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**SITTING DAYS—2016**

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FORTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

Governor-General
His Excellency General the Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove AK, MC (Retd)

House of Representatives Office Holders
Speaker—Hon. Anthony David Hawthorn Smith MP
Deputy Speaker—Mr Mark Maclean Coulton MP
Second Deputy Speaker—Mr Robert George Mitchell MP
Members of the Speaker’s Panel—Hon. Sharon Leah Bird MP, Ms Sharon Catherine Claydon MP, Mr Steven Georganas MP, Mr Ian Reginald Goodenough MP, Mr Andrew William Hastie MP, Mr Kevin John Hogan MP and Ms Maria Vanvakinou MP
Leader of the House—Hon. Christopher Pyne MP
Deputy Leader of the House—Hon. Darren Chester MP
Manager of Opposition Business—Hon. Anthony Stephen Burke MP
Deputy Manager of Opposition Business—Hon. Mark Dreyfus QC MP

Party Leaders and Whips
Liberal Party of Australia
Leader—Hon. Malcolm Bligh Turnbull MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Julie Isabel Bishop MP
Chief Government Whip—Ms Nola Bethwyn Marino MP
Government Whips—Mr Albertus Johannes van Manen MP and Mr Rowan Eric Ramsey MP

The Nationals
Leader—Hon. Barnaby Thomas Gerard Joyce MP
Deputy Leader—Senator the Hon Fiona Nash
Chief Whip—Mr George Robert Christenson MP
Deputy Whip—Ms Michelle Leanne Landry MP

Australian Labor Party
Leader—Hon. William Richard Shorten MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Tanya Joan Plibersek MP
Chief Opposition Whip—Mr Christopher Patrick Hayes MP
Opposition Whips—Ms Joanne Catherine Ryan MP and Mr Graham Douglas Perrett MP

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<th>Party</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson, Mr Richard James</td>
<td>O'Connor, WA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson, Mr Timothy Robert</td>
<td>Goldstein, VIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood, Mr Jason Peter</td>
<td>La Trobe, VIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyatt, Hon. Kenneth George, AM</td>
<td>Hasluck, WA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zappia, Mr Antonio</td>
<td>Makin, SA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimmerman, Mr Trent Moir</td>
<td>North Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PARTY ABBREVIATIONS**
AG—Australian Greens; ALP—Australian Labor Party; AUS—Katter’s Australia Party; IND—Independent; LNP—Liberal National Party; LP—Liberal Party of Australia; NATS—The Nationals; NXT—Nick Xenophon Team

**Heads of Parliamentary Departments**

Clerk of the Senate—R Laing  
Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder  
Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—R Stefanić  
Parliamentary Budget Officer—P Bowen
## TURNBULL MINISTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Minister</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prime Minister</strong></td>
<td>Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Indigenous Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Women</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cabinet Secretary</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Arthur Sinodinos AO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service</em></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism</em></td>
<td>Hon Michael Keenan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minister Assisting the Cabinet Secretary</em></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Scott Ryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Cyber Security</em></td>
<td>Hon Dan Tehan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister</em></td>
<td>Senator the Hon James McGrath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation</em></td>
<td>Hon Angus Taylor MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources</strong></td>
<td>Hon Barnaby Joyce MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources</em></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Anne Ruston</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister</em></td>
<td>Hon Luke Hartsuyker MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Foreign Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Hon Julie Bishop MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment</strong></td>
<td>Hon Steve Ciobo MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for International Development and the Pacific</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Concetta Fieravanti-Wells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment</em></td>
<td>Hon Keith Pitt MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attorney-General</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon George Brandis QC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Vice-President of the Executive Council)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Leader of the Government in the Senate)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Justice</strong></td>
<td>Hon Michael Keenan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Treasurer</strong></td>
<td>Hon Scott Morrison MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Revenue and Financial Services</strong></td>
<td>Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Small Business</strong></td>
<td>Hon Michael McCormack MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Finance</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(Deputy Leader of Government in the Senate)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Special Minister of State</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Scott Ryan</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Regional Development</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Fiona Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Local Government and Territories</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Fiona Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Infrastructure and Transport</strong></td>
<td>Hon Darren Chester MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(Deputy Leader of the House)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Urban Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>Hon Paul Fletcher MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Defence</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Marise Payne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Defence Industry</strong></td>
<td>Hon Christopher Pyne MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Leader of the House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Veterans’ Affairs</td>
<td>Hon Dan Tehan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC</em></td>
<td>Hon Dan Tehan MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Defence Personnel</td>
<td>Hon Dan Tehan MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Immigration and Border Protection</strong></td>
<td>Hon Peter Dutton MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection</em></td>
<td>Hon Alex Hawke MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science</strong></td>
<td>Hon Greg Hunt MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science</em></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Matt Canavan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Resources and Northern Australia</strong></td>
<td>Hon Craig Laundy MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Health and Aged Care</strong></td>
<td>Hon Sussan Ley MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Sport</strong></td>
<td>Hon Sussan Ley MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care</em></td>
<td>Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Rural Health</em></td>
<td>Hon Dr David Gillespie MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Communications</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for the Arts</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Manager of Government Business in the Senate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Regional Communications</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Fiona Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Employment</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Social Services</strong></td>
<td>Hon Christian Porter MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Human Services</td>
<td>Hon Alan Tudge MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Jane Prentice MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs</em></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Zed Seselja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Education and Training</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills</em></td>
<td>Hon Karen Andrews MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for the Environment and Energy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders</td>
<td>Hon Bill Shorten MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders</td>
<td>Senator Patrick Dodson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Preventing Family Violence</td>
<td>Terri Butler MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister to the Leader (Tasmania)</td>
<td>Senator Helen Polley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Hon Tanya Plibersek MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Education</td>
<td>Hon Tanya Plibersek MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Women</td>
<td>Hon Tanya Plibersek MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Schools</td>
<td>Andrew Giles MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Universities</td>
<td>Terri Butler MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Equality</td>
<td>Terri Butler MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader of the Opposition in the Senate</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Penny Wong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Penny Wong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for International Development and the Pacific</td>
<td>Senator Claire Moore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Don Farrell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Special Minister of State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Sport</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Treasurer</td>
<td>Hon Chris Bowen MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Treasurer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Competition and Productivity</td>
<td>Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Charities and Not-for-Profits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for the Digital Economy</td>
<td>Ed Husic MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs</td>
<td>Tim Hammond MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Treasury</td>
<td>Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Environment and Water</td>
<td>Hon Tony Burke MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Australia</td>
<td>Hon Tony Burke MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Manager of Opposition Business (House)</td>
<td>Hon Tony Burke MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Australia</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Jenny Macklin MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Disability and Carers</td>
<td>Senator Carol Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Stephen Jones MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pat Conroy MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for External Territories</td>
<td>Hon Warren Snowdon MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Attorney-General</strong></td>
<td>Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for National Security</strong></td>
<td>Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Manager of Opposition Business in the House of Representatives</td>
<td>Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Justice</td>
<td>Clare O'Neil MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations</strong></td>
<td>Hon Brendan O'Connor MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Employment Services, Workforce, Participation and Future of Work</td>
<td>Ed Husic MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Lisa Chesters MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Climate Change and Energy</strong></td>
<td>Hon Mark Butler MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Climate Change</td>
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<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Defence</strong></td>
<td>Hon Richard Marles MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs</td>
<td>Hon Amanda Rishworth MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Defence Personnel</td>
<td>Hon Amanda Rishworth MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC</td>
<td>Hon Warren Snowdon MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Cyber Security and Defence</td>
<td>Gai Brodtmann MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Defence Industry and Support</td>
<td>Hon Mike Kelly AM MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon Kim Carr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Manufacturing and Science</td>
<td>Hon Nick Champion MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Health and Medicare</strong></td>
<td>Hon Catherine King MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Medicare</td>
<td>Tony Zappia MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Warren Snowdon MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Development</strong></td>
<td>Hon Kate Ellis MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for TAFE and Vocational Education</strong></td>
<td>Hon Kate Ellis MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Skills and Apprenticeships</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Doug Cameron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Early Childhood</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry</strong></td>
<td>Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Shadow Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Rural and Regional Australia</td>
<td>Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Australia</td>
<td>Lisa Chesters MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Resources and Northern Australia</td>
<td>Hon Jason Clare MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
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<td>Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tim Hammond MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Shayne Neumann MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Finance</td>
<td>Dr Jim Chalmers MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Small Business and Financial Services(2)</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Small Business</td>
<td>Julie Owens MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Communications</td>
<td>Hon Michelle Rowland MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Regional Communications</td>
<td>Stephen Jones MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Ageing and Mental Health(3)</td>
<td>Hon Julie Collins MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Ageing</td>
<td>Senator Helen Polley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Mental Health</td>
<td>Senator Deborah O’Neill</td>
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Each box represents a portfolio except for (1) which is in the Education portfolio, (2) which is in Treasury portfolio and (3) which is in the Health portfolio. Shadow Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.
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Tuesday, 11 October 2016

The SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Smith) took the chair at 12:00, made an acknowledgement of country and read prayers.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Privilege

The SPEAKER (12:01): On 13 September, I made a statement to the House on the seizure of a range of material by the Australian Federal Police following the execution of a search warrant in Parliament House on 24 August. The member for Blaxland has made a claim that the material that has been seized is protected by parliamentary privilege, and in accordance with the *AFP national guideline for execution of search warrants where parliamentary privilege may be involved* the material is being held securely in the office of the Clerk of the House.

As the member for Blaxland is seeking a ruling from the House in relation to his claim for parliamentary privilege, as provided for under the guideline, and as this is the first occasion such a ruling has been sought, I advised the House that I would undertake consultations to determine the way in which this matter will be dealt with.

I have now undertaken those consultations with the assistance of the Clerk of the House. I present for the information of members a paper prepared by the Clerk's Office on the process to determine claims of privilege in matters such as these. As noted in the paper, it is proposed that the House Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests be tasked with considering the claim made by the member for Blaxland and making a recommendation to the House about its ruling on the claim.

With this in mind, I propose to give precedence to a motion to refer the matter of the determination of the member for Blaxland's claim of parliamentary privilege to the Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests for consideration and advice to the House.

COMMITTEES

Privileges and Members' Interests Committee

Reference

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (12:03): Mr Speaker, I thank you for the consultations and the way that you have been deliberating over this issue of great significance to the House. I move:

that:

(1) the House Standing Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests consider the claim for privilege in relation to the material seized by the Australian Federal Police under a search warrant executed on the Department of Parliamentary Services at Parliament House on 24 August 2016 and which is subject of a claim of parliamentary privilege by the Member for Blaxland under paragraph 6.11 of the 'AFP National Guideline for execution of search warrants where parliamentary privilege may be involved' and make a recommendation to the House about its ruling on the claim;
(2) in considering the claim, the Committee shall have regard to the law of parliamentary privilege, including the Parliamentary Privileges Act 1987 and any case law relevant to the interpretation of the Act;

(3) the Committee shall provide affected parties with the opportunity to make submissions on the claim of parliamentary privilege, including on the application of the law of parliamentary privilege;

(4) if the Committee is able to determine the matter without the material being examined, it shall accordingly make a recommendation to the House about its ruling on the claim;

(5) if the Committee is unable to determine the matter without the material being examined, it may engage expert assistance to examine the material and report to it on the claim of parliamentary privilege. The Committee shall then make a recommendation to the House about its ruling on the claim; and

(6) if the Committee approves the engagement of expert assistance to examine the material, the Clerk of the House shall make the material available to the expert/experts so engaged only for the purpose of their examination of the material, but otherwise the material shall remain in the custody of the Clerk of the House at all times until its disposition is determined by the House, and shall not be examined by the Committee.

Question agreed to.

COMMITTEES

Membership

The SPEAKER (12:03): I have received two messages from the Senate informing the House of the appointment of senators to certain joint committees. As the list is a lengthy one, I do not propose to read the list to the House. Details will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

BILLS

National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016
National Cancer Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016

Second Reading

Cognate debate.

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

to which the following amendment was moved:

That all words after 'That' be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

'whilst not declining to give the bill a second reading, the House condemns the government for outsourcing Australians' most sensitive health information—including Medicare data—to Telstra, and before passing the necessary legislation.'

Ms OWENS (Parramatta) (12:04): The National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 and the National Cancer Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016 are important bills (1) because they do something very important, but (2) because they highlight the incompetence of the government in implementing something as important as the National Cancer Screening Register. They are doing something that is important and, once again, they are doing it badly. In speaking today I want to highlight both those sides: what is
important about the register itself, and the process that the government have gone through that has got them to the shemozzle that they are in today with this legislation.

Firstly, the Cancer Screening Register itself will replace nine existing registers: the National Bowel Cancer Screening Register and eight state and territory registers for the National Cervical Screening Program. Labor supports the establishment of a cancer register. It will reduce duplication and improve the prevention, identification and treatment of cancer in Australia. Because it will link through to GPs' desktops, GPs will be able to see the entire cancer screening history of their patients. Labor also supports the improvements to cancer screening programs that the new national register will enable. The National Cervical Screening Program will move from a two-yearly pap test to a five-yearly cervical screening test. This implements recommendations that were actually made by the independent Medical Services Advisory Committee, and this is expected to prevent an additional 140 cervical cancers a year. As with so many cancer prevention strategies, none of us will know the names of the people who were saved by this, but it is an incredibly important move. The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program will accelerate its transition to biennial screening—again, incredibly important—with Australians aged 50 to 74 screened every two years by 2020, instead of 14 years late by 2034. We know from clinical trials that biennial screening can prevent between 300 and 500 deaths per year. Again, it is incredibly important that this register be established, and it is a good thing.

But when it comes to the implementation itself we really do get a completely different story.

The register will hold Australia's most sensitive health data, like the results of cervical and bowel cancer screening, and we need to get it right. On the Labor side, we are incredibly concerned that the government has already carried out moves to outsource the register to Telstra, to privatise the keeping of what is incredibly important data.

I am going to leave aside the dishonesty during the election campaign, when they were declaring strongly that they would not outsource Medicare, when, four days before they called the election, they had already signed a contract with Telstra to outsource the cancer register. Let us leave that aside. Let us leave aside the fact that they planned to make a major announcement during the election campaign and then, when it became clear that the people of Australia did not want their medical services to be outsourced, they decided to cancel that announcement. Let us just that aside and deal with the process itself that got us to this point.

It is important to remember that the announcement for the cancer screening register was not made in the 2016-17 budget. It was actually made in the 2015-16 budget, so it was made over a year and a half ago, and two years before the register was due to come online, effectively, on 1 May 2017. So, in the announcement in 2015-16 they gave themselves two years to get the register, the legislation through the parliament, have it established, sort out its processes and get it right. And it is incredibly important that we do get something right when such sensitive information is held on the register. But what we found was that through the year 2015-16 to 2016-17 there was no legislation to establish the cancer register. It was not put forward. But what happened instead was that four days before the calling of the election a contract to manage the register was let to Telstra. So, roughly a year after they announced they were going to have a register, they let a contract to Telstra to manage a register, before the legislation had gone through parliament.
I think every business out there would wonder what is in that contract, because at that stage the legislation to establish the register the contract was for had not passed the parliament and we were heading into an election the government was not guaranteed to win. If we were honest, we had no idea during the election campaign what the parliament would look like, yet the government was letting a contract to a major corporation for a register that did not exist and had not passed the parliament. Heaven knows what is in that contract, but it must be an interesting one, with a lot of blank spaces.

The government now has to rush the bill through the parliament so that Telstra, which has the contract, is able to deliver the cancer register by 1 May 2017. You need to understand there that Telstra has no experience in the managing of this kind register. In fact, there is not a single cancer register in the world that is managed by a private entity; they are all managed by public entities, as they are in Australia. So Telstra has no experience whatsoever in setting up or managing a register of this kind and is busy at the moment running around to the existing holders of the nine registers trying to poach their staff and borrow their expertise so that they can actually meet this deadline. So we are now looking at a government that is trying to rush the legislation through the parliament to meet a deadline they have, by their own incompetence, shortened to a ridiculous extent.

When Labor and the crossbench referred the government's bills to the Senate inquiry, the health minister, Sussan Ley, accused Labor of a hysterical tirade. But in an embarrassing rebuke of the government their own privacy and information commissioner made six recommendations to fix the legislation to the Senate inquiry. Some of the loopholes identified by the commissioner were really alarming. For example, the government's bills, as drafted, may allow the register operator to collect all Medicare claims information on people who are on the register, and not just the information that relates specifically to the cancer register. Under the government's plan this would allow Telstra to see all the health services that a person had received, including in sensitive areas like mental health and sexual health. So that is one really alarming area of privacy that the commissioner alerted the government to.

Last week Labor proposed nine amendments to improve the government's legislation and the government has come kicking and screaming into accepting many of those amendments. We understand the government will move a series of amendments that will meet many of the demands that Labor has made, because they are actually quite reasonable demands. Arguably, if the government had spent sufficient time on getting this register right over that year where it sat idle, they may have handled these matters themselves and may have done the appropriate consultation to handle these kinds of really quite obvious problems with the legislation.

Yet, the government still cannot get it right. The legislation is still absolutely full of holes, so Labor is moving three more amendments that the government refused to accept. Those amendments fall into three areas. First, relating to Telstra itself, to limit the operation of the register to a not-for-profit organisation or a government agency. I will come back to this. Second, is mandatory disclosure, so that individuals are notified when their most sensitive health data is breached. Third, an amendment to increase the penalty for unauthorised use of or disclosure of information. On the Labor side we would think that these are three really obvious amendments that will have the support of the people of Australia. First, that something as sensitive as a cancer register should be held by a not-for-profit organisation or a
government agency. Second, that if data is breached individuals should be notified. Third, that the penalties for unauthorised use of or disclosure of information are substantial, substantial enough to ensure that a private company would be extremely concerned that such unauthorised disclosure did not happen.

I will come back to the detail of those amendments. The Telstra amendment, which limits the operation of the register to a not-for-profit organisation or a government agency is there for a very simple reason. Telstra has never operated a register like this. In fact, no for-profit corporation anywhere in the world does it. It is new territory and it is extremely sensitive information for the government to be using in a guinea pig approach for Telstra's first foray into health.

It is going to contain extremely private health information that has never been handed over to a for-profit company. This includes the Medicare number, the Medicare claims information, the preferred GP, HPV vaccination status, screening test results, cancer diagnosis—incridibly sensitive information which has not, in Australia, been held by the corporate sector before today. So, Telstra will know things like whether you have had a cervical or bowel cancer test, whether you have a precursor to cancer or genetic markers that may lead to cancer or whether a woman has had a hysterectomy or a partial hysterectomy—incridibly sensitive information.

In fact, the Senate inquiry revealed that it is not just the Labor Party that is concerned about keeping this kind of sensitive information in the hands of the corporate world. The Australian Medical Association, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and other experts share Labor's concern about outsourcing the register to a for-profit corporation. Labor's amendment, in clear English, would ensure that the register would have to be held by a government agency or a not-for-profit. Incidentally, not-for-profit organisations and government departments are currently quite successfully holding the nine registers that currently exist.

The second amendment concerns mandatory disclosure so that individuals are notified when their most sensitive health data is breached. Under the government's legislation, if and when there are data breaches, Telstra has to tell only the Department of Health. That is it. We understand that the government will now accept Labor's amendment to ensure that the Privacy Commissioner is also notified. That is an improvement, although, as I said earlier, the Minister for Health originally said we were being hysterical about this, but they have agreed to that. But it is really not good enough: if a person's health privacy is breached, that person should be advised of that breach. So that is the second amendment, and it is consistent with our position across all portfolios. Unfortunately, the government has a history on this. When sensitive Medicare and PBS data was breached the government took weeks to come clean. So this is an important amendment for protecting consumer rights.

The third one is the penalties amendment. Under the current bill the penalty for recording, using or disclosing information without authority is $21,600—for Telstra—for misusing or disclosing information without authority. In the six months to December 2015 Telstra reported a profit of $2.1 billion. It is hard to see how, for a corporation of that size, a penalty of $21,600 would be a sufficient deterrent to ensure that the corporation had data security in the forefront of its mind. First, they have to tell only the Department of Health—and now, because of the amendment, the Privacy Commissioner—and they get fined what is a drop in
the ocean for a corporation the size of Telstra. The former Secretary of the Department of Health, Stephen Duckett, said:

The automatic consequences of release of data – inadvertent or not – must be made so great that any risk-management matrix will ensure the organisation and its managers always have patient privacy at the forefront of their mind.

Even stakeholders that are generally supportive of the government's legislation, such as Pathology Australia, have called for a review of the fine for offences to ensure that they are an appropriate deterrent.

Under the Crimes Act 1914 a court can impose a penalty of up to five times this amount on a corporation. So, if Telstra is the register operator it could be fined $540,000 for breaching the legislation. This penalty of $21,600 is simply insufficient, and it should not be discretionary. If individuals or organisations inappropriately use Australia's most sensitive health data, the punishments should be severe and automatic. These three amendments—to prevent data being held by a corporation but, in the case where it is, mandatory disclosure of any breach of data privacy and serious penalties for disclosing information or publishing it either intentionally or inadvertently—are absolutely essential items. It is a shame the government did not spend the time they should have spent on this. They would have had two years to make it happen. Rushing legislation like this and rushing a process that is as important as this is an absolute sign of their incompetence.

Mr ZAPPIA (Makin) (12:19): The National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 is another example of this government's bungling of so much of the legislation that comes before this parliament. We see that the legislation now being debated is going to be changed by the government, thanks to the efforts of Labor and crossbenchers who had it referred to a Senate committee for inquiry. At that time, the minister said that this was another hysterical tirade by Labor.

To put the importance of this matter into context: one in three Australian men and one in four Australian women will be diagnosed with cancer before the age of 75. Each year more than 123,000 new cases of cancer are diagnosed in Australia and an estimated 45,700 pass away because of the illness. President Obama, in his State of the Union address on 12 January 2016, in recognition of the devastation and prevalence of cancer, said:

For the loved ones we've all lost, for the family we can still save, let's make America the country that cures cancer once and for all.

Such are the prevalence and effects of cancer across humanity. For that reason, this legislation will be of widespread interest to Australians, as very few Australian families will not be affected by cancer at some stage in their lives, and therefore the register itself will become relevant to them.

The effect of this legislation is to pool nine registers that currently exist across the states and territories and the national register into one single national register. It is a concept Labor supports, because it will have benefits. The register, however, is an important document. It will include Medicare numbers and Medicare claims data. It will function on an opt-out basis only. That is, most people's names will be included on the register, because I doubt that too many of them will opt out of it. It will also capture other sensitive information, such as whether a woman has had a hysterectomy and the person's GP or health provider, the HPV
vaccination status of the person, bowel and cervical cancer screening test results, and bowel and cervical cancer diagnosis.

Indeed, some 11½ million Australians may have their health information on the register.

The register will, of course, also serve a useful purpose in managing the risks and health effects of cancer. The existing registers are presently managed by the state and territory governments. In Victoria, I understand that the Victorian Cytology Service handles the register on behalf of that government. Under this proposal, the government wants to effectively outsource the register to a private body, in this case Telstra. I am not aware of Telstra ever having had any expertise in managing a register of this kind. My understanding is that the current register holders have, to date, had no complaints made against their ability to manage and hold the relevant information, and yet the government now wants to outsource the register to Telstra for five years, with a right of renewal for an additional 10 years. This is a $220 million program. I have not seen the contract itself and I am not sure whether anyone in the opposition has seen it. We do not know what the government has promised Telstra and agreed to with Telstra, and we do not know why Telstra was chosen in the first place. What we do know, as a result of the Senate inquiry, is that it would appear that in no country in the world does a private organisation hold a register of this kind. We do not know where the register is going to be kept or where it is going to be housed. Is it indeed going to be sent offshore, as so many other operations of private companies are? We do not know what the attraction was for the government to give the register to Telstra. What is even more interesting is that the agreement with Telstra, as the member for Parramatta has already pointed out, was signed on 4 May, just before the calling of the last federal election. It was never announced at that time, and one can only speculate as to why, but the government said very little about it at the time. I suspect it said very little about it because the government knew that giving this kind of information to a private company to hold would not have been a popular move throughout the Australian electorate.

As a result of this legislation having been brought to the parliament and then referred to the Senate for inquiry, there will be, I understand, some amendments moved by the government. I understand also that the Information Commissioner made some recommendations with respect to the legislation. So we have the Information Commissioner and the Senate inquiry both recommending amendments to the legislation—before it has even passed this place, highlighting just how badly the proposal was put in the first place.

As the member for Parramatta has quite properly pointed out, Labor will be moving some additional amendments, because, whilst the government has accepted some of the changes that have been proposed, the government has not gone far enough and there are still holes in this legislation. Labor will be proposing some additional amendments to try and tidy up those aspects of the legislation that the government failed to address with its own amendments. In particular, Labor will be moving amendments relating to who is able to hold this kind of information, the mandatory disclosure of information and the penalties that arise for any breaches in respect of it. Each of those three matters is important. Who holds the relevant information is a matter of deep importance to most Australians. We currently have registers held by organisations that are run directly either by the government or by not-for-profit organisations that have had a track record of keeping this information and using it appropriately—and yet none of them have been asked to manage the cancer register for the
national government into the future. One has to ask the question: why? We know that Telstra has not in the past managed such a register. In fact it has, to my knowledge, very little expertise in this area or with respect to managing health matters generally. As I and other speakers on this side of the parliament have pointed out, the register will contain very, very sensitive information, I suspect, for most Australians. As the Senate inquiry pointed out, even organisations like the Australian Medical Association and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners share Labor's concerns about the register being handled by a for-profit corporation.

Given that the government has already signed the contract, I do not know if it is in a position to withdraw from it, but it is of serious concern that the contract was signed before this legislation came to parliament and was passed by the parliament. It leaves the parliament in a situation whereby, if we, as a parliament, were to support Labor's amendment, we would also be in a position where we would have to deal with a contract that has been signed by the government. It is not the kind of position that I believe a parliament should ever be faced with and, frankly, it just highlights the incompetence of the government—perhaps in its rush, before the election, to get the contract locked and signed away with Telstra.

The other two matters go to mandatory disclosure. Again, I cannot understand why the government would not agree to any breaches of information from the register being disclosed to the person who owned that information. It is not sufficient to simply say that we will allow the Information Commissioner to make the decision as to whether the information needs to be passed on to the person involved. I would have thought that most Australians would say: 'We are happy to be on the register. However, if there is a breach, then we have the right to know.' It is not a matter of whether someone should decide whether they have a right to know. They have a right to know, and Labor's amendment will ensure that that is the case.

The last point is with respect to penalties. The member for Parramatta has quite rightly pointed out the proposed changes that Labor has in mind with respect to penalties. Currently, the penalty for any breaches is $21,600. For a corporation like Telstra it is not a significant amount of money. Labor's proposal is that the penalty be increased to $108,000 and up to five times that amount for a corporation. That makes the penalty a substantial penalty of $540,000. That, in my view, will ensure that, at the very least, Telstra—who does not necessarily have a good track record in this regard—will do its best to ensure that it manages the register appropriately and that there are no breach of privacy with respect to the information that is contained within it.

All in all, Labor's amendments make this better legislation. I will be interested to hear, when the minister sums up, why the minister will not accept Labor's amendments, particularly with respect to penalties and with respect to privacy breaches that might occur in respect of the legislation.

In summing up, Labor's shadow minister for health, Catherine King, who is in the chamber here today, addressed Labor's concerns about this legislation several weeks ago. As a result of those concerns, the legislation went to a Senate committee, as I pointed out earlier on. The legislation is now better as a result of the proposed amendments that, I understand, will be coming back to the parliament. However, those amendments do not go far enough. The government should seriously consider accepting all of the amendments that Labor is proposing. That way it will have the legislation in place that, I believe, will serve the
Australian people much better. I wait with interest to hear just what the government's response to Labor's proposals is, and, indeed, to see the specifics of the amendments that it proposes as a result of Labor having taken this matter to a Senate inquiry.

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (12:32): The change in the conversations that we have in this place is remarkable. Less than 24 hours ago we had the government continuing their pretence about 'Mediscare' and about Labor being wrong about the push to privatisé Medicare. Well, this debate and the way in which the government have tried to push this issue through the parliament—where they have not been honest with the Australian people—is another example of why we are arguing that the government's real agenda is to privatisé Medicare.

Let me say from the beginning, as previous speakers on this side of the House have said, Labor strongly supports the establishment of a National Cancer Screening Register. However, it has to be done in the proper and correct fashion. What we heard during the election, after the election and as recently as this morning is that prior to the election the government signed a contract with Telstra to establish the National Cancer Screening Register. Like other speakers, I will outline the weaknesses in the government's push to do that. If you are saying on the one hand, to the average Australian out there, that, 'We have no plans to privatise,' yet you sign a contract with Telstra to privatise part of what people would see as a government service, then they put two and two together and say: 'What is the government on about? I thought they said Medicare was safe from privatisation.' It is clearly not, and this push by the government is another example of their real agenda for Medicare.

So keen were they to rush this legislation through that we are here today with amendments. These amendments are necessary to ensure that the data that the register will hold—the most sensitive of health data—is not going to be misused or leaked and that it is safe. The register will hold Australians' most sensitive data, like the results of cervical and bowel cancer screenings. We need to make sure that we get any establishment of this register right. We have concerns about the government's shambolic approach to this important legislation. There are serious concerns about how they have managed this. It demonstrates, again, how chaotic the government are.

On the eve of the last election, this government signed a $220 million contract to outsource the register to Telstra, before this parliament even saw the legislation. When you talk to people in the community, Deputy Speaker Mitchell—and I know you would have lots of these conversations with them—and when you explain that the government signed a contract with Telstra for the new National Cancer Screening Register most people roll their eyes. They struggle to get Telstra on the phone to fix basic phone services! They struggle to get Telstra out to look at faulty connections! There are problems and issues within Telstra. They have a lot of work to do to rebuild their brand. They have a lot of work to do to rebuild respect and their relationship with people in regional Australia in particular. So to hand them a $220 million contract right before the election means people in the community are rolling their eyes and saying: 'What will happen? What does this mean?'

In an embarrassing rebuke to the government, their own Information Commissioner has made six recommendations to the Senate inquiry to help fix the legislation. Some of the loopholes identified by their own commissioner were alarming. So, while the government claim that we are being hysterical, we were actually proved right again. This seems to be a bit of a pattern with the government—for example, the government's bills draft may allow the
register to operate to collect all Medicare claims and information for people who are on the register. All Medicare claims! It is clearly a loophole that the government did not foresee.

Last week Labor proposed nine amendments to improve the government's legislation. The government has now accepted many of these and we understand that it may have more to be presented. We too have our own to make sure that we close all of the loopholes in the legislation. There are still gaps that are being identified by their own people, by health services.

I recently held in my electorate a number of hearings and forums about Medicare. I want to spend a few moments on that because it is an issue that people in the community are scared about. They are scared about the increasing out-of-pocket expenses in relation to Medicare. They are scared about the cost of going to the doctor. Several people have said to us that since the government froze the Medicare rebate and started to talk about a co-payment or a GP tax their doctor has started charging a gap fee. So, whilst bulk-billing rates are high in areas like Bendigo, more and more doctors are charging a gap on top of that. Doctors have also told us that they, unfortunately, have to do that because of the cost of running their clinic. It is alarming that we have GPs now saying that their practices are becoming unviable because the government has continued the freeze on the rebate. The price they are getting from the government means that their practices are struggling to break even.

In the city and places like North Melbourne it is not such a big issue because their bulk-billing to fee-paying ratio may be 75 to 25—75 per cent have the disposable income to pay upfront and 25 per cent may be bulk-billed on a concession card only. In parts of the region it is the complete reverse. In parts of Bendigo, like Kangaroo Flat and Eaglehawk, households are struggling on the smallest of incomes, so their ratio is the complete reverse. Some 75 to 80 per cent are bulk-billed concession card holders and only about 20 per cent can afford to pay upfront. If you do the maths, you work out very quickly that it is hard for these GP bulk-billing services to continue.

What happens when GPs start to increase their fees is that people stop engaging with primary health care. They stop going to the doctor when they need to. They might turn up in our emergency departments. They stop doing preventative health care. We want people to be proactive. Let me turn to how this relates to this register. It is a very similar story when it comes to people being proactive about getting regular testing. Take a Pap smear, for example, and it talks here about the cervical cancer register. I had one person tell me that it cost her $70 to go to the doctor to get her Pap smear test. She had to pay a bit of a fee to get the test done and she had to pay to go to the doctor. She will get some of that back through Medicare, but she said: 'I didn't know until I turned up and I had to have $70 in my bank account to do it. I will now think in two years time whether I will actually go. I will have to plan ahead to have the money in my account.'

That is the wrong message we want to be sending women. It is the wrong message we want to send to people over 55 around bowel cancer or prostate cancer. We want to encourage people to go to their GP and have these tests because we know that when it comes to all of these cancers early intervention and early diagnosis are critical. We have been able to drastically reduce the rate of women dying of cervical cancer because we have early testing, and we have had a strong community based campaign to encourage that.
My concern about some of the reforms that have been put forward is that, if it is not guaranteed that people's data and results are kept secret—that they have the privacy that they currently have within our government departments—people will not go. Until it is guaranteed and people are sure that Telstra can get this right, that the government can get this right, people may be deterred from getting these vital tests that can help improve their health outcomes. If there is a sad case where they are diagnosed, they can seek the help they need.

Another alarming thing that has come up as well through the discussions we have had is the cost involved with cancer treatment. It is an area we do need to look at. A decade ago a woman in Bendigo was diagnosed with breast cancer. She said her out-of-pocket expenses were about $300. Today a woman in Bendigo, who decided to pay for some of it upfront because she wanted the best quality care she could get, paid $30,000. It is extraordinary that in one town, a decade apart, two women diagnosed with breast cancer had such different experiences when engaging with our health system—$300 versus $30,000.

I do not believe that the government really understand what is going on on the ground, particularly in regional areas, when it comes to health care and healthcare delivery. That is why I do not believe they fully understand what they have put forward. They have rushed legislation in relation to the National Cancer Screening Register. They still have not closed a number of the gaps and loopholes. There are a number of amendments that we will still put forward. We want to see the government adopt them because only through adopting these amendments can we ensure that the new register does have the confidence of the community, does have the confidence of the health profession and does have the confidence of this place that it will actually do what it is to do.

The amendments will still allow the register to be operated by one government agency or a not-for-profit organisation that has successfully managed existing registers. This is critical. This is what people want from their federal government when it comes to health care and healthcare delivery. Labor's amendments will also provide that the new National Cancer Screening Register be operated only by the government or a not-for-profit agency. This is critical. It goes to the heart of one of Labor's arguments about this government's hidden agenda to privatise Medicare. We believe that a register of this nature—the National Cancer Screening Register—should be operated by the government or a not-for-profit agency. It should not be operated by a for-profit agency.

How can members of the government stand up and say the government has no privatisation agenda for our health system? How can they do that in one breath knowing full well that they signed this contract to a private company in the midst of an election hoping that people would not notice? I know some of the people in the Nats still see Telstra as a great government business. You guys sold it off years ago. It is now a profit-making independent business. It is not part of the Australian government; it is not owned by taxpayers in any way. So to try and link the two is just messy and a demonstration of how chaotic this government has become.

I hope the government will realise the importance of these amendments. Again, it is an example of how, in opposition, we have cleaned up the government's mess. This legislation is another example of how the government are not really interested and are not putting in the time and the detail we need to ensure that we have good quality health care. They have managed to turn the good idea of establishing a National Cancer Screening Register into another shambolic attempt and another mess that they have created. It demonstrates that they
do not really understand what is going on in our regions with regard to health care and Medicare.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton—Opposition Whip) (12:46): I too rise to speak on the National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016. We all know how important screening for cancer is. More than 130,000 Australians will be diagnosed with cancer this year. Sadly, nearly 47,000 of these, our fellow Australians, will die from cancer. The risk of any of us being diagnosed with cancer is staggering. In 2016 the chance of a man being diagnosed with cancer by their 85th birthday is one in two—50 per cent—and for a woman it is one in three.

Like most Australians, I care about this topic and, unfortunately, like many other Australians, cancer has touched my family. In fact, my mum, who was a former nurse, had a screening in 1989 and then was treated with a lumpectomy in 1995. I remember that particularly well because it was the year I was married. Mum was treated a day before my wife's bridal shower and she did not tell anybody. She was just part of that stoic, good old Irish Catholic stock. She did not tell anybody. It was like it was no-one else's business. Thankfully she was treated with the lumpectomy and had the lump removed, and she went on to live a longer life. She died in May 2011. Because of that family history, all of my three sisters were screened below the age of 40. Sadly, on my father's side, my aunt—Aunty Ann—died from breast cancer and my mum's sisters and my cousins also have that breast cancer gene. So it is so important that we get screening right. We know that it is vital.

BreastScreen Queensland do great work. They were the pioneers, in fact, of cancer screening. They were the first public breast-cancer-screening service in Australia. I say an especially big hello to all of those who work at their Brisbane south side service, especially those operating out of the QEII hospital in the middle of my electorate of Moreton. They do fantastic work; they save lives every day. There are 11 services throughout Queensland and each service has several satellite locations. With Queensland being such a decentralised state, even on Brisbane's south side they have seven satellite locations so that everyone can have access to this important screening service.

We know that screening for breast cancer is effective. The mortality rate for breast cancer has decreased from 17 people per 100,000 back in 1968 down to 11 people per 100,000 in 2013. The Cancer Council has confirmed that it is clear that a substantial number of Australian women are alive today because an early-stage breast cancer was detected through the BreastScreen Australia program.

Screening for cancer can save lives. I recently turned 50 and I was happy to participate in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. I know it is not a sexy topic, but is just something that all people need to do.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Rob Mitchell) interjecting—

Mr PERRETT: I hear that, Deputy Speaker—that you cannot believe that I am 50, but that is the case!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yeah, I'm shocked!

Mr Pitt interjecting—

Mr PERRETT: The member for Hinkler, I am sure, would say the same thing! Labor supports the establishment of the National Cancer Screening Register because it will replace nine existing registers, reduce duplication and improve the prevention, identification and
treatment of cancer in Australia. It is the right step for a modern federation. All the information about cancer screening and treatments for an individual will go to the one register. It will enable a person's GP to see their entire cancer-screening history, wherever that screening occurred in Australia. It will be particularly beneficial for people who move between states and territories, so particularly the military and their families. In Australia in 2016, this is more the norm than the exception. That is the modern Australia: people will move for work, economic opportunities and study opportunities.

This bill will also improve the current available screening programs for cervical cancer and bowel cancer. The change to the National Cervical Screening Program will see a two-yearly Pap test being replaced by five-yearly cervical screening tests. This change will implement the recommendations of the Medical Services Advisory Committee. This new screening process is expected to prevent 140 cervical cancers a year and hopefully more. The change to the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program will see the process increased to biennial screenings. Australians aged 50 to 74 will be screened every two years by 2020, and clinical trials indicate that biennial screenings will prevent around 300 to 500 deaths per year.

Labor applaud and support these changes to cancer screening, and we wholeheartedly support the establishment of a National Cancer Screening Register. But we do have some concerns. When Labor and the crossbench referred the legislation to a Senate inquiry, they were accused by the Minister for Health and Aged Care of a 'hysterical tirade'. In a submission to that inquiry, the government's own recently reappointed privacy and information commissioner made six recommendations to fix the legislation. The commissioner identified that the government's legislation allowed the register operator to collect all Medicare claims information on people on the register. This information would include all the health services a person has received, including very sensitive information like mental health and sexual health. Recently, Labor proposed nine amendments to the government's legislation, and the government, after much kicking and screaming, has accepted many of these amendments. We understand that the Turnbull government will move some amendments to its own legislation to meet the demands that the Labor health team has suggested. I thank the shadow health minister for her work in this area.

However, the government's legislation, even if it makes the amendments it has agreed to, will still be full of holes.

Labor will be making three additional amendments to the legislation to ensure that Australians' personal information is collected and used appropriately and that adequate penalties are in place to protect all Australians. First, Labor will make an amendment to limit the operation of the register to a not-for-profit organisation or government agency. The government's legislation would actually allow it to outsource the register to multinational for-profit corporation. I repeat: that is what the current legislation would allow—a multinational company or for-profit corporation to do this work, the handling of Australians' private information.

I do note that the Turnbull government has already entered into a contractual arrangement with Telstra to operate this new register. Four days before Prime Minister Turnbull called the election, this government signed a contract with Telstra to operate the National Cancer Screening Register. That is extraordinary, because there was no legislation that had been passed and none was before the parliament when that contract was signed. The health minister
never announced that a contract had been entered into. After the media reported the contract during the election campaign, the health department—the public servants—issued a media release defending the contract. This is yet another example of this government trying to privatise our health care.

Labor has serious concerns about outsourcing Australians' personal details to a for-profit multinational company. This register will hold extremely sensitive information about all Australians who are eligible for cancer screening programs—information such as names, addresses, contact details, dates of birth, gender, sex, Medicare number, Medicare claims, preferred GP or other health care provider, human papilloma virus, or HPV, status, screening test results, cancer diagnoses. It is unprecedented that this type of sensitive health data would be held and managed by a multinational company, in particular a multinational company with a history of privacy breaches. In fact, there is nowhere else in the world—I repeat: nowhere else in the world—where for-profit corporation operates a cancer screening register. The Labor Party understands the ideology of those opposite to the outsourcing of public health. We see it every day; we saw it before the election, during the election campaign and we have seen it since the election.

In 2011 Telstra had a privacy breach within their own organisation where the personal details of 800,000 Telstra customers were left online and available to anyone via Google for eight months. Our health records are important and deserve the best protection possible. Labor believes that the best protection would be for the register to be operated by organisations that are not at the whim of their shareholders or that are focused on extending their profit margins. Who would these organisations serve, the patients or their shareholders? What if there were a breach? Who would we contact if we suspect there has been a breach? Telstra? They are not exactly known for their prompt customer service, as many Australians can testify.

The information that this register will keep could not be more sensitive. Telstra will know whether a person has cancer; whether a person has a precursor to cancer or genetic markers that lead to cancer; whether a woman has had a hysterectomy; whether a person who identifies as a man is biologically a woman. This information is incredibly personal. It is not information that any of us would want to be available for general consumption. The AMA, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and other experts all share Labor's concerns about outsourcing the register to a for-profit corporation. It is not much of a stretch to imagine how this information could be very valuable if it got into the wrong hands.

This bill also allows the minister to make rules which would give Telstra an even greater volume of personal information. Why would the government even consider making a multinational for-profit organisation the custodian of this sensitive, personal information? There is no need to look to multinational for-profit organisations to operate this cancer screening register. There are a range of government and not-for-profit organisations which are currently successfully managing the existing screening registers, such as the Commonwealth Department of Human Services, which operates the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program Register; the state and territory organisations which operate the National Cervical Screening Program; the Victorian Cytology Service which operates the Victorian and South Australian registers for the cervical screening program. There is no reason why any one of these organisations, which already have expertise in managing these registers and which have
proven track records in this area with good checks and balances, could not operate the National Cancer Screening Register.

In fact, the Senate inquiry heard evidence that one of these organisations could deliver the register on time from 1 May 2017. So this Turnbull government is gambling with the sensitive personal health information of Australians. Telstra has never operated a register like this before. There is no way that the government could be confident that it would successfully manage this important and crucial register. It is particularly concerning when Telstra's core business—the one it has been operating for many years—has recently struggled with numerous network outages. The Prime Minister, during the election campaign, said 27 times that he would never outsource Medicare, yet this 45th Parliament has already seen a bill from this government that effectively does exactly that. This bill will allow the government to hand over to a multinational telecommunications company the Medicare numbers and Medicare claims of Australians. So Labor's amendment provides that the new National Cancer Screening Register can only be operated by a government or not-for-profit corporation.

Second, Labor will move an amendment to ensure individuals are notified when their most sensitive health data is breached. The government's legislation only mandates that if there is a data breach Telstra only has to tell the Department of Health. Individuals should be told if their most private health records are accessed inappropriately. When sensitive Medicare and PBS data was breached recently, the government took weeks to come clean about the breach. So Labor's amendment will mandate disclosure of data breaches to the affected individuals.

Thirdly, Labor will propose an amendment to increase the penalty for unauthorised use or disclosure of information. The bill does provide for penalties for breaches of privacy but they are almost laughable when we are talking about multinational companies. The penalty is $21,600 for recording using or disclosing information without authority. How much did Telstra make last year? In the last six months of 2015, Telstra had profits of $2.1 billion. So while a not-for-profit might find a $21,000 fine prohibitive, for Telstra it will not even cause a ripple.

Stephen Duckett, former health department secretary, said:

The automatic consequences of release of data – inadvertent or not – must be made so great that any risk-management matrix will ensure the organisation and its managers always have patient privacy at the forefront of their mind.

So Labor's amendment would increase the penalty for unauthorised use or disclosure of information from 120 penalty units—$21,000—to 600 penalty units, or $108,000. Under the Crimes Act 1914, a court has a discretion to impose a penalty up to five times this amount on a corporation. So Telstra, if it were the operator of the register, could face a fine of up to half a million dollars.

In the last sitting week of parliament the government was insisting that its legislation had to pass without scrutiny. We now know why they did not want this legislation looked at too closely: it was a mess. Labor's amendments will try to fix a very poorly-thought-out piece of legislation.

There is one aspect of the government's behaviour that sits very badly with me: this idea of entering into a contract with Telstra to hold this register, all done quietly a few days before the election. Telstra Health, which is the name of the branch of Telstra that the government
wants to look after Australians' health information, is described in its own media release when it announced its 'selection' to deliver and operate the Australian National Cancer Screening Register. Clearly, this is a business that is intended to make a profit and we need to scrutinise this decision much more closely.

**Ms BUTLER** (Griffith) (13:01): It was very useful to listen to the member for Moreton who, of course, is a very strong advocate for his community and for community access to health care that is quality, that is accessible and that is affordable—and, of course, that is safe and secure for people, including in relation to their privacy. He is a very fine member, and someone who I am very grateful to have as a neighbour in Brisbane because, of course, our electorates border each other. So I wanted to thank the member for Moreton for his contribution on this National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016.

Mr Deputy Speaker Mitchell, as you know, this bill is about the National Cancer Screening Register. Obviously—I think it probably goes without saying, but just to avoid any possibility of doubt—we on the Labor side strongly support the establishment of the National Cancer Screening Register. We also strongly support improvements to cancer-screening programs that the new register will support. But we do hold some concerns about this particular bill.

This bill relates to the establishment of the register, and it should be noted that the register will hold people's most sensitive health data, like the results of cervical cancer testing and the results of bowel cancer testing. So, given the sensitivity of the health information that will be contained in the register, it is very important that this parliament gets the framework right.

That is why we have such serious concerns about the government's shambolic approach to this legislation.

I think it is really quite disappointing that this government pre-empted the election and pre-empted the legislation coming before the parliament by actually signing a $220 million contract just before the election was called—on the eve of the election being called—to outsource the register to Telstra. We had not even seen the legislation in this parliament when they signed that contract.

It is a massive amount of money—$220 million—and to sign up to a contract in relation to this register without having the legislative framework even before the parliament, and in the dying days of the 44th Parliament just before the election was called, I think speaks for itself. It was deliberately intended to try to lock the government into a position and to try to force that position on this parliament without really any thought being given to the possible ramifications for privacy.

Let's just talk about the sort of information that will be contained on this register. It will have your Medicare number. It will have your Medicare claims information, which could show important information about the appointments that you have had. It would have your preferred GP or other healthcare provider—and there are some people who go to very specific forms of healthcare services and who would not necessarily want that in the public domain.

It has your HPV vaccination status, this data. In other words, it has the status of whether you have been immunised for HPV. It has screening test results and it has cancer diagnoses—very, very highly personal types of data. The sensitivity and personal nature of that data are important to everyone. It is important to everyone that they can be assured that their data will be kept private if it is on a register.
It is particularly important that people do not fear for the privacy ramifications to the extent where they do not go and get the screening done or they do not go and get the testing done because they are so worried about privacy ramifications. So people need to feel that there is a very robust privacy framework in relation to very highly sensitive health information. People need confidence that their privacy will be protected.

For example, Mr Deputy Speaker: as you know, I have portfolio responsibility for equality. I am concerned that this bill will create a framework where highly personal information about a trans man who has a cervix will be kept in this register, and this register will be in the hands of a private firm. I am concerned about that for obvious reasons.

One of the reasons that this is such a difficult issue, of course, is because the government has been completely hopeless when it comes to protecting people's privacy and protecting data. In fact, it was in February 2015 that there was a report of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security recommending that mandatory data breach notification legislation be introduced into the parliament by the end of 2015. And it was in March 2015 that the government response to that report agreed to that report. They agreed to that report.

Of course, in the previous parliament we had introduced mandatory data breach notification legislation, but it had not gone through in time before the election and had lapsed. The government then took office in September 2013 and did not even agree until March 2015 to bring forward data breach notification provisions. And it was not until 30 November 2015 that the government produced an exposure draft of its proposed mandatory data breach notification legislation.

That is a very, very long time. More than two years after they were elected, the Attorney-General finally brought forward into the public domain, in draft, proposed mandatory data breach notification legislation. He then conducted a consultation process. That consultation process ended in March 2016. A year after they had agreed to bring forward mandatory data breach notification legislation by the end of 2015, we finally had the end of the consultation process.

After that process, the Attorney-General said, 'Alright—we will be bringing this legislation forward in the winter 2016 settings.' It did not happen, did it? No, it did not happen. There was no mandatory data breach notification legislation brought forward in the winter 2016 settings. The most recent reporting indicates that the Attorney-General is now saying that we will be seeing this legislation in the spring sittings. There was a media report on 4 October in which the outlet reported that Data Governance Australia was calling for the bill not to proceed, but the Attorney-General's Department was saying that it would be introduced in the spring sitting. That remains to be seen, because, as is entirely obvious from the really tortuous process that I have just described, the Attorney-General has been utterly hopeless at bringing forward mandatory data breach notification legislation to this parliament.

We are seeing the consequences of that right now. They have signed a contract with a private firm to host the National Cancer Screening Register well in advance of bringing forward the legislation and even on the eve of the last election, as I mentioned. But there is no mandatory data breach notification legislation in place, so what has happened? There has been an outcry about this bill. I might say that full credit needs to be given to the shadow minister for health. The shadow minister for health is an excellent, tenacious shadow minister who has
worked extremely hard to shine a light on the outrageous conduct of this government in relation to the Cancer Screening Register. It was through her work that the concerns about privacy have been raised.

The government has now conceded that she is right to have those concerns about privacy by indicating that it will have legislative amendments to this bill to deal with data breach notification. But they are inadequate amendments. It is very unfortunate that this government thinks it is okay just to have some reporting programs in place, not to the people whose personal information has inadvertently or otherwise been leaked, but to a government agency. The amendments are not good enough. It is because this government has been so completely hopeless when it comes to data breach notification laws that these amendments to this bill have to be brought in in this ad hoc manner.

I mentioned how effective and thorough the shadow minister for health has been in relation to the concerns about this legislation. She has certainly been very, very firm in holding the government to account on all matters to do with health care. This secret contract signing became public on 26 May 2016 in an article in Fairfax. You will recall that the shadow minister, through public comment at the time, made very clear her concerns that this was yet another example of this government's intention to outsource functions of Medicare.

At the time, she blew the whistle on the fact that the health minister was going to try to announce that Telstra would be given control of the private medical details of millions of Australians by being awarded the contract. She made very clear our concerns about the fact that this was going to go to a private firm, when in fact there are not-for-profit entities in existence that already have significant expertise in relation to cancer screening registries. She has been very firm on our concerns about this specific registry, but also on our concerns that this is the thin end of the wedge. The Prime Minister has made no secret of the fact that he wants us all to pay more for our health care, whether it was early support for the GP tax; the couple of billion dollars worth of cuts to health in the form of freezes to the MBS schedule; the hundreds of millions of dollars in cuts to pathology, which will see people needing breast screens or melanoma scans paying hundreds of dollars, or possibly more, for those tests; the increase in the cost of PBS medicines for everyone, including pensioners. There are a range of concerns that we have about this government's approach to hollowing out Medicare and hollowing out universal health care in this country. This idea that you should privatise and outsource the Cancer Screening Registry is another example of that, on top of the privatisation task force that the Turnbull government had previously established.

It is regrettable that the Prime Minister's only plans for Medicare, the government's only plans for Medicare, the Liberals' only plans for Medicare and the Nationals' only plans for Medicare are to hollow it out and cut it. It is a disgrace. What we need in this country is universal health care. What we need in this country is health care that depends on your Medicare card, not on your credit card. What we need in this country is a situation where the circumstances of your birth, your income, your family background and your cultural background do not affect the quality of health care that you can have access to. We will always stand up for those principles, because Labor created Medicare and defends Medicare. The Liberals attack Medicare, but we will always stand up for universal health care.

I want to be very clear about our concerns with this piece of legislation, which I believe I have done. But I am also concerned about the broader questions of data security that arise
from this government's failure to bring forward mandatory data breach notification provisions. This is a very, very acute situation, where it is highly personal and sensitive information, like your cervical cancer history, your cancer screening history, your cancer diagnosis history or the question of whether you are a trans man with a cervix. But there are other areas also affected by the failure to bring forward mandatory data breach notification provisions. Specifically, there are concerns about the government's intention to look at outsourcing or privatising some other forms of data that are presently held by government, and, of course, some of those have been in the news recently and are the subject of some controversy.

Beyond speaking about that issue, I do think that this is an opportunity to speak about what a shame it is that this government has so comprehensively stuffed up the process for this bill. There is such strong bipartisan support for a National Cancer Screening Registry. There is such strong bipartisan support for the improvements to the cancer screening program—improvements that will actually see a situation where we will have an estimated 140 additional early diagnoses and preventions of cervical cancer every year. Those are the things that we strongly support for which there is strong bipartisan support. But to have a sneaky process of secretly doing a deal to set up a contract with a private firm before the election was called—on 26 May that become public—well in advance of any legislation tabled in this parliament for debate so that the Australian people could not even see the legislative framework that was going to surround this contract, and then to do so in a way that the health minister had to then rush out and defend it because she had done it behind closed doors and had not been straight with the Australian people, is a very great shame. To have so comprehensively failed to be able to help people in relation to their data security is also a very great shame.

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:16): Labor strongly supports the establishment of a National Cancer Screening Registry, but this register will hold some of people's most sensitive data, including the results of screening for cervical and bowel cancer, so we have to ensure that we get it right.

While I am on the subject of cervical cancer, I want to use this opportunity to send a message to Australian women about the important need for them to get regular Pap smears. I have a friend who is currently down in Melbourne at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre undergoing her second round of tests as a result of being diagnosed with stage 4 cervical cancer last year. She spent six months in Melbourne, in and out of Peter MacCallum, getting treated. She had a pretty good diagnosis at the end of it, but she is down in Melbourne again getting a reassessment of how things have progressed. It is a very aggressive form of cancer, and she had to go through a number of interventions.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the team at Peter MacCallum for looking after her so beautifully. She has nothing but high praise for the team at Peter MacCallum. They helped her through a very difficult time both physically and emotionally. She was down there, quite often on her own, in those clinics addressing the subject of her own potential mortality. The support team at Peter MacCallum who looked after not just her health concerns but also her emotional wellbeing concerns were fantastic. Again, I want to take this opportunity to thank the team at Peter MacCallum for doing such a wonderful job of looking after her. She is down in Melbourne at the moment getting the next round of tests—may the news be good. She is a very close friend of mine, and it came as a huge shock to all of us when she heard this
news last year. She has been amazing in dealing with it, confronting it with the stoicism that she has come to be known for. I wish her all the best on the test results. My thoughts are with you, my dear friend.

Once more, I want to take this opportunity to thank the team at Peter MacCallum, who have helped her through this very challenging time—may it be an end to this challenging time—but who also help hundreds of thousands of Australians each year in providing health support and also emotional wellbeing support.

Creating a register for data of this level of sensitivity requires taking the time to consider options, to consult with the community and to review and refine the final product. Australians expect the best, and that is what they deserve. Labor supports the establishment of a National Cancer Screening Register so long as it meets the community's highest expectations of quality, safety and security, and that is a long away from what the government originally proposed.

When it comes to the National Cancer Screening Register, the Turnbull government's policy-making process has been an absolute shambles. On the eve of the election, the Turnbull government signed a $220 million contract to outsource the register to Telstra before parliament even saw the legislation. On the eve of the election, they signed a significantly large contract with a for-profit organisation before parliament even saw the legislation.

This is typical of the Turnbull government's commitment to oversight and accountability. Apparently the only people who need to see and review the government's legislation before contracts are signed are in the Turnbull cabinet. We, on this side of the House, see no virtue in bad policy done on the fly as is so typical of this government. We, on this side of the House, believe in getting policy right. When Labor and the crossbench referred the government's bills to a Senate inquiry, we did so to ensure the expectations and concerns of the community were met and addressed.

It is entirely reasonable for the community to expect that a national register of individuals' most sensitive data is well designed and well produced to ensure a well-functioning outcome. According to the Minister for Health and Aged Care, referring legislation to the Senate amounts to what she has termed an 'hysterical tirade'. These are her words. According to the minister for health, it is her government's view that a commitment to good policy is not reasonable; it is hysterical. What an embarrassment it must have been for the government's own Privacy and Information Commissioner to have made six separate recommendations on how to fix the legislation. While the government set about accusing its opponents in engaging in hysterical tirades, Labor began the process of getting right what the government has persistently got wrong: bad policy done on the fly.

A good government would not rely on the opposition to fix its mess, but this shambolic Turnbull government's mismanagement of the legislation for a national cancer screening register has left us with no choice but to get actively engaged in this. We do not think it is an hysterical tirade to question the wisdom of letting the register operator collect all Medicare claims information on people who are on the register. This is what the government's plan originally proposed. Under this plan, Telstra would be able to see all health services a person has received, including in sensitive areas, like mental health and sexual health. Telstra would be able to see all those health services on those very sensitive issues.
Australians deserve better than that. They deserve a better standard of protection than that, and they are not getting it from this government. That is why, last week, Labor proposed nine amendments to improve the government's legislation. We have dragged the Turnbull government kicking and screaming to the table, and it appears they will move a series of amendments to accommodate our demands.

While the government accused us of some hysterical tirade, we set about getting the policy right. We set about fixing the mess left by the Turnbull government. The Turnbull government has turned around, admittedly—tail between its legs—and has said, 'Labor, maybe you do have a point. Maybe this legislation could do with a few changes.' They have agreed to a few of Labor's amendments but they have not agreed to all of them. They have put pride before policy and, as a result, their legislation is still full of holes. But the community expects that we will get this right, as I have said many times through the course of this speech. This is holding sensitive data about their health—about their mental health, about their sexual health, about their history.

So in addition to the Labor amendments that the government is accepting, we will move three amendments that they have refused to accept. Our amendments strengthen the protection of Australia's personal, private and sensitive information. Our amendments ensure that this data is collected appropriately, is reviewed appropriately and is protected appropriately. We think making good policy means that if you know there is a gap or a loophole you close it. But by refusing to accept Labor's amendment to close a number of glaring loopholes, the Turnbull government seems to think that good policy means saying 'no' to fully protecting Australians—because it was Labor's idea to do so. This is how churlish they are: 'It was Labor's idea, so let's just say no.'

We think committing to a policy that is full of loopholes, despite a number of cybersecurity concerns, is not a recipe for good policy. But it seems it is another example of this government and its leadership sticking with a bad policy even though they know it is bad. We will not do the same. That is why Labor will proceed with its amendment to limit the operation of the register to a non-for-profit organisation or a government agency.

The Senate inquiry heard that you cannot find a country—anywhere in the world—where a for-profit corporation is responsible for the operation of a cancer screening register. This is not the sort of innovation Australia needs. The register should not be signed over to an untested, unproven operator that exists to deliver a profit. Yet that is what Telstra is and that is what the government is trying to do. It is offering Telstra access to some health information that we have never offered access to before—your Medicare number, your Medicare claims information, your screening results. This is the information being offered, for Telstra to have access to.

The government is signing off on giving Telstra access to data that reveals whether a person has cancer, whether a woman has had a hysterectomy, whether a person who identifies as a man is biologically female. And all of this information will be signed over to Telstra to look after. The Turnbull government may think that is not a problem. It may accuse us of engaging in hysterics, of throwing tantrums, of generating outlandish conspiracy theories, but I wonder if they also accuse the Australian Medical Association of the same? I wonder if the Turnbull government's minister for health is about to press 'send' on a media release accusing the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and other experts, of another hysterical
tirade? These organisations share Labor's concern about outsourcing the register to a for-profit organisation. They are concerned, as Labor is concerned, that handing this data to a private for-profit corporation with a history of privacy breaches represents a fundamental failure to protect Australians' most sensitive and personal health information.

We want the best protection and we want the best policy. That is why Labor will move an amendment to ensure that individuals are notified whenever their most sensitive health data is breached. The Turnbull government's legislation means that if and when there are data breaches, Telstra's only responsibility is to notify the Department of Health. It appears that the government is now willing to accept Labor's amendment that the privacy commissioner be made aware of any breaches. That is a significant improvement, and it is to be welcomed. But it does not fix the fundamental problem that lies at the heart of the amendment I am concerned about here today. Unless the privacy commissioner's own personal, private health data has been compromised, in some way, by a breach, the amendment will not do enough of what it should do.

What the community expects and deserves is to be told if their most private health information is accessed inappropriately, and we have serious concerns that this expectation is not being met by the government's proposed legislation. The government says it is up to the privacy commissioner to tell individuals, if they choose to do so. This is not mandating notification. This is treating disclosure as an optional extra. It is not making it a requirement. It is, basically, at the discretion of the privacy commissioner. It treats notifying an individual that their sensitive data has been breached as an after-thought, as not a fundamental responsibility. I am sure—I know—that most Australians will be significantly concerned about that.

It was Labor that first introduced mandatory data-breach notification legislation in 2013 and it was Labor that reintroduced the legislation in 2014. It was Labor that qualified its support for legislation, in 2015, on the government committing for bringing mandatory data-breach legislation to a vote by the end of the year. We do not have it, because the government did not do it. The government says it agrees but it drags its feet on mandatory disclosure. This is a chance for the Turnbull government to match word with deed and show it believes in mandating data-breach notifications. This is an opportunity for the government to show that it is listening to the community, that it is listening to the AMA, that it is listening to the general practitioners, that it is listening to the community's expectations that their sensitive data about their health—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 43. The debate may be resumed at a later hour.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

headspace

Ms MACKLIN (Jagajaga) (13:30): Today marks 10 years since headspace was first funded by the federal government. Six months ago headspace Greensborough opened in my electorate. It has been a very busy six months. In that time more than 106 young people have sought assistance at our headspace. This translates to more than 250 occasions of care for young people. Since opening, the centre has been embraced by the local community. The SAFEMinds mental health literacy program provides training to local schools, community
health centres, parent groups and youth service providers. It teaches educators and caregivers early warning signs for mental health issues, including where someone may be suffering from anxiety or at risk of self-harm. headspace Greensborough also provides access to drug and alcohol services, as well as access to a range of mental health professionals such as psychologists, psychiatrists and counsellors. This will allow even more young people in the area to access these important mental health services. Patrick McGorry has stated that 75 per cent of disorders develop before the age of 25, so a key priority for us is to refocus our efforts on young people with emerging mental illness. This is why headspace is so important. A very happy headspace day to headspace in Greensborough and centres right around Australia.

Greyhound Racing

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (13:31): I rise to congratulate the New South Wales state government for seeing common sense and reversing the ban on the breeding, owning, training and racing of greyhounds. A sign of true leadership is being prepared to change your mind in light of new evidence, and today Mike Baird showed true leadership. The vast majority of people in the greyhound industry are very good people. On Saturday night I was pleased to go to Wentworth Park and present a trophy to the winner of the third race, One Samuel, with proud owner Noeline Holloway. The greyhound industry is as iconic as the Australian movie The Castle, where Darryl Kerrigan looks after his four beloved but moderately-performing greyhounds. Perhaps in The Castle Darryl Kerrigan's lawyer is right that our Constitution has a vibe, and that vibe is our Constitution will simply not condone governments banning the pleasures of individuals or dictating how they should spend their leisure time or earn a living. I congratulate the New South Wales Premier on showing leadership on this. You little ripper!

headspea

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (13:33): I rise today to join the member for Jagajaga in highlighting the great work being done by headspace across this country, and particularly in my electorate of Lalor, where the headspace facility opened under the Gillard government and is doing fantastic early intervention work with young people in a community where we truly do understand the debilitating impacts of mental health. It is Mental Health Week this week, and it is right for us to raise the issues and the impacts that mental health issues are having not just on the broad community, but particularly on our young people. I would mention in particular the impact that psychosis is having in my electorate of Lalor as a result of aberrant drug use. What a tragedy it is to see young people's lives derailed in those processes! But with supports like headspace and other specific psychosis support available across the western suburbs of Melbourne, young people are getting their lives back on track. I cannot say this clearly or loudly enough: in this debate about mental health, there are solutions. If people have been sidetracked through ice use, in particular, into psychosis, there are solutions; they can find their way back.

Marriage

Mr LAMING (Bowman) (13:34): It is an important day—Bowman having had a survey on same-sex marriage now four times in the last three years—that the exposure draft finally comes to this great House. Isn't it obvious today, as the opposition get themselves into a Stuka dive to try and attack the plebiscite however they can, that their 'greatest social challenge of a
generation' that they did nothing about for six years in government is suddenly the most important thing but can be delayed three years with no problem? This is a situation where the Labor Party are saying: 'We want no gay marriage under any opposition that Bill Shorten leads. Whatever we can do to stop it now is good, including killing off the will of the people and the voice of the people.' You know what groups are most fearful of a plebiscite? They are the groups that are most fearful of the result of a plebiscite—the voice of the Australian people—which on a social issue should be heard to reflect the community values in a social policy change.

What is it about this opposition leader? He used to support tax cuts for small business; he does not any more once he is running for Prime Minister. He used to support a public voice and a vote on same-sex marriage and does not any more. After six years of doing nothing, suddenly they will do everything to stymie the vote of the people and a plebiscite. Give the Australian people a say. We deserve a public vote on this. And let's be honest: the mental health case that we cannot deal with a plebiscite in Australia for the mental health outcomes has been said by a mental health expert who was at the Labor Party post-election party on election night. What is that for an expert piece of advice?

Dr Chalmers: Attacking mental health experts in headspace week? No wonder everyone over there thinks you're a grub!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Coulton): Member for Rankin!

Dr Chalmers: I withdraw that remark.

Australian Women in Agriculture

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (13:36): All members of this parliament would understand how important succession planning is, and there is no industry for which this is more important than agriculture. I am proud today to welcome to this House 20 young members of Australian Women in Agriculture, who have come as part of a leadership course to get their skills up, to understand networking and to learn how this place works and how they can influence it.

Their participation in this leadership program, which is sponsored by the Merlyn Myer Fund and supported by Australian Women in Agriculture, and of course the young people themselves who have funded their way here and taken time from their work, reflects all Australian industries and all sectors of agricultural industry. They have been learning skills about leadership, public speaking, being courageous and stepping up.

But I think there is nothing more important in leadership than actually understanding how to influence this place, so the rules and the legislation that we make truly do reflect the reality of the people in our community, particularly in agriculture. There is so much change going on and these young people, these young women, bring the new face of agriculture—their innovation, their creativity and their courage.

So, I have a call-out to the members on the other side of this place to look around your membership teams of women on agriculture. How many young women are there? Why aren't they there? And what do you need to do to make sure that that new face of agriculture, the young women that we work with, are represented on all your committees.
Capricornia Electorate: Infrastructure

Ms LANDRY (Capricornia—Deputy Nationals Whip) (13:38): Families and small businesses are doing it tough in the Queensland city of Rockhampton. We can create thousands of jobs around Rockhampton within two years, but the Labor Party once again is holding back this opportunity. Rookwood Weir, near Rockhampton, is a key economic driver, but Queensland's State Labor government and Labor MPs like Bill Byrne are sitting on their hands delaying the project, and, along with it, stalling up to 2,100 new jobs.

This is in contrast to the Turnbull-Joyce coalition government, which has put $130 million on the table to pay for 50 per cent of Rookwood. Further to this, we gave Queensland an extra $2 million to get on with the job of completing the state's business case required for Rookwood Weir. Rookwood would boost agricultural production in the Fitzroy Basin by $1 billion. The go-slow Queensland Labor government say they will not have their business case ready until maybe 2018.

Today, I join the Deputy Prime Minister in condemning Queensland for their go-slow. Expert advice suggests Queensland's business case could, in fact, be completed this year, with the project starting in 2017. But Labor would rather see that nothing goes ahead in Rockhampton than give our federal government credit for a project that would create thousands more jobs and turn the city around.

Batman Electorate: Preston Market

Mr FEENEY (Batman) (13:39): In every community there is a building or a place that is not just part of the landscape but it is part of the culture and is often much loved as an expression of the community itself. In the middle of my electorate sits Preston Market. In many ways this market and the people who work there and shop there are a tangible expression of the community it serves. It is a loud, busy place and it proudly celebrates the diversity of our multicultural community.

Recent redevelopment plans have caused a degree of concern in the community and amongst the traders whose livelihoods centre on the market. For the community one of the key concerns is maintaining the character of the place, a character that we have all grown to love. For traders, these concerns centre around the uncertainty that change brings. Over the last couple of weeks I have had the opportunity to hear from the community and traders. There has been a positive campaign from the community to come together, talk through these concerns, and advocate for a beneficial outcome. I look forward to working with all stakeholders to ensure the market grows with the community in a way that retains the place's integrity and looks after its diverse traders.

National headspace Day

Mr LEESER (Berowra) (13:40): On 14 September 2016, I delivered my maiden speech to this House. I spoke of my father's death by suicide some 20 years ago. I had not been adequately prepared for the effect that this story would have. Since the speech thousands of Australians from every background, from every shade of political opinion and from every walk of life have approached me to share their stories of being bereaved by suicide or of their personal struggles with mental illness. It has been humbling to share these very personal stories with other Australians.
What has also impressed me is hearing about the number of organisations that are trying to improve services for those suffering from mental illness—from established organisations like Lifeline to emerging organisations like Batyr, which goes into schools to talk to young people to try to remove the stigma associated with mental health issues. Yesterday, I had the privilege of meeting with Professor Patrick McGorry, a board member of headspace, an organisation that provides early intervention mental health services for 12 to 25 year olds, along with assistance in promoting young people's wellbeing.

Today marks the first national headspace day. Over the past decade more than a quarter of a million young people have sought help and advice from headspace centres. I would like to acknowledge all those who support headspace and in particular I would like to acknowledge the great work on my constituent Elizabeth Goh, who has been an ambassador and senior youth advisory group board member at the Chatswood headspace centre since 2013. A new headspace centre opened in Castle Hill in June this year and it is already provided assistance to more than 74 young people. I wish everyone a happy headspace day.

Canberra Electorate: National Broadband Network

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:42): The ACT election is this Saturday and I wish all Labor candidates the very best of luck.

An opposition member interjecting—Hear, hear!

Ms BRODTMANN: Hear hear! I have taken a number of opportunities to campaign with Labor candidates and in that time I have heard Canberrans say the same thing to me, again and again: that the NBN is not in their suburb; that the NBN is not coming to their suburb; and that they are relying on a substandard internet connection when deserve a world-class one. So you can imagine my confusion when I learnt that one Liberal MLA was writing to some of my constituents in Kambah to inform them that the NBN is coming this month and to inform them that the NBN will be completed by the end of next year.

I was confused to learn of this because this contradicts the advice I have received from nbn co itself. It contradicts the advice available on the NBN rollout timetable. But when I asked for the source of the Liberal MLA's advice, I received no response. It is understandable that the Canberra Liberals would try to sell a good-news story on the NBN. Canberrans have some of the worst quality broadband connections in the country—20 kilometres from our national parliament there are some of the worst connections in the country. They deserve better and I am committed to delivering better. I am asking Canberrans to send a screenshot of their internet speed test result to my office. Send me your speeds and send the Turnbull government a message. You can find instructions how to do so on my website—because if they will not listen, we will show them! (Time expired)

Maranoa Electorate: Waltzing Matilda Centre

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Maranoa) (13:43): The Waltzing Matilda Centre in Winton, Queensland, is a tourism landmark dedicated to the story behind the song of our famous Banjo Paterson's Waltzing Matilda, and the only museum in the world dedicated to a song, a song that quickly became the favourite of our Australian troops during the 1915 Gallipoli campaign. Sadly, in June last year, this iconic Australian museum was ravaged by fire in what was a gut-wrenching blow to Central West Queensland and the nation.
Despite this tragic event, in true outback style the Winton community, as our nation's custodians of our national song, has pushed forward. Over the past 15 months the community has tirelessly worked on preserving what remained and planning for a future rebuild.

I am proud to say that last week the federal government announced $8 million through the National Stronger Regions Fund towards rebuilding this centre. This is truly deserved by the community for their efforts and is a tiny reprieve for Winton following years of drought. I offer my sincere thanks to each and every person who helped, from those fighting the fire to those working in the clean-up or planning for the new build. I also thank the Winton Shire Council for their dedication, in particular Mayor Butch Lenton, whose commitment to rebuild was unwavering. I am very much looking forward to the reopening of the renowned landmark just in time for Waltzing Matilda Day in April 2018.

Richmond Electorate: Volunteers

Mrs ELLIOT (Richmond) (13:45): I rise today to congratulate the Northern Rivers 2016 Volunteer of the Year and Adult Volunteer of the Year, David Steward. David is from Byron Bay, and he was rightly recognised for his really outstanding work at the Byron Community Centre. This year was the 10th annual Volunteer of the Year award, recognising volunteers across 20 regions in New South Wales. Northern Rivers volunteers from Byron Bay, Lennox Head and Yamba were acknowledged for the remarkable work they do within our region.

The volunteer awards are convened by the Centre for Volunteering. The centre's CEO, Gemma Rygate, said:

… volunteers improve people's lives by helping out, keeping people connected and creating a sense of belonging in communities.

This year the Centre for Volunteering received a record number of nominations—more than 7½ thousand nominations acknowledging more than 100,000 volunteers, which is a record number since the awards began 10 years ago. Congratulations to David Steward, who is an integral part of the Byron Community Centre in his work from the back office to the front of office in house ticketing and ushering duties at the Byron theatre. David's talents and enthusiasm are applied across a very wide range of tasks. He also works regularly at the Byron markets. So, congratulations to him. I also note that the Senior Volunteer of the Year is Doug Stinson, of the Cancer Council. Doug lives at Lennox Head. Thanks so much to volunteers like David and Doug, whose great work really enriches the lives of so many people whilst making the north coast an even better place to live.

Australian Rail Track Corporation

Dr McVEIGH (Groom) (13:46): One of the most significant infrastructure policies of the Turnbull coalition government is the Melbourne to Brisbane inland rail project. It is particularly important to our electorate of Groom. It is a pleasure to work with the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Darren Chester, and you, Mr Deputy Speaker Coulton, and our neighbouring colleague the honourable member for Maranoa in progressing this important initiative not only for our electorates but for the entire eastern seaboard and, via various transport networks, the rest of the country. The Australian Rail Track Corporation, or ARTC, has been tasked with the project. While their task is immense, some shortcomings in early-stage consultation have been noted and have been well and truly documented, especially in
media reports in our local areas. I take comfort from the CEO, John Fullerton, that consultation is improving and that open and transparent processes will be prioritised. He and his team have acknowledged the criticism.

I for one, whilst continuing to examine their progress in the interests of landholders and stakeholders in Groom, am committed to supporting and working with them through the entire process. It should be remembered that ARTC are currently the only entity to plan and develop the project. We must monitor them and provide robust critique when required but above all else get behind them to ensure the best outcome.

Automotive Industry

Mr KHALIL (Wills) (13:48): At 9.30 am on 7 October 2016 the Ford plant in Broadmeadows in Victoria ceased production forever. At that moment some 400 jobs were extinguished. The full impact to those companies down the supply chain is yet to be fully realised. There are not many dominos left to fall before car manufacturing in this nation is over for good. Many of the workers suffering job losses or who will lose their jobs live in my electorate of Wills. While these closures may mark the end of an era in Australia's automotive history, this time represents new challenges that are only beginning for many of these people. A survey conducted following the closure of the Mitsubishi plant in Adelaide showed that only a third of workers went on to permanent work six months after being retrenched. The remainder lingered as unemployed or underemployed or were forced into retirement. Additionally, the Australian Catholic University's longitudinal study of ex auto workers found that nearly 90 per cent have not searched for new jobs outside the sector because it is all they know how to do.

So for the Ford workers and their families, this is about more than just nostalgia for a beloved brand name; it is about their livelihoods. I know they and their families are nervous about the future. To those workers, know that Labor will fight to protect and enhance your future prospects and defend your dignity. We have and are working on policies that include job creation programs to utilise your existing skills, including investing in training and education programs to empower you with new skills. We will always believe that there is a moral duty to help those families who are in transition.

Natural Gas Projects

Mr O'DOWD (Flynn) (13:49): Australia Pacific LNG—namely, ConocoPhillips and partners—yesterday announced that the second train on its Curtis Island plant has entered into production. This milestone represents the culmination of three groundbreaking Curtis Island LNG projects, a total investment of over $75 billion and thousands employed during the construction of each of the three LNG plants. Australia Pacific LNG's first train began production in December 2015. The first LNG cargo was exported in January 2016. APLNG has loaded a total of 47 ships to date. This achievement reminds us of the importance of the resources and energy sector to the Australian economy. Queensland's LNG industry exceeds $1 billion of production per year and has created over 20,000 long-term jobs. Australia is on its way to being the world's biggest exporter of natural gas, and the three plants that have been developed at Curtis Island are key to this—another example of just how important Central Queensland is to the national economy.
Moreton Electorate: McGeoch, Ms Rosie

Mr PERRETT (Moreton—Opposition Whip) (13:51): I rise to congratulate Moreton constituent Rosie McGeoch from Yeerongpilly. At an age when perhaps some of us might consider putting our feet up, Rosie decided to go last weekend to the Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, Ironman and Ironwoman World Championships. She started off in her togs and swam for 3.8 kilometres and then got on a bike and rode 180 kilometres—about the distance from Moorooka to Dalby. After that, because she was feeling fit, she decided to go for a marathon—incredible. Rosie came first in the 40- to 44-years age group. This was only the second time she has competed, but she took it to the rest of the world. She beat athletes from all around the world—the best of the best. Rosie McGeoch from Yeerongpilly did us proud. Congratulations, Rosie.

Sunshine Coast Airport

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (13:52): I want to bring to the attention of the House an exciting new project on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, and that is the upgrade of the Sunshine Coast Airport—an upgrade to make it a fully-fledged international airport. This project will help unleash the economic capacity of the region. Delivering on this vision will not be easy, because it requires an upgrade without overcapitalisation, debt funding without leaving the ratepayer with a long-term debt liability and a partnership with a private sector player that brings demonstrable expertise. What is more, it requires collaboration between three tiers of government and also the private sector.

I want to pay tribute today to the local council, the Sunshine Coast Council, who own the asset and who are taking the right leadership to get this job done. They do of course have support from the Turnbull government, from this coalition. Not only has the coalition already approved an EIS but it has also committed to providing a concessional loan to the council subject to due diligence and a guarantee from the Queensland Treasury Corporation. This is a big game-changing deal for our region of the Sunshine Coast, and I am delighted to put it on the agenda for this national parliament and to say that it has the support of this government.

National headspace Day

Dr CHALMERS (Rankin) (13:53): I acknowledge in the gallery today a couple of local champions from my community, Tilly and Bev, who have come here from Logan City. Today we are wearing green wristbands because it is the first National headspace Day, and it gives us the opportunity to talk about the work headspace does with young people in our communities—in my case, in Meadowbrook. I have spent a fair bit of time there with so many wonderfully committed and dedicated community-minded people. The last time I was there was the night before the election, at a hip-hop performance they hosted for local Aboriginal youth.

Here in the people's house, I want to thank, acknowledge and celebrate the work that headspace do. The numbers are extraordinary: 260,000 young people helped nationally over 10 years; something like 1.5 million services provided; and approximately 7,500 people in my own community alone. But this is about more than numbers; it is about a safe and welcoming place for people under psychological stress to go to. It is about people who can help—people not just with good qualifications but people with big hearts as well.
Everyone here has some experience of or connection to a young person experiencing difficulties with mental health issues. On behalf of them and on behalf of us, on National headspace Day, we pay tribute to the work that they do at Meadowbrook and in all of our communities right around the country to improve, to shape and even to save young lives.

Mental Health Week

Gympie Heart of Gold International Short Film Festival

Mr LLEW O’BRIEN (Wide Bay) (13:55): This week is Mental Health Week. It is important that everyone takes care of their mental health through exercise, diet and relaxation as well as through social, sporting and creative activities. I said in my maiden speech that we need to do more to remove the stigma that surrounds mental health and we need to look out for the mental wellbeing of our loved ones, our friends and colleagues.

One of the best ways to lift our wellbeing is through social interaction and the arts. So it was a great pleasure to attend the opening night of the Gympie Heart of Gold International Short Film Festival last Thursday. This was the ninth anniversary of the event and over 100 short films were screened over the three-day program. About 200 people were at the opening of the festival to watch six short films. I was particularly touched by the story of Kayah Guenther, who was born with trisomy. The powerful film, entitled The Battle, conveyed Kayah’s struggle with his identity as well as his experiences of power, passion and despair. All films were poignant and heartfelt. It is a tremendous honour that Gympie is able to host the event, which forms part of the Rush Festival. I encourage everyone to come along and be entertained by the Rush Festival’s many activities that run over October. I thank the organisers and sponsors for putting on such a great film festival.

National headspace Day

Mr GOSLING (Solomon) (13:56): I also wish to acknowledge National headspace Day and the work this organisation does in my electorate of Solomon, in the Northern Territory. For the 12 months from June 2015 to June 2016, more than 429 of Darwin's young people sought help from our local headspace centre, which is located just across from my electorate office in Casuarina. This figure represents 1,618 occasions of care for our local young people and their families—critical work when you consider the Northern Territory has one of the highest levels of youth suicide in the country.

Headspace has a great program called Yarn Safe to encourage young Aboriginal people to come, to talk and to seek assistance. Since they have had that program running, there has been a 32 per cent increase in young Aboriginal people availing themselves of that service. The new hub has eight counselling rooms, GP facilities and three meeting rooms. The bigger and brighter purpose-built centre was designed by young local people. It is a welcoming place and it is a great program.

I want to congratulate headspace and their team on their commitment, and I will do what I can to support them. I also want to acknowledge Lauren Moss MLA from the Northern Territory parliment for her work over many years for young people battling with mental health issues in the Northern Territory.
Prostate Cancer

Mr PASIN (Barker) (13:58): Over 20,000 men in Australia are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year. Indeed, prostate cancer kills more men than breast cancer does women; yet awareness of the deadly statistics remains relatively low. The Big Aussie BBQ aims to raise awareness and understanding of the disease and raise funds to support research and awareness programs. Last year, I held my first Big Aussie BBQ at my office in Mt Gambier, raising much-needed funds for the foundation. This year, together with the Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group, we raised a further $1,000 for the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia for the fantastic work they do in reducing the impact of prostate cancer on Australian men and their families. Our Big Aussie BBQ was a fantastic opportunity for members of the Mt Gambier community to come together, share some food and raise awareness and funds, of course, for prostate cancer. I am grateful for the level of support for this important initiative, which raised not only important funds but also awareness of the disease and the need for men to undergo appropriate health checks.

I pay tribute to Malcolm Porter, Ian Minge, Paul Arnold, Lea Clarke, and Bruce and Joan McGregor, members of the Limestone Coast Prostate Cancer Support Group, who assisted with the barbeque and, more importantly, were on hand to provide support and information to members of our community. I also extend my thanks to Baxter Hire, Baker's Delight and Shelton's Butchers for their generous in-kind donation, without which this very successful event could not happen.

The SPEAKER: It being 2pm, the time for members' statements has concluded.

CONDOLENCES

Siddons, Mr John Royston

The SPEAKER (14:00): I inform the House of the death on 22 September 2016 of John Royston Siddons, a former senator. John Siddons represented the state of Victoria from 1981 until 1983 and from 1985 until 1987. As a mark of respect to the memory of John Siddons, I invite all present to rise in their places.

SHADOW MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:00): For the information of the House, I present a revised list of the shadow ministry.

The document read as follows—

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Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:01): My question is to the Prime Minister. Does the Prime Minister stand by his promise that he made the day before the election that no Australian will pay more to see a doctor because of his six-year Medicare freeze?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:01): I thank the honourable member for his question. The honourable member knows very well that the Medicare freeze is not, as he said, 'your Medicare freeze'. It is his Medicare freeze. It is the Labor Party's Medicare freeze. They froze it. It was a Labor government decision to freeze the Medicare schedule, and it has been continued. The consequence of unfreezing the freeze and allowing indexation to continue would, as the Minister for Health and I pointed out in the course of the campaign, result in an increase of 60c, was it?

Ms Ley: Something like that.

Mr TURNBULL: Something around 60c. We had the Labor Party and various other people in the debate claiming that by not unfreezing the indexation and denying, say, 60c that would justify an increase in charges by $10 or $15 or $25. It was ludicrous. The reality is that...
the indexation freeze was introduced by Labor as a cost measure. It has been maintained by us for precisely the same reason. What we have been able to do is to bring one new drug after another, one new life-saving drug after another, onto the PBS. We have been able to use the scarce resources available—

The SPEAKER: The Prime Minister will resume his seat. The Manager of Opposition Business on a point of order.

Mr Burke: On direct relevance—the Prime Minister is being asked whether he stood by an election promise.

The SPEAKER: The Manager of Opposition Business will resume his seat. The Prime Minister is in order.

Mr Turnbull: The bottom line is this. That we are living here in Australia, in this parliament and in this government, with scarce resources. What we need to do is to ensure that we live within our means and that we deploy the taxpayers' funds available to us to achieve the best health outcome for all Australians. That is what we are doing—constantly investing, constantly improving, defending Medicare and standing up for our public health system.

The Labor Party on the other hand peddled the most outrageous lies in the election campaign.

Mr Dreyfus interjecting—

Mr Turnbull: Oh, yes, they laugh. Oh look, it is so funny. Oh a Queen's Counsel. Think of that one of her Majesty's counsel, learned in the law, the member for Isaacs thinks telling lies is funny. That is what he said. He thinks it is so funny.

The SPEAKER: The Prime Minister will not reflect on members.

Mr Turnbull: That tells you a lot—all you need to know—about what has befallen the Australian Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the next question I will remind all members and the Prime Minister that the standing orders prohibit reflections on members.

Economy

Ms Banks (Chisholm) (14:04): My question is—

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: I have called the member for Chisholm. There cannot be a point of order. I am going to ask the Manager of Opposition Business to resume his seat. I made my statement—

Mr Pyne interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will cease interjecting. I made the point very firmly to all members, including the Prime Minister. I then called the member for Chisholm. I did not do it in a rush. I have called the member for Chisholm. Play on.

Ms Banks: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister advise the House how the government are delivering on our national economic plan, boosting economic growth and delivering on our election commitments?
Mr Turnbull (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:05): I thank the honourable member for her question. Our government is getting on with the job of delivering the national economic plan that was endorsed by the Australian people at the election. We promised to continue the hard task of deficit reduction and living within our means and repairing the budget. We have delivered $11 billion in budget repair. We are making the 45th Parliament work. Every one of our policies—from our enterprise tax plan, to our export trade deals, our record investment in land infrastructure and our record investment in defence capabilities—every single one of them is delivering stronger economic growth. We promised pro-growth policies and we are delivering them. We are creating thousands of advanced manufacturing jobs across the nation through our defence industry plan and our investment in and promotion of innovation and science. We are committed to continuing the strong economic growth which we have had for more than a quarter of a century but which we cannot take for granted. In the last year we have seen the rate of growth rise from 2 to 3.3 per cent. It is the envy of the developed world.

We promised strong jobs growth—and we are delivering, with more than 180,000 jobs created over the last 12 months. Today marks another important step with the introduction into the Senate of personal income tax legislation that will stop half a million middle-income Australians from entering the second highest tax bracket. That matter will soon be voted on by the Senate. We promised and we remain committed to boosting small business investment and improving the competitiveness of small business by progressing our 10-year enterprise tax plan, a measure that will give Australia's 870,000 incorporated small businesses a tax cut this year.

We promised to take immediate action to restore the rule of law in the workplace to stop militant unions standing over volunteers, and we have succeeded. The Labor Party abandoned the Country Fire Authority volunteers of Australia to a militant union. They disrespected them and allowed the very volunteer essence of the CFA to be compromised. We stood up for them. We said we would defend them as they have defended us, and we have defended them and the Senate has passed the law. There is more to be done. Just as we defended the owner-drivers and just as we defended the CFA volunteers, we stand up for the rule of law in the workplace. (Time expired)

Medicare

Ms Catherine King (Ballarat) (14:09): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to the Prime Minister's previous answer. Is it seriously the contention of the government that the Prime Minister's credibility on Medicare was unharmed by the freeze on Medicare rebates, unharmed by cuts to pathology and unharmed by plans to make all Australians, even pensioners, pay more for medicines—

Government members interjecting—

Ms Catherine King: but could not withstand a text message?

The Speaker: The member for Ballarat will resume her seat for a second. There were a number of interjections on my right. I heard the member for Corangamite. It prevented me from hearing all of the question. I want to hear the question again from the beginning.

Ms Catherine King: My question is to the Prime Minister and I refer to the Prime Minister's previous answer. Is it seriously the contention of the government that the Prime
Minister’s credibility on Medicare was unharmed by your Medicare freeze, unharmed by your cuts to pathology and unharmed by your plans to make Australians, even pensioners, pay more for medicines but could not withstand a text message?

*Government members interjecting—*

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the Prime Minister—

**Ms Catherine King:** Mr Speaker—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Ballarat will resume her seat.

**Ms Catherine King:** I ask that you ask the health minister to withdraw that unparliamentary remark.

**The SPEAKER:** Did the health minister use an unparliamentary term?

*Ms Ley interjecting—*

**Ms Catherine King:** You can’t tell the truth about that even.

**The SPEAKER:** When there is a wall of interjections, including now from the member for Ballarat, you will understand that it places the minister for health in the same position as the member for McEwen yesterday, so I will not have any innuendo. The Prime Minister does have the call. The question is just in order. It is mostly preamble, but it is just in order.

**Mr TURNBULL** (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:10): I thank the honourable member for her question. What she is asking is whether the dishonest text message had any effect, so she is like somebody who is charged with or sued for misrepresentation, for telling a falsehood and for misleading somebody, and whose defence is not that the statement was accurate, not that it did not mislead, but that it did not have any effect. That is basically her defence. How low have the Labor Party sunk? They think it is a joke to lie to millions of vulnerable Australians. They were designed and calculated to mislead.

*Mr Perrett interjecting—*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Moreton will leave under standing order 94(a). It is completely disorderly.

**The member for Moreton then left the chamber.**

**Mr TURNBULL:** She asked me whether I think those misleading, dishonest, deliberately exploitative text messages—this shocking exercise in deceit—had an effect or not. I will answer the honourable member. I believe they did. I think all of us know many Australians who were frightened out of their wits by those text messages, who were frightened and misled. We have all heard stories of people in old people's homes, of older Australians—

*Opposition members interjecting—*

**Mr TURNBULL:** The Labor Party scoffs.

*Opposition members interjecting—*

**The SPEAKER:** Members on my left! The member for Gorton is warned.

**Mr TURNBULL:** This is remarkable. The opposition, an alternative government, so little respect the truth that they believe it is a joke to lie to millions of vulnerable Australians.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Lilley!
Mr TURNBULL: They are proud of their deceit.

Mr Swan interjecting——

The SPEAKER: The member for Lilley will cease interjecting. The Prime Minister will resume his seat for a second. There are far too many interjections. I have asked the member for Lilley to cease interjecting three times. I would believe him if he said he did not hear me, but I have ceased proceedings, so he is in no doubt. The Prime Minister has the call.

Opposition members interjecting——

The SPEAKER: The member for Sydney is warned! The Prime Minister has the call.

Mr TURNBULL: The opposition leader asked me, 'How's the AFP going?' He knows very well what the AFP concluded—that, while there is a very serious criminal offence of impersonating a federal officer——

Opposition members interjecting——

Mr TURNBULL: There is—five years in jail actually. There is apparently a loophole in the law which the Labor Party managed to sail through. That loophole will be plugged. In the meantime, while Labor revels in the success of its deceit, we get on with the job of investing, defending and ensuring that Medicare and public health services continue to improve, that lifesaving drugs are made available and that Australians' enviable health services continue to be the best in the world. (Time expired)

Rural and Regional Services

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Maranoa) (14:14): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. Will the Deputy Prime Minister update the House on how the government is helping rebuild stronger communities and more jobs in regional Australia? Is the Deputy Prime Minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr JOYCE (New England—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (14:15): I thank the honourable member for his question. There can be no better example of what the coalition is doing for regional Australia than what can be seen in Maranoa—matched by many but not bettered by others. What we have seen, obviously, in Maranoa is the money that we have put on the table for Emu Swamp Dam. Emu Swamp Dam is part of our dams policy. It is a dams policy that is supported on this side of the chamber but not supported in Queensland—they are too interested in Ms Trad and Ms Annastacia Palaszczuk, the Premier, getting stuck into one another—and not supported on the other side either where we see they are going to take $235.2 million out of our water policy because they do not believe in building dams. You can see the difference the coalition has made when you see the work that has been put in with the dog fences put in place at Cunnamulla, bringing sheep back into those regional areas and making sure that employment is based once more in the western areas and making sure that the economy is going in the western areas and dragging the wealth back into the western areas.

You can see our vision in the $100 million we put on the table for the Winton to Laverton road, because we believe in sealing the third road across our nation. Since close to settlement—since the First Fleet—we have only sealed two roads across this nation: one through Camooweal and one across the Nullarbor. But the vision to seal the third road across our nation resides on this side of the chamber. This side of the chamber is where it is, and it is
the same side of the chamber that believes in building the inland rail. This is the inland rail which we put money on the table for so that we can have a corridor of commerce from Melbourne up to Brisbane through regional Victoria, regional New South Wales and regional Queensland. It comes on the back of record ag exports—record prices in cattle, record prices in meat sheep, record prices in pork, turnaround in the wool market and turnaround in the wine market. We are getting towards record prices in sugar and a turnaround in the price of oranges, potatoes and chickpeas.

You ask what the policies are on the other side, and well might you ask that question because we will never know. It has been a year since I got a question on policy from the member for Hunter. It is a year now—since 30 October—since I got a question on policy issues. For a question of any sort, we have to go back to November. When it comes to water policy, I have never received a question. I have never received a question on that from the member for Port Adelaide or the member for Watson. They do not give us questions on these issues, so where would you go looking? I suppose you could go looking at their 100 Positive Policies. In the 100 Positive Policies they have a policy on the Commonwealth cleaning services but not one on agriculture. They have nothing on agriculture, and even right now while we are trying—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister will resume his seat.

Mr Joyce: Oh, my God—I'm about to get my first question!

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister will resume his seat. Before I recognise the member for Hunter—

Mr Joyce: He's hard to recognise. He never stands up!

Mr Hunt interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister will not interject when I am addressing the House. The Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science will cease interjecting as well. Before I call the member for Hunter—

Mr Joyce: Who are you? You're a mystery man!

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister is warned! The member for Hunter is rising on a point of order. He will need to state the point of order.

Mr Fitzgibbon: Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table the latest 2016 agriculture policy—

The SPEAKER: The member for Hunter has no point of order.

Mr Fitzgibbon: Why would I ask him a question if he doctors the Hansard answers?

The SPEAKER: If the member for Hunter does not have anything with him, he can just keep walking out the door under 94(a). That is a complete abuse of points of order, and he well knows it.

The member for Hunter then left the chamber.

Mr JOYCE: Right now the Australian Labor Party are fighting us on the backpacker tax, just like they fought us on the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal and just like they put at risk the firefighters. If you want to see what the Labor Party looks like, you cannot go past South Australia with the blackout. (Time expired)
Marriage

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:19): My question is to the Prime Minister. Australian of the Year and mental health expert Professor Patrick McGorry has warned that a plebiscite on same-sex marriage is a dangerous thing to do that will harm people's mental health. What is the Prime Minister's response to Professor McGorry's warning last week?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:19): I have a very high regard for Professor McGorry and I have discussed this matter with him directly.

Mr Watts interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Gellibrand will not interject.

Mr TURNBULL: I do not want to go into the details of a private conversation with him, but I am quite satisfied that the Australian people are capable of having a civil discussion on this issue and resolving it. I recognise and have some understanding of the additional mental stress and the prevalence of mental illness among the gay community. There is no issue about that. We understand that. The member for Sydney and I both understand that, in particular, given our electorates. We have both been involved with organisations that seek to address it and indeed have supported them, I might say, very collaboratively. We do understand that, but nonetheless this is a big issue. It is a big issue that concerns all Australians, and we believe that all Australians should be entitled to have their say.

We took the plebiscite proposal to the election as part of our platform. We won the election. It is a perfectly democratic process. The honourable members opposite should remember that it was not so long ago that their own leader, the member for Maribyrnong, supported a plebiscite. He advocated a plebiscite. So what has changed?

Ms Plibersek interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Sydney she has been warned.

Mr TURNBULL: The only thing that has changed is the politics. The Labor Party is not so much interested in same-sex couples being able to marry as they are in wringing every ounce of political gain out of this debate.

Child Care

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (14:22): My question is to the Prime Minister. It is a question about the provision of child care in rural, regional and remote Australia. What is the government's commitment to families who live outside our major cities and towns? The chairperson of the National Association of Mobile Services, NAMS, recently told a Senate committee addressing the Jobs for Families Child Care Package that the legislation would ensure the closure of up to 90 per cent of the 46 budget based funded mobile childcare services, including four in Victoria and one in Indi. Mr Prime Minister, can you please assure the House that the government really cares about the provision of child care to farming and Aboriginal families and those who live in remote areas and will guarantee funding for these valued services which cannot be supported—(Time expired)

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:22): I thank the honourable member for her question. I can assure her that on this side of the House we are committed to spending record levels on child care through the Jobs for Families Child Care Package. We will support...
childcare services in rural, regional and Indigenous communities through programs such as the Community Child Care Fund. The status quo is clearly not working in a sufficiently fair or transparent way for existing budget based funded services with some services receiving less than $100 per child and other services receiving thousands of dollars per child.

I can well understand the concern the honourable member has for the services in her electorate. I can inform her that the government will carefully transition services to enable them to become approved to administer the childcare subsidy where appropriate. For the first time parents using these services will be able to attract a childcare subsidy and operators will be able to attract funding to support their service's viability. Importantly, the transition support we are rolling out over the coming months will ensure the business model works for the location of the service.

Mr Snowdon interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Lingiari, do not interject.

Mr TURNBULL: Commencing early next year this transition work will include developing a business plan, preparing a budget, setting appropriate fees and fee collection processes, developing staffing rosters and establishing a viable operational structure that meets the needs of the community. We anticipate that any supplementary funding for individual services would be informed by the work of the transition consultants and reflect and, where possible, address specific transition challenges that may be faced by individual providers. The reality is that some of the budget based funded services are not delivering childcare, but we recognise that they are delivering a vital community service. Where that is the case, we will identify alternative funding sources appropriate to the type of service they are offering and the number of children being cared for.

We believe the early years of a child's life are vitally important—I know that all honourable members do—in ensuring children meet the learning and development milestones necessary for a strong start in life and for a positive transition to school. Parents are the first and most important teachers that children will have, of course, and that is why we have invested in both programs that support parents and children and support parents' participation requirements through formal child care.

Budget

Mr RICK WILSON (O'Connor) (14:25): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the government is managing the successful transition of the Australian economy? In particular, how will the Enterprise Tax Plan to stimulate investment especially by small and medium-sized businesses in new jobs and higher wages to improve living standards for hardworking Australians?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:25): I thank the member for O'Connor for his question and his interest in ensuring that particularly small and medium-sized businesses in this country can grow and can support the jobs that they put in place through their own investment. The government's Enterprise Tax Plan was introduced into this House within the first hundred days after the last election, and that plan supports stronger growth, more investment, higher wages and more jobs.

The modelling undertaken by Treasury shows that GDP would increase by over a percentage point, investment would be up by three per cent and wages up by a percentage
point as well. There used to be a lot of consensus on this point, Mr Speaker. We know the Leader of the Opposition once said that cutting the company income tax rate increases domestic productivity and domestic investment. We know that the shadow Treasurer used to also be a supporter of cutting company income tax. He said, 'It's a Labor thing to have the ambition of reducing company tax because it promotes investment, it creates—

Mr Bowen interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon.

Mr MORRISON: That is what the shadow Treasurer said. The former Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, said this: If you are against cutting company tax, you are against economic growth. If you are against economic growth, then you are against jobs. And, if you are against economic growth and jobs, then you are also against increasing wages …

That view is also shared by distinguished former officials in the Treasury. Ken Henry said this:

If the company income tax were to be cut the principal beneficiaries would be the workers.

So you ask the question.

It is bad enough that those opposite do not support the Enterprise Tax Plan over 10 years to make sure that we can drive investment and growth in this economy to lift real wages and to lift living standards, but last night we learnt in the Senate that they are even opposed to cutting the company tax rate for companies with a turnover of up to $10 million. They are opposed to ensuring that they would get access to the depreciation provisions which would allow them to invest in their businesses and support growth and jobs in their businesses. There are 100,000 businesses with a turnover of between $2-10 million. They employ on average some 22 people—so 2.2 million Australians' jobs depend on the health and wellbeing of the small businesses they work for.

Those opposite may want to go and have a chat with some of those small businesses as I have done. Maybe the member for Herbert would like to go and talk to Martin Locke from Martin Locke Homes who has a turnover of $7 million; he has eight staff and he supports 30 subbies. He says, 'I am a small business owner and to be labelled a big business is offensive.' Or perhaps the member for Hindmarsh might want to talk to Terry Tinney at Precise Tooling Australia. He says, 'It is very much going to help our industry going forward, which means that we can employ more people, which will be excellent for this state.' On this side of the House, we are committed to jobs and growth—(Time expired)

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER (14:29): Just before I call the member for Grayndler, we will pause for a second and the Leader of the House will cease interjecting. I would like to inform the House that we have present this afternoon Ingrid Fischbach, Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Minister for Health of Germany and Dr Anna Prinz, the German Ambassador here in the gallery. I extend a very warm welcome to you both.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Tourism

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler) (14:29): My question is addressed to the Minister for Tourism. I refer to the minister's comments of 31 August 2016 when he told the House that the increases in the passenger movement charge were … choking the golden goose that is Australia's tourism industry.

Given that just 28 days later the government increased the charge by $5, does the minister stand by his comments? And if he does, doesn't that make him look like a golden goose?

Mr CIOBO (Moncrieff—Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment) (14:30): I actually thank the member for his question, because there has actually been some debate in the House around the passenger movement charge. So let me just re-enlighten those members opposite about some of the debates we have had about the passenger movement charge.

I quote a member who said:

'This is a government that is serious about the future of tourism. This is a government that is serious about a fiscally responsible budget that looks at changes to charges like the PMC in line with indexation to only partly recover the additional costs that have been placed on the government …

That would sort of seem like a fiscally prudent approach—an approach that reflects the need for governments to be responsible. You would almost expect it to be a comment on our side of the chamber, right? But, in fact, it is a comment by the minister opposite—

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr CIOBO: Sorry: the shadow minister opposite, shadow minister Butler. It was shadow minister Butler who made that comment. The one person on their side who was actually able to put forward a point of view that was consistent with the need to be fiscally responsible. So the member for Port Adelaide is the sole member on that side—

The SPEAKER: The member for Grayndler on a point of order?

Mr Albanese: Yes, Mr Speaker, it goes to relevance. This is about what the minister said last time he was at the dispatch box during question time—the very last time. Since then, the tax has gone up—does he stand by his comments?

The SPEAKER: The member for Grayndler can resume his seat. I am going to rule on the point of order before I call the minister. As the member for Grayndler well knows, there was a lot of commentary and preamble in the question as well as the specific question.

Mr CIOBO: I absolutely stand by my comment that the Australian Labor Party was strangling Australia's tourism industry with a 45 per cent increase in the passenger movement charge. A 45 per cent increase in the passenger movement charge! You need to talk to the member for Port Adelaide, who actually put forward the rationale about why it should go up. So the simple fact is that once again we see the Australian Labor Party approach to policy making that says, 'Don't listen to what we say, look at what we do,' because that is what Labor did—a 45 per cent increase in the passenger movement charge.

Now, we know that inflation was out of the bottle. We heard that from the Australian Labor Party. But 45 per cent? Really? The member for Lilley—45 per cent when Labor was in power. So we know that the Australian Labor Party delivered record taxes on Australia's tourism industry, but they did not reinvest the money. A 45 per cent increase in the passenger
movement charge but they actually reduced funding for tourism in Australia, unlike the coalition, which has put in place a modest increase—substantially less than 45 per cent.

It is the coalition which is putting in record funding to Australia's tourism industry: $639 million by this government, driving record numbers of tourists, driving record spend by tourists and driving the length of stay to new record levels. That is the record of this government, and I am very proud to stand by this government's track record.

**Small Business**

Mr WOOD (La Trobe) (14:33): My question is to the Minister for Revenue and Financial Services. I remind the minister that small business is the lifeblood of the local economy in my electorate of La Trobe. Will the minister update the House on the government's support for small business through tax cuts and tax concessions? Is the minister aware of any alternative policies?

Ms O'DWYER (Higgins—Minister for Revenue and Financial Services) (14:34): I would very much like to thank the member for La Trobe. I note that his wife, Judy, is a very successful small business woman. She is one of more than 16,000 small businessmen and women in the seat of La Trobe who are taking a risk and creating an opportunity for themselves and for their families and, more broadly, for the communities in which they operate. They are helping to grow our economy.

Earlier this year I had the opportunity to visit a number of small businesses in the electorate of Latrobe. And one such small business that the member and I visited was the Nomadic Cafe, owned and operated by Andrew, who has been running that business now for more than two years. He has been running that business very successfully, and it has been growing rapidly. It opens for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and it has now employed more than 25 employees—more than 25 employees!

This business is a very important business because it has now just tipped over the $2 million turnover threshold, which means that Andrew's business benefits from the announcement made by this government in the budget, the tax enterprise plan, that will actually deliver company tax cuts for small businesses with a turnover of less than $10 million—a company tax rate of 27½% in the dollar from 1 July this year. This is going to advantage more than 870,000 small businesses.

We are also increasing the unincorporated small business tax discount from five per cent to eight per cent, capped at $1,000, and that will be for businesses with a turnover of less than $5 million. That will mean that 2.2 million Australian businesses will benefit from this change. Not only that, we are going to be providing tax concessions available to all small businesses with a turnover of less than $10 million. This includes the $20,000 instant asset write-off. This, again, will advantage more than 3.1 million Australian businesses. Now, one of the issues for Andrew is cashflow and one of the other issues is making sure that he can invest in his business, and both of these initiatives actually deliver for him.

But I was asked, 'Are there any alternative views?' I am very sad to say to the member for La Trobe that there are. Those opposite would put a handbrake on the aspiration of small business. They would limit small business from being able to access company tax cuts, from being able to access discounts and from being able to access the instant asset write-off if they had any more than $2 million in turnover.
We on this side of the House want to grow small business. We want them to be able to employ more Australians. We know that since 2007 the small business definition has not changed. We are not talking about it; we are acting.

**National Broadband Network**

Ms ROWLAND (Greenway) (14:37): My question is to the Prime Minister. On 28 October 2014 the now Prime Minister told the parliament that one of the big changes he would be making in relation to the NBN would be 'upgrading HFC networks to ensure that everyone gets very fast broadband but at much less cost.' Can the Prime Minister confirm the scaling back of up to 1.5 million HFC premises in the latest corporate plan, a significant increase in the cost of HFC connections and NBN Co abandoning the Optus HFC network?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:38): I am delighted that the honourable member has been following the reporting of the NBN Co. I do not claim any prescience here, but as it happens I was looking at the NBN Co's weekly rollout report as she was getting ready to ask her question. I have it here. As of 29 September—we will get some new numbers in a day or so—there are now 1.37 million premises actually activated and accessing the network—paying customers. There are 3.2 million premises that have the ability to access the network.

The NBN Co is connecting—that is to say, activating, signing up—new customers at the rate of around 90,000 every four weeks. In six years, Labor connected 50,000. The company is doing as much in two weeks as Labor did in its whole term in government. It is rolling out. Half of Australia's premises will have access by 30 June next year. The company forecasts that it will be three quarters by 30 June 2018, and the project will be completed in 2019-20.

This is one of the great corporate turnarounds in Australia's history. This was a complete catastrophe, a failed project. Construction had stopped in many parts of Australia and in other parts it had barely started. We put in a new board, new management, new business plan, and they are getting on with the job. Unlike the Labor Party, we do not turn technology into ideology. They make the same mistake with telecommunications as they do with climate policy and renewables policy. What is the object? Getting people connected to the internet with very fast broadband. That is the goal. How do you do it? You do it in the most cost-effective way using the resources you have, where they are, and you design a technique that suits circumstances. That is what we are doing. Of course, we could have stuck with Labor's ideological plan, which would have cost another $30 billion and taken six to eight years longer. The turnaround of the NBN is one of the great achievements of the coalition government.

**DISTINGUISHED VISITORS**

The SPEAKER (14:40): I inform the House that we have present in the gallery this afternoon the Australian Political Exchange Council's 10th delegation from the Philippines. On behalf of the House I extend a very warm welcome to you all.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Small Business

Mr BUCHHOLZ (Wright) (14:41): My question is to the Minister for Small Business. Could the minister update the House on our Ten Year Enterprise Tax Plan and the effects it will have on small business in Australia and, in particular, the effects on small business in my electorate of Wright?

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina—Minister for Small Business) (14:41): I thank the honourable member for Wright for his question. He is a good member. He understands the importance of small business because he ran one and continues to do so—CQX Transport with 10 trucks. It is a good small business in the electorate of Wright. The member understands, as do all members on this side of the House, the importance of small businesses and what they mean to our economy.

There are more than 13,000 small businesses in the electorate of Wright. It is great to hear, in Wright, of regional businesses opening, expanding and, perhaps most importantly, growing. Our Ten Year Enterprise Tax Plan will assist them to do just that. It will relieve compliance on Tom Plunkett of Paint Place in Beaudesert, so he can get on with what he does best—supporting local tradespeople and offering a high quality service to customers. For the local Beaudesert grocer, Antonio Bufalino of The Big Pumpkin fruit and vegetables, our plan will free up capital for him to reinvest and develop his business.

Just an hour ago I met with the Council of Small Business of Australia chairman, Paul Nielsen. He spoke of how critical our enterprise tax plan is to enable small business to drive innovation and growth. They were his words. The Coalition understands just how important this plan is to create the right conditions for small business to grow and prosper.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr McCORMACK: You might think it is a joke, but this is important. That is why I was so pleased that this legislation was introduced as a priority by the Treasurer in the first week of the 45th parliament. Over the past 15 years Australia has gone from having the ninth lowest corporate tax rate amongst advanced countries to now having the sixth highest out of 35 OECD countries. Australia must remain competitive as an attractive destination to invest in. That is why we have delivered a tax plan targeted to provide opportunities, to boost jobs and growth. Our Ten Year Enterprise Tax Plan will support up to 3.2 million small businesses, who employ more than 5½ million Australians. As of this financial year, companies with turnovers of less than $10 million will have a tax rate of 27.5 per cent, the lowest it has been since 1967. That is around 870,000 additional businesses which will benefit and have access to a range of small business tax concessions.

Just yesterday the member for Kingsford Smith stated that he and his Labor colleagues are opposed to changing the threshold turnover for small businesses to beyond $2 million, saying, 'There is no economic benefit and it will do social detriment.' Why do you hate small business?

I say this to the member for McMahon, the shadow Treasurer—and this underlines one of the golden rules of Australian politics—

Ms Plibersek interjecting—
The SPEAKER: I am trying to help the member for Sydney stay in the chamber.

Mr McCormack: when the Labor Party gets its hands on important pieces of economic policy, sensible people should be very worried.

Broadband

Dr Aly (Cowan) (14:45): My question is to the Prime Minister. Almost a year ago in this House, the former Liberal member for Cowan spoke about poor internet coverage in the Cowan electorate. Speaking about the suburb of Greenwood, the former member said: A lot of people just cannot get a service of any kind.

What has the Prime Minister done in the past year to provide broadband access to the suburb of Greenwood?

Mr Turnbull (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:45): I thank the honourable member for her question. I will consult with the minister and come back to her with a specific answer with respect to the suburb to which she refers. The NBN is a gigantic project, and obviously I do not have the details of every rollout in every particular location, but I will give the honourable member the benefit of the history. When the Labor Party lost office in 2013, construction had barely started and was stopped in Western Australia. There was a complete failure, and the contractor effectively imploded. The NBN Co had to start again, so the construction of the NBN is more advanced in some other states, but it is catching up. Right now there are 323,000 premises in Western Australia that can access the service and 125,717 that are signed up and are paying customers.

The honourable member has made an inquiry about a particular suburb. We will take that up with the minister and get her the precise details. She could, of course, have obtained that information very readily from the NBN Co, which does a very good job liaising with all members of parliament. But I thank her for her question, and I thank her for her interest. She has succeeded a very capable member for Cowen—a member who was very assiduous in standing up for his constituents and ensuring they had the services they need.

Mr Hammond interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Perth will cease interjecting. He was interjecting right through that answer.

South China Sea

Mr Andrews (Menzies) (14:47): My question is to the foreign minister. Will the minister explain to the House the importance of clarity and consistency on policy in the South China Sea, and is she aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms Julie Bishop (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:48): I thank the member for Menzies for his question and for his interest in this important issue. The South China Sea has the busiest shipping lanes in the world; indeed, two-thirds of our exports pass through that sea. It is the coalition's view that, in foreign affairs, clarity and consistency are all-important, especially when dealing with significant and difficult issues in our region and issues involving great powers.

This government has been utterly consistent in relation to the South China Sea, calling on all nations to refrain from coercive behaviour, calling on all nations to respect international law and, indeed, calling for China and the Philippines to accept the recent international
arbitration ruling award as final and binding. As they have done for decades, Australian vessels and aircrafts will continue to exercise their rights of passage and overflight under international law in the South China Sea.

However, in contrast, what we have seen from the Leader of the Opposition is a complete failure of leadership on the South China Sea as Labor has announced inconsistent, contradictory positions. There was Senator Dastyari ceding almost all of the South China Sea to China by saying, 'The South China Sea is China's own affair.' Then, over the weekend, Labor's shadow defence minister decided that Australia should escalate tensions by having our navy conduct freedom-of-navigation operations within 12 nautical miles of Chinese controlled land features that are also contested by other claimants. We hear vague mutterings from the Leader of the Opposition, but it took the former Labor Prime Minister Paul Keating to denounce Labor's latest pronouncements as 'shocking'.

This is too important an issue for Labor folly, indulgence and inconsistency. I call on the Leader of the Opposition to confirm that it is Labor's policy that the Australian Navy should sail within 12 nautical miles of contested features in the South China Sea, something Australia has not ever done before. Australia should be seeking to de-escalate tensions in the region. Australia is not a claimant state. Australia should not take sides, and we should continue to urge all parties to conduct peaceful negotiations between the claimants. It is time for the Leader of the Opposition to show some leadership over his party on this issue. It is too important for Australia to have the inconsistent mutterings from the Leader of the Opposition and his contradictory pronouncements on this issue.

Budget

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:51): My question is to the Treasurer. The final budget outcome for 2015-16 was dumped out late on a Friday afternoon two weeks ago. If a projected deficit of $4.7 billion for 2015-16 warranted a budget emergency, what does the Treasurer call the government's final deficit figure of $39.6 billion—a deficit more than eight times larger than that projected when this government came to office?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:51): I always welcome questions from those opposite about deficits, because on that side of the House they have written the book on deficits. They have written the book on deficits. And the final budget outcome showed, for that year, that the actual deficit was less than was anticipated at the time of the budget this year.

But it was those opposite who went to the Australian people at the last election and said what Australia needs is an even bigger deficit. They said that the deficit over the budget and forward estimates should be $16½ billion higher than what we announced in May of this year. They also think that the way to try and drive investment in this country is to increase taxes—so higher taxes to fund higher spending, and they want bigger deficits over the budget and forward estimates. Now that is not a plan to drive jobs and growth.

Ms Plibersek interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Sydney has been warned!

Mr MORRISON: And that is why it is not surprising that those opposite were rejected at the last election—because they could not be trusted to run the economy of this country. And
they need to reflect on that, because what I notice from those opposite is a hubris and an arrogance, after the last election. We had the Leader of the Opposition do a lap of honour for an election he never won! Perhaps he was celebrating his victory over the shadow transport and tourism minister. Perhaps that is what he was celebrating. But what we know is that hubris and arrogance is preventing them from understanding that the Australian people do not want to see the country go into even higher levels of debt.

They wanted to add $16½ billion to Australia’s deficit and to drive up debt. That is what they wanted to do. On this side of the House we outlined a budget that would see expenditure as a share of the economy fall over the budget and forward estimates and the deficit decline and we would, therefore, arrest the debt. Those opposite only have a plan to spend more, to tax more, to ensure the debt rises by more. That is why they remain totally opposed to providing support, particularly for small and medium sized businesses, which is necessary to drive investment, which drives growth, which drives jobs. So happy to have questions from those opposite, from the architects of higher deficits, higher debt and higher taxes.

**Border Protection**

Mr IRONS (Swan) (14:54): My question is to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. Will the minister update the House on action taken by the government to make our community safer, including the cancellations of visas held by members of outlaw motorcycle gangs, and is the minister aware of any different approaches to the protection of our borders?

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (14:55): I thank the member for his question and thank him, very much, for the efforts on behalf of his community that he makes to make it a safer place. That is certainly what this government is about. We have been able to cancel the visas of 106 non-citizens—cancelled or refused 106 non-citizen visas over the course of the last 12 months or so of people associated with outlaw motorcycle gangs.

What we know in this country is that members of outlaw motorcycle gangs are the biggest distributors of amphetamines, they are involved in extortion and they are involved in standover tactics, particularly of people in small business, and as a government we have said that we will not stand for it. So we have introduced provisions in the Migration Act which allow us to cancel visas of people who are engaged in criminal activity, including these outlaw motorcycle gang members.

It really is quite astonishing that the Labor Party is opposed to such measures. And we ask ourselves: why? What people know about this Leader of the Opposition is that he is owned and managed by the union bosses of this country. He is owned and managed by them—and he has been his entire working life. That is the true fact of the matter. And we know that the CFMEU, the most militant union in the country, employs outlaw motorcycle gang members to stand over builders and workers on building and construction sites around the country.

And you ask: why would this Leader of the Opposition turn a blind eye to the activities of the CFMEU and of the bikies providing that standover and muscle on those building sites around the country? There are 1.3 million reasons why he did it last year: because the CFMEU donated $1.3 million to the Labor Party last year alone. They are still running a protection racket for him.
Ms Plibersek interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has been warned three times. That's it. No more interjections. No more sign language. No more anything or you'll be out. The Manager of Opposition Business on a point of order.

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, it is under standing order 90. The minister, in his answer, has gone directly to imputing improper motives, which—under standing order 90—is considered highly disorderly. I ask that he withdraw the comments and that he be brought back to the question.

The SPEAKER: I am listening carefully to the minister's answer. He will just wait a second. I am very well aware of standing order 90. The minister is very close to the line—he is very close to the line—which is why I had not intervened, but I will call the minister.

Mr DUTTON: Thank you, very much. One point three million dollars last year was donated to the Labor Party by the CFMEU. That was eclipsed only by the shoppies, who donated a bit more than that, and we know that over the course of the last seven or eight years they have donated over $6 million. So when the Australian public ask themselves the question, 'Is this Leader of the Opposition fit to be Prime Minister of this country?' they need to look at these dirty grubby links back to these union thugs and bosses who are dictating terms to this man, and it is unacceptable for a person who seeks the highest office in this country.

The SPEAKER: The minister will resume his seat. The Manager of Opposition Business—the minister has concluded his answer. Unless it is a different point of order I will anticipate that the Manager of Opposition—

Mr Burke: It is different, based on he has now made comments that he had not made when I put the previous point of order. On the comments that he has made, I ask that he withdraw. They cannot be read as anything other than impugning motive. That is what it was entirely about, and I ask the comments be withdrawn.

The SPEAKER: I think what the Manager of Opposition Business will find—I was listening very carefully and, as I said, we get tough questions and tough answers, in this place, and, as I have said many times—I do not want to repeat myself—I do not want to be ruling out tough questions as well. I have listened carefully. I do not think there was anything, directly, there. I really do not. I think an examination of the Hansard, which we will not do now, if it suits everyone, will show that the view I have taken is pretty consistent with past practice. But I do take that matter pretty seriously, and that is why I was listening very closely to the minister.

Attorney-General

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (14:59): My question is to the Minister representing the Attorney-General. Nearly 24 hours have passed since the minister took on notice questions about whether the Attorney-General had misled the Senate and the Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security. Why has the minister failed to meet the commitments that he gave to the House yesterday?
Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism) (15:00): I thank the member for Isaacs for that question, and if he waited another 10 minutes I could have provided this answer, but considering he has invited me to do this now, I will be very happy to provide it to the House, as I undertook to do yesterday.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will cease interjecting.

Mr KEENAN: In answer to the questions that he asked me, I would like to refer him to this very comprehensive submission that Senator Brandis has already made to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee, who are looking into this matter. This submission is publicly available. It outlines in detail the process of consultation that the Attorney-General undertook in relation to his dealings with the Solicitor-General. Further to this, on his questions in relation to legal advice, it has been longstanding practice in this House under successive governments—including the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd governments, for which he was briefly Attorney-General—that we do not discuss the detail of legal advice. That is something this government adheres to as well.

The SPEAKER: Just to be clear, was the minister seeking to table the document?

Mr KEENAN: I am happy to table it. It is actually a submission that is publicly available already, but I am very happy to table it if it is difficult for the shadow Attorney-General and his staff to actually find it on the internet.

Mr Husic interjecting—

The SPEAKER: It is up to the minister. I was not sure whether he said he was going to, that was all. The member for Chifley will cease interjecting.

Australian Submarine Corporation

Ms FLINT (Boothby) (15:01): My question is to the Minister for Defence Industry. Will the minister update the House on today's announcement in relation to the ASC? How will the restructure of the ASC enable the government to deliver on its promise to implement a continuous naval shipbuilding plan which will be a creator of jobs and will grow the economy into the future?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Defence Industry) (15:02): I thank the member for Boothby for her question, and I can tell her that today's announcement about the future of the Australian Submarine Corporation is another critical step in the establishment of our naval shipbuilding plan into the future. Today we have announced that the ASC will be structurally separated into three business entities: a shipbuilding business, which will be conducted at Osborne south in South Australia; a submarine maintenance and sustainment business, which will continue to be operated at Osborne north and at Henderson in Western Australia; and an infrastructure business which will own the infrastructure at Osborne. I intend to enter into negotiations with the South Australian government in order to take over their part of that, the Common User Facility, so that the Commonwealth owns all of the infrastructure at Osborne, south and north, to prepare for our submarine and our naval shipbuilding industries into the future.
What this will create in South Australia, and for Australia, is the most modern and one of the busiest platform shipbuilding businesses that is conducted in the world right now, at Osborne south. At Osborne north will be one of the most modern and busiest submarine businesses in the world. This is creating jobs, creating growth, creating investment and providing the high-tech advanced manufacturing jobs of the future that are part of such an important project. We will need to build significant infrastructure at Osborne in South Australia and at Henderson in Western Australia. That infrastructure will start being built next year. That will also be creating jobs. So under this government, because of decisions that we have made in the last three years, we will see up to 5,000 jobs in the naval shipbuilding businesses in South Australia. That is a critical element of investment in our economy.

Once again, we are keeping the commitments that we made at the election as part of our national economic plan. Part of it was innovation; part of it was defence industry. Unlike the previous government, which in six years made not one decision to build a vessel in Australia, we have made the decisions that will allow 54 vessels to be built in this country. Today's announcement is another part of the foundation stone that we have setting in place since the election. We have signed the contract with DC&S for the design and mobilisation of the submarines. We have announced today the structural separation of the ASC. We have chosen Lockheed Martin as the combat system integrator for the submarines, and we are promoting Australian defence industry exports in Washington and elsewhere—whether it is the Joint Strike Fighter program or naval shipbuilding. We are getting on with the job, in stark contrast to what we saw under the Labor Party.

**Attorney-General**

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (15:05): My question is again to the minister representing the Attorney-General. I refer to the legal services direction relating to the Solicitor-General. Can the minister please explain to the House how it was possible for the Attorney-General to consult with the Solicitor-General in November 2015 about a document which did not exist until April 2016?

**The SPEAKER:** I will call the minister to address the question to the extent that he can, given he is representing the Attorney-General.

Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism) (15:05): I am really amused by the fact that those opposite are interjecting so heavily about this, as if they understand even a word about the role of the Solicitor-General. Seriously, I will give credit to the shadow Attorney-General that he might actually know something about the role of the Solicitor-General. As has been well and truly ventilated by the Attorney-General already, he consulted with the Solicitor-General at a meeting in his office on 30 November about the guidance and about the direction, and that is the subject of the very comprehensive submission that he made to the Senate committee inquiry into this particular matter.

**headspace**

Mr CREWTHER (Dunkley) (15:06): My question is to the Minister for Health and Aged Care. With today being the inaugural headspace day, would the minister update the House on
the important work this organisation does, and reaffirm the Turnbull government's commitment to youth mental health services?

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Sport and Minister for Health and Aged Care) (15:07): I thank the member for Dunkley for his question and congratulate him on an outstanding start as the member for Dunkley, including his strong representations to me about MRI, palliative care and indeed headspace.

It was actually the coalition government that established headspace 10 years ago, when Prime Minister Howard and the member for Sturt had a vision to provide a much needed service on the ground to young people aged between 15 and 25. Ten years on the Prime Minister and I and many, if not all, members in this place have not lost sight of that vision. That is why we continue to make the commitment that we do to headspace.

It is vital for young people to know that there is a door through which they can go that will never be the wrong door. That is the philosophy on which headspace is built. We know that three-quarters of all those who suffer from mental ill health are under the age of 25; we know that those trends are increasing. We are therefore absolutely committed to the reforms in mental health, some of which I outlined yesterday.

We will guarantee funding for 10 new headspace centres, bringing the total to 110, a really solid foundation from the 30 that were announced 10 years ago. We are driving a national approach to suicide prevention, through 12 regional trials. And we are continuing funding for six early psychosis youth services, because we know there are 160,000 young people with severe psychoses or mental illnesses and it is important that we do the very best we can by them. We are promoting and supporting a more sustainable and flexible mental health nursing workforce, because the role of mental health nurses in primary care and in headspace is incredibly well recognised. I do want to give a shout-out to nurses for what they do across the spectrum in health care.

I want to make an important point about mental health spending, because the spend the government makes on mental health is a subset of the spend it makes in the entire health portfolio. Only by managing sensible, measured, sustainable health policy are we able to make the announcements we made during the campaign about mental health, and are we able to add $192 million of, effectively, new funding to support some of the initiatives I have mentioned: a healthier Medicare; a Medical Research Future Fund, including research into youth mental health; and access to new medicines. These are all part of this government's commitment. There are tough decisions to make and we do not walk away from those tough decisions, because we do not yet want any young person not to have the right door to walk through in the future.

The SPEAKER: I call the Prime Minister.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (15:10): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Opposition members interjecting—

An opposition member interjecting—Oh, come on!

The SPEAKER: The Prime Minister will resume his seat for a second.

Mr Shorten interjecting—
The SPEAKER: I heard the interjection of the Leader of the Opposition. It is quite disorderly. If he refers to 'Practice' the Prime Minister can end question time at any time and those rules have existed for longer than both the football teams we support! It is very well written up. The Prime Minister has the call.

Mr Turnbull: I ask that further questions be placed on the notice paper.

DOCUMENTS
Presentation

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Defence Industry) (15:10): Documents are presented as listed in the schedule circulated to honourable members. Details of the documents will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE HOLDERS
Speaker's Panel

The SPEAKER (15:11): Pursuant to standing order 17(a), I lay on the table my warrant nominating the honourable members for Cunningham and Newcastle to be members of the Speaker’s panel to assist the chair when requested to do so by the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE
Broadband

The SPEAKER (15:11): I have received a letter from the honourable member for Greenway proposing that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely:

The government’s second-rate NBN failing Australians.

I call upon those members who approve of the proposed discussion to rise in their places.

More than the number of members required by the standing orders having risen in their places—

Ms ROWLAND (Greenway) (15:11): Few things better exemplify this Prime Minister being all talk, all spin, or buzzwords, but no delivery than his failed National Broadband Network. The disappointment felt by Australians in this Prime Minister, who promised so much but delivered so little on the National Broadband Network, is truly something to behold. Today in this parliament the Prime Minister was asked two questions and his responses say it all. On the first, he was challenged on the fact that he promoted particular technologies over others, that he would somehow be able to deliver with his multi-technology mix—MTM, or 'Malcolm Turnbull's mess' as we know it—that he would somehow deliver the holy trinity of promises: faster, sooner and more affordable. On each count it has been fail, fail, fail. On each count he has let the Australian people down.

I note my specific question about his bungling of HFC. In his answer he did not refer once to HFC, because he was completely incapable of defending the mess that he has made in this area. And with respect to the member for Cowan’s question, he gave his typical condescending response, basically saying the voters of Cowan got it wrong. He gave the lecture he loves to give about how he knows everything. But what he is missing is the knowledge that we on this side of the House have, and that is the lived experience of our
constituents, the lived experience of those people we represent, who have been let down, who are living in broadband backwaters and who cannot in many cases even get basic internet standards. It took three years of dictation from his then leader, whom he despised, the member for Warringah. He gave him a remit to destroy the National Broadband Network. And who will ever forget that unedifying spectacle of then Prime Minister Abbott, with his communications minister, and supposedly Sonny Bill Williams, announcing that by 2016 every Australian would have minimum broadband speeds. Well, he has 81 days to go. So good luck. As he just said in his answer earlier today, there are just over one million premises connected and only seven million to go—in 81 days.

When this Prime Minister came to office he knew he would not be able to deliver on the promises he made in this area, but he persisted with them to all ends. When Labor was in government we knew we needed to deliver a future-proof set of infrastructure for the 21st century and beyond—the best infrastructure we could provide. This Prime Minister has ignored that, and every single assumption that has gone into his mess has been proven utterly wrong in every respect.

But you do not need to take it from me. You can take it from then-senator Barnaby Joyce and Senator Fiona Nash, who is now a minister in this area. On 7 April 2009, when Labor was announcing the NBN, they claimed credit for it. In fact, they said the NBN stood for the 'Nationals Broadband Network'. The plan from them was to roll out fibre optic cable. They said that rolling out fibre optic infrastructure across Australia would be like a 'glass Snowy'. Let's look at what else Senator Nash had to say about copper, the current government's preferred delivery mechanism:

The Copper Age was 5,300 years ago, and that is where copper belongs. We need to embrace optic fibre, wireless and satellite so that we have the right mix of infrastructure to take us into the future.

And I will give Senator Nash even more credit, because she labelled anything that was fibre to the nodes as 'fraudband':

It's widely understood in the telecommunications industry that FTTN will not deliver improved broadband speeds to rural and regional areas.

Those opposite—and I see the minister here at the table, the member for Bradfield, ready to have a go—are very keen to point out what they would see as the evidence to show that their plan is working. Well, let's have a look at what the minister had to say in June 2011 about fibre. He talked about how Japan, for example, which had 55 per cent of its total broadband services delivered over fibre, actually did not rate that well and was only two places ahead of Australia in the internet speed rankings. Let's look at where Australia is today. At that time— he quoted the OECD figures—Japan, favouring fibre, was only two slots ahead of Australia. Today Australia is rated, on the Akamai broadband speed rankings, as 56th; Japan is No. 7. Australia is languishing in 56th spot. And where were we? Where did we stand in 2013, when Labor left office? We were 30th.

On this Prime Minister's watch, Australia dropped to 60th in the world, beaten by an array of other countries, including most of the countries in our region. But few things typify this Prime Minister's utter duplicity on the National Broadband Network as much as when those opposite, and the Prime Minister in particular, hailed the NBN satellites as a great game changer, the second one being launched last week—a great game changer. But what did he say in 2012 when Labor commissioned these satellites? I will tell you what he said: 'more
wasteful NBN spending', and he called them a Rolls Royce solution. Not only that, but he advocated leasing capacity from a third-party satellite provider. Such is this guy's business acumen—do you know what happened to that satellite provider? It went bankrupt. Such is the business acumen of this Prime Minister. Not content with the duplicity in this area, this Prime Minister is now stuffing up the connection process for the NBN. We have had retail service providers who are using the NBN satellites reporting that they have connected around 10,000 customers—Activ8me, for example—but have 24,000 customers waiting to be activated because this government had three years with its own hand-picked team to work out how they were going to do activations and have completely stuffed it up. You listen to anyone in rural Australia who has been trying to connect to Sky Muster. The fact is that Labor put those birds up in the sky. It is this government that is letting them down, with a third-rate connection process, denying them what would end up being the great ending of the digital divide when it comes to broadband access.

Again, the people of Australia know this. Last week we had the release of the Essential poll as to who has the best NBN. The Labor plan rated 42 per cent. What did the Liberal government's plan rate? A measly 27 per cent. Even more worrying for this government, and something they should take note of, was the number of Liberal voters who think their policy is absolute rubbish. I point to the fact that under Labor's NBN we were able to deliver real transformational change for small businesses, for education, for health care. Few things typify this better than a company in my own electorate called The Good Egg Studio, which is set up in Riverstone, which was the site of the first Sydney metro rollout. Warren Kirby, the proprietor, has said:

We have the full fibre to the premises model and it works so well we can run our business from here without any problem.

So, what has this government actually delivered? It has not delivered faster, sooner and more affordable. It is slow, it is expensive, it is obsolete.

The residents of Australia know what they want out of their broadband services and they are not afraid to demand it. Just the week before last I was in Perth with the member for Perth and a number of our other Western Australian members. On a wet and windy night, we had over 120 people come to a forum to demand a real broadband network. They know that the state of the copper is such that they will not get what they need through this. So you do not have to take it from me. If this government would listen to their own constituents, they would know that they are not delivering for the Australian people.

**Mr FLETCHER** (Bradfield—Minister for Urban Infrastructure) (15:21): Is there a more depressing job than being Labor's shadow minister for communications, trying to defend Labor's disastrous record of NBN incompetence and trying to distract people from the relentless and ever-increasing NBN rollout? The member for Blaxland dutifully performed this thankless task for three years, trying to be continually gloomy when the light of broadband availability shone ever more brightly across the land. On 17 September 2015 he brought forward a matter of public importance debate—'the Prime Minister's mismanagement of the NBN'. At that time there were 1,291,635 premises that were able to connect. He had another go on 21 October 2016. 'The Prime Minister's second-rate NBN' was the topic of the MPI that he brought forward then. At that time, 1,374,408 premises were able to connect.
But he did not give up. He was persistent, even in the face of the facts. On 10 February 2016, he brought forward yet another MPI, 'The Prime Minister is failing Australians with his second-rate NBN'—again, the member for Blaxland determinedly running the ideological line in the face of all the evidence. By that point, the number of premises that could connect was 1,719,122. You will note that, as each MPI comes passed, the number of premises has increased by many thousands. So, by 3 May 2016, the dutiful old member for Blaxland, still trying to ignore the ever-better story on the NBN and still trying to tell a very different story, brought forward yet another MPI. His topic was 'The government's failure to deliver on the NBN for Australians'. At that point, there were 2,428,606 premises that were able to connect.

The member for Blaxland naturally could not wait to get this smelly dead cat of a shadow portfolio off his shoulders, and finally he escaped. He is now happily off doing trade investment and resources and there is a new shadow minister, the member for Greenway—full of enthusiasm; full of bold new ideas like having an MPI on the topic of 'The government's second-rate NBN failing Australians'. If we now look at the numbers, there are 3,207,727 premises able to connect. So the fact is that the number of premises which can connect is increasing rapidly and remorselessly, even as Labor, with their ideological blinkers, try to cling to set of facts which are utterly different to the reality.

The reality is this: Labor has a hopeless track record on delivery, including a particularly hopeless track record on the delivery on the National Broadband Network. The reality is that the coalition came to government with a clear plan. We are executing on that plan and we are getting the NBN rolled out. The third reality is that Labor has no clue what it is going to do about the NBN, as we saw demonstrated comprehensively during the 2016 election.

Let us remind ourselves of Labor's record on delivery across a whole range of areas. How many naval ships or submarines did Labor order in government? None. Let's talk about delivery. Remember the member for Lilley coming into this place and saying, 'The four years of surplus I announce tonight'? How many were delivered? None. What did he deliver? Absolutely nothing. Remember Fuelwatch and GroceryWatch? What was delivered there? Nothing. Remember the housing insulation program? Sadly, we know what was delivered there. Tragically, four young Australians died and hundreds of houses were burnt, because of this Labor Party's hopeless track record on delivery. Remember the mining tax—the tax that delivered no revenue? Remember the GP superclinics? At the 2010 election, Labor promised there were going to be 28, and there was one operational. Remember ending the double drop-off? In the 2007 election, Labor promised 260 childcare centres—the double drop-off delivered by that public policy genius, the member for Adelaide. How many of those 260 had been built by February 2010? Three. This is the Labor Party, with their track record of being utterly hopeless at delivery.

And when it came to the National Broadband Network they were on form; they were on song. They produced a delivery stuff-up right up there with the levels of excellence in all of the other portfolios. Let us remember what they promised in the 2007 election. They promised that there would be a fibre-to-the-node network to 98 per cent of the population and it would be delivered in partnership with the private sector. They could not deliver it—abject ignominious failure. In April 2009 there was another plan—fibre to the premises. It was going to be 12.2 million premises—but, again, 'Don't worry; there is going to be private sector involvement.' Of course, by 2010, they discretely slipped out the news that the private sector
consultants they had retained, McKinsey and KPMG, had said, 'Actually, no; the private sector won't be touching this with a barge poll. So the taxpayer is up for every dollar of the National Broadband Network.' That is just one other example of Labor's delivery incompetence.

But what did they actually deliver by September 2013 when they shuffled crippled off the national stage and left us to pick up their mess? I will tell you what they had delivered. They had spent $6 billion and they had connected barely 50,000 premises. That is an ignominious record of incompetence, an ignominious record of hopelessness, at delivery. We inherited this chaotic shambolic mess from this pack of incompetents on the other side, and we were charged with getting it under control.

We established a competent management team. Bizarrely, under the previous government, there was virtually nobody on the NBN board who actually had any familiarity with telecommunications. That is why we put in Ziggy Switkowski, former chief executive of Optus and former chief executive of Telstra and one of the most experienced telecommunications executives in Australia. We also put in Bill Morrow as the chief executive—again, a very experienced telecommunications executive. We developed a credible plan. Out of the shambles that we inherited, we developed the multi-technology mix, using the most cost-effective combination of fibre to the premises, fibre to the node and HFC cable, rolled out faster and more affordably—limiting public investment to $29.5 billion—and yet 90 per cent of fixed-line premises will get 50 megabits per second.

How have we operated since we came to government and once we had control of the NBN? There has been transparency, there has been weekly reporting on the rollout—because we have got nothing to hide, unlike the previous government—and we now see that for seven quarters in a row the National Broadband Network has met its delivery targets and its financial targets. How many times did that happen under the previous Labor government? Not once. And this shambolic pack of people, who are completely incompetent of delivery, the Labor Party, bizarrely keep coming back to this topic rather than slinking away from it in shame—which, frankly, is what they ought to be doing.

What did we see during the 2016 election? After all kinds of chest-beating and bold promises on the NBN—they were going to fix it all, they were going to deliver fibre to the premises everywhere, and it was going to be fantastic—what did they actually announce as a policy? Listen to this, because it is pretty good, they were going to spend not one dollar more than the coalition. But, here is the good bit, they were going to connect two million more homes by fibre to the premises. A little factoid for the Labor Party: a fibre-to-the-premises home costs $4,400—these are numbers from the corporate plan—fibre to the node costs $2,300, roughly half. Yet our friends in the Labor Party, these people with a chaotic record of incompetence with the NBN, thought it was a good idea to tell the Australian people that their plan for the NBN in 2016 was to spend not one more dollar but you could have two million more fibre-to-the-premises homes. It just does not work. It was a completely incredible and completely implausible policy, because the frank reality was, as they effectively admitted by putting that policy out, they had no idea what to do.

Thankfully for the Australian people, there is a government which is committed to the NBN, which is committed to delivering the NBN, which is populated by people who have serious business experience, which has put in place a competent management team, which has
a credible plan and which is systematically rolling out the National Broadband Network. That is what we are doing. It is a story of it of success. There is a lot more to do, and we are doing the job. We are delivering.

**Mr STEPHEN JONES** (Whitlam) (15:31): In question time today we saw the Prime Minister, in his amateur theatrical mode, make a huge song and dance about the government's great successes in rolling out the National Broadband Network. Well, right around the country you could hear people switching off their television sets, because there is a huge gap between what the Prime Minister thinks is reality when it comes to the rollout of the NBN and the lived reality of people in their homes right around the country.

For a bloke who is alleged to have invented the internet, he is doing a very good job at stuffing up the rollout of the NBN. He promised us, before the last election, that he was going to deliver the NBN and it was going to be faster, it was going to be cheaper and it was going to be delivered to our homes sooner. In fact, he promised us that the NBN was going to be rolled out to every premises in Australia. When?

**Ms Rowland:** By the end of this year.

**Mr STEPHEN JONES:** Before the end of this year. Now, I am looking at you, Deputy Speaker Coulton, and I am pretty sure that is has not been rolled out to your house. It has not been rolled out to mine and I am sure that, all of the people that are listening to this today, the vast majority of them are yet to see an NBN truck roll down their street. So much for doing it faster.

Let us look at the other claims that he made. He claimed that he was able to deliver faster broadband and every household was going to be getting 25 megabits per second. I know, as a matter of fact, that in those places around the country—and in the vast majority of those places around the country that have got the NBN connected by the Prime Minister's second-rate fibre-to-the-node model—they are getting nothing like 25 megabits per second. They will be lucky if they are getting that in the middle of the night when no-one else is in the suburb or no-one is doing any homework or no-one is doing any business.

He promised that he was going to do it cheaper. Let us have a look at that. His first big promise—and he is big on making big promises and big on making the grand statement—was that he was going to be able to deliver it for $29.5 billion, and that was in 2013. He made the promise of $29.5 billion in April 2013. By December 2013, that cost had blown out to $41 billion. It would be bad enough if it stopped there, but before we got to the last election the total cost of this second-rate NBN was going to be $56 billion. You have to have got to ask yourself: how does a guy who is supposed to have the business acumen that the Prime Minister prides himself on manage to see a blowout of this proportion? There are lots of places that you can look, but the one that really bells the cat, the one that shines a light on why this guy has stuffed it up so much, is if you look what he has done with the copper network.

I have gone around the country and visited many of the regional towns throughout Australia during the last election, from Cairns and Townsville in the north, down to Hobart and Launceston in the south, right throughout regional New South Wales—I had the pleasure of visiting your electorate, Deputy Speaker—and out through Adelaide and Victoria as well.
It was not unusual that when I visited a town and I talked to people about the state of the network to be shown pictures that look like this—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Coulton):** I will remind the member for Whitlam about the use props.

**Mr STEPHEN JONES:** The picture that I am unfolding and looking at is the state of the copper network. This happens to be in the Hunter Valley, but it could have been in any place throughout the country. You ask yourself why the Prime Minister and his fibre to the node is spending so much on copper? It is because this is the state of the network. This is a guy who spent close to half a billion dollars on copper—last century's technology to deliver this century's National Broadband Network.

In the old days education, health and welfare were the big levers that you pulled down upon to deliver more equity in this country. In this century it is going to be broadband. It is in regional Australia where the Prime Minister and this government are failing so much. We have seen study after study showing the failure of the government to deliver basic services such as the National Broadband Network and basic infrastructure services. That is leading to growing inequality in this country, and this government has absolutely no plan to do anything about it. We have seen only last month a study from the Swinburne Institute for Social Research, which compared the digital inclusion of people living right around the country. It showed huge gaps between people living in the regions and people living in the cities. *(Time expired)*

**Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (15:36):** It is great to be able to talk on this MPI today on the NBN. You have to laugh when people like the member for Whitlam want to talk about their record on the NBN. Labor had such an abysmal record on the NBN between 2007 and 2013. The member for Whitlam was part of that government and part of the decisions that caused the chaos that resulted in the disastrous NBN system that we had to clean up. The rollout was so badly managed by Labor that they missed every single target they set for themselves. They set targets and missed every single one of them. Imagine if you did that in business. You would be going broke. Under Labor, taxpayers paid more than $6 billion for the NBN rollout. Guess how many Australians' premises that passed? Three per cent. Labor's NBN passed just one in 50 premises. We are now at one in four. I could go on and on.

The fact is that Labor's record is appalling. Part of the problem is they were not focused on the people; they were more focused on the politics. Their solution was not really a fibre-to-the-premise one; it was a fibre-to-the-press-release one. Labor's fibre-to-the-press-release solution resulted in disastrous telecommunications for people in my electorate, particularly in North Lakes, for years to come. What did Telstra and other companies do? They said: 'The NBN has come in. We won't bother putting anything in, because Labor is bringing it in.'

I also believe the rollout was politically motivated in parts of marginal seats, particularly in the southern end of my seat right on the border of Petrie and Lilley. There were Labor members there. Their rollout was not done for the benefit of the people but for the benefit of the Labor Party. Their budget blowouts, higher debt and fibre to the premise would have resulted in residents receiving NBN some six to eight years later. In the world we are living in, where businesses need internet connectivity as fast as possible, this is very important. As I said, one in 50 premises were connected under Labor. We are now three years into our term and we are now at one in four and in my electorate at almost 1½.
I say to new members opposite: if you want to get things done, do not listen to your 
shadow minister and do not listen to the negativity we saw from Labor on this issue at the 
2013 election, which they lost, and at the 2016 election, which they lost. In three years time 
most of the country is going to be done. That is the goal we need to set for ourselves. That is 
the goal I have set for myself. I talk to the minister. If members opposite have problem 
suburbs in their electorate, they should talk to the minister. It is okay. It does not matter that it 
is a coalition minister. You can go and see them. Do not listen to your shadow minister. That 
is what I encourage you to do.

The very first minister I invited into my electorate when I was campaigning in the 2013 
election was the shadow minister for communications, who is now of course the Prime 
Minister, Malcolm Turnbull. I know that the internet and communications are very important 
for my electorate. I am very proud to announce that in the last six months almost 20,000 
households in Redcliffe have been connected to the NBN or are ready to be connected and the 
build has begun on another 4,000 houses in Scarborough. The number of premises ready for 
service is close to 30,000 and about 10,500 have an active service. MPs and senators in the 
other place, rather than being negative when the debate has been lost at the last two elections, 
need to be encouraging people to take up a NBN connection and actually connect to the NBN. 
That is what I would be saying.

I spoke before about North Lakes having a major issue. I am very pleased to say that right 
now the build is commencing, cables are being laid, in places like Copeland Drive, Discovery 
Drive, Lakefield Drive, Memorial Drive, Anzac Avenue, parts of Bounty Boulevard, 
Tuckeroo Parade, Endeavour Boulevard, Freshwater Creek Road and Halpine Drive. There is 
a lot more work to be done. This NBN is about the people. The government have prioritised 
jobs and growth, because that is what we know people are interested in, and stability. We 
need to be encouraging NBN Co to roll out the service as quickly and efficiently as possible 
for all Australians to benefit.

Ms SWANSON (Paterson) (15:42): The member for Petrie is completely right: the NBN 
is about people. Last week Labor's spokesperson on communications, Stephen Jones, the 
member for Whitlam, joined me in my electorate of Paterson to meet with real, everyday 
people who are having problems—it is not actually problems that they are having; they are 
going through a nightmare. They told us about this second-rate National Broadband Network. 
Stephen and I visited the Early Links Inclusion Support Service, a not-for-profit doing critical 
work with children with disabilities and high needs in my community in the suburb of 
Ashtonfield. It is a support service that cares for children with very high disabilities. They 
operate from a council owned building. They are struggling with the most basic of internet 
needs.

When parents phone to make an appointment for their children, they cannot get onto the 
internet to make an appointment. When they try to access files for the children, they cannot 
get them. When they try to report for the NDIS, which is a whole world of pain that I will not 
go into now, they cannot get onto the internet to do it. So they divert precious resources, 
money, to buy dongles so they can do this basic work.

Here is where the injury and the insult really come together. They have a box on the wall 
which should connect them to the NBN. It is not connected. What is that about? It is 
absolutely disgusting. We have looked at the box. We had a photograph taken with it. That is
all you can do. It is not useful. It is not connecting anyone to anything. It is a pretty little prop box on the wall.

A staff member at this establishment—a single mum; she is a fantastic person who does great work for Early Links—told me that she spends $300 a month on mobile broadband for her two teenagers to do their high school work because they cannot even get ADSL in her part of Thornton. She spends $300 a month. I have been a member for only a short time but I can tell you that my office is inundated every day with complaints. Chris Lindus from Aberglasslyn said that the NBN website says that the address is ready to connect but all of the internet service providers say that the property is not ready to connect.

Some neighbours are able to connect but not Chris, and he said that he is currently on very slow ADSL. What about Jacqui Esder, also from Aberglasslyn? She has the same story as Chris. However, she has been told by NBN Co that they only have to have 90 per cent of the suburb ready before they can declare that it is actually ready for service. So apparently 90 per cent is okay—do not worry about the other 10 per cent! They just say, 'Yes, it's a little bit of froth and bubble there.' What about poor old Angela Niznik from Chisholm? She has no access to the NBN at all, and it is not on the build plan. The other half of the suburb is already connected. Talk about a digital divide!

Earlier in the day the member for Whitlam and I went to Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove. They cannot get mobile service there, even though they are only 10 kilometres from Newcastle, Australia's seventh largest city. One resident in the gorgeous over-55's development that we visited said that she can sometimes get one bar of signal if she stands on the kitchen sink and holds the phone above the venetians, but her husband has a dodgy hip and he has had to stop doing it. Yes, just get up on the sink—she will be apples!

These examples are just the tip of the iceberg. Not a day goes by when we are not fielding complaint after complaint about this, and my office is not the only one. Many people go to Facebook and all the sites to have a whinge about it, and no wonder. When we refer the complaints to NBN Co they are obliging, but they can only follow their riding instructions. They are constrained. Of course they are constrained. Like attracts like. The government are like copper. They bend under pressure, they melt when the heat is on and they have lost their lustre quickly. This is a patch-up. This is a stitch-up of all Australians. I say to you that the government talk innovation but only deliver frustration.

Ms Marino (Forrest—Chief Government Whip) (15:46): It is interesting that the theme of this MPI is about being second-rate. Well, nothing was as second-rate as Labor's absolute dog's breakfast of an NBN rollout. What we saw at the election was that construction had actually stopped completely. That is how good it was—it had stopped. Instead of, as we saw, building in areas where there was a real need, they were actually overbuilding in areas that had 100 megabits already available. In my seat of Forrest in Western Australia at the time of the election, there were zero NBN connections—zero! Now that is what you call second-rate.

Of course, this government have prioritised underserviced areas like the rural and regional area of Forrest. My area in the south-west of WA has been a major beneficiary of investment in communications, and we are delivering better broadband sooner to the south-west. Unlike the Labor Party's pie-in-the-sky proposal—and it was, because we were looking at construction in my area at least into the next decade—today my region has towers going up and boxes being built on street corners. Of the 62,000 or so premises on the NBN rollout plan,
there are currently some 35,000 premises in Forrest that have access to the NBN, and close to 10,000 have taken up NBN services. Mind you, a vast majority of these have fibre-to-the-premises connectivity.

Around 7,300 premises in the greater Bunbury area are in the process of getting access to the NBN, with construction on the fibre-to-the-node network now well under way. It is a really important milestone because we had zero premises with access to the NBN when Labor was in government. We have greater certainty for homes and businesses as they switch to fast broadband in the suburbs of Usher, Withers, South Bunbury, College Grove, Dalyellup, Gelorup and Carey Park. Final network designs are now complete and we have already seen NBN's subcontractors in streets in other areas of Bunbury. Of course, the NBN rollout plan identifies at least 50,000 premises that will soon be able to access the NBN by fixed line technology and additionally through wireless and also through satellite.

The Busselton region will see even more people accessing the NBN much faster than previously thought, with a total of 16,600 premises that already have or will soon receive access to fixed line technology, and another 2,500 will have wireless access. There are two people in the chamber today from Busselton—David and Rosemary Ryan. When we got into government and the NBN started to roll out in their area of Busselton, they accessed the service and are extremely happy with the result. So, when we talk about second-rate, what was second-rate was the fact that they did not have a service before we got into government.

It is great to see the interim satellites that were launched and now the Sky Muster satellites—the second being launched only last week—providing much better services through regional and remote areas for regional and remote users. I saw in a press release that the Shire of Capel Council President, Murray Scott, said:

"The NBN is vital piece of infrastructure for the Shire of Capel providing enhanced connectivity for those who live and work in the region. That is what we did not have under Labor. He also said:

Residents in the Shire’s rural locations—
not overbuilding in areas that already have access to fast broadband like Labor—
will at last have the option of a fast internet service to cater for their family needs and home businesses.

I also saw that Regional Development Australia’s Executive Officer, Charles Jenkins, said:

The South West is going through a period of unprecedented economic, population and tourism growth. Access to better broadband gives local businesses the opportunity to improve productivity through internet enabled innovation, market the region as a tourist destination through social media and open up opportunities for online wine sales both domestically and internationally.

Well, in my electorate of Forrest, we would have been waiting at least another 10 years at best for these types of services that were going to be delivered by Labor. That is what you call second-rate.

Mr KEOGH (Burt) (15:51): I had an early uni job working as an on-site technician for iiNet, and, working through the period of the old dial-up modem and the introduction of DSL, I have to say that my excitement at Labor’s NBN program when announced was sky high, although it has now come crashing down over the last three years, as the Luddites on the other side of this chamber have trashed the NBN with their copper fetish, delays and cost blowouts—aka fraudband.
I have said it before and I will say it again in this place now: if the Prime Minister had been in charge in the 1850s and 60s, Australia would never have gotten the telegraph; he would have been telling us that mail services were more than sufficient. But, as they say, the more things change the more they stay the same, because in the 1953 maiden speech of a certain EG Whitlam, he raised concerns with the number of unsatisfied telephone applications due to the then government's cuts causing a three-year delay on the completion of new telephone exchanges. Sixty years may have passed for residents in Australia's outer suburbs, but it may seem to them like we are stuck in the 1950s with a Liberal government that refuses to meet their needs for 21st century internet access.

According to some results published in *The West Australian*, Perth is officially Australia's broadband wasteland. Perth’s 7.1 megabit figure of average internet access speed is slower than Indonesia's average download speed and well below the national average. In fact, even those great some time Liberal supporters, the WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry, have said that internet reliability is a major issue for WA businesses.

This year I was contacted by a Thornlie business in my electorate, Resurfacing WA. Sharron and Greg need to send and receive high-resolution images in order to be able to provide quotes for their customers for kitchen and bathroom renovations. It is a fantastic small business; it is employing a handful of people in Perth's south-east, which is vitally important as we are a high-unemployment area. But Resurfacing WA has hit a snag.

Thornlie is one of those unlucky suburbs that has been entirely left off the NBN rollout plan. Homes and businesses to the south, west and north of Thornlie at least have a glimmer on the horizon—they still have to wait a number of years to receive their broadband, but at least they are on the rollout. Not so for Thornlie. As in older suburbs across Australia, the existing copper and exchange infrastructure in Thornlie is failing to provide adequate ADSL internet access. For Sharron and Greg, this means running a business from home is almost impossible. The snail-speed internet means they cannot even get their email to work on occasion, and so they are relying on 4G phone hotspots, which is an enormous financial impost to their business.

It also goes without saying that NBN might actually fix this mess if it worked. I have to say that I have gone in to bat for Thornlie; I arranged a meeting with NBN Co., hoping they could provide some clarification to this mess. I asked them why Thornlie has been left off the rollout plan. Their response was to blame Telstra. They told me that it is up to Telstra to get the exchange ready to hand over to them and that they are waiting for that to be dealt with before they can put it into their rollout plan. But when I talk to Telstra, they say, 'Oh, no. It's NBN Co.'s fault.' They blame NBN Co. because they say they set the timetable. It turns out that NBN Co. have not even asked to have that exchange put onto the rollout plan. This is completely unacceptable. While NBN Co. and Telstra bicker and play the blame game, Sharron and Greg can't even send an email, and their business is hurting because of it.

In 2013, Malcolm Turnbull promised that every household and business in Australia would have NBN by the end of 2016 and that the areas with the worst broadband would be prioritised first. Indeed, only a handful of areas in Burt are going to have any hope of NBN by the end of 2016. Homes and businesses across Burt have been forgotten by the Turnbull government's NBN.
To add insult to injury, Cecil Andrews Senior High School in Seville Grove in my electorate, a STEM specialty school which was much feted by the government during the recent election, is in one of these areas. While it moved all its students over to tablets, it is of no use, because the internet connectivity of the school is pretty much useless.

We also have the Forrestdale Business Park, a new industrial development in my electorate. One of my constituents recently contacted me because he found his business is in an internet black hole. He has been left without internet at all—no copper, no fibre. The business park is due to be connected to the NBN apparently in a matter of months, but, under infrastructure provider of last resort and universal service obligations, NBN Co. has a clear responsibility to provide an interim solution until there is a fixed-line rollout for that the business park. But they have been ignoring this responsibility.

This is the model that the Turnbull government has fostered—customer last. And now it is costing us $54 billion. In a 21st century economy, reliable internet is not a luxury; it is a necessity for our homes, education and for business, but 20th century internet access appears to be all we are getting.

Mr GEE (Calare) (15:56): It is a great pleasure to be able to make a contribution to this matter of public importance. I think it is fair to say that the manner in which this MPI has been brought to this place by the member for Greenway has been churlish and very negative. It is been full of confected outrage, but I do give the member for Paterson some credit because, even though I did not agree with a word that she said, she at least used some rhyme in her MPI speech and you do not hear that very often in parliament. Despite the churlish display from the member for Greenway and the very negative nature in which it was brought to this place, there is a silver lining.

It gives me the great opportunity to tell the House about some of the wonderful things that are happening with the NBN rollout in regional Australia. There is no greater example of that than last week when the NBN network was officially switched on in the great city of Orange. I was there for that occasion, when 9,250 homes and businesses in Orange were officially connected to the NBN; the remaining 9,800 homes and businesses will be progressively connected over the next months. That is terrific news for our area. Those new homes and businesses join about 3500 premises that are already connected around the city of Orange, including Glenroi, Lucknow, March, Orange West, Spring Creek, Spring Hill town. There are many other people in our area who are now eligible to connect to the NBN through Sky Muster. We are all very excited about that.

Ms Rowland interjecting—

Mr GEE: The confected outrage continues, Mr Deputy Speaker. Despite the confected outrage, by November the rollout of the NBN on the Orange network will be complete with more than 19,000 Orange homes and businesses able to access fast and reliable broadband. It is important for regional Australia because—the member for Hume nods in agreement—it is all about bridging the great divide between the city and the country and bridging the tyranny of distance.

Where did we have this launch in Orange? At a company called Focus, and their business is selling cloud based data analytics software. It is a great new high-tech company in Orange. They currently employ 110 people, with 35 staff in Orange, but they actually want to double
that. And now that Orange is connected to the NBN they will be able to do that—supplying, developing and growing regional jobs in our area.

For example, I had the pleasure of meeting Phocas CEO, Phil Dodds, there and one of his support managers, Anthony D'Amico, a local man who has finished high school and who is now working as the Phocas support manager. This is a company that services its software all around the world from Orange. So it is an international company doing all of this from Orange in regional New South Wales, all made possible by the NBN.

Mr Vasta: We back people there!

Mr GEE: Yes, we back them—we back them and we support them, and we want more of them to come to country New South Wales. CEO, Phil Dodds, said to me, 'I could have set this business up anywhere in this country, but I chose Orange, and as long as the NBN is there we will be able to develop the business and continue to grow it.' So it is wonderful news for country New South Wales and country Australia. It is a wonderful thing.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you can imagine what a disaster it would have been had the other side had control of such a huge project. We all remember the Building the Education Revolution. We all have school halls which are overpriced and too small—not fit for purpose. There were the pink batts—you name it, Mr Deputy Speaker. But it is not just about high-tech companies. We are a major mining centre; we have Australia's largest gold mine right on the fringes of Orange.

Health: Orange is a major health hub. All over Western New South Wales they are linked up through the internet into Orange so that the professionals in Orange can provide mental health advice. The physicians are all connected as well through that network, so it is very important for regional Australia. And so despite the churlish display by the members opposite, we are delighted that the NBN is rolling out through country Australia.

Mr Stephen Jones: It's the Canobolas killer!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Longman, I will remind members that while this is a free-ranging debate the exuberance is taking off. I remind the shadow minister and member for Whitlam that using his hands as a megaphone is unparliamentary behaviour.

Ms LAMB (Longman) (16:02): Malcolm Turnbull came into government with a promise to get every Australian on the NBN by the end of 2016—not very far away. He promised the NBN would be sooner, he promised it would be faster and he promised it would be cheaper, and what a colossal disappointment he has been. His hypocrisy is now being exposed at every single turn. He is committing a fraud on the Australian people and he is trying to jeopardise our economic future by saddling Australia with second-rate copper and second-rate infrastructure.

And if we are talking about copper, I might add that the Minister for Regional Communications, Senator Nash, said:
The Copper Age was 5,300 years ago, and that is where copper belongs. We need to embrace optic fibre, wireless and satellite so that we have the right mix of infrastructure to take us into the future.

Well, I do not believe the minister has yet hugged this supposed 'right mix of infrastructure'. And why? Because it just does not exist. Well, I am all too ready to embrace infrastructure, but there has to be something to hug in the first place. The Australian people recognise this
focus on second-rate copper and second-rate infrastructure simply represents a lack of vision. In fact, a recent Essential poll of Liberal, Labor and Greens voters reported that barely one in five Australians—that is one in five—considers the NBN to be adequate to meet our future needs.

And what I can say is that the dissatisfaction rate in my electorate of Longman is significantly higher. In fact, I can inform the House that at least one-third of all constituents who call my office—phone, email or walk through that door—are seeking help with their substandard connection. I know this government struggles doing their numbers, but they should at least realise that a dissatisfaction rate of 70 per cent is dire.

Take Nigel, for example. Nigel lives in Ningi. Ningi is a really small, beautiful place between Caboolture and Bribie Island. It is a really beautiful place; it is the sort of place where lots of people are moving to. Unfortunately for Nigel and for many other Australians who live in new premises, the NBN node is installed at the top of his street. Now, the surrounding streets and his neighbours are all connected to the NBN, but guess what? Nigel's house is not. He was told that this is due to the placement of the node. His provider said that the reason is poor infrastructure. It took five months—five months!—before it was resolved. Such delays are not acceptable and they are most certainly not indicative of forward-looking technology.

Let me talk about Stephen. The situation is even worse for Stephen. Let me tell you about him. He lives in Caboolture—not far from Nigel in Ningi. He reviewed the NBN rollout map and then he was advised by the NBN Co that it was all systems go. He was pretty happy, right? He needs the NBN. Unfortunately, Stephen subsequently received a phone call saying—guess what?—no infrastructure exists. There were no nodes and no hub in place; it would not be possible for him to connect via the NBN.

I might observe that information on this rollout map looks pretty lovely: it has pretty colours and interactivity. I mean, it is positively 21st century. But there is one small problem: it is not accurate. This government must stop wasting money on superficialities and just focus on the basics—the basics! We want affordable, high-speed internet with a reliable connection. That is all we want: just the basics! The people of Longman deserve better infrastructure for the 21st century. They currently have infrastructure that is reminiscent of the 1990s.

So whether it is in Burpengary or Bribie Island, or Morayfield, or Caboolture or Woodford, or whether it is a small business, or a student or one of our retirees, from the central coast to regional Australia this government has shown that it does not care about the lived experience of people in Longman, and indeed in the rest of Australia. It has treated them with contempt, and that is shameful!

Dr McVEIGH (Groom) (16:06): It is a pleasure to rise and participate in this MPI debate. As I do so, I reflect upon some of the contributions of those opposite and note that whilst they have acknowledged NBN Co in particular a number of times, they clearly do not listen and it is proven that they do not study their progress reports.

It is important that we return to the facts of this matter. Across all NBN technologies, as evidenced in the last NBN progress report, around 90,000 homes and businesses have purchased an NBN connection over the past four weeks. That compares, as we heard earlier, to just 51,000 paying customers on the NBN during Labor's six years in government. That is
almost twice as much achieved by the coalition government in four weeks as Labor achieved in six years. Today, one in every four Australian premises—3.2 million—are now able to purchase a connection to the NBN, compared to just one in every 50, or 300,000, at the time the coalition came to government three years ago.

As the Prime Minister updated the House earlier, half of Australian households will be connected by June 2017, three-quarters by June 2018 and the project will be completed by 2020. The Prime Minister quite correctly reflected on that as a tremendous corporate turnaround, versus the catastrophe that we saw under Labor. The coalition is achieving a cost-effective approach utilising available technology and infrastructure. Labor would have cost Australians another $30 billion and taken six years longer.

The coalition's approach, as I said, is a practical and cost-effective one that utilises state-of-the-art technology available across the modes that are being put out to Australia householders and businesses. That is particularly important across regional areas such as the one that I represent in Groom. Back in February 2012 the Prime Minister stated, quite rightly, that Labor had failed to explore all of the available options for providing broadband across Australia, but most particularly in the bush. He made it clear from opposition that we would not compromise on the objective of delivering fast broadband to all Australians, wherever they lived. We have clearly been fulfilling that promise.

In the electorate of Groom I am so thrilled that construction works began in the village of Kingsthorpe, outside Toowoomba, just last month, and they are expected to start in the neighbouring townships of Oakey and Cambooya before the end of the year. This signals a concerted push into the rural areas of my electorate. The next construction phase will see a further 4,000 premises being able to access the NBN by the end of the year through various modes.

The initial time for works to be finalised in Groom was 2020, but under the Turnbull government we have accelerated works such that in the entire Groom electorate anyone who wants to order an NBN service will be able to do so by the end of next year. Therefore, we in Groom and the Toowoomba region are one of the most connected regional areas in Australia. I say to those opposite, who I would suggest have collectively neither an understanding nor an appreciation of regional Australia, that that means a tremendous opportunity for Toowoomba and Darling Downs businesses, which now have endless possibilities for growth and innovation using the NBN network. That, together with roads, airports and inland rail adds to the infrastructure that people in our electorate of Groom can benefit from. That is an example of the Turnbull coalition government implementing state-of-the-art solutions, affordable and practical solutions in our approach to the national broadband network.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The discussion has concluded.

COMMITTEES

Human Rights Committee

Report

Mr GOODENOUGH (Moore) (16:11): by leave—It gives me great pleasure to table this first report of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights in the 45th parliament. Given this is the committee's first report of the new parliament, I would like to take some time to remind the House of the important role that this committee plays in supporting the parliament's legislative process and reporting on human rights. As the new committee chair, I would also like to acknowledge and welcome new and continuing members of the committee.

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights is a scrutiny committee which examines and reports to the parliament on the compatibility of bills and legislative instruments with Australia's international human rights obligations under the seven international human rights treaties ratified by Australia. This is in accordance with its legislative mandate under the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011. This is a technical examination and does not assess the broader merits or policy objectives of particular measures. The committee also has the ability to examine current acts and to conduct broader inquiries into human rights matters referred to it by the Attorney-General.

The committee's purpose is to enhance understanding of and respect for human rights in Australia and to ensure appropriate consideration of human rights issues in legislative and policy development.

The committee seeks to achieve these outcomes through constructive engagement with proponents of legislation and the parliament more broadly. This is often undertaken through a dialogue model in which the committee corresponds with relevant ministers and officials to identify and explore questions of human rights compatibility. The committee also reports its findings and recommendations, and in doing so strives to provide reports that clearly signpost the committee's analytical framework and the content of various human rights.

The reports are intended to clearly set out the human rights analysis of legislation, and ultimately provide clear assessments of the compatibility of legislation that are accessible to members of parliament and to the public more broadly.

Most human rights are able to be limited if there is a proper justification for doing so in accordance with international human rights law. The committee's analytical framework therefore focuses primarily on identifying if a proposed measure might have the effect of limiting the enjoyment of a specific right and, second, whether any such limitation may be regarded as permissible or justified.

The vast majority of bills and instruments considered by the committee do not raise human rights concerns because they either do not engage any human rights or in fact promote rights.

Of the legislation that may or does limit human rights, the committee is often able to assess the limitation as justifiable under international human rights law. In these cases, the committee generally reports on the legislation simply by identifying it as not giving rise to human rights concerns.

The committee's approach generally focuses on those bills and instruments which raise human rights concerns and which have not been adequately addressed in a statement of compatibility.

These remarks I hope draw attention to the great importance of ensuring that statements of compatibility for bills and instruments provide considered and evidence based assessments of
how any potential limitations on human rights may regarded as justified. Statements of compatibility are a critical tool for the committee for an adequate dialogue with legislation proponents and parliament more broadly.

For the benefit of those charged with the task of preparing statements of compatibility, I would emphasise the importance of clearly setting out the legitimate objective of the legislation and the manner in which human rights have been considered when framing the legislation. This is crucial when, in order to achieve a particular objective, certain rights are to be limited.

The committee expects that where rights are limited the statement of compatibility will demonstrate that the limitation is rationally connected to, which is to say will be effective to achieve, its stated objective, and explain whether the limitation is proportionate to that objective. The statement should also set out any safeguards that will be applied to ensure that any limitations on human rights are implemented in the least restrictive form. In this respect, I note that a further aim of the requirement for a statement of compatibility is to ensure that human rights are considered throughout the entire policy development and implementation process.

In this new parliament, the committee will continue to build on its previous work by systematically reporting to parliament on the human rights compatibility of legislation. Clearly, parliamentary committees such as this one have an important role to play in informing parliamentarians about the human rights implications of legislation and ensuring better understanding of human rights more broadly.

I encourage my fellow members and others to examine the committee's reports to better inform their understanding of the committee's deliberations.

This report considers bills introduced into the parliament from 30 August to 15 September 2016 and the legislative instruments received from 15 April 2016 to 18 August 2016. The report also includes the committee's consideration of two responses to matters raised in previous reports.

With these comments, I commend the committee's Report 7 of 2016 to the chamber.

**BILLS**

**Fair Work Amendment (Respect for Emergency Services Volunteers) Bill 2016**

Returned from Senate

Message received from the Senate returning the bill without amendment or request.

**BUSINESS**

Rearrangement

Mr FLETCHER (Bradfield—Minister for Urban Infrastructure) (16:18): I move:

That business intervening before order of the day No. 5, government business, be postponed until a later hour this day.

Question agreed to.

**GOVERNOR-GENERAL’S SPEECH**

Consideration resumed of the motion:
That the following Address in Reply to the speech of His Excellency the Governor-General be agreed to:

May it please Your Excellency:

We, the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (16:19): Before I call the honourable member for Dobell, I remind the House that this is the honourable member's first speech, and I ask the House to extend to her the usual courtesies.

Ms McBRIDE (Dobell) (16:19): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and congratulations on your election. Today, I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Ngunawal and Ngambri people, as well as those of the electorate I have come to represent, namely the Darkinjung and the Guringai people.

I would like to recognise the contribution of my predecessor, Mrs Karen McNamara, the former member for Dobell, and thank Mrs McNamara for her good wishes. And, on behalf of the people of Dobell, I would like to share our special appreciation for the first and longest-serving member for Dobell, a minister in the Keating government and my friend, Michael Lee, who was, and is, a strong advocate for our region. Thank you for being here, Michael. I also acknowledge my friend and Central Coast colleague Senator Deb O'Neill, who has joined us on the floor.

I have always been part of a tribe—the second of eight McBride kids—five boys and three girls. It was the day-to-day negotiations of who was going to clean up the kitchen that taught me the value of acceptance, tolerance, perseverance and the very literal meaning of not blowing up the place!

Growing up my family moved around a lot, changing schools seven times. I was lucky enough to live in the inner west, Western Sydney and Nauru—which, looking back through the eyes of a six-year-old, was a tropical island paradise—before finally settling on the Central Coast. When I first came to the coast, it was the late 1980s. Big hair was in, acid-wash jeans were ‘must have’ items, the Parramatta Eels were winning premierships and John Farnham’s You’re the Voice was the No. 1 hit.

I can still remember how alive I felt going for morning surfs at Soldiers Beach before school with my dad and my brothers. With the sun slowly rising from the east, cool sand under our feet and crashing waves around us, we would jump on our boards and plunge headfirst into the vast, salty water of the Pacific Ocean. Later, those surfing trips we went on when we first moved to the coast would become analogous to how we lived our lives as adults—bold, confident and free.

Like so many young people on the coast in the 1990s, I had to leave the area to study. At the time we did not have a local university I could attend to gain the skills and training I so badly wanted and needed to become a pharmacist. My friends and I did not have local jobs to support us through our years of training, or even the option to come back and work for local industries. So, once I graduated, I moved again. Throughout my twenties I lived and worked in Forbes, North Sydney, Newtown, Berkeley Vale, Belmont and Oxford in the UK. I would
have kept moving except that one day I got a call from my friend Toni about a job going on the coast. I packed my bag to come home.

As a pharmacist—the only pharmacist in this parliament—I have had the privilege of working in health for 20 years, in mental health for 15 years and at my local community hospital in Wyong for the last decade. During this time I have had a front row seat to the changes that have been happening on the coast. I have witnessed the area's booming population growth first hand and the life and energy it funnels into our community. I have also witnessed the strain these changes can place on our infrastructure and local services—the struggle of families living in suburbs and towns and villages without the ability to support their most basic needs. However, this does not define who we are. In Wyong Hospital pharmacy, despite constant pressure on the department we worked together and commissioned the cancer care pharmacy, so chemotherapy is now manufactured on site and patients like my friend Laurie can have treatment locally and discuss their concerns with expert oncology pharmacists. As a former councillor with Wyong Shire, despite the budget being stretched, working with Labor council members Lisa Matthews and Doug Vincent we had the bonds for not-for-profits waived so community groups like 2261 Out of the Box could host family feasts without somebody having to put hundreds of dollars on their credit card, and there is being a volunteer director of the Wyong community Bendigo Bank, which filled a gaping hole left by the big four in our town and this year, again, stepped up in helping to 'Kick Start the Heart', the only regional netball club in the inaugural Netball New South Wales Premier League.

While modest, these achievements are examples of the type of work many thousands of people on the coast are doing each and every day to better our community. We have a population to rival nearby regions; we have the ability and the will to change our area for the better; and, as a group, we have decided that now it is our time to thrive. In much the same way that I am no longer the person I was all those years ago, Dobell is not the same as it was in the eighties or the nineties. To many people the electorate is nothing more than a name on a list and a set of lines on a map, but to me, my family and our friends it is our home town. It is the bustling beachfront cafes at Wamberal, the cycling tracks around the Tuggerah Lakes, the beautiful Red Gum walking trail in the Wyrrabalong National Park, the charm of the rural townships of Dooralong and Cedar Brush, where my great-great-grandfather was a pioneer, and the region's natural beauty that first drew us to the coast. It is the reason we never want to leave.

The population that once sat just under 200,000 has grown to 330,000 and is soon to be a booming 400,000—the ninth-largest urban centre in Australia. Our region now boasts 21,000 local businesses, a university, major teaching hospitals and a growing number of new homes. Our proximity to major cities, population and growth have turned a former holiday destination into a serious regional player and a community with a powerful voice. Yet, sitting along the overwhelming natural beauty of the region and the energy and vitality of its people is a jarring social reality—the harsh truth of disadvantage. Unemployment and a lack of local jobs are real and persistent problems.

The coast's greatest strength is its people. Dobell is an area with one of the highest populations of young people in the country, which means we have a great potential for developing tomorrow's leaders. However, the latest job figures for the Central Coast reveal
that over 16 per cent of 15- to 24-year-olds are unemployed, compared with the national rate, which sits at 12.7 per cent. That is 16 per cent too many. In an area where local jobs are limited, it is of real concern that only one in two students have the chance to finish high school. For the many working people who call the coast home, one in four travel outside the area for work. This daily commute can take anywhere between two and four hours. Locals will tell you it has not really improved all that much since I was young, and it is two to four hours that people could be spending with their friends and loved ones and not travelling for work.

However, it is one thing to know the issues and another to do something about them, which is one of the reasons our region would be best served by a Labor government. Only Labor believes in reducing inequality and promoting greater social and economic equity by providing individuals and families with the tools they desperately need to make a positive change in their community. With Labor, we can help raise high school completion rates through the provision of a quality education supported by full Gonski funding. Our young people are motivated and talented and deserve the same start as all kids in life. With Labor, our business community can flourish, with the support of better infrastructure and policies that attract industry and generate local jobs. Our business sector is smart, dynamic and community minded. It does not need this government throwing obstacles in its path, like the NBN, the roll-out of which in my region has been nothing short of disastrous. Labor created Medicare, and only Labor will protect Medicare. As a pharmacist, too often I saw patients and those who loved them forced to make decisions that no-one should have to make about skipping medications or pathology tests because they simply could not afford to pay. Our young people, families and the elderly can and must be able to continue to access the best in health care rather than simply what they can afford, through universal health care in the form of Medicare and the PBS.

The last 10 years of my working life have been dedicated to Wyong Hospital, a public hospital in a low-socioeconomic area that provides quality care to thousands of locals. Today, Wyong Hospital, which was built by our community for our community and belongs to our community, is slated for privatisation by the NSW Liberal government. So that you can understand how important this hospital is to our community and the reason we feel it should stay in public hands, I want to share with you a little about how it came to be.

In the 1950s, with a growing population and no local hospital, a group of dedicated locals banded together, fundraised endlessly and worked tirelessly to find a community solution to a very real community problem. In fact, it was 1956 when the first Wyong Hospital committee meeting was held, and 1980 before the first patient was admitted to the newly constructed 100-bed hospital.

Keith O’Connell who was a Labor member for Peats at the time was so impressed with the dedication of locals with support of this hospital he said:

It amply demonstrates that when we work for the community, we should not be daunted by delays, frustrations or obstacles placed in our path, as tenacity and determination will overcome such problems. In this area of patient centred care, why are conservative governments in such a rush to retreat from public hospitals? More than balance sheets, KPIs and so-called health outcomes, public hospitals in regional areas care for our community. They offer us hope when we are sick; they provide expert care to newborns and empower new mums; they give us a safe place to stay
when we need refuge; and they are the rooms where we mourn when we say our last goodbyes.

To the residents who held gymkhanas, springtime fetes, doorknock appeals and carols by candlelight festivals, to the Wyong Bowling Club, RSL Club, Toukley-Noraville Progress Association, the Toukley Chamber of Commerce; to the Wyong Hospital Committee, Wyong Hospital Trust, Wyong Hospital Auxiliary and the Tuggerah Lakes Auxiliary; to the everyday members of our community who fought for almost 30 years for our hospital to be built and are now fighting to keep it in public hands, I am here to tell you all that I believe that Wyong Hospital must stay our public hospital. I support you when you say we want to and must keep it in public hands.

Whilst on the topic of health, I thought I would take this opportunity to speak about an area that I have worked in for 15 years and that is very close to my heart, mental health. As you may know, October is Mental Health Month, this week is Mental Health Week and yesterday was World Mental Health Day. Each month, week and day that we mark as a community to recognise mental health is important, to focus on how far we have come and how far we have to go. As a pharmacist, mental health worker and carer, I will use this platform so that in the future those living with mental illness and those who love and care for them will live better. Despite the barriers broken down, the programs launched, the modest boosts in funding, stigma persists and lives are being lost.

According to the National Mental Health Commission, 'Each year one in five Australians will experience mental illness'. They go on to say:

Over a lifetime, nearly half of the Australian population will experience mental illness … Less than half will access treatment.

The NMHC has noted that in the last decade the number of Australians taking their own lives has increased to more than 2,800 a year, which is more than twice the number of people killed on our roads. This needs to change, across our neighbourhoods, towns, cities, regions and across the country, so that lives, like that of my friend Graeme, are not lost.

As a young pharmacist I took a locum post on the other side of the world and found myself working in mental health but what made me stay was working with highly motivated and dedicated social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists, nurses and psychiatrists who, working together, each and every day could change lives. My firsthand experience working in health for almost 20 years is of hardworking and capable staff, who do a great job in very difficult circumstances.

In Australia today, where you are born, where you grow up, where you live, where you work and where you age matter. The social determinants of health are now well understood; however, there is a gap between the rhetoric and the reality. I would like to share with you a quote from Michael Marmot, President of the World Medical Association:

Why treat people and send them back to the conditions that made them sick?

When he made this observation, Professor Sir Michael Marmot was a medical student at an outpatient psychiatric clinic at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney. It was the 1960s, and the psychiatrist at the clinic had instructed a patient to 'stop taking blue pills and try these red pills', made an appointment for a month's time and sent the patient, still a picture of misery, home. Dr Marmot goes on to say that the idea that this patient was suffering from red-
pill deficiency was not compelling. You cannot separate a patient and their condition from life's circumstances.

Fortunately, our health care and mental health services have improved considerably since the 1960s. However, I was part of too many case conferences where the only option for discharge accommodation was to hand a patient a telephone book and ask them to try to find somewhere to live. This must change. In Australia in 2016 we should not, from any hospital or any health service, discharge anyone to a car, a couch, a cave or 'No fixed abode'.

Joining me in the fight for better health care, improved infrastructure for local families and businesses, and the opportunity to create a thriving local community were 300 dedicated individuals who door-knocked 50,000 homes and worked tirelessly on the campaign to win back Dobell for Labor. To those who were there from the beginning for the 28-day 2013 campaign, Jay Suvaal and Stacey Reay: thank you.

Thank you to the Labor leadership team, Bill and Tanya; to Albo, for the best backyard barbie; and to Tony, Chris, Jenny, Jason, Mark, Sharon, Ed and Katy, for your support of the Dobell campaign and commitment to the Central Coast. To NSW Labor, Kaila Murnain and Pat Garcia, for backing talented women—and men—in winnable seats, thank you.

To the 2016 campaign team of David Dobson, Jack Power, Peter Duggan, Andrew Scott, Peyton Roberts-Garnsey and Jake Allen, and all the Young Labor volunteers, Andrew, Jack, Edward, Josh, Vanessa, Siobhan, Dominic, Sean, Claudia, Daniel, Shane, Caitlin, Jacob, Zac and our little Labor rising star MacKenna: we would not have been the No. 1 Labor team for door-knocks across Australia without your tireless efforts.

To my Central Coast Labor colleagues David Harris, David Mehan, Yasmin Catley and Kathy Smith, and Senator Deborah O'Neill and Pat Conroy: I am looking forward to working closely with you for our region. I also acknowledge Anne Charlton, Labor's formidable candidate in Robertson, who fought a tough campaign for the coast. To Jill Hall, the former member for Shortland and tireless campaigner for our community: thank you for your enthusiastic support. To all the branch members, Central Coast Community Union Alliance and supporters across the Central Coast—I know many of you are watching with Jill right now at The Entrance Leagues Club today: thank you.

My nanna was a proud shoppiie and would have been overwhelmed by the support of the union movement. To Gerard Hayes and my union, the HSU: I will stand up for healthcare workers across Australia and in Dobell, so they can care for us. Thank you to Steve Butler and the ETU NSW Branch; to Glen Williams and the MUA Newcastle; to Tony Sheldon and the TWU; to Tara Moriarty and United Voice; to the ACTU and Unions NSW; and to Sally and Mark's not-so-secret army, Salim and Aarin, and the entire Build a Better Future Campaign teams for Dobell and Robertson.

To Denis Leahy, Pharmacy Guild of Australia New South Wales Branch Vice President, my friend and mentor: your work, over many decades, with those affected by alcohol and other drugs is inspiring and is saving lives. To friends and colleagues at Wyong Hospital and across Central Coast Local Health District; to Sue Evans, Director of Nursing and Midwifery; and to David Gilbert, Deputy Director of Pharmacy: it was very difficult to leave. But now it is my turn to stand up for you and our hospital in this place.

CHAMBER
To Josh Brown, for setting up the office and guiding me through these first few months: congratulations on your election to Upper Hunter Shire Council. Your community will be well served by you.

A big shout out to the team in the Dobell EO: Richard, Heather, Jake, Peyton and Lisa. We make a great team, and I thank you all for your hard work.

Thank you to my friends in the public gallery today. To Amanda Galbraith, Pharmacy Guild of Australia ACT Branch President: I was very lucky to meet you on the first day of pharmacy school. To Jo Sharpe: your clinical expertise and friendship have taught me a lot. To Di Selby, the Central Coast Heart, and all my friends over thirty years of netball on the coast: launching the Heart has been a boost to women’s sport and our region, and I wish you the very best for the future. To friends who have helped me so much and could not be here today, Renee and Megan: your friendship keeps me grounded, and I will be back on court next season. To Roland: thank you for your calls from London. Your political insight is invaluable. I am looking forward to you moving back home next year. To Maria: thank you for believing in me when I doubt myself.

To my parents—my mother, Barbara, who is here today, and my father, Grant: your love for my siblings and me knows no bounds, and we are forever grateful. Many years ago, my dad told my brother Leo: ‘You can do anything in life, but you can't do everything. We chose to have all you children over everything else.’ To the children who came before 'everything else' and their families, for your support, always—to Will, Karin, Gabe, Gus, Isabel and Vincent; to Nick, and my god-daughter Frances, who are here today; to Urs, Patrick and Oscar; to Eddi, Ling, Finn and Iona; to Leo, Kel, Flo and Johnny; to Aimee and Serge and Iggi and Dejana: thank you.

Finally, to the Central Coast: I am humbled by your trust in me. I will not let you down.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Vasta): I too would like to congratulate the member for Dobell, and I wish her all the very best in the 45th Parliament. Before I call the honourable member for Brand, I remind the House that this is the honourable member’s first speech, and I ask the House to extend to her the usual courtesies.

Ms MADELEINE KING (Brand) (16:44): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and congratulations on your appointment to that role. I respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we meet, the Ngunawal people, and I acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of my home, the Whadjuk people of Nyungar country. I pay my respects to elders past and present, and I am grateful always for the grace, good humour and thoughtfulness of Indigenous leaders in our community who seek to help this nation reconcile its dark history so that we might together create a better future for the first peoples of this vast and beautiful country.

My name is Madeleine Mary Harvie King, and I stand here today the elected representative of the people of the city of Kwinana and the city of Rockingham. Together these cities make up the federal seat of Brand. These are the places of my childhood. These are the places I call home. Brand is a place of remarkable diversity, with some of the most beautiful beaches in the country, including pristine Singleton, Golden Bay, Secret Harbour and Anstey Beach in the south, up to the industrial heartland of Naval Base in the north, which has been a major driver of economic development in WA since the 1950s. Brand stretches west over Cockburn
Sound to Garden Island, home to Australia's largest Navy Base, HMAS Stirling, and where the Swan River Colony was first declared in 1829. To the east of Brand, rural and semi-rural life coexists with one of the fastest-growing suburbs in the country: Baldivis, a place where I used to go bushwalking with my dad and where brumbies would run, or so Dad would say.

It is the singular and greatest honour of my life to have been elected by the genuine, honest and hardworking people of Brand to represent my home town and its surrounds in this the federal parliament of Australia. It is sometimes hard to reconcile the sandgroper kid born in Calista—growing up in Shoalwater Bay, enjoying a childhood without care and often without shoes, running through the dunes to the beach or riding bikes through the suburbs with my school friends—with my becoming a member of parliament, but here I am. I am very proud to be here and I am very proud to be the federal member for Brand. I am excited by the challenges to come and I am humbled by my election result.

I and the Labor Party owe the voters of Brand a great deal for delivering the first safe Labor seat in WA for 15 years. This significant result on 2 July demonstrates that the community shares my personal convictions, which reflect those core Labor values of fairness, equality, equity and inclusion. Like the people of Brand, I believe in an Australia that is a confident; progressive and enterprising nation, valuing its high performers whilst recognising that those less fortunate and vulnerable are equally valued and deserving of help provided with respect and dignity.

I also share these values with my three Labor colleagues who have preceded me. They have each made a giant contribution to the nation, to WA and to the seat of Brand, held by Labor since its creation in 1984. The Honourable Wendy Fatin was the first member for Brand and was also the first Western Australian woman to serve in this place. Wendy Fatin was a minister in the Hawke and Keating governments and I thank her for her support and counsel.

The Honourable Kim Beazley AC was the second member for Brand. As defence minister he implemented the two oceans policy which would ensure the Australian Navy operated as a self-reliant force in the Indian Ocean, as well as in the Pacific. It was a tectonic shift in policy, which saw HMAS Stirling on Garden Island expand dramatically and become the largest and most significant naval base in the nation. This has had great benefits for Rockingham, which supports the naval presence and has welcomed Defence personnel from across Australia into the community over many years. As the member for Brand, Kim Beazley served this nation as Labor leader and Leader of the Opposition. I thank Kim for his continued support, and for launching my campaign. I can tell you, my friends, when Kim Beazley launches your campaign, you know it is launched. He was spot-on in his prediction for how the vote would go in Brand.

The Honourable Gary Gray AO was the third member for Brand, and my immediate predecessor. Many of you know Gary, and many have served with him in previous parliaments. He has served the ALP as its national secretary and has been a tremendous contributor to this party. Gary's contribution to the economic development of WA and Australia through his work on resources and energy policy is well recognised throughout the industry and across the political spectrum. He was a tireless advocate for the community of Brand and worked hard for it every day.

It was my very great honour to have worked for Gary in Prime Minister Julia Gillard's Labor government. I thank Gary for his encouragement and support. Gary and his family ran
the Hillman Primary School booth on polling day. His wife, sons and in-laws—the fantastic Walsh family—all helped out. Although recovering from her first chemotherapy dose, Gary's wonderful wife, Deb Walsh, was also out on polling day. I only wish I could give as much support to Deb in her cancer battle as she, her family and her husband have given to me.

Colleagues, I am the youngest daughter of John Harvie Morris and Diana Eve Pizer; the youngest sister of Rebecca, Peter, John, and Matthew; and sister-in-law of Bronwyn, Robyn and Lara. I am the aunt of Levi, Hannah, Izak, Jacob, Eli, Eva and Alex—the Morris club. I am the very fortunate wife of James Murdoch King. I am so pleased that my mum, Diana, my brothers Peter and John, my nephew Eli and the love of my life, Jamie, are all here today, as is my oldest friend, Vanessa. We met when we were six.

Today, 11 October, is my dad's birthday. If John Morris were still walking this earth, he would be 90. But after a good and fulfilled life of service, love, faith and family, Dad died three years ago. I think of him every day with happiness, knowing that he was enormously proud of each of his children, and that he would enjoy being here today—perhaps slightly surprised at my new job, but immensely proud. He and Mum have always encouraged me to do all that I can, and I am grateful for the support and love they have always given me. My father grew up in England during a time of war and witnessed the violence and fear that comes with it, hiding from bombs with his mother and sister under the kitchen table and watching his mother help put out the fires caused by the incendiary bombs that fell across Plymouth. As soon as he could, he followed his father into the war, joining the Royal Navy and serving as a radar operator on the Arctic Russian convoys.

My grandfather, Major George Harvie Morris OBE, was a Royal Marine in the commando unit of the Royal Navy. He served in the Great War and World War II and, along with my grandmother, his wife, Ellen Higgins, was among that most confronted of generations that lived through the turmoil and utter catastrophe of Europe in the first half of the 20th century. Years later, from the distance and the relative peace we enjoy, it is difficult to fathom the destruction and violence that wasted the lives of so many millions of people. But we get some impression of these dark times from the truly shocking images we see of the current conflict in Syria. Without doubt, peace is hard work, but work at it we must. There is no prosperity without peace, and the world is diminished while such brutal and inhumane conflicts continue.

Like many, my dad left post-war Britain, and arrived on a boat in Fremantle in 1956. He was among the first employees in the newly-built BP oil refinery in Kwinana.

My mum is a Perth girl, born and raised in West Perth. Together they built a house on a sand dune in Shoalwater Bay. Together they built a home and a future for my sister, my brothers and me. As well as raising five beachcombers, my mum, Diana, owned and ran a drapery store on Railway Terrace, Rockingham. It was called The Family Traders. My nan, Peggy Pizer, worked in the shop too, and together Mum and Nan sold all manner of haberdashery. I am empowered by all the people who tell me regularly across the district of Brand that mum's shop was the best in town.

I enjoyed an education at the local Safety Bay and Rockingham Beach primary schools and at Safety Bay Senior High School. I went on to university, where a whole new world of opportunity opened up to me. However, sadly, this path is not one well travelled in the community that I represent, which has among the lowest educational attainment rates in the
nation. When I first went to The University of Western Australia, I was quite unaware that my
being there was something unusual for a young person from Safety Bay. That this situation
has not changed much in 25 years troubles me deeply.

I know much more now than I did then. I understand better the barriers that exist for many
in our community and how they hinder people's ability to access further education. No good
can come from governments putting barriers in the way of aspiring young people. The very
idea of exorbitant fees for university degrees is one such barrier. It has a limiting effect on
people. It pre-empts the aspirations of many by causing them to think they will never get
there; that they will never be able to afford it. And, by constraining access, by constraining
aspirations, we build the very ivory towers we have long sought to pull down.

University education gave me opportunities that might not have been available without
Labor's commitment to opening up access to higher education in Australia. I want to ensure
that a young person growing up where I grew up has at least the same opportunit
ies today that
I had. I want to ensure that young people enjoy a diversity of choices in how they build their
future.

Of course, as well as education and training, there is a real need to provide meaningful jobs
for people. With the construction phase of the WA mining boom at an end, unemployment
and under-employment is affecting families across Brand, indeed across the whole of Western
Australia. Successive state governments in WA have supported the need for an outer harbour
to be constructed in Cockburn Sound to ensure the further economic development of
WA.

First raised in the 1960s, it is only in recent years that bipartisan support has withered as
the Liberal state government has focused on other, mainly road based, priorities. Progressing
the construction of the Kwinana outer harbour will unlock latent potential across existing
industries and attract new industries into the area, along with an estimated 25,000 new direct
jobs. Support for a Kwinana outer harbour ticks all the boxes. It will help grow the local, state
and national economies, it will create long-term jobs, it will encourage innovation through the
application of modern technology to port operations, and it puts people first by supporting a
sustainable industrial base to underpin the flourishing communities in Brand.

Once again, Kwinana stands to be at the heart of advancing the further economic
development of WA. I will be right behind this effort, and will do all I can to bring this game-
changing project to fruition for the benefit of the electorate of Brand and the people of
Western Australia. Failure to recognise this project for all that it is will ultimately mean the
state and the nation misses out on this long-term beneficial and vital infrastructure.

In my decade-long career at The University of Western Australia, I worked as a research
contracts lawyer; Chief of Staff; Director of Centenary Celebrations and, most recently, as the
founding executive and Chief Operating Officer of the Perth USAsia Centre. This work has
brought me into the orbit of many leaders in their fields—great scientists, educators,
academics, policy experts, professionals across many fields, astounding artists, and managers
and supporters of the arts community. Among many things, my experience has taught me the
pivotal role science and research has had in the development of Western Australia.

We should remind ourselves that without collaboration between scientists, government and
farmers in the 1930s to develop dry-farming techniques and high-yield and disease resistant
grains, WA wheat farmers would not be about to produce—despite frosts—a likely record
crop, half of the entire wheat crop of this nation. The lion's share of this great grain will be exported to our near neighbours and friends in Indonesia. And this significant export venture sets sail from Kwinana Beach, where the iconic blue wheat silos of CBH overlook Cockburn Sound. It is the largest grain-exporting and handling facility in the nation and is a constant reminder of the value of agriculture to Western Australia.

Research and development has always driven the growth of WA's largest commodity export industries of resources and agriculture. And it is important that this country supports the science and research that will be required to care for our land and oceans, to get the most from these resources without desolating the soil, the air and the sea.

In my work, I have been most fortunate to see the beginnings of astounding science projects. Take the visionary work of Professor Peter Quinn, leading a team at the forefront of international efforts to move forward by looking backward in time, considering questions no less fundamental than: how did the universe, the stars and the galaxies form and evolve? They are the builders of the Square Kilometre Array radio telescope. Under the leadership of the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research, the world's largest public science data project is happening in Perth and in the radio quiet of the vast Murchinson, where you can lie on your back at night and see the Emu in the Sky constellation as clear as our Indigenous sisters and brothers have seen it for over 40,000 years.

In my work, I have met inspiring people, such as Professor Gia Parish, who conducts research around the world in advanced sensing technologies, such as chemical sensors for environmental and industrial monitoring; while teaching the next generation of engineers; while taking on extensive administrative duties as head of school; and while raising two young girls and participating in her community. She is an inspiration.

These are the people who work in our universities. These are the people who are building the potential of this nation today, tomorrow, and into the future. Their work and their service should be acknowledged and celebrated much more than it is. Without them, we all miss out on Australia being all that it can be.

If we can understand the importance of science, technology and research then we must also appreciate and understand the importance and value of the arts and humanities. They provide us with exciting and often new ways to give us a 'sense of place'. In turbulent and challenging environments, arts and humanities can provide the bedrock of tolerance by fostering a better understanding of the diversity of thought, knowledge and cultures that swirl around each of us. Through the arts in particular, we are challenged to look more closely at how we see ourselves and others—reimagining ourselves, our place in our communities and our place in the world.

Western Australians, with the desert at our back and the vast Indian Ocean before us, are widely thought to have the most isolated capital city in the world: Perth. But I disagree with this because, truth be told, we are the most connected Australian capital city. You just need to consider that more than 60 per cent of the world's population lives in arguably the most dynamic region on earth, directly to our north. Perth is the gateway to the Indo-Pacific. This is no secret in Western Australia, with businesses actively building relationships throughout the region for many decades—relationships that create opportunities in trade and relationships that create opportunities for closer engagement with our regional neighbours.
Closer to Perth than Canberra, civil society in Jakarta, through its Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia, led by Ambassador Dino Patti Djalal, discuss as we do how Australia and Indonesia and all South-East Asian nations might work together in policy development so that together we can meet the challenges of the region: nutrition, infrastructure, education, security, energy security, pollution and the effects of climate change. Our common concerns and our common goals bring us together.

There has been a theory floating around that David Bowie may have been the glue that held the universe together and that our geopolitical landscapes and our lives within them were perhaps a little more comprehensible before this visionary artist died at the age of 69 in the early days of 2016. This theory reflects a feeling of bewilderment for many; upset as popular cultural icons have died unexpectedly; disbeliefing as the nation that fought to save a western European civilisation elected to walk away from its incredible legacy; and, most seriously, shocked at the rise of an odious kind of politics in the US that seeks to harness those most human traits of reservation and resistance to change, magnify and distort these feelings into a disturbing wave of dread and mistrust that ventures into hate. We know these politics and we know that at their root is fear. Fear is a tremendous and dangerous weapon, and its use is as old as the hills of this, the oldest continent on the face of the earth. In one way or another, fear of change infects every generation, and every generation laments the degeneration and ruin of the times.

My husband's great-grandfather Sir Walter Murdoch observed in the late 1930s that we spend too much time seeking for a continuing city in a fluid world where it can never be found, and that:
The fear we have to conquer if we are going to seek wisdom is the fear of change.
A self-confessed conservative, Sir Walter felt:
… like kneeling down daily and praying to be delivered from this shameful fear of change; and praying that my country may be delivered from it.
Sometimes I feel like kneeling down myself and joining Sir Walter in his mission.

History shows us that we as Australians should not fear change but show the faith in ourselves, and in each other, that will allow this country to continue to forge its own progressive path. After all, we led the way in women's political rights as the first country to give women the right to stand for parliament, we introduced a minimum wage and fair and safe working conditions for all, we have built a stable multicultural society and we built and will always protect our system of universal healthcare that is the envy of the world.

It is hard to reconcile these great legacies of our progressive nation with it now being held back on the issue of marriage equality due to a fear of change. My sister Rebecca Morris and her life partner, Robyn Rollston, have been together much longer than the 17 years I have been married, yet our country does not treat our loving relationships equally. This is not right. As representatives of the people, we may do well to consider that a majority of Australians choose to live and let others live and are accepting of social change.

I only have to look to my grandmother's life to know how fear and societal norms constrain people and provide them with stark choices. My grandmother, Hannah Margaret Pizer, or Peggy as she was known, was born in Coolgardie and grew up in Kalgoorlie and Meekatharra. With the love and support of her parents, Peggy Pizer raised my mother as a
single parent. Perth in the thirties and forties was a conservative place and the societal pressure on my Nan and her family to give up their baby for adoption must have been overwhelming. But, lucky for me, love won out and the Pizer family rallied around Peggy and her baby daughter, my mum, Diana. It was a truly courageous choice. But it was not without cost and not without sacrifice. Peggy Pizer was an important part of my life. She lived with our family in Shoalwater Bay since 1965 and died nearly 25 years ago. As I drive between Kwinana and Rockingham and pass her final resting place in the East Rockingham Pioneer Cemetery, I always think of her.

There are many people to thank for so many things on my journey to this place, including lifelong friends from Safety Bay: Vanessa Bonjolo, now Vanessa Buttiegieg; Ross Walker; Natalie Harker, now Natalie Parry; Sacha Winzenreid, who dropped in from Jakarta on election day and called in the quickest scrutineer result of the night; and Kim Thompson, who was always the best hockey player I have had the pleasure of playing with.

I thank my understanding teammates on the hockey field—the University Soaks Scrigglers. I have played hockey with these great women for years, some since I was 18. Catching up with them and playing this great game is one of the most fun things I do. My WA masters hockey teammates played Queensland today in the national championships in Hobart. Sadly it was a draw, but I guess I will take that against the Q. I started representing WA in masters hockey seven years ago. It is a wonderful community and you had better believe how fiercely competitive these women are. I would like to have been with them all in Hobart this week, but there is the small matter of parliament!

My thanks go to the local state members across the electorate of Brand: Mark MacGowan, the member for Rockingham, Leader of the Opposition and next Labor Premier of Western Australia; Roger Cook, the member for Kwinana; and Paul Papalia, the member for Warnbro. I am grateful for the support and help provided by the presidents and members of the local Labor branches across Brand. They are champions of our cause. My thanks also go to Peter Tinley, the WA Labor President and to Lenda Oshalem and Patrick Gorman for their leadership and to all of the state office. With the five new WA Labor member for Brand—Burt, Cowan, Fremantle and Perth—we have together started something big. I thank the leadership and membership of the labour movement and particularly the SDA, the AWU and the TWU for their support. EMILY’s List and Perth Labor Women are important organisations that I support, and I have enjoyed theirs.

The election result in Brand is testament to the calibre of the people that worked on the campaign: Andrew O'Donnell; the amazing brother and sister team that is Georgia Tree and Callan Tree; Helen Hansen; Bridget Edwards; Amy Le Ray; John and Peg Cotter; the many volunteers that helped making calls in the community and knocking on doors, among them some from Young Labor Unity; and the many Margarets of the Brand campaign. And, Dennis Terrell, I have not forgotten I owe you many coffees! Also Mike Barnett, the former member for Rockingham and Speaker of the House in WA, was critical to the effort and kept us all on an even keel. I thank you all, yet I cannot thank you enough.

I will always be grateful for the friendship, support and encouragement I have received, over many years, from Colin Campbell-Fraser and Ini Campbell-Fraser; Doug Durack; Professor the Honourable Stephen Smith—I know he likes that title; Professor Alan Robson AO CitWA, my former boss and from who I learned so much about leadership as his chief of
staff; and from three wonderful women—Shaheen Hughes; Sonia Nolan and Elena Douglas. Sadly, Elena is today putting her father's remains to their eternal rest. Good luck and God bless, Elena.

I am very grateful for the support I have received from my new colleagues in this place. It has been great and heartening, and I love it. I am enjoying the company of sector 12 immensely. I could not ever do without my international convention of friends: Jeannie and Jamie Osborne; Shane Balzan; Felicity Gouldthorp; Marcus Edwardes; Emmanuel Hondros; Jock Meston and the great Labor activist, Alison Bunting. Eternal gratitude my friends.

The King family have been amazing. To Walter and Adephe King, Mary-Ellen, Simon and their families, and especially Julie and Matthew King—who harbour me in Canberra from time to time—I cannot thank you enough. For my own family, there are either no words or there are too many. Here we all are! Dad would have loved this. Everything is for us because of my mum. And I thank you, Mum, for everything. Rebecca, Robyn, Peter, Bronwyn, John, Matthew and Lara—each such good people and good friends that I love and treasure. Thank you.

And Jamie King. He is the finest dancer of his generation and always my best and constant friend. We joined the Labor Party together many years ago. We share the same personal convictions of fairness, equality, equity and inclusion. We love music and we love each other. I would not be here without the constancy of Jamie King. And I thank him for it. It was Jamie's birthday yesterday. Happy Birthday, Jamie.

Summer is coming—as is the end of this speech. When I get home, I will do what I do every summer. Jamie and I will head to the beach where I learned to swim, and we will paddle over to Seal Island. I will think of my Dad as we move quietly over the clear sea, under which the ashes of his bones mingle forever among the sands of Shoalwater Bay. We might see a few dolphins, and we will swim among the seals. There is nothing quite like having an Australian sea lion swim alongside you, poke its head near yours, and follow you as you go—there is simply nothing. There is no place I would rather be. There is no place I would rather call home, and this is the place I have the honour and privilege to represent. Thank you for your indulgence.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Vasta): I too would like to acknowledge the great speech the member for Brand gave, and I wish her all the very best in the 45th Parliament.

Debate adjourned.

COMMITTEES

National Broadband Network - Joint Standing Appointment

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Vasta) (17:11): Mr Speaker has received a message from the Senate informing the House that Senator Griff has been appointed a member of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Broadband Network.
BILLS

National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016
National Cancer Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016
Second Reading

Cognate debate.

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

To which the following amendment was moved:

That all words after 'That' be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

'whilst not declining to give the bill a second reading, the House condemns the Government for outsourcing Australians' most sensitive health information—including Medicare data—to Telstra, and before passing the necessary legislation.'

Dr FREELANDER (Macarthur) (17:12): I rise today to speak on the National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 and the National Cancer Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016.

As someone new to parliament but a long time in the medical profession I have to admit that delving into these bills has been a bit of an eye-opener. Like any fair minded or perhaps slightly naive person, I was willing to give even this government the benefit of the doubt on setting up a single national cancer screening registry for bowel and cervical cancer. Although proposals for separate national registers for these two and other forms of cancer—principally breast cancer—have been around for a long time, I was not much fussed that the government seemed keen to claim the lion's share of the credit for advancing the single-register concept.

Clearly, there are not unsubstantial benefits to be had in improving how we monitor government programs that have a major impact on national health and wellbeing. No-one disputes that. It is also very important epidemiologically. Having got across the legislative history—principally the delay caused by the government's decision to call a double dissolution just three days after these bills were first introduced into parliament—I could see why the health minister might be inclined to cut a few corners off the parliamentary process to get these bills passed, so that the proposed national register can be up and running by the target date of 20 March 2017.

I was also prepared to set aside my concern that this House was being asked to consider these bills before members had a chance to consider fully the findings and recommendations of the parliamentary committees that are or soon will be examining them—for example, the Senate Committee on Community Affairs, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights and the Senate Standing Committee for the Scrutiny of Bills. It has not escaped my attention either that the constitutional footing on which these bills rest seems a little unsure. That too appears to concern the government, when you turn up the multiplicity of savings provisions that make up clause 15 of the principle bill.

The government's position on that potential pitfall and others might also have been better or more fully explained but that was not a deal-breaker either. Perhaps the minister was not able to access advice from the Solicitor-General. One never knows.
It was troubling that the government had not seen fit to even outline the detailed rules that will govern the operation of the proposed registry. Yes, I know that many of those rules will ultimately turn up in delegated legislation, which either house can disallow; I would just prefer that it did not come to that. Likewise, I did not see the package, in and of itself, as fatally compromised by the limited stakeholder consultation. Consultation is still extremely important.

I did think too that now might also be a good time to move to a national register for breast cancer screening—though here, to be fair, I was reassured by clause 12 of the main bill, which seems to be drafted to allow the scope of the proposed register to be broadened in the future. Such future expansion may well, though, need a specific amendment to the definition of a designated cancer in clause 4 of the bill as presently drafted.

The Australian Privacy Commissioner, who is also the acting Information Commissioner, has joined in criticism of the bills, remarking on the thinness of some of the bills' privacy protections and the lack of clear and unambiguous information-handling requirements. Again, I would still, all things being equal, have seen those possible failings as more of a case of 'do in haste and repent at leisure' than anything sinister.

More troubling, though, was and is the somewhat imperfect compromise struck by the principal bill in balancing privacy protections and any cost imperatives with allowing ready access to data sets for legitimate medical, social and academic research. On that point, I agree with the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association's submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee inquiry on the bills, where it says:

It is important that the data to be housed in the National Cancer Screening Register are made appropriately available for clinical research and also to understand the incidence of cancer in our society, the way we fund the care of people with cancer, what it means in terms of the funding and organisation of our health system. This will allow researchers, clinicians and policymakers to ensure health policy is evidence-informed.

Without the clinical perspectives and the opportunity to conduct data linkage with other health data sets made possible through collaborative efforts such as this, the value of the National Cancer Register will not be fully realised. It is not yet clear if Telstra Health will be required to provide the cancer data they will hold to agencies such as Cancer Australia and the AIHW, in particular, who have important national roles in the collection, management and reporting of cancer statistics. It is important the Commonwealth clearly outlines who will be responsible for analysing these data, how often will this be done, whether the reports be made public and who will ensure the validity of the results.

The new regulatory regime must promote, and not inhibit, genuine efforts to improve the understanding and treatment of bowel and cervical cancer. In short, on the above criteria I would have given the bills a bare pass mark. The minister had some explaining to do, but you felt that ultimately you could live with what was being proposed, given the probable benefits, which are huge. I think that that is the point that most fair-minded people would have got to. Everyone was trying desperately to love these bills, even if our love was qualified.

But then, regrettably, the minister has invited us all to go one step beyond. The minister, on top of the foregoing litany of missteps and loose ends, now also asks us to accept—again, with very little explanation—that the National Cancer Screening Register ought to be run by a private, for-profit company with limited—virtually no—experience in the health field, Telstra
Health. In fact, rather than asking the parliament for its view, she simply went ahead and did the deal. To ice that particular cake, it transpires that Telstra Health, the successful tenderer, was awarded the prize less than a week before the by then much-anticipated double dissolution election was called by the Prime Minister, with the tender outcome announced only after the pre-election caretaker period had commenced. This is not a good look.

Details of the contract between the government and Telstra health remain incredibly sketchy. As the Parliamentary Library's excellent Bills Digest says, the explanatory memorandum is unclear on the value of the contract to Telstra Health. It necessarily follows that the ultimate net cost of this latest outsourcing exercise to the taxpayer is also presently a complete mystery. Telstra Health's substantial submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee is likewise completely unenlightening on the terms of the contract.

Personally, I am not one who believes that public services must always be provided by the public sector, but I am always wary of the monetary and other costs of outsourcing. There is truth, I suspect, in the old saying that a consultant is someone who borrows your watch to tell you the time. Some things do not add value; they just cost a lot more. The profit motive is not always corrosive. It can in some instances, particularly in health care, undermine or reduce the quality of public services. There are services, too, that even delusional conservative governments have come to understand cannot be left to the market without incurring a moral hazard. Private prisons, however badged, are a case in point.

In this case the tender process which locks this and future governments in for five years is not so much poorly explained as barely mentioned at all. As the AMA said:

There has been a lack of transparency around the process for awarding this contract ...

It then added:

The AMA would be more comfortable with it being operated by Government, a tertiary institution, or not-for-profit entity that has little interest in how the data in the register might otherwise be used.

I agree. Why—one cannot help but ask—was no part of the federal bureaucracy considered up to running the register? Has the federal Public Service been reduced to such a level of institutional anaemia that it cannot do its core work anymore? Was the APS even allowed to tender? It would be a perfect fit for Medicare, to enhance its ability to provide data. I have noted, too, the Community and Public Sector Union's submission, which sensibly points to the employment consequences of centralising the proposed register in Melbourne and denying jobs to other states such as Tasmania and South Australia—two states that traditionally struggle to provide enough work for their residents.

It is simply unacceptable—and this is the bottom line for me—to contemplate researchers, Commonwealth and state instrumentalities, charitable bodies and other agencies paying for or having to beg for access to information and data that they need in their daily work of protecting and improving the health and welfare of all Australians. That really would be one step beyond.

As I was preparing this speech I was confident that I would not be the first member to remind the government of the Prime Minister's post-election conversion to the idea that his party had much to do to establish public trust in it on matters of health policy. To quote the Prime Minister from a 5 July joint media conference with Nationals leader Barnaby Joyce:

CHAMBER
That is a very clear lesson. We have to do more to reaffirm the faith of the Australian people in our commitment to health and to Medicare. [We] have to work harder to rebuild or strengthen the trust of the Australian people in our side of politics when it comes to health. There is no question about that. 

Well, 101 days after the election none of the government's Medicare cuts have been reversed. This would have been a perfect opportunity for the health minister or the Prime Minister to affirm their commitment to Medicare. And now we have these bills.

When the British Prime Minister says she does not want her party to be tagged with the label 'the nasty party', at least you get the impression that she may know what she is talking about. With this government, the reflex to be 'the nasty party' on health is so deeply ingrained that they do not even know when they have gone that one step beyond. Those 5 July words of contrition are already sounding pretty hollow.

This bill is deeply flawed. The legislation for a national cancer registry is vitally important. In my own work and in the work people will be doing in the future this is really important. I am sorry that this bill this so flawed.

Mr GEORGANAS (Hindmarsh) (17:24): I rise to speak on the National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 and to support the amendments put forward by the member for Ballarat. I think Australians have a right to be a little bit concerned and a little bit worried about the way this particular bill was brought about. The National Cancer Screening Register Bill is a real example of why we should be concerned about Medicare and health and the way that this government goes about its business in this area. But let me be clear that we support the establishment of a national cancer screening register. It is really important that we have good register, a national register, and I make it clear that we support a national cancer register and also support the improvements to the cancer screening programs that the new register will support.

We know that cancer touches the lives of many Australians, not only those affected directly by cancer, but their families, their carers their loved ones and everyone who is connected to them. It is a major health problem in Australia today. According to the Cancer Council, at current rates it is expected that one in two Australian men and one in three Australian women will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85. An estimated 130,500 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed in Australia this year. We know that cancer is the leading cause of death in Australia. More than 44,000 people died from cancer in 2013. It is a good thing that we live longer but one of the problems is that more people develop cancer in older ages. Around 19,000 more people die each year from cancer compared with 30 years ago.

So we clearly have a responsibility to do everything in our power to ensure that Australians have the best possible care, the best possible services and the best possible systems in place. That is why Labor supports steps that increase the efficiencies. The proposed register is meant to replace nine existing registers. It is good thing that we are coming up with one national register to replace nine different registers, including, for example, the national register for the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program, and as many as eight state and territory registers for the National Cervical Screening Program.

The proposal has merit because it will reduce duplication and improve the prevention, identification and treatment of cancer in Australia. It is an excellent thing that a doctor or GP will have access to a patient's entire cancer screening history, regardless of whether they live
in my electorate in South Australia or they have moved from one state to another or have been away for a while. It is an excellent thing that they will have this history.

A further reason for supporting this national register is the improvements that will flow to our cancer screening programs. For example, the National Cervical Screening Program will move from a two-yearly Pap test to a five-yearly cervical screening test. Not only does this implement one of the recommendations made by the independent Medical Services Advisory Committee, but it is also estimated that it will prevent an additional 140 cervical cancers per year. That is 140 lives that it will touch and benefit.

In addition, as a result of the national register, the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program will transition to screening people every two years at a much faster rate than previously proposed. This means that Australians aged between 50 and 74 years will be screened every two years by 2020 instead of 2034, as previously proposed. The research and clinical trials tell us that this change could prevent an estimated 300 to 500 deaths per year, and that is a good thing.

All of these proposals make sense. They clearly improve screening and diagnosis and they make it easier for practitioners, GPs and those involved in the health system to do their job. But what we do not support is the outsourcing of this new register to a massive multinational for-profit corporation. That is what we do not like. Certainly, when I speak to people and tell them that the information in this register will be held by a multinational, they do not like it either.

So let's cast our minds back to the election campaign of 2016. On 26 May Fairfax Media broke a story that the government had awarded Telstra the contract to operate the national register. It was then revealed by AusTender that Telstra and the government had in fact signed the contract on 4 May. That is four days before the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, called the election. The government signed the contract for the operation of a national register despite the obvious fact that the necessary legislation to establish that national register—the legislation we are debating here today—had not yet passed.

What does that tell us? It is further proof that Australians have every right to be worried about such sneaky measures. Following the Fairfax story that broke regarding this contract, the Department of Health then issued a press release defending the contract. Was this a breach of the caretaker conventions? Who knows. If Australians have nothing to worry about, why the need to defend the contract? Why keep it a secret? So it is imperative that this parliament does its job and carefully scrutinises both the concept of a national register and also whether it should be operated by Telstra, a big, multinational, for-profit company. And there is a very long list of justified concerns. These have been echoed by many of my constituents and others in this place, as well as the shadow minister, the member for Ballarat, and they are clearly reflected in the damaging losses suffered by the coalition government at the last election when it came to health and Medicare.

For example, the new register is designed to hold extremely sensitive information about every Australian who is eligible for the cancer screening programs. This information will be held by a multinational, for-profit corporation. There have been many speeches made in this place and many inquiries into some of the practices and errors that are made by Telstra on a regular basis. This information will include people's personal details, names, addresses, contact details, dates of birth and gender. The information will also include the private health
data, including an individual's Medicare number, Medicare claims information, preferred GP or other healthcare provider, HPV vaccination status, screening test results and cancer diagnosis. I have to tell you, I would not feel comfortable with Telstra or any multinational, private company holding that information about me, and I am sure many Australians would not feel comfortable about that either. We accept that this information is necessary for the operation of a register, but not with a massive multinational.

According to the government's own explanatory memorandum, Telstra will also be provided with very sensitive information, including whether a person has genetic markers that may lead to cancer, whether a woman has had a hysterectomy or partial hysterectomy or whether a person is transgender. But what are the implications of taking the step, unprecedented in Australia, of handing over such sensitive information to a for-profit, multinational company? Will Telstra be given access to even more information down the track that we will not be aware of or do not know about? As I said earlier, Telstra has a questionable record of privacy breaches. How will they protect, how will they safeguard, Australians' most private and most sensitive health information? Surely our voters, the Australian public, deserve to ask such questions and have them answered honestly.

What are the bigger implications of a contract of this size on our public healthcare system—a system that Australians are so rightly proud of? We have one of the best healthcare systems in the world. And what are Australians to make of this constant backtracking and denials by the government that are proven wrong? Let us not forget that at least 27 times during the election campaign the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, said that he would never outsource Medicare. But isn't that exactly what these bills do—outsourcing to a for-profit multinational company? They put Australians' Medicare numbers and Medicare claims information in the hands of a multinational telecommunications corporation. If that is not outsourcing, I do not know what is.

So let us be clear: if we are not careful, this can open the floodgates to privatising our entire health system, and the government appears determined to do just that. For example, We know that the government spent $5 million trying to privatise the Medicare payments system. Now they want to pay Telstra to store Australians' most sensitive health data. The government's cuts to health care are an attack on our health system and continue to shift costs from Medicare to patients. This is privatisation by stealth.

For all these reasons, Labor proposed nine amendments to improve the government's legislation. After accusing Labor of a hysterical tirade, the government is now amending its own legislation. But there are three amendments that the government refuses to accept and that we will not give up on. Firstly—and I am sure the shadow minister will speak on these in detail—we are going to proceed with our amendment to limit the operation of the register to a not-for-profit organisation or government agency. This will address those risks of giving Australians' most sensitive health data to a telco corporation that has never managed a register like this. The existing cancer screening registers are managed by governments and not-for-profit organisations that have expertise in managing the registers. But Telstra has never operated a register like this. Is it sensible to be trialling something that has never been done with such sensitive data? That is the question. It is a worry, quite frankly, especially when we consider the types of data and information that they will be holding on the Australian public.
Today during question time we heard the government side talking about text messages about Medicare. Well, here is proof. This is absolute proof that we are privatising parts of our health system. When I look back over the past three years at the government's track record on health, all I can see is that on a number of occasions they tried to bring in a copayment and when that failed, because of the Senate, they then tried to bring it in through the back door through a freeze on doctors' payments. All these things play on the minds of the Australian public. No wonder they have absolutely no confidence in this government when it comes to health, when it comes to Medicare.

Again, seeing some of the most sensitive data that we have being given to a multinational telco company to run and to hold, is another example of the way we are heading with health.

All of us on this side want to support a national register for cancer, because we know it is a good thing. But we want that information to be secure. We want to ensure that the Australian public has confidence in whoever holds that information and we want to ensure that there will be no accidental release of information, as we have already seen with previous data that Telstra has held. I support this legislation, and certainly with the amendment the opposition has brought to this House.

Dr GILLESPIE (Lyne—Assistant Minister for Rural Health) (17:38): The National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 creates a new legislative framework for the establishment and ongoing management of cancer screening registers. This bill will establish the National Cancer Screening Register, which will support changes to the National Cervical Screening Program to be rolled out from 1 May 2016. The national register will also support the expansion of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program, which is critical in the fight against bowel cancer. A number of amendments to other legislation are required once the National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 receives royal assent to enable certain information to be provided to the register. These are described in the National Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016. Not only will the national register provide an efficient approach for these two key national screening programs but it will also future proof Australia's approach to population based screening, as it will have the ability to be expanded to other cancer screening programs in the future.

The bill provides a principle based legislative framework to support the government's policy objectives of supporting Australia's health system to meet current and future challenges. The bill will lay the foundation for future work to move towards a national integrated system that captures and reports on individual screening tests and results of relevant follow-up procedures up to and including the diagnosis with cancer or precursor to cancer.

I thank members for their contributions to the debate on this bill. This bill will serve to benefit the health of Australians through more efficient cervical and bowel cancer screening pathways made possible by the establishment of a national register that will facilitate the monitoring of the effectiveness, quality and safety of screening and diagnoses associated with bowel cancer and cervical cancer. The register will also assist general practitioners and healthcare providers in their clinical decision-making, contributing to cancer detection and treatment and cancer prevention in Australia.

Debate interrupted.
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): On indulgence, the member for Moreton.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton—Opposition Whip) (17:40): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. On indulgence, I wish to correct the record. During the 90-second statement I made today, I incorrectly said that one of my constituents, Rosie McGeoch from Yeerongpilly, came second in the Ironman and Ironwoman World Championship. She actually came first. I do apologise to her and I wanted to correct the record at the first available opportunity.

BILLS

National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016
National Cancer Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016
Second Reading

Cognate debate.
Consideration resumed of the motion:
That this bill be now read a second time.
to which the following amendment was moved:
That all words after "That" be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:
"whilst not declining to give the bill a second reading, the House condemns the Government for outsourcing Australians' most sensitive health information—including Medicare data—to Telstra, and before passing the necessary legislation."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent) (17:41): The original question was that this bill be now read a second time. To this the honourable member for Ballarat has moved as an amendment that all words after 'that' be omitted with a view to substituting other words. The immediate question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided. [17:46]
(The Speaker—Hon. Tony Smith)

Ayes .................70
Noes .................73
Majority..............3

AYES
Albanese, AN
Bird, SL
Brodtmann, G
Burney, LJ
Butler, TM
Chalmers, JE
Chester, LM
Claydon, SC
Conroy, PM
Elliot, MJ
Feeley, D
Freelander, MR
Giles, AJ

Aly, A
Bowen, CE
Burke, AS
Butler, MC
Byrne, AM
Champion, ND
Clare, JD
Collins, JM
Dick, MD
Ellis, KM
Fitzgibbon, JA
Georganas, S
Gosling, LJ

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Question Negatived.
Original question agreed to.
Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Bill—by leave—taken as a whole.

Ms CATHERINE KING (Ballarat) (17:54): by leave—I move opposition amendments (1) to (3):
(1) Clause 26, page 22 (line 16), omit "The Minister", substitute "(1) The Minister".
(2) Clause 26, page 22 (lines 16 and 17), omit "a person", substitute "a permitted entity".
(3) Clause 26, page 22 (line 20), at the end of the clause, add:
(3) In this section:

permitted entity means:

(a) a Department of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory; or
(b) a body (whether incorporated or unincorporated) established for a public purpose by a law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory; or
(c) a person in the service or employment of a Department mentioned in paragraph (a) or a body mentioned in paragraph (b); or
(d) a person who holds or performs the duties of an office or position established by or under a law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory; or
(e) an entity (whether incorporated or unincorporated) established for a charitable purpose.

(4) This section has no effect to the extent (if any) to which its operation would result in the acquisition of property (within the meaning of paragraph 51(xxxi) of the Constitution) otherwise than on just terms (within the meaning of that paragraph).

These are very important amendments. They go to the heart of Labor's concerns with the National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016. This is a very serious debate we are having here in this chamber this evening. This is a debate about not only who will hold some of the most sensitive health information but the future possibilities of the private, for-profit sector in the health space. We have known for a long time—it happened to us when we were in government—that there are a lot of very large for-profit companies circling our health system. Our system is largely delivered by the public sector. It is delivered currently through Medicare and the Department of Human Services. These companies have been circling for a long time to try to get a slice of that pie. They want a slice of that pie because it is very...
lucrative and it will make them money. There is a reason why we have suddenly seen a telecommunications company set up the Telstra Health arm. They are not the only ones in this space. There are other large companies that are very keen and have been circling the space of Medicare.

In this bill for the first time we have had a register—the national bowel cancer screening register, which is currently run by the Department of Human Services—contracted to a for-profit company. We also have the cervical cancer screening registers that have been run in the states and territories by their departments or in the case of Victoria and South Australia by a not-for-profit organisation, the Victorian Cytology Service, which has been running that since 1989 in Victoria at least. This is really at the heart of what this government has done.

We know that they have been giving very clear signals to the private sector that there is money to be made here—'We want you to start coming up with ideas to make money out of health.' Labor thinks there is a problem with that. It is a fundamental problem, which needs to have a proper debate. We started to say that we have some concerns about this. Remember that this government signed a contract with a for-profit company to run the Australian government's National Cancer Screening Register—something we support; we want to see the Cancer Screening Register—four days before the election was called. There was no announcement that that was what they had done. They signed the contract before they went into caretaker mode. They did not announce it during the election campaign—we thought they were going to—and then they actually said, 'We are not privatising Medicare at all.' This is a thin-end-of-the-wedge argument. This is where we are starting to see the creep of for-profit companies into what the government is already delivering—the delivery of government services. This is a very substantial change that the government is making. The amendments I have moved say that that is not okay. We do not believe that this new National Cancer Screening Register—part of which is the national bowel cancer screening register, which is already run by the Department of Human Services—is an appropriate service for a for-profit company to run.

We had a Senate inquiry. The government said, 'The world is going to end if you have a Senate inquiry.' Hopefully, we have improved this legislation through the proper processes of this parliament. We have seen this government decide that it is right for a for-profit entity to hold data about you—your Pap smear results and your bowel cancer screening results. They will know a whole heap of information about individuals—your Medicare data, whether you are a transgender individual and a lot of very sensitive information.

The government are also saying that they do not think the Department of Human Services is up to running this sort of register. That is basically what they are saying. We saw this government during the Ebola crisis, for example, give $20 million to a for-profit, private company rather than actually back in our AUSMATs. We saw the government take that $20 million decision. This is another decision they have taken. It is a $200 million contract over five years, with an option of 10, to give a for-profit company an edge when it comes to our healthcare system. The amendments I have moved very strongly say that we do not believe that we should have a for-profit company running this register. I want to make it very clear that we will be moving these amendments in the Senate as well. These are amendments that I believe the House should support because if we do not it is the thin end of the wedge when it comes to this government privatising our Medicare system. (Time expired)
The SPEAKER: The question is that the amendments be agreed to.
The House divided. [18:04]
(The Speaker—Hon. Tony Smith)

Ayes .................68
Noes ...................74
Majority ..............6

AYES
Albanese, AN
Bird, SL
Brodtmann, G
Burney, LJ
Butler, TM
Chalmers, JE
Chesters, LM
Claydon, SC
Conroy, PM
Elliot, MJ
Feeney, D
Freelander, MR
Giles, AJ
Hammond, TJ
Hayes, CP
Husar, E
Jones, SP
Kelly, MJ
Khalil, P
King, MMH
Leigh, AK
Marles, RD
McGowan, C
Mitchell, RG
O'Connor, BPJ
Owens, JA
Plibersek, TJ
Rowland, MA
Shorten, WR
Stanley, AM
Swanson, MJ
Thistlethwaite, MJ
Watts, TG
Wilson, JH

NOES
Abbott, AJ
Andrews, KJ
Banks, J
Broad, AJ
Buchholz, S
Christensen, GR (teller)
Coleman, DB
Crewther, CJ

Alexander, JG
Andrews, KL
Bishop, JI
Broadbent, RE
Chester, D
Ciobo, SM
Coulton, M
Drum, DK
Ms CATHERINE KING (Ballarat) (18:10): by leave—I move opposition amendments (1) to (9) together:

(1) Clause 4, page 6 (line 12), after "personal information", insert ", key information".

(2) Clause 11, page 9 (lines 24 and 25), omit paragraph (e), substitute:

(e) claims information, to the extent that the information relates to whether or not the individual has undergone or should undergo screening;

(3) Clause 12, page 11 (lines 5 and 6), omit paragraph (1) (n).

(4) Clause 12, page 11 (line 7), omit paragraph (1) (o), substitute:

(o) any other purpose that is directly related to a purpose mentioned in one of the above paragraphs.

(5) Clause 17, page 18 (after line 21), after paragraph (3) (g), insert:

(ga) the person does so:

(i) for the purposes of conducting medical research, and in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles or any guidelines issued by the CEO of the National Health and Medical Research Council under subsection 95(1) of the Privacy Act 1988; or

CHAMBER
(ii) in a permitted health situation, as defined in subsection 16B(2), (3) or (4) of the Privacy Act 1988; or

(6) Clause 18, page 19 (line 8), omit "120 penalty units", substitute "600 penalty units".

(7) Page 20 (after line 16), at the end of Part 3, add:

22A Data breaches

(1) This section applies to an entity if:

(a) the entity is:

(i) the Commonwealth, the Minister or the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer, performing functions under this Act; or

(ii) engaged by the Minister, on behalf of the Commonwealth, to perform services for or on behalf of the Commonwealth in connection with functions of the Commonwealth, the Minister or the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer under this Act; or

(iii) any other person performing work relating to the purposes of the register; and

(b) the entity becomes aware that:

(i) a person has, or may have, contravened this Act in a manner involving an unauthorised collection, recording, disclosure or other use of information about an individual; or

(ii) an event has, or may have, occurred (whether or not involving a contravention of this Act) that compromises, may compromise, has compromised or may have compromised, the security or integrity of the register; or

(iii) circumstances have, or may have, arisen (whether or not involving a contravention of this Act) that compromise, may compromise, have compromised or may have compromised, the security or integrity of the register; and

(c) the contravention, event or circumstances directly involved, may have involved or may involve the entity.

Note: This section applies to an entity when the entity becomes aware of a matter referred to in paragraph (b) regardless of when that matter arose or occurred or if the matter is ongoing at the time the entity became aware of the matter.

Notifying the Information Commissioner

(2) The entity must, as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the contravention, event or circumstances, notify the Information Commissioner of the contravention, event or circumstances.

Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.

(3) If an entity has given notice under subsection (2) on becoming aware that a contravention, event or circumstances may have occurred or arisen then, despite subsection (2), the entity need not give notice again on becoming aware that the contravention, event or circumstances has occurred or arisen.

Steps to be taken if contravention, event or circumstances may have occurred or arisen

(4) The entity must, as soon as practicable after becoming aware that the contravention, event or circumstances may have occurred or arisen, do the following things:

(a) so far as is reasonably practicable contain the potential contravention, event or circumstances;

(b) evaluate any risks that, if the contravention, event or circumstances has occurred or arisen, may be related to or arise out of the contravention, event or circumstances;

(c) if there is a reasonable likelihood that the contravention, event or circumstance has occurred or arisen and the effects of the contravention, event or circumstances might be serious for at least one individual—notify all individuals who would be affected.
Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.

Steps to be taken if contravention or event has occurred or the circumstances have arisen

(5) The entity must, as soon as practicable after becoming aware that the contravention or event has occurred or the circumstances have arisen, do the following things:

(a) so far as is reasonably practicable, contain the contravention, event or circumstances and undertake a preliminary assessment of the causes;

(b) evaluate any risks that may be related to or arise out of the contravention, event or circumstances;

(c) notify all affected individuals;

(d) if a significant number of individuals are affected—notify the general public;

(e) take steps to prevent or mitigate the effects of further contraventions, events or circumstances described in paragraphs (1) (b).

Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.

(6) If an entity has given notice under paragraph (4) (c), then despite paragraph (5) (c), the entity need not give notice under paragraph (5) (c).

(7) Page 20 (after line 16), at the end of Part 3, add:

22A Data breaches

(1) This section applies to an entity if:

(a) the entity is:

(i) the Commonwealth, the Minister or the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer, performing functions under this Act; or

(ii) engaged by the Minister, on behalf of the Commonwealth, to perform services for or on behalf of the Commonwealth in connection with functions of the Commonwealth, the Minister or the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer under this Act; or

(iii) any other person performing work relating to the purposes of the register; and

(b) the entity becomes aware that:

(i) a person has, or may have, contravened this Act in a manner involving an unauthorised collection, recording, disclosure or other use of information about an individual; or

(ii) an event has, or may have, occurred (whether or not involving a contravention of this Act) that compromises, may compromise, has compromised or may have compromised, the security or integrity of the register; or

(iii) circumstances have, or may have, arisen (whether or not involving a contravention of this Act) that compromise, may compromise, have compromised or may have compromised, the security or integrity of the register; and

(c) the contravention, event or circumstances directly involved, may have involved or may involve the entity.

Note: This section applies to an entity when the entity becomes aware of a matter referred to in paragraph (b) regardless of when that matter arose or occurred or if the matter is ongoing at the time the entity became aware of the matter.

Notifying the Information Commissioner

(2) The entity must, as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the contravention, event or circumstances, notify the Information Commissioner of the contravention, event or circumstances.

Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.
(3) If an entity has given notice under subsection (2) on becoming aware that a contravention, event or circumstances may have occurred or arisen then, despite subsection (2), the entity need not give notice again on becoming aware that the contravention, event or circumstances has occurred or arisen.

Steps to be taken if contravention, event or circumstances may have occurred or arisen

(4) The entity must, as soon as practicable after becoming aware that the contravention, event or circumstances may have occurred or arisen, do the following things:

(a) so far as is reasonably practicable contain the potential contravention, event or circumstances;

(b) evaluate any risks that, if the contravention, event or circumstances has occurred or arisen, may be related to or arise out of the contravention, event or circumstances;

(c) if there is a reasonable likelihood that the contravention, event or circumstance has occurred or arisen and the effects of the contravention, event or circumstances might be serious for at least one individual—notify all individuals who would be affected.

Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.

Steps to be taken if contravention or event has occurred or the circumstances have arisen

(5) The entity must, as soon as practicable after becoming aware that the contravention or event has occurred or the circumstances have arisen, do the following things:

(a) so far as is reasonably practicable, contain the contravention, event or circumstances and undertake a preliminary assessment of the causes;

(b) evaluate any risks that may be related to or arise out of the contravention, event or circumstances;

(c) notify all affected individuals;

(d) if a significant number of individuals are affected—notify the general public;

(e) take steps to prevent or mitigate the effects of further contraventions, events or circumstances described in paragraphs (1) (b).

Civil penalty: 600 penalty units.

(6) If an entity has given notice under paragraph (4) (c), then despite paragraph (5) (c), the entity need not give notice under paragraph (5) (c).

(8) Page 20, after Part 3, insert:

Part 3A—Interaction with the Privacy Act 1988

22B Contravention of this Act is an interference with privacy

(1) An act or practice that contravenes this Act in connection with personal information or key information about an individual included on the register is taken to be:

(a) for the purposes of the Privacy Act 1988, an interference with the privacy of the individual; and

(b) covered by section 13 of that Act.

(2) The respondent to a complaint under the Privacy Act 1988 about an act or practice, other than an act or practice of an agency or organisation, is the individual who engaged in the act or practice.

(3) In addition to the Information Commissioner's functions under the Privacy Act 1988, the Information Commissioner has the following functions in relation to the register:

(a) to investigate an act or practice that may be an interference with the privacy of an individual under subsection (1) and, if the Information Commissioner considers it appropriate to do so, to attempt by conciliation to effect a settlement of the matters that gave rise to the investigation;

(b) to do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of those functions.

(4) The Information Commissioner has power to do all things that are necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of his or her functions under subsection (3).
Note: An act or practice that is an interference with privacy may be the subject of a complaint under section 36 of the *Privacy Act 1988*.

**22C Information Commissioner may disclose details of investigations to the Minister**

The Information Commissioner is authorised to disclose to the Minister any information or documents that relate to an investigation the Information Commissioner conducts because of the operation of section 22B, if the Information Commissioner is satisfied that to do so will enable the Minister to monitor or improve the operation or security of the register.

(9) Clause 26, page 22, after subclause (1), insert:

(2) Ownership of information included in the register or otherwise obtained under, or in accordance with, this Act is retained by the Commonwealth despite any agreement under subsection (1).

I understand that the government has its own amendments which largely support Labor's amendments. I look forward to the government actually supporting these amendments, but I suspect not. Again, these are all improvements to the bill that have occurred through Labor's intervention to make sure the Senate had proper scrutiny of these bills.

When we raised concerns about data breaches, they said I was engaging in some hysterical tirade. Apart from the nature of the gendered language that imbeds, I have to say that the government now has, embarrassingly, a bit of egg on its face. It now has to come into this place—or it will do shortly—and move substantial amendments to this bill, which go to the heart of data protection. In the amendments we are moving today we believe very firmly that, when there are breaches of data, the individuals who are affected by those breaches of data need to be informed about them. You could get no more sensitive data than is in this bill: your Pap smear results; your bowel screening cancer results; your Medicare item number usage when it comes to cancer testing, cancer screening and cancer treatment. Or perhaps you are a transgender individual; or you may have had some other issues in relation to sexually transmitted diseases. You could not get more sensitive data. We accept that the government wants the Privacy Commissioner to decide whether to disclose that data that has been breached to the individual. We believe that you should, but it should be occur automatically.

We do not believe that the penalties in this bill or in the government's amendments go far enough. We have recently seen a massive breach of healthcare data where the Department of Health put Medicare item number data up on myGov. The way this government handled it was frankly appalling. Some 16 days after they were notified of the breach, on the floor of the Royal College of General Practitioners conference, the minister goes to all of the GP providers—some of whom potentially had had their provider numbers breached by the downloading of this data—and says: 'I'm really sorry about it and 16 days later we're going to inform you. We haven't informed the individual providers, the individual GPs who may have had that data breached. We'll do an investigation. We're going to try and close a loophole in the law.' It was not good enough. The doctors themselves have to inform their patients if there has been a breach of their privacy, but the government itself took 16 or 17 days to basically inform GPs that their data may have been breached. We think there needs to be mandatory data breach reporting. We have actually tried to get the government to do that in the previous parliament. We really think they need to move on it.

When it comes to the penalties, particularly given that the government signed a contract with a for-profit provider four days before the election, they are miniscule in this bill—$21,000 for a breach of data for a for-profit organisation like Telstra is simply not good
enough. So the amendments that we are moving say very clearly that there needs to be higher penalty units within the bill itself and they should not deferred by seeking reparation through the Privacy Act.

We actually think they need to be within this bill itself.

We understand that the government has come some way to accepting some of Labor's amendments. But it has had, literally, the government's own body—its own body—having to inform it that it has some problems with this bill. We have through the Senate process managed to get the government to come part way, but again that we are moving these amendments here this afternoon because we do not think the government amendments go far enough.

As I said, penalty units of $21,600 when you come to a for-profit provider are simply not enough to discourage the potential misuse of this data—this highly sensitive data. I think, again, that when it comes to breaches of data the government has not protected individuals enough—not within its own legislation. It is all very well and good to inform the Privacy Commissioner that you have breached. We have seen that the government has form on this, with the recent health data breach, and we simply think that individuals have a right to know if this data has got into the public domain. If it has got into the public domain it should not be that the first time individuals know about it is when they read about it on the front page of a newspaper. I commend the amendments to the House.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the amendments be agreed to.

The House divided. [18:20]

(The Speaker—Hon. Tony Smith)

Ayes .....................69
Noes .....................73
Majority ................4

AYES

Albanese, AN
Bird, SL
Brodtmann, G
Burney, LJ
Butler, TM
Chalmers, JE
Chesters, LM
Claydon, SC
Conroy, PM
Elliot, MJ
Feeney, D
Freelander, MR
Giles, AJ
Hammond, TJ
Hayes, CP
Husar, E
Jones, SP
Kelly, MJ
Khalil, P
King, MMH
Leigh, AK

Aly, A
Bowen, CE
Burke, AS
Butler, MC
Byrne, AM
Champion, ND
Clare, JD
Collins, JM
Dick, MD
Ellis, KM
Fitzgibbon, JA
Georganas, S
Gosling, LJ
Hart, RA
Hill, JC
Husic, EN
Keay, JT
Keogh, MJ
King, CF
Lamb, S
Macklin, JL

CHAMBER
AYES

Marles, RD
McGowan, C
Mitchell, RG
O'Connor, BPJ
Owens, JA
Pibersek, TJ
Rowland, MA
Sharkie, RCC
Snowdon, WE
Swan, WM
Templeman, SR
Vamvakiras, M
Wilkie, AD
Zappia, A

McBride, EM
Mitchell, BK
Neumann, SK
O'Toole, C
Perrett, GD (teller)
Rishworth, AL
Ryan, JC (teller)
Shorten, WR
Stanley, AM
Swanson, MJ
Thistlethwaite, MJ
Watts, TG
Wilson, JH

NOES

Abbott, AJ
Andrews, KJ
Banks, J
Broad, AJ
Buchholz, S
Christensen, GR (teller)
Coleman, DB
Crewther, CJ
Dutton, PC
Evans, TM
Fletcher, PW
Gee, AR
Goodenough, IR
Hastie, AW
Henderson, SM
Howarth, LR
Irons, SJ
Keenan, M
Laming, A
Laudy, C
Littleproud, D
McCormack, MF
Morrison, SJ
O'Brien, LS
O'Dowd, KD
Pasin, A
Porter, CC
Price, ML
Ramsey, RE (teller)
Sudmalis, AE
Taylor, AJ
Tudge, AE
Van Manen, AJ
Wallace, AB
Wilson, RJ
Wood, JP

Alexander, JG
Andrews, KL
Bishop, JI
Broadbent, RE
Chester, D
Ciobo, SM
Coulton, M
Drum, DK
Entsch, WG
Falinski, J
Flint, NJ
Gillespie, DA
Hartley, L
Hawke, AG
Hogan, KJ
Hunt, GA
Joyce, BT
Kelly, C
Landry, ML
Ley, SP
Marino, NB
McVeigh, JJ
Morton, B
O'Brien, T
O'Dwyer, KM
Pitt, KJ
Prentice, J
Pyne, CM
Robert, SR
Sukkar, MS
Tehan, DT
Turnbull, MB
Vasta, RX
Wicks, LE
Wilson, TR
Wyatt, KG

CHAMBER
Question negatived.

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Sport and Minister for Health and Aged Care) (18:24): I present a supplementary explanatory memorandum to the bill and I ask leave of the House to move government amendments (1) to (12) on sheet HE125, as circulated, together.

Leave granted.

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Sport and Minister for Health and Aged Care) (18:29): by leave—I move government amendments (1) to (12):

(1) Clause 4, page 3 (after line 20), after the definition of commercial-in-confidence, insert:

contracted service provider has the meaning given by subsection 22A(10).

(2) Clause 4, page 6 (lines 1 and 2), omit the definition of prescribed body.

(3) Clause 11, page 9 (line 25), at the end of paragraph (e), add "associated with a designated cancer".

(4) Clause 12, page 11 (line 6), omit "cancer;", substitute "cancer."

(5) Clause 12, page 11 (line 7), omit paragraph (1) (o).

(6) Clause 17, page 17 (line 15), omit subparagraph (3) (a) (iv).

(7) Clause 17, page 18 (after line 36), at the end of the clause, add:

Collection, recording, disclosure or use of personal information for the purposes of research of a kind to which guidelines approved under section 95 or 95A of the Privacy Act 1988 relate is authorised under paragraph (3) (a) or (f) only if the collection, recording, use or disclosure is in accordance with the guidelines.

(8) Page 20 (after line 16), at the end of Part 3, add:

22A Data breaches

Notification of contraventions and possible contraventions

(1) If the Secretary becomes aware (otherwise than because of a notice under subsection (2)) that a person has, or may have, contravened section 18 in a manner involving an unauthorised recording, use or disclosure of personal information included in the register, the Secretary must, as soon as practicable, notify the Information Commissioner.

Note: This subsection applies when the Secretary becomes aware of the contravention or possible contravention, regardless of when it occurred or whether it is ongoing.

(2) If a contracted service provider or a former contracted service provider becomes aware that a person has, or may have, contravened section 18 in a manner involving an unauthorised recording, use or disclosure of personal information included in the register, the Secretary must, as soon as practicable, notify the Information Commissioner.
disclosure of personal information included in the register, the contracted service provider or former contracted service provider must, as soon as practicable, notify:

(a) the Secretary; and
(b) the Information Commissioner.

Note: This subsection applies when the contracted service provider or former contracted service provider becomes aware of the contravention or possible contravention, regardless of when it occurred or whether it is ongoing.

Civil penalty: 100 penalty units.

(3) A notice given under subsection (1) or (2) must set out the following:

(a) a description of the contravention that has occurred or may have occurred;
(b) the kind or kinds of information concerned;
(c) if the notice is given under subsection (2)—the identity and contact details of the contracted service provider or former contracted service provider.

Handling possible contraventions

(4) If the Secretary, or a contracted service provider or former contracted service provider, becomes aware that a person may have contravened section 18 in a manner involving an unauthorised recording, use or disclosure of personal information included in the register, the Secretary, or the contracted service provider or former contracted service provider, must do the following:

(a) so far as is reasonably practicable, contain the possible contravention;
(b) evaluate any risks that, if the contravention has occurred, may be related to or arise out of the contravention;
(c) if there is a reasonable likelihood that the contravention has occurred and the effects of the contravention might be serious for at least one individual whose details are included in the register:

(i) in the case of the Secretary—consult the Information Commissioner about notifying individuals who may be affected; or
(ii) in the case of a contracted service provider or former contracted service provider—ask the Secretary to consult the Information Commissioner about notifying individuals who may be affected.

Note: This subsection applies when the Secretary, contracted service provider or former contracted service provider becomes aware of the possible contravention, regardless of when it occurred or whether it is ongoing.

Handling contraventions

(5) If the Secretary, or a contracted service provider or former contracted service provider, becomes aware that a person has contravened section 18 in a manner involving an unauthorised recording, use or disclosure of personal information included in the register, the Secretary, or the contracted service provider or former contracted service provider, must do the following:

(a) so far as is reasonably practicable, contain the contravention and undertake a preliminary assessment of the causes;
(b) evaluate any risks that may be related to or arise out of the contravention;
(c) in the case of the Secretary—consult the Information Commissioner about notifying individuals who may be affected;
(d) in the case of a contracted service provider or former contracted service provider—ask the Secretary to consult the Information Commissioner about notifying individuals who may be affected;
(e) take steps to prevent or mitigate the effects of further contraventions.
Note: This subsection applies when the Secretary, contracted service provider or former contracted service provider becomes aware of the contravention, regardless of when it occurred or whether it is ongoing.

Secretary's duty

(6) The Secretary must comply with a request under subparagraph (4) (c) (ii) or paragraph (5) (d).

No need to report or consult if already done

(7) A person is not required to comply with subsection (1) or (2) in relation to a contravention that has occurred if the person has already given notice under that subsection that the contravention may have occurred.

(8) A person is not required to comply with paragraph (5) (c) or (d) in relation to a contravention if the person has already consulted, or asked the Secretary to consult, the Information Commissioner under paragraph (4) (c) in relation to the contravention.

(9) A contracted service provider or former contracted service provider is not required to comply with subsection (2), subparagraph (4) (c) (ii) or paragraph (5) (d) in relation to a contravention that has, or may have, occurred if another person has already:

(a) given notice in relation to the contravention under subsection (1) or (2); or

(b) consulted, or asked the Secretary to consult, the Information Commissioner in relation to the contravention under paragraph (4) (c) or (5) (c) or (d).

Contracted service providers

(10) In this Act:

contracted service provider means a person who:

(a) is engaged under an agreement referred to in section 26; and

(b) obtains protected information in the course of performing services under the agreement.

[Data breaches]

(9) Page 20, at the end of Part 3 (after proposed clause 22A), add:

22B Contravention is an interference with privacy

(1) An act or practice that contravenes section 18 or subsection 22A(1), (2), (4), (5) or (6) is taken to be:

(a) for the purposes of the Privacy Act 1988, an interference with the privacy of an individual; and

(b) covered by section 13 of that Act.

(2) The respondent to a complaint under the Privacy Act 1988 about an act or practice, other than an act or practice of an agency or organisation, is the person who engaged in the act or practice.

(3) In addition to the Information Commissioner's functions under the Privacy Act 1988, the Information Commissioner has the following functions in relation to the register:

(a) to investigate an act or practice that may be an interference with the privacy of an individual under subsection (1) and, if the Information Commissioner considers it appropriate to do so, to attempt by conciliation to effect a settlement of the matters that gave rise to the investigation;

(b) to do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of those functions.

(4) The Information Commissioner has power to do all things that are necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of his or her functions under subsection (3).

Note: An act or practice that is an interference with privacy may be the subject of a complaint under section 36 of the Privacy Act 1988.

[Interference with privacy]

(10) Page 20, at the end of Part 3 (after proposed clause 22B), add:
22C Information Commissioner may disclose details of investigations to the Secretary

The Information Commissioner is authorised to disclose to the Secretary any information or documents that relate to an investigation the Information Commissioner conducts because of the operation of section 22B, if the Information Commissioner is satisfied that to do so will enable the Commonwealth to monitor or improve the operation or security of the register.

[interference with privacy]
(11) Clause 27, page 23 (lines 1 to 3), omit subclause (2), substitute:

(2) The Secretary may, in writing, delegate his or her functions or powers under:
   (a) paragraph 17(3) (g) (about disclosing information); or
   (b) section 22A (about data breaches);

to an SES employee, or an acting SES employee, in the Department.

[data breaches]
(12) Clause 28, page 23 (after line 13), after subclause (1), insert:

(1A) Before making rules for the purposes of:
   (a) paragraph (l) of the definition of key information in section 4; or
   (b) paragraph 11(g);

the Minister must consult the Information Commissioner in relation to matters that relate to the privacy functions (within the meaning of the Australian Information Commissioner Act 2010) and have regard to any submissions made by the Information Commissioner because of that consultation.

[consultation with Information Commissioner]

As members know, the need for these bills arose from the 2015-16 federal budget announcement to establish a National Cancer Screening Register aimed at saving more lives through increased detection, treatment and prevention of some of the country's biggest killers. The National Cancer Screening Register Bill provides for the establishment of the register and authorises the collection, use and disclosure of information for the purposes of the register and certain other purposes. It will allow Medicare enrolment and claims data and healthcare identifiers for individuals and healthcare providers to be collected by the register for the initial system build as well as on an ongoing basis.

The Turnbull government is serious about increasing cancer screening rates in the fight against cancers, as well as to improve survival rates. This legislation is critical for this government priority. These bills will serve to benefit the health of Australians through more efficient cervical and bowel screening pathways made possible by the establishment of a national register. The bills will facilitate monitoring of the effectiveness, quality and safety of screening and diagnoses associated with bowel cancer and cervical cancer. They will assist general practitioners and healthcare providers in their clinical decision making and contribute to cancer detection, treatment and prevention. They are very important.

I have proposed some changes to the National Cancer Screening Register Bill to provide clarity in some of its provisions, as discussed with the Office of The Australian Information Commissioner. These include a new provision requiring the contracted service provider to notify data breaches to the secretary of my department and to the Information Commissioner, and for the secretary of my department to notify data breaches to the Information Commissioner and for certain actions to be taken in relation to data breaches. These
amendments will achieve an appropriate balance between protecting privacy and retaining the flexibility required to deliver these world-class screening programs.

The protection of personal information held in the register is of paramount importance. I have proposed to make unauthorised recording, use or disclosure of personal information in the register, or a contravention of the requirement to notify data breaches, an interference with privacy for the purpose of the Privacy Act 1988. Although the department or affected individuals would have recourse to engage the Information Commissioner in any matter related to a privacy breach, this amendment would make it explicitly clear that the Information Commissioner could undertake an investigation as required.

The opposition has proposed amendments to the legislation to limit operation of the register to a not-for-profit organisation or government agency. Successive governments have successfully partnered with the private sector to deliver many programs. This amendment would be an extraordinary limitation on government's ability to continue with these partnerships, and it would send a concerning message to the private sector.

Changes to the National Cervical Cancer Screening Program from 1 May 2017 will introduce a more effective cervical cancer test, the human papillomavirus test, to replace the two-yearly Pap test. Cervical cancer claims the lives of 250 women a year, despite being one of the most preventable cancers.

Bowel cancer is the second most common cause of cancer deaths in Australia, with about 4,000 Australians dying each year. The expanded National Bowel Cancer Screening Program will roll out a free, at-home bowel cancer screening kit to Australians aged 50 to 74 years every two years by 2020.

I know that the heart of this legislation, the principles and the creation of the register, is not disagreed by the opposition, and I appreciate that. Quite frankly, it is a no-brainer that this legislation get passed and that this register come into operation. Everyone who appeared before the Senate committee inquiry initiated by the opposition said those things. They expressed their views and concerns, as they should, about privacy, and sought those reassurances which I believe my department has provided but which I am happy to strengthen with these amendments that I am moving. While all of those messages took place at the Senate inquiry, the very strong view of all those who appeared before it was that we need this legislation passed. We need the register in place because the current system is not geared to take on the five-yearly HPV test for cervical cancer.

It is quite clear that this legislation, this register, will save women's lives, and I look forward to its smooth passage through the other place. I commend my amendments to the House.

Ms CATHERINE KING (Ballarat) (18:30): I want to be very clear about what has actually just happened here. Labor do support the establishment of a National Cancer Screening Register—we have said that from the start—but, only a scant few weeks after the government introduced its legislation, the government has had to move 12 amendments to its own legislation because we have pointed out, through the Senate, as we should do, holes in this legislation. That is what this parliament is designed to do.

When we referred these bills to a Senate inquiry, what did this minister say? It was that, 'Labor is being hysterical. There is a hysterical tirade from Labor about these bills.' What we have just seen is the minister having to come to the dispatch box and say, 'I did get it wrong.
We rushed this legislation. We have not thought about this properly, and I have now had to move amendments to my own legislation. Perhaps it would be better, Minister Ley, if you actually talked to us in the first place before you introduced legislation. We can tell you what our issues are going to be. We are going to have debates about you deciding that something should be contracted in this way, because, frankly, it is not the best process when we have to amend and force the government to actually come to this dispatch box and amend its own legislation in this way. The Department of Health might have briefed us about what they were planning to do, but it is not until you get into the detail that you get an opportunity to say, 'There are some problems here.' That is what the Senate inquiry did.

We will support these amendments. We do not want to hold up this legislation. We know that this is a problem of the government's own making. They took the decision to sign a contract with Telstra in the dying days of the last government. They took that decision. Why? We do not know. We suspect it was something to do with an election announcement that they backed away from. This government took that decision. They have now had to retrospectively introduce legislation to allow that to happen. It is a disgrace, frankly, that they signed a contract before this parliament had passed legislation to establish the register of which the contract was the subject.

We are seeing a complete shambles when it comes to introducing health law in this country, an inability to actually get the legislation right in the first place, leaving it to the last minute—this is something that came, from memory, out of the 2015 budget; it was in not the 2016 budget that they wanted to establish an National Cancer Screen Register—and then having to amend their own legislation on the floor of the chamber.

We are happy, through this process, that we have improved these bills, apart from the two areas that I mentioned in our amendments. We do believe very firmly that there should be mandatory data breach reporting not just to the Privacy Commissioner but to the individuals affected, particularly when you look at the information that is there. Imagine if that information got into the public domain and you as an individual did not know about it. Imagine if that happened. Recently, with the data breach, there were 16 to 17 days from notification of the breach to the Department of Health—individuals still do not know if their data has been breached or not—before the minister reported it to the general practice sector. It is simply not good enough. We also absolutely contend that the penalties are still not good enough. As I said, we will support these amendments, but we will seek to continue to prosecute our case in the other place.

I particularly want to reiterate the issue that this is really a very large debate about what the role of the for-profit sector is in the delivery of government services. It is a very big debate and a very big decision that this government has made, for the first time, to give a for-profit provider a national cancer screening register. As far as I am aware, this is the first time a for-profit telecommunications company has had control of such a register. It is a big call that the government has made. We will be looking, with great interest, at the capacity of Telstra to actually deliver on its contractual promise on the delivery date it has promised. We are hearing already that there are some major problems around that. That has nothing to do with the passage of legislation; it has to do with the capacity of the organisation. This is something that we will continue to prosecute because this government, at every single opportunity, has
given preference to the private sector when it comes to Medicare. It has wanted to privatise Medicare, and this is just an example of what is to come.

Question agreed to.

Bill, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Dr GILLESPIE (Lyne—Assistant Minister for Rural Health) (18:37): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Plebiscite (Same-Sex Marriage) Bill 2016

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (18:38): Labor wants to achieve marriage equality in the fastest, least expensive, least harmful way possible. That is why Labor is calling for a free vote in parliament. That is why we will oppose this ill-conceived, ill-thought out plebiscite. Fundamentally, the inspiration of the proposed plebiscite by the government is, at its core, a delaying tactic, a divisive tactic, and Labor believes instead in immediate action.

This plebiscite is a gross abdication of responsibility and we believe parliament should simply do its job. The parliamentarians should do what they are paid to do, which is debate and vote on the laws of this country. In the past weeks and months my colleagues and I have taken the time to meet with community leaders, to listen to LGBTIQ Australians and their families as well as religious leaders. We have consulted with mental-health experts and social workers. What struck me, first and foremost, was how often the persons concerned, the advocates of marriage equality, how often these advocates' first concern was for others—the parents who are frustrated that the child they love as deeply as one of us, any of us, loves our son or daughter is still denied equality.

Proud dads, like Geoff Thomas—who the member for Sydney introduced me to—told us of how, when he found out that his son was gay, he said, 'The thing that hit me the most was that after having fought in Vietnam—my country sent me off to fight for a democracy that I believed in—I discovered that my son was not extended the same dignity, respect and equality before the law, in his own country, as other Australians.' The challenge that he laid down to all of us in this parliament is he just asked us to get on with it. He said, 'Do the right thing by my son and other people's sons and daughters. Do the job you are elected to do.' Well, Geoff, the Labor Party will do the job that we were elected to do. We want to get on with it. We will not let you down.

We heard from older Australians who are gay. They remember how tough it was for them growing up. They appreciate how hard it was dealing with previous generations' anti-gay homophobic attitudes, the penalties, the criminalisation. They said to me, very clearly, they do not wish to see a new generation bear the brunt of public judgement. It was a fantastic loving
couple that had been together for 17 years. They said they would rather wait for parliament to
do its job than inflict a 'no' campaign on gay teenagers.

Then, there are all those marvellous young LGBTI Australians. They are resilient,
confident, intelligent people but cognisant and anxious of the prejudice that would be dredged
up. We met with same-sex couples with children, wondering how they will protect their child
from the harm and the hatred unleashed by the worst elements of the anti-marriage-equality
advertising. One mum, Simone, baby on her knee, repeated some of the vicious, awful things
that had been said to her and her partner in the past. As she was doing so, she put her hands
over her child's ears. But if this legislation is passed, there are not enough hands to put over
enough children's ears to save them from the dreadful debate which no conservative
government can guarantee will not occur.

That is what we are doing here. We are going to make sure that the children in these
relationships do not have to put up with the inevitable abuse, the heightened abuse, merely
because the government will not go down the fastest, least expensive, least harmful path. Now
it is true, in 2013, after I had already voted for marriage equality in the parliament, I told a
Christian forum I was relaxed about a plebiscite. And the Prime Minister is desperate to use
that as a distraction, with no sense of irony. My preferred position is to have a vote in
parliament. But, unlike the Prime Minister, I have not changed my mind or firmed up my
opinion because of some Faustian bargain or at the instruction of anti-marriage-equality
advocates.

The people of Australia are the ones who have educated us and they have certainly
reinforced my view. What do you say to people who will be targeted by a 'no' campaign?
How do you seriously and rationally and reasonably explain to one group of our fellow
citizens that they have to submit their relationship to a $200 million taxpayer funded opinion
poll whose result members of the government have already confirmed that they will ignore?
Why should some Australians' special relationships be subject to a new and separate legal
process that has never been inflicted on any other group on any other question?

Why do gay Australians have to submit and metaphorically knock on the doors of 15 million
of their fellow Australians to get permission to get married? No-one else has had to do that, so
why on Earth are we asking some Australians to go through a more onerous process than that
we ask of all Australians? How do we compel 15 million Australians to vote—and fine them
if they do not vote—when members of the government will not be compelled to respect the
outcome? I have to ask why, after so many backflips and backdowns, is this plebiscite the
only election promise that the Prime Minister and the Liberal-National coalition are
determined to keep?

Make no mistake: this plebiscite is not about marriage equality. It is about two things and
two things only: Tony Abbott's ideology and Malcolm Turnbull's job security. Equality for
minorities should not be conditional on the approval of majorities. You
do not have an
opinion poll on rights. That is why they are called rights. Imposing this plebiscite would not
just be a waste of money or a failure of leadership; I think it would be a failure of basic
decency. It is a glaring contradiction of our national ideal of a fair go for all.

When he introduced this legislation a few weeks ago, the Prime Minister said of its $200
million cost, 'What price democracy?' But the price of this plebiscite goes far beyond the time,
the money and the resources to run a national opinion poll. It stretches further than the $7.5
million in the funding for the 'no' campaign—government money, the money of taxpayers, being spent to argue against the rights of Australians. It is worth remembering that in the 1967 referendum the Liberal government then did not provide any dollars to the 'no' case. This proposition of moral relativism—the assumption that 'yes' and 'no' are equally weighted arguments—belies the nature of the arguments against marriage equality.

The true cost of this plebiscite cannot be counted on a spreadsheet alone; it is a toll that will be borne by same-sex couples being told that their precious children are members of a new stolen generation. I have met and heard from—as have all my colleagues gathered here—literally thousands of parents who are worried about people who will not be able to advocate for themselves: children watching government funded ads which reject their parents' love and tell them that it is not normal and that the family they live in is not wanted or valued. Inevitably these same hateful slogans will be thrown back at them in the schoolyard or slapped across their Facebook. Why do some Australian children have to watch their parents' relationship voted on by everyone else? It is about gay teenagers yet to come out, fearful of rejection, being told that there is something wrong with who they are and how they feel.

The cost of this plebiscite is measured in the arrogance of the coded language that implies that some families are more equal than others, that some kinds of love count for more than others. Every MP should be honest and report to the House the vile homophobia they have received in their emails—the crazy arguments treating some Australians as different from others. We all know it, and every MP receives this material, signed or unsigned. What I cannot understand is why government MPs, having received this material, pretend that this is a debate without consequences—that this is a debate and an opinion poll without victims and without the potential for great harm.

I absolutely respect freedom of worship and freedom of religious expression. I understand that some good people of sincere faith do not support marriage equality as they see it as conflicting with their faith. Do I think everyone who is opposed to marriage equality is homophobic? No, of course not. But do I believe that homophobic hate will be more widespread as a result of this debate? Yes, I do. No-one truly believes that this debate will be civil. The Prime Minister understands this. Despite his best intentions and the best intentions of some people arguing for the plebiscite, they cannot give a guarantee that this will be a civil debate, and they know that it will not be. I do not understand the nature of a leadership which says that the harm to some people is a price worth paying for a political deal in the Liberal party room.

When that updated bill and information—which was more about carving out exemptions to please the hard Right than achieving equality under the law—was released at 11 pm last night, we saw that they cannot guarantee this respect. We know that when you release that sort of information at 11 pm the night before this bill is due to come back on, it smells like a deal with the hard Right. So when the Prime Minister asks us 'What price democracy?' demonising loving couples, victimising the children of loving couples and inflicting emotional torment on young and not-so-young people is not a price that Labor is willing to pay on behalf of the coalition.

I have been criticised by some for drawing the link between this plebiscite and the concerns about the mental health of LGBTI Australians. I say to those members, some of whom are here in the chamber, I make no apologies for bringing attention to this most serious issue,
especially when the evidence is so overwhelming. A recent study conducted by the Young and Well institute found that 16 per cent of young Australians who are gay had attempted suicide; a third had harmed themselves; and more than four in 10 had thought about self-harm or suicide, a rate six times greater than that of heterosexual Australians of the same age.

Up to two out of every three of these young Australians have been bullied at school, at work or on the sporting field about their sexual orientation.

Last week, the member for the Sydney and I met with Professor Patrick McGorry and other mental health experts to discuss the mental health consequences of a plebiscite. He told us that LGBTIQ people have a five-times increased risk of suicide, and, as he said, this is caused by discrimination and homophobia. He went on to say that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with people in the LGBTIQ community in terms of mental health or mental illness, but their experiences cause this increased risk. The reason Professor McGorry, like so many other mental health experts, opposes the plebiscite is that, as he said:

We know when these campaigns are held in the public domain like in the US and in Ireland, the risk goes up. What is it about the voice of practitioners and experts that the government refuses to hear? What is it about the evidence that this government chooses to ignore? What is it about this plebiscite that means any price is worth paying, according to the government?

Members of the church also understand that the plebiscite will be a deeply divisive experience. The Anglican Bishop of Wangaratta, John Parkes, wrote to the Prime Minister and I last month warning:

... there are those who will engage in harmful, derogatory and damaging discourse, dividing communities and causing deep pain to our LGBTI brothers and sisters.

Indeed, following the Irish referendum, when there was no alternative to a national vote—please do not give us the Irish referendum as the justification for the plebiscite. There was no choice in Ireland; there is a choice here. And, of course, in Ireland, though marriage equality succeeded and our TV screens were full of all of those remarkable images, a recent survey has found that just 23 per cent of LGBTI Irish people would be prepared to endure that vote again—only 23 per cent would want to have that experience again.

What is it about the evidence, the experience, that this government wilfully ignores in favour of a suboptimal, painful approach. The most powerful argument against the Prime Minister's plebiscite is found in the streets of the suburbs and towns of Australia. The most powerful argument against this plebiscite is LGBTI Australians living their lives, raising children, paying taxes, building communities, caring for our elderly, teaching in our schools, serving in our defence forces and sitting in this parliament—fellow Australians who do everything this nation asks of them.

Generation by generation they have worked to overturn the discrimination that their own country levelling against them. Fifty years ago homosexuality was a criminal offence in every Australian state and territory. We did not need a plebiscite to recognise that. Thirty years ago—

Mr Tim Wilson: The Liberals fixed it.

Mr SHORTEN: Well, be the Liberals you once were, sir. Thirty years ago gay people were barred from serving in the Defence Force. We did not need a plebiscite to fix that. As
recently as eight years ago same sex couples were still subject to more than 80 different forms of legal and financial discrimination. Labor fixed that, and the Liberals fixed other matters—inch by inch, clause by clause the laws have been overturned. Change has been hard-fought, had-argued and hard-won.

Change has come because on the floor of this parliament MPs from both sides summoned the courage and the basic human decency to extend equality and not diminish it, to end discrimination and not entrench it. Now, in this 45th Parliament, it is our turn. It is our turn to face up to the test that previous parliaments and previous political generations have answered. It is our turn to answer this question: can we respect the national mood and simply get on with a free vote on marriage equality? Can we prove that we are big enough? Can we prove that we are good enough? Can we prove that we are generous enough? Can we prove that we understand that families come in all shapes and sizes and that families do not need the judgement of conservative Liberal politicians or opinion polls? What they actually need is just to be allowed to get on with it, and that is what they expect from us—to get on with it!

Are we able to remove the last piece of discrimination against LGBTI people from our nation's laws? Our predecessors have done this without resort to plebiscite. When we have made so much progress, so hard-fought, why is this too hard for the parliament to do? Why did those who seek to have a plebiscite abdicate their responsibility? Why did they get elected if it is not to the job they were elected to do? Can we find it in ourselves to say to our brothers and sisters, our sons and daughters and our friends and neighbours that you deserve the right to marry a person you love?

All of us who are called to this place have a tremendous privilege, and I know all who are here understand that. The privileges is to serve the people of Australia as their representatives. In this chamber we rise to speak on their behalf. We can argue with each other about which laws suit people and which do not, but we are all motivated with our views about laws and votes that will benefit Australians. We owe Australian's not just our industry but our judgement.

We have before us now the opportunity to change a law that does not describe the generous, inclusive, egalitarian nation that we love. There will come a time, even if it is not right now, that when we pass a bill for marriage equality in this country people will ask after that why it took so long. And there will come a time in the future, much as we look back at discriminatory laws in the past, and ask why they did not change it then. Why did it take so long? But what we on our side will not do is squib the challenge. The parliament and the laws we want to have should be a reflection of what we want people who watch Australia to understand to be our values.

Our laws should be a mirror in which we can teach our children the reflection of who we think we are as a country. We are lucky to have this opportunity to make Australia a more inclusive and more open and more generous nation. We are lucky to have this opportunity. Why on earth would people not want to take the opportunity to conduct ourselves in the manner in which parliaments have done in Australia for 100 years? Why not allow people a measure of happiness in the lives of a great number of our fellow Australians? Why not understand that marriage equality is not a responsibility that we should delegate? It is not a job we can contract out. You cannot contract out your conscience to an opinion poll. You cannot contract out our responsibility to our fellow Australians. That is the complete opposite
of representative democracy. This argument that marriage equality is in a special category, that marriage laws are in a special category and therefore create special circumstances—we don't buy that.

We have amended the Marriage Act on 20 occasions. There was no need for a plebiscite on any one of those. And we have dealt with complex issues in this parliament which go to morality. I would have thought that a chance to serve the people, a chance for parliament to prove its worth, to fulfil its purpose, a chance to reflect the values of our people to make a country a better place, a free vote in the parliament which saves our taxpayers $200 million and saves our country from a divisive argument—all around the world citizens do not feel partners with their politicians in the democratic purpose. We have a chance to be partners with them—not to follow them, but to lead them, to listen to their voice, as we do. We have a chance to say to our fellow Australians that the democratic system is not broken, that we cannot make hard decisions in this place anymore. It is the failure of decision-making and the willingness to put a group of our fellow Australians down a path of lawmaking that we do not ask of anyone else. That is the failure here.

A free vote on marriage equality means that we could be attending the spring weddings of people who have waited long enough. A free vote is the cheapest, the fastest and the least-harmful way. That is why I move, as a second reading amendment:

That all the words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

“this bill be withdrawn and redrafted to legislate for marriage equality and that the House calls on the Government to afford all members of parliament a free vote.”

Let's just get on with it. Let's make marriage equality a reality.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Craig Kelly): Is the amendment seconded?

Ms Plibersek (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (19:02): I second the amendment and reserve my right to speak.

The Deputy Speaker: The original question was that this bill be now read a second time. To this the honourable Leader of the Opposition has moved as an amendment:

That all the words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

“this bill be withdrawn and redrafted to legislate for marriage equality and that the House calls on the Government to afford all members of parliament a free vote.”

If it suits the House, I will state the question in the form 'that the amendment be agreed to'. The question now is that the amendment be agreed to.

Mr Entsch (Leichhardt) (19:03): When we talk about divisive speeches—we just heard one in this place right now. Again, it raises serious concerns about the motives of the other side.

Back in my late 20s, when I was living in remote Queensland gulf country, a fellow I knew went to Sydney one Christmas and came back as a woman. Years later she wrote to me and thanked me for my acceptance, tolerance and support during that time. She said that contrary to the perception that the North is full of ‘rednecks’, it was, in her words:

… thanks to these people and ‘ringers’ like you, that I used to work and socialise with, I was able to work and live a ‘normal’ life that is so often not available to others in situations like mine.
As you and I know there is absolutely no family in the country that can assume it will be 'immune' to having a child/grandchild/relative that is gay or transgender... Hopefully, these families would want that person to have the same rights in their relationships that other Australians take for granted.

It was not until I received that email that I realised the strength of my actions in not being judgemental but simply accepting her for who she was. That has made a lasting impression on me and was the beginning of my journey as an advocate for gay and transgender Australians.

At this point I would like to acknowledge a very good friend of mine, Kate Doak, who has embarked on a journey over recent years. I am proud and privileged to have been able to share that journey with her and work through with her, and it is wonderful for her to be sitting in the gallery today, because this debate is as much about Kate as it is about all of our other gay and transgender Australians.

Today I rise to speak on a bill that provides for a national plebiscite to be held on whether the parliament should legislate to allow same-sex marriage. Voting on 11 February 2017 would be compulsory and the result determined by a simple majority of votes cast across Australia, 50 per cent plus one vote. Under the proposed legislation the definition of marriage would be changed to replace 'a man and a woman' with 'two people'. Conditions of a valid marriage would not change. Same-sex marriages would be recognised in Australia. Existing religious protections for ministers of religion would be retained and strengthened, as would protections for religious bodies or organisations that refused to provide facilities, goods or services. Marriage celebrants, including those who are not ministers of religion, would be able to refuse a marriage of same-sex couples on the grounds of conscientious or religious beliefs.

It has been a long road to get to this point, and I accept that there are those who are not happy with where we have ended up. The plebiscite certainly is not my preferred position either. I put up a cross-party bill back in 2015 in good faith, but it joined the other 17 unsuccessful bills that have gone before it. The proposal for a plebiscite was taken to the 2016 election as a clear coalition policy, and we won that election.

For me personally, I have gained and lost a lot of votes on marriage equality alone. But conversations revealed that many people who supported the plebiscite were not opposed to gay marriage. There were certainly some, but the majority reasoned that they did not want the vote to be owned by the politicians; they wanted to be able to tell their gay friends or relatives that their vote had contributed to a significant social change—and that view should not be underestimated. That is what I tell members of the gay community when they ask me, 'Why should my neighbour have a say on whether I'm allowed to get married?' The fact is that many of their neighbours are very keen to be part of this change and they do not want it owned by a small group of politicians.

In the period since the election I have become convinced that, were this plebiscite to get up, we would certainly be able to achieve marriage equity. There is overwhelming support in the Australian public. You only need to look at the recent Newspoll figures—62 per cent in favour and only 32 per cent against. Conversely, if we were to force a parliamentary vote on this issue, anybody who thinks the results will be accepted is kidding themselves. There is too much interest and emotional investment in this issue now. If a vote in the parliament were unsuccessful, those supporting marriage equality and the broader public would challenge its validity because the decision was made by politicians. If a vote in the parliament was successful, the same goes. There is no way that those who oppose marriage equality would
accept the result and walk away. The issue would continue to be unresolved indefinitely—and this is exactly what neither side wants.

Every issue has its time in the sun when the national conversation is at its peak but, when that moment passes, it can be years before momentum again reaches the point of change. Marriage equality is no different. There is a huge risk of issue fatigue the longer this is dragged out. We are in a position now where we can achieve the outcome we have been moving towards for so long. So I urge people not to dismiss the opportunity because they do not like the process. Also, those in the community who are taking a 'willing to wait' stance are doing so based on two very flawed assumptions: firstly, that the Labor Party will win the 2019 election; and, secondly, that the policy position supporting gay marriage that was imposed on Labor politicians at their national conference will continue past 2019. The issue is white hot right now and, if not resolved on 11 February, I suspect many people will feel that they have given it their best shot and walk away and focus on other issues.

The exposure draft legislation has now been released and people have the opportunity to comment on it until 6 December. After this, the legislation will be finalised, ready to be enacted immediately in the case of a 'yes' vote. We have already debunked the argument of a plebiscite not being binding with a cast-iron commitment that the parliament will respect the will of the people. If there are half a dozen who decide that they want to go against the will of the people, that is entirely up to them and they will have to answer to the people. The reality is that, if there are 150 people in here—and if what we hear from the other side is true and they are committed to making it happen—there is no way that such a vote, if it was 'yes', would not get through this place. So any suggestion that it would not is absolute nonsense from the other side. As I said, in the case of a 'yes' vote, there might be a handful who will vote against it or abstain.

Overwhelmingly, Australians already know how they are going to vote in a plebiscite. This issue has been discussed for well over a decade. So advertising material will only target the single-digit proportion of people—six per cent according to Newspoll—who are undecided. While I question the allocation of funds to the 'yes' and 'no' campaigns, I accept that funds need to be spent, whether through the Electoral Commission or the two parliamentary committees that would be established. This process will see government-produced material scrutinised through the cabinet process to ensure language is appropriate, respectful and decent.

It is this respectfulness and decentness which absolutely must be carried through into the national dialogue, as we have seen in the experience of other countries. Tiernan Brady headed the 'yes' campaign in the Irish referendum, and I have met with him several times to discuss Australia's path to marriage equality. In a recent article in The Australian, Tiernan disputed the Leader of the Opposition's depiction of the Irish experience as 'ugly division'. Tiernan accepted that the lead-up to the vote was mentally taxing for LGBT people but said the campaign 'brought people together instead of tearing them apart' and the vote itself was 'an astounding and unifying moment' for his country. I see no reason why it would be any different here in Australia. Tiernan went on to say that the 'ugly conversations' were not the result of the process itself, saying:

... the approach of people in the campaign decides what the tone is and I think that is a critical point...

We have to set the tone that is respectful. There will be other voices and that is always the way it is and, sadly, we have to endure those voices.
Tiernan's sentiments were echoed in a very good book recently released by Paul Ritchie, titled *Faith Love and Australia—The Conservative Case for Same-Sex Marriage*. Ritchie tells us to 'embrace all conversations' about same-sex marriage, writing:

The opponents of same-sex marriage know they will lose a plebiscite that is about the merits of legalizing same-sex marriage, but they can win a plebiscite if they make the public debate about something else.

That 'something else' is of course the issue of freedom.

Whether or not the plebiscite legislation is passed, supporters of same-sex marriage must not employ the American political tactic of simply shutting down opponents' messages, whether through banning TV ads, calling on hotels to refuse to hold meetings for same-sex marriage opponents or attacking corporate entities for not publicly endorsing the campaign for same-sex marriage. The case for marriage equality is a strong and logical one in itself, while people opposed to marriage equality may have deeply held, personal convictions on the issue. We must allow all conversations to be heard and, yes, there may be public statements that are distasteful or offensive. But, as Ritchie says, 'We must let the unfair attacks sit in the public square as proof of why there must be change.' I also dispute the assumption that all the negativity is coming just from the 'no' campaign. As a result of my efforts to make a plebiscite work, some of the communications coming to me from marriage equality supporters on the extreme side have been intimidating and incredibly offensive. So far I do not think either side can claim the high moral ground on this one. I am only one voice but I will continue to pursue this with dignity and respect and I urge everyone commenting on this issue to do the same.

This is a battle that has been going on for decades now. And, while I am not challenging the intention of some individuals across politics in championing this cause or those within the marriage equality movement, I am concerned that people are losing sight of the end game. For them, it is more about the battle than the outcome.

I listened to the opposition leader's contribution on this bill. Why didn't he make the changes between 2007 and 2013, when he was in government? He had the ability to do it, but he made no effort, because he had a different view on it then. He was opposed at that stage. He is all over the place. At an Australian Christian Lobby candidates forum prior to the 2013 election, the current opposition leader said that he was:

... completely relaxed about having some form of plebiscite.

He said:

I would rather that the people of Australia could make their view clear on this than leaving this issue to 150 people.

Only in August last year the Leader of the Greens and Senators Xenophon, Lambie, and Leyonhjelm fronted the cameras to announce that they were putting forward a bill to bring on a plebiscite no later than the 2016 election. Senator Di Natale told the *Financial Review* and other media:

One thing we all agree on is that we need to deal with this issue and deal with it quickly ... and it must be the parliament that owns the plebiscite and drafts the question.

Senator Xenophon added:

If all MPs and senators can't have a conscience vote then there needs to be a conscious vote of all Australians through a plebiscite.
But for goodness sakes let’s get this done, let’s have a vote as soon as possible rather than just being put off to the never-never …

Well, Senator Xenophon and others, this is the never-never unless we start to deal with this issue right now. So stand up for what you committed to only 12 months ago.

By all means, as new information comes forward politicians should be able to change their minds on an issue without being accused of backflipping. But the Leader of the Opposition, in citing his reasons for change—and I find this quite concerning—that has entered dangerous territory in directly connecting gay marriage to youth suicide. We know that young LGBTI people are particularly vulnerable to negative commentary, but they will be exposed to it, whether it is through a plebiscite, a parliamentary vote, or another three years or more in a dragged-out debate. We can prepare for and minimise this risk by committing additional funding to headspace, in line with the Irish model, where extra funding for mental health services was fully utilised. There is no reason why we cannot do the same here and shorten the whole process.

Labor is the one playing wedge politics on this issue by fuelling divisiveness, ignoring the fact that there is a cost to democracy and trying to undermine the government, which has a mandate for a plebiscite, as voted by the Australian people. We must put aside partisan objections and focus on what we want to achieve. If Labor and the Greens really support gay marriage and want it to be legalised as soon as possible, they should be supporting this plebiscite. This is the best possible chance we have had in a decade, but if the legislation fails I will be one of millions of Australians who will be profoundly frustrated and disappointed with the Labor Party’s hypocrisy. Let us not allow this opportunity to be squandered. I certainly commend this bill to the House.

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (19:17): In 2004 I received a letter from a man called John Challis. The letter was about superannuation, and it called on the then Howard government to give same-sex couples the same legal rights to inherit superannuation as married couples and de facto heterosexual couples. John was concerned that if he died his partner, Arthur, would not be able to inherit his superannuation. John and I lobbied the Howard government for years for change; of course, our calls fell largely on deaf ears. It was not until 2007, when Labor was elected, that changes around superannuation, taxation, family law, Medicare, pharmaceuticals, immigration and more than 80 pieces of discriminatory legislation were changed for same-sex couples and their children.

A couple of weeks ago I caught up with John in Sydney for a cup of coffee. He is now 88 years old and his partner, Arthur, is 84. They have been together for 49 years. More than a decade after John first wrote to me about equal rights for him and for his partner, Arthur, we talked about this campaign for one last great change. One piece of unfinished business—marriage equality. But, while John and Arthur have waited nearly half a century to have their relationship properly recognised by the community that they have given so much to, they said that they could not support a plebiscite. They are so concerned about the harm that a plebiscite would do to the gay and lesbian community, to same-sex couples, and to same-sex parents and their children, that they were prepared to wait. John was also deeply concerned about how a plebiscite subverts our usual democratic processes. Frankly, it tells you all you need to know about how serious the damage a plebiscite on marriage equality would be that a
same-sex couple in their 80s who have waited almost half a century are saying that they would rather wait than take this path.

For John and for Arthur: I will not and Labor will not support this plebiscite. For the same-sex couples that would hear that their relationships are second-rate: I will not and Labor will not support the plebiscite. For the children of same-sex couples who will hear that there is something wrong with their family: I will not and Labor will not support this plebiscite. For young gay and lesbian people who might be struggling with their sexuality or who are just thinking about coming out: I will not and Labor will not support this plebiscite. That is why I am proud to have seconded the Leader of the Opposition's amendment that this bill be withdrawn and re-drafted to legislate now, today, in this parliament for marriage equality. That would see a free vote. That would see this parliament do its job.

For 14 months since Tony Abbott and the right-wing of the Liberal Party first proposed the plebiscite as a way of indefinitely delaying marriage equality, we have been debating this proposal. To be fair, we have not been debating the latest legislation—we have only just seen that. But the more closely we have examined the proposal the worse it has looked. I have received literally thousands of emails and letters about marriage equality and I have spoken to many, many people deeply concerned about this plebiscite. I have heard from Leighton, who was deeply affected by homophobic hate speech as a young person and who turned to substance abuse and self-harm. He says:

Children struggling with their identity… need to be protected and spared the hateful debate that this plebiscite will incite.

I have heard from Roberta, who fears for her 19-year-old granddaughter and the impact that a publicly financed 'no' campaign will have on her. I have heard from Damien, who asks why the LGBTIQ community needs to have this unprecedented approach. He says, 'It's as if we must reach a certain quota of suffering as a community before we are granted this fundamental right—one last humiliating hurdle.' I have heard from Shauna, who is heterosexual but finds the concept of 'giving permission' to equal access to the law to be disgusting.

Last week the Leader of the Opposition and I met with marriage equality advocates in Sydney. The Leader of the Opposition has been doing a terrific job of consulting on this, as has the shadow Attorney-General, as has the member for Griffith, as has the member for Franklin, who has been working very hard with mental health organisations—as have all members on this side. We have heard again and again from advocates: 'Not this way.' Geoff Thomas from Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays last week told the Leader of the Opposition and I that as a Vietnam veteran who fought for democracy because his country asked him to he could not understand why his son should not expect the same legal rights and obligations as any other Australian. He said: 'That's not the democracy and freedom I fought for.' That is the question at the heart of this debate. Why should some Australians face discrimination or even vilification because of who they are or who they love?

Every day it becomes more apparent that this plebiscite is a delaying tactic, a tactic designed by the opponents of marriage equality in the hope that they can take the majority support that unquestionably exists in the Australian community, as the previous speaker said, and twist and obfuscate this issue in the same way they did when it came to the republic
debate and frighten people off voting for it. There is a simple way to settle this. The Marriage Act could be changed by parliament this week. The Liberals are advancing the simplistic argument that somehow it is more democratic to have a plebiscite than for the parliament to vote, yet Michael Kirby, a very distinguished jurist, has pointed out that three Prime Ministers—Menzies, Whitlam and Howard—who loved and respected this parliament and its processes did not choose to settle difficult social questions by using plebiscites. Kirby recalls that Gough Whitlam always upheld the idea that parliament itself should be a great institution of equality. Whitlam said:

Parliament has been our great liberating force … There is no freedom without equality. To redistribute and equalise liberty has been one of the principal functions of Parliament.

John Howard did not have a plebiscite when he changed the Marriage Act last time, nor incidentally when he overturned the Northern Territory voluntary euthanasia legislation—to my mind, a more controversial proposition than the one that is before us.

It is our day job. It is what we do in this parliament. It is what we are paid to do. Unless it is constitutionally required, these matters should be resolved through the usual channels of a responsible parliamentary democracy, particularly when the High Court has already said it is the job of this parliament to legislate. The member for Goldstein was in here earlier. As a former Human Rights Commissioner he provided exactly this evidence to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Legislation Committee in 2015. In his advice he said that a plebiscite is not an appropriate method for addressing matters relating to marriage and will do nothing to resolve in a substantive way this issue. In fact, Solicitor-General Justin Gleeson probably could have told the government that for free if they had bothered to ask him. No doubt he would have had some very instructive views about the novelty of such an approach.

It is also why Aboriginal leaders are advising the Prime Minister to abandon the plebiscite. They are convinced that an ugly campaign will actually set back the real referendum before us at the moment—the proper updating of our Constitution to recognise our First Australians. Marcia Langton said that a divisive campaign against marriage equality could 'unleash the dogs' on Aboriginal Australia. We will have a referendum on Indigenous constitutional recognition because the Constitution requires us to update it in this proper way, not because Cory Bernardi tells Malcolm Turnbull, 'Your job depends on it.'

The SPEAKER: The member for Sydney will refer to people by their correct titles.

Ms PLIBERSEK: We know that this pointless plebiscite will be fantastically expensive—$200 million, by the government's own estimate. You would really think that the people who said we had a debt and deficit disaster would worry about that. When we had a projected deficit of $4.7 billion for the 2015-16 year that was a debt and deficit disaster. Under this mob that has blown out eightfold—this is why I was doing this gesture in question time today. It is almost $40 billion but they cannot think of something better to do with $200 million—maybe pay down debt, maybe properly fund our schools, maybe properly fund our hospitals, maybe build some transport infrastructure. Do the Liberals really think that running this plebiscite is more important and more valuable than properly funding aged care or properly funding child care? Yes, apparently they do.

But the most compelling argument is the harm that this debate will do to the LGBTIQ communities, their families and supporters. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, mental health experts, including Professor Patrick McGorry and Frank Quinlan, and suicide
prevention expert Dr Jo Robinson have all said that the potential for harm here is real. We know that it will happen. Two weeks ago I visited—not for the first time—Twenty10, a gay and lesbian youth counselling service in my electorate. They have already seen an increase in demand for their services. Gay and lesbian rights advocates have told me about physical confrontations and even death threats that they have already experienced because they have been speaking out in favour of marriage equality. Rainbow families, close and loving families, have had to explain to their children why people—

The SPEAKER: It being 7.30 pm, the debate is interrupted. The member for Sydney will have leave to conclude her remarks at a later hour.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER (19:30): It being 7.30 pm, I have no choice but to propose the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

Plebiscite (Same-Sex Marriage) Bill 2016

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Whitlam.

Mr Stephen Jones: I am very sorry to have interrupted the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Sydney, in what was an impassioned speech about something that I care very deeply about.

Ms Plibersek: I'll finish it tomorrow.

The SPEAKER: The member for Whitlam can resume his seat for a second. The adjournment kicks in at 7.30 pm automatically. I have no choice in the matter. I call the member for Whitlam. No? I call the member for Sydney on the adjournment.

Ms Plibersek: The member for Whitlam has kindly said that he is happy for me to continue, if that is all right, during his adjournment slot.

The SPEAKER: Yes, you have five minutes.

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (19:31): Thank you very much, and I thank the member for Whitlam for being so generous. As I said earlier in the second reading debate on the Plebiscite (Same Sex Marriage) Bill 2016, gay and lesbian advocates have already told me about physical confrontations and death threats that they have experienced. Rainbow Families visited our parliament today to talk about how difficult it is to tell their children that there are people they have never met who think there is something wrong with their family. These families will not be created by marriage equality, despite what some of the most pernicious propaganda is already suggesting. These families exist now—and they have always existed—and they have a right to the same protections and responsibilities that other families enjoy. Why should the children of these families be told by complete strangers that their parents' relationship is second-rate and that it does not deserve the recognition that we accord other relationships?

The Liberals have said that our concerns are unwarranted and that we are somehow suggesting that Australians cannot have a civilised debate. There is nothing further from the truth. I absolutely know, firstly, that a vast majority of Australians support marriage equality and, secondly, that the vast majority of Australians can and will engage in this debate in a civilised way, if they engage at all. But such a debate will undoubtedly hand the megaphone
to the extremists in any discussion and, in this instance, the government proposes to subsidise this to the tune of $15 million.

Of course I have also met with constituents who oppose marriage equality, including representatives of the Greek Orthodox community and the Catholic Church—a whole range of people across the community. I do truly want to reassure them once again that there is nothing in what Labor proposes that would require their churches to solemnise any relationship between a same-sex couple. There is nothing in this proposition that suggests that. They are completely entitled to live their lives and worship as they choose, but the simple fact is we live in a society that separates church and state. For many people, marriage is a religious sacrament, but not for everyone. For others, however, it is still an important legal and social recognition of deep love and commitment, and that is something that really most of us want in our lives.

I would like to say to my colleagues in this place too: none of us should assume that because someone has deeply held religious views they are automatically opposed to marriage equality. Indeed, there are many people of deep faith who make a strong Christian case in favour of marriage equality—great and compassionate leaders such as the Reverend Dr Keith Mascord, who I have known for decades now. I am surely not the only person in this place who comes from a devout family whose motto may as well be, 'Judge not, lest ye be judged,' or, my personal favourite, 'Take the splinter out of your own eye before you reach for the speck in your brother's eye.' When I asked my mum about this years ago, she said to me: 'It's just so simple. There is not enough love in the world, so why would we want to deny it to anyone who has found it?'

I want to finish with this: one of my favourite poems is a love poem by WH Auden from 1937, and it is called _Lullaby_. It is a poem written by a gay man in a time and from a country where his love was illegal, and it speaks of universal love and hope. Marriage equality is a fundamental recognition of the universal character of love—that the way each of us loves is not so very different. Our hopes and dreams for ourselves, for our families and for our children are not so very different, and our laws should not discriminate.

**Dunkley Electorate: Infrastructure**

**Mr CREWTHER** (Dunkley) (19:35): During the recent election, I announced with Minister Paul Fletcher the $4 million Dunkley rail plan. As part of this plan, $2 million has been allocated to cost and plan the electrification and duplication of the Frankston-to-Baxter rail line, which will extend Metropolitan Rail services to residents across Dunkley. This plan will incorporate Frankston station, Leawarra station, a new station for Langwarrin and Frankston South, which will be at or near the old Langwarrin station site, Baxter and an entirely new station at Frankston Hospital. The Leawarra station will service students of the Monash University Peninsula campus and is anticipated to increase enrolments by more than 20 per cent. This feeds into the continual growth of Frankston as a health hub, with $6 million in funding towards a fully funded MRI licence, which I announced during my recent election campaign, which will benefit not only the 2,000 local patients but also those residing within the whole southern peninsula.

At a recent meeting with the Minister for Health and Aged Care, Sussan Ley, it was confirmed that full access to this service under Medicare will be active as early as next year.
A dedicated Frankston Hospital station will also be investigated and planned. Having a dedicated Frankston Hospital train station will allow greater ease of transportation for patients to access their vital health services and will contribute to resolving the significant parking issues and costs currently experienced at both the Frankston train station and the Frankston Hospital, which I regret to say the state government has neglected.

A further $2 million has also been allocated to plan a third rail track for an express train service between Frankston and Melbourne—a vital asset that the state Labor government neglected to include as part of its Skyrail proposal, with their proposal looking at only two tracks instead of three. The lack of planning in this regard will cost a lot more in the long term. I am calling on the state Labor government to consider a third track as part of their proposals for level crossing removals.

While the Skyrail proposal has some sites with rail trench options, three sites in Carrum and Frankston are earmarked for unsightly rail bridges. While all involved agree that level crossings are dangerous and need to go, local councils, residents and businesses are against the proposed plan and are extremely concerned about the negative environmental, social, financial and business impacts this model will have. It is as opposed to the much more aesthetically appealing 'cut and cover' model which, while being slightly more expensive, is much more viable in the long term not only from an engineering perspective but also from the perspective of local home owners. Their privacy will not be impacted; their house prices will potentially increase; and the land above the rail line is opened up. For example, Frankston resident Julie Freeborne said she would be left viewing a monstrosity and a 'concrete blob' out of her window. Local businessman Max Whitehead also commented that 'authorities should give more consideration to rail-under-road option at the intersection'.

These projects I have mentioned in Dunkley will provide crucial connectivity—which is great for jobs, business, tourism, as well as community engagement and preventing social isolation—and it will help create a polycentric city. As a member of the Infrastructure and Regional Development Committee, I am committed to supporting the connectivity of freight and passenger travel, particularly within Dunkley. I am very pleased that the coalition government had the foresight to contribute $4 million towards the Dunkley rail plan as part of my campaign.

As part of that committee I am a big supporter of creating a state of cities, connecting our regional centres for both freight and passenger rail. That is why I have previously been involved heavily in projects like the Murry Basin Rail Project, which not only provides crucial freight upgrades but also paves the way for passenger rail. I do believe passenger rail should be considered not only for Dunkley, but for regional centres and outer suburban areas in Melbourne and across Victoria and, indeed, Australia.

Dudley, Mr Geoffrey

Hill, Mr Mike

Mr KHALIL (Wills) (19:40): I attended the memorial service for Geoff Dudley on 5 August. Geoff passed away peacefully in his sleep on 24 July, and I rise to speak in his memory and in honour of his life.

On behalf of the broader Labor Party family, I want to extend my deepest condolences to his loving partner Kristina Olsen and to his three sons Alexander, Albert and Sam. At the
memorial service, they were surrounded by friends and family as we commemorated Geoff's life, the generosity of his spirit, his warmth, his friendship, his passion for social justice, especially for Indigenous Australians, his eclectic taste in music and his love of the stars as an avid amateur astronomer.

I saw Geoff only a few days before he passed away. He came to visit me at my campaign office. As always he was generous with his time and his ideas, and we looked forward to and made plans for our next meeting to work on those ideas.

He and Kristina were such a wonderful support to me during the recent federal election campaign, taking time out of their lives to attend so many campaign events. They were true believers; ALP members; true Labor people—committed, passionate advocates for so many good causes. Geoff was a real champion of social justice.

I will miss Geoff for his kindness and warmth. And I am personally, selfishly, so saddened that he left us, as he and I were only just starting our friendship. But I know that his beloved family, Kristina, Alexander, Albert and Sam will miss him so much more. Geoff was a loving husband and father; truly a good man. As Albert said in his moving eulogy at the memorial, Geoff is now with the stars he loves so much. Vale Geoffrey Dudley.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I also wish to remember Mike Hill, who passed away on 26 July this year. I was saddened to learn of Mike's passing and attended his funeral on 2 August at the Coburg Town Hall.

Mike had a defining vision for which he won the respect and admiration of many, myself included. He espoused a firm commitment to protecting our natural environment and worked tirelessly to promote environmental sustainability and conservationism.

Mike was also a beloved community leader. After the establishment of the Moreland City Council, Mike Hill served as Moreland's first mayor, from 1996 to 1999. He was also a founding member of the Victorian Local Government Association, where he served for nine years. Mike understood the important role played by local government in advocating for and delivering, real change.

He was integral to the establishment of the Moreland Energy Foundation and served as its chair for ten years, until his passing. Alongside his partner Lorna Pitt, Mike developed the Westwyck Eco Village on the site of the former West Brunswick Primary School—an innovative and award-winning housing project, which became a model for sustainable design and hosted countless design tours over the years.

Mike was a mentor to many people and taught countless life lessons to countless people in the course of the remarkable journey that was his life. Mike was a warm-hearted and caring person who was always receptive to the needs of others. He was respected across the political divide, Mike worked with governments of all political persuasions. In 2010, Mike was awarded a life membership of the Australian Labor Party by then Premier of Victoria, the Hon. John Brumby.

On behalf of all of the Labor members and supporters and all of those people in the local community that have been touched by Mike's commitment to community service, I once again extend my deepest sympathies and condolences to Mike's partner Lorna and the broader family. We can all draw inspiration from Mike's vision, passion and commitment. I am sure
that by standing in this place I am conveying the sentiments of the scores of people whose lives he touched in saying: he is missed. Vale Mike Hill.

Calare Electorate: Bathurst Bushrangers AFL Club

Mr GEE (Calare) (19:44): The Central West of New South Wales has a rich bushranging history, from Ben Hall to Jessie Hickman, who was known locally as the 'lady bushranger'. But tonight we celebrate the exploits of the latter day Lady Bushrangers, and I speak of course of the Bathurst Bushrangers AFL Club women's side, who have just claimed their second Central West AFL title, making it two in a row—a mighty effort from the Bushrangers.

As I said, it was their second title in a row, playing at Cowra's Mulyan Oval. It was a very close match—a tough encounter—but the Bushrangers triumphed 4-7-31 to 2-1-13 over a gallant Orange Tigerettes side. There is a great rivalry between those clubs. The Tigerettes fought very hard and they did the Orange community proud, but it was the Lady Bushrangers who prevailed.

I need to make special mention of all of those Lady Bushrangers in the side, including Taylor Armstrong; Lauren Barnett; Mikala Bringolf, who was named best on ground; Paige Cuy; Mariah Gilchrist; Isabella Giuliano; Abbey Hardie; Selina Harlum; Elise Hull; Monique Price; Courtney Pring; Jessica Rose; Jessica Scadding; Rachael Schumack; and also 'captain courageous', Kelsey Smith, who did a wonderful job. She kicked a major in the third quarter, along with Keeghan Tucker. I have to say that Keeghan Tucker was recently named the Central West AFL's best and fairest: 36 goals for the season, Mr Speaker—I know you are an AFL fan. She had two in the final and she has recently trialled with the Greater Western Sydney Giants. I can see you nodding in approval, Mr Speaker.

I also need to mention Sarah Stackman, Sophie Thrower, Sarah Weal, Victoria Weal, Hollie Whitla and Tori Whitla. I also need to mention the coach, Trevor Brown, who was effusive in his praise of the side—but obviously they are very well coached. And I also need to mention team manager, Helen Price, team physio, Helen Brown and also all the other support staff, including Sharron Stevens.

The Bathurst Bushrangers is a wonderful club, and I also need to make special mention of Graeme Grundy, who is the president; Brian Matheson, who is the vice president; Jo Howard, who is the secretary; David Flude, who is the treasurer; Simon Ross, who is the players representative; Tony Lewis, the registrar; Barry Fuller, the match day manager; and Helen Price, who is the social committee member.

Of course, we all wish Keeghan all the best in her efforts, not only for next season but also, hopefully, she will get a berth at the GWS Giants. We have the inaugural women's AFL competition about to launch next year, so this is a very exciting time for Keeghan and indeed for all women who are playing AFL, not only in the Central West but right around New South Wales and Australia.

I also just need to mention Bathurst Giants pair, Cooper Brien and Ben Cant, who took out the under-12s and 14s best and fairest awards at the recent Central West presentation. They did an excellent job there. I will also mention Bushrangers pair, Peter Grundy and Bill Watterson, who finished inside the top three for the senior best and fairest honour.
We have a wonderful sporting history and heritage out in the Central West of New South Wales, but we are all very proud of what the Lady Bushrangers have achieved. They are obviously a very tight unit, with two premierships in a row, and I believe that we are going to see great things from them next year.

I do not want to take anything away from the Orange side. There is always a tough competition between Orange and Bathurst in these local derbies, but this year it was the Lady Bushrangers who prevailed for the second year in a row. I would formally like to pass on the congratulations of this House, the Australian parliament, to the Bathurst Lady Bushrangers on a job well done for 2016.

Far North Queensland

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (19:49): There have been three deaths in three weeks on construction sites. This government is pressing ahead with—and this is the only word I can use—the oppression of a particular union that represents those people.

One of those sites was non-unionised. They did not even stop work. It was an extremely dangerous work situation. When the police arrived they were so disgusted that they ordered the management to stop work immediately.

I went to a stoppage. I thought it may be an irresponsible stoppage by people in Brisbane. They said there was danger in the tunnels. There was another stoppage three weeks later. I went back to the second stoppage and there was a man dying as a result of the dangerous conditions that existed. It turned out that man was the brother of the mayor of my home town. I knew Sam Beveridge very well, and he died.

I represent Mount Mulligan, where 72 people were blown to death in one explosion. I represent Mount Leyshon Mine at Charters Towers, where 23 men were blown to pieces in one hour. And the only reason we are not getting blown to pieces, or falling down manholes or having cement walls collapsing on us is because there are some strong people left in trade unions in this country who stand up for principles that need to be stood up for.

And to be associated with a government that is removing the right to remain silent—we have all watched the movies, we all see that you have the right to remain silent. Yes, you do, except if you are a trade unionist in Australia under a Liberal government.

The government has discretionary powers for apprehension. We died in 1215 at Runnymede to get a document called Magna Carta. It said that you do not have discretionary powers, Mr Government, to pluck a person off the street: you must have a basis for it. No basis here.

Mr Entsch interjecting—

Mr KATTER: I see the honourable member for Leichhardt laughing and smiling. His electorate is right on the edge of Mount Mulligan. He knows how many people died there and he knows why they died. And he is sitting there, laughing! So I want to put on the public record that the member of Leichhardt thinks this is funny. I am sure the people of Far North Queensland will appreciate his sense of humour.

If the member for Leichhardt would ever get off his backside we will move on: we have five million head of cattle in North Queensland, and there are 140,000 head of cattle in Cape
York. That is all: 140,000 head of cattle in Cape York. It has three times the rainfall, almost, of Victoria—the same size—and Victoria has 4½ million head of cattle.

A good example is that we have five million head of cattle in North Queensland. If you give us, every cattleman, including the member for Leichhardt, a couple of hundred of hectares of irrigation, and if you give our little towns a microirrigation scheme of a few thousand hectares, we will give you not five million head of cattle, but nine million. We have two dreadful problems: we have climatic droughts, which come around every 10 to 15 years, and we have annual protein droughts, which occur every single year. We can eliminate both of those, or at least we will have a weapon to overcome them, if we are given on-farm irrigation—just a couple of hundred hectares for each operator or station owner, and maybe about 15 microschemes schemes of about 7,000 hectares at the Georgetowns and Hughendens and Richmonds.

If you give us that, instead of turning off one in six head of cattle as we do in Northern Queensland—whereas the rest of Australia turns of one in three—we will turn off one in three. This is $7 billion extra dollars for the Australian economy, just by giving us the right to take a little bit of water out of the Mitchell River, the biggest river in Australia—bigger than the Murray-Darling. There is hardly a single farm on the entire Mitchell River. We just want a few graziers to take a couple of hundred hectares, not 10,000 hectares like they have in other areas.

The town of Hughenden has worked for some 20-odd years, and put in huge sacrifices of time, money and effort, for a tiny little scheme there. We appreciate the federal government, we appreciate minister Joyce, who has said that he will look at $2.5 million to cost out the scheme and to draw up the scheme. Not to assess it or look at it—we have burnt up $300 million in assessments and looking at it. We do not want any money to look at it. We do not want to waste any more public funds on that. We just want immediate drawing up of an engineering plan and the money to cost it, so we can come back to the government and say, 'This is how much it will cost—can you give us a bit of help with some guaranteed loans.'

The way we are looking after North Queensland, we have 100 million hectares. Seven million of that 100 million has gone under the prickly acacia tree. It has completely destroyed what were the best natural grasslands—and I quote from Sunmap of Queensland—completely destroyed by the prickly acacia tree. (Time expired)

Leichhardt Electorate: Cairns Aquarium and Reef Research Centre

Mr ENTSCH (Leichhardt) (19:54): I rise tonight to highlight a wonderful project that is currently under construction in my electorate: the Cairns Aquarium and Reef Research Centre. By April 2017 Cairns will have a $54 million, world-class, 7,500 square metre, three-level public aquarium and reef research centre, which will promote Australia's premier natural asset, the Great Barrier Reef. 15,000 fish and animals will be showcased in 69 lifelike exhibits in a family friendly, affordable, safe and fully immersive experience in the heart of Cairns CBD.

With over four million visitors a year to Australia's tropical north, the Cairns aquarium will provide a world-class venue for seeing and interacting with the incredible plants, animals and inhabitants found only in Australia's Wet Tropics, a region which borders two world heritage listed environments, the Daintree rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef.
Cairns aquarium company directors Daniel Leipnik and Andrew Preston initiated the project in 2011. By 2012 they had purchased a 4,000-square-metre parcel of land in the Cairns CBD within walking distance of shops, hotels and other attractions.

The project has secured a significant amount of private investment, and was one of the first to benefit under the Australian government's Tourism Major Project Facilitation service as well as the Tourism Industry Regional Development Fund and AusIndustry funding. On completion it will be a significant revenue-generating attraction for northern Australia, which will facilitate substantial economic development, increased visitor numbers, increased visitor spend, increased visitor stay nights and return visitation. It will help to diversify the region's tourism offerings by providing a new and innovative approach to showcasing the flora and fauna of the Wet Tropics to a growing tourism market, and it will play a key role in the ongoing revitalisation of the Cairns CBD.

The project will create 650 jobs by November 2016 in the construction and pre-operational stages, with 130 fulltime positions in the operational stage from April 2017 onwards. It will deliver investment into the region of some $35 million for construction services and materials, including $11.5 million of international investment, with substantial flow-on benefits to the regional economy. Once operational, it will generate almost $20 million in revenue per year and a combined $8 million in taxes each year to the three levels of government, as well as $8 million in export sales per year through sales of tickets to overseas visitors.

In addition, the aquarium will help to cement Cairns's position as a centre of excellence in reef research, continuing the work being done through James Cook University and the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre. It will focus on creating awareness of the threats to the Great Barrier Reef and surrounding ecosystems and what can be done to protect these environments, including the work that is being carried out by federal and state governments through the Reef 2050 Plan.

The Cairns aquarium will also have a permanent team of experienced scientists and researchers, who will work with leading universities, TAFEs, CRCs and industry partners to develop marine science biotechnologies focussed on environmentally sustainable commercial outcomes. This is perfectly aligned with the federal government's National Innovation and Science Agenda. It has earned the support of key partners: RDA Far North Queensland and Torres Strait, Cairns Regional Council, Advance Cairns, the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre, James Cook University and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce.

Tonight I extend an invitation to my parliamentary colleagues to pay a visit to Cairns. I see over here Mr Evans, the member for Brisbane, and I invite you to come along; and of course I invite my friend the Speaker to come along to Cairns, along with all my other colleagues, and allow Daniel to take you on a tour of this amazing project so you can see first hand the substantial investment they are making in new reef-related marine tourism infrastructure.

I am also working with the aquarium to put in an application for government support under the upcoming Building Better Regions Fund. I am pleased that, under the BBRF, there is a focus on projects that create jobs and drive the economy in regional areas. The BBRF will invest in two streams: infrastructure projects and community investments, with the majority of the fund expected to go to infrastructure. I strongly support the Cairns aquarium. (Time expired)
Australian Public Service: Workplace Relations

Mr GILES (Scullin) (19:59): I take this opportunity to place on the record two things: my deep and abiding respect for Australia’s Commonwealth public servants, in particular those who work so hard to support people in Scullin, and my deep concern that this government is not affording them the respect they are due in terms of bargaining. 100,000 workers have been without agreements for 1,000 days—over three years. It is time for this government to come to the table to treat these workers and their union, the Community and Public Sector Union, with the respect they deserve so they can continue to provide the services that all Australians rely on.

House adjourned at 20:00

NOTICES

The following notices were given:

Mr Watts: To present a Bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Code Act 1995, and for related purposes. (Criminal Code Amendment (Private Sexual Material) Bill 2016)

Mr Wilkie: To present a Bill for an Act to amend the Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989, and for related purposes. (Australian Postal Corporation (Unsolicited Political Communications) Bill 2016)

Mr Zimmerman to move:

That this House:

(1) notes:

(a) the strong multi-party commitment in Australia to see an end to the death penalty worldwide;

(b) that 10 October was World Day Against the Death Penalty, an important moment to mark our resolve to end capital punishment around the world;

(c) that the evidence overwhelmingly shows that the death penalty is not an effective deterrent to crime;

(d) that the death penalty is the ultimate cruel and inhumane punishment and Australia opposes its use in all cases;

(e) that the international trend shows the world is moving away from the death penalty—in 1977 only 16 countries had abolished the death penalty, now 140 nations have abolished capital punishment in law or practice;

(f) that despite this overwhelming trend, 2015 saw more people executed than in any year in the past quarter century, with executions carried out by several of Australia’s neighbours and allies; and

(g) that Australia has the opportunity to influence progress towards the worldwide abolition of the death penalty in its relationships with key regional and global partners; and

(2) welcomes the report of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade inquiry into Australia’s Advocacy for the Abolition of the Death Penalty: A world without the death penalty (May 2016), and looks forward to the Government’s response to its recommendations; and

(3) calls on the Government to:

(a) continue to strengthen its efforts to advocate for an end to the death penalty wherever it still occurs;

(b) support civil society efforts to advocate for an end to the death penalty, particularly in retentionist countries; and

(c) encourage other United Nations member states to support a global moratorium on the death penalty at upcoming United Nations General Assembly negotiations on a moratorium resolution.

CHAMBER
Mr Broadbent to move:
That this House:
(1) recognises that cancer is one of the leading causes of death in Australia, causing to 33 per cent of deaths;
(2) further recognises that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month;
(3) congratulates the Government for being committed to cancer research through funding the National Health and Medical Research Council and Cancer Australia, and establishing the Medical Research Future Fund;
(4) welcomes the Government providing $18.5 million to the McGrath Foundation to deliver 57 trained breast care nurses to assist and care for people diagnosed with breast cancer;
(5) further congratulates the Government for delivering savings to taxpayers while ensuring that the latest cancer-fighting medications are on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), available for patients as soon as possible, without fear or favour;
(6) welcomes the addition of new drugs such as Herceptin and Kadcyla within the Government's investment in the PBS; and
(7) further welcomes the large number of approvals for cancer-fighting drugs that this Government has approved for the PBS, worth over $1.9 billion.

Mrs Wicks to move:
That this House:
(1) recognises the importance of a generous social safety net;
(2) further recognises that it is essential that welfare is targeted to achieve better lifetime outcomes for recipients;
(3) welcomes the release of data that will help the Government to target interventions to Australians who need it most;
(4) congratulates the Government's Try, Test and Learn Fund, with $96.1 million allocated to it which will:
   (a) bring together stakeholders, academics, the states and territories and any relevant parties in the non-government sector, to trial new policies and initiatives to help achieve better lifetime outcomes for target cohorts; and
   (b) ensure new, bold and innovative ideas are trialled which will help to reduce long term and inter-generational welfare dependence; and
(5) looks forward to the first round of funding under the program which will improve lifetime outcomes and increase the self-reliance of young parents, young carers and young students.

Ms Marino to move:
That this House:
(1) recognises that 10 to 14 October was Stay Smart Online Week, which saw the Government educate businesses and individuals on the importance of cyber security, including how to protect themselves online;
(2) further recognises that this year's theme of 'Cyber safety from the lounge room to the board room' focuses on the importance of good online security habits at home and at work;
(3) congratulates the Government on launching Stay Smart Online Small Business Guide and Stay Smart Online My Guide for individuals which:
   (a) provides:
(i) advice on vital areas of online security including aspects of privacy, passwords, suspicious messages, surfing safely; and
(ii) information on cyber security when accessing online finances and making payments; and
(4) welcomes the Government's free Alert Service, which has online safety information and solutions to help people protect themselves online; and
(5) congratulates the Prime Minister on launching the National Cyber Security Strategy which sets out the Government's vision for meeting the dual challenges of advancing and protecting Australia's interests in the digital age.

Dr McVeigh to move:
That this House:
(1) recognises that the number of drownings in Australia increased from 267 deaths in 2014-15 to 280 in 2015-16 as stated in the Royal Life Saving's National Drowning Report (September 2016), which shows:
   (a) a quarter of all drownings occurred in inland waterways such as rivers, creeks and dams;
   (b) almost one fifth of all deaths occurred in people age 25 to 35 years old;
   (c) 86 per cent of all drowning deaths were males; and
   (d) there was a 30 per cent decrease in deaths of people age 0 to 4 years old;
(2) acknowledges that every incidence of drowning has a wider impact including family, rescuers and communities;
(3) recognises that the Government released the Australian Water Safety Strategy in April 2016, which aims to reduce drowning deaths by 50 per cent by 2020;
(4) acknowledges that the Government is partnering with the peak water safety bodies such as Royal Life Saving (RLS), Surf Life Saving (SLS) and AUSTSWIM as well as Australian Water Safety Council Members and federal, state, territory and local governments, to work to prevent drowning;
(5) recognises that the Government is providing funding $3.6 million in 2016-17 through the National Recreation Safety Program work towards the target of reducing drowning deaths; and
(6) congratulates RLS, SLS and other community groups for their work in educating people on the potential dangers of all our beaches and waterways.

Ms Banks to move:
That this House:
(1) notes that:
   (a) National Stroke Week:
      (i) ran from 12 to 18 September 2016; and
      (ii) is about raising awareness to prevent stroke in Australia; and
   (b) the National Stroke Foundation encourages all Australians to:
      (i) be aware of what stroke is, how to recognise a stroke and what to do;
      (ii) live healthy to reduce the risk of stroke; and
      (iii) get a regular health check;
(2) acknowledges the:
   (a) launch by the Minister for Health in June 2015 of the Acute Stroke Clinical Care Standard; and
   (b) bi-partisan work done by past governments in the area of stroke; and
(3) notes the requirement for greater awareness and promotion of the prevention of stroke within the Australian community.

Mr Keogh to move:

That this House:

(1) recognises the parlous state of Western Australia's finances, brought on by the economic mismanagement of the Western Australian Government and a record low share of GST revenue, which was foreseeable;

(2) acknowledges the importance of Commonwealth infrastructure funding and state infrastructure spending for creating employment and driving economic growth;

(3) notes that $1.54 billion of Commonwealth infrastructure funding has been allocated to the Perth Freight Link (PFL) and Oakajee Port over the forward estimates, in circumstances where:

(a) the Western Australian Government has not committed to stage two of the PFL, a contract for which will be required before Commonwealth funding flows to Western Australia, and the Western Australian Opposition is opposed to the project; and

(b) the Turnbull Government has kept a $339 allocation to Oakajee Port in the federal budget for more than two years after the project was abandoned;

(4) notes that although Western Australia takes up one third of Australia's land mass and holds 10.4 per cent of the population, the loss of Commonwealth funding for the PFL and Oakajee would cause Western Australia's share of the Commonwealth infrastructure budget to drop to just 9.5 per cent; and

(5) calls on the Australian Government to redirect funding allocated to the PFL to the infrastructure projects that Western Australians actually wants and needs—the Armadale/North Lake Road Bridge, an Outer Harbour and METRONET.
Tuesday, 11 October 2016

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Coulton) took the chair at 12:30.

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (12:30): I inform the Federation Chamber that it has been agreed that members constituency statements will commence at 4 pm.

BILLS

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2016-2017
Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2016-2017

Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2016-2017

Second Reading

Cognate debate.

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (12:30): Before the election we told the Australian people we would not block the appropriation bills. It has been our principled position certainly since the 1970s and before. We have had experience with the coalition blocking appropriation bills or deferring them. I recall the instance of the 1975 dismissal crisis. In not blocking appropriation bills, Labor always acts responsibly to ensure that the function of government continues for this year and every other year, regardless of whether we are on the Treasury benches or, indeed, in opposition.

That does not mean we are supportive of the government's management of the economy. In fact, we would call it mismanagement. In late September it was interesting to look at the final outcomes in relation to the budget for the 2015-2016 year. What it showed was that the deficit for 2015-2016 had soared to $40 billion, eight times bigger than was estimated the day Tony Abbott became the Prime Minister of this country. We saw the net debt reach $296 billion at the end of the last financial year, which is $77 billion more than was projected when Labor lost office in 2013. That comes on the back of the coalition's previous budget, which projected a net blow-out by over $100 billion in 2016-2017.

I recall the many statements from the former member for North Sydney, then shadow Treasurer, Joe Hockey, saying that there was a budget emergency. I remember opposition leaders saying this repeatedly when we were in government, talking about debt crises and Labor's alleged mismanagement of the economy. They never talk like that anymore, because the figures really show the true situation. The Turnbull government expects us all to show gratitude for a $35 billion blow-out in the deficit and a $77 billion blow-out in net debt in 2015-2016. This is all at a time when they want to give $50 billion in tax cuts to the corporate sector, including $7.4 billion in tax cuts to the big banks. Having had six positions to avoid a royal commission, they should simply do what the Australian public wants, and what Labor urges, and have a royal commission. Giving multinational companies $50 billion in tax cuts makes the budget situation much, much worse, and I think it clearly jeopardises our much cherished and hard-won AAA credit rating.
This is a government that when in opposition said that they would 'deliver a surplus in our first year and every year after that', to quote the then member for North Sydney and the shadow Treasurer. But we know they like to point the finger at us and ignore the action that we took to protect this country during the global financial crisis. 'Global', 'financial' and 'crisis' are three words that they refused to acknowledge when in opposition and almost never acknowledge now they are in government.

It was eight years ago that the Labor government took one of its most important decisions: the first stimulus package and bank guarantees that oversaw the fact that we would protect our financial system during the global economic meltdown over Christmas 2008. Bernard Keane of Crikey in 2010 wrote of the Labor government, with the Treasury and the Reserve Bank:

They stabilised our banking system, kept credit flowing, and launched two waves of stimulus that put a floor under falling consumer confidence and employment.

He went on to write that Henry's advice—that is, Ken Henry—to then Prime Minister Rudd and Treasurer Swan to 'go hard, go early, go households' was the 'playbook for a spectacular policy success'.

But what have we seen from the Abbott-Turnbull governments? They have plunged us into further debt, they have risked our AAA credit rating, they have overseen spiralling deficits since the 2014 budget—which would have to go down as one of the worst budgets in history, notwithstanding the smoking of cigars and the dancing in the then Treasurer's office before the budget was delivered—and they have undermined the national safety net, which protects the most vulnerable. Labor, however, will support these appropriations and not block supply. That is our legacy. No Labor opposition in history has ever blocked supply. Given the budgets that those opposite have thrown at us, it is not something we do lightly. But we will defend the national safety net and we will stand up for the values that we hold dear in terms of education and opportunities for all, universal health care, and we will oppose, as we always have done, the heartless cuts which will impact upon Australia's most vulnerable people.

One of the most heartless cuts that this government has undertaken over such a long period of time is in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Islander affairs. Recently my colleague, the member for Barton, spoke out against the harsh cuts to services in the face of critical rates of family violence, particularly amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous leaders, including the member for Barton and the assistant shadow minister, Senator Pat Dodson from Western Australia, have spoken out against this for decades, as I did in the last parliament when I was shadow minister for Indigenous affairs.

The response of the then Prime Minister and the present Prime Minister and the Minister for Indigenous Affairs was to shrug their shoulders, to cut half a billion dollars to Indigenous services and resile from a previous commitment of development of justice targets in closing the gap. These cuts slashed millions of dollars from the Family Violence Prevention Legal Service, community legal services, legal aid and frontline services in areas of housing, health, education and the like—essential services that tackle gross inequality, whether in urban areas or rural communities. I challenge the now Prime Minister to reverse these cuts to Australia's First People and to commit to tackling the scourge of domestic violence—as I said yesterday in my speech in relation to migration legislation—and the tragedy of Indigenous suicide rates as a matter of urgency.
During the election campaign I, as shadow minister for ageing, fronted up to each and every meeting in relation to aged-care providers, who were dealing with a $1.2 billion blow in the May 2016 budget, where there were cuts to complex health care and pain management for older Australians in residential aged care. Unsurprisingly, the government would not release the financial basis for these cuts, the background to it and why they were making these cuts. Of course, this is a government that had a $107 million hole in the omnibus bill figures and relied on us to provide additional savings of $6.3 billion to make sure that the omnibus legislation went through in accordance with our previous commitment during the election campaign and to make sure that they could get their maths correct and undertake the necessary budget reform which we need to undertake in this country.

During the election campaign, I said to aged-care providers that we should be investigating what should happen in relation to these budget cuts in aged care, and I am pleased to see that shadow minister for ageing, the member for Franklin, and her deputy, Senator Helen Polley—both from Tasmania—have introduced an amendment to the Aged Care Act to ensure an independent review of residential aged-care funding. The Minister for Aged Care's rationale for cutting $2 billion over the 2015 MYEFO and 2016 budget was that aged-care providers were gaming the system—an outrageous claim. We want to make sure that there is responsible management, and I call on the minister to release the financials and the background to it to show why these cuts are necessary.

In my own shadow portfolio area of immigration and border protection, the annual report tabled yesterday tells a worrying story about the immigration minister's management of the department. This comes on top of the Australian National Audit Office report on offshore processing on Manus and Nauru and the Rand Corporation report, commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, which looked at the merger of the customs and immigration departments. The immigration minister has blown the budget, with the final budget outcome showing a $257 million blow-out. This blowout is driven by a $236 million overspend for departmental costs in relation to 'Outcome 1: protect Australia's sovereignty, security and safety by managing the stay and departure of non-citizens', which is essentially Operation Sovereign Borders.

At the same time, there is a significant cost blowout in the program area. The department's 'Function 5: Offshore maritime security' failed to meet targets for contracted aircraft and Royal Australian Air Force assets, square nautical miles; the commercial contracted satellite; Ashmore vessels, station and streaming days; marine unit patrol days; the number of apprehensions of illegal foreign vessels; and the number of illegal foreign fishers apprehended and processed. But these are not the minister's only failures. It is quite clear that the minister has taken a tick-and-flick approach and a hands-off approach in these areas.

The Rand Corporation reports and the ANAO report clearly show that the government has engaged in some very bad maladministration and stuff-ups in the department, such as the failure to meet KPIs, including management of travellers and goods moving across borders occurring in accordance with the department's service standards—target not met; immigration status of the majority of non-citizens located in the Australian community for breach of immigration law resolved in a timely way—target not met; percentage of citizenship conferral applications decided within service delivery standards being at least 80 per cent—target not met; and visa applications finalised within an acceptable service standard—target not met.
That is specifically for student visa, working holiday maker visas, general skilled migration, employer sponsored, business innovation and investment, partner, parent and other family programs. It is especially worrying that 52.4 per cent of permanent visa applications were not finalised within service standards. It is simply not good enough.

It is all very well to lecture the world—as the Prime Minister and the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection did recently in America—but you should be able to run your own department properly. There are three reports which clearly show that the Department of Immigration and Border Protection has serious systemic problems. This is a department that has been merged and there are reforms that continue to need to be undertaken. This is a government which, in terms of budget allocations, is blowing money, and we also have a minister who is clearly not focused on making sure the necessary reforms in the department are undertaken and we see that the necessary targets have been set are not being fulfilled. So it is all very well for the government to claim that they are doing things right in border protection—and we believe in strong border protection as well—but we need to treat the management of the department better and we need to make sure that money is spent more wisely, because this is taxpayers' money.

Another contentious issue is Medicare. In the 100 days since the election the government have not dropped one of the savage health cuts that you find in the budget—not one. Yesterday there was an opportunity for coalition members to go back to their electorates this Friday and say, 'We stood up for Medicare,' but they did not take that opportunity; they voted in the House to continue the savage cuts. The government refuse to protect bulk-billing. Members here have refused to protect bulk-billing. They refuse to reverse the harmful cuts to Medicare by unfreezing the indexation of the Medicare Benefits Schedule. They are in a situation where they will go back to their constituents who may have cancer and tell them that they will end up paying more for blood tests because their member of parliament voted against reversing the government's cuts to pathology. They are going to tell women with breast cancer that, as a result of the government's cuts to breast screening, MRIs, X-rays and other diagnostic imaging, they will pay more for vital scans. The government refuse to listen to the public on Medicare and refuse to listen to the public on the banking royal commission. We will support the appropriations legislation. We will support our long-held position, but the government must manage the economy better and do what they said they would do—that is, reduce debt and reduce deficit.

Mr BRENDAN O'CONNOR (Gorton) (12:45): I would like to make some comments on the appropriations bills and, more broadly, on the government's lack of an agenda for most Australians. We might remember that the government ran an election campaign entitled 'Jobs and Growth', under which sat nothing. The government's only understood policy was to find a way to provide $50 billion by way of tax cuts to, predominantly, large businesses and banks and, in some cases, multinational companies that do not reside in Australia. That is $50,000 million spent on cuts to provide opportunities, perhaps, but the idea that those fiscal cuts to our budget—money that would be lost from providing support in hospitals or investing in education and skills—was going to be a panacea for what ails Australia is false.

Whilst the government scraped over the line, I think it is fair to say that the Australian people were not convinced about the message from the government. Whilst I think people are concerned about their jobs and employment prospects generally, I do not believe they believe
the government are sincere in their concerns for workers and for those seeking work. If we look at what is happening not only in Australia but more broadly around the world, there are some concerning things happening in comparable democracies. We see the rise of Donald Trump—a person who identifies problems and has simplistic solutions or, even worse, seeks to find the wrong reasons for the problems that beset that country. He seeks to blame people—in some cases ethnic minorities. He seems to blame others rather than perhaps finding a solution to some of the challenges that that country faces.

If anyone wants to get a real sense of what has happened to America—and it is quite disturbing, when you think back to a time when often, certainly in some respects, we looked to America as an exemplar in terms of jobs, in terms of income, as a wealthy nation that had a middle class; you really have to wonder what is going on that has led to such disquiet, to protests in the streets and to the capacity for so many Americans to consider that Donald Trump is the answer—I would refer members and senators to Joseph Stiglitz's book. I have looked at it and I am relooking at it. A Nobel laureate who won the Nobel Prize for economics, he identifies what has happened to the United States: the hollowing-out of the middle class; the impoverishment of working-class people; the fact that millions and millions of workers who are working a full-time job are still living below the poverty line; the fact that they do not have access to health care; the fact that a rich nation like that impoverishes so many of its citizens; the fact that, through de-industrialisation and through globalisation, there has been no effort to stop the growing gap between the very, very rich and the majority of Americans.

If you look back and draw the comparison between what has happened in the last 40 years in America and the growth in the obscene wealth of the one per cent and the 0.1 per cent of those citizens compared with what has happened to the middle-class and working-class Americans, it is a salutary tale, and it is an example that we must avoid. The reason why it has some relevance and pertinence to our situation is that we currently have a government that does not address issues about the rising inequality in our own country.

How could it be the case that the only answer to provide secure, decent jobs for Australians is to provide tax cuts in the order of $50 billion to multinationals, big banks and others? The notion that trickle-down economics works has been repudiated by all eminent economists over many years. When Milton Friedman was around, it might have been the case that this notion took hold and people believed that equality was what you had to sacrifice for growth. Well, that has been repudiated. Even bodies such as the World Bank and the IMF have made it clear, along with the OECD, that the growth of economies is adversely affected by inequality. The less equal your society is, the more likely you are not going to grow your economy. Further to the point, in that economy, of course, people are not sharing, and that is why there is a lack of confidence and faith. In America you see it writ large with the fact that Donald Trump is running for the most senior, most powerful political position in the world. Despite all of his conduct, behaviour and offensive, abusive admissions, he is still running as the presidential candidate for one of the major parties. I think that is an indictment.

Labor's fear is that, if the government does not attend to some of the very serious issues in our own society, we will tread down America's path. I am concerned, for example, that we make sure we maintain the minimum wage. Bill Shorten and I made a submission last parliamentary term to make sure we arrest the decline in the minimum wage. Recently, the
shadow Treasurer also added his voice to support this important social benefit to the lowest paid workers in our society. We do have a relatively high minimum wage, and that is a good thing, because we want to make sure we have a decent society where people, when they work a full week, can afford to make ends meet and can afford to pay the bills, look after the family, pay the mortgage or rent and keep a car running. I think people in this place can sometimes forget how difficult it is to live on the minimum wage or do not have any idea how hard it would be, particularly if you are not supported by family, to try and survive on a very low wage.

We need to make sure we do more, continue to have the argument and repudiate those who would like to see the minimum wage fall. We would like to see it grow. I would like to see it increase as a proportion of the median wage. I would like to see it not fall. In fact, if you look—even with the efforts in recent times in maintaining the minimum wage—it has started to fall against the median wage and the mean average wage. I think that is something that we need to arrest, and Labor is going to make sure we say more about that in the coming weeks and months.

Equally, we are concerned that, as we speak, the Fair Work Commission is looking at cutting the real income of low-paid workers by changing penalty rates. We know the Liberal Party love the idea of cutting penalty rates. That seems to be the only thing that they all agree on: 'Let's cut penalty rates. Let's abolish it. There are going to be lots of jobs that will come from it.' What it means is that there will be real income taken out of the economy. Of course employers would like to pay less, but they will have customers with less money in their pockets if they go down the path of supporting cuts to low- and middle-income earners who rely upon penalty rates to make ends meet. We do not support it, and that is why we made a submission to the Fair Work Commission to argue against any cuts. We impress upon the Fair Work Commission not to, in any adverse way, affect people that are struggling—particularly at a time where the wage growth in this country is as low as it has been in a generation.

Since figures were collected in 1998, we have not seen wage growth so low. In many parts of our labour market there is actually a wage recession. Wages are going backwards in real terms for many Australians. So, when your constituents talk to you, Deputy Speaker, or talk to me or other colleagues about struggling, they mean it, because their wages are not going forward and they are struggling and we need to be sensitive to that. I do not think the government has a plan other than to hope that the commission cuts penalty rates—and, again, Labor stands against those cuts and will argue that strongly. We did say, if elected, we would have intervened and argued that strongly. Of course, the government is hoping the Fair Work Commission does its work for it and makes the cut in real terms to low-income earners, and I think that is a dreadful shame.

Again, it is the government turning its back on those people that need the most help. It is the movement away from what, I think, is a fair society towards what has happened in the United States. People in that once great nation, which seemed to allow people to realise the dream, now just have empty promises. They have broken promises and broken dreams because of the impoverishing of the working class and the hollowing out of the middle class—people cannot find a decent job. They are working three or four jobs just to make ends meet. I think this government has to wake up to what is happening in this country. It might
not be happening in such a pronounced way as it is happening in the United States, but it is happening. Inequality is at a 75-year high.

We have seen the bank CEOs recently come before a parliamentary committee and argue that they do not need any royal commission. Of course, with their wages in excess of $10 million each, they do not understand why people are affronted by the sort of money they receive and the bonuses they get, when they treat their own clients the way they have. The government does not have answers to some of these issues around the growing casualisation of work, the fact that people are not finding full-time work, the fact that 90 per cent of the jobs created in the last 12 months have been part time when people are looking for full-time work, or the fact that there is now the highest number of Australians underemployed, according to the ABS, with 1.1 million Australians saying, ‘We are looking for more work but we cannot find it.’ They cannot find more work. They are struggling and unemployment is at its highest in our history. So there are some real issues.

The slogan 'Jobs and growth' will not cut it. The notion that people still believe in trickle-down economics—that you give all the benefits to the wealthy and it trickles down to the less wealthy—has been repudiated and, quite frankly, I think Australians do not believe it. There might have been occasions when Australians once believed it, but they do not believe it now. We have to have a government that is in tune with the needs of ordinary Australians and believes there should be decent conditions of work. Where people are looking for full-time work, there should be opportunities to find it, and, when there is massive exploitation on the scale of 7-Eleven, something should be done about it. There is no point mentioning it in the election campaign and forgetting to put it into the top 25 priorities. It would appear that at least $100 million was not paid to workers at 7-Eleven. One hundred million dollars—this is just one example and, yet, what has the government done in two years to respond to the most blatant exploitation of workers? There are still workers that have not been paid back the money owed to them. A $100 million debt is owed to workers and the government has done nothing about it, obsessed as it is with the double dissolution bills, the registered organisations bill, which is so esoteric that no-one in the real world knows what we are talking about, and this ABCC bill, which is about introducing a regulator for the building industry which already exists. We have a fair work building commission that has coercive powers now. This was the big election about nothing. It is like a Seinfeld episode. We have the registered organisations bill, which one in 1,000 Australians knows anything about, and we have the ABCC bill, which is supposed to be introducing a regulatory body that already exists—that is the aim of this government. That is its intent. That is the reason upon which the election was predicated. It just shows you how empty and hollow the Prime Minister is, how empty and hollow the election campaign policies of the government were, and why it was left with a margin of one in the lower house.

If the government wants to get serious, it should take heed of Labor's policies—making sure that there is fairness at work and making sure that, when we do grow our economy, people share in that growth. It is about inclusive growth. As I said, it is not just Labor saying that. The IMF and the World Bank have said fairer societies—societies that are more equal than others—will grow faster and will grow for longer because people can see the benefits in growing the economy if they are beneficiaries of the growth. It makes perfect sense. But, when people have lost faith in an economic system where they are not the winners—in fact
they are being deprived of the benefits—and they see the five per cent at the top getting everything and themselves getting nothing, it is no wonder we see the rise of Donald Trump in America and we see certain minor parties here benefitting as well.

This government has got to get real, listen to the concerns of working people and businesses, invest in skills, invest to make sure that we can grow, invest in our industries too—not turn our back again on manufacturing like we saw with recent decisions by this government—and engage in order to make sure we prosper as a country. Labor is willing to sit down with the government on a series of these issues because they are so important; they are in the national interest. But the government has to stop just tending to the top end of town. The merchant banker has to become the leader of this nation, because up until this point he has been an abject failure.

Mr GEORGANAS (Hindmarsh) (13:01): It gives me great pleasure today to be here to speak on the appropriation bills and to represent the people of Hindmarsh. As I have said many times in this place, I represent a very diverse electorate, an electorate that has very diverse businesses, stretching from the beachside suburbs right into the city. It is filled with some fantastic businesses, both small and large, and some great community groups, great organisations. It has a vibrancy and a real sense of community. But there are also many challenges to these groups, whether they be community groups, businesses or families just going about their business, mums and dads just wanting to get to work, get their wage, pay their mortgage, pay their bills and be mums and dads. There are also challenges to people running a big business, a multinational company, within the electorate—and we have a few—or a small niche market business. There are challenges, and I want to talk about some of these challenges today and compare the government's record with the record that Labor had.

Some of these businesses in the electorate, both large and small, need our help to thrive. Even though some of them are doing very well, they need this help to be able to create more jobs. We just heard the shadow minister speak out about jobs and industrial relations. We definitely need to be concentrating and focusing on the creation of more jobs, especially in South Australia. That is why I am very proud today to be showcasing some of the great products that are made locally in the electorate of Hindmarsh. In my parliamentary office, I have a sample of biscuits that were sent to me by Arnott's. Most of us know of Arnott's biscuit making. The company are located right in the middle of my electorate, in Marleston. They employ about 200 people and they are operating two shifts at the moment. Occasionally they may even go to three shifts. They are an example of a company exporting around the world and setting up businesses in other places as well. Not only that; I am very proud to say that Hindmarsh is the home of Tim Tams. The member for Bendigo may lay claim to having the home of the Chiko Roll in Bendigo, in her electorate; we have the home of the famous, wonderful Tim Tam biscuits in Hindmarsh. I am very proud of that. Arnott's require assistance and good policy from governments to ensure that they can thrive and go on producing their product, exporting it around the world, employing people, going to that third shift and being a thriving business that is part of the community.

Another great business in my electorate—I visited it a couple of weeks ago, with the shadow minister for industrial relations actually—is Pak Fresh. Pak Fresh is an amazing little company that was started up a few years ago by two people. It is a cold store, based in Adelaide Airport, for chilled and frozen products to be exported all over the world. It is a
logistics sort of company. Those people found a niche market. They started off the business through hard work, through enterprise and through some thinking outside the box about where there was a market. Obviously they filled that market. They export goods for people who want to export certain things. For example, they showed me how they could have fresh and frozen seafood brought down from Port Lincoln on a plane and have it ending up in Asia within 24 hours.

I raise these businesses because these are hardworking people who are employing people in my electorate, people who are trying their darned hardest to do what they can. That brings me to the point of infrastructure and how these businesses really require good infrastructure, whether it be roads, rail or other transport, to ensure that they can move their products across metropolitan and regional areas and across the country in reasonable time frames to be able to get productivity up and to do a whole range of other things.

I am very proud that, when I was here in 2013, the federal Labor government, together with the state Labor government, announced the upgrade of Torrens Road in my electorate. It is called the Torrens to Torrens project, because it is from Torrens Road to the River Torrens. Approximately four kilometres of road is being upgraded. It was a very narrow road with thousands of cars banked up bumper to bumper every morning and every afternoon—most of the day, actually. I was very proud when Anthony Albanese announced the Torrens to Torrens project. The project cost about $896 million. We turned the first sod in 2013 with the then Minister Albanese. It created 480 jobs there—480 jobs that have been going since 2013. This is the benefit that you get out of infrastructure.

But there are other added benefits as well. The upgrade features a new lowered road under Grange and Port Roads, providing nonstop routes from my electorate through to the northern suburbs. It reduces delays in east-west travel. You may say, 'What does that mean?' If you are travelling to the northern suburbs from my electorate, it will reduce the time by about 12 minutes. If you are coming back, which most people do in the afternoon—or if you are a transport company—that is close to 25 minutes a day that you are saving. Over an average week of five days—and many companies work six or seven days—that could be anything up to two hours. When you think of the productivity hours that are saved, the benefits to the nation, the benefits to those companies that use that road, the benefits to the mums and dads who can spend an extra couple of hours with their kids reading a story to them at night or playing with them on the weekends or in the mornings, it is a big difference. It actually makes a difference not only to people's lives but also to the economy as a whole. That is why I am very proud of this project, which is a four-kilometre nonstop section of roadway with wider lanes and a flow-on of traffic which will be much more convenient for everyone using it. It starts at Pym Street, Croydon Park, and finishes at Ashwin Parade within my electorate.

When this was announced and when I was fighting to make sure that we got the money for this infrastructure project back in 2013, I remember the then opposition arguing against it, saying that there was no benefit to it and it was a waste of money and carrying on like pork chops that this was not going to be a good project. Funnily enough, though, in the last three years it has been claimed by the government as their wonderful, great project. It was featured on every flyer that went out with Liberal Party members who have represented those areas over the last three years. So on the one hand it was bagged, and then on the other hand, when
they were in government, they praised it—and rightly so; it should be praised. It is a great project that will improve everything—for cycling, for pedestrians and for the economy. That is why it is so important. I was very proud that we announced it and that we funded it.

There are many other projects in my electorate. The Michael Herbert Bridge as it is known now—it was formerly known as the King Street Bridge—in Glenelg provides better traffic conditions for local residents. This benefits not only local residents but the businesses that use it as well. If this bridge had not been built—it was going to be closed down because it was dangerous—it would have meant an extra six kilometres for people travelling to that side of Glenelg in the electorate or wanting to head north or south. If you add six kilometres one way and six kilometres the other onto everybody's timetable every day, that is an enormous amount of hours spent on transport, just travelling. Again, it is hours that mums and dads save. They can have more family time and businesses can value add to their business through productivity and the saving of time.

Another great project from Labor has been the Glenelg to Adelaide recycled water pipeline—and let us not forget that all of these infrastructure projects created much-needed jobs. It cost about $61 million and was funded by state and federal governments. Previously, the wastewater treatment plant at West Beach treated the sewage a little and then pumped it out into Gulf St Vincent, an extremely important ecosystem for our fisheries and a range of other things. This system was killing the seagrass; therefore, diminishing the ability for our professional fishermen to fish in these waters. But now, with the funding that came from the then federal Labor government and the state Labor government, that sewage is treated at the sewerage plant and the water is pumped back into the city, watering our parklands and also fed off to businesses that require it. It is a great project.

Again, that infrastructure has created much-needed jobs and it is a plus for the environment and a plus for Gulf St Vincent in South Australia. It has ensured that we maintain our fishing industries and that we look after the environment, and we are giving much-needed water to businesses and parklands between the city and the sea. Anyone who has visited Adelaide and seen our wonderful metropolitan parklands will know what I am talking about. During the drought, these areas all dried off and gum trees that were 150 years old were dying. This will never happen again because of this project, and I am very proud of it.

At the other end of the scale in the education and training area, I am very proud of our St George College in Mile End. We were able to secure funding for their hospitality trade training centre. We put money into training kids so they can get VET credits. Kids train in hospitality, get some credit and then go straight into an apprenticeship when they finish. It is very important to give kids the pathways to go on into apprenticeships. This centre delivers innovative, creative and quality training. I visited that centre with the then Minister for Education Peter Garrett. It provides kids with a certificate I in hospitality and a certificate II in kitchen operations, making them ready to be employed as apprentices and be productive from day one as apprentices in the hospitality industry in restaurants and big hotels. That, of course, saves money for the people employing them because they are productive immediately. It gives those kids a pathway and an interest whilst still at high school doing certificate courses that count towards an apprenticeship. Also, it prepares students for employment in the dynamic and fast-paced hospitality industry in my electorate of Hindmarsh.
These are just some of the examples of the great initiatives that Labor delivered for Hindmarsh. Compare that to what has happened under the Abbott-Turnbull government. It is clear they have done very little for my electorate and for South Australia as a whole in terms of investment and infrastructure. We know that when you inject money into investments in infrastructure, you are creating jobs and much-needed facilities for particular electorates. Compare the government with what we announced during the last federal election campaign. We announced big infrastructure projects for the electorate of Hindmarsh that would have created jobs and solved some of the infrastructure issues we have.

One project on which I was very proud to be able to secure a commitment from the Labor opposition in the lead-up to this election was $40 million towards the Brown Hill Keswick Creek Stormwater Project, which will safeguard thousands of homes, businesses and residents from the devastating damage of flooding. One of those businesses that would be affected by this is the Adelaide Airport—a major piece of infrastructure in my electorate. Last week, with the storms and the bad weather, we came very close to having a devastating flood through these creeks in my electorate. There were people who were sandbagging and people who were asked to leave their homes. They tell me we were just lucky it did not rain for an extra hour, otherwise we could have had some massive disasters. We were willing to fund to the Brown Hill Keswick Creek Stormwater Project, which would mean that the flows of water could be controlled to prevent flooding. I am very proud of that commitment.

Another Labor pledge in the lead-up to the election was $500 million for the AdeLINK tram network to expand the tram line from the city to Henley Beach, going through the Adelaide Airport in my electorate as well. That would help to reduce traffic on roads in my electorate, not to mention the environmental benefits it would have. I go back to that point of infrastructure and the money that you spend. That $500 million would have alleviated traffic problems, provided much-needed infrastructure, and also created 200 jobs in the electorate, which are badly needed at this point in time. (Time expired)

Mr HAYES (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (13:16): I, too, take the opportunity to speak on these appropriation bills. These bills, effectively, are a result of the last election. Labor has agreed to pass these bills. But it is worthwhile noting that, together with the supply acts, which were passed earlier, these three bills of appropriation from the Consolidated Revenue Fund are for annual service of the government for the full year of 2016-2017 and to facilitate the implementation of the 2016-2017 budget. In total, around $58 billion is sought for the remainder of that financial year, and these amounts effectively form the bottom line for the budget.

As I say, this very much results from the last election and, to that extent, I think it is worthwhile to test some of the government's record as it now appears. The basis of this budget, if you listen to the government, is called 'budget repair'. Interestingly, one thing that you will never hear this government talk about is the global financial crisis. They will never talk about what occurred there. They will never talk about what their response was to the global financial crisis when they were in opposition, because, through their then shadow Treasurer, they said, 'We should wait and see what develops.' It is clear that Labor acted in accordance with Treasury advice. We acted to protect the citizens of this country, we acted to protect growth—we were the only OECD country during that period that recorded growth—and we acted to protect jobs. And there was a cost to that—there is no question about that. But
what this government has done is come along so many years later wanting to lay the blame for budget repair solely at the feet of Labor. Particularly at that time in opposition, they just buried their heads in the sand and played politics.

I would contrast that to the position that Labor is adopting today. We are supporting the government's position. We do acknowledge the need for addressing budget repair. As a matter of fact, in the lead-up to the last election, Labor made it very clear that we would partner with the government in addressing issues of budget repair. We spoke about increasing tobacco excise, which is not necessarily popular out there. We actually proposed that. We spoke about negative gearing and adjustment to capital gains tax. I know we were not the first to do it. I know the then member for North Sydney, in his valedictory speech, also made mention of the need to do that. We know that Treasurer Morrison spoke on many occasions about it being subject to various successes. But when it came down to it, there was only one party prepared to take the hard decisions. We are committed to doing something about this. It is an issue that particularly affects those of us living in Sydney and those of us living in Melbourne who are very much impacted by the inflating real estate markets. We said that we were prepared to do it and we committed ourselves to do it.

Similarly, in terms of VET FEE-HELP, we on this side do want to get young people through trades. We do want people to actually gain an education which is going to help them be more job ready for employment opportunities. We said we would put an $8,000 cap on that, which was not what we saw this government do over a period of time where I think it blew out 300 per cent. People were receiving various certificates, diplomas and all sorts of magical documents with lovely crests and headings on them but they did not eventuate into jobs. And yet people are being stung for VET FEE-HELP debts of over $30,000 and not netting employment. We do not think that is a very good idea. It is not a smart idea. And it has taken this government a long time to actually come to terms with that and to be committed to doing something about it.

The plan of those opposite was to give big business a $50 billion tax cut. In the course of this concept of budget repair, they thought there was something to trickle-down economics. They proposed that if they could give business a $50 billion tax cut then those businesses would, in turn, pass it on to their employees in higher wages. Put this to the test: how many times have you ever heard of a conservative government popping up in a test case of the Industrial Relations Commission of the minimum rates adjustment to say, 'We support it'? In the whole time that I have been involved in public life, I cannot remember a government from the conservative ranks ever saying that they support a wage adjustment. The fact at the moment is we have the lowest possible wage growth seen in the last 20 years; it has stagnated. Most economists say that is one of the issues we currently face. I would have thought that, through trickle-down economics, a $50 billion tax reduction might see corporate profits go up a little, may see dividends to shareholders paid out and may see a little bit of corporate buyback, but I am not sure I would have backed that in as being the biggest drawcard to budget repair.

The same could be said for giving people earning $180,000 a tax cut to their marginal rate. Those opposite would propose that, if they gave the top three per cent of wage earners in the country a tax cut, those people would invest, they would put their money somewhere else, they would stimulate the economy and they would create jobs. Maybe not, maybe they will
buy their sixth or seventh house. If that occurred, 75 per cent of people would not get anything.

Deputy Speaker Coulton, I know you are familiar with my electorate. There are many things my electorate is very proud of. We have the most multicultural community in the whole of the country. Thirty per cent of my community speak Asian languages. It is very diverse, colourful and vibrant. But my community is not a rich community. When the government indicated it would give these tax cuts at the higher end of the scale, it basically took away any chance of anyone in my community receiving a tax cut. In my community, the average household income is under $60,000, not the average income but the average household income. People want to talk about things such as education. They have high aspirations for their kids. They know that in a society like Australia that the ticket to success is a good education. They understand that and, quite frankly, they make their kids work pretty hard to attain good results. Mums and dads will work two or three jobs to make sure their kids get a proper education and the resources they need. Education is a very high priority for them.

Health was also a big issue, with the government wanting to talk about Medicare insofar as cutting financial support for people going for MRIs and cutting funding for various aspects of oncology treatments. It is all very well to say that people are expected to pay as they go, but, in a community like mine, health is very, very important. In a country like Australia, we expect that people will be able to access first-class health care with their Medicare card, not their credit card. Those things were important.

The central plank of the budget was $50 billion in tax cuts for business, showing that those opposite turned their backs on working-class areas like mine and those that many members on my side represent. Although the truth of it is that, while many of those opposite might not want to admit it, people in their electorates would have been in the same financial position as those in my electorate. They turned their backs on those people, and the consequence of that is that they lost in the vicinity of 16 or 17 seats. They turned their backs on the needs of ordinary people in their community.

Those opposite are cutting $30 billion from schools, and they want to talk about Gonski, asking what it has delivered and all the rest of it. Apart from everything else I have indicated, my community is over-represented by families that live with disabilities, and there is a reason for that. As I said, it is a very working-class community; it is not a very rich community. A lot of people gravitate to Western Sydney because the land is cheaper. They will compromise on houses and land to make sure that their children are able to receive the necessary support. For instance, 52 per cent of all families in New South Wales that live with autism are within a 20-kilometre radius of the Liverpool CBD—and it is certainly not due to the water we have or the air we breathe. It is due to the fact that people make compromises to look after their kids, particularly kids who are on the autism spectrum. Probably the most devastating statistic is that 82 per cent of all those families are single-parent families; regrettably, very few marriages survive issues associated with raising children with autism.

These people want to know, and they deserve to know, that their kids will be given the necessary assistance through our education system and through our health services, that they are not going to be forgotten, that their kids can do what all the rest of our kids can do, which is to reach their potential. The Gonski money was used pretty constructively in schools in my electorate—I cannot speak for everyone else, but in my electorate I saw what was happening.
For kids with a learning disability or kids who needed speech therapy, including kids on the autism spectrum, there were special classes aimed at adjusting kids into mainstream education. These are areas where we can make a difference. We are a lucky society. We are a very fortunate society. But society cannot be lucky and fortunate for a certain few—we must make sure that we do not allow people to fall through the cracks.

We must be, and we must always aspire to be, a caring community. That does not mean to say that we are simply going to be a welfare state. I was just talking to a member at the table about the need for people to be in work. We made that very clear—in fact, while in government we made it very clear. We drew a distinction between people on a disability support pension or an age pension and people on Newstart, on the dole. We did not want to establish an alternate economy where people could opt-out and simply say, 'I'll join John Howard's surfing team'—as they used to call it in the past. We want to make sure there is an incentive for people to get out and gain employment and contribute to the community. It is a two-way street. We tried very hard to deliver that message in the community.

Quite frankly, when we talk about jobs, education and health, these were things that resonated with the community. Because of that, particularly in Western Sydney, all these seats came back to Labor. They had a flirtation with the Liberals—and I am talking about the fancy things—but they found out that it meant a tax cut for big business. There was nothing for mums and dads raising kids in Western Sydney, nothing for their struggle to pay a mortgage and nothing for them in relation to job security. These are issues that were important. These are issues that Labor was able to focus on. These are the issues that delivered Labor election victory in Western Sydney. As I said at the start of my contribution, we will not oppose the passage of these bills, but I think we ought to have regard to how that came about.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): The debate is adjourned and the resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for a later hour.

Sitting suspended from 13:32 to 16:00

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Live Music Industry

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (16:00): Live music has provided the soundtrack for the lives of Australians for a very long time, and live music is now going through an extraordinarily challenging transition, with the advent of streaming and difficulties that many are facing in having access to live venues. If you take a typical weekend like the one I have just had, the soundtrack went through Jimmy Barnes, the Oils, The Cat Empire, Josh Pyke, Sticky Fingers and a fantastic new album by Julia Jacklin, with a very special title that we would all ascribe to, Don't let the kids win. She is a wonderful artist from the Blue Mountains, whose album has come out only in the last few days.

New artists like Julia Jacklin or the members of Sticky Fingers are facing a very different situation in Australia to that faced by bands like Midnight Oil or Cold Chisel. Whereas previously bands were able to take a portion of their income from album sales and a portion of their income from live performance, many now have to work on the basis that the album sale part of the royalty is effectively written off because of streaming. What that means is that live performance needs to fill the gap if we are going to have the sort of live music industry in Australia that members of this House grew up with. Live performance needs to fill the gap in
all three ways: access to live venues in Australia, access to live venues internationally and the importance of the festival circuit, which in some ways has provided some additional opportunities for Australian artists that were not there previously. However, with respect to all three, major decisions will have to be made by the government that will have a very real bearing on whether Australian artists are able to make this transition in getting continued access to live venues in Australia, internationally and on the festival circuit.

I saw a terrible time in Sydney when venue after venue decided to remove their stages and instead fill their venues with poker machines. What we established in place of that was the Live Music Office, to actively be in there helping remove the type of red tape that effectively reduced the volume to zero. Similarly, Sounds Australia requires a level of support which is not currently there. The Australia Council has made an attempt to fill the gap by providing some funding to both the Live Music Office and to Sounds Australia, but the Australia Council can only do so much. At the same time, we have some changes being mooted to visa fees which create a real question as to whether or not the festivals will be able to get the headline acts which are required to provide space for the local artists. (Time expired)

Galhos, Ms Kerry

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde—Government Whip) (16:03): Today I would like to share with the House the tremendous efforts of the Beenleigh Tennis Club and their support for a rising young tennis star, Kerry Galhos. Beenleigh Tennis Club is one of our great local sporting clubs, with a passionate team of coaches, players and supporters. Kerry Galhos's story is not the everyday sporting success story. It is one of hard work, sacrifice and generosity from across the world.

Kerry's talent for tennis was first discovered in East Timor by Gerard, the brother of local tennis coach James Rapkins. After a few short years her journey brought her to Australia, leaving behind her supportive family in Timor so that she could pursue her passion for tennis. Under the guidance of the club's coach, James Rapkins, Kerry's talent for tennis has flourished. Not only has she embraced the Australian lifestyle, language and her tennis training, Kerry is also an academic star and is currently studying a dual political science and communications degree. Through her dedication to her studies and her tennis training, I am very excited to share that our young Beenleigh star is on her way to becoming an international star, with Kerry awarded a full scholarship to study and play in the USA. Study & Play USA specialises in connecting talented young kids with US universities to further their talent and to receive a first-class universally-recognised education.

For Kerry, it has been a tremendous journey from her life in East Timor with little material wealth. But she has studied hard and trained hard and has been awarded this full scholarship in the USA, where she will be fully supported, covering her shoes, socks, other clothes, rackets, accommodation, food and tuition and her travelling within the USA with her new team for the next four years. She will want for nothing.

When I caught up with Kerry at the Beenleigh Tennis Club, it was great to see how excited yet humbled this young tennis star was at the opportunities that were being presented to her. Her journey to Australia and her time with the Beenleigh Tennis Club has given her the opportunity to pursue her dreams and make her family back in East Timor very proud.
I would like to congratulate James and the team at the Beenleigh Tennis Club for turning one young lady's dream into a reality. I have no doubt we will see Kerry Galhos back in Australia in no time—perhaps competing against the world's best in our open grand slam tennis tournament.

**Broadband**

**Mr SWAN** (Lilley) (16:06): I just want to say a few words about internet speeds and internet connection in the electorate of Lilley and the northern suburbs of Brisbane.

Earlier this year, I was contacted by residents of a new estate, Brighton Landing, regarding the lack of broadband internet in the area. This was a new estate that did not even have access to ADSL. These new estate residents had expected to have the NBN, but of course they were unaware that that had been cancelled by the Turnbull government or the Abbott government and that nothing was being rolled out in the area. They did not have ADSL, so they were simply left high and dry—with no prospect of the NBN being rolled out in their area.

I know this is not uncommon right around the country. So they were facing a very long wait for internet coverage. They were too far from the exchange; Telstra was reluctant. After spending some time with Telstra I managed to persuade them that they could find a solution to the distance from the exchange, which they have now found. So at least the residents of Brighton Landing will have access to ADSL.

I do not know how long they will have to wait for the full rollout of the NBN, because that is such a disaster. The Turnbull government announced in the last couple of weeks that the HFC network—which was going to be the backbone of the new NBN across something like two-thirds to three-quarters of the area that I represent—is also cancelled. So residents in those areas which were not fortunate enough to get fibre to the premises—that is about 25 per cent of the area I represent—are now still waiting, not knowing what the technological solution is going to be for their area, and in many cases with no idea of when the new NBN will be rolled out in their area.

Fortunately, about 25,000 homes in the Lilley electorate have fibre to the premises, and those people are very, very fortunate—suburbs such as Aspley, Banyo, Bridgeman Downs, Northgate, Nudgee, Nudgee Beach, Nundah, Pinkenba, Taigum, Virginia and Zillmere. But almost everywhere else people are waiting.

This is a huge problem for people who are operating home based businesses in those suburbs—a huge problem. It is a huge problem for kids who are trying to do their high school assignments. And of course when both happen in the house at the same time and the connectivity is so low, this is an incredible challenge for those families. I have been to childcare centres where they are running their businesses on a hot spot through their mobile phones because their connectivity is so low. Also, even though we are so relatively close to the city there are significant sectors of my electorate which do not have decent mobile phone coverage either.

So these issues of being able to connect are essential issues of the capacity to do business and for kids to actually progress at school. But these are people who have been left behind in the digital backwater—in a broadband backwater—by the shemozzle of the Turnbull government. *(Time expired)*
Tuesday, 11 October 2016

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 1615

Menzies Electorate: Infrastructure

Mr ANDREWS (Menzies) (16:09): I rise this afternoon to highlight the increasing traffic congestion in Melbourne generally and in my electorate of Menzies in particular. Increasing traffic is not surprising, because Melbourne has been growing at the rate of about 1,500 extra people a week for not just weeks or years but, indeed, for some decades. If you look at the major infrastructure in Melbourne, the Monash Freeway, the Eastern Freeway and East Link, the ring road to the west and the north or the Tullamarine freeway, most of this infrastructure is at least a decade old—if not decades older now. The city's infrastructure is not coping adequately at the present time, let alone into the future.

Melbourne is predicted to overtake Sydney as the most populous city in Australia in the coming decades. Therefore, traffic congestion in Melbourne is a pressing issue for residents. It is particularly felt in my electorate. Roads such as Bulleen Templestowe Road, Manningham Road and Fitzsimons Lane are chock-a-block with cars and trucks trying to find a way through to major freeways each morning and afternoon. This also affects the neighbouring electorate of Jagajaga, especially Rosanna Road. The triangle between Clifton Hill, Templestowe and Greensborough is one of the most congested areas of Melbourne at the present time.

Therefore, I welcome the recent Infrastructure Victoria report which said that the No. 1 priority for road funding and construction in Melbourne is the North East Link. This is the link between the M80 Ring Road, which is the Western Ring Road, Northern Ring Road, and the Eastern Freeway and EastLink. There is a gap between those two roads which means that roads such as Fitzsimons Lane, Manningham Road, Rosanna Road in Jagajaga and Bulleen Templestowe Road become thoroughfares for cars and, increasingly, large trucks each day to make the connection.

The Infrastructure Victoria chief, Michel Masson, said that this road was the clear winner in terms of priorities for Melbourne. The draft report calls for building the missing link in 10 to 15 years. I believe, however, that it should be expedited. Traffic is chaotic now. In 10 years time it will indeed be horrendous. At the election, this government promised funding for a feasibility study. I note that that funding was matched by Labor. I call upon the Victorian government to match the funding to get on with the feasibility study and start to relieve the congestion in this important part of Melbourne.

Parsons, Ms Georgina

Bundian Way

Dr MIKE KELLY (Eden-Monaro) (16:12): I take this opportunity to express my sympathy for the recent loss of Georgina Parson, an elder of the Walbundgan Yuin people, who was better known as Aunty Coope. Aunty Coope was a talented artist who, for 13 years, shared her extensive knowledge of Aboriginal art and culture at Art Central in Moruya. She allowed people of all walks of life to be able to access and understand the culture and art of the Walbundgan Yuin people. She forged strong relationships with her colleagues at Art Central, which is the home of the Arts Council of Eurobodalla. In addition to this work, Aunty Coope worked hard for her community by consulting with all levels of government on important issues such as Closing the Gap and achieving reconciliation. Her generous spirit also spread to all members of her multicultural local community through education, health,
stories, arts and culture. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her. Aunty Coope was part of what is a vibrant arts scene in our region, in particular a vibrant Indigenous heritage.

It is not only the Walbungan Yuin people of the coast who I am talking about here but also the peoples of the high country, the Gunnawal and Ngambri peoples, and the Wiradjuri peoples of the south-west slopes and Yass region. We have seen a wonderful proposal that will tend to bring all of these traditions together in our region in a project known as the Bundian Way, which will open up a traditional and historical track that runs from Mount Kosciuszko down to Twofold Bay. We have been using this project as a lightning rod for promoting Indigenous art. The wonderful Bundian Way Gallery that has been established in Delegate is a fantastic showcase of that art. It is breathing life back into the respect that we should always have had for the Indigenous culture of our region. It is providing a wonderful outlet for expression and revival of the themes of that culture, such as the traditional bogong moth hunting that used to take place, with the gathering of the tribes of our coastal and slopes region on the south-western side.

The artists are now carrying that torch forward and showing that our region is very special when it comes to that heritage. It is something that all Australians will have the opportunity to experience as we get this Bundian Way project up and running. It will need more funding to get there, and I am hoping that we can all work together to achieve that outcome. I will be looking forward to working with the government to see what more can be done to make that dream real and to open it up as wonderful tourism opportunity as well. It will be a boost for our local economy but a key step forward in the reconciliation process and a resuscitation of the wonderful cultural heritage of our region.

Dunkley Electorate: Mornington Main Street Festival

Mr CREWTHER (Dunkley) (16:15): I rise today to speak on a very important date in the calendar of many people in my electorate of Dunkley. For the past 20 years local residents have flocked in their thousands to the main street of the town of Mornington to celebrate all things local. The Mornington Main Street Festival, the most anticipated festival in the community for over 20 years, is held annually on the third Sunday in October and continues to attract a crowd of over 20,000 visitors each year. It has been run by Christina Nolan and her wonderful group of volunteers. This Sunday, 16 October, the festival will again occur and will again, I am sure, prove to be a day to remember for locals and visitors of all ages to my beautiful electorate of Dunkley. It is on from 11 o'clock to five o'clock this Sunday, and I encourage all of those in my electorate to come down and those beyond our electorate who may be tourists to come and visit.

The Mornington Main Street Festival is a great day out that celebrates the uniqueness of Dunkley. While there, you can sample some of the scrumptious local delights that we have to offer, whether it is the agricultural produce from all down the peninsula or Tucker on offer from Mornington Masala, DOC Mornington, the Grand Hotel, The Rocks or the Boyz 4 Breakie, just to name a few—and accompanied by locally crafted beverages and wines from places like Brooklands of Mornington, Merchant Lane and others. Of course, it would not be a full experience without following up with a great quality coffee and something special from Yummo Ice Cream or from Vespa's Gelataria—one of the local favourites that the Minister for Foreign Affairs experienced when she visited my electorate earlier this year. The forecast is for 16 degrees and rainy, which is, I guess, a typical Melbourne day. But, given
Melbourne's reputation, it could well be a fine sunny day with a top of 22 degrees later on—four seasons in one day, as they say.

Either way, it is a perfect day out where the whole family can see some of the best that my electorate of Dunkley has to offer. While you are there you could go and check out the Mornington foreshore, the clean-up of which, by a Green Army project, I was proud to announce during my local campaign. You could also wander along Main Street in Mornington and check out the Empire Street mall. During my campaign I announced $600,000 for enhancements to the mall and to the playground there to make it accessible to people of all ages and abilities, as well as upgrading the memorial fountain, which will be moved to the local park. We have a village-like atmosphere in Mornington, and it is the gateway to the peninsula, where country life begins. Please come down and experience this festival in Mornington this Sunday.

**Calwell Electorate: Oromo Youth Australian Football Club**

Ms VAMVAKINOU (Calwell) (16:18): I would like to congratulate players from my local Oromo Youth Australian football club, who last month competed in the Oromo Sport Federation's 20th anniversary soccer tournament in the United States. I would like to thank my friend and local constituent Hamza Wariyo for introducing me to these young and dynamic players within our community. I am pleased to have a very vibrant Oromo community in my electorate of Calwell, who are making a great contribution to our local community.

The soccer tournament, held in Minnesota in August, saw 28 teams—including two from Australia—competing. The tournament raised awareness of Oromo culture by bringing the Oromo diaspora together, fostering relationships and sharing cultural heritage and identity. Both of our local soccer teams competed under the Australian flag, and I congratulate the Oromo Youth Australian football club for making it to the quarter-finals. Before they flew out to Minnesota, I had the pleasure of meeting Barisa Kedir, the Australian team manager and player for the Oromo Youth football club. Barisa is a wonderful young man who considers his soccer team pretty much an extension of his own family. He gives much of his time after school to playing and to coordinating those he calls his favourite boys, and his friends.

Sport is a great way to foster pride in the community as people build their new life here in Australia. But, of course, my local Oromo community remains very concerned about conditions for the Oromo people in Ethiopia. On their behalf, I would like to take this opportunity to bring the plight of the Oromo people to the attention of this chamber. The Oromo constitute the largest single ethnicity in Ethiopia, with an estimated 38 million to 50 million people. They are at least 40 per cent of Ethiopia's population. Most reside in the Oromia region, which encompasses Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. The Oromo people practise varying faiths, including the indigenous religion, Waaqeffanna. The region also generates an estimated 60 per cent of Ethiopia's economic resources.

While making up such a significant proportion of Ethiopia, they lack significant political, economic and cultural representation. Importantly, Ethiopia's political system is largely dominated by the Tigrayan ethnic group. The Oromo people, as I have said, feel that the Ethiopian resources and wealth are not shared equally. My local Oromo community is very concerned about the large number of Oromo people who have been killed and the many who have been arrested and jailed. The protests continue to rage. They involve farmers and
students. All are seeking to fight for national self-determination and a more representative democracy. (*Time expired*)

**Mallee Electorate: Migration**

Mr BROAD (Mallee) (16:21): In my opinion, the people I represent are some of the most compassionate and fair-minded people you will find in Australia. They call a spade a spade, and they accept people. It is a very multicultural community. I always point to the school of Robinvale, which has 415 students with 54 first languages.

One of the things that was brought to my attention quite a while ago was the plight of people who had come here by boat and were stuck on a visa under which they were not able to work. Out of discussions with the then Minister for Immigration, Scott Morrison, came the Safe Haven Enterprise visas. Under these visas, if you work or study for 3½ years out of five, you will have a pathway to apply for residency and, ultimately, citizenship.

Whilst these visas are now law, it disappoints me that the state governments are required to sign them off. The Victorian state government has not signed them off at the moment. Every council in the electorate of Mallee has said, 'We want to be a council that has the SHEV.' So they are very keen. New South Wales has signed off. But the Victorian government's response is that they are trying to extract more services and more dollars for these people. The people are already living in my community, so they are already drawing services. My argument is that when they are working they are less likely to draw services.

What I am bringing to the parliament is my plea to the Victorian government. I have written to the Minister for Immigration, Peter Dutton, asking him to work constructively with the Victorian government. I have also written to the Victorian Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs to see if there is a way that we can bring hope to these people. Ultimately, the thing that has defined Australians is that, if you come here, you contribute, you hold down a job and you get involved in the community, we will welcome you. We often have people come into our office and we work very constructively with them.

I also want to add one thing. As we think through our refugee policy and how we deal with desperate people, there is a great line—which actually comes out of Genesis, I have to say—which is: 'It is not good for the man to be alone.' In a lot of instances, you have people who are refugees but their families are not here, and you can see the heartbreak in them. They are holding down a job and they are contributing to our community, and I think it is appropriate that we look quite favourably at how we can ensure that they are reunited with their partners, with their wives and with their children, because that and helps to cement them and they become great Australian citizens.

We all came as refugees or as migrants, one way or another, a long time ago. The Broads came out in 1850. There are many of us and, hopefully, we have been more positive than negative on the Australian population. I believe that if these people are given the opportunity they can be very positive as well.

**Macquarie Electorate: Western Sydney Airport**

Ms TEMPLEMAN (Macquarie) (16:24): If you had build a new piece of infrastructure—in fact, probably the biggest single piece of infrastructure you can imagine—the worst way to do it would be to look at the rules that other, similar, nearby pieces of infrastructure have and then throw them out. That is exactly what the government did when
they proposed Western Sydney airport at Badgerys Creek. They looked at the rules that had been hard-fought for by residents and local members in the east, the inner west, the south and the north shore to protect their communities from excessive impacts from aircraft and they said, ’We are going to do exactly the opposite—no curfew, no cap on hourly flight numbers and no flight sharing.’

I understand the economic attractiveness of these policy settings for the airlines and for the operator of the airport, but, as the local member, I do not as not accept and my constituents do not accept the social, health and environmental consequences of them for the Blue Mountains and for the rest of Western Sydney. A year after we saw the draft EIS for this plan, with 100 per cent of incoming flights merging over the unsuspecting town of Blaxland in the lower Blue Mountains 24 hours a day, there have been some concessions. But unfortunately the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport’s press release about changes is not adequately reflected in the final EIS. It fails to lock in the policy commitments made by the minister of no merge points across the mountains and no night-time flights over residential areas.

The EIS still talks about potential merge points and the head-to-head night-time operations is merely a preferred operating mode. It fails to adequately address environmental impacts by pushing all serious consideration and studies into the future, after the airport is approved—the flight paths, the air quality, the impacts on World Heritage, the effects of bird and bat strikes and where they will find suitable land banking sites to compensate for the loss of Cumberland Plain. And it is important to note that on the 16th anniversary of World Heritage listing, the EIS fails to acknowledge that UNESCO only gave World Heritage listing to the Greater Blue Mountains after the Howard government abandoned plans for an airport at Badgerys Creek.

It is also worth noting that a key argument in favour of the airport is that it creates jobs but the jobs analysis in the EIS ignores increased automation, robotics and artificial intelligence when estimating jobs. It uses a figure higher than the current employment rate at Kingsford Smith to estimate jobs numbers for a Western Sydney airport and we pay a huge financial and social cost for those jobs. If you operate on the assumption that an EIS is a process for assessing environmental impacts of a development then this fails to address the necessary issues, and the airport should not proceed on this basis.

McMillan Electorate: Wonthaggi Seed Bank and Community Nursery

Mr BROADBENT (McMillan) (16:27): I never cease to be amazed by the environmental warriors across the whole area of Gippsland. On Wednesday 5 October, I had the pleasure and privilege of attending the opening of the Wonthaggi Seek Bank and Community Nursery's new purpose-built facility at the State Coal Mine in Wonthaggi, and what a celebration it was. Run and staffed by local volunteers, the group works to collect, store, propagate and supply indigenous seed and tube stock from local parks and reserves. The seed and tube stock are used for local projects run by farmers, Landcare and local community groups. I was pleased that this vital community group recently received $7,000 through the federal government's Stronger Communities Program for shed footings and what a shed it is. It is a beautiful shed. Testament to their can-do attitude, the rest of the work was completed through fundraising and volunteer labour.

In my electorate of McMillan, indeed, across this great nation, there are many wonderful volunteer organisations doing essential work. As someone who has been a volunteer, I can attest that it is not only good for the community but it is good for the soul to volunteer.
Australia would grind to a halt without its volunteers. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2014 volunteers contributed 743 million hours to the community. This equates to an average of 128 hours per volunteer in that 12-month period. Almost 20 per cent of volunteers performed more than 200 hours of volunteering—that is, 5.8 million people giving something back to their communities with no thought of payment, with the highest rate of volunteering, 42 per cent, among young people aged 15 to 17 years.

For 15 years, the volunteers at Wonthaggi Seed Bank and Community Nursery have worked hard to preserve McMillan's beautiful natural environment. In the past two years alone, they have produced 50,000 native plants. President Beth Banks, Treasurer Bill Berry and Secretary Margaret Barnard do wonderful work but they are well supported by 50 or so volunteers who meet up twice a week. These tireless environmentalists are an essential part of the conservation movement in my electorate of McMillan and are well supported by the Gardiner Foundation, Bass Coast Shire Council and the Department of Human Services. The community needs them. The environment needs them. Like so many other volunteers in Macmillan who give up their time for the betterment of everyone, whether they be protecting our precious native environment, manning our op shops, looking after the interests of the young or elderly people with disabilities, coaching junior sport, raising money for charity or myriad other selfless actions, they deserve as much praise as we can give them. May the Wonthaggi Seed Bank and Community Nursery volunteers continue to flourish, along with all volunteers. I never cease to be amazed by the environmentally charged activists whose contributions will outlive even themselves and their children's children.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hastie): In accordance with standing order 193, the time for members' constituency statements has concluded.

BILLS

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2016-2017
Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2016-2017
Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2016-2017
Second Reading

Cognate debate.
Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr ROB MITCHELL (McEwen) (16:31): by leave—Three months since the election and what we have seen in that time is a coalition, despite promises of unity, that can only be described as chaotic, rudderless and deeply divided. Whether privatising Medicare payments, the backpackers tax or superannuation, what is clear is that this is a government that believes it can say anything to the Australian voters before an election and do the complete opposite after it. The Australian people were promised innovation and agility, but what they have received is more of the same. I want to talk about the electorate of McEwen, which I have been re-elected to represent. I have been entrusted by the many towns and communities across the big and beautiful seat of McEwen and I am incredibly proud to be given this opportunity, for the third time, to continue building on the community cohesion and the legacy of Labor values in our communities, as did the late Peter Cleeland.
As we all know, election campaigns are not a sole endeavour and I would like to thank some people who made it possible for me. First, to my ever supportive family, all of them, thank you. From my partner, the ever patient Lisa, and her siblings to my mum and my siblings—each and every one of you gave your all to help me continue the fight for our communities. To my staff during the election—the calm, the considered Adam Mara; Jeni Emmins; Gareth Jones; Renee Pope-Munro; Hailey Emmins; Gemma Saccasan; and Catherine Campbell—the clock never stopped and neither did you. With your passion, your humour and a team spirit, you kept me going. I value the intelligence and the care that you showed not just during the campaign but each and every day.

I would like to pay tribute to some Labor branch members and supporters in the McEwen team: my brother Santo Spinello, an amazing man; Mr Craigieburn himself, Spiro Pastras; Oscar Goodwin; Brad Stewart; Jamie Miletto; Sam Lynch; Jordan Casey; Emilia Sterjova; Jan Maplestone; Mikaela Sadkiewicz; Parvinder Sarwara; Jasvinder Sidhu; Nariner Garg; Cassandra Devine; Josh Raymond; Kylie Spencer; Sasha Nacovski; Cameron Moir; Sharon Wallace-Storm; Casey Nunn; Terry Larkins; and, of course, Big Andy. And there was the support from someone who has been a wonderful friend and always answers the call: Carmel Barrott and her family, thank you. We could not have done it without you. These are just some of the people. It is not an exhaustive list but an example and a testament to the team effort of our whole campaign—people who stepped up not just once but each and every day. In a long-winded campaign, they were there in numbers—rain, hail, sleet and sometimes almost snow.

I would especially like to thank the 300 volunteers who helped us throughout the election on election day. They took the time out of their own lives to talk to their friends, neighbours and fellow community members about why this election mattered, and I am so grateful and say thank you. We received the largest swing to a sitting member in Victoria and that is a great achievement and a testament to their work. I will continue to work tirelessly for the communities in McEwen, ensuring that the trust and the faith they have, again, placed in me will be justified.

The people of McEwen re-elected me as their voice and I will continue to ensure that that voice is heard. Yesterday, I spoke about the coalition government’s burning desire to look after big business. It has shown the Australian people that it is full of rhetoric and empty slogans. Promises of innovation are just repackaged support for the big end of town, while the people of McEwen get left behind. Our communities have been hit hard by the policies and the budgets of the coalition government. This has left people concerned about the future of the local workforce, about access to quality schools and hospitals and about the lack of commitment to serving the expanding communities in the growing north. Since removing the member for Warringah, the current Prime Minister has made many empty promises about a change in direction. This talk has been shown to be cheap. Actions show us that nothing has changed within this government other than the messenger. We have seen course corrections, backflips, thought bubbles and gaffes, but very, very few substantive policies that will actually make a positive difference to the lives of most Australians.

The people in McEwen come from communities that span new suburbs and well-established rural communities, and their needs are just unique. Since the creation of the seat in 1984, it has maintained the status of a barometer, swinging between the two major parties and
showing us the constant importance of having a deep understanding of the many communities it encompasses. We have always been a very marginal seat, due to the wide-ranging demographics. I am proud that at the election the people of McEwen saw fit to recognise my efforts in understanding the unique needs of our many communities and returned me to this House with the largest margin in the seat's history.

While taking in many rural communities such as Kilmore and Seymour, we are also home to some of the fastest-growing communities in Australia such as Craigieburn, Wallan, Sunbury and Mernda. That mix of rural and urban living means we have a community of over 130,000 who have seen firsthand the difference between a Turnbull government that talks and a Labor government that delivers. Under Labor, our communities saw community-building investment in health care, education, jobs, communications, infrastructure and community facilities. But it was clear during this year's election that the coalition government had no interest in continuing Labor's legacy of prioritising our communities.

Prior to the coalition forming government in 2013, Labor provided almost $30 million in funding for hospitals, health clinics and local health practices, directly improving the lives of the people in our communities. I have worked hard to advocate for local projects, and I am proud of our successes in projects like a proper NBN, with NBN fixed wireless being rolled out for small regional communities, and the Reedy Creek mobile phone tower, $800,000. That has been delayed by 12 months now due to the government's bumbling. Another fire season will go past and the people in these communities will not have mobile reception. We saw a $46,000 upgrade to the Sankey Reserve in Gisborne. Four hundred million dollars was invested for a national post-entry quarantine facility, including hundreds of ongoing jobs. There was funding for the Hanson Road traffic lights, $612,000; the roundabout at Oaklands Junction, $965,000; safety barriers on Oaklands Road, $935,000; Whittlesea Tennis Club lighting upgrade projects, $64,000; and roundabouts and guard rails on Yan Yean Road and Jorgensen Avenue, $1 million. I am proud of these many commitments to our community that we were able to secure, through important consultation with the community itself.

Commitments that we made during the recent election were: $90 million for the Bridge Inn Road duplication from Epping Road through to Yan Yean Road in Mernda-Doreen; $20 million for the Craigieburn Road duplication; $67 million for the O’Herns Road-Hume Freeway interchange; $900,000 for traffic lights in Whittlesea; $2 million for the much-needed global learning centre in Sunbury; $2 million for the Sunbury child health hub; and $1.4 million for Gisborne Oaks aged care. My commitment now to the people in McEwen is that I will continue to fight for these projects, as they are so important and their importance should never be contingent on having a Labor victory. It will be no mean feat, since, as I mentioned, this government has already demonstrated its ability to disregard its own promises and walk away from the people of Australia.

I would love also to hold this government to account for the promises it made to the people of McEwen via its candidate. Sadly its lack of concern and conviction was evident throughout the campaign this year, as it was at the last election. It was no more evident than when we looked at the funding commitment to the seat of McEwen by the coalition: $150,000 for the Sunbury Memorial Hall to be repainted. That was the entire commitment that we saw directly for the seat of McEwen. For an electorate like McEwen, which is experiencing so much rapid growth, to have been so roundly ignored by this government is a slap in the face.
The announcement by Senator Ryan was also the only time a senior Liberal member came to visit the electorate. Many drove through, but they never stopped. Such was the coalition's lack of interest in our community. I have had assurances from Senator Ryan that he has been in contact with another minister, although he did not name them, to discuss the implementation of this promise. I hope we are not seeing yet another delaying tactic. This is not an unreasonable concern for us given the complete disregard shown during the previous term of parliament to honouring commitments. The Sunbury community was hit hard by this government's hollow promises—broken promises to Sunbury like the Solar Cities program, a $300,000 promise that was never delivered, and the removal of $40,000 which forced the closure of the Sunbury PCYC, which was doing excellent work for our kids.

I have written to several members of the Turnbull government to ensure that they are held accountable for the promises made, that they give our commitments due consideration and that they consider the impacts of their decisions through these bills and what they mean for families. These include cuts to family payments, mortgage stress and the pricing out of families, and the impact of the failure of the NBN rollout. Even today we have seen examples in Wallan, where effectively everything that was put down has to be ripped up again because the copper wiring cannot deal with something called the weather. So when it is wet the NBN does not work. I have spoken many times about mobile phone blackspots and this government's failure to deliver mobile phone reception across communities which exceed all of the government's criteria. We see impacts on our communities due to Medicare privatisation and lack of funding commitments prioritising the northern growth corridor. The government should consider the coming impact of the closure of Ford and the lack of a succession plan for our workforces, with the impact on the 10,000- plus residents reliant on manufacturing and satellite industries. The government should protect rates of pay and liveable wages for our communities and ensure that banks are held to account for their unscrupulous decisions, which cost people their life savings.

We went to the election with positive plans and positive ideas. We put people first. As I said earlier, I am humbled and honoured to be re-elected as the member for McEwen. I said that I am here for our community, and I am. I am not going to stand by as the Turnbull government try to walk away from delivering for the people of McEwen. Even though it was a measly promise that they made, they owe it to the community to actually deliver. We cannot continue to see backflip after backflip by this government. It is time they stood up and delivered properly for the people of McEwen and kept their promises to all Australians.

Mr BYRNE (Holt) (16.42): I rise to speak about Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2016-2017 and about the need for the Turnbull government as part of the budget process to fully commit and invest in the outer suburbs of Australia's major cities, like in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne and in my electorate of Holt. To put this in context, according to the National Growth Areas Alliance, Australia's fastest-growing suburbs are home to five million people. The Casey region, in my electorate of Holt, is home to the fastest-growing suburb in the country, which is Cranbourne East. There is rapid population growth occurring in other suburbs, but the key challenge is that infrastructure—roads, schools, jobs and services—and then social infrastructure are failing to keep up with that population growth. Research commissioned by the NGAA shows that there is a $50 billion backlog in infrastructure for fast-growing outer suburbs and, unless it is seriously addressed now, that figure will grow to
about $73 billion in the next 15 years. By then, the population in these areas is expected to reach 7.5 million.

One suggestion was put to me with respect to that, and I encourage the Turnbull government to contemplate this to speed up the backlog in infrastructure: there needs to be consideration given to setting up a specialised fund for the outer suburbs in the same way that rural and regional areas have a dedicated fund. It really is only fair that growing outer suburbs are treated equally and get their fair share of infrastructure funding—because a view that a lot of people have is that they do not get their fair share.

The key priorities for the Casey region during the 45th Parliament should be to provide more funding and more support for community safety and more support for Casey’s youth, roads, education, hospitals, NBN and mental health services, as well as having a plan—and this is quite vital—to improve government services, create new manufacturing jobs for the south-east, turn the Fountain Gate precinct into a new mini outer suburban CBD and continue to invest in areas where extra investment is required, like Doveton, Hampton Park and such areas.

One of the key issues that came up in my constituency during the 2016 federal election campaign was the issue of community safety. It was not something that, then, a lot of people were paying attention to, but it was an issue—particularly when we were speaking to people in the community and even doorknocking, when people were too afraid to answer their doors because of the substantial increase in the space of home invasions, car thefts, assaults and carjackings—that we needed to address.

It is quite interesting that initially when I put that on the public record—there was an article written by Ellen Whinnett about it in the Herald Sun—the local Liberals, shall we say, were quite perplexed about why I would do something like that, and I could not say they were really supportive. It did not come up on my discussions with them, but it was an absolutely key element of my speaking to the community, notwithstanding a lot of the other broader macro issues that we discussed in the campaign, like the assault on Medicare. And you can see that in subsequent reporting in our Victorian papers. There is a substantial rise in home invasions and car thefts. It has been a common theme in the outer suburbs of Melbourne, including in the city of Casey and, particularly, in my electorate of Holt.

The issue is lack of police resources, and we are not here to allocate blame, as others have, but to basically, positively address this particular issue, because as Melbourne grows by 100,000 people per year the demands on social infrastructure are going to occur. The Andrews Labor government has been made fully aware of these ongoing challenges and is keen to increase police numbers across the state. In the state budget Premier Andrews made a commitment for an extra 406 sworn police and 52 support personnel, which includes 20 much-needed extra police for the Casey region in our local area. Over the coming years, the Police Association of Victoria believe an extra 189 police will be needed in Casey by 2022, and with such rapid population growth it is vital that we deliver the required resources to the Casey region over the coming years.

It certainly was a substantial issue, and I would like to thank the Kerala community in particular for conducting a community safety forum with the Victorian police to amplify their concerns. As a consequence of their lobbying, I believe that the state government has responded with much-needed additional resources where there is a federal overlay with this. I
think the member for La Trobe has spoken about a joint gang task force. I think that is one suggestion that is noted, but I do think that we need to have more concerted ongoing attention, and possibly the legislation, to disrupt and degrade these gangs. I will be pursuing that in other fora and possibly through other committees.

I also wanted to ensure—and there is an overlay with the federal government here as well—increased CCTV resources. I note that the Minister for Justice, Michael Keenan, has mooted a potential expenditure in the Hampton Park area, which is one of the key areas where the so-called Apex gang congregate. I would commend the minister for that, welcome that and look forward to working with him to deliver that, but there is much more that needs to be done. I will be flagging with the minister that I will be seeking much more extra funding for CCTV cameras for local shopping centres, community centres, churches and mosques.

Also, in my role as deputy chair, there is one issue that I have some measure of concern about, and that is the issue of countering violent extremism projects. What we have, Deputy Speaker, is an issue that you may or may not be aware of, with the difficulties that we have with radicalised youth in our region which resulted in the Endeavour Hills police incident on 23 September 2014 and also the thwarted Anzac Day plots in April 2015.

We conducted consultations with the federal government, federal government agencies, the Attorney-General's office, the Australian Federal Police and Victoria Police. One of the key issues that arose in the consultations with the key stakeholders that were worried from the affected communities was meaningful federal government funding going to projects that could help them in terms of the prevention of radicalisation of youth. Now, I am not here to criticise the programs, but one of the difficulties, and I have raised this concern with the Attorney-General's Department directly, is that we need to fund projects—even if it is through that particular funding or if we segregate the CVE funding from the Attorney-General's Department and call it community capacity building funding—where good community groups, such as Afghan community groups as an example, can build the youth community facilities that they actually need. The difficulty is that, because they are not getting this federal government support and funding, we are facing a challenge where those whom we are quite worried about do not have access to this funding to provide the facilities which would act as an attractor to those that we worry about in our community.

In discussing this appropriation bill, my request is not to criticise the existing funding, but I do believe that it could be targeted. The communities at risk—and there are several—that I have dealt with do in fact need targeted funding to provide the resourcing that they need. I will certainly be continuing to raise this with the Attorney-General's office and, as I said, I have worked very closely with them. There are a couple of examples. For example, there is a gentleman that I know named Peter Aguto from the Sudanese community. Funding could help him run his Road to Therapy program, which moves young Sudanese youth away from acts of crime to become active members in the community. There is another very interesting program, called the Raqib Task Force, which was created by Anooshe Mushtaq and Hussain Nadim, which is a counterextremism initiative led by the Muslim communities. They are based in Sydney.

We want to make these people stakeholders in the process of reducing acts of crime and terrorist threats in this country. That is not to say that I—as you may be aware, Deputy Speaker—say that those who commit those crimes should not meet the full force of the law,
and we will flag that we will continue to be giving our security agencies the powers that they need to address those particular concerns, but the intelligence agencies tell me that it would be much better, as you would know, to be dealing with these threats or to see them mitigated rather than having to deal with the endpoint. Had some of the foreshadowed threat of the Anzac Day terror plots occurred and not been thwarted by the excellent work of our intelligence agencies and the security community, God knows what would have happened in our community. We commend the intelligence community for their work, but we must do everything in our power to ensure that that does not happen. I think more appropriate targeting of the countering violent extremism funding is one way of doing that.

In the same vein, I am also committed to campaigning for additional resources for Casey's youth. In the Casey region we have about 60,000 people, but, because they live on the outer suburbs of Melbourne, they do not have the same opportunities as those in the inner city. As a result, I have continued to be keen to support their youth in the best way I can and to provide them with world-class experiences. For example, Google and Facebook—and hopefully Twitter, if this actually occurs—are coming down to my constituency at some stage in the next month or two to talk about the youths' concerns about cyberbullying, social media challenges and extremism and how we could, collectively, combat those. I would like to commend them for doing that. That is bringing them out to the outer suburbs to actually assist in terms of the issue that the youth are dealing with.

It is pertinent because the Fountain Gate area in the Casey area, for example, has the second-highest uptake of mobile phone appliances in the country. It is not as though there is not a demand for something like this to be happening. If you said 'Fountain Gate shopping centre'—besides people automatically jumping up and talking about Kath and Kim—it is, as I said, one of the fastest growing areas in the country. The shopping centre is the second largest shopping centre in Australia. The diversification of the community is proceeding at an amazing pace, and so we need to act in accordance with that in the services that we provide, and we are just not getting those services. We are not getting the funding that we need.

I spoke before in this place about mental health funding. We were very worried about the two headspaces that had been funded, and I think the member for Cowan was talking about suicide prevention or World Mental Health Day just before I spoke. The difficulty with these transitioning arrangements was that the ongoing future of those two headspaces was not guaranteed until fairly recently. The problem with that uncertainty is that you lose qualified staff. I hope this matter has been resolved. I was listening carefully to what the health minister said with respect to this issue today. I hope that she is now in the process of allocating that additional funding for early psychosis prevention services. I think the minister spoke about the 12 suicide prevention services, but that should be just on top of the existing early psychosis programs that are being run, which do a lot of the suicide prevention work.

One of the key problems that we had prior to the last election was that funding for a very key early psychosis service was going to be taken away. There would be 75 per cent funding the first year and 25 per cent the next year. As a consequence of lobbying by a lot of young people and by Professor Patrick McGorry and others—and probably by some on your side of politics too, Mr Deputy Speaker—that funding is being reinstated. But the difficulty with the contracts that need to be renewed is that the funding actually has to be allocated, and it has not been allocated yet. I would urge the health minister to do so so we can keep those world-
class services up and running, on top of the delivery of the 12 suicide prevention special projects.

Roads are obviously a key issue. I am running out of time, but I could talk a lot more about that issue, particularly with respect to Thomp lions Road and the commitment that we made to it. We made an $85 million commitment to assist in the widening of Thomp lions Road, which would duplicate high-volume sections to six lanes, build a full-grade separation over the Western Port Highway intersection and upgrade intersections to the Frankston-Dandenong Road and the Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road. That would be very good. That was a commitment that we made, so I certainly welcome the Turnbull government's commitment with respect to the Monash Freeway and some elements of Thomp lions Road. But this money is required for the completion of the project, so I will certainly be writing to the Prime Minister to ask respectfully that he ensure that that happens.

In finishing, people in the outer suburbs often feel like they have been taken for granted. They provide so much of the industry and the resources and so many of the bright young people for our country, and they create the future that we want for our country. But they often feel like they do not have respect or resources. I spoke about Kath and Kim, and I say that because they feel like they are disparaged every time that term is used, and they are right. This is the future of our country, all dotted in the outer suburban areas in this country. I would urge the government to recognise that. I will continue to work with them to ensure that they get the appropriate resources that they need in this area.

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (16:58): A few weeks ago on a Friday afternoon 20 people at the National Gallery of Australia were given some really bad news. They were told that their jobs had been cut and that they were out of a job as of Monday. You can imagine those 20 people going home to their families that Friday night, looking forward to the weekend, to spending some time with their kids, to going to sport on the weekend, to perhaps catching up with friends over a dinner party. You can imagine how they felt about the fact that they had lost their jobs as of Monday and about going home to their families with that heavy heart and that fear to announce the news. You can imagine how the news was received when they got home and the uncertainty that it created amongst their children: 'Will it mean that we have to move from Canberra? Will it mean that I have to leave my school? Will it mean that I have to leave my local community and my local sporting club?' Imagine their partners thinking, 'Will I have to leave Canberra? Will I have to leave my job? What does this mean in terms of my future and my career?' And imagine what they were also thinking in terms of, 'What is my future? What is my career? Here I am.'

I met two of them on the Saturday morning, and they were still in shock, but they had at the front of their mind: 'Well, how am I going to pay the mortgage? What is going to be my future? I am an expert in my field. I have spent decades building up my skills in a very highly technical and expert area. What sort of job—what sort of future—is there for me? Here I am in my mid-40s or my mid-50s, facing this fear of not being able to pay the mortgage and possibly having to relocate—having to relocate my children, relocate my partner and relocate my partner—to get another job. Who knows—given that I am 45 or 50—what opportunities will be there for the future?'

So that was a grim day a few weeks ago at our National Gallery of Australia for those 20 people and those 20 families. But the cuts to jobs throughout our national institutions have not
been isolated to those 20 people at the National Gallery and their families. These cuts have been taking place since this government was elected in 2013. Since this government was elected in 2013, there has been cut after cut after cut at our national institutions. It has been sustained. At the National Archives of Australia, 39 people have lost their jobs. At the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, 47 people have lost their jobs. At the National Gallery of Australia, I mentioned those 20, who are among 28 who have lost their jobs. At the National Library of Australia, 41 people have lost their jobs; at the National Museum of Australia, five people; at the National Portrait Gallery of Australia, 11 people; and at Old Parliament House, the great old Wedding Cake, two people. At the Australian War Memorial, which protects and preserves the memories of those who have sacrificed their lives in the service of this nation to defend this nation, 61 people have lost their jobs since this government was elected; at the Royal Australian Mint, 26 people; at the High Court of Australia, 10 people; at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, three people; and, at the Australian Institute of Sport, 114 people. That is hundreds and hundreds of people who have lost their jobs in our national institutions and our sporting institutions since this government was elected, and that means there are hundreds and hundreds fewer people who are looking after, preserving, curating and conserving our national collection. These are hundreds and hundreds of people who are now not doing that anymore.

I am very concerned about what that means for our national collection. We have many millions of dollars invested in our art collection at the National Gallery. We have our war history and memories of those thousands and thousands of lives that were sacrificed in war. There are fewer people now looking after, conserving and preserving those memories. At the National Library of Australia, where we have every edition of every book that has been produced by an Australian in this country—including first editions of *Blinky Bill* and *The Magic Pudding*—their preservation, conservation and ability to tell those wonderful stories for generations to come are potentially being compromised as a result of 41 people at the National Library having lost their jobs since this government was elected. There are 41 fewer people being able to conduct that work.

What this means, in terms of actual numbers, is not just the hundreds and hundreds of jobs—all those hundreds and hundreds of people and the hundreds and hundreds of families that have been affected. We are talking here about one in 10 staff at the national institutions. Ten per cent of the staff at the national institutions have lost their jobs since this government was elected. When you broaden it out to a number of other national organisations, we are looking at one in eight, or 12 per cent of people, who have lost their jobs and whose families have been affected as a result of job cuts under this government.

As I said, that means we have hundreds and hundreds fewer people looking after our national collection: the Brett Whiteleys, the Margaret Prestons and the much-derided—recently by one senator—and much-loved *Blue Poles* by Jackson Pollock, a definite and iconic piece in his life's work. The Americans are very envious that we have that piece in Australia. Despite the fact that it was lambasted when the late, great Gough Whitlam bought it, that piece is one of Jackson Pollock's most iconic works, if not his most iconic work. But with hundreds and hundreds fewer people looking after those works now, what does it mean
for their conservation and their preservation and for their ability to tell our national story in the future?

Phar Lap's heart is at the National Museum. Since the government was elected there are five fewer people at the National Museum looking after the collection, including Phar Lap's heart, which I remember seeing is a child at the National Museum of Victoria. Now it has come up to our great national capital.

I know a number of people outside Canberra would say, 'Why should I care? These are Canberra institutions; these are Canberra jobs. This has no impact on me.' I would say to them: 'This does have a significant impact on you and will have on your children and their children. It will have a significant impact on future generations.' It has a significant impact because the fewer the people who are conserving, preserving and curating our national collection, the greater the potential for that collection to be killed. There is significant potential that the collection will not be able to tell our national story to future generations. There is significant potential that the collection will not be able to tell our national story to future generations. There is significant potential for the National Library to be no longer able to tell our national story, for the National Gallery to be no longer able to tell our national story through art and for the War Memorial to be no longer able to tell our story about the great sacrifices that have been made to defend our nation in the name of democracy and peace. It means that the story about our democracy at Old Parliament House could be affected by the job cuts. The story of our culture that is so brilliantly told at the National Museum could be affected by these job cuts. The National Film and Sound Archive has had significant job cuts—47 since this government was elected. The Film and Sound Archive has the first edition of Ned Kelly, that crazy black and white thing that we have all seen snippets of. It has that in its collection. That could potentially be affected by these job cuts.

That is why I say this is not just a Canberra story. Canberra is our nation's capital. Canberra draws a thread through every state and territory to our nation and it tells our national story. It is also the seat of our great democracy. I say to everyone in Australia: you do need to take notice of this. You do need to fight these cuts to these national institutions, because they are affecting your story, your nation's capital, your national collection, your national literature, your national film, your national war memorial and your national sports institutions. The cuts are affecting your story.

I encourage all Australians to take an interest in this. They should write to their local member and let them know that we can no longer sustain these cuts to our national institutions and our national collection. Everyone knows that national institutions are lean organisations. Everyone knows that arts institutions, be they in regional Australia or in the major cities in Australia, are pretty mean and lean outfits. We are not cutting into flesh with these cuts. We are not cutting into bone with these cuts. We are cutting into vital organs with these cuts, and it is affecting our national story. In my view, these cuts have the potential to kill or have a significant impact on our national story.

So I say again to all Australians: write to your local member and let them know that we can no longer sustain these cuts. Enough is enough. You do not want our national story killed. You do not want our national collection affected anymore; you do not want it compromised anymore. Because you cannot preserve a national collection of art, of literature, of film, of war artefacts, of sporting icons and of cultural icons if you do not have the skilled experts to do so.
As I said, we have people at the National Gallery who have been in these jobs for decades. They have spent decades building up those skills. They are rare beasts in Australia. These are people we should be valuing. We should not be telling them on Friday afternoon that—after all their decades of service to our nation, to our democracy, to our national story—essentially, 'Your job on Monday is gone'. They deserve more dignity than this. They deserve more respect than this. You are 45-years-old; you are 55-years-old; you have a very highly specialised skill. That is what those 20 people at the National Gallery had to face a few weeks ago.

This is not just a unique story to the National Gallery. These are stories that have been played out since 2013, when this Liberal government was elected. These stories have played out around kitchen tables and in living rooms, in tearful scenes in carparks. These stories have played out right across Canberra for the last four years. All these experts and all these highly skilled staff—in our National Archives, in our National Film And Sound Archive and in the National Library, these stories have played out right across our national institutions, right across Canberra. That is why I call on an end to this.

Morale is at rock bottom in many of our national institutions. They are trying to make do. They are trying to do their job; to preserve, to protect, to curate, to continue to tell our national story. They are doing their best to do that, but they are doing it with very limited resources, and those resources are becoming fewer and fewer.

So I say to all Australians: this is your nation's capital; these are your national institutions. If you value them, if you want your grandchildren to see Phar Lap's heart, if you want your grandchildren to see the first edition of Blinky Bill or the first edition of The Magic Pudding, if you want your grandchildren to see the first edition of Ned Kelly—if you want your grandchildren to stand in the entry foyer of the National Gallery of Australia and see those fabulous iconic Indigenous pieces that have been collected over the years, highly treasured and much loved by Canberrans and all Australians who go into that foyer in the National Gallery—then I encourage you to write to your local member and tell them enough is enough. We can no longer afford these cuts. We can no longer sustain these cuts. It is killing our national story.

We are cutting not into flesh; we are cutting not into bone; we are cutting into vital organs. And, once you start doing that, you have the potential for things to end, for our national story to be killed. So, please, Australians, write to your local member and let them know enough is enough.

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (17:13): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and congratulations on your appointment as Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms McGOWAN: It is lovely to have you here. In speaking in support of the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2016-2017, I would like to pay particular attention to the impacts on rural and regional Australia. In opening my comments, I would also like to welcome to the parliament and to this chamber two wonderful women from my electorate, Francine and Polly. Thanks for coming. Thanks for your work. I really appreciate your contribution to my office as volunteers, but particularly the work you do in your own communities to make them a safe place. So thank you for being here.
Tonight I want to put a challenge to the government. I want to put a challenge to the Prime Minister. During the campaign, he was very proud and very loud in telling the people of Australia that the Liberal and National Parties have a plan for jobs and growth. I am really pleased to hear it. But there is a bit of the plan that really confuses me. When I worked through all the publicity—and I read the detail really closely—I said, 'But where's the plan for rural and regional Australia in the plan for jobs and growth?' I got further into it. In my electorate of Indi during the campaign, there was a National Party candidate standing. I went to his material to see what he was standing for. What was the National Party saying about jobs and growth in rural and regional Australia?

It almost made me cry with frustration. There was nothing there about rural and regional Australia. There was nothing there. I could not find the term mentioned once. There was no regional development plan and no sense of what the vision was for rural and regional Australia.

The National Party had a statement, 'Our Plan for a Strong New Economy.' I went onto the web page and had a really good look. Again, there was not a single mention of rural and regional Australia in their subsections about jobs and families. It was not that they were talking about the city either. It was this nondescript sense of all of Australia being the same. There was some sense that, by just using the words, things would work. All of us know that that is not the case for rural and regional Australia.

There was one thing on the National Party web page that I looked at that was called 'Supporting Australia's Farmers and Exporters.' I had a closer look and thought, 'Maybe this is where I will find out about regional development.' But no, it was not there. It was about agriculture, which I have to say I was really pleased to see. But there was no sense at all that agriculture exists within a context of community, a context of small business and a context of education and all the services we need. It just was not there. Similarly with small business, I went on there and thought, 'What is the government going to do about small business in rural and regional Australia?' Zilch, nada, nothing.

In my role tonight, as a member for rural and regional Australia, I want to really speak up for us. I want to talk about the role of the budget as one of the key policy documents for this government to pay attention to rural and regional Australia. As taxpayers in rural and regional Australia, we want to see our dollars coming back to us—not just as trickle-down or by the way. We want to see services come to our community that address our needs, that are specifically designed for the group of people who live in the country, because we all know, as you do, Mr Deputy Speaker Buchholz, that it is different to the city. What I want to say tonight is that, sadly, when I see the budget papers, I see no vision for rural and regional Australia. I think there is an assumption that one size will fit everything. There is an assumption that trickle-down might work. There is maybe even an assumption that a rising tide lifts all boats. If we know anything about rural and regional Australia, we know it just does not happen.

What I wanted to say tonight was that it is not that the government do not know how to do it. If we look closely at some of the government's other programs, we can see that they do know how to plan and they do know how to do sectoral planning. One of the really good examples of this is the northern Australian plan. It shows clearly that the government, when they put their mind to it, can actually do whole-of-region, integrated, strategic, long-term
sustainable development. I love reading the northern Australian plan, but every time I see it, I think, 'But what about the rest of us? What about north-east Victoria? What about southern New South Wales? What about a strategic approach to how our community is going to reach its potential?'

The second example I see when I read the government's papers about its ability to plan—and I just love this example—is the work it has done on developing its national defence plan. I looked at that document and I thought, 'Ah, here the plan is.' I just love listening to the Prime Minister speak about it. The Prime Minister said, 'We want to use defence industries to grow innovation, to grow creativity, to grow jobs, to grow our exports, and we will wrap it all together around a 20-year, multimillion-dollar defence plan.' I think, 'Great, but why can't we take that logic and that thinking to rural and regional Australia? Why can't we take that thinking to agriculture and all the surrounding bits of agribusiness? Why can't we have our budget papers do that sort of thinking for us?' That is the major point that I want to make tonight. I want to really set on the agenda that, over the next three years, I am going to be working with the government about putting rural and regional Australia at the front. I am going to be saying to the government, 'Let's talk about infrastructure. Let's talk about how the money is invested in rural and regional Australia to do what we need to do.'

I am going to talk about the National Stronger Regions Fund. That is where the main money is spent at the moment. I looked at the national regional funding program, and it is good with what it does, but clearly there is not nearly enough money there. The actual applications far outweigh the government's ability to fund it, so you get caught in this terrible competitive tension—of politics, of demand, of a good submission—that is not based on need and is not based on a strategic approach to advance the national economy. I know the minister is going to be looking at that program to come up with something different, but I am saying that you cannot have a plan for spending if you have not got a national vision. It is not much good saying, 'We'll give this money for this and give this money for that,' if it does not fit into a whole. I think that whole budget process lacks vision. It lacks clarity about what we are trying to achieve.

When I am talking about this I go and look at the budget papers and I say, 'Where could we get some better input into this?' My research has shown me that there is a process in the cabinet submission process, which reads:

A Cabinet Submission that has a positive or negative impact on Australia's regions must include a Regional Australia Impact Statement (RAIS). The role of the RAIS is to provide a complete and accurate assessment of the effects (positive or negative) that a policy proposal will have on regional Australia. The RAIS helps to ensure that regional impacts are made visible to Cabinet Ministers, to inform their decision making.

Where the regional impacts of the policy proposal are significant, they should be analysed in the body of the Cabinet Submission and summarised in the RAIS, including references to the relevant sections of the Cabinet Submission.

The idea is there, but I think it fails in its implementation. To follow this through a little bit, a question was asked of the Attorney-General, Senator Brandis, in Senate estimates in 2015. He was asked if a cabinet impact statement had been prepared by a certain program—in this case it was the Australia Council. He said, 'No, that is not the way the budget process works.' This suggests to me that regional impact statements may be a part of cabinet process but they are
not part of budget process. That is a problem. Cabinet may be thinking about rural and regional Australia, but when we come to do the budget it is not there.

What is the answer to this? What hope have we got to get the budget process thinking about those of us who live in the regions—those who live in rural areas and those who live in more isolated areas? It seems to me that one of the things we could do is call on the government to have these budget impact statements made public twice a year—with the budget and also with the mid-year economic report. In 2014 I introduced into parliament a private member's bill calling on the government to do this. It was the Charter of Budget Honesty Amendment (Regional Australia Statements) Bill. I think I am going to have to reintroduce it in this session of parliament because, clearly, in all of the words of the Prime Minister, in all the words of the minister and in all the words of the whole election campaign, there was no sense at all that anybody in the government actually gets that rural and regional Australia is different from the cities. We have to design our policy and our funding processes to meet the needs.

But it is not enough just to do the design and to do the funding. I know that you know, Mr Deputy Speaker Buchholz, that government can put a whole lot of money into something and it makes absolutely no difference at all. What we have to do is say, 'Here's the intended outcomes that we want.' Then we have to measure the outcomes and go, 'Yes, here's the planning, here's the budget, here's the delivery mechanism, here's the outcomes we want and here, really importantly, is the review mechanism,' so we can go back and say, 'Yes, that money worked. We've solved that problem, but next time we've got to do XYZ.' I just do not see that process when government makes its budget submissions, so of course we do not get the outcome we want, because it is not designed into the process that we are looking for.

In bringing my comments to a close tonight, I put a challenge up there, not only to the public service that advises the government—from PM&C to the ag department, the Department of Regional Development and the Minister for Infrastructure—but to the whole of the parliament. We should be saying, 'Here's the outcome we want.' We should not just be saying, 'Here's money to be spent.' And we need to match the outcome we want against our vision of what we are trying to achieve for the nation.

In bringing my comments to a close, I want to put on record my enormous disappointment in the National Stronger Regions Fund program and its failure to fund major infrastructure in my electorate. I wonder how and where the money is going to come from without a commitment by the government to actually fund infrastructure in regional Australia. Wodonga council's Baranduda Fields sporting complex is a great initiative, it is a great idea and it really needs to be funded. The Mount Buller-Mount Stirling water storage project is, again, really important infrastructure that really needs to be funded. The tourism links project that links Mount Buller Resort, Mansfield and the Alpine National Park is really important infrastructure that must be funded. The Wangaratta council's Wangaratta aquatics plan is to fund an aquatics centre in Wangaratta that creates a regional centre of excellence around swimming for all north-east Victoria. It is obviously needed and is well supported. It cannot be done by the local council—we just do not have the money—but how can it be done nationally? How can we get the funding in the system to build the infrastructure we need? I can only see it happening by government making a commitment to actually do for rural and regional Australia what needs to be done.
In setting up an agenda for my work in the next three years, I call on the government to actually stand up for rural and regional Australia, particularly for the Nationals to do something about regional policy. How can they have a web page that does not talk about regional Australia? How can they have a web page that does not talk about regional education? How can they have a web page that does not talk about regional health? How can they have a web page that actually does not talk about how it all comes together? It is so lacking. To my Nationals colleagues in particular: have courage, have a vision, develop some policies, have some deliverables and then work on some outcomes.

My hope is that in 50 year's time from having this discussion, we can look back and see that we actually have a balanced development agenda in Australia, that we have ended this huge investment in the infrastructure of the cities. And that we have said as a nation, 'We have got a lot of country so we need to have some decentralisation; some large regional hubs; we need to have really good transport linking them; we need really good internet connecting us up; we need really good health facilities, education facilities, quality first-class facilities and they happen to be in the country.'

I am hoping that my speech tonight is the beginning of that sense of turning around the idea that all Australia is is an urban fringe and that the jobs and growth plan is for the urbanites; we need it for the whole country. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight, and I look forward to coming into this place often and developing these ideas further.

Ms CLAYDON (Newcastle) (17:27): I am very pleased to rise this evening to speak on the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2016-17. Elections and governments are indeed all about choices, and you can tell a lot about a government's priorities by the way it sets its budget and the choices it makes. I wish tonight in my contribution to this debate to reflect on some of the challenges that I see before the current parliament. But before doing so, I would like to spend a moment reflecting on something that I think is a quite worrying aspect with regards to the current gender representation in the Australian parliament. I think that of the 150 members elected into the lower house, the House of Representatives, during the last election, we now just have 43 women—that is, less than one-third. Indeed in the other house, there are just 30 women out of the total of 76 senators. Overall that means that this 45th Parliament is comprised of just 32 per cent of women. In a society that is pretty evenly split fifty-fifty, this parliament is clearly not being reflective of the communities that we represent.

From the major party perspective, Labor, while it is not perfect, certainly continues to set the example in this regard—an example that the coalition government really should take heed of and learn some lessons from. Labor's overall representation of women is now 44 per cent. That is well above the parliamentary average and exceeds the current targets on gender inequality that we set for ourselves within the Labor Party. I am very thankful that the Labor Party chose at our national conference last year to extend that quota through to 50 per cent.

Our increase in women representatives has been steady over the last two decades since those targets and quotas were first introduced. They were introduced quite deliberately to address the issue of gender representation gaps.

Whilst Labor sets targets, and indeed meets and continues to exceed those targets, the coalition continues to really struggle to make very significant progress on this front at all. In this parliament the coalition is represented by just 21 women out of 106 members and senators—that is 19 per cent of their representation. Less than one in five members and
senators are women. When John Howard was first elected Prime Minister, some 20 years ago, there were more women in the Liberal Party ranks than there are today. The Liberal Party's steadfast objection to the notion of quotas and targets for women is very telling. We often hear their argument that promotion should always be based on merit, but that clearly flies in the face of some other conservative principles that are followed in this place. I would suggest that that is certainly the case with regard to Liberal-National representation on the front bench, which once described by John Howard, and reinforced recently by the Deputy Prime Minister, I understand, being calculated on the basis of the iron laws of arithmetic.

It seems like a fairly simple argument, as I understand it. The higher the percentage of Nationals who are elected into coalition government, the more positions of power they are allocated. That is, regardless of any discussions around capability, experience or, dare I say, merit, there would always be a certain number of Nationals on the front bench based on those numbers. I ask: if this simple arithmetic is accepted when it comes to coalition membership and the breakdown of party positions, why can it not be applied when it comes to women on the front bench or more broadly in the preselection of candidates in winning seats? As journalist, academic and formal Liberal staffer Peter van Onselen observed when evaluating the situation:

The government's failure to attract, preselect and promote women has become a national embarrassment.

I agree.

Let me take some moments now to reflect on what I think are some of the additional challenges that sit before the 45th Parliament. Over the term of this parliament there will be many challenges, and some of those can be and have been foretold. Others will, I anticipate, emerge over the coming weeks and months. I would like to reflect on some of those now. During the election campaign we were often asked why we wanted to become members of parliament, why we work late nights, why we give up weekends, friends, hobbies, a sense of privacy—all those things—to spend 20-odd weeks a year in Canberra and every spare moment living and breathing politics. The major driver for me is the ongoing struggle around equality and how we address what has been a widening gap in inequality in Australia. I have spent much of my life fighting discrimination in all its forms, and this is how I view most issues. This is the prism through which I view most issues. Man, woman, heterosexual, gay, Indigenous, non-Indigenous, born here into wealth and success, born into poverty or struggle, disabled or abled, it should not matter and it must not matter. In our work in this place, we must focus on establishing legislation that ensures equality for all, legislation that does not discriminate. That struggle for equality will be front and centre of this parliament—gender representation in this place, as I have just outlined, but also more broadly around a lot of other issues to do with representation.

The issue at the forefront of all our minds right now is marriage equality. When last in government, Labor changed 85 separate pieces of legislation to remove discrimination against gay men, lesbians and same-sex couples. Regrettably, there was one major piece of unfinished business, and that was this issue of marriage equality. It certainly is time for marriage equality in Australia. Indeed, it is long overdue. I am especially proud of our party's stance today against supporting a hurtful and divisive plebiscite in our nation. I would like to share with the House today a message I received earlier in the day from a dear friend and colleague and
his partner, who thanked the Labor Party and, indeed, me as their representative here in the Australian parliament for not supporting the plebiscite and not proceeding with a bill that they thought would subject them to having their relationship litigated publicly. That is one of very many messages I have received today from people who are grateful to be spared—or hoping that they will be spared—from what might be a very hurtful and divisive debate in the Australian body politic.

It is, however, certainly time for marriage equality in Australia. It is time that we just got this done and brought the Australian parliament into line with the Australian community and into the 21st century. It is time we all stood up for respect of love in all its forms in Australia. Recent analysis of the new parliament identifies that, if a conscience vote was granted on marriage equality today, it would pass both houses of parliament. The Prime Minister should scrap his plans for an expensive, divisive, non-binding plebiscite and have a vote in this parliament today. We are elected to make decisions and we should do so on marriage equality. There was not a plebiscite when John Howard changed the Marriage Act to discriminate against same-sex couples back in 2004 and we do not need a plebiscite now to right this discriminatory law on our statute books.

The other matter that is certainly worrying for many Novocastrians and the people I represent in the good electorate of Newcastle is access to affordable quality health care. Time and time again, the Liberal Party—I suggest dominated by a few in the far Right—has shown its ideological opposition to Medicare. Since the days of Whitlam's Medibank, the Liberals have always railed against the principles of universal health care. Whether in the form of privatisation, a co-payment, cuts to bulk-billing or the Medicare freeze, the Abbott-Turnbull approach to health care has consistently been characterised by attempts to undermine the universality of our health care system. Medicare is at the centre of the Australian social contract. People love it, they are proud of it and they rely on it. Cost already deters one in 12 Australians from seeing a specialist, and this is only set to increase as this government creates new up-front expenses for vital services such as blood tests and X-rays. This government spent its first three years trying to push the price of health care back onto Australian families and then has the gall to call us deceitful when we pull it up for it. I mean, give me a break. The government must heed the calls of the AMA, Labor and others to remove the ongoing Medicare rebate freeze. Price hikes to prescription medicines and pathology costs should be abandoned, and the hospital funding crisis faced following the Abbott-Hockey 2014 funding cuts needs to be addressed.

One of the other issues that continues to get bandied around when I think about trying to take a stand on issues of equality and discrimination is section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act, which Labor introduced—more than two decades ago now—to protect against offence, insult, humiliation and intimidation based on race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin. Section 18C has served Australia well and protected our rich, vibrant and successful multicultural society. There are, however, some members in this place who are intent on seeing 18C watered down, arguing it should be amended or indeed repealed altogether. I call on the Prime Minister to show some strength here to ensure that these calls for repealing 18C are not allowed to rear their ugly head again. Every Australian deserves the right to live free from racial and ethnic vilification. The only outcome from repealing 18C of
the Racial Discrimination Act would be more hate speech, and this is an unacceptable premise for any civil society. Any plans to repeal 18C should be permanently shelved.

One of the other issues that certainly is at the forefront of my thinking, and one of the many challenges for people in my communities in the electorate of Newcastle, is housing affordability. The provision of safe, affordable housing is a basic human right and the absence of such becomes a huge cost for all our communities.

_A division having been called in the House of Representatives—_

_Sitting suspended from 17:42 to 17:58_

Ms CLAYDON: The issues of housing stress and homelessness are certainly varied and complex. Whilst no government gets to resolve all the issues being experienced by people in our communities, leadership, adequate policy and funding must be delivered by the Commonwealth as a solid platform to address these challenges.

Finally, I would like to touch on another area of concern—that is, the cuts to community legal centres. The flow-on effects of these cuts and the further 30 per cent cuts that the community legal centres will face in 2017 are having massive impacts in my communities. They are also hurting their women's services and shelters, the disability advocacy groups and the homelessness services because they are a very complex ecosystem in our community. I urge the government to match Labor's commitment of $43 million in to these services over the next three years. We need ongoing access to justice for the vulnerable people in our communities.

Mrs ELLIOT (Richmond) (17:59): On this side of the House, Labor have said we will support the appropriation bills, although we have raised many issues and concerns about various government policies. Today, I intend to also raise my concerns, particularly in the context of the election. I start by saying what an honour it is to have been re-elected as the member for Richmond. I would like to thank all of my constituents. It is a real privilege to serve in our federal parliament and represent their interests here. Richmond is a remarkable and fantastic electorate. It is a very diverse electorate with many people from different backgrounds—something we should always acknowledge and always celebrate. It is the most beautiful part of Australia and a unique area.

In terms of the election, it really is an honour to have been returned with an increased majority. As I have said to many locals, whether you voted for me or not, my door is always open to help anyone with any issues they may have. I thank all of those who assisted with the campaign. This election was essentially a comparison, if you like, between the Liberal-National Party, which was looking after big business and multimillionaires, and the Labor Party, which was looking after everyday people. That was really highlighted in my electorate and was certainly reflected in the comments that people were making to me about the election. In terms of the election itself, there were a variety of issues that were brought up, particularly saving Medicare—

_A division having been called in the House of Representatives—_

_Sitting suspended from 18:01 to 18:30_

_The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hogan):_ It being 6.30, the debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 192B. The debate is adjourned and the resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for the next sitting.
GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Consideration resumed of the motion:
That grievances be noted.

Broadband

Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (18:30): Deputy Speaker, I feel aggrieved. Many residents in the electorate of Blair, reaching through most of Ipswich and all of the Somerset region of south-east Queensland, also feel aggrieved in terms of telecommunications. They were promised fast broadband and an affordable NBN by the Abbott Turnbull government and it has not delivered. The former Prime Minister, the member Warringah, and the current Prime Minister, the member for Wentworth, promised in April 2013:
Under the Coalition’s NBN all premises will have access to download speeds 25mbps to 100mbps by the end of 2016.

All premises by the end of 2016—well, that is not going to happen. In fact, in my electorate office this morning, my staff could only achieve a download speed of 3.4 megabits per second. I think we can agree that, in spite of it just being over three months away, the government has no way of fulfilling that promise—another broken promise by the Abbott Turnbull government. We have come to expect failure in relation to the NBN and telecommunications. It is no wonder telecommunications and stakeholders are in uproar because this Prime Minister was the former Minister for Communications.

The so-called NBN network remains hit and miss. Why? This government was too arrogant to continue Labor's fibre-to-the-premises broadband rollout. Instead, they took us back in time, to ancient days technologically, by trying to convince the country that fibre and copper could work just as well and for a lot less money. What we have instead is not an NBN but a multitechnology mess—or Malcolm Turnbull's mess, an MTM. The cost has skyrocketed. The pace of rollout has slowed to lower than the download speeds that most Australians would expect and have in their own homes. NBN Co has confirmed what we all knew, that the HFC network was a lemon. It paid $800 million for the Optus HFC network, and when the now Prime Minister was the Minister for Communications, he travelled the country lecturing anyone who had inadvertently caught his eye of the virtues of this multitechnology mess.

They spent over $1 billion on maintaining the old copper network and now they have ditched it for—wait—fibre optic cable. Five months earlier, the current Minister for Communications was heralding this fibre-to-the-distribution point or fibre to the kerb as fantasy fibre. But those 700,000 customers connected to the Optus HFC network are now going to have fibre to the kerb. In October 2014, the now Prime Minister told parliament one of the biggest changes he was making in relation to the NBN would be upgrading the HFC network to ensure that everyone gets very fast broadband but at a much lower cost. Now they have junked it. Those of us on the sensible side of this place understand that decent broadband is essential for conducting business in 2016. It is essential for communicating and staying in touch with the fast-paced world in which we live. It is necessary for young people, studying, researching and learning. It is critical for job seekers. It helps people be connected and reduces social isolation. It allows technological advances to support those people with disability, older Australians and those living with dementia. The internet of things is
providing incredible opportunities for those people living with security, dignity and opportunity problems.

We are a nation of transition, that is why Labor in government invested in the largest piece of nation-building infrastructure ever—a National Broadband Network. The Prime Minister's second-rate NBN has divided communities in my electorate. There are suburbs where, on one side of the street, people have Labor's NBN, and across the same road there are residents who rely on the copper network of the last century—a multitechnology mess. Essentially, we have digital divisions in streets, suburbs, regions and country areas in my electorate.

Looking at the rollout plan, large chunks of my electorate will remain neglected. They are not slated for anything in the near future. The government, in its arrogance, dumped Labor's plan to roll out fibre to the premises. The cost is double. Instead of being $29.5 billion as the coalition promised in opposition, this government has seen a massive blowout in projected costs, to about $56 billion. They talk about a budget emergency—it is one they have created through their own mismanagement. This second-rate broadband is taking twice as long to build, and it will not be done by the end of 2016—that is for sure. I have seen this nation drop from 30th to 60th in the world in internet speed rankings. We are not keeping up as a country.

We know that fast broadband will help create jobs, and the MTM is preventing businesses in Blair from transitioning to the future economy. Reliable broadband is not a luxury in Blair, where devastating floods in 2011 and 2013 cut off individuals and communities for weeks at a time. Floodwaters have tormented the old copper network in remote areas of my electorate, the northern areas of the Somerset and places like Moore, Linville and Toogoolawah, for example.

This brings me to a related area of telecommunications. In February this year, I wrote to the Minister for Communications, Senator Fifield, about the Mobile Black Spot Program. While I was pleased to see funding allocated to residents living in Moore and the Somerset Dam, I was extremely disappointed that this vital technology upgrade was not made a priority. I visit these communities regularly and I know from firsthand experience the dearth of mobile coverage. Most parts of Moore and the Somerset Dam simply have no mobile reception. It is not poor or unreliable; it does not exist. In 2016, just a couple of hours from Ipswich, residents cannot make mobile calls or send text messages. It means that parents cannot contact children. In particular, these areas that I mention are only about an hour or an hour and a half away from Ipswich. Drivers on isolated roads cannot call for roadside assistance if they get into trouble. During times of natural disaster, residents cannot contact loved ones, let alone emergency services. In Moore and Linville during the 2011 floods, individual residents went door to door checking on the elderly and making sure prescriptions were filled. They then had to make their way to the fire station to radio for supplies, assistance and medications. You see, the copper landline had been washed away, and mobile service was non-existent. You can imagine how disappointed I was as the local member that neither Moore nor the Somerset Dam had made it in the first six-month rollout schedule for black spot funding. It could be another 2½ years before these isolated communities see mobile coverage. It is unacceptable. By then the Mobile Black Spot Program will have been another failure, something overpromised and underdelivered on. This government's independent auditors slammed this program, claiming it was 'beset by weaknesses and provided poor value for money.'
Many of those opposite campaigned on the back of this program in 2013 and in 2016, claiming a Turnbull government was going to fix the mobile black spots and bring mobile coverage to the regions. What happened was that 80 per cent of funding went to coalition electorates and just seven per cent went to Labor electorates. It is worse than pork-barrelling.

The Australian National Audit Office found that one in five mobile phone towers funded in the first round provided little or no new mobile coverage. Funds were used to help win campaigns—if I might put it like that—but delivered nothing, in effect. The program was clearly not aimed at improving mobile coverage in the bush or regions. It was about helping coalition candidates win seats. Even then, they could not be delivered.

I am aggrieved. In the second half of 2016, most residents in my electorate of Blair will not have access to world-class broadband. Worse than that, they cannot access mobile telecommunications services and phone coverage—no broadband, no mobile phone coverage and up to two or three hours away from Brisbane. How do those people living in Ipswich and the Somerset region compete in a global economy?

There are young people in my electorate who do not have the opportunities that the member for Wentworth, the Prime Minister, has for the young people in his electorate. Young people in the regions, older people in rural communities, families in small regional towns—they are the ones who have been failed by the government's failure in telecommunications.

It is time this government had a look at itself in relation to this area. We have an 11 per cent gap in digital inclusion between city and regional Australia, and that is on top of the lower wages earned by those living in regional Australia. Digital divide has a snowballing effect—those with the best access to technology and telecommunications can compete, stay up to date and, potentially, earn more. Those opposite call themselves the voice of regional Australia, but this government's second-rate broadband, the MTM, and its blackspot blunders have widened the digital divide. They have to do far better, and it is about time they did better in terms of telecommunications for the people of Blair.

Forced Marriage

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell—Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (18:40): I rise today to raise the very important issue and the ongoing challenge posed by forced marriages in Australia and, in particular, forced marriages relating to children in our community. The Australian government is committed to working with civil society and states and territories to combat forced marriage, and to protect and support the victims of this very challenging issue.

Anecdotally, we are seeing that reports continue to be raised by communities, by states and by state ministers for the protection of children which show that, while there may not be a huge number of cases being presented, we are seeing a greater prevalence due to the laws that the Australian government has put into place. For the benefit of the House, I will remind the House that the Australian government criminalised forced marriage in March 2013. This was to send a clear message that this practice is completely unacceptable in Australia. Australia's forced marriage offences cover registered relationships as well as those formed by cultural or religious ceremonies, and apply regardless of the age of the victim.

The forced marriage offences carry a maximum penalty of nine years imprisonment, and in 2015 the Australian government amended the forced marriage offences to ensure that children
under the age of 16 are presumed unable to consent to marriage due to their age—also a long overdue change. To date there have been no prosecutions for forced marriage offences in Australia, and the Department of Immigration and Border Protection contributes to Australia's whole-of-government response to human trafficking, including forced marriage, by administering the Human Trafficking Visa Framework.

The reason I raise this today is that we are seeing good work being done by communities, by teachers, by health professionals and by people engaged in this space. This work is about awareness and ensuring that those people, even those from recently arrived migrant communities, people with different cultural backgrounds and people who have come from countries where forced marriage is lawful—and there are hundreds of countries in which these arrangements are lawful—understand that this is unlawful in Australia, against our culture and traditions and against our law for people to force other people to marry, or to force children to marry.

Awareness is perhaps one of the most important things to continue actively working on with the community. It was really good to see the Minister for Justice, in November 2015, launch My Blue Sky—Australia's first comprehensive website dedicated purely to preventing and addressing forced marriage. It provides resources for service providers and for people in or at risk of forced marriage and offers free legal advice, including via text and email, understanding the very difficult challenges that are posed by this serious issue in different cultures and to people from different backgrounds. My Blue Sky was developed by Anti-Slavery Australia using Commonwealth funding awarded by the Minister for Justice. Also during 2014-15, funding was given to many different communities for human rights and different anti-trafficking organisations to raise awareness of forced marriage.

I can record that this is having an impact in accordance with the Australian government's framework and with the forced marriage community packs that have been sent out in consultation with civil society organisations. From 2014 and 2015 the variety of materials—the safety plans, the booklets, the comprehensive information and the packs that are available through the Attorney-General's Department in the different languages of all the different backgrounds that are relevant—has also had a great impact. On the other side of this awareness issue, it is also very important to note that during 2015 the Attorney-General's Department, the Australian Federal Police and Anti-Slavery Australia held a series of workshops in each state and territory and every capital city to raise awareness of forced marriage. The workshops are aimed at raising awareness of forced marriage issues including indicators and referral pathways among frontline officers and service providers in both civil and government organisations. This is having an impact and it is leading to more identifications of forced marriages and potential forced marriages within Australia, which I am sure all members will agree is a serious sign.

At the front lines of this, we are seeing our community service ministers in our states raising the extent of forced marriages involving children. Indeed, the Minister for Family and Community Services in New South Wales raised, in particular, the extent of children in New South Wales in forced marriages that they are becoming aware of and the availability of the appropriate support services. Minister Hazzard has indicated that about 52 per cent of the forced marriage cases dealt with by the New South Wales Department of Family and Community Services have involved girls under the age of 15 and that a number of refuges in
New South Wales are housing child victims of forced marriage—a completely unacceptable situation. While the Australian government can sometimes find it difficult to verify forced marriage statistics that are produced by certain departments due to the complexities involved in these cases, I think it is vital that we understand that the majority of forced marriage referrals that are received relate to teenage girls, young girls and vulnerable girls who are Australian citizens and residents. Obviously more coordinated action between the Commonwealth and the states is required. Australian governments of all persuasions have now been committed to this process for the last 3½ years. It is a process which we need to continue. Indeed, the Australian government also confirms its ongoing commitment to this process of working in a more coordinated way with the states to identify a clearer picture of the extent to which these incidences are occurring.

I want to particularly note a journalist, Marina Freri from the ABC, who on Monday 26 September drew this issue into the public domain—again, to help raise awareness. She put together an excellent, in-depth program about some of the cultural practices going on in Sydney and raised the concerns of the New South Wales state government as indicated by Minister Hazzard. Her report is very comprehensive and I recommend it to members of the House. It delves into the different agencies that deal with this issue—the Red Cross and all of the frontline people, including teachers. She has gathered a series of interviews and refers to points from some academics, such as people who work with Anti-Slavery Australia. The program also included some significant work that she did in dealing with people who have become aware of these cases and in some cases have been involved in them. This kind of activism by journalists is absolutely necessary in this field and we do need to continue to ensure that awareness is being promoted not only by all levels of government—all of our anti-trafficking and anti-slavery organisations, our law enforcement agencies and our family and community service agencies—but also through the media and through our cultural awareness that we can promote through the media.

We need to understand that issues like this can be very difficult to locate and define, and we have to ensure that we address them at the right time. I think members here will understand that while we have come up with the right legal framework and the right definition under the Commonwealth Criminal Code in dealing with this—the Australian government has done its bit in defining it in law and taking a strident approach in working with criminal agencies—we have to recognise that we have to tackle this issue at all levels. We have to understand that people accept in Australia that it is not just criminal but it is against Australian community standards for anyone to be forced into marriage for any reason and that Australian citizen children are not to be sent offshore in forced marriage arrangements. I look forward to working with states and territories in the role that I serve in as Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection.

The Australian government, of course, provides visas for victims who are in difficult situations—who are here in Australia and who may be the potential victims of forced trafficking and forced marriage arrangements. I continue to be open to any solution to help assist the community make sure that people who have come from different countries with different standards and different practices understand that, under Australian law and under Australian standards, forced marriage—and forced marriage, in particular, of children and vulnerable children—is completely illegal and unacceptable. I commend the approach that
Minister Hazzard has taken in raising this with the Commonwealth. I certainly look forward to other states helping the Commonwealth in identifying these practices and working with our whole-of-government systems, our education systems, our family and community service systems and our frontline workers to ensure that awareness is high, that they work not only to ensure that we interdict, where possible, any of these arrangements but also with any people that have come from other cultures so they understand that, from an Australian cultural standpoint and from an Australian legal standpoint, forced marriage is illegal and unacceptable and the forced marriage of children in particular is illegal and unacceptable.

Building and Construction Industry

Mr PERRETT (Moreton—Opposition Whip) (18:50): Can I give a big hello to the Bowen Hills branch of the Australian Labor Party, who are listening in tonight. I know the members of the branch, like many other people, saw just over five months ago Prime Minister Turnbull invoke that rarely used power contained in section 5 of the Constitution when he asked the Governor-General to recall parliament for an extra three sitting weeks, an extraordinary request. Other than for a general election, section 5 has only been invoked on four occasions since 1961—two were so the Queen could open new sessions of parliament, one was on the death of Prime Minister Harold Holt and the fourth was an unusual situation when Prime Minister John Gorton did not have this government's program fully prepared for their first sitting after the 1969 election.

The reason given by Prime Minister Turnbull in March to warrant such an unusual request was so that parliament be recalled to give consideration to two 'important parcels of industrial legislation'. Those pieces of legislation were the ABCC bill and the registered organisations bill. Parliament was recalled on Monday 18 April for a period of three weeks. The two bills were again put before the parliament and both were again rejected by the Senate. Prime Minister Turnbull then advised the Governor-General to exercise his power under section 67 of the Constitution to dissolve both houses of parliament simultaneously to enable an election of both houses—and didn't that work out well! Again, it is not a power often invoked. This was only the seventh time since Federation it has been used and, strangely, after such a dramatic prelude to the election being called, there was barely a discussion by the coalition about either the ABCC bill or the registered organisation bill during the election. Post-election, we had Prime Minister Turnbull with the scarce majority of one in the House of Reps, a reduced number in the Senate and an increased crossbench.

The ABCC bill will undoubtedly be again put before parliament, a bill originally introduced in 2005. Labor opposed its introduction then and opposes it again. The ABCC, implemented by the Howard government, said to be a response to recommendations of the $60 million Cole royal commission, the commission established by the Howard government to investigate the building and construction industry, supposedly a 'hotbed of intimidation', 'lawlessness', 'thuggery' and 'violence' at the time—they are quotes. Curiously, not one criminal prosecution, not even a finding of guilt resulted from that royal commission. As a point of difference, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, commenced under Prime Minister Gillard, has made over 1,700 referrals to authorities so far.

Let's revisit the period after the ABCC was introduced in 2005. Building industry fatalities jumped 95 per cent between 2006 and 2008, cases were brought against the CFMEU and
other unions resulting in over $5 million in fines and millions more in court costs—that is good for lawyers but not for the building industry and those that protect the workers in that industry. The ABCC was condemned eight times by the International Labour Organization for bias and for breaching conventions that Australia has signed. It was found to have unlawfully interviewed 203 people. When the Gillard and Rudd governments removed the majority of the ABCC’s powers and implemented the Fair Work Australia Act, we saw industrial disputes go down, we saw fatalities go down and we saw productivity increase.

Labor abhors corruption and criminal activity in any industry, including the building and construction industry—and I say that with three brothers who work in the construction industry. But the ABCC is not designed to deal with breaches of the criminal law or corruption of any kind; it was set up by the Howard government to enforce civil laws and industrial relations legislation. During the period that the ABCC was in place, there were 330 deaths on construction sites. The investigation set in motion by the ABCC into those deaths totalled zero. Not one investigation was thought warranted out of 330 deaths of ordinary Australians going about their jobs in the construction industry.

It was recently brought home to me how important it is for union representatives to have access to building sites. I met with Andrew Ramsay, who is a workplace health and safety coordinator with the CFMEU. He is also the chairman of the board of the Asbestos Disease Support Society. As the workplace health and safety coordinator for the CFMEU, Andrew, who is listening in, was at home one weekend when he received a phone call from a building site in Brisbane that will become the new executive building in William Street. The person on the other end of the phone said that they thought there was asbestos on the building site. Andrew said he was disbelieving, knowing that asbestos was banned in Australia and it was illegal to import it. He could not imagine how there would be asbestos on a Brisbane construction site.

Investigations were made and it was confirmed, sadly, that indeed there was material on the site that contained asbestos. The particular piece of material being used—and that had been used by workers—contained 60 per cent asbestos. To put that in context, the old fibro sheets that many of us had in houses and that we can all remember, contained about 10 to 15 per cent asbestos. The material had been imported from China, manufactured to specifications to fit a particular situation on the site. When it arrived, it did not fit. The builders being workers, innovative and agile, took to the material with an electric saw to make it fit. It was only then that one of the observant people on site became aware of the asbestos being present in the material. The site was immediately shut down.

Through his involvement with the Asbestos Disease Support Society, Andrew has seen firsthand the devastation that asbestos causes to the health of the person exposed to it. It is an insidious substance. It is impossible to know you are being exposed to it until it is too late. The asbestos fibres are so small that they appear like a pinprick on a magnified follicle of human hair. I would like to table a photograph that shows the relative sizes of the follicle of hair.

Leave granted.

Mr PERRETT: Thanks very much, member for Corangamite.
Exposure to asbestos can cause asbestosis and mesothelioma. Both are deadly diseases, often fatal. There is no cure for either disease. Sufferers of asbestosis can live for decades but their quality of life substantially deteriorates. Mesothelioma is a cancer; the prognosis for sufferers is dismal. They sometimes only live for a matter of months beyond their diagnosis. They suffer terribly as the disease progresses. It is our brothers and our sisters and our sons and daughters working on construction sites who are becoming the latest unwitting victims of both of these insidious diseases.

When we hear members complain about time being lost on building sites due to shutdowns, they do not actually understand that on their watch this illegal substance is somehow making its way past border control and into Australia. Shutting down these building sites when asbestos is suspected is imperative to protect the health of our workers. Surely that is a crucial thing. The diligence of our union delegates ensuring that asbestos, a banned substance, is not used in Australia's buildings is not only protecting the workers on the site but also the rest of us who may live or work in these buildings once they are complete. We know there are sites, like the children's hospital in Perth, that have this material.

There are 69 job sites across Australia that material containing asbestos has been delivered to. That is an appalling situation. We had the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, bizarrely, blaming the CFMEU for driving developers to use illegal and dangerous products on their building sites. I heard that quote and could not believe it. How absurd!

After speaking with Andrew Ramsay from the CFMEU I have reflected on why it is absolutely necessary that union delegates be allowed onto worksites. Can you imagine if a construction worker was not able to have a union delegate come onsite to check on materials that are suspected to be asbestos? If their only option is to go to a supervisor employed by the construction company, how much joy will they have? How likely would it be that the site is shut down to protect the health of the workers? Construction companies, even the most worker friendly of them—and there are many—are driven by profit obviously.

That is how this asbestos ridden material is finding its way onto building sites across Australia. Sadly, because it is cheaper. Using it will increase the profits for the company. I know that working in the construction industry can be dangerous. My brother had two work colleagues killed right alongside him many years ago. The workers have to trust that systems are set up in a safe way for them to do their jobs.

I have never worked in the building industry, as I said, but my three brothers still do. I also have a sister who is an electrician who occasionally works on construction sites as well. In fact one of my brothers worked on the construction of Parliament House. My younger brother, who also works in the building industry—as I said, when he was working at twin towns had two colleagues killed right alongside him. It also injured his back and psychologically impacted on him for many years. So, every day when he hears of a worker killed, to this day—in fact I have got a text from him today—it is always very traumatic for him. I cannot imagine what it is like to be inches away from being killed—how that would impact on you when you go back into these workplaces.

I know that the construction industry is tough on workers. It is physically demanding and can be extremely dangerous. The more that costs are cut to improve the bottom line, the more dangerous it becomes for workers, as safe practices are abandoned. Also, it sometimes can be the cowboy construction tenderers who get the projects. So we need to protect workers in the
construction industry. It has been left to Labor and the great union movement to stand up for workers. The ABCC legislation will not protect workers; the Turnbull government will not protect workers—but Labor definitely will.

**International Day of the Girl Child**

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (19:00): Tuesday, 11 October, marks International Day of the Girl Child, a day created in 2011 to champion girls' rights and to address the unique challenges that girls face around the world. While we have many registered days to recognise and celebrate, this one has special significance for me. I have previously spoken of volunteering in India, but, even before that, our family fudge business supported a school on the rural outskirts of Chennai. I visited this school and its orphanage. The nursery wire baskets were filled with young babies, some with an obvious disability but others simply left to die by their poverty-stricken parents because the child had the misfortune to be a girl. There was one poor baby about 10 weeks old who had been left near a river under the shade of a scrubby tree. Unfortunately the child had been left near an ants' nest and, when she was rescued, she was covered in ants—on her ears, eyes, nose and mouth. The baby died, but she had been abandoned because she was a girl. Clearly we can see why recognising the International Day of the Girl Child is so important.

Over the last 15 years, since the global community committed to implementing the Millennium Development Goals, we have made significant progress in improving the lives of girls during early childhood. Today they are more likely to be enrolled in primary school and receive essential vaccinations. They are less likely to suffer from health and nutrition problems. We should be proud of these achievements that help save lives and improve the wellbeing of millions of people around the world, thanks in large part to the targeted investments of Australian aid. These benefits go beyond the individual. They help a generation thrive and, in so doing, support future generations to also thrive.

There are 1.1 billion girls living in our world today. To quote the United Nations, this is:

… a powerful constituency for shaping a sustainable world that’s better for everyone. They are brimming with talent and creativity. But their dreams and potential are often thwarted by discrimination, violence and lack of equal opportunities.

Significant obstacles stand in the way of millions of girls realising their human rights and achieving their full potential. That is why we continue to acknowledge the International Day of the Girl Child, to recognise how far we have come and yet acknowledge how much more work we still must do.

There are a number of persistent problems around the world that prevent girls from reaching their full potential. The first relates to poor quality education. While the number of girls enrolled in primary school almost matches the number of boys, girls' enrolment often drops off in secondary school and even more so at university. In addition, many girls who do go to school are also responsible for a heavy workload of household chores, keeping them away from their studies. The result: women are much more likely to be illiterate or less educated and less skilled than men, which affects their work choices, independence and freedom.

The second problem is the lack of information and services related to puberty and reproductive health. While this is improving for adult women, many adolescent girls are not
provided with the information they need to lead healthy lives. In fact, many communities are
often in the dark about sexual health practices. Early pregnancy is particularly dangerous for
adolescents. Girls aged 15 to 20 are twice as likely to die in childbirth as those in their 20s,
and girls under the age of 15 are five times as likely to die. Ninety per cent of adolescent
pregnancies in the developing world are to girls who are already married.

In some tribes, girls on reaching puberty have to undergo female circumcision. When I
visited a Masai community, it was a day set aside for just such an event for two young girls.
While I was invited to be part of their celebrations, I actually returned to the bus and cried
silently for these two young women whose culture was the celebration of genital mutilation.
We have a long way to go before we can say that, internationally, our girls can grow to
womanhood without such a terrible experience.

The third problem is that adolescent girls are much more vulnerable to physical and sexual
violence. Deaths due to violence increase as girls enter adolescence. In 2012 violence was the
second leading cause of death for adolescent girls.

Finally, while the practice of child marriage has been declining, it is still a persistent
problem. Many girls are forced to leave school and have children early, and many are
vulnerable to abusive relationships. Every year almost 15 million girls are married before the
age of 18, and one in nine girls in the developing world are married by the age of 15. In the
remote villages of Tamil Nadu and other Indian districts, a young girl experiencing a breech
birth, perhaps not even having known she was pregnant, spends three to four days trying to
give birth before finally travelling to the closest town where medical help is available, yet
often both lives are lost.

In addition, while some information is known about birth control, there certainly needs to
be much better education. Girls are often far too young to give birth, and often the baby is a
big baby that tears its way into the world. Other young girls have plastic cups, originally used
for birth control, left within the birth canal, or any other unimaginable material can be left to
rot and poison them. These images are horrifying and I make no excuse for recording them
here. Girls such as these present to places like Kenyatta National Hospital with bladder or
bowel fistulas which ruin their lives forever without medical intervention. We have a lot to do
to help our girls internationally.

We also have work to do in our own backyard to encourage our girls to believe in
themselves, to encourage them to be the best they can be and to be sexually responsible. A
survey recently released in Australia by Plan International and Our Watch revealed that nine
in 10 Australian girls believe they are not treated equally to boys. To quote the United
Nations, adolescent girls have the right to a safe, educated and healthy life, not only during
these critical formative years but also as they mature into women. If effectively supported
during the adolescent years, girls have the potential to change the world, both as the
empowered girls of today and as tomorrow's workers, mothers, entrepreneurs, mentors and
political leaders. An investment in realising the power of adolescent girls upholds their rights
today and promises a more equitable and prosperous future—one in which half of humanity is
an equal partner in solving the problems of climate change, political conflict, economic
growth, disease prevention and global sustainability.

This year's theme for the International Day of the Girl Child is 'Girls' Progress=Goals'
Progress: A Global Girl Data Movement.' This is a call to action for increased investment in
collecting and analysing girl-focused, girl-relevant and sex disaggregated data. The Sustainable Development Goals which Australia and 192 other United Nations members agreed to set an ambitious roadmap for tackling the obstacles that girls face in their lives, especially those most vulnerable to discrimination based on race, ethnic background, location, religion, disability, migration or economic status. We need to know what is holding our girls back and what is critical for fulfilling the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Progress for girls is progress for all. An extra year of primary school for girls can increase their eventual adult wages by between 10 and 20 per cent, and an extra year of secondary school increases that to between 15 and 35 per cent. Studies from Kenya, Brazil and India show that delaying adolescent child-bearing age could have increased national economic productivity worth in the billions of dollars. If all girls completed secondary education in low and lower middle income countries, under-five mortality would be cut in half.

This year’s International Day of the Girl Child also asks us to double our efforts to collect accurate data about their lives to enable us to take targeted and effective action. I am thrilled the Australian government has prioritised gender equality and women’s empowerment as a key pillar of our overseas aid program. Recently our foreign minister, the Hon. Julie Bishop, committed $6.5 million over four years to making the Making Every Woman and Girl Count program an integral part of our long-term commitment to closing the gender baby gaps that exist globally. In fact, Australia was the first country to invest in the program. What gets counted generally gets done. That is the theme of what has happened. Melinda Gates said:

*We can't close the gender gap without first closing the data gap.*

Australia is leading the way with data collection with the individual deprivation measure. It is a collaborative initiative with the Australian government and the Australian National University to produce a world-first data innovative tool. The more we know about the struggles and achievements in girls’ lives, especially those who are the poorest, hardest to reach or most excluded, the more we can do to protect girls and improve their opportunities.

In closing, I wonder how long it will be before we, even in our advanced culture, can accept that women and girls can be equal to their male counterparts, and how long it will be before, when a young woman in an executive office beats all the male colleagues at the table tennis tournament, she is not patted on the back by her boss, who says, ‘I don't want to detract from your victory, but they probably chose to lose to you.’ So, on this International Day of the Girl Child, let's recall the words of Helen Reddy in *I Am Woman*, because before that she was a girl.

**Australian Electoral System**

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (19:10): The focus of my grievance concerns how we treat our young people, and the systemic failures by our institutions to protect them and support their full participation in our democratic processes. An AEC submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters inquiry into electoral education said:

As at 30 June 2015, it is estimated that 80.4 per cent of eligible adults aged 18 to 25 are on the federal electoral roll. This compares to the rate for all ages of 93.2 per cent.

In a submission to the JSCEM, the United Nations Youth association of Australia noted that the federal electoral system poses substantial barriers to young people participating in our democracy and that Australia's electoral system is failing our young people. In 2015, polling...
by the Lowy Institute found that fewer than half of 18- to 29-year-olds declared democracy to be preferable to any other form of government.

Our democratic system is failing our young people, and in my electorate of Indi we have had firsthand experience of the way young people actively engaged in the political process have been treated by our institutions and how the system has failed them. The Australian on 27 September 2014 reported:

The idea that something might have been seriously amiss—in Indi in the 2013 election—was first raised by senior Liberal Party officials with federal parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters … in a formal submission …

In the newspaper article, individuals were named, accusations were made, the report was syndicated and the smearing process began.

The AEC took these accusations seriously, and in their submission to the JSCEM inquiry into the 2013 election they discussed what they called the 'close seat analysis', in sections 7.1.47 to 50, which address this submission from the Liberal Party. Their answer, in short, was that there was no evidence of systemic fraud. Freedom-of-information documents show that, on three separate occasions, allegations were made to the AEC and investigated, and each time the analysis did not indicate any evidence of unusual activity.

But then something changed. On the fourth occasion, the AEC referred the matter to the Australian Federal Police, and, by 30 April 2015, one team leader and eight team members of the AFP had spent 1,740 hours of AFP time conducting an investigation, with the result that, from the 27 referrals, four briefs were provided to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, on 18 and 19 May, in respect of allegations that four individuals had provided false or misleading information to the AEC.

The source of this was a question asked by the Western Australian Liberal senator Dean Smith, to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee on 28 May 2015. This is not the last time Senator Smith has indicated a strong interest in this Indi matter. Eventually, on 5 April this year, prosecutors withdrew charges in the Melbourne Magistrates' Court. The court decided that there was no case to answer. 'It smelt like a rat, it looks like a rat, and fortunately common sense has prevailed,' was the reported quote from Rob Stary, a Melbourne lawyer involved in the case. He also said that this has been 'a terrible waste of resources from both AFP and prosecutors'.

So tonight I want to put the record straight. There was no false or misleading information. There was noorchestration. There was no incitement. There was no deliberate attempt to fraud. There was no loophole. There was no conspiracy. A significant number of young people who had the courage to engage in democracy were punished. Their reputations were tainted. Their parents, and their friends and housemates, were interrogated about their children's living arrangements. Acquaintances living as far away as New York and London received phone calls from the AFP, and they were questioned intimately about the living arrangements of some of these people.

This generated enormous fear, anxiety, worry and, worst of all, loss of trust, and there has been significant psychological impact. To quote from a letter one of these young people sent to me, 'It has been a terrible time. But over time and with some strategies I've learnt from the
psychologist. I no longer have the anxiety attacks when I see a police car or see police at the train station or, indeed, read anything about politics.7

The 2013 election in Indi was clean—it was honest—and the AEC advice still holds for the 2016 election.

What if I live in more than one address? The answer on the website is that you should enrol for the address which is your permanent residential address. This is the address you intend to return to even if you are living somewhere else temporarily. For example, while studying at university, you can remain on the electoral roll for your home address. This is what the young people of Indi did.

In this whole case there are many unanswered questions. Why did one national newspaper call into question the integrity of 27 young people? Why did so much of the media blindly follow suit? Why did the AEC decide in 2014 to refer the case to the AFP when on three separate occasions they had said there was no case to answer? Why did the AFP investigate this case for 1,741 hours when it was clear even to them that there was no case to answer? Who was counting the cost? This is particularly so in comparison to other instances in the 2013 election. There were 7,743 cases of alleged multiple voting and, of these, 2,013 admitted to voting more than once. The AFP investigated 65 cases, and none were referred to the CDPP.

Who should take responsibility for ensuring that there is a public apology to the young people and to their families and their communities? This episode has caused enormous damage to the young people and their families, and to rural communities, where so many people use their home address as their permanent address. It has caused damage to our democracy and to the trust in our political institutions. In the eyes of many young people, this is even more reason why it makes no sense to engage in politics.

The saga has caused reputational damage to the Australian political system. Why did we let this happen to our young people? Why did no-one stand up for them? It has damaged the reputation of our political media among young people. Where was the accuracy? Who was leading the investigation? This has caused reputational damage to the Liberal Party. Having lost the election, they proved to be really bad sports. And to add insult to injury, somebody photocopied all these articles and distributed them widely throughout the electorate. Sadly, it has caused reputational damage to the party that says it represents rural Australia, the party that says it stands up for country people. Why did the National Party not stand up for these young people or for the rural FIFO workers or for the many itinerant workers who travel throughout rural Australia?

The problem of confusion about young people's enrolment was not new. In 2009-2010, the Australian National Audit Office made a number of clear recommendations. Why has so little been done by this parliament to address these recommendations? They include developing government arrangements for the management of electors' personal information and assessing the nature to which access to electoral roll information by non-government agencies adversely impacts on the willingness of Australians to enrol to vote.

In closing, I want to explain why I have taken the opportunity to raise this matter in this grievance debate tonight. I thought it was over and done with, but this is not so. Sadly, there is someone out there who is not content to accept the court's decision. On 5 May 2016, just
before the campaign was announced and a full month after the court had said there was no case to answer, the Liberal senator for Western Australia, Senator Dean Smith, asked 10 questions in writing—again, to the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. What is going on there? Why is this topic of interest to the Western Australian senator.

This is part of my grievance. Not only has the damage been done; it has been perpetuated. It must stop for the sake of young people, to whom it has done so much damage. Who will call the Liberal Party to task on this? Who will take responsibility? I want to set the record straight and to also ask the government to show us how it will work in the future to encourage and support young people to participate in our democratic processes and, in turn, community life. Part of the answer may lie in the appointment of a minister for young people and in providing support for infrastructure to address systemic barriers that prevent young people from civic participation. (Time expired)

Type 1 Diabetes

Mr VASTA (Bonner) (19:20): Today I would like to speak on one of the most serious health issues this country faces—type 1 diabetes. I would like to share the personal stories of some of my constituents who have type 1 diabetes, to highlight the importance of this issue and to show what this government is doing to support diabetics and their families.

Type 1 diabetes is not preventable or curable. It is a chronic, lifelong and life-threatening condition. Type 1 diabetics face a constant struggle to keep their blood sugar levels stable. Without around-the-clock checks, the consequences can be dire. They range from minor complications to something as terrible as passing away in one's sleep from dead in bed syndrome.

Many parents have shared with me the stress and anxiety of life with a child with type 1 diabetes. Imagine living with the fear that, every time they go to sleep, your little one might not wake up. One mother wrote to me about the constant battle to keep her two-year-old boy's sugar levels within a safe range. This little boy has to be woken up by his parents several times in the night so they can monitor his blood sugar levels. Another father shared with me how he has to check his six-year-old son three times a night, every night, and spend hours getting his blood sugar back to normal. He gets just 20 minutes of sleep between checks. Just imagine the toll that this would take.

That is why I was thrilled when the coalition government announced in May this year that it will invest $54 million to subsidise continuous glucose monitoring technology for children and young adults under 21, to help them manage their type 1 diabetes. Our commitment to subsidise CGM devices on the National Diabetes Services Scheme will benefit an estimated 4,000 young diabetics. CGM devices help children and their parents monitor blood sugar levels around the clock through a small wearable device that will instantly warn them if glucose levels are getting too low. This removes the need to draw blood through a finger prick multiple times a day.

I have received overwhelming support for this initiative from my constituents. One young woman, who has already trialled the technology, told me that it had saved her many, many times. She is able to sleep right through the night for the first time in five years. The peace of
mind that CGM devices give to type 1 diabetics is priceless, and I am proud to be part of a government supporting the use of this amazing technology.

I am also proud to support initiatives working towards a cure for type 1 diabetics. Recently, I met with Cheryl Burton and her 18-year-old son, Joshua. Josh has been living with type 1 diabetes since he was four years old. He is passionate about a cure that would help him, and thousands of others, live a normal life free of finger pricks and the lingering fear that comes with this autoimmune disease. Right now, Josh is fundraising for the JDRF One Walk. JDRF’s mission is to raise funds for scientific research to better treat, prevent and ultimately cure type 1 diabetes. The JDRF One Walk is the world’s biggest type 1 diabetes fundraising event, raising over $85 million each year for life-changing research. Well done to Josh for supporting this vital cause, and I wish him all the best in the future.

Type 1 diabetes is a chronic, life-threatening disease that, sadly, is too often confused with type 2 diabetes, which is caused by lifestyle factors. I will continue to raise awareness of this condition and I will continue to support this government's effort to support Australians living with type 1 diabetes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time for the grievance debate has expired. The debate is interrupted in accordance standing order 192B. The debate is adjourned and the resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for the next day of sitting.

Federation Chamber adjourned at 19:25