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SITTING DAYS—2016

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FORTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
SECOND 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
Deputy Speaker—Hon. Bruce Craig Scott MP
Second Deputy Speaker—Mr Robert George Mitchell MP
Members of the Speaker’s Panel—Mr Russell Evan Broadbent MP,
Ms Anna Elizabeth Burke MP, Ms Sharon Catherine Claydon MP,
Hon. John Kenneth Cobb MP, Mr Patrick Martin Conroy MP,
Mr Ian Reginald Goodenough MP, Mrs Natasha Louise Griggs MP,
Ms Sarah Moya Henderson MP, Mr Stephen James Irons MP,
Mr Craig Kelly MP, Ms Michelle Leanne Landry MP, Ms Clare Ellen O’Neil MP,
Mrs Jane Prentice MP, Ms Melissa Lee Price MP,
Dr Andrew John Southcott MP, Mr Michael Sukkar MP,
Mr Ross Xavier Vasta MP and Mrs Lucy Elizabeth Wicks 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 Ewen Thomas Jones MP and Mr Brett David Whiteley MP

The Nationals
Leader—Hon. Barnaby Thomas Gerard Joyce MP
Deputy Leader—Senator the Hon Fiona Nash
Chief Whip—Mr Mark Maclean Coulton MP
Deputy Whip—Mr George Robert Christensen 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 Jill Griffiths Hall MP and Ms Joanne Catherine Ryan MP

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>van Manen, Mr Albertus Johannes</td>
<td>Forde, QLD</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varvaris, Mr Nickolas</td>
<td>Barton, NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vasta, Mr Ross Xavier</td>
<td>Bonner, QLD</td>
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<td>Watts, Mr Timothy Graham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whiteley, Mr Brett David</td>
<td>Braddon, TAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wicks, Mrs Lucy Elizabeth</td>
<td>Robertson, NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willie, Mr Andrew Damien</td>
<td>Denison, TAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Williams, Mr Matthew</td>
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<td>Wilson, Mr Richard James</td>
<td>O'Connor, WA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood, Mr Jason Peter</td>
<td>La Trobe, VIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyatt, Mr Kenneth George, AM</td>
<td>Hasluck, WA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zappia, Mr Antonio</td>
<td>Makin, SA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zimmerman, Mr Trent</td>
<td>North Sydney, NSW</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

ALP—Australian Labor Party; LP—Liberal Party of Australia; NATS—The Nationals;
IND—Independent; NATSWA—The Nationals WA; CLP—Country Liberal Party;
AUS—Katter's Australia Party; AG—Australian Greens; PUP—Palmer United Party

### Heads of Parliamentary Departments

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Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder
Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—R Stefanic
Parliamentary Budget Officer—P Bowen
# Turnbull Ministry

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Women</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Arthur Sinodinos AO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public</td>
<td>The Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>The Hon Michael Keenan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister</td>
<td>Senator the Hon James McGrath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation</td>
<td>The Hon Angus Taylor MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>The Hon Dr Peter Hendy MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and</td>
<td>The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Anne Ruston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister</td>
<td>The Hon Keith Pitt MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon Julie Bishop MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
<td>The Hon Steve Ciobo MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for International Development and the Pacific</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Tourism and International Education</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney-General</td>
<td>Senator the Hon George Brandis QC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Vice-President of the Executive Council)</td>
<td>The Hon Michael Keenan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Leader of the Government in the Senate)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Justice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon Scott Morrison MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Small Business</td>
<td>The Hon Kelly O’Dwyer MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon Kelly O’Dwyer MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister to the Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon Alex Hawke MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Finance</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Deputy Leader of Government in the Senate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Minister of State</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Finance</td>
<td>The Hon Dr Peter Hendy MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Regional Development</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Fiona Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Infrastructure and Transport</td>
<td>The Hon Darren Chester MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Deputy Leader of the House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Major Projects, Territories and Local</td>
<td>The Hon Paul Fletcher MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science</td>
<td>The Hon Christopher Pyne MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Leader of the House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia</td>
<td>The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Northern Australia</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Matt Canavan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Science</td>
<td>The Hon Karen Andrews MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Innovation</td>
<td>The Hon Wyatt Roy MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Immigration and Border Protection</td>
<td>The Hon Peter Dutton MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Immigration</td>
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<td>The Hon Greg Hunt MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon Sussan Ley MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Aged Care</td>
<td>The Hon Sussan Ley MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Sport</td>
<td>The Hon Sussan Ley MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Rural Health</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Fiona Nash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care</td>
<td>The Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Defence</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Marise Payne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Veterans’ Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon Dan Tehan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC</td>
<td>The Hon Dan Tehan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Defence Materiel</td>
<td>The Hon Dan Tehan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Defence</td>
<td>The Hon Michael McCormack MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Communications</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for the Arts (Manager of Government Business in the Senate)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Regional Communications</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Fiona Nash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Employment</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Social Services</td>
<td>The Hon Christian Porter MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Human Services</td>
<td>The Hon Alan Tudge MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Disability Services</td>
<td>The Hon Jane Prentice MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Multicultural Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon Craig Laundy MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Education and Training</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Vocational Education and Skills</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Scott Ryan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Tourism and International Education</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck</td>
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Each box represents a portfolio. Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type. As a general rule, there is one department in each portfolio. However, there is a Department of Human Services in the Social Services portfolio and a Department of Veterans’ Affairs in the Defence portfolio. The title of a department does not necessarily reflect the title of a minister in all cases. Assistant Ministers in italics are designated as Parliamentary Secretaries under the Ministers of State Act 1952.
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<th>Shadow Minister</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Hon. Bill Shorten MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader for Science</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Kim Carr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader on State and Territory Relations</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Women</td>
<td>Senator Claire Moore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager of Opposition Business (Senate)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Jacinta Collins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Hon. Michael Danby MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary Assisting with Digital Innovation and Startups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Hon. Ed Husic MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Manager of Opposition Business (Senate)</td>
<td>Terri Butler MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Women and International Development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader of the Opposition in the Senate</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Penny Wong</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for School Education and Youth</td>
<td>Senator Sam Dastyari</td>
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<td>Hon. Catherine King MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Ageing</td>
<td>Hon. Shayne Neumann MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Mental Health</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Sport</td>
<td>Dr Jim Chalmers MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Health</td>
<td>Stephen Jones MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Tony Zappia MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Aged Care</td>
<td>Senator Helen Polley</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness</td>
<td>Sen. the Hon. Doug Cameron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Human Services</td>
<td>Sen. Claire Moore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Carers</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Families and Payments</td>
<td>Sen. Carol Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Child Safety and Prevention</td>
<td>Terri Butler MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>of Family Violence</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Immigration and Border Protection</td>
<td>Hon. Richard Marles MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multiculturalism</td>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration</td>
<td>Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Hon. Brendan O’Connor MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Employment Services</td>
<td>Hon. Julie Collins MP</td>
</tr>
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Shadow Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.

* Senator Katy Gallagher’s appointment to the Shadow Ministry is effective from 1 November 2015. Senator the Hon. Jan McLucas will serve as Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness and Shadow Minister for Mental Health, and represent the Shadow Minister for Northern Australia, the Shadow Minister for Health, the Shadow Assistant Minister for Health, the Shadow Minister for Sport and the Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs in the Senate until 31 October 2015.
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Thursday, 5 May 2016

The SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Smith) took the chair at 09:00, made an acknowledgement of country and read prayers.

COMMITTEES

Appropriations and Administration Committee

Report


Reports made parliamentary papers in accordance with standing order 39(e).

BILLS

National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Ms Ley.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Health, Minister for Sport and Minister for Aged Care) (09:02): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 creates a new legislative framework for the establishment and ongoing management of cancer screening registers.

The need for this bill arose from the federal budget 2015-16 announcement to improve cancer detection, treatment and prevention through innovative measures that ensure Australia remains a world leader in the field. Approval has been given for the renewal of the National Cervical Screening Program, which will increase cervical cancer survival rates through an evidence based pathway backed by research undertaken by the Medical Services Advisory Committee.

The Australian government is serious about increasing cancer screening rates in the fight against cancer. Cervical cancer claims the lives of 250 women annually, and yet it is one of the most preventable cancers. Currently 80 per cent of women with cervical cancer have not been screened or have not had regular screenings.

The changes to the National Cervical Screening Program from 1 May 2017 will introduce a more effective cervical cancer test, the human papillomavirus (HPV) test, to replace the current two-yearly Pap test. The HPV test detects HPV infection—which is almost always the first step in developing cervical cancer—before abnormal cells change. As the HPV test will only be required every five years, the number of invasive procedures during a woman's lifetime will reduce from 26 to nine.

The HPV test will be available on the Medicare Benefits Schedule from 1 May 2017.
Since its inception in 1991, the National Cervical Screening Program has effectively halved the mortality and morbidity of cervical cancer. The rollout of the new screening pathway will decrease the mortality and morbidity by at least a further 15 per cent.

Key activities will also be delivered to support the renewed National Cervical Screening Program, including workforce change strategies, critical management guidelines, a quality management framework and a communication strategy.

Australia continues to have one of the highest rates of bowel cancer in the world, and this government is committed to improving health outcomes in this area through early detection. Bowel cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death in Australia, with approximately 4,000 Australians dying from it each year. That is around 80 deaths each week.

The risk of bowel cancer increases from the age of 50, yet, if it is detected and managed early, nine out of 10 cases can be successfully treated. Currently, fewer than 40 per cent of bowel cancers are detected early.

In a bid to fast-track the program and save more lives, approval has also been given to deliver an expanded National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. This program expansion will roll out a free at-home bowel cancer screening kit to Australians aged 50 to 74 every two years by 2020, instead of 2034. That is 14 years earlier than was planned under the previous government. Evidence from clinical trials has shown that biennial screening using fecal occult blood testing can prevent 300 to 500 deaths a year.

Fast-tracking the bowel screening program will also take the pressure off our health system by providing early detection that involves simpler treatment. Advanced bowel cancer treatment is estimated to cost our health system $66,000 per case, compared with $2,000 to remove precancerous polyps.

Australia seeks to connect its health system to deliver better, safer, efficient care now and into the future. With the recent investments in cancer prevention and detection, it is important that the organised approach to population based screening is underpinned by a consistent and contemporary national register. There are significant efficiencies that can be gained by establishing the National Cancer Screening Register that will support not only the renewal of the National Cervical Screening Program and the expansion of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program but potentially other cancer screening programs in the future. By 2020, the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program will be inviting about four million Australians to screen each year and could detect approximately 3,500 potential bowel cancers each year.

The National Cancer Screening Register will be on the cutting edge of innovation. It will provide an ICT platform incorporating themes of accessibility and usability capable of integrating with the My Health Record system and Health's Electronic Data Warehouse, with the ability to be expanded to support other cancer screening programs in the future. The register will be able to interoperate with clinical information systems to enable healthcare providers to provide data to the register easily and receive information back easily to better inform clinical decision making.

The register will support the screening pathway by facilitating invitations, sending out of test kits and recall of participants. It will enable improved software integration with general practice, specialists and pathology laboratories, as well as improved quality and accessibility of data and rate of data capture and data matching, with the prime focus of maintaining a
complete and consolidated source of screening information for participating individuals. Over time it will help increase program participation rates and the effectiveness of the screening programs.

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

The 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, such as providing health care.

Establishing the register involves large-scale data migration and merging to create a national database of records for cancer screening information. The bill 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 bill authorises collection of HPV vaccination status from the HPV register so that individuals' cervical screening information in the register will also include their HPV vaccination status.

Currently there are eight separate state and territory cervical screening registers and an outdated, paper based bowel screening register, which has created a fragmented system. The bill removes obstacles associated with migrating state and territory cervical screening data by providing the authority to transfer data to the register.

The register will capture a significant amount of information that can be accessed by a range of individuals and entities in order to support the delivery of the screening programs. Such a repository of high-quality data will support the health system by informing policy for national screening programs and service delivery at the local level.

The bill protects the use and disclosure of personal information collected by the register and creates an offence arising from the unauthorised disclosure of personal information contained in the register.

The bill includes provisions allowing individuals to opt off participation in the screening programs, either fully or partially, according to the individual's preference.

The bill includes mandatory reporting of cancer screening information of a prescribed type. Mandatory reporting obligations will ensure routine collection of information which is crucial for the screening processes and clinical pathways. The details of the reporting obligations, including who is obliged to report and what information is to be reported in what time frame, will be prescribed in the rules.

The register will commence operation on 1 May 2017. It will be built and maintained by a register operator to be commissioned by my department.

Royal assent to the bill is required by July 2016 to enable data migration of state and territory cervical screening registers to the register, followed by data cleansing and system testing in time for a fully operational national register on 1 May 2017.
A number of amendments to other legislation are required once the bill receives royal assent to enable certain information to be provided to the register, such as Medicare data and HPV vaccination status. These are described in the National Cancer Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016.

From 1 May 2017, regulations under the Health Insurance Act 1973 will be amended to include a new MBS item for the five-yearly HPV test.

This bill 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. It will assist general practitioners and healthcare providers in their clinical decision making and contribute to cancer detection, treatment and prevention.

Debate adjourned.

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

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Ms Ley.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Health, Minister for Sport and Minister for Aged Care) (09:12): I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill provides for the consequential and transitional provisions required to support the operation of the National Cancer Screening Register.

The National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 and the National Cancer Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016 will establish the National Cancer Screening Register (the register), authorise collection, use and disclosure of information for the purposes of the register, authorise the migration of state and territory cervical screening data to the register, and mandate reporting of screening information to the register to facilitate clinical decision making. The designated cancers for the purpose of the NCSR bills are cervical cancer and 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 Cancer Screening Register (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2016.

Amendments will be made to the Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987 and the Health Insurance Act 1973 to facilitate the provision of information to the register.

The Health Insurance Act 1973 will be amended to enable the ongoing provision of Medicare enrolment and claim data to the register. This information will be used as part of the process for determining the individuals who are to be invited or not invited, as appropriate, to participate in the cervical cancer and bowel cancer screening programs.
The Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015 will be amended to authorise the disclosure of information kept on the Australian Immunisation Register to the National Cancer Screening Register. This will allow for the human papilloma virus vaccination status to be included in an individual's record on the register.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987 will be amended to authorise the disclosure of specific information kept by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to the National Cancer Screening Register. This will allow information from the National Death Index to be provided to the register, to ensure that individuals who are deceased are not invited to participate in the cancer screening programs.

This bill authorises the disclosure of information from prescribed cervical screening registers to the register. This will facilitate the transfer of information from the state and territory based cervical screening registers to the National Cancer Screening Register without the states and territories being required to amend their legislation to authorise that transfer.

This bill provides for the limited operation of the National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 prior to 1 May 2017, to allow the register to be established.

The bill provides for the civil penalty for failure to comply with mandatory reporting obligations to commence on 1 May 2018, allowing a 12-month grace period after commencement of the register to give healthcare providers time to transition to the new mandatory reporting scheme.

The provisions in this bill will commence at the same time as the National Cancer Screening Register Bill 2016 commences. However, if that bill does not commence, the provisions in this bill do not commence either.

I thank the House.

Debate adjourned.

Dental Benefits Amendment Bill 2016

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Ms Ley.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Health, Minister for Sport and Minister for Aged Care) (09:17): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill is the first stage in giving effect to the government's decision to introduce a new Child and Adult Public Dental Scheme from 1 July 2016.

The Child and Adult Public Dental Scheme will provide states and territories with the highest ever level of Commonwealth financial support for public dental services. The scheme will double the Commonwealth's current funding contribution to the states and territories for dental.

As well as providing record levels of funding, the bill for the first time ever puts Commonwealth payments to the states for dental services on a legislative basis. This will give...
states the long-term certainty they need to invest in infrastructure and ensure that Australia has a high-quality public dental service into the future.

This government believes that investing in good public dental care is critical to ensuring that Australians have good oral health. We know that poor oral health can have a significant impact on individuals' overall health and wellbeing, and knock-on effects on employment and economic opportunities.

It is shocking that in this day and age there are Australian children who have never seen a toothbrush, let alone a dentist; and those with low incomes are the most affected. The oral health of adults on low incomes is even worse, with nearly 60 per cent of low-income and Indigenous adults having untreated tooth decay—double that of the general population.

The Child and Adult Public Dental Scheme targets Commonwealth dental funding to the people who need it most—all children, and adults with concession cards. The scheme will deliver better dental care to these patients, with an increasing focus on preventative dental care.

The bill I am introducing today amends the Dental Benefits Act 2008 to establish a framework for the Child and Adult Public Dental Scheme. Under this bill, almost $416 million of Commonwealth assistance will be available in 2016-17—more than double what is available to the states this year. It provides higher amounts in 2017-18 and 2018-19, and from 2019-20 provides for funding to be indexed in line with population growth and the consumer price index.

The $1.7 billion to be provided for the Child and Adult Public Dental Scheme over the next four years is just part of the $5 billion that the Commonwealth will invest to support dental care through the private health insurance rebate, Medicare funded in-hospital dental services, and funding for dental infrastructure in rural and remote Australia.

Turning briefly to the bill itself, broadly speaking it contains two sets of amendments. The first inserts a new part 1A in the act to establish a framework for the Child and Adult Public Dental Scheme.

The detailed arrangements for the provision of funding under the scheme will be set out in agreements between the Commonwealth and the states. The bill provides that in determining financial assistance the minister must have regard to agreements between the Commonwealth and the states. Grants of financial assistance will be subject to the terms and conditions set out in the agreement, and to any other terms and conditions that the minister may determine through a legislative instrument.

The Commonwealth has already had a number of preliminary discussions with the states on a possible agreement.

The Commonwealth's intent is to adopt a broadly similar model to that used for public hospital funding. It will pay about 40 per cent of the efficient price of delivering public dental services for every dental service delivered by the states. This contribution will also extend to services that the state contracts from the private sector.

Use of the national efficient price determined by the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority under the public hospital funding arrangements has seen a steady reduction in the rate of growth in the price over the five years the arrangement has been in place. The
government will be working with the states to put in place a similar independent arrangement for determining the efficient price of delivering dental services.

The states will continue to be responsible for managing and operating public dental services. They will continue to make decisions about priorities for treatment, and they will continue to make decisions about the level of services they provide.

Under current eligibility arrangements all children up to the age of 18 are eligible for public dental services in most states and territories. In the others access for children after their early teens does not extend beyond children in concession cardholder families. In negotiating agreements with the states we will make sure that this gap is covered, and that all children are eligible for services. Adults with concession cards will continue to be eligible for public dental services as they are now.

The additional funds available should allow the states to increase the number of services they provide so that they can treat an additional 600,000 patients each year.

That is, the states will be able to increase the number of services they provide by at least 50 per cent over the base level of activity they were providing in 2011-12 before any Commonwealth assistance became available. At that time average waiting times for general dental treatment for adults in the public sector were around two years. Under the first national partnership agreement on dental services, which provided $344 million from 2012-13 to 2014-15, average waiting times were halved. The government expects that the additional funding provided through this bill will see an ongoing sustained reduction in waiting times.

The second part of the bill closes the Child Dental Benefits Schedule or CDBS. The bill removes entitlement to benefits under the CDBS for services provided on or after 1 July 2016. It is important to note that benefits will still be payable for services provided on or before 30 June as long as all the requirements of the act were met. And similarly, the audit and compliance powers in the act will continue to apply to benefits paid in relation to services provided on or before 30 June.

The government has made the decision to close the CDBS because it is an inherently inefficient use of taxpayers' money.

The CDBS has been poorly utilised, hence its inefficiency, with less than a third of eligible children accessing services since it began in 2014. This is because four out of five children were already visiting a dentist regularly before the scheme was introduced. When the CDBS was introduced, the Deputy Opposition Leader, the member for Sydney, who was the health minister at the time, announced that more than three million would be eligible. However, the shadow health spokesperson has since confirmed that only one million children have been treated since the CDBS commenced two years ago. In fact, the member for Sydney was once again misleading Australians about this government's landmark public dental scheme and the inefficient use of the scheme that she introduced this morning. She did acknowledge that only one million children had been treated under the scheme, not the three million forecast, and urged parents to hurry up and get children treated before the end of this financial year. She thus demonstrated how inefficient and poorly targeted the CBDS was; hence the decision by this government to close it. But in that closure we are introducing and creating a better public dental scheme that treats children—that makes all children between the ages of nought and 18 a priority—and also adds low-income concessional adults.
Another mistake, I believe, that the member for Sydney made in her remarks this morning was to suggest that all preventive oral care should be provided by dentists. The dentists I talk to freely admit, and welcome, the support of another dental workforce: the oral therapists, dentists in training and people who support the delivery of preventive care, for example to schools, so that children—some of whom, I have come to understand, do not have any understanding of dental care, do not have a toothbrush in their house and do not have parents who would take them to the dentist, which they would have to have had under Labor's scheme—get introduced to the best way to look after their teeth and, in this era of more bottled water and less fluoride, have fluoride painted on their teeth twice a year. In so doing, they create the best possible preventive oral health start for them.

The CBDS has also, unfortunately, been rorted, with 1,200 incorrect claims uncovered so far, and another $3 million of claims under investigation. Even the deputy opposition leader, the member for Sydney, would have to acknowledge that this is a serious problem. In fact, when she closed another dental program—the Chronic Disease Dental Scheme—she justified it by saying: 'We've had 1,000 complaints about it. Do you call 1,000 complaints a small problem? I think it's a substantial problem.' That is what the member for Sydney said about the number of complaints under a previous dental scheme that she then determined to close.

Clearly, the CBDS does not represent a good use of taxpayers' money.

The Child and Adult Public Dental Scheme will remove waste and duplication in the health system to direct funding where it is needed most. It is a strong national public dental scheme that will ensure people do not fall through the cracks.

This bill represents a landmark investment in public dental care in Australia, that will protect the oral health of Australians now and into the future. It puts in place the foundations for ongoing Commonwealth investment in public dental services. As one state health minister said to me: the fact that we are legislating and locking in the structure of a truly public scheme now and into the future gives them—that state health minister—the confidence to build the infrastructure to deliver what, as I said, is the best possible use of taxpayers' money in targeting the oral health of Australians where they need it most. It is an investment that will benefit not just this generation but future generations. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

COMMITTEES
Privileges and Members' Interests Committee
Report

Mr BROADBENT (McMillan) (09:28): As Chair of the Standing Committee of Privileges and Members Interests, I rise to inform the House of the outcome of the committee's consideration of an important matter. On 17 March 2016 I presented to the House a report from the Standing Committee of Privileges and Members Interests as to whether the former member for Dobell, Mr Craig Thomson, deliberately misled the House on 21 May 2012. Having regard to the findings against Mr Thomson made by the Melbourne Magistrates' Court on 18 February 2014, in presenting the report I advised the House that there appeared to have been a breach of process in the committee's finalisation of the matter and that this would be considered further by the committee at its next meeting.
I now advise the House that this breach of process was an apparent unauthorised disclosure and publication of the committee's draft report. Members will be aware that, under the standing orders and the Parliamentary Privilege Act, unauthorised disclosure of committee documents may amount to contempt of the House where the disclosure causes, or is likely to cause, substantial interference with the work of the House or the committee system.

I advise the House that the committee considered the matter at a meeting yesterday evening and concluded that, on this occasion, the unauthorised disclosure and publication of the draft report is unlikely to have caused substantial interference to the work of the House or its committees. In addition, the committee's view is that it would be difficult to determine with any certainty the source of the unauthorised disclosure. It is most regrettable that this occurred, especially as the Committee of Privilege and Members' Interests was finalising such a serious reference in relation to a one-time member of this House.

I wish to take this opportunity to remind all those involved with the committee processes of the importance of observing the rules against unauthorised disclosure of committee documents, including draft reports. There is obviously a potential for unauthorised disclosures to impact adversely on our work as parliamentarians. This concludes the matter. It is finished.

I thank the House.

Public Accounts and Audit Committee


Reports made parliamentary papers in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr IAN MACFARLANE: by leave—I wish to speak to both of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit reports just presented, commencing with the report entitled Defence major equipment procurement and evaluation, and Great Barrier Reef regulation.

This report sets out the findings of the committee's examination of three Australian National Audit Office reports. A key theme emerging from the committee's review of these reports was the importance of effective risk management.

Chapter 2 of the report discusses the committee's findings concerning Audit report No. 52 on Defence vehicle fleet replacement. In terms of the Defence risk management of procurement, the committee noted that the failed first tender process for this matter resulted in an estimated seven-year delay in delivering new vehicles and the need to sustain the existing fleet far beyond initial specifications. The committee made one recommendation: that Defence provide additional evidence that the lessons learned from this project have been embedded in standard operating procedures.

Chapter 3 of the report discusses the committee's findings concerning Audit report No. 3 on the regulation of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park permits. The committee noted the seriousness of the Auditor-General's overall conclusion that shortcomings in the regulatory practices of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority have undermined the effectiveness of the permit system as a means of managing risks to the marine park. The committee made
three recommendations—that the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority: firstly, appropriately accelerate its time frame for implementation of the ANAO recommendations; secondly, implement more effective performance information in this area; and, further, report back to the committee on the implementation of a range of initiatives related to permit application assessment, compliance management and response to noncompliance.

Chapter 4 of the report discusses the committee's findings concerning Audit report No. 9 on the test and evaluation of major Defence equipment acquisitions. Effective risk management in the context of procurement was again emphasised in this inquiry. Several past ANAO reports and external reviews have identified deficiencies in aspects of Defence's test and evaluation program. The committee made one recommendation—that Defence report back to the committee on: the coordination of test and evaluation across the department; how this is consistent with the outcomes of the recent Defence first principles review; key improvements to performance reporting; and implementation of competency and training arrangements in this area.

I commend the report to the House.

I now move to the second report presented, entitled Development of into the Commonwealth performance framework—Second report.

This report is a continuation of the committee's ongoing scrutiny of the development of the Commonwealth performance framework. The report incorporates the committee's review of the draft 2015-16 annual report rules, and also marks the first time the committee has also considered the annual report rules for corporate Commonwealth entities.

The committee has consulted with other committees of the parliament, on the form and content of annual reports, and has identified issues for further discussion and consideration in the longer term.

The committee has reviewed and approved both rules, and anticipates a broader discussion about enhancing the rules for both corporate and non-corporate entities next year. Further the committee hopes to see legislative changes set by parliament to ensure that annual reports are tabled earlier.

The committee has made two recommendations. The first requests that Finance provide the committee of the 45th Parliament with an incoming brief addressing key issues in the Public Management Reform Agenda. As the PMRA moves into its third stage, it is important that Finance briefs the incoming committee to facilitate prompt and thorough committee engagement.

The second recommendation requests that Finance address a range of issues identified through the inquiry to facilitate consideration of the 2016-17 annual reporting rule in 2017.

I thank the Department of Finance for their continued engagement with the committee.

In conclusion, I wish to thank committee members for their deliberations on these significant matters.

I commend the report to the House.

Mr CONROY (Charlton) (09:36): by leave—I want to briefly talk to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit report No. 456, in particular the review of the LAND 121 project. This was a $3½ billion project to acquire new medium and heavy vehicles for the
Army. This tender process was signed off in mid-2007. The ANAO condemned this Defence tender process as one of the most flawed tender processes in recent history. The department failed by claiming it was a low-risk military off-the-shelf acquisition. They failed by recommending a single supplier without test and evaluation. They ignored value for money and they failed to advise the minister at the time of the significant risks in acquiring this project. As the member for Groom highlighted, this resulted in a seven-year delay for capability and increased sustainment costs for an ageing fleet. It cost an extra $700 million to acquire the trucks and it resulted in the acquisition of 261 fewer protected vehicles.

This is a poster child for a failed Defence procurement. There are two issues of concern. First, this occurred post the Kinnaird reforms of 2004-05 that were supposed to put Defence procurement back on track. Secondly, the committee went to some lengths to try and understand the accountability mechanisms within Defence over this failed tender process. We asked, in committee, without identifying the individuals involved—because we did not want a witch-hunt—whether Defence could assure us that there were some negative consequences for the officials involved in the flawed tender process. Unfortunately they could not provide any evidence at the committee hearing, and, so far, they have not provided information on notice as to the eventual outcome of this matter. This goes to a fundamental problem with Defence acquisitions at the moment: is there accountability for the individuals involved in making mistakes? That is something that I would hope the public accounts and audit committee pursues in the 45th parliament. I commend the report to the House.

Report

Mr IAN MACFARLANE (Groom) (09:39): by leave—I present executive minutes on report 447, report 448 and report 449 received by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit.

Report


Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).


The reform of the Department of Defence, following the release of the government's First principles review: one Defence in April 2015, represents an opportunity for Defence to redress some of the issues identified within the MPR and by the JCPAA. Ongoing commitment, resourcing and leadership will be required to fully exploit the opportunities that the First Principles Review process offers.

In this year's review of the ANAO-Defence MPR, the committee has reviewed a number of specific projects, including some of the most problematic—namely the Air Warfare Destroyers and the MRH90 helicopter acquisition. The committee notes that, despite
expectations that the risks involved in these projects were considered to be mitigated, errors in risk assessments and suboptimal contract arrangements have resulted in Australian taxpayers carrying a greater burden than necessary. That is a small understatement. Despite some significant improvement in project management and capability delivery, the committee remains concerned that slippage of projects is still occurring. It is also disappointing that some large projects, such as the Air Warfare Destroyers, still require significant sums of additional funding despite all the progress that has been made over the past decade in better managing these types of acquisitions. The committee does, however, note with satisfaction that the MPR, as a document and as a process, has developed into an excellent tool to assess the status of Defence major acquisition projects. The committee commends both the ANAO and the Department of Defence on their continued work on this topic—work that shall continue into the next parliament and beyond.

I thank committee members for their deliberation on these significant matters. I commend the report to the House.

As this will be my last address to the House, I thank the committee for their spirit and cooperation and for the way they went about a task which always has the potential to be made a political football, if that is the intent of the individual. That did not occur on this committee and I commend both sides of the House for doing that. The committee's work is extraordinarily important. We are very ably supported by a very professional secretariat. I thank David and his team for the support they have given us. The work of this committee will continue in the next parliament. Despite the fact that I am retiring very soon, as I understand it, I will continue to take great interest in the work of this committee, because its work is crucial. If we are to address some of the major deficiencies in the expenditure of taxpayers' funds, this committee is pivotal to that. So I wish the committee in the 45th Parliament all the best. Thank you.

Mr CONROY (Charlton) (09:43): by leave—I rise to talk about the major projects report—one of the excellent initiatives from the Public Accounts and Audit Committee. The member for Groom was right to highlight a few of the brief issues that have come out from that report. I will not go into detail because today is a very important day for a lot of people, but I just want to highlight a few worrying trends. Firstly, there is the inconsistent treatment of contingency in major projects. This inconsistency adds budget risk to the Commonwealth, and that is of concern. Secondly, there is the treatment of schedule changes when a project is re-baselined by a further government decision—that is, truly understanding the schedule delay if a project goes back for a revised second-pass approval.

Thirdly, I am concerned about the management of project payments by the Department of Defence. To smooth things over when something gets delayed, sometimes they bring payments forward. While that makes sense, it potentially exposes the Commonwealth to forgone revenue.

Fourthly, I want to highlight concerns around the AWD contract, the pain-gain model, and whether people in the private sector that are partners to this contract truly are feeling pain from mismanagement of this contract. I want to highlight that, in evidence to the committee, Defence admitted that both the MRH, the multirole helicopter, and the armed reconnaissance helicopter are still unable to deploy to high-threat environments like the Middle East—despite
acquisition starting well over a decade ago, supposedly, for MOTS aircraft. That is something that constrained governments of both persuasions and that needs to be improved upon.

I do want to highlight a good news story, which is that, after concerted actions by the Department of Defence, in particular the Navy, under the last two governments the Collins class submarines are achieving excellent availability. They are hitting their targets. That means that we are getting the training pipeline for new submariners. The Collins is proving to be the best conventionally powered submarine in the world. So, despite a lot of myths out there from the media and other people, the Collins class submarine is a great capability that really is the spearhead for the ADF and it is doing great work. As the chair alluded to, future committee hearings will be looking more at defence sustainment, which is well over half the capability budget for the Department of Defence.

Finally, on behalf of the Labor members, I thank the secretariat. Public Accounts and Audit is one of the premier committees of parliament, and it is served by a great secretariat that does brilliant work. I pay tribute to the two chairs of the committee I have served under in this parliament, the member for Boothby and then the member for Groom. The member for Groom came in as chair in the middle of our most heated inquiry of the last three years, where a few young turks from both sides of parliament were trying to make their names—

Mr Ian Macfarlane: You were one of them!

Mr CONRODY: I was one of the young turks—and he controlled us superbly. He looked at the public interest, he understood where people were heading and he managed a very heated committee process very well. So I pay tribute to the members for Groom and Boothby and wish them every success in their future endeavours. Thank you very much.

Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue

Report

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (09:47): On behalf of the Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue, I present the following reports, with minutes of proceedings: 2015 Annual report of the Australian Taxation Office: first report and External scrutiny of the Australian Taxation Office.

Reports made parliamentary papers in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr VAN MANEN: by leave—I wish to speak to both the House Committee on Tax and Revenue's reports just presented, commencing with the report entitled 2015 Annual report of the Australian Taxation Office: first report.

This report reviews the evidence gathered by the inquiry through submissions and the committee's public hearings in February with the Australian Taxation Office, the Inspector-General of Taxation, and other stakeholders. This is part of the regular scrutiny by the parliament of one of the most important agencies of government. It is the fifth such report in the life of this parliament.

The ATO's introduction of new computer systems was again the chief topic of discussion. Take-up of the new web-based lodgement system by individuals, myTax, has been rapid and appears to be going smoothly, albeit that around tax time, in early July, there are glitches and it certainly gets a little bit slower.
Tax practitioners have also complained that the ATO's tax agent portal, which was heavily criticised in previous hearings, was still not functioning well. Practitioners were also concerned that the timetable for replacing the portal was unclear. The committee has recommended in this report that the ATO publish a timetable for that development.

On the other hand, tax professionals reported that the ATO had been more willing to engage with them and to hear their concerns.

The committee welcomed the ATO's caution in retaining the existing electronic lodgement system alongside the new lodgement system which will replace it. The new system will use standard business reporting, which has the potential to create greater efficiencies and reduce red tape for business in their dealings with all areas of government.

The ATO is engaged in a broad and ambitious program of technical and cultural change, which it calls 'reinventing'. This has already shown some good results, but a change such as the one envisaged will take many years and will require sustained energy and engagement of all the senior staff of the ATO.

I now move to the second report presented, entitled External scrutiny of the Australian Taxation Office.

The ATO's main scrutineers are the Auditor-General, the Inspector-General of Taxation, parliamentary committees, the courts, and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

The key issue during the inquiry was the extent of overlap between these scrutineers. In particular, some stakeholders suggested that there was overlap in reviews, or that external scrutiny was 'haphazard'. The ATO gave several examples of what it saw as overlap.

The scrutineers, however, rejected these claims. They stated that they held co-ordination meetings that were effective. In addition, some scrutiny reports have described why reviews from different scrutineers were not duplicative, although sounding similar at the 'headline' level.

The committee concluded that the extent of any duplication, if it does occur, is minimal. The committee supports the ability of scrutineers to select the reviews they think are the most valuable and within their mandate. The committee also decided that their co-ordination process is sound.

I would like to make two other comments in relation to the inquiry. The first is that the committee supports the work of external scrutineers. The tax system is complex. The ATO has considerable resources and strong powers. The cost and practicalities of the legal system mean that most taxpayers cannot have their day in court. However, we all benefit from the integrity and expertise of our scrutineers.

My other comment is that the quality of communication between the ATO and the Inspector-General of Taxation appears to be problematic. The committee has recommended that these parties redouble their efforts to improve communication before, during and after reviews. I would personally add that the Inspector-General and the ATO could also look at occasions to engage in dialogue more widely, not just around reviews. My understanding is that both parties would welcome such an opportunity.

Both inquiries benefitted from the views of stakeholders, the scrutineers and the ATO. The committee very much appreciates the time, effort and expertise that stakeholders applied to
their submissions. The committee also appreciates the contribution made by witnesses at the hearings and their readiness to engage with the committee.

Finally, I would like to thank the secretariat for their tremendous work over the course of this parliament. It was my privilege to chair the committee for the second half of this parliament. So, to David Monk, the committee secretary, and the team, thank you very, very much for all of your hard work. I know they are here in the chamber. I would like to thank my colleagues on the committee for their support and assistance during the inquiries and, in particular, the deputy chair, Bernie Ripoll, who is now retiring and leaving this place.

I commend the reports to the House.

Corporations and Financial Services Committee

Report

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (09:53): On behalf of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services I present the following reports: Impairment of customer loans and the report on the 2014-15 annual reports of bodies established under the ASIC Act.

Reports made parliamentary papers in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr VAN MANEN: by leave—The first report that I wish to speak to is the Impairment of customer loans. The terms of reference for this inquiry into the impairment of customer loans required the committee to consider the practices of banks towards borrowers' financial difficulty and the role of constructive or non-monetary defaults which include breaches of loan contract terms other than borrowers not meeting repayment requirements.

The committee is aware that the matters raised in this inquiry have been examined previously, and, despite previous examination, allegations continue to be raised. In order to ensure that the issues raised during the inquiry were thoroughly examined, the committee has:

- conducted this inquiry over 11 months;
- received and published 195 submissions;
- considered more than 11,000 thousand pages of evidence;
- held eight public hearings leading to more than 450 pages of transcribed evidence;
- asked and received answers to over 300 written questions;
- examined a number of cases in some detail to gain an understanding of the practices of banks.

The majority of the evidence received by the committee addressed small business and commercial loans. Many are small family businesses who may still have to borrow millions of dollars to achieve their commercial objectives yet be run by an individual, family or partnership that has significant personal exposure due to the use of personal assets such as the family home as security.

From the evidence it has received, the committee has been able to determine that there has been—albeit in a minority of cases—a persistent pattern of abuse of the almost complete asymmetry of power in the relationship between lender and borrower.

The committee has not been able to discover evidence that demonstrates that there was widespread or systematic illegal behaviour by banks or that there were deliberate impairments of loans motivated solely by clawbacks or warranties associated with acquisitions of banks.
However, the committee does consider that there are four factors that create an environment in which small business borrowers are very vulnerable and that banks are able to exploit this vulnerability. These factors are:

- the significant level of discretion and commercial judgement available to the banks for both initial lending and the management of loans in financial difficulty;
- complex, non-negotiable loan contracts, coupled with gaps in existing legislation and regulations, give banks the power to behave in ways that—in relation to loans—are unethical, unreasonable and lack transparency;
- in many cases, borrowers in financial difficulty are unable to pursue their rights though the courts because the process in either unaffordable, or they have lost control of their financial assets due to the appointment of receivers; and
- there are significant gaps in the coverage of mediation and external dispute resolution schemes leaving borrowers without the means to have their disputes with banks tested.

The committee considers that to address the vulnerability of small business and commercial borrowers it is essential that a single body be empowered to:

- lead and/or coordinate the implementation of the outcomes of this inquiry and recent government announcements that relate to small business in order to avoid the significant risk that major gaps and flaws in the protections for small business would remain;
- bring together a team with expertise in financial services, ethics and education to establish standards for the conduct of bank management and their employees in relation to small business loans and to work with the banking industry to implement those standards and appropriate mediation and dispute resolution schemes;
- work with the banking industry to develop nationally consistent standardised loan contracts; and
- where gaps in the implementation of those standards and appropriate dispute resolution schemes remain, to act as a small business loans dispute resolution tribunal.

The committee considers that the most appropriate body to undertake this role is the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman. The committee therefore recommends that the government bring forward legislation and other measures to give the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman the relevant powers to carry out this role, and to do so retrospectively where appropriate.

The committee has made a number of other recommendations in relation to practices of banks, valuers and receivers.

I commend the report to the House.

Mr RUDDOCK (Berowra) (09:59): by leave—I thank the member for Forde for tabling the report and his comments about it. I do not normally, I might say, participate in committees that deal with such complex and difficult issues relating to financial affairs. It is not my area of expertise. So, it was with a good deal of trepidation that I joined the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services to conduct the inquiry in relation to impairment of customer loans. But I did so because I became aware, in my role as a member of parliament, that there were people who had been dealing with one particular bank who
suddenly found that they were on the brink of bankruptcy because loans that they had negotiated were found to be impaired, and I wanted to see a situation where we could understand what was happening and try to find a way forward.

Parliamentary committees are probably not the best way to do it. If you read the terms of reference—and the minister at the table gave us these terms of reference, as I recall—you will find that we were asked to look at:

a. practices of banks and other financial institutions using a constructive default (security revaluation) process to impair loans, where constructive default/security revaluation means the engineering or the creation of an event of default whereby a financial institution deliberately reduces, through valuation, the value of securities held by that institution, thereby raising the loan-to-value ratio resulting in the loan being impaired;
b. role of property valuers…;
c. practices of banks and other financial institutions in Australia using non-monetary conditions of default to impair the loans of their customers, and the use of punitive clauses such as suspension clauses and offset clauses by these institutions;

I do not regard a parliamentary committee as being able to adequately deal with these issues, and I will explain why. If you are going to inquire as to who is to be believed in relation to issues like impairment then you effectively have to hear the evidence from the party who believes they are aggrieved, you need to hear the evidence of the people against whom accusations are made, and, in order to try to determine the truth, you need to comprehensively cross-examine each of the parties to be able to find where the truth lies.

When you have a committee, where other members have an entitlement, you can never get to a point where you are adequately able to test the evidence that is before you. So, one should not be surprised that the committee, in its consideration, uses language like:

The committee considered allegations that there was a deliberate strategy by the Commonwealth Bank to over-impair loans in order to seek financial gain through a range of mechanisms after the acquisition of Bankwest in 2007. After considering the evidence and responses it has received, the committee has not been able to determine that deliberate impairment of loans, solely motivated by clawbacks or warranties, occurred.

The reason you can never get to that is that you can never effectively cross-examine the parties and test the evidence. A parliamentary committee specifically was not able to look at all of those issues.

I want to draw a further point in relation to this, because the committee went on to observe: While the contractual arrangements associated with the acquisition of Bankwest may have played a role, the evidence before the committee points strongly to a culture of placing profit and return to shareholders ahead of the interests of borrowers.

The most interesting aspect of this inquiry, to me, was that there was an opportunity to consider evidence in relation to two banks where there were suggestions that loans may have been impaired deliberately, and the practices involving each bank were different. For me, the Commonwealth Bank has meant a great deal. I have known many of its senior executives over a lifetime. I had one of its money boxes—which I am sure most people will remember—given to me at school. I look at somebody like David Murray, who is contributing to national debate and who has been a very, very important leader in relation to probity and appropriate conduct.
I look at somebody like Les Taylor, whom I knew as the bank's corporate counsel. I look at those who have followed and I cannot see people conducting themselves in the same way.

I do not know on what basis the Commonwealth Bank were asked to take over Bankwest, but it is quite clear that, having been asked by the government to do so, they were a bit worried about the nature of the loan book they received. There is a Mr Narev. I have never met him, but he has made some comments that they thought they were getting a lot of lesser quality loans. That may lead to a situation where 2,000 loans were impaired—it may. They may have been lesser loans. I do not know. But what I am reasonably satisfied about is that in numbers of cases there have been suggestions to me that if the bank had been reasonable and had talked matters through—had negotiated with their clients—the matters might have been resolved very differently.

I will mention just one case. A client of the bank's who was building units in Sydney found, regrettably, that the principal of the building company he had employed had died. The client was worried about whether those who followed would be able to complete the contract. He went to the bank and said, 'Look, I would like to change the builder, to engage a major constructor, Hornibrook, to finish the job.' The bank said no. When the builder did not deliver the project in a timely way, the bank called up its interests, essentially closed down the operation and sold the property—and, I might say, somebody else made an absolute killing in finishing it off. I would like to think that banks, when they are faced with a situation like that, would sit down with people and work out the appropriate way to deal with these issues. I know that they have not conducted themselves unlawfully but I think they have conducted themselves in ways that, in some cases, are absolutely unconscionable.

A committee like this was never going to be able to get to the bottom of that, but I think it is very important for a new government to be aware of the recommendations that are being made in this report, because we have to find a way forward where these issues will be addressed. I have encouraged the Commonwealth Bank, when they have appeared before us, to sit down, like others have—and I refer to the ANZ bank—with their clients, work out where the problem is and come to a reasonable, negotiated settlement. The Commonwealth Bank has essentially refused to do it. I encouraged them, when they appeared before us, to put in place a situation of independent mediation where we could enable people's issues to be adequately tested and address the issue as to whether the bank—not that they had acted unlawfully, because I am absolutely certain they had the best legal advice; they were never going to act unlawfully—had clearly acted unconscionably.

Recommendation 11 in this report is absolutely essential to providing a way forward. It recommends that:

a. lenders should engage independent experts nominated by the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman to critically examine contentious cases to determine what, if any, restitution may be appropriate in the light of the standards developed by the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, with particular regard to unconscionable conduct; and

b. that funding through a user pays industry funding model be provided to Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman acting as a tribunal to consider cases retrospectively in the event that lenders do not choose to voluntarily examine contentious cases as recommended above.

So the banks will have two choices. One is to appoint independent mediators and to work these issues through. And, if they do not, there will be a body set up to consider those cases
retrospectively in the context of whether or not their behaviour was unconscionable. These are remedies in relation to consumer protection that we expect in every other area, and they ought to be available to the banks' clientele.

If you think I am passionate about it, I am, because I believe that people have been treated quite unjustly. And I very much regret how the Commonwealth Bank, invited to look at these issues—probably because of the enormity of the potential claims—approached this. Imagine if you have 2,000 customers all looking for $1 million compensation; $2 billion might come off the balance sheet, and wouldn't that be dreadful? You can see why they may be taking such a view. But, let me say, I did say to the banks during the inquiries, 'Look, you ought to sit down and deal with these matters independently, and if you do not then you may be faced with a royal commission.'

I want to speak about that issue because some comments have been made that others are taking up the view that perhaps there should be a royal commission. I want to make it very clear that I support the recommendations of this report because I think they provide a better way forward, and that ought to be understood. If there were a royal commission, it would be doing merely what our parliamentary committee did before. It may be able to get to the point where it cross-examines and gets a better understanding of what has happened, but at the end it will make further recommendations. That would not be the end of the matter, if a royal commission were appointed. It would mean another inquiry.

My view is that the recommendations this committee has made to set up a body that will be retrospectively empowered to adjudicate on those issues are a far better way to go and will give a more meaningful result. That is why I support the recommendations of this report. But let me just say to my colleagues at the table—because I know that if the government are returned, given the responsibilities that they hold, they may be looking at this issue—that I want to make it very clear that I am a great fan of the Commonwealth Bank. I want to see its reputation restored. And I believe—and I hope the bank is listening to this speech or will read it—that its reputation will be restored only if it is prepared in good faith, with independent arbiters, to deal with these issues, not in terms of the lawfulness of what has happened but absolutely in terms of whether or not the conduct was unconscionable. If they do that, there may be some justice.
report in a timely way entitled *A world without the death penalty: Australia's advocacy for the abolition of capital punishment*.

Ideally, this inquiry should not be necessary. Ideally, we would live in a world where the death penalty was relegated to the dark pages of history. Sadly, this is not the case. Indeed, the need for Australia to take stock of the situation and solidify our efforts for global abolition has never been more pressing. This inquiry was undertaken with a view to determining what role Australia might play in the global movement towards abolition; how we, as an abolitionist country, might play a role in reducing the number of executions globally and best assist retentionist nations on the pathway toward abolition.

In 1977, only 16 countries had abolished the death penalty. Today, a majority of countries have abolished it in law or in practice, with four countries last year making the transition to abolitionist. While 2015 marked the first time that a majority of countries were abolitionist, it also recorded an increase in executions carried out. Of all executions recorded in 2015, 89 per cent were carried out in just three countries: Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. I might say that there are others who do not report the numbers that they execute, and in some cases they may be even larger. However, the United States of America has found itself in the unenviable list of countries carrying out the most recorded executions, even though, as I have said, China and North Korea are both suspected of having carried out far more. I regret that, as recently as this week, media reporting suggests that a country, or perhaps countries, in our region may also be considering a resumption of executions. Were that to be so, it would be most regrettable.

The application of the death penalty is not limited to hardened criminals guilty of the most serious crimes. Indeed, the list of those executed or under sentence of death includes people with intellectual disabilities and juvenile offenders, and in many cases people were sentenced following trials that did not meet international fair standards of trial. Of those sentenced in recent times, some have been found guilty of apostasy, blasphemy, homosexuality, witchcraft or adultery—let me say, not terrorism and not murders. The death penalty is never carried out in a way that could be deemed to be humane, with some even being sentenced to death by stoning.

Last year, 2015, marked the sad occasion where Australian convicted drug smugglers Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran were executed in Indonesia. This event sadly focused the minds of many Australians on the issue of the death penalty, and left many wondering what we, as a nation, might do to eliminate this barbarous practice. I am pleased that the government has sought to answer this question by referring this inquiry to the committee that I have chaired, and through its other activities. We can be proud of Australia's advocacy for abolition, but there is more that we can and should do.

The report that I am presenting to the parliament today comprises thirteen recommendations. After many months of public hearings, private meetings, in-depth research and consultation, the committee has arrived at these recommendations as a way that Australia can effectively drive change. Included in the committee's report is a recommendation to develop a whole-of-government strategy for abolition. This includes changes to the way in which we share information internationally, developing a coordinated strategy document for dealing with individual cases, developing a strategy for international abolition efforts, undertaking much needed research and analysis, advocating for transparency, and augmenting the work already undertaken by other nations.
In developing a formal strategy, we will join the United Kingdom and Norway, who are actively advocating for abolition internationally. The committee also recommends that Australia plays an ongoing leading role in the abolition movement, including the World Congress Against the Death Penalty. Recommendations outlined in this report are realistic and practical.

While it is inappropriate for the committee to opine how broad recommendations may be pursued, I believe that in any consideration of priorities we should include powerful international influence. For instance, if the United States, our closest ally, were to change its policy, I think it would present a powerful argument for many others to follow.

Australia has a strong voice on the global stage, and our ability to coordinate our approach with other influential partners may well be beneficial.

I do thank all the witnesses who made themselves available to this inquiry. I particularly note the involvement of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Federal Police, and the Attorney-General's Department. I am grateful to foreign governments for their willingness to assist this inquiry and for the dedication of organisations including Amnesty International, Reprieve, Human Rights Law Centre, Australians Against Capital Punishment, Human Rights Watch, Parliamentarians for Global Action and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, along with many other organisations who have contributed.

Having campaigned against the death penalty for all of my time since entering this place some 42½ years ago, it seems fitting that I am able to present this report as the sun sets on my parliamentary career. Somebody else must have written that for me! I am honoured to do so. I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, for this reference and her keen and ongoing interest in Australia's effort to abolish the death penalty. I thank particularly my colleagues whom I have waved at formally before, who have played a key role in this inquiry: my colleague the member for Fowler, Chris Hayes, who has co-chaired Parliamentarians against the Death Penalty, and my retiring colleague the member for Fremantle, Melissa Parke. For their dedicated work, I thank the staff of the joint standing committee, including Vikki Darrough, Nathan Fewkes, Sonya Fladun and Emma Banyer, led ably by our committee clerk, who is hiding behind there, Jerome Brown, whom I acknowledge as the leader. He ensured that we were able to do this report in a timely way; he is, with his team, extraordinarily professional, and I do want to thank them. I also acknowledge my staff member Ross Macdonald for his work. It may not be known that he worked previously with my Senate colleague and friend from the ACT previously, who played a leadership role in these matters, and he comes with a personal compassion that I know only too well.

The death penalty is barbaric. It degrades those who perpetrate it. The result is final. But, for me, the most basic principle of human rights, the right to life, should always prevail. I commend this report to the House.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough):** Member for Berowra, would you mind moving that the House take note of the report?

**Mr RUDDOCK:** I have failed on my last day! Forgive me, Mr Deputy Speaker Goodenough. With great pleasure, I move:

That the House take note of the report—this very, very significant report.
Mr O'DOWD: On behalf of the Joint Select Committee on Trade and Investment Growth, I present the committee's report on its inquiry into Australia's future in research and innovation, together with minutes of the proceedings.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr O'DOWD: by leave—Australia faces a world of rapid change as technology creates opportunities to develop new solutions to social and economic problems. Through the inquiry into Australia's future in research and innovation, the committee examined whether Australia's innovation system is enabling the realisation of these opportunities and creating valuable new products, processes and industries.

Delving deeper, the committee considered how ideas created through research and innovation are developed and commercialised. The committee heard from a diverse range of participants in the innovation system, from university researchers to venture capitalists; from start-up software businesses to world-leading medical companies.

Inquiry participants generally welcomed the government's National Innovation and Science Agenda, or NISA. The NISA contains a suite of initiatives designed to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship across all sectors of the Australian economy.

As research and innovation is a progressive field globally, the committee has recommended that the NISA initiatives be reviewed after three years to assess their effectiveness and determine whether they should be continued.

The foundations of Australia's innovation system are strong. Australia has a well-educated population, globally recognised research organisations, and a stable business environment.

It is questionable, however, whether we are taking full advantage of the opportunities that this foundation provides. The committee heard that Australia's record of translating investments in the research sector into outcomes with social and economic benefit could be improved.

One area of potential improvement is the exchange of knowledge between the research sector and business. Rates of collaboration between Australian universities and business are among the lowest in the OECD.

Increased collaboration with researchers and universities could assist business to develop novel solutions to the real world problems being faced. Collaborative research is also crucial to developing the disruptive technologies that could form the basis of new companies and industries.

In view of this, the committee has recommended that the Department of Education and Training examine successful overseas models which could be adapted and used to encourage greater collaboration between universities and businesses in Australia.

Innovative ideas are the fuel for new and improved goods and services, but their development requires capital investment. Australia's innovative start-up companies have often struggled to attract the early-stage investment needed to grow their business.
While still small, the committee was pleased to see signs of growth in Australia's capital venture market. This positive development could be enhanced by initiatives announced by NISA. These include the establishment of a biomedical translation fund and reform to the tax treatment of early-stage investments.

The committee has recommended that Innovation and Science Australia identify emerging industries where Australia has the potential to become a world leader. The committee has also recommended further examination of possible measures to encourage innovation raised by participants during the inquiry.

I would like to thank all those who participated in the inquiry by providing information and submissions and appearing at our public hearings. Finally, I would like to thank my deputy chair, the member for Charlton, Mr Pat Conroy, and my fellow committee members, including Senator Joe Bullock, who has now left the other house, for their support and participation in this inquiry. I would like to thank the secretariat, Stephanie Mikac, John Carter, Timothy Brennan and Carissa Skinner, for the splendid way they pulled together this inquiry. A lot of work was done by them and it is very much appreciated by the committee. I commend the report to the House.

DELEGATION REPORTS

Australian Parliamentary Delegation to Japan and the Republic of Korea

Mr O'DOWD (Flemm) (10:31): I present the report of the parliamentary delegation to Japan and Korea from 9 to 21 November 2014, and I ask leave of the House to make a short statement in connection with this report.

Leave granted.

Mr O'DOWD: I present the report of the parliamentary delegation to Japan and the Republic of Korea, which took place between 9 and 21 November 2014. The delegation had several aims. These included discussions of our trade relationships, particularly in the context of the new free trade agreements being finalised with each country at the time of the delegation's visit. We also wanted to explore the role of Australia's energy and minerals exports in the Japanese and South Korean economies and the countries' approaches to energy policy in the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan.

Among our other appointments, the delegation had the honour of meeting the presiding officers of the National Diet of Japan and the Speaker of the Korean National Assembly and held meetings with parliamentary friendship groups in both countries. We were deeply honoured by the generous hospitality extended to us all. We thank the parliamentarians in Japan and South Korea for making the time to hold informative and friendly discussions with us.

The dominant impression gained by the delegation was the extent to which Australia is relied on as a partner to Japan and South Korea in the secure supply of energy resources, minerals and food products. The visit gave us new insight into the deeply complementary trade relationships between our countries and the extent to which Australia fuels the Japanese and Korean economies. Australia is Japan's largest supplier of energy resources, providing 25 per cent of Japan's total energy needs. This includes 64 per cent of Japan's coal imports, 21 per cent of its natural gas and 19 per cent of its uranium imports. In addition, Australia supplies 59 per cent of Japan's iron ore and over 50 per cent of its beef imports. The
delegation was pleased to see firsthand Australian energy and mineral resources being used to fuel the Japanese economy. For instance, the delegation had the opportunity to visit the Isogo power station in Yokohama, the most advanced coal-fired power station in the world. Employing ultrasupercritical technology, the plant uses Australian coal and produces 25 per cent less carbon emissions than the global average coal power plant. The delegation saw Australia's strong common interest with Japan in seeing that low-emissions coal-fired technology is widely deployed.

We visited the steelworks of Nippon Steel and Sumitomo Metal in Osaka, which sources 50 per cent of its iron ore from Australia. We saw this being transformed into rail wheels for use both in Japan and in Australia on our mining projects. At the Sakai centre, which is one of dozens of LNG terminals in Japan, some 1.5 million tonnes of Australian LNG arrives each year from Woodside Pluto projects in Western Australia. The gas is used in the Kansai Electric Power Company's gas-fired power stations to provide electricity to its millions of customers in Kansai region. I am pleased to report that the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement and the Korea-Australia Free Trade Agreement had widespread political support in both countries.

It was encouraging for the delegation to hear from parliamentarians we met in Japan that the relationship with Australia has never been closer. In addition to our already very strong economic and people-to-people links, it was emphasised to the delegation that Japan would like to see the security and military relationship grow in the years ahead.

The Republic of Korea also deeply impressed the delegation. It is worth recalling just how extraordinary South Korea's economic development has been. In 1953, shortly after the Korean War, South Korea's gross domestic product stood at US$41 million and income per capita was just $67 per year. The country was amongst the poorest in the world. By 2014—just 60 years later—South Korea's GDP had grown more than 31,000-fold and is now over $1.4 trillion. The Republic of Korea is today the world's 13th largest economy. That is a great improvement. Australia's trade relationship with South Korea, notably our coal, iron ore, food and education services exports, has played a part in this extraordinary achievement.

Nothing better epitomises South Korea's economic development than the fact it now exports its own indigenously developed nuclear power plants, one of which the delegation visited during our visit. We also saw the steel modules for the Gorgon LNG Plant being fabricated, ready for shipment to Barrow Island off north-west Western Australia. It is very pleasing to see that the project is now producing and exporting gas back to Japan. With the Korea-Australia Free Trade Agreement now in force, there is potential for an expansion of Australia's agricultural and services exports, and increased Korean investment in Australia.

Goodwill towards Australia is evident in both Japan and South Korea. This seems to be, at least in part, because of the experiences of many tens of thousands of Japanese and Korean people who have travelled to Australia for education and holidays. The still well-remembered contribution of Australian forces in the Korean War also remains deeply appreciated by the South Koreans. We were pleased to be able to visit the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan and we were all honoured to lay a wreath at the Australian Monument for the 340 Australians who were killed during the war.

The delegation wishes to record its appreciation for the work of our parliament's International and Parliamentary Relations Office and Australia's diplomatic missions to Japan.
and South Korea for their efforts in developing the programs and the excellent support provided during our visits.

As the House well knows, the former member for Canning, Mr Don Randall MP, tragically died in July 2015. Mr Randall was the leader of our delegation, and we express our sincere condolences to his family and our appreciation of his leadership of this delegation.

I would also like to thank Jerome Brown, who finalised this report and travelled with us on that very important visit in connection with our free trade agreements. His knowledge of the area was very much appreciated by the delegation members.

I commend the report to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): I thank the member the Flynn and I am sure the Randall family will be very touched by your words today.

COMMITTEES

Communications and the Arts Committee

Report

Mrs BRONWYN BISHOP (Mackellar) (10:40): On behalf of the Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts I present the committee's report entitled Arts and the news to rural and regional Australia together with the minutes of proceedings.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mrs BRONWYN BISHOP: by leave—Rural and regional Australians deserve access to high-quality arts performances and reliable news services. This inquiry has been a timely and productive examination of how well rural and regional communities are currently served in these two distinct, but important, areas.

The live performance industry in Australia each year reaches millions of people, enriching their lives and providing a host of community and health benefits, as well as contributing millions of dollars to the economy. In 2012, the live performance industry generated $2.546 million (value adding $1.529 million to the Australian economy) and employed over 18,000 people.

As a group, Australia's major performing arts companies reached 16 million people in 2014-15, through live arts performances and broadcasts or recordings of their own work. In 2015, the major performing arts companies delivered live arts performances and arts programs to close to four million people in metropolitan and regional areas.

Major performing arts companies like Opera Australia and The Australian Ballet bring excellence to the one-third of Australians who live in rural and regional communities. Opera Australia, as Australia's national opera company, presents more than 700 performances each year, reaching more than half a million people. Since 1996 it has toured to 110 different venues, presented 549 high-quality performances and travelled more than 280,000 kilometres around the country. The Australian Ballet delivers 200 performances in cities and regional areas across Australia each year, reaching over 10,000 people in regional communities.

The performances and interactive programs delivered by these groups are highly valued by these communities, and often have a profound impact on audiences and participants. They can also be an important source of inspiration for, and have a long-lasting impact on, students and
local professionals. These groups, and the other performing arts companies, play a crucial role in shaping and reflecting Australia's cultural identity.

In 2014 there were over 18.5 million tickets for attendances at live arts performances, exceeding the football sporting code attendances of over 13.7 million that year. This was a 3.4 per cent increase on 2013 attendances at live arts performances. In Australia, which prides itself on being a sporting nation, the ticket numbers for attendances for live arts performances reflect that the arts are most highly valued.

Touring is one of the key ways in which people in rural and regional communities can access quality live performances without having to visit a capital city or larger metropolitan area. Regional touring is generally undertaken by Australia's major performing arts companies and some small to medium arts groups, and is usually subsidised to some degree by the company itself. These touring and regional engagement activities also typically receive government funding support. The performing arts groups do an outstanding job in delivering tours and regional engagement activities to rural and regional communities. There is wide demand for these shows and engagement, and they are highly valued by people in these communities. Australia's major performing arts companies recognise the importance of enabling everyone, regardless of how far they may live from a major metropolitan centre, access to the very best Australia has to offer.

While regional tours often run at a loss, with groups regularly subsidising their touring activities, they tend to regard it as an 'investment', rather than a loss. Governments must see its funding for these tours and activities in a similar light.

The committee's nine recommendations relating to the arts are aimed at helping to ensure that the excellent work already being done continues and, where possible, is further enhanced. The committee accordingly recommends: the continuation of funding for Australia's major performing arts companies; the government take into account the dynamic and changing nature of the arts in grants programs, including acknowledging the dynamic nature of the major performing arts companies, like Opera Australia, which sees its repertoire as evolving, for example, to include amplified performances and musicals, and challenges the definition of opera so it is not stuck in a 19th century form of opera that makes it part of the past rather than part of the future; the government, when assessing the effectiveness of its funding, encourage the educative role that performing arts companies play—for example, the Australian Ballet, which brings professional excellence to these communities in its performances, and through its interactions with schools has reached thousands of teachers and students; maintaining adequate funding for the Australia Council for the Playing Australia program; national touring status arrangements are retained and extended to additional performing arts companies; the Australia Council explore ways to encourage and formalise mentoring arrangements between performing arts companies and rural and regional communities; the new Catalyst Australian Arts and Culture Fund be evaluated, and this be reported on the department's website to heighten awareness of the program; the government consider funding and support for digital innovation in the delivery of the arts; and the eligibility for the Catalyst Australian Arts and Culture fund includes competitions and eisteddfods.

Commercial, public and community broadcasters play important roles in providing news services to people in rural and regional Australia. The ability to access diverse local content,
including news and emergency information, is vitally important to Australians living outside of the major metropolitan centres. People in these communities should have equitable access to fast and reliable broadband and related services. The government needs to take the necessary actions to help ensure that rural and regional communities continue to receive reliable and quality news services, including locally relevant content.

The committee makes seven recommendations aimed at providing the necessary support for regional services in the changing media landscape. Accordingly, the committee recommends: reducing broadcast licence fees for free-to-air and community broadcasters; the need for the government to take into account the implications of any reforms to media ownership on broadcasting and news services to rural and regional Australia; reviewing the existing broadcast licencing system to consider the adequacy of the concept of 'local' and the provision of incentives for broadcasters who deliver more targeted local content to rural and regional audiences; ensuring that the ABC board is more representative of the Australian community, including rural and regional communities and ensure two members are from rural and regional Australia; changes to the ABC Code of Practice to include a requirement that any correction or clarification must be made on the relevant program in which the error was made, in addition to being published on the ABC website; developing a level playing field for public, commercial and community broadcasters in adhering to standards for broadcasting; developing a framework to enhance the accuracy and accountability of the ABC; and the SBS and ABC remaining as separate entities.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the organisations and individuals that assisted the committee during the inquiry through submissions and giving evidence at public hearings. I also thank my colleagues, the deputy chair, Mr Tim Watts MP, and other members of the committee—Mr Laurie Ferguson, Ms Nola Marino, Mr Graham Perrett, Ms Melissa Price, Mr Rowan Ramsey, Ms Maria Vamvakinou and Mrs Lucy Wicks—for their contribution to the report. I would also like to thank committee secretary, Mr Stephen Boyd; inquiry secretary, Ms Samantha Mannette; senior researcher, Dr John White; and the secretariat team for their diligent work on the report. I commend the report to the House.

Migration Committee

Report

Mrs MARKUS (Macquarie) (10:49): On behalf of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration, I present the committee's report of the inquiry into the Seasonal Worker Program entitled Seasonal change.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mrs MARKUS: by leave—It gives me great pleasure to present the committee's report for its inquiry into the Seasonal Worker Program. The Seasonal Worker Program is extremely important to the developing nations of the Pacific islands and Timor Leste as well as the Australian horticultural and agricultural industries. It assists these nations by providing valuable employment opportunities, economic development through remittances, and new skills and training for seasonal workers. It also supports the Australian horticulture industry by filling a significant industry labour shortage with hardworking, reliable and productive employees.
While this is a valuable program providing job opportunities for Australians, particularly in the areas of labour shortages, there appear to be poor perceptions surrounding the agriculture industry—in particular, that it lacks viable career pathways. More needs to be done to change this misconception and to support youth employment pathways.

That is why the committee has recommended the Australian government allocate funds to establish a three-year pilot program for 17- to 24-year-olds to train and work in the agricultural sector, a Future Force, similar to the model of the Green Army Program, with appropriate adjustments. Overall, submitters were very supportive of the program and its objective to contribute to economic development and support Australian employers in the horticultural sector.

However, the committee received evidence that there were a number of impediments preventing the program from reaching its full potential. Most notably is the horticultural industry's significant reliance on working holiday maker visa holders. Over 41,000 second working holiday visas were granted in the last financial year, 2014-15, and over 92 per cent indicated they had engaged in agricultural work.

While the impetus to establish the working holiday visa is for cultural exchange, the reality is it fills a significant labour gap within the industry and it has been asserted that is in competition with the Seasonal Worker Program. The committee has therefore recommended that the Australian government undertake a comprehensive review of the changes to the seasonal worker and holiday maker programs by December 2017 to ensure they are meeting their stated goals and not adversely impacting on each other or the local labour market.

Female participation in the program remains very low, at only 13 per cent of participation in the last financial year. Gender equality and empowering women has been shown to contribute to economic growth, development, stability and poverty reduction. The committee has made a number of recommendations aimed at increasing gender equality and providing women with greater employment opportunities.

The committee also recommended that the Australian government standardise labour market testing requirements across the range of temporary work visas, undertake a review of current superannuation requirements for Seasonal Worker Program participants and consider expanding the program to the aged-care, childcare and disability care sectors, as has already happened in the north of Australia. The committee recommends that the Seasonal Worker Program provide an employment pathway for Australia Pacific Technical College graduates.

I would sincerely like to thank all the stakeholders, particularly the governments of Seasonal Worker Program participating countries, approved employers and growers, peak bodies, government departments, academics, unions that presented, and organisations and individuals, for their time in preparing submissions and appearing at public hearings. I would also like to thank my hardworking committee colleagues for participating in this inquiry. I would particularly like to thank the deputy chair, Maria Vamvakinou. She and I have been chairing or deputy chairing this committee for some time now. I would also like to thank Jerome Brown, the committee secretary, and Paul Zinkel, the inquiry secretary.

The report was very insightful. There have been a number of challenges, as we heard, particularly in the last 12 months, around labour market hire companies and their work in the agricultural sector. This was an issue that was particularly raised with us. While the
compliance and other settings around the Seasonal Worker Program are very strict and we are
seeing employers choosing the Seasonal Worker Program as a better, safer, more reliable
option with more integrity, we did hear about some issues. The government has taken serious
action through Taskforce Cadena and other measures to ensure workers in the agricultural
sector are treated fairly and receive all their work entitlements. I move:

That the House take note of the report.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): The debate is adjourned in accordance with
standing order 39. The resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for the next
sitting.

Reference to Federation Chamber

Mrs MARKUS (Macquarie) (10:55): I move:

That the order of the day be referred to the Federation Chamber for debate.

Question agreed to.

Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity Committee

Report

Mr MATHESON (Macarthur) (10:56): On behalf of the Parliamentary Joint Committee
on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, I present the committee's
report on its inquiry into the jurisdiction of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement
Integrity.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Report

Dr STONE (Murray) (10:56): On behalf of the Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, I present the committee's first report of the inquiry into
development partnerships in agriculture, entitled Food for thought: improving health and
nutrition in the Indo-Pacific region.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Dr STONE: by leave—On behalf of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Defence and Trade, and as the Chair of the Foreign Affairs and Aid Subcommittee, I am
pleased to present the committee's first report for the inquiry into the role of development
partnerships in agriculture and agribusiness in promoting poverty reduction, economic growth
and regional stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

This first report offers some directions on what Australia can do to improve health and
nutrition outcomes for our nearby Indo-Pacific region, and particularly for our nearest
neighbours in the Pacific.

The evidence taken during the inquiry urged the committee to note that there is a looming
health crisis in our region.

By 2050 the global demand for food is expected to rise by 60 per cent. Meeting the need
for a sustainable supply of nutritious and affordable food will be 'one of the greatest
challenges of our time'.
The Indo-Pacific region is the epicentre of a youth bulge. Significant nutrition deficits will not only have grave implications for maternal and child health but also have long-term economic and population health impacts.

This report details the result of increasing affluence in some families, where, despite more of family income being spent on food, it is not necessarily being spent to purchase food with a higher nutritional value. Urbanisation, changed agricultural production, the incursion of urban development, the migration of men and youths to cities or overseas and changes in trading patterns in the Pacific region are all making a difference to what people have access to in the way of food and the preferences in food consumption.

As local food production and fishing industries have fewer people engaged in them and often overseas remittances provide families with additional income, unhealthy imported convenience foods—for example, fatty mutton flaps, turkey tails, turkey necks and other offcuts from the abattoirs of the US—typically become available in quantities, and often at a price, where they become a preferred and higher status food for many consumers. Tinned spam and fish is too often replacing the fresh meats and fresh fish which once underpinned the local diet.

The result is that the enduring challenge of malnutrition, particularly among mothers and children, has transformed into a double burden of both overnutrition and undernutrition, sometimes occurring in the same communities.

The statistics presented to the committee bear this out. For example:

- in Papua New Guinea, 49 per cent of children are stunted, while 13.8 per cent of the children under five are overweight or obese; and
- In the Solomon Islands, 33 per cent of children are stunted, while 39 per cent of women are obese.

The health impacts of poor nutrition, combined with the rising price of healthier fresh foods, a more sedentary lifestyle and a lack of knowledge about dietary health are placing high cost burdens on communities, particularly in relation to health services.

In Pacific island countries, the incidence of non-communicable diseases has escalated, with some of the world's highest rates of obesity and associated diseases, such as diabetes, recorded in Tonga, Samoa and Fiji. In August last year a diabetes related amputation was being carried out in Fiji every 12 hours. This year, in Vanuatu, 11 diabetes associated amputations had occurred by April.

The solution to these problems is clearly not just a matter of increasing food supply. Rather, better information about nutritional values, food storage and preparation, better support for local food production and some control on advertising unhealthy food choices for children all play a part.

Contrary to conventional assumptions, improvements to income or GDP do not automatically lead to improvements in health or better nutrition, as shown in Australia, where poor dietary choices and excess sugar and fat are often part of the rise in diabetes.

At the same time, affordable fresh food and sustainable local industries to produce it can improve the health and incomes of the poor in the region. Australia in particular has expertise in how to manage agriculture, use small-scale equipment and look at better genetics for
livestock. We are in a perfect position to assist these countries to ensure their own food production remains stable and, indeed, is even improved.

Often women remain the main workers in agriculture in the region. But, as more men leave communities to migrate to the cities or overseas, women are having to assume even greater roles. Some refer to the feminisation of farming in the Mekong. We took evidence of how some equipment traditionally used by men in agriculture is now being modified—in particular, being made smaller—so women can use it. This is a very important development.

A focus on what has been termed as 'nutrition sensitive' agriculture intervention results from international recognition that agricultural development is facing extraordinary threats, including encroaching urbanisation, less access to water, soil erosion and local pollution. We know we must carefully target these particular communities, taking on board their particular challenges, if we are going to improve nutrition outcomes.

This approach takes into account the broader social underpinnings of economic wellbeing, including the clear nexus between women's involvement in agriculture, their status, their education, good nutrition and health.

With women now in charge of around half of the farms in the region, as men move offshore to paid work and to send remittances home, women's empowerment—from working as farm and financial managers, as family educators and as cooks—has never been more important to the region's prosperity, health and wellbeing.

The subcommittee was pleased to see advances for women in agriculture being considered in the context of the Australian government's recent commitment to integrate gender and nutrition programs. I am so pleased that more than 80 per cent of our Australian aid programming is directed towards the empowerment of women.

A companion policy focuses on child nutrition, in recognition of the importance of good nutrition in the first 1,000 days of life, without which a child will never reach their physical nor intellectual potential.

The subcommittee's report examined closely global donor commitments to support nutrition-specific programs, for child and maternal health, and nutrition-sensitive agriculture policies, to address malnutrition, and we found that Australia is making commitments but could be taking more of a leadership and coordination role in improving nutrition in the region.

The report makes four recommendations, with the first being to develop a stronger regional policy and funding focus on nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive activities under our overseas development assistance program.

Much of the evidence gathered during the inquiry, in some 50 submissions and during public hearings, documented the tremendous work being done in agriculture related programs by regional governments, organisations, businesses and universities, in partnership with the Australian government and its agencies. In particular, we commend the excellent work of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research and the CSIRO.

The final recommendation calls for improved education and analysis, and for greater co-ordination between multisector partners to act more decisively on nutrition related initiatives. This includes us continuing to engage and partner with our Pacific neighbours in the Scaling
Up Nutrition movement and to make the ‘double burden’ in the region a global priority, in partnership and with leadership from Australia.

I commend the report to the House.

MOTIONS

Budget

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (11:05): I seek leave of the House to move the following motion:

That the House:

(1) notes that in an extraordinary interview with David Speers on Sky News this morning:

(a) the Prime Minister said that Treasury “has not identified the dollar cost” of the centrepiece of his Budget, the 10-year tax cut for big business:

(i) but a moment later, the Prime Minister said Treasury had modelled the cost; and

(ii) yet later, the Prime Minister said the cost of his centrepiece 10-year tax cut for big business was outlined on page 3-11 of Budget Paper No. 1 despite the fact, that page does not mention companies or corporations or small businesses even once; and

(b) the Prime Minister said the $55 billion cost of his centrepiece 10-year tax cut for big business nominated by economist Chris Richardson “may well be right”;

(2) condemns the Prime Minister for delivering a Budget which is a fraud on the Australian people by having a centrepiece without a cost attached; and

(3) calls on the Prime Minister to attend the House to finally come clean about the 10-year cost for the 10-year tax cut for big business.

Leave not granted.

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (11:07): I move:

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the member for McMahon from moving the following motion forthwith:

That the House:

(1) notes that in an extraordinary interview with David Speers on Sky News this morning:

(a) the Prime Minister said that Treasury “has not identified the dollar cost” of the centrepiece of his Budget, the 10-year tax cut for big business:

(i) but a moment later, the Prime Minister said Treasury had modelled the cost; and

(ii) yet later, the Prime Minister said the cost of his centrepiece 10-year tax cut for big business was outlined on page 3-11 of Budget Paper No. 1 despite the fact, that page does not mention companies or corporations or small businesses even once; and

(b) the Prime Minister said the $55 billion cost of his centrepiece 10-year tax cut for big business nominated by economist Chris Richardson “may well be right”;

(2) condemns the Prime Minister for delivering a Budget which is a fraud on the Australian people by having a centrepiece without a cost attached; and

(3) calls on the Prime Minister to attend the House to finally come clean about the 10-year cost for the 10-year tax cut for big business.

It takes a particular level of incompetence to bring down a budget with a centrepiece uncosted—incompetence and a fraud by this Prime Minister.
Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry and Innovation and Science) (11:08): I move:

That the member be no longer heard.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): The question is that the member be no longer heard.

The House divided. [11:13]

(The Deputy Speaker—Mr Broadbent)

Ayes ................. 78
Noes ................. 51
Majority ............. 27

AYES
Abbott, AJ
Andrews, KJ
Baldwin, RC
Bishop, BK
Briggs, JE
Brough, MT
Chester, D
Ciobo, SM
Coleman, DB
Dutton, PC
Fletcher, PW
Gambare, T
Goodenough, IR
Hastie, AW
Henderson, SM
Hogan, KJ
Hunt, GA
Irons, SJ
Joyce, BT
Kelly, C
Landry, ML
Macfarlane, IE
Markus, LE
McCormack, MF
Nikolic, AA
O'Dwyer, KM
Pitt, KJ
Prentice, J
Pyne, CM
Robert, SR
Ruddock, PM
Scott, FM
Stone, SN
Sukkar, MS
Truss, WE
Van Manen, AJ
Vasta, RX
Wicks, LE
Wood, JP

Alexander, JG
Andrews, KL
Billson, BF
Bishop, JI
Broad, AJ
Buchholz, S
Christensen, GR
Cobb, JK
Coulton, M (teller)
Entsch, WG
Frydenberg, JA
Gillespie, DA
Hartsonyker, L
Hawke, AG
Hendy, PW
Howarth, LR
Hutchinson, ER
Jones, ET
Keenan, M
Laming, A
Laundy, C
Marino, NB
Matheson, RG
McNamara, KJ
O'Dowd, KD
Porter, CC
Price, ML
Ramsey, RE
Roy, WB
Scott, BC
Southcott, AJ
Sudmalis, AE
Taylor, AJ
Tudge, AE
Varvaris, N
Whiteley, BD (teller)
Williams, MP
Zimmerman, T
Question agreed to.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent)** (11:19): Is the motion seconded?

**Mr BURKE** (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (11:19): I second the motion.

Even Joe Hockey was more competent than this! The centrepiece of the budget—and they forgot to cost it! They will cost every one of their cuts, but when they are reducing company tax there is no need to cost that. A simple question was asked repeatedly by David Speers. In an interview that made the metadata interview look good, he asked the simple question: how much will this cost? The centrepiece of the budget—

**Mr PYNE** (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry and Innovation and Science) (11:20): I move:

That the Member be no longer heard.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The motion is that the member be no longer heard.

The House divided. [11:22]

(11:22)

Ayes ....................80

Noes ....................52

Majority .................28

AYES

Abbott, AJ

Alexander, JG
## AYES

Andrews, KJ  
Baldwin, RC  
Bishop, BK  
Briggs, JE  
Brough, MT  
Chester, D  
Ciobo, SM  
Coleman, DB  
Dutton, PC  
Fletcher, PW  
Gambaro, T  
Goodenough, IR  
Hastie, AW  
Henderson, SM  
Hogan, KJ  
Hunt, GA  
Irons, SJ  
Joyce, BT  
Kelly, C  
Landry, ML  
Ley, SP  
Marino, NB  
Matheson, RG  
McNamara, KJ  
O'Dowd, KD  
Pasin, A  
Porter, CC  
Price, ML  
Ramsey, RE  
Roy, WB  
Scott, BC  
Southcott, AJ  
Sudmalis, AE  
Taylor, AJ  
Tudge, AE  
Varvaris, N  
Whiteley, BD (teller)  
Williams, MP  
Wood, JP  

## NOES

Bandt, AP  
Bowen, CE  
Burke, AE  
Butler, MC  
Byrne, AM  
Champion, ND  
Clare, JD  
Conroy, PM  
Dreyfus, MA  
Ellis, KM  
Fitzgibbon, JA  

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**CHAMBER**
Question agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent) (11:23): The question now is that the motion moved by Mr Bowen be agreed to. I call the Leader of the House.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry and Innovation and Science) (11:24): It is my call to speak. For the benefit of the shadow Treasurer: all he needs to do is look at Budget Paper No. 1, chart 1, page 3-11 to get his answer. I move:

That the motion be put.

Mr Burke: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek leave to table the document that he just referred to, which does nothing of the sort.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the House has moved that the question be put. The House divided. [11:26]

(The Deputy Speaker—Mr Broadbent)

Ayes .......................80
Noes .......................52
Majority .................28

AYES

Abbott, AJ
Andrews, KJ
Baldwin, RC
Bishop, BK
Briggs, JE
Brough, MT
Chester, D
Ciobo, SM
Coleman, DB
Dutton, PC
Fletcher, PW
Gambaro, T
Goodenough, IR

Alexander, JG
Andrews, KL
Billson, BF
Bishop, JI
Broad, AJ
Bachholz, S
Christensen, GR
Cobb, JK
Coulton, M (teller)
Entsch, WG
Frydenberg, JA
Gillespie, DA
Hartsuyker, L
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Question agreed to.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent)** (11:27): The question now is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided. [11:28]

(The Deputy Speaker—Mr Broadbent)

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**NOES**

| Abbott, AJ | Alexander, JG |
| Andrews, KJ | Andrews, KL |
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| Brough, MT | Buchholz, S |
| Chester, D | Christensen, GR |
Thursday, 5 May 2016

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

4503

NOES

Ciobo, SM
Coleman, DB
Dutton, PC
Fletcher, PW
Gambaro, T
Goodenough, IR
Hastie, AW
Henderson, SM
Hogan, KJ
Hunt, GA
Irons, SJ
Joyce, BT
Kelly, C
Landry, ML
Ley, SP
Marino, NB
Matheson, RG
McNamara, KJ
O'Dowd, KD
Pasin, A
Porter, CC
Price, ML
Ramsey, RE
Roy, WB
Scott, BC
Southcott, AJ
Sudmalis, AE
Taylor, AJ
Tudge, AE
Varvaris, N
Whiteley, BD (teller)
Williams, MP
Wood, JP

Cobb, JK
Coulton, M (teller)
Entsch, WG
Frydenberg, JA
Gillespie, DA
Hartsuyker, L
Hawke, AG
Hendy, PW
Howarth, LR
Hutchinson, ER
Jones, ET
Keenan, M
Laming, A
Laundy, C
Macfarlane, IE
Markus, LE
McCormack, MF
Nikolic, AA
O'Dwyer, KM
Pitt, KJ
Prentice, J
Pyne, CM
Robert, SR
Ruddock, PM
Scott, FM
Stone, SN
Sukkar, MS
Truss, WE
Van Manen, AJ
Vasta, RX
Wicks, LE
Wilson, RJ
Zimmerman, T

Question negatived.

COMMITTEES

National Disability Insurance Scheme

Report

Mr BILLSON (Dunkley) (11:31): On behalf of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme I present the committee's report entitled Accommodation for people with disabilities and the NDIS, together with the evidence received by the committee.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr Husic interjecting—

Mr BILLSON: by leave—I would like to thank my friend and colleague Mr Husic for his encouragement! In tabling this report I recognise the bipartisan—the omniparliamentary—support for the NDIS. And what a great achievement it will be when it is fully rolled out. I
extend the committee's congratulations to all who were involved in that important mission for our generation.

Enabling people with disability to have choice and control over their lives is one of the central tenets of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. At present, Australians with disability are not assured of access to housing that is suitable for their needs. This has been an issue at a local, state and national level for some time and amongst so many of us in this parliament. And, as was noted in the committee's 2015 report, the lack of adequate housing can significantly limit people's ability to fully exercise choice and control. Ultimately, it restricts their ability to participate in society and live an ordinary life.

Hence, as part of the committee's review of the implementation, administration, and expenditure of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the committee decided to examine the issue of affordable and appropriate accommodation for people with disabilities. The committee noted in its most recent annual report, in July 2015, that the lack of adequate accommodation can limit people's ability to fully exercise their individual choice and control over their lives. It can also limit a person's ability to fully participate in society and to live a life with ambitions that we all share as Australian citizens.

On 23 October 2015 the committee concluded a round table hearing here in Canberra on housing. This was the first part of the committee's inquiry into accommodation for people with disabilities. The committee received 56 submissions to the inquiry. I would like to thank all of those who took the time not only to present their ideas to the committee but to engage in the discussions the committee instigated.

The committee has put forward four core recommendations to government to assist in addressing these important issues. I will not dwell on them for too long, other than to say that this is something that needs to be addressed, and the national disability peak organisations throughout our country as well as the state, territory and Commonwealth governments should liaise and work closely with the Australian Building Codes Board to examine updating the Building Code of Australia regarding to accessibility.

Another recommendation was to encourage the idea that accommodation for people with disability be integral to the development of affordable and social housing policy proposals more generally. A third recommendation was to urge the Commonwealth to explore all possible proposals for disability accommodation and ways in which the Commonwealth can assist in bringing them to fruition. Recommendation 4 was about the Commonwealth assessing how financially accessible housing is for people with a disability and their families as part of that examination of bringing different disability accommodation proposals to fruition.

Recommendation 5 supports the idea of the Department of Social Services clarifying the status of the Supported Accommodation Innovation Fund, and, if the fund is no longer available, whether other initiatives will either complement or replace it over time. The final recommendation urges the Commonwealth to explore capital sharing, securitisation and joint ownership options to expand the provision of appropriate accommodation for people with disabilities.

In the moments that are available to me, I would like to thank the committee for its work over the journey. We have been extraordinarily well served, as so many of us in this chamber
know, by our committee staff: the secretary, Mark Fitt; the principal research officer, Gerry McInally, who has been confused as being my brother; senior research officer, Fiona Gardner; senior research officer, Natasha Rusjakovski; and also administrative officer, Hannah Dunn. I commend this report to the parliament. I urge all members to acquaint themselves with the recommendations and findings.

In a moment of pure indulgence, may I acknowledge and thank my bodacious wife, Kate, and my delightful children, who are in the chamber. My valedictory was impromptu and not able to be shared by my family.

Mr Husic interjecting—

Mr BILLSON: My friend Mr Husic has pointed out that, yes, I am indeed batting well above my average, and I thank him for pointing that out. I thank my sweetheart wife and my children for their unstinting support in public life. I love them; I admire them. I am eternally grateful and I will be home soon.

Petitions Committee

Report

Dr JENSEN (Tangney) (11:36): On behalf the Standing Committee on Petitions, I present the committee's report, entitled The work of the Petitions Committee: 2013-2016, together with the minutes of the proceedings.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Dr JENSEN: by leave—It has been a privilege to serve on the Petitions Committee for two terms. In the last parliament I was deputy chair and for this term I was chair of the Petitions Committee. This committee has a significant function for the parliament, and that is to give voice to people and what they believe so that the parliament can see what people out there are thinking. The benefit of having petitions is that, when the petitions are found in order, they are forwarded to a minister for response. This is something that does not necessarily happen when people write letters directly to a minister, so it is a significant benefit to the community. An important issue with the committee is that the committee needs to continue to evaluate petitions purely against the standing order requirements. There is a potential danger: you might have a committee evaluating a petition based on content and the perceived views of the committee on content. We must ensure that that is never the case. We must ensure that petitions that are tabled and presented to ministers are representative of what people think, whether or not we happen to agree with what is in the content of those petitions.

I will not hold up the parliament for too long, but I would certainly like to thank my deputy chair and all members of the committee. Most particularly, I would like to thank the secretariat: Sharon Bryant, and Catherine Cornish before, Pauline Cullen and other members of the committee for the sterling work that they do. The work of the secretariats of all committees is, I venture to say, very much unsung in this place. I know that people do acknowledge it, but, for people out there in the community who might be listening to this, the secretariats of the committees in parliament work very hard to ensure the smooth running of this place. I commend them for that.
Mr IRONS (Swan) (11:39): On behalf of the Standing Committee on Health I present the committee’s report on its inquiry into chronic disease prevention and management in primary health care together with the minutes of the proceedings.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr IRONS: by leave—Recent societal and lifestyle changes have had profound effects on the illnesses that beset the Australian population. While medical advances have increased life expectancy and decreased mortality rates, the increase in sedentary workplaces and lifestyle factors such as diet, exercise and habitual behaviour such as smoking and excess alcohol consumption has seen the incidence of chronic disease skyrocket, both domestically and internationally.

According to the World Health Organization non-communicable chronic diseases are responsible for 70 per cent of mortality rates worldwide and, unfortunately, 90 per cent of mortality rates in Australia. The vast majority of these are lifestyle diseases, such as type 2 diabetes and most chronic respiratory conditions.

The primary health care system is ideally the mechanism for addressing the rise in chronic disease, however the fragmented nature of the current care model challenges the system’s ability to deliver the best patient outcomes.

The fluid and open definition of chronic disease can also complicate prevention and management programs, as any condition with persistent symptoms and duration can be classified as a chronic disease.

Many specific health conditions were highlighted during this inquiry, however many illnesses and conditions not mentioned in the committee’s report are just as relevant as those that are mentioned.

The federal, state and territory governments, as well as private health insurers and individual providers and peak bodies, all have a role in preventing chronic disease, although more could be done to coordinate the programs that exist, as well as widening the scope of screening activities that can identify the earliest signs of chronic disease.

The coordinated care and multidisciplinary approach to improved chronic disease management is evident in the examples that show best practice in Australia and internationally. The Wagner chronic care model, patient centred medical homes and supported self-management of chronic disease are evident in health care systems across the world.

These models can help inform the development of chronic disease care into the future, the first steps of which will be made with the Healthier Medicare introduction of Health Care Homes trials in 2017. The Health Care Homes trials announced by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Health on 31 March as part of the Healthier Medicare package will help to improve the prevention and management of chronic disease and with appropriate funding, privacy considerations, capture and consolidation of data, and a focus on research and improvement the cooperative care goals required to improve chronic disease primary care can become a reality.
The improvements that will come from these trials are welcomed by all Australians, though the positive impact they can have on care outcomes for low socioeconomic status, rural and regional and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations may be profound. About 65,000 Australians will participate in initial two-year trials in up to 200 medical practices from 1 July 2017.

The submissions and evidence received during this inquiry have indicated that the groundwork to improve the primary health care system to better prevent and manage chronic disease already exists across all providers and interested parties.

It is clear, however, that this cannot occur without cooperation, coordination, evaluation and adequate data and records to support Primary Health Networks in fulfilling their important role as coordinators of care.

Performance measurements, expansion of chronic disease items, improved referral and rebate claiming processes and encouraging private health insurers to manage their members in cooperation with the primary healthcare system is a clear goal.

The current regulatory and legislative framework that governs private health insurance in Australia is complex, but there are small areas of improvement that could be made to the Private Health Insurance (Health Insurance Business) Rules 2015 regarding expanding the providers that can be used by private health insurers in chronic disease management plans.

The committee appreciates the efforts and honesty of the large number of organisations and individuals that contributed to the inquiry. The breadth of chronic disease prevention, management and research in the Australian community is evident and the desire to improve the system was the overwhelming message communicated to the committee.

I thank all those who have contributed to this inquiry. I also thank the committee members for their participation and contribution to this important and wide-ranging inquiry and the secretariat—Jeff Norris and Stephanie Mikac—who did an enormous job. I also thank my colleague the member for Shortland, who I know is going to talk on this subject—it is one of her favourites. I would like to personally thank her for the time we have spent on the health committee since 2009 for the cooperative and helpful assistance that she has given while I have been the chair of the committee. On a personal note, I wish her all the best for the future. I want to thank all members of that particular committee. I commend the report to the House.

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (11:45): by leave—I rise to support the report that has just been tabled by the Standing Committee on Health, Inquiry into chronic disease prevention and management in primary health care, and to emphasise the importance of dealing with the issue of chronic disease. It is vital that government puts in place a proper strategy to deal with chronic disease, and it starts with prevention. I look at the inquiries that the committee has dealt with over the time that I have been involved with it. I was lucky to be on the first health committee in this parliament where we released The blame game: report on the inquiry into health funding. I would like to emphasise that practically every inquiry we have had has linked into chronic disease of some type. It shows that you can look at one disease, one illness and one category of diseases, but we need to look in a more holistic way and understand that all of these diseases contribute to and make up chronic disease—for example, things like dementia. One of the key inquiries we did that relates to chronic disease was on obesity. So many of the chronic diseases hang off obesity. You look at heart disease,
cancer or asthma—everything that we do, every chronic disease, links into lifestyle. I think it is very important that we take note of this report and that we look at it. I would say that there is more work to be done in the next parliament.

I have to put on record my thanks to the committee and the committees over the years that I have worked with in health as well as a special thanks to Steve Irons, the member for Swan. It has been wonderful working with him. I know that he has a total commitment to health. Sometimes we look at things a bit differently but, overwhelmingly, we have the goal of improving health, improving the availability of health care for people in Australia and to giving people the opportunity to lead a healthy lifestyle. Thank you.

Standing Committee on Education and Employment

Mr LAMING (Bowman) (11:47): by leave—I am making a statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Education and Employment relating to its inquiry—innovation and creativity: workforce for the new Economy. This will be an abridged statement. I recognise that there is a conscripted audience here as well, so thank you.

On 2 February 2016, the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon. Simon Birmingham, referred an inquiry into those matters that ensure that Australia's tertiary education system can meet the needs of the future labour force that is focused on innovation and creativity. There are already more people worldwide that have access to a smartphone or mobile device than they do to adequate toiletry and hygiene facilities; already, we see up to one-third of the population with smartphones. Within about 10 years, there will be a $700 billion economy for machine to machine internet connection—M2M connection—and we expect more machine internet connection than there are people on the planet.

Australia, in this period, has enjoyed sustained economic growth, but to meet these challenges we have to be looking at how to do things smarter. Of course, the resource industry has been successful and manufacturing has moved in niche markets, but to sustain Australia's high standard of living we need to be looking with forensic detail at how to do things better. As with other developed nations, Australia's investment in human capital is the key. This investment needs to start from home and continue through school with teachers, career advisers, VET providers, universities and employers. Government has an obligation to make sure we do this properly.

In the committee's work to date, we have received 70 submissions, held four hearings and looked at a range of issues most pertinent to those sectors. Several themes have emerged from these roundtables in considering how to ensure students in particular are appropriately skilled for the jobs of the new economy. We identified critical enablers which we hope to look at in more detail. We also took evidence on how to increase collaboration between higher education providers and industry—absolutely essential and an area where Australia does, regrettably, lag. Each of these themes has shown that there are various issues that need far more considered discussion in a subsequent parliamentary term.

This committee has not yet had the opportunity to develop detailed recommendations, but the evidence strongly suggests that it should. The committee urges the Minister for Education and Training appointed in the 45th Parliament to re-refer this specific inquiry. Re-referral will equip the newly constituted committee with the time and resources to gather more evidence and carefully consider recommendations for a report.
I offer my sincere thanks to my deputy chair, Alannah MacTiernan, members of the committee, and Richard Grant and Samantha Leahy, who have looked after the needs of the committee.

**BILLS**

**Australian Crime Commission Amendment (National Policing Information) Bill 2015**

**Australian Crime Commission (National Policing Information Charges) Bill 2015**

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

**Australian Crime Commission (National Policing Information Charges) Bill 2015**

**Australian Crime Commission Amendment (National Policing Information) Bill 2015**

**Social Services Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous Measures) Bill 2015**

**Financial System Legislation Amendment (Resilience and Collateral Protection) Bill 2016**

**Omnibus Repeal Day (Autumn 2015) Bill 2015**

**Assent**

Messages from the Governor-General reported informing the House of assent to the bills.

**GOVERNOR-GENERAL’S SPEECH**

**Address-in-Reply**

Debate resumed on the motion:

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

*To His Excellency the Governor-General*

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.

Ms BURKE (Chisholm) (11:51): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for being in the chair during this speech. It will come as no great surprise that I will probably not be talking to the address-in-reply—sad but true.

I have been thinking long and hard about this speech today and have actually put words on paper, something I rarely do nowadays for a speech. I could not quite fathom what one says when one gets the chance to say goodbye, thanks and, 'I loves you all.' Most people leave this place not at a time of their choosing, so when you get that privilege you need to show it some respect. All of us here are constantly asked, 'Why? What drove you to a political career?' I often feel like the contestant at a beauty pageant getting the sash, when I answer, 'World
peace. But I do not resile from that. I genuinely wanted world peace when I joined the Labor Party in 1987, at Greg Sword's house in Ashwood, and I want it more today. I joined the party because I wanted to be part of change and to make a difference. I did not join at university; I joined the local branch because I wanted to be part of something. We had been through a tremendous time during the International Year of Peace, when my elder sister, Nina, had been very involved in a program that, sadly, ended not in a peace communique to the UN but in a police riot. The paddy vans arrived and The Age the next morning read 'Youth peace forum ends in riot'. I was sick of this. I was sick of all the armchair experts willing to throw rocks but not willing to actually do something to create a better world and a better community. Barack Obama put it well when he said:

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

I never thought I would be a member of parliament. I often describe myself as the accidental member for Chisholm. I got asked to nominate in 1997 as we needed a candidate. I told Steve, my long-suffering bloke, who has been on this journey with me the whole way, 'It's okay, I can't win.' We were renovating a house. I was in the midst of an intensive EBA negotiation with ANZ bank for 22,000 staff Australia-wide, with six state secretaries and one national union secretary to keep on side. We led bank staff to their first ever industrial action, and Steve and I were thinking of starting a family. So it was not the time to think of running for parliament—so, yes, of course that is what I did. I never got to live in my fully renovated house. I have never used my ILVE oven. I dream of my ILVE oven I have never got to use! The FSU did triumph and got a great deal that, sadly, stood there for nine years because of the Howard government, but it was a great deal and they deserved it. After my first 12 months in parliament, I gave birth to my daughter, Maddie.

Labor won the seat in Chisholm in 1998 through hard work and a bit of good luck. I am grateful to Michael Wooldridge for seeing sense and swapping seats! The first campaign was fun. We had nothing to lose and almost nothing to work with but drive and enthusiasm. I lost a stack of weight and had a ball.

Five more elections to one of the most marginal seats in the country and the fact that I get to decide when I leave are testament to a great team around me. I thought I was gone on more than one occasion. I had a phone call from my last Liberal opponent, John Nguyen, just the other day, wishing me well. He did everything in his power to unseat me at the last election; he gave it his all.

I did not think I would ever get here, let alone last almost 18 years. I did not have my maiden speech written when I was three years old, like I suspect Kevin Rudd did! I finished mine at three in the morning before I gave it. Mum said it was not quite the greatest. So I am trying to make amends for that today, as she is here today, as was the extended Burke clan back in 1998. Nina, my eldest sister, has made it today, and I know the rest of the clan is listening in. Those of you who know us know that my mother has never quite worked out what she did right or wrong, because at one stage, of her five children, four of us were working for trade unions and my little brother was at Slater and Gordon. I think it goes to my parents' drive and determination to make the world a better place—to show us, through their Catholic faith, a struggle for social justice.
My children, Maddie and John, are here with me today but of course were not in 1998 because they were not. I can mark my election success by the growth of my children. They are no longer young—and I hope I have not sacrificed my time with them by being a member of parliament. Yes, I have missed things, but I have also had the opportunity to be there. I skipped a leadership challenge to go to Madeline's first day of school. Heck, at that stage, we had had so many leadership challenges, what was another one! A lot of people said to me, 'Everyone'll know you're not there. It'll be a big issue. Maddie won't mind you didn't come.' But I would have minded that I did not go to Madeleine's first day of school, so I did. I have to be honest, and I apologise to the electorate: I did nick out of a few question times to make it home to the yearly school concert. I have tried to be at most of my children's parent-teacher interviews. I even had to fly home once to discuss turning off my father's life support system. He managed to live for another 10 weeks, though. I thought that was grossly unfair of him at the time! But it was difficult. My father, for all his challenges, was one of my greatest supporters and fans, and also my harshest critic, and we still miss him.

I took my kids to everything. I breastfed them—very discreetly—in front of an enormous array of people. One Army major sitting in my office was a bit mortified one day when there was a squeak from the corner of my office: 'What's that?' I said: 'It's a baby.' He said, 'What do you mean, it's a baby?' 'It's a baby!' 'What are you going to do?' I said: 'What do you think the baby wants to do now!' 'We'll leave.' I said: 'Fine. If you want to leave or you want to stay, it makes no difference to us. She's going to get what she wants.' I fed her in front of a year 12 politics class, and the class were great; the teacher did go a bit white. The Greek and Chinese ladies in my community still ask me why John is not at events with me. When I explain that he is 14 now, they say, 'How did that happen?' And sometimes I wonder: how did it happen?

I did tuckshop duty and baked cakes for school fetes. I love our local 24-hour K-mart. Thank God for 24-hour K-mart—for those forgotten presents, oranges and snakes, so many things. I did of course leave my children at child care and got the apocryphal phone call: 'Are you coming to get them?' And, yes, I have regularly been late. But it has made the adventure all that more fun.

While sitting in the Speaker's chair, I had texts saying, 'Where are my hockey socks,' to which I replied, 'I'm in Canberra. I suspect they're in your sister's drawer.' 'Oh yeah' would be the reply. I had people ring me, when I was in the Speaker's chair, asking, 'Are you going to be picking the children up tonight?' 'I don't think so; I'm in Canberra.' But we have managed it all, just as every other working family in the country does.

Steve has been there the whole way, giving up work and going part-time—but only after he actually threatened to go to the industrial relations commission when his employer informed him that part-time work was only for women. We have changed that. Many of the things in this place that we describe as women's issues are not; they are family issues. They are issues for our community; they are issues for our society. Steve has changed careers. He has retrained. He has on occasion accepted being called 'Mr Burke'. He has cooked. He has cleaned. He has driven everyone to where they needed to be and felt all my frustrations and triumphs along the way. I could not have done it without him.

We all trot out the line that it has been an honour and a privilege to serve—because it has been. Since Federation, there have been 1,665 members in this place and, of those, only 165 have been women. Those of us sitting on these green chairs belong to a very small collective,
but many more have tried to get into this place. To have had this honour bestowed on us by those in our electorates, and for successive elections, is something to say thank you for. Thank you for putting your faith in me to take genuinely the role of being your representative and to serve in this august institution. It has been a blast and often times incredibly frustrating but, above all, it has been an honour.

My motto in politics has always been to be active and approachable, and I think I and my staff have lived up to that creed. I like the line by Trollope on which I based my honours thesis: 'It's dogged as does it.' That is what life in politics has been for me. Sadly, the quote ends: 'It ain't thinking about it.' But I have thought about it—all of it—and that has made it sometimes much harder. I still believe it is the narrative, the vision, the light on the hill to which the electorate is drawn and craves—a vision that will drive action for a better world. Sometimes it does not feel like that to us here or to the electorate, but I think that is why we all come to this place. Thomas Jefferson, the founding father and the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, said:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.

On the flip side, one of Australia’s own founding fathers asked the people to vote for the lofty aim of Federation with the words:

We shall found a great nation, and there will be cheaper meat.

We do have a great nation, one that every day I have served and marvelled at—but, sadly, there is no cheap meat.

What I have enjoyed most is being in my community, working with hundreds of great community groups, schools, kinders, service organisations, universities, research institutions, businesses big and small, hospitals and individuals who all work to the benefit of the whole community. As members of parliament, we get to step into their lives for a small moment to see them at their best and worst, to be there for the triumphs and the tears. It is amazing the things you get to see and do in this job that you could easily never know existed. I remember being at the 100th birthday of Phyllis Winifred Smith, who had organised her own messages and party and said that I could come because I was a nice girl, even if I wasn’t a Liberal. There was the celebration of the 61st wedding anniversary of Ron and Margaret Snell that was held in my office. They did not want to make a fuss at their 60th, but we thought we needed to make amends on their 61st. There was the opening of the Translational Medical Centre at Monash Medical Centre.

On another occasion I can recall standing with the workers at the closure of Arnott’s factory and seeing the loss of 500-plus jobs and then, sadly, the factory. Its site has now become housing. There was the celebration of the successful transitioning of auto parts manufacturer, Bosch, who will survive beyond the auto industry shutdown. There was the visit to the Ashwood School, which is a disability service in my electorate, where one day we applaud a child who has learnt to tie their laces and the next day that child is off to the swimming trials for the Paralympics. There was dancing with Greeks to celebrate Saints Anargiri feast day in Oakleigh. Opa! I can do it beautifully!

There was the help we gave to countless individuals with migration matters such as helping Rosewinda’s daughter Ruwimbo get a permanent child visa to come to Australia, because, sadly, she had been left behind when her mother, who was facing persecution in Zimbabwe,
had to flee. We received one of the nicest bottles of red—I do not think we deserved it. It was wonderful to see them reunited. There was the cutting of pig on numerous occasions to welcome in Chinese New Year, listening to the fire crackers going off and being at the dusk to dawn ceremony at Box Hill, with over 80,000 Chinese people. I remember marvelling at the Italian men wanting to dance passionately with their wives after 50 years of marriage, and applauding the Tamil community, who strive to keep their language and dance traditions alive in the next generation.

I remember watching the pride of the Jewish community in the academic excellence of their students and in their culture. Although they do not live in my electorate, they have the largest school in my electorate. And then there was applauding students at Kingswood for winning vocational training awards; watching the solar car fly at Box Hill High and the rebirth of Ashwood High School; being at countless grade 6 graduations and marvelling at the ability of adolescents to walk in ridiculously high shoes; watching as a 3D printed jet engine came to life at the additive manufacturing plant at Monash University; buying my first Big Issue from Craig; having Alexis and Opal in my office, as no one else will give this highly intelligent disabled woman and her assistance dog the break she deserves; and working to undo complex Centrelink matters and resolve intractable housing disputes.

We were reminiscing, and one of my staff, Jason, who has been there almost from the beginning, said, 'I do remember in the first few months when I started with you in Box Hill how we helped a woman who was a victim of domestic violence out the back door of the office as she was fleeing from her partner and was terrified he would be loitering out the front.' He said that has always stayed with him.

I remember attending the funerals of too many branch members and community leaders, most recently the magnificent Robyn Fenton, the most vibrant special education teacher you could ever know. It did not look like she had died, because they painted her coffin a bright pink. She was too young, and we all miss her.

I remember being at the Box Hill Vietnam veterans' black tie dinner and their dawn service at Oakleigh RSL, as we marched down the street, and Clayton RSL—where the World War II veterans have finally taken to the Jeep—as we marched from the club to the cenotaph. Sadly, I have seen many of them pass away, too.

I remember watching the pride the Indian senior citizens take in the work of their community, and eating my way through too many Kariatides ladies lunches; in my electorate I have eaten my way through every ethnic cuisine known to man! And I have never satisfied them—I have never eaten enough—and I apologise. And then there was helping sell Box Hill Lions cakes and sell sausages for MASH Rotary; being the butt of the tail twister at Waverley Lions and understanding that our community does not work without the great work of all these amazing service organisations; attending the Christmas barbecue of the Damper Creek volunteers, who have turned a barren creek into a calm forest oasis in the suburbs; standing with the community over rotten planning decisions; cheering the Box Hill Hawks—at least one of my footy teams has to win some time!—and watching Waverley Hockey take on Camberwell, and remembering I have to cheer for the blue and not the tangerine side.

I remember seeing the joy and hugs at Eastern Gymnastics as some small child completes a beam routine without falling off; knowing Christmas has arrived by being at Carols at the Grove; supporting the dedication and drive of the members of the Asian Business Association
of Whitehorse as they achieve great things for business in our community; watching the joy and sorrow of recognition at Cabrini nursing home as the choir, led by the 105-year-old pianist, sing in tune—kind of; handing out the award each year at Waverley Guides; and being at the annual Amaroo Neighbourhood House Art Show and marvelling at people's creative talent and dedication to our community.

Sometimes this was just a week in my life in the electorate of Chisholm, and of course there was so much more, summed up in an incredibly touching email from a constituent:

Hi Anna

As you prepare to depart parliament, I would like to thank you for your commitment over the last 18 years. You have been a great local member who has done much for our community. From visiting to my children's schools, to speaking with them when they visited Canberra, to your response to emails and to your willingness to chat with people on the street, you have made yourself very available. Poor Stefanie has large shoes to fill.

Being a politician is a tough life, enjoy not being a politician. Thank you

Christine

I have championed many causes in this place, but one close to my heart is anaphylaxis. Meeting parents of children who have died from an anaphylactic shock is a sobering experience. Speaking to the Baptists about the hole left by Alexis' death and the Tates' loss of Louis has left me to wonder: why? Why do more children have to die before we see common-sense legislation that will literally save lives? One in ten children will be diagnosed with life-threatening anaphylaxis—not a rash or tummy ache. So we need to raise awareness about allergic disease and fund research. But in the interim we need to work on prevention and training in how to use an EpiPen in situations where you literally can save a life. So I was absolutely rapt to be with Catherine King last week at the Monash Medical Centre when we announced that a Shorten Labor government will commit $1.1 million to better manage allergic diseases and their associated health risks. I thank her greatly for that.

I am proud I am leaving behind the Do Not Call Register, an initiative I championed and introduced from opposition. I am taking credit; I do not care what anyone else says!

**An opposition member:** You should!

**Ms BURKE:** I think I should! I did it and I think I should. Issues of consumer affairs are often ignored by many of us, but they impact on everybody's life. I think we have done something great by returning your home to being your castle and not a telemarketing paradise.

I have said enough on asylum seekers here and everywhere. You know what I think. You know I think what we are doing is wrong, but I am not going to run away from the issue. Tim Winton, who spoke at the Palm Sunday peace rally in Perth last year, summed it up well:

To those in power who say the means will justify the end, I say I've heard that nonsense before. It's the tyrant's lie. Don't you dare utter it in my name.

If current refugee policy is common sense, then I refuse to accept it. I dissent. And many of my countrymen and women dissent alongside me. I don't pretend to have a geopolitical answer to the worldwide problem of asylum seekers. Fifty million people are currently displaced by war and famine and persecution. I don't envy those who make the decisions in these matters, those who've sought and gained the power to make decisions in this matter. I'm no expert, no politician. But I know when something's wrong. And what my country is doing is wrong.
We're losing our way. We have hardened our hearts. I fear we have devalued the currency of mercy. Children have asked for bread and we gave them stones. So turn back. I beg you. For the children's sake. For the sake of this nation's spirit. Raise us back up to our best selves. Turn back while there's still time.

I echo Tim Winton: let us 'turn back while there is still time'. Let us show we are a nation not of small hearts. But, in my own words, I say to everyone listening: Labor is not the current government. It is incumbent on the Turnbull government to resolve this issue now, and to deal with these human beings as humans, not political footballs. These are people so traumatised that some of them are setting themselves on fire at Nauru. A High Court ruling has said that the asylum seekers have to be removed from Manus Island. These are not illegals, these are not criminals; these are refugees. Something needs to be done. I know we can do better and I know the public is asking us to.

I would like to talk also about climate change, foreign aid, and higher education research, but I have gone on way too long already. But I do know that I am part of the first generation to leave the next generation worse off, and I despair of that. I think we need to do great work in that space, particularly in climate change. Again, I applaud what this side of parliament has done and has always done. I was proud to be elected in 2007 and to see us introduce great legislation then. I want to know that we will be re-elected as a Labor government to do some genuine action in that space.

You do not get here without a lot of help, and I am going to read a lot of names, because I owe it to them. I want to thank the following party members: Peter Chandler; Sue Hopgood; Jan and Cyril Kennedy, who got to think that I was not a right-wing, nasty person but an okay girl—they kind of like me now; Howard and Marie Hodgens; Gary and Jan Dircks; Graham Hill; Peter Rennie; Dan Hill; Wendy Dickerson, who keeps me alive with her many emails; Helen Buckingham; Barbara Dwyer; Tony Monogal; Lorie and David Werner; Gonzollo; Brenton Ward; the marvellous Manfred Xavier; Sam Lin; Halinda Strnad, a holocaust survivor who has done so much for our party; David Schulz; Raff Ciccone; Josh Beggs; Christine Barcham; Margret Oldfield; Bob and Ravel Kirkwood; Kathleen Brasher; Tom Huxom; Mark Coffey and Susan Berkeley; Dimity Paul; Malcolm McDonald; Chris Wilkes; Michael Watson; the entire Chiron family; Robert Chong; Sharon Ellis; Alan and Margret Clausen; and some great supporters who are not party members: Norm and Toppsy Gibbs, and Margaret Taylor.

I do not have too many local Labor members of parliament. I am in a seat of 'Liberaldom' in my neck of the woods. So, for the support I have had over the years from Shaun Leane, Steve Dimopolous, Burwood Bob, Maxine Moran and Jacinta Collins, I thank them dearly—for everything. In the early days there was an amazing guy called Bert Stephens, who just rocked up on my door and offered me help. I am eternally grateful.

Thank you to my amazing staff, who have been there from the beginning. Some of them have lasted the whole distance. A couple of them have been made redundant and have come back again, which I think is pretty remarkable of them. At the beginning it was the inevitable Rachel Davoren who made it all possible. Rachel was a star. People love her or hate her, but she could campaign till the cows come home. She was incredible. Matthew Merry and Kerryn Buckney were there at the beginning. Kerryn came along and set me up like she had served Robert Ray, and I have had barely anything go wrong in respect of entitlements because of it.
Janet Chiron, Mathew Cooper, Faye Dapiran, David Di, Joe Fennessy, Ainslie Gowan, Alastair Gowing, Karen Heidtmann, Jason Lebisch, Rick Prakhoff, Louise Roche, Jehane Sharah, Liana Staffa, Peter Stephens and Gayle Vermont were all in my electorate office. They have all done amazing things. They have all served my community so well. Jason, Rick and Janet have been the backbone of the office for so long, and I thank them dearly.

When I was Speaker and Deputy Speaker I had phenomenal staff. We need phenomenal staff in that office. It was actually my time as Deputy Speaker that was probably more trying. I know most of you will find that hard to believe, but it was the day of the cardboard cut-out of Kevin Rudd that will be forever etched in my memory. I had been Deputy Speaker for a week. I had never done it before. We were sitting in this chamber. Bernard was sitting in the clerk's chair. We were all sitting here: 'What does one do with a life-sized cardboard cut-out of the Prime Minister? Especially when we've agreed under the standing orders that I can't throw anyone out.' It was horrendous. You can YouTube it. I survived that. So did Lindy. Lindy was amazing during that time. She lost her job. She came back again. She served me well, and I say thank you to her. Thank you to all those staff, particularly the ones who we affectionately refer to as 'the get me re-elected people'.

Thank you to my amazing family, to my mother and father—to my mum, Joan, who is with us today, who brought up five children on the smell of an oily rag, put us through private school and then all on to university, at the same time going and graduating herself as a mature student. It has been an amazing effort, and we could not have done it without you. Thank you to my father, Bernie, who is gone; to my endearing brothers and sisters, their partners and their children: Tony, Liana, Sara, Emma and Chris; Nina, Gerard, Julian, Tim, Matt and Sinead; my sister Sophie; Paul, Melinda, Thomas and Alice, and to my fantastic in-laws. I have amazing in-laws and they have been, again, the backbone of how I have managed to do this—John, Maureen, who sadly is no longer with us, Jenny, Dermot, Lily, Greg, Elise, Leo, Hazel, Katy, Emmett and Henry: thank you all.

Thank you to the staff in this place who look after us so well and who I got to know amazingly well in my time as Deputy and as Speaker. Thank you to the attendants, particularly Luch, who looked after me so well. To the security guards in this place: you are amazing. To Hansard, the cleaners, the people in stores, the people in the shuttle, the Table Office, the PLO, IPRO, the sergeant's office and the gym staff: thank you. I like going to the gym, as some of you may know. To Comcar, DPS, DoFA, the Aussie's people who make my coffee every day without my even saying what I want, all the people in the Library but most importantly the clerks, who are the backbone, the corporate knowledge, of this place, I say thank you. To David, to Bernard, to Claressa and to all of you I say an enormous 'thank you'.

It was not an easy time in the hung parliament. I used to watch as Bernard scrawled in his hand the changes to Reps Practice that he was making on a daily basis as we changed precedent literally before our eyes. On occasion Bernard and I both sat there and said: 'Well, what do we do now? Actually, nobody knows; we've never done it before.' It was an amazing period. I also think it demonstrated that we belong to an amazing institution, an institution that does us proud. People can go on and say that the hung parliament was bad. I don't think it was. I think it was an amazing period in our democracy. It demonstrated that this parliament works. Legislation was passed—actually, more than has been passed in this majority parliament—committee meetings happened; committee reports were done; private members
business took place; private members business actually became law. It was an amazing time and, I think, upon reflection, people will understand how truly wonderful it was. But without the clerks, without the institution, it would not have happened. As we go into an election, I think we in Australia, who take our democracy for granted, need to reflect on how grateful we should be to the institutions we have.

I wish Stephanie Perri, the Labor candidate for Chisholm, well. She is a phenomenal human being, a great person. I have known her for a long time. I know it is going to be a struggle. We never take for granted that we will win the seat of Chisholm, but she will be able to do it.

Frustrations were many over the years. Being in opposition was always a frustration—not being able to get things done. I personally am frustrated I never got to speak from the dispatch box. I think I had more to give, and I was disappointed I never got the chance. There were very dark days in 2010 and again in 2013. Being told by the Prime Minister that she thought I would be happy being the chair of a committee really did leave me a bit speechless. When I asked her if she thought she would like to be chair of a committee, seeing as we had both been elected in 1998, I just got a blank look. I was not in a good place at those times. Through it all, my family were phenomenal. At home that was easy; I could ignore this joint. It really hurt here, though. So I need to put on the record my absolute appreciation for my long suffering roommate, Catherine King. She has put up with a lot. I know I would not have made it without her, and I am eternally grateful.

I have had many friendships in this place. There are Tanya and the girls of 1998, Nicola, Kirsten and Michelle—they were all there. We all then went on and had children. It was a rather remarkable group. There is Jenny Macklin, who has been there too. More recently, there have been Maria, Melissa, and Andrew Giles. In the fun days in Red Corner, Albo and Griffin tried to lead me astray with the 'fun faction', but, as I was very soon pregnant, that did not work out either! But they were a hoot—

Mr Albanese: Which was totally unrelated!

Ms Burke: to be around. Totally unrelated! Steve is here. Look at my children: they look very much like me and my husband.

On my last walk up Red Hill, I reflected on Caroline Chisholm, the amazing woman whom my seat is named after. She said:

I promise to know neither country nor creed, but to serve all justly and impartially …

The world has benefited from the remarkable life of Caroline Chisholm. She had a dream of a better life for those less fortunate. She was stymied and vilified by the establishment of the day, but she triumphed, through her dogged persistence to her cause, and achieved respect and support for her endeavours because she had a vision. I hope I have emulated in a small way that dogged determination to make the world a better place and to achieve the great objective of 'the light on the hill'. The last word, though, goes to Trollope again:

It has been the great fault of our politicians that they have all wanted to do something.

Mr Laurie Ferguson (Werriwa) (12:24): I have a well-earned reputation for bluntness and curtness. This will be the first and last time that I will seek the indulgence of my colleagues to go over time. At the outset, I want to recognise Indigenous ownership of this land. That is particularly appropriate for me to do as the retiring member for Werriwa: it
amazes me that, in the racism of 1900, a number of people decided that they would call a federal seat the Indigenous word for Lake George, near Canberra.

As the Leader of the Opposition would well know, it is particularly appropriate at this time because in April 1816, 200 years ago, the Appin massacre occurred in the region that the member for Macarthur and I represent. There has been a month of activities out there, led by the Liberal mayor of Campbelltown; a Catholic nun who lives in the community, Sister Kerry; the Campbelltown Arts Centre; and the local reconciliation group, who have rejected the arguments by some media commentators that we should remember every single moment of Gallipoli but basically abandon and forget the way in which whites conquered this country.

We talk about many other aspects of Indigenous affairs, including incarceration rates and the lack of progress on Closing the Gap, but I was pleased to note recently a decision in this country that $20 million would go towards Indigenous language preservation. The number of Indigenous languages has gone from over 400 to a situation where possibly only 20 will survive. So I recognise that decision.

I am very passionate about diversity in the world. The book *Spoken Here*, by Mark Abley, is about the whole world of language, but he starts with an Australian example. Patrick Nudjulu was one of the last three speakers of Mati Ke in the Northern Territory. Now he has probably died and the language has probably died since that book was written.

It is an eternity since June 1967, when I walked across Guildford Road to join the local branch at St Mary's Anglican Church. I was a precocious 14-year-old. I had spent the previous year in the polling booth for the most intense election in my lifetime—the 1966 anti-Vietnam election. What also seems far away is my misspent youth in the Carlton bar, near the Sydney Law School, and similar establishments around the university suburbs of Glebe and Newtown. This led to the disappearance of my parents' hopes that I would be a lawyer.

However, in that period, with a group of people including John Overall, John Whitehouse, Jeff Shaw, Rod Cavalier, Joan Evatt, Pam Allan, Peter Crawford, Peter Baldwin, Bruce Clarke and many others, we established a very strong university Labor club, which we utilised to seize control of the New South Wales Young Labor organisation for the Left. It was a powerful club. Amongst its many visiting speakers was the current Prime Minister of this country. I had already read Borkenau and Bolloten and Deutscher, so I was a bit disillusioned with Stalinism, but he came to the club and he appealed that we should form a popular front of progressive liberals like himself—the communists and the Labor supporters—to defeat these evil conservatives at the university campus, such as his predecessor as Prime Minister!

Those things are distant, but it seems like yesterday that I hopped in a car with Peter Baldwin, John Faulkner and Daryl Melham to come down to the first Left caucus meeting to meet Gerry Hand, Duncan Kerr, Harry Jenkins, Brian Howe, Peter Staples, Nick Bolkus, Carolyn Jakobsen, Olive Zakharov and many others, including Barney Cooney and Jim McKiernan, who I lived with for a decade. When they retired, I thought it would be impossible to have such a good connection with other colleagues, so I then moved out. I want to thank Audrey and Rob Rough for accommodation at their house since then, for the last 16 years. Although the accommodation is very good, my wife delights in ridiculing it as a yurt, but it is great accommodation.
A few months ago, I was with one of my closest comrades and friends, Jim Lloyd, after a meeting of the Granville Central branch in my old electorate, and he said, 'Laurie, are you going to make a valedictory?' and I said, 'No, I can't be bothered.' He said: 'Laurie, you have to. You have to thank Maureen.' I want to say our first meeting was not propitious. Tom Uren, my predecessor in Reid, despite support from the right-wing machine and the local Catholic Right, was challenged in a preselection ballot. I and the executive of the FEC met in Alan Clarke's garage in Myall Street, Auburn. There was a small branch called Birrong. We were not really sure about them and so we were a bit hardline in our credentialling. The then Maureen Voltz had forgotten to sign a pledge eight or 10 years previously, so we duly eliminated her from the ballot. Unbeknown to me, she wandered away and left the Labor Party, and it was only when she came to the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union—

Mr Fitzgibbon: As you do.

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON: as you do—that we became very connected and I actually revealed to her that in those years previously I was the person who had eliminated her in the preselection ballot that led to her leaving the party. She forgave me and she has been an enormous support politically. She is a very constant, and often correct, critic and has sacrificed much for me. She left school at 15, pushed out to work by her mother despite her academic ability. One of the best times of her life was to go back to East Sydney TAFE, do the higher school certificate and matriculate. She got to university and then faced the demands of countering a huge stacking of the branches, which was motivated by people's attempts to overcome development rules, basically to get their own way on developments. It was an enormous struggle at that time, night after night going out and recruiting—it was my first experience of ethnic recruitment—with people like Frances Rees, who worked for Tom Uren; Samir Bargashoun; and Phil Gordon. I thank Maureen for her endless support over the years.

Through her, of course, I have had the support of my stepkids, Anthony, David and Lynda, and the moral support of Mark, who has been married in Austria for 30 years but has always been very supportive. I am particularly thankful that my stepdaughter, Lynda Voltz, is now in the state parliament of New South Wales and is, I am pleased to say, a very independent person who does not get pushed around by factional warlords. I also acquired Maureen's ex-husband Bruce as a constant support on election day. He has always been there to support me.

I am, indeed, from a very political family. The member for Berowra has mentioned this on occasion. My father, of course, left school at 13 during the Depression, was retrained after the Second World War and eventually became Deputy Premier of the state. He left the state parliament acknowledged by all as the best-read person there, despite leaving school at 13. But we are even more political than that. My two grandfathers were politically active—one in the Communist Party, the other in the Country Party. The father of one of my grandmothers ran as the federal Labor candidate for Reid against the Langites, and when Paul Keating went back to Galway, to his home village of Tynagh, the person who greeted him, as chairman of Galway County Council, was my father's second cousin. So, all four lines of our family have been in politics. Tonight in Sydney Colm Dolan, who is the son of that second cousin, will become an Australian citizen, having migrated from Ireland under our skilled intake.

I want to acknowledge the support of my brothers and sisters, because it is indeed a very strong political family and you would expect that. All of them and their partners have always been there, both on election days and throughout campaigns. Importantly for me, as a person
who never wanted to be owned by any institution, my fundraising historically has been penny-ante and localised, and they have always been there for that—as were those nieces and nephews who could be supportive: Chris, Sarah, Aneta and Merryn.

I want to acknowledge a wide variety of people. I should say here that I am running three functions at restaurants to thank people.

*Opposition members interjecting—*

**Mr LAURIE FERGUSON:** No, no—I am putting them on for the hundred-plus people who have helped me in my life. I cannot mention everyone today, so I will thank them in that fashion. But I do want to mention a certain group of people: Sue and David Rosen, Jo Smith, Peter Manning, Carol Lawson, Lennie and Denise Wiltshire, Greg Shaw, Paul Higgins, the Sidiropoulos family and Durga Owen. They are people from outside my electorate who, wherever I have been a member, have come and supported me.

I will turn to my staff. My father thought I was an idiot for going to the office nearly every day when parliament was not sitting. He said, 'You're just a glorified social worker.' That might be the case, but my staff have been part of making sure that we were very effective social workers. Julie Bouloux and Lorraine Zaher were with me for about 25 years. Neither joined me when I moved to Werriwa. They left for personal reasons, one going to Queensland and the other thinking it would be better to get a job locally. Maurice Campbell has been with me for about 30 years. Although he is focused on political, Labor Party campaigns and those sorts of things, he has another important responsibility: he heads our gambling club, which we run out of the office. John Murphy, a friend and former colleague, said—in a rhetorical way—'Laurie, does that guy ever do any work besides running the betting syndicate?' He has been very successful. We have won about 14 years out of 15. Emily Zaiter, who is present here today, Linda Perrett, who started in 2005, and Steve Christou, who started in 2007 have been with me for very long periods of time.

As I said, three of my staff were with me for over 25 years. They were very good at public relations in the electorate. I can sometimes tell people where things are at and be a bit gruff when they do not have a very good case, but they have always been there to smooth things over. My attitude in life is that people would rather get a negative response the next day than wait around for a letter in three weeks time—and my staff have been part of that. They also provided support in running functions, keeping the diary and making sure that we were an effective electorate office.

In more recent times David Voltz, Alex Morrison and Alex Peck have done part-time work with me. I also want to acknowledge Vicki Meadows. Should Anne Stanley, our Labor candidate for Werriwa, be successful at this election, Vicki will have worked for four members of Werriwa, which is no mean feat. I have had long-term relationships with staff. It has been a great experience in my life, and we have had many social events outside of work.

As a glorified social worker, I always appreciate it when I am walking down a street in Ingleburn, and a Sierra Leonean guy walks up and says: 'Do you remember me from 15 years ago? This is my wife and my kids, who are here as a result of you.' I caught a taxi a few weeks ago and, as is typical of my whole life, a Lebanese taxi driver thanked me profusely for getting the department to change its mind with regard to a visitor visa for his brother. I have Colombian refugee friends who actually came here because of my help. I will never equal the
member for Berowra's numbers, but there are hundreds and hundreds of people who owe their future in this country to my activities and those of my office.

I want to recognise the Parramatta immigration liaison team: Jan, Sam, Ian, Ruth, Robyn, Ralph, Tomas. It has been a tradition for them to come to our restaurant Christmas party every year. I have so much respect for them and thank them for their efforts. They are classic public servants—professional and always there. We had that relationship with Centrelink staff for many years. Under previous Labor and Liberal governments they were of great service to us. But I am sad to say that in recent years the staffing reality, where people are on the phone complaining about them for two hours, has led to a very sad deterioration of matters.

David Bitel, who went to law school with me, has always been there to provide me with free legal advice on cases—it is very sad that he is suffering from cancer at the moment; it is very serious—and he has been ever supportive.

I want briefly want to talk about the staff I had when I was parliamentary secretary for immigration. We did a few things. We had a national consultation with regard to settlement, and there were great outcomes from that. Whilst we have question marks about our refugee intake policies, we are acknowledged around the world as leaders in settlement policies. When the former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres—the former Prime Minister of Portugal—came to this country, he said: 'You have the best system in the world. You should be more vocal about it in international fora.'

I established a national advisory committee with regard to multiculturalism, with Andrew Demetrio at the head. Unfortunately, a rather ill-advised attitude in the Labor Party cabinet at the time knocked over our original suggestion. Peter Scanlon went on to spend millions of dollars of his own money to establish the Scanlon Foundation, which does tremendous work in multiculturalism. I advise every member of this House to look at the research that they have done on this about the attitudes of the Australian people. I am pleased to say that my adviser Carla Wilshire went on to become the director there. At that time Sarah Gestier-Garstang, Hanah Noura, Jodi Lewis, Nadine Clode, who were seconded to the office from the department, provided tremendous support. At that time we also had a new national statement on multiculturalism and rebranded Harmony Day. I also want to acknowledge my advisers in opposition and government—Warren Gardiner, Khalidou Hajaj and Aisha Amjad—who were all a tremendous source of support.

I want to turn to my electorates. In 2010 my seat was wiped out and I, unfortunately, was denied the right, in practical terms, to contest a number of seats in preselections. I want to thank Julia Gillard for standing up to the factional powerbrokers and backroom boys who tried to wipe me out. It was tremendous loyalty at the time. She stood up to major forces in my party.

That was very difficult. Chris Hayes was an extremely popular member in Werriwa, and even as a result of the positive outcome of us retaining seats we still have the ridiculous practice that I move through four seats every morning and he moves through four seats in the opposite direction to actually represent our electorates. So, it was very difficult, very challenging, and I want to thank the people who gave me very early support. It was a daunting experience to go to the Macquarie golf links to meet Councillor Anne Stanley and John McLaughlin, the president and secretary of Werriwa FEC. But they soon got behind me, as did councillors Aaron Rule, Wal Glynn, Anoulack Chanthivong, Mark Pearce and Brad
Parker and my brother-in-law, Paul Lynch, the state member for Liverpool. It was tremendous that we had that support from the party organisation, in very difficult circumstances.

That was a great outcome in terms of life experience. I have come to represent a very different electorate: large numbers of Centrelink issues, and disabilities, as the member opposite would acknowledge, are a major facet of that electorate, and there are tremendous local voluntary groups and workers. I do not think any other part of Sydney has so much commitment. I have come to learn that the semi-rural area still had an attitude that they raised all the money for charities, and they stressed at every event that 'the money stays here.' It was a very different experience. Internet access is a massive issue out there. Current housing development of semi-rural areas is basically becoming part of urban Sydney. As I said, it was a great experience.

Despite the rather difficult times of 2010, the party organisation had I think a very credible outcome in 2013 to hold the seat against massive spending by the Liberal Party, unprecedented in Werriwa. I also had a preselection, despite this image of being imposed and of how dreadful it was that I was imposed. We had a preselection ballot, and I got an East German, Walter-Ulbricht-style majority of 93 per cent in the preselection ballot! One of the great ironies in life—and I particularly appreciate it—is that after the result I had a phone call from Graham Richardson, and he said, 'Laurie, you and I have never been friends or associates, but I just want to say that you holding Werriwa is just unbelievable.' That was testimony to the party organisation.

I will turn to Reid. I had the second-longest term of its eight members—and I was one of six of the eight who never had a royal commission investigation into them! It is a high-NESB area—new arrivals, multiculturalism; that is the nature of it. I really enjoyed that. I have to say, Reid has a lot of Labor Party history. Percy Coleman, the federal secretary of the federal Labor Party, was defeated as a federal member by Joe Gander. Charlie Morgan was knocked over by Tom Uren in a preselection ballot and went on to get 17 per cent as an Independent, which is no mean feat. Regarding the party organisation there, I want to go back to Michael Hanna, who first persuaded me not to step aside for other people and let other people go into politics in the area. Apart from a few friendly words at my father's funeral, he has not spoken to me since I supported the first Iraq war. But I have not forgotten his support at the time. And then there were Bob Lipscombe, Alan Clarke, Therese Wood, Tony Latimore, Karen Fitzsimmons, Phil Gordon, Paul Garrard, Kim Yeadon and all of those, and, from more recent generations, Joanna Devine, Martin Byrne, Caroline Staples, and those people who really are not in leadership roles but worked their guts out at polling booths: Alex Petrov, Ian Pandilovski and Brian Long.

I have always had an attitude of massive attendance at branch meetings. I had 17 to 19 branches back in Reid. I tried to attend each of them every month. With Werriwa it is a lot easier as they have only six branches; it is great. I had an attitude that I did not want to be anyone's prisoner in politics, so that is why throughout life I really stressed that local connection and commitment. I saw other people's futures become basically controlled by even their enemies because they neglected the branches. I always believed that people who work for you on an election day deserve a lot.

Harry Jenkins, in his valedictory speech, spoke of 'exposing ourselves to what is different'. As the kind of kid who at primary school knew every world capital and prided myself that I...
knew more than every other kid in the school about the world, I, like Harry, am very thankful that I have had the opportunity through this parliament to learn a lot overseas: at the United Nations, to go to seminars there and workshops and to visit various NGOs; to visit Palestinian camps and to see the work of APHEDA; at the Thai border camps; in Lebanon to meet people across the political and religious spectrum and to see the bombing of South Lebanon; in Bangladesh, unfortunately having to be accompanied throughout by police and military, to visit the areas of the indigenous Jumma people; in Turkey, to meet with the leadership of the Alevi and the Kurdish communities; to see the malnutrition in Timor; to see refugee and immigration practices in virtually every European country; to see the attitude of Denmark on leadership and renewables; and to go to Hungary and understand the experiences of the Roma Gypsy minority and the discrimination that they face. It has been a tremendous opportunity to really learn more.

I want to now talk about—to borrow an American expression—'work across the aisles'. I have always appreciated the ability to work with people in other political parties on areas where I have firm beliefs. In my areas of foreign aid, development, women's focuses, human rights and international affairs there are a number of groups in this parliament: Parliamentarians for Global Action, Amnesty International, Australian Parliamentarians against the Death Penalty, and the Parliamentary Group on Population and Development. Obviously, on my side, there have been people like Senator Claire Moore, John Langmore, Maria Vanvakinou, Janelle Saffin, Duncan Kerr, Melissa Parke, Lisa Singh, Alan Griffin, Kelvin Thompson and many others, but I guess that is to be expected by me. But a very early experience that I found valuable—I was pushed into this by Warren Snowdon—was to head the parliamentarians in support of East Timor.

In that experience, I had significant cooperation from a number of members on the opposite side of this parliament and, more particularly, Democrats senator Vicki Bourne, who really was a tremendous activist on this issue. I think probably one of the most moving outcomes of that activity was when about 25 members of this parliament—mostly of the Labor Party Left, a few right-wingers, a few Democrats and a number of Liberals, including Russell Broadbent and Michael Atkinson; there were a few other Liberals—threw in $100 each so that I could go to the United Nations for the decolonisation hearings and to link up with parliamentarians from the former Portuguese colonies, Canada, Japan and the United States. I think that was great cooperation and support from all sides of this parliament. To work particularly with Julian McGauran and John Bradford—Philip Ruddock was at many of the meetings—on that issue was really appreciated.

I have worked with Sharman Stone around women's issues and development; with Jane Prentice and Richard Di Natale—unfortunately my retirement and his elevation to the leadership of the Greens has meant the end of that—to have a group on West Papua to ensure autonomy there, at least, and human rights; with Lyn Allison to go to Lebanon to see the destruction of the southern part through the Israeli bombing and the use of cluster bombs; and more recently, outside this parliament—as much as this activity is—with Greens members in New South Wales, John Kaye and Jamie Parker, around the question of Burma, going to a variety of ethnic groups, the Rohingyas and the National League for Democracy. It is tragic that this week John Kaye, the upper house member in New South Wales, passed away. A few
weeks ago, at a function on the Burmese cause, I was sad to mention his illness to the 500 people who were there.

I want to also acknowledge the people outside this parliament who have faith in campaigning by MPs and who come to us about issues of human rights. I could mention many others, but Moustapha Hamed; Kabita Chakma; the Jubian family; Pat Walsh; Necla Dag; Dr Myint Cho; Tony Lamb, a former member; Varuni Bala; Selima Begum; and Hanni Gayed are all people who have come to me about human rights issues. They have faith that members getting off their backsides, being out there at rallies in the streets of the city, being outside embassies at demonstrations and raising issues in this parliament have a value. It has also been worthwhile to engage with many ambassadors and to converse with them about the issues and, in some cases, to be pushed by them on these human rights issues. Obviously, we all understand that Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are also there to be supportive and to give us information and make sure these issues are taken up.

I want to recognise the staff of the parliament, most especially—I have to say—the library. It does not matter to members much these days with the internet and Wikipedia et cetera, but back when I first arrived I was asked about the differences between federal and state parliament, where I had been. I said that basically you lose contact to some degree with your electorate, being a federal member as opposed to a state member. You are not there as often. Secondly, the conviviality of the state parliament is far greater because you have known these people through your local party organisation in your state. The third thing was the abysmal research support that state parliamentarians in New South Wales had. Anyone that was half decent was grabbed by the incoming government to work in a ministerial office. To come down here and to have that tremendous support was so refreshing.

The parliamentary liaison officers, under Labor and Liberal governments, are sometimes in invidious situations in trying to be objective and give advice to people on the opposite side, but they have been tremendous. There are the dining room staff, the committee secretariats, the cleaners and the drivers. Indicative of this was a conversation I had with John Chapman—unfortunately, like Anthony Albanese, he is a devotee of the South Sydney Rabbitohs, but he has been a driver for 33 years. That really shows you that kind of thing.

In conclusion, I want to wish my party the best in what is going to be a very competitive election. I particularly hope that Councillor Anne Stanley succeeds me in Werriwa. She was selected in a preselection without challenge and has given tremendous service to the community both inside and outside the local council.

At my father's funeral, the renowned Australian journalist Mike Steketee asked me about an expression I used at that funeral. I said that my father's motto was 'know your value'. He asked me, 'What do you think it meant?' What it meant was, basically: do not be too self important and never be anyone's lackey. I hope that I have fulfilled that in my career, and I thank everyone for their attendance.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Vasta): I would like to thank the honourable member for Werriwa, and I wish him and his family all the very best in future.

Mr TUDGE (Aston—Minister for Human Services) (12:51): by leave—I move:

That standing order No. 43 (Members' statements) be suspended for the duration of the speech of the Member speaking at 1.30 pm.
Thursday, 5 May 2016  HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  4525

Question agreed to.

Mr KELVIN THOMSON (Wills) (12:52): Politics is possibly the only profession for
which no preparation is considered necessary. I said 'possibly'! I have clocked up 20 years as
the member for Wills, and I thank the voters of Wills for the confidence that they have shown
in me, in good times and in bad, and the support and the encouragement that they have given
me. It has been a great honour and a privilege to represent them, but you have to know when
to fold them, and for me that time has come.

I thank the Australian Labor Party for the support it has shown me for a very long time,
including endorsing me to stand in the forthcoming election. I was first elected as a Labor
representative in the Coburg council in 1981 and re-elected in 1982 and 1985. I was elected to
the Victorian parliament in 1988 and re-elected in 1992. I was elected here first in 1996 and
Labor Party at one level or another, from age 25 to age 60.

You know your time is up when your office rings the solicitor of a constituent to follow-up
their case and the solicitor says: 'Does Kelvin remember going on the ducking school at
Moonee Ponds West Primary School? Tell him I was the kid who ducked him.'

It would not have been possible without the great support of my family, friends, staff,
colleagues and volunteer campaign workers, and I owe them a great debt of gratitude. I had a
tough year personally last year, with a heart attack and the loss of a number of family
members, and it is now time for me to attend to other priorities in life.

I want to thank my family for their great support. My partner, Kerry, is in the gallery.
Kerry's love, good humour and support for me have been invaluable. Kerry said she is looking
forward to divorcing the federal member for Wills and her new relationship with Kelvin
Thomson, who in her words is 'a good bloke if only he'd spend more days at home'. I am told
that quality time will include cooking lessons—now there is something to look forward to! I
thank my son, Ben, and my daughter, Naomi. There are plenty of challenges involved in
growing up in a political household, and I thank them for their patience and support. I am
very proud of their perseverance in their chosen careers of aviation and animal welfare. I
thank my father, Allan, OAM, a man of great character and integrity and a wonderful role
model. He is also in the gallery, and that means a lot to me. My late mother, Dorothy—you
know what mums are like—wanted me to become Prime Minister. So did my
grandmother on my father's side, but she was a branch secretary to Malcolm Fraser in the
electorate of Wannon and thought I should be a Liberal Prime Minister. That would have been
a number of bridges too far!

I thank my brothers, Lex and Daryl, and my sister, Jacqui, and their families for their
support. I thank my office staff: Mimi Tamburrino, Tim Hamilton, who is here, Mark
O'Brien, Julie Ryan, Cate Hall, Nosrat Hosseini and many others who have served over the
past two decades. Mark had a stroke in the office just prior to Australia Day and has not been
able to return to work, so we are all thinking of him. I ended up in the same hospital on the
same day—naturally I took some files in for Mark to work on! Singling people out is a bad
idea, but I got terrific value out of Robert Larocca and Anthony Cianflone, who both would
be very good as MPs themselves. My office was a training ground for the Victorian Labor
ministers Tony Robinson, Christine Campbell, John Eren and Luke Donnellan. Indeed, for a
while when I was a state MP, I had the now member for Batman on my books. I am not sure that I can back up a claim that he worked for me, but he was there!

My staff could easily fill a valedictory speech themselves with their stories of constituents, such as the man, unlucky in love with four runaway brides, battling the immigration department to be allowed to sponsor a fifth. A couple of times my office was contacted by people asking us to draw up a will for them. When my staff demurred, the disappointed constituents said, 'But isn't Kelvin Thomson the member for Wills?'

I thank the Labor Party members and volunteers in Wills. They are an outstanding group of people who have always given much more than they ever got back. I thank the trade union movement—Ged Kearney and Dave Oliver at the ACTU, Ben Davis and his team at the AWU, Tony Sheldon and his team at the TWU, Glenn Thompson and the Manufacturing Workers' Union, Earl Setches at the plumbers, Dave Noonan at the CFMEU, the Institute of Marine and Power Engineers and many more. I thank the non-government organisations, who play such an important role in defending the public interest and reminding us that life is not all about money. I have worked closely with Animals Australia, the RSPCA, World Animal Protection, the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Humane Society International, the WWF and many others. I acknowledge the work of the Accountability Round Table in defending and advancing high standards of ethics and integrity in public life. I also thank business leaders like Dick Smith, Robert Rio from the Rio Industrial Group, Hugh Middendorp from Middendorp Electrical, and Flight Centre, amongst others, for their encouragement, support and leadership. To all of you, thank you for the chance to do this.

I thank my colleagues both present and past for their company, their wise counsel and their friendship. You are a very talented group of people and the Australian political system is very much the better for your contribution and your efforts. The funniest person on this side of the House has been the member for Bruce. He specialises in blue-on-blue attacks. One of his targets was the Labor MP Dr Andrew Theophanous. When the House was amused to learn one question time that Dr Theophanous had been one of Peter Costello's lecturers at Monash, and Dr Theophanous volunteered that he had given Peter Costello high marks, Alan said, 'Yes, but he gave high marks to all the tall blondes.' And when Dr Theophanous did indeed marry a tall, blonde archaeologist, Alan said he was not so much a husband as a research project. To another colleague he apologised for not being able to attend his third wedding but said he would try very hard to get to the next one. Most of Alan's interjections are quite unfit to be recorded by Hansard, so he says them under his breath, but because I sit next to him I get to hear them. If only he were here more often. Today will be the last Griffin Watch. That is it. Perhaps the best interjection I ever heard—it was not here; it was in the Victorian parliament—was when then Premier Kennett developed an animosity to the Director of Public Prosecutions, Bernard Bongiorno, and was taking action to get rid of him, and the state member for Melbourne, Neil Cole, observed that the Premier was the only person in the world who thought that 'Bongiorno' meant goodbye!

I want to thank those opposite for their friendship also. People see us on the TV getting stuck into each other during question time and do not realise that we do a lot of constructive work in committees, on delegations and through multiparty parliamentary friendship groups, problem-solving and promoting worthwhile causes. The nature of Canberra necessarily brings people together from across the aisle. When I was in the Victorian parliament, you did not
necessarily have much to do with opposing MPs, but here we have to travel to and from Canberra in the same planes and so on. One time a journalist talked me into bagging Petro Georgiou for giving very few speeches in the chamber. Karma decreed that, the next time that I travelled to Canberra, Petro and I would be seated together.

I want to thank the staff of Parliament House. It is a small city and it is a great place to work, particularly when parliament is not sitting. It is a bit like that efficient hospital with no patients in *Yes, Minister*. I thank the clerks, the Serjeant-at-Arms and the attendants. Luch was mentioned before. I think he has a twin or a clone, because everywhere you go he seems to be there. I thank Hansard and the Library, who provide professional and politically proper advice. I thank the Comcar drivers, the catering staff and the cleaners. I thank the outdoor staff. They keep the grounds in fantastic condition. As one MP who knows the difference between a *Grevillea* and an *Eremophila*, I have sometimes found the grounds a source of solitude and recovery after the mayhem and madness of question time.

I thank the MPs, senators and staff who have accompanied me on delegations and made them so entertaining. It will be a long time before I forget the look on the face of the OPEC official in Vienna, who was almost certainly wearing a real Rolex, when one of our senators took his watch off post briefing and said that it was an Australian custom to swap watches at the conclusion of a meeting! One time one of the border security people looked at my passport photo and said, 'Sir, are you well enough to travel?' On any delegation I went on, MPs and senators had very full itineraries and precious little time for sightseeing or relaxation. I am not sure I could say the same about all delegation secretaries. As soon as we got to one destination, our secretary went down to the beach, put on her bikini, spread herself out like a starfish and pretty much maintained that pose for the remainder of the delegation.

The parliamentary committee secretariats do great work. While I have served on many committees, I have put far and away my greatest effort into the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties. It recently clocked up 20 years here too, and I am its longest serving chair and the only member to have been both chair and deputy chair. The treaties committee has done quite a lot of work on trade treaties. We have done a lot of work on the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, the TPPA, but we will not get to report on it before the parliament is dissolved, and it will fall to the next treaties committee to complete that task.

These days, everyone declares themselves to be in favour of free trade, but I wonder how many Australians are aware that the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement is about much more than tariffs and quotas. It contains so many provisions restricting governments in their migration, foreign ownership, copyright and so on—so many other policies—that it is a handcuff on future governments and the right of Australians to democratically determine their future. I have heard the TPPA described as standing for 'taking people's power away'. It is noteworthy that the three remaining candidates in the US presidential primaries, Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, have all disowned the TPPA. Australia should certainly go no further down the path of ratifying this treaty until the US path becomes clear and, in the meantime, we should have a proper cost-benefit analysis carried out by the Productivity Commission. Members opposite regard Alfred Deakin and Sir Robert Menzies as their heroes—great Victorians they were, too—but I urge them to actually read what they said about the world, particularly about manufacturing. It is no good to invoke their names while trashing their legacy and their achievements.
People who know me know that I am not in the starry eyed, rose coloured glasses camp of politicians who say that the world is becoming a better place and that our best days are ahead of us. But I have worked as hard as I can to make the electorate of Wills a better place to live and to protect the good things about it.

One of my key objectives from the time I became a federal MP was to get our unemployment down from the terrible level of 20 per cent at the start of the 1990s—and it did come down too, right down to five per cent. But I never accepted that we should accept a degraded environment as the price of employment. In fact, I believed it was the other way around—the better we could make our environment the more working people would want to live here. So I supported local residents on issues with noise and fumes from places like the Essendon Airport and the Colonial chicken farm in Hadfield.

I wanted the public open spaces to be as attractive as they could be, so I fought successfully against proposals for freeways down creek valleys, like the F2 freeway reservation in the Merri Creek valley and the East West Link through Royal Park and the Moonee Ponds Creek. I fought successfully against the sale of public open space in the Moonee Ponds Creek valley, in areas like Moonee Boulevard and Pascoe Vale Road, and against selling public open space in the Merri Creek valley too. I set up Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek, which has done terrific work revegetating the Moonee Ponds Creek valley and establishing the Jacana wetlands. I actively supported Friends of Merri Creek and the Friends of Edgar's Creek, who have transformed these great open-space assets.

As early as my state parliament days I worked on getting the trucks off Pascoe Vale Road and getting rid of the Strathmore escarpment freeway reservation. I worked on maintaining bus services in Pascoe Vale South and cleaning up local railway stations, and I supported successful campaigns to stop the Upfield railway line from being closed by two different state Liberal governments. We were certainly on the right side of history there—the problem nowadays is that the carriages are full and people down the line cannot get on!

A critical component of living conditions is neighbourhood character and the planning rules. I have fought hard—although not as successfully as I would have wished—to give residents a genuine say in the character of their street and their community.

Education is crucial to our life chances. I supported the successful 'High school for Coburg' campaign. And I am proud to have been a member of a Labor government that put over $100 million into both primary and secondary school buildings in Wills, setting up our schools to offer quality education to the next generation and sparing us from the fate of trying to educate our children in the run-down, dilapidated buildings and classrooms which were thrown up hurriedly in the postwar years and were very much in need of renovation.

Beyond education, employment and environment, I have greatly enjoyed working with local people to build and strengthen the rich community life of Wills—its sporting clubs, RSLs and community organisations. In recent years I have held forums designed to shine a light on some of our darker corners and send a message that some things are just not okay. We had a forum on domestic violence, a forum after the Ford closure announcement, a forum about Sydney road safety, a forum after the killing of Jill Meagher and we had forums on the ice epidemic and on unemployment in Wills.
When I arrived here in 1996 I was young, enthusiastic, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed—as I see a number of you here are now. It is true! Many of my older colleagues were downcast by the comprehensive shellacking of the 1996 election which brought John Howard to power with a majority of basically 100 seats to 50. But I was more cheerful. I had taken a real risk in giving up a safe Labor seat in the Victorian parliament to campaign for a seat which we did not hold, having lost it to Independent Phil Cleary in 1992. So I was pretty pleased just to be here.

I admit that when I moved to the federal parliament in 1996 it was part of my political calculus that Victorian Labor—the so-called guilty party—was seriously discredited and destined for a long time in opposition. I was surprised that we were able to regain government just three years later in 1999. I also thought that federal Labor, despite the big loss in 1996, was in pretty good working order. So I was also surprised that it took us 11 years to regain government. But, having spent 15 years in opposition at state and federal levels, it was terrific to win in 2007, but I was not prepared for the selfishness and poor judgement which came from within both those Labor governments in the ensuing years. I was not prepared for the machinations, the leaking, the backgrounding and the lack of loyalty to colleagues, which was unworthy of us. It drowned out our achievements and let down our supporters. I was more than surprised by this; I was appalled. But I was not surprised—and neither was anyone else—at the verdict of the electorate on this self-indulgence in 2013. We learned some lessons the hard way during that time.

I became a shadow parliamentary secretary the year after I arrived and shadow Assistant Treasurer after the 1998 federal election, which we narrowly lost. One of my campaigns in that period was for minimum quarterly, rather than annual, superannuation guarantee payments, and it was good that the Howard government picked it up.

I thought the year 2000, with the Sydney Olympic Games, and that innocence we had before September 11 was a great time to be an Australian. The Olympic torch passed through Wills one Saturday morning, and I joined a large crowd waiting for it at the North Essendon Junction around 7 am. There were two pubs back then at the junction, and in a driveway next to one of them was an old white Holden with two young blokes asleep inside who had clearly put in an all-nighter next door. One of them woke up and got up on the bonnet to get a better view and started jumping up and down on it in an unsuccessful effort to rouse his sleeping mate, singing out, 'Wake up, Donger, you'll miss the parade!' I thought it was a great time to be an Australian.

Labor looked good in 2000 and 2001, off the back of the government's problems in implementing the GST, particularly the extra work for small business, but we made the mistake of thinking we would surf into government on this issue and became a small target, rolling out very little policy of consequence. If Tony Abbott had been in our shoes he would have promised to get rid of the GST, but we did not.

Into this vacuum sailed Tampa, and after the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 the mood of the country changed and the government was returned. Australians abandoned their customary scepticism and irreverence about governments. They were genuinely horrified by Islamist terrorism and locked in behind the government and hoped it was up to the task of protecting them. Labor went through tough years of leadership instability and division over policy and strategy. During those years one of our colleagues died in tragic circumstances.
Before he was even buried I was asked by a young aspirant whether I would have any objection to their taking his place. I said that was fine with me but it was not really my call—that they would have to ask the undertaker.

After 2001 I became shadow environment minister. A number of the key climate change policies I promoted in this role—ratification of the Kyoto protocol, an emissions trading scheme, and increasing the renewable energy target—were adopted as policy and later implemented when we came to government. I also pushed on issues like water for the Murray-Darling Basin and marine national parks. I had some success, but it did feel like hand-to-hand combat both within and outside the Labor Party.

We were defeated again in 2004, and I was not surprised to be moved from environment and was sufficiently worn down by the battles of the previous three years not to put up a fight over it. I was given regional development, amongst other things, and had a lot of fun exposing the regional rorts. I turned some of the regional rorts into poems and nursery rhymes and felt that I was making use of both the forensic and the more creative sides of my character.

When Kim Beazley returned to the leadership I was given the portfolios of public accountability and human services. I told Kim I would support his return to the leadership but that he needed to speak in language that ordinary people understood and could relate to. He replied that he was determined to be 'less prolix and verbose', and my head dropped a little. In retrospect I and the others who shifted our support to Kevin Rudd in 2006 may have done Kim a disservice. At the time I thought John Howard had his measure, but, looking back, perhaps the electorate would have been ready for change come 2007. And, looking back, I believe Kim would have made a better Prime Minister than either of his Labor successors.

Kevin Rudd made me shadow attorney-general. The biggest issue in this portfolio at the time was David Hicks. When he was first arrested there was very little sympathy for him in Australia, but after he had spent five years in Guantanamo Bay Australians were becoming restless. I promoted a two-word slogan in relation to him: fair trial. It was wrong to detain him indefinitely without trial and wrong not to allow him a trial before a real jury, not a military one.

In March 2007 my glorious career came to an abrupt dead end. In the political game of snakes and ladders, I hit the big snake. I was contacted by Kevin Rudd's office and advised that they had been told that I had written a reference for Tony Mokbel. I thought this was unlikely but naturally offered to check my office to see. After several hours of searching, my staff and I had found nothing and I was increasingly confident that it was a hoax, like the letter Ralph Willis produced in the 1996 election. But one of my staff eventually found the letter and brought my world crashing down. It is a tough business, politics. After I resigned as shadow Attorney-General I was depressed and miserable. But then I turned it around—and became miserable and depressed! It is said, 'Show me someone who hasn't made a mistake and I'll show you someone who hasn't done anything.' The important thing is to learn from your mistakes, and I sought to do that.

It is a great honour to be a member of the federal parliament, and I was determined not to waste it. I subscribe to the Edmund Burke view that we owe it to those who vote for us to tell them what we ourselves believe and try to add the value of our own experience rather than all the time simply parroting the party line. I also subscribe to the George Bernard Shaw view that, while reasonable people adapt themselves to suit the world, the unreasonable person
insists on trying to adapt the world to suit them—therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable person. In that sense, I have been unreasonable for much of the past decade.

In 2013 I had the opportunity to be Parliamentary Secretary for Trade and later on Parliamentary Secretary for Schools, and for those opportunities I thank former Prime Ministers Julia Gillard and Kevin Rudd.

As a backbencher I have been a contributor to national policy debates about Australia's rapid population growth, the exploitation of migrant workers and international students, trade and the future of the manufacturing industry, animal welfare, industrial fishing by supertrawlers and more.

One thing I have been increasingly concerned about, and would spend more time on if I was doing it all over again, is the integrity of the political process itself. The recent revelations about the use of Panama by large corporates and powerful individuals to dodge tax and hide ill-gotten gains; the corruption in the oil industry revealed by the Unaoil revelations; the scandals in New South Wales, involving both sides of politics, over retail leases and coal tenements and illegal campaign donations by property developers—all of these things suggest to me that a concerted push to clean up the political system is needed. I have called before for a national independent commission against corruption, and it is an idea whose time has come. The Senate crossbenchers are right about this.

We should make campaign donation disclosures in real-time, so you have to disclose a donation on your website within, say, a week of receiving it. We should make political lobbying more transparent. The Queensland model is a good one. Ministers must publish their external diaries every month. Registered lobbyists must also publish their meetings with ministers. They must file on the Integrity Commissioner's website, no later than 15 days after the end of each month, information on every lobbying contact with a government or opposition representative.

The New South Wales ICAC has recommended that meetings and phone conversations with lobbyists be the subject of a written record, with the date, venue, duration, names of attendees, subject matter and meeting outcomes being disclosed. As ICAC put it in 2010:

Lack of transparency in the current lobbying regulatory system is a major corruption risk, and contributes significantly to public distrust.

The US requires public officials to disclose details of their appointment diaries in a timely manner.

One anticorruption measure which people may be surprised to hear me advocate for the return of is the defined benefit superannuation scheme for members of parliament. Labor should never have proposed its abolition, and the Howard government should not have taken the bait. It is not in the public interest for MPs and senators to be making decisions about issues where billions of dollars are involved—such as listing PBS items, communications infrastructure, Defence projects or road projects—when those MPs have no financial security and therefore a healthy interest in what work opportunities they will have after parliament. One day some of you younger MPs should get together across the chamber and put the old scheme back.

Some people will ask, 'What about the double-dipping where an MP gets the superannuation and goes to work for a large foreign corporation anyway?' I agree that that is
an issue, and I would cheerfully support more robust measures by way of cooling-off periods for former ministers, for example. This is also an issue for public servants, by the way.

If members opposite should read more Deakin and Menzies, members on this side should read more Gough Whitlam. They do those surveys asking, 'Who has been our best Prime Minister?'

The correct answer is Gough. His towering intellect and basic decency changed Australia unquestionably for the better. The Prime Minister says there has never been a more exciting time to be an Australian. Yes, there has: 1972 to 1975, by a mile. Frankly, with the greatest of respect to Gough's successors on both sides of the fence, it has been all downhill since then. He delivered free postsecondary education, and we should never have let that achievement go. Bruce Billson, the member for Dunkley, said that we risk being the first generation to fail to live up to Australia's great promise that each generation will have it better than the one before. That was a point reinforced today by the member for Chisholm.

Many of you know that I think that the greatest driver of this failure is rapid population growth. I think this is true both globally and nationally. Globally, there are people still alive who were born into a world of two billion people, when we are now over seven billion and headed for nine billion to 10 million mid-century, with no credible sign of slowing down. A key driver of the shocking spectre of terrorism, of millions of boat people, of endless wars, is conflict over access to scarce resources—too many people and not enough arable land, water and food to go around. We all need to get serious, through the UN and every other relevant global avenue at our disposal, about reducing the global birthrate.

As to the ongoing asylum seeker crisis in Europe, the United States, Australia and beyond, the countries of the United Nations should together require the permanent members of the UN Security Council to provide refugee camps on their own soil that could accommodate all those who flee conflict zones and last for at least the duration of the conflict. That would act as a real incentive to the UN Security Council permanent members to resolve conflicts, rather than letting them fester for years, and encourage them to do a lot more to stop conflicts breaking out in the first place. The UN, its Security Council and its High Commissioner for Refugees have conspicuously failed to do what they were set up to do—prevent conflict and make the world safe for everyone. Real power resides with the permanent members of the Security Council, and they should be made to carry out the role for which they were given this power and made accountable for their decades of failure.

Nationally, for the last decade we have been growing at a rate of a million every three years. People who think that Australia is sparsely populated are ecologically illiterate. They do not realise that most of Australia is desert and uninhabitable, except at quite unsustainable levels of energy and water use. Rapid population growth is undermining the future of the next generations—fitting them up with job insecurity, housing unaffordability and student debt.

If we shy away from slowing down Australia's rapid population growth, and the media keep giving us policy advice from economists rather than ecologists, we will fail the next generation. We will pass on to them an unworthy legacy. We also risk an uprising by those we have let down. It is all very well for mainstream political forces to have a gentlemen's agreement that some issues are not to be touched, but nature abhors a vacuum. The commentators can look down their noses at Donald Trump or Bernie Sanders or UKIP or the push for a Brexit or Jeremy Corbyn or the European populist antimigration parties, but, if you
refuse to pay attention to what voters want, if you dismiss the voters as ignorant or rednecks, you take a real risk. It is better to be less greedy and more willing to give the voters what they want.

We have recently remembered 101 years since Anzac Day at Gallipoli. We know that each generation has its own battles to fight, its own challenges to confront. In the face of the global threats and challenges facing us now, it is easy for people to be passive, throwing their hands up in the air and saying, 'What can I achieve? The challenge is so massive and I am but one person.' But this was precisely the situation facing the Anzacs at Gallipoli. The courage and character they showed back then is not some museum piece to be taken down, dusted off and admired once a year and then put back on the shelf. It should inspire us to fight the battles of our own time.

*Endeavour* was of course the name of the ship Captain James Cook sailed in in his voyage of discovery to the Southern Hemisphere in 1770, and just this week the *Endeavour* itself was apparently rediscovered off Rhode Island after going missing in the 18th century. If we can rediscover the *Endeavour* after 200 years, surely there is still some endavour waiting to be discovered in each of us.

It is said that a politician thinks about the next election, whereas a statesman thinks about the next generation. Somewhat immodestly then, I try to think about the next generation. But if I keep talking, some of you will conclude that I am intending to speak until the arrival of my audience, so I will stop now. It has been extraordinary privilege and, again, I thank everyone who has contributed to either giving me this opportunity or sharing the journey. I wish all of you, including my prospective successor, Peter Khalil, all the best for the future.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Vasta):** I also would like to thank the honourable member for Wills. I want to acknowledge his lovely partner and his father, who are in the gallery today. I wish him and his family all the very best in the future.

**Mr Pitt (Hinkler—Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister) (13:25):** Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker Vasta. It is certainly good to see you in the chair again. I rise today to speak on the address-in-reply. This debate gives me an opportunity to update the House and my constituents of Hinkler on what has been achieved and what is in the pipeline.

There has been a strong flow of infrastructure funding throughout the Hinkler electorate across a wide range of assets. Just last week, I announced $390,000 for the Black Spot Program to fix three problem intersections in Bundaberg. Two of the intersections are right beside local schools, Bundaberg South State School—which incidentally will celebrate its 120th anniversary on 21 May—and Bundaberg East State School. Work at these sites will see both intersections upgraded, bike lanes added and pedestrian facilities improved. Residents in Bundaberg know firsthand how notorious these locations are. Accidents take huge tolls on families, on our communities and on the economy. I am delighted to see these upgrades approved.

Since June 2014, the Hinkler electorate has received $1,912,348 towards black spot funding. This includes road intersections in not only Bundaberg but Burnett Heads, Nkenbah and Pialba. The coalition government has committed $5 million to the Black Spot Program until 2018-19—and got an improvement on Tuesday night, as I recall. The Black Spot Program is improving road safety and infrastructure across country. The program allows
anyone to make a submission for a safety upgrade to a road or intersection in their local area, and I encourage the residents of Hinkler to get online and submit any roads that they think are dangerous. According to the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, there were 1,242 road deaths in Australia in the 12 months to February 2016. This is far too many and we must continue to campaign to make our roads safer.

Continuing on the theme of roads, the road widening works on a 2½ kilometre section of the Bruce Highway near Pig Creek and Little Pig Creek, between Childers and Torbanlea, is progressing very well: the $3.4 million road widening works will help improve road safety on this part of the Bruce Highway and is part of the Australian and Queensland governments' $8½ billion dollar program of works to upgrade the Bruce Highway. To date, there has been $29.7 million in upgrades on the Bruce Highway in my electorate of Hinkler. There has been $8 million worth of upgrades to the three intersections near Childers, completed in July 2016; $6 million for an overtaking lane north of Howard, which was completed in August 2014; $4.5 million for widening a four-kilometre stretch near Adies Road at Apple Tree Creek, which was completed in July 2014; $7.1 million for the widening of the highway for 2.2 kilometres near Wongi State Forest, south of Torbanlea, which was completed in December 2015; and $700,000 for the widening of a seven-kilometre stretch Booyal, which commenced in February 2016.

There are other safety improvements scheduled for the Hinkler stretch of the Bruce Highway in the 2016-17 financial year as well. Significant work is being done on sections to the north and south of my electorate, which will directly benefit Hinkler motorists. Motorists' safety, freight route reliability and emergency accessibility are essential for the people who live, work and run businesses in regional Queensland, as well as the tourists and visitors that help boost our local economies.

The coalition government is committed to making not only the Bruce Highway but also local regional roads safe. Another successful regional infrastructure program is the Capital Grants Program. Last month, I had the great pleasure of hosting the Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham, in my electorate as we opened new science facilities at St James Lutheran College in Hervey Bay. The school received a $650,000 grant through the Capital Grants Program, and the facilities that they have built are absolutely first-class. When Senator Birmingham spoke to the students, teachers and school community, he said he hoped a future great Australian breakthrough would be produced by a student inspired by the new science facilities. And, really, absolutely anything is possible.

Another school in my electorate, St Luke's Anglican School in Bundaberg, was also the recipient of $500,000 in the Capital Grants Program.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. BC Scott):** The debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 43. The debate may be resumed at a later hour.

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**Vietnam: Environment**

**Mr HAYES** (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (13:30): Since last month, dead fish have been washing up on the shores of Vietnam, from the Ha Tinh province down to the Hue province, and it is now spreading down to Da Nang city. The evidence suggests that this is the result of a toxic waste discharge from the Formosa Ha Tinh Steel Corporation, a Taiwanese
company operating in the Vung Ang industrial zone. The result of this is that local fishermen have now lost a lot of their work and their livelihoods have been compromised, for which there is no compensation.

Tuan Anh Nguyen, who is a member of the Vietnamese Overseas Initiative for Conscience Empowerment, VOICE, and was also an intern in my office earlier this year, has been working with the local community, assisting them by providing temporary relief and aid. Tuan has also been working to report on this dire situation through blog sites and social media. I am advised that, over the past two weeks, Tuan has been monitored by the authorities and has been ordered to remain in the vicinity of his local church. There remains a real concern that if he leaves he will, once again, be detained.

I understand that many protestors who are seeking to raise awareness of this environmental disaster have already been detained. Once again, there appears to be a situation where the authorities are targeting those who advocate the truth rather than those who have caused real harm to the environment and the community.

**Petrie Electorate: Police and Citizens Youth Clubs**

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (13:31): I have two local police and citizens youth clubs in my electorate of Petrie that offer so many constructive activities to help keep local children and youth on a strong path to success, employment and encouragement. We are lucky that both of these clubs have been established for a long time, and I have two other nearby that also support the Petrie electorate. I have had the opportunity to help both of these clubs recently through the Turnbull government's Stronger Communities Program.

The Deception Bay PCYC received $9,915 towards an air-conditioning unit for their new gym, which was also built and funded by the federal government. This will provide an income-producing asset for them through membership of the gym. I note that the wonderful staff at the PCYC, as well as the branch manager, Sergeant Jeremy Arato, recently told me that the club's membership is the highest it has been in years, and that is great news.

The Redcliffe PCYC also received $18,000 toward upgrading their outdoor area. I used to teach judo at the Redcliffe PCYC. I know the great job they do. Well done to Peter Parkes and Noel and the rest of the committee and all the staff there on the wonderful job that they do. I am doing my best to ensure our local PCYCs have the infrastructure and funding they need to help the whole community and its children prosper.

**Budget**

Mr MARLES (Corio) (13:33): If the coalition is re-elected on 2 July, Australian pensioners, families and job seekers can expect more pain and more cuts. The unlegislated measures that were contained in the 2014-15 budget form part of the budget that was announced on Tuesday night, and that means that if the coalition is elected they will become law. It will mean increasing the pension age to 70. It will mean cuts to paid parental leave that will affect 80,000 new mums. It will mean cutting family payments that will hurt ½ million Australian families. It will mean cuts to young job seekers that will force them to live on nothing for a month.

All of that describes my electorate of Geelong. All of that impacts the very heart of the electorate. When you look at the various scenarios published in the papers around the effects of the budget, all of them make depressing reading. A couple on a single income of $87,000...
with two children in primary school will be $2,300 worse off, largely through cuts to the schoolkids bonus and the end-of-year supplements for the family tax benefits. If you go through each of these scenarios for people who make up the electorate of Corio, they are all going to be worse off. This was a government that, when it was elected, began de-industrialising Australia. They goaded Australian manufacturing offshore, and now they are shredding the safety net that people rely on.

Employment

Mr Hutchinson (Lyons) (13:34): Too many of our young people grow up in a family where no-one has ever had a job. Previous governments have tried, and we must keep trying. Our nation needs these young people. We in this place know that the best form of welfare is a real job, so the $840 million Youth Employment Package, where 120,000 young people will have the chance to get a real job, is an absolute necessity. At its core is Youth Jobs Path—prepare, trial and hire—targeting young people up to 25 years of age to get them into real paid work with a real employer. In the preparation stage, there will be intensive three-week training to help meet the needs of employers, to provide them with advanced job-hunting skills and to improve their preparation for real work and their presentation once they get there. In the trial period, which is a voluntary period of between four and 12 weeks, there will be internships for up to 30,000 young people, a $1,000 incentive payment for the business to host a placement and an additional payment of $200 per fortnight on top of the income the job seeker is receiving either through Newstart or youth allowance to incentivise these young people to get into real work. There will be work experience with the opportunity for up to 25 hours per week and then a real chance that they will be hired. A job is a life-changing experience, and we owe it to our young people to keep trying. We owe it to our nation.

Budget

Ms Brodtmann (Canberra) (13:36): Women earn less per week than men. Women face less job security than men. Women retire with less than men. So what did the Abbott-Turnbull government do about it in this Tuesday's budget? They delivered a budget that reserves its deepest, harshest cuts for women. This is a squib of a budget. It does nothing to advance the priorities and aspirations of Australia’s women. It does everything to undermine them. This Prime Minister had an opportunity to mend the damage done by his predecessor, but he decided it was more important to give multimillionaires a tax cut.

But that costs money, and where was he going to find the money? Where did he go? He cut paid parental leave. By locking up the cuts from the 2015 budget he ensured that up to 80,000 women are left as much as $11,800 worse off. He cut Medicare by nearly $1 billion and shut down the Child Dental Benefits Schedule. He made cuts to women’s diagnostic imaging and tests such as pap smears. He did all of this to pay for the tax for the wealthy. More than one million low-income families will lose vital family payments and their tax will not change by a dollar. This is an unfair budget from an unfit government. It is an unfair budget for women. (Time expired)

Swan Electorate

Mr Irons (Swan) (13:37): Mr Deputy Speaker Scott, I congratulate you on your service to the parliament and wish you all the best for the future. As we head towards the inevitable election, I would like to thank the constituents of Swan for putting their trust in me for the last
three terms and briefly mention some, not all, achievements, including the $490 million GST that I advocated for that was in the budget and is being allocated to the brand new railway line to High Wycombe, the Forrestfield link line, as it has been named. Many more could be listed but I do not have the time, so I will not be doing it at the present time.

One thing I will not be doing during the election period is promoting a change to the date of Australia Day from 26 January. I certainly will not be changing political parties for personal advancement. I have been a member of the Liberal Party for many years. I am happy being a member of the Liberal Party and can say that I have always voted for the Liberal Party. I have not voted for other parties and then changed to different parties. I will not be setting up a community group to promote a certain ideology and political agenda and pretends to care about the people in the community. The people in Belmont know about that. I certainly will not claim to be a longstanding resident of the electorate after working for more than eight years in Sydney. I look forward to the election. I will say that I will miss Don Randall in the next parliament.

**Kingsford Smith Electorate: Pagewood Botany Football Club**

Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (13:39): I wish to support and congratulate the members and supporters of Pagewood Botany Football Club, which celebrated its 40th anniversary on Saturday. Pagewood Botany is the largest sporting club in our area, with over 1,200 players, 172 coaches and managers and many, many volunteers. On the weekend, they celebrated this significant milestone with a gala day at their home ground of Jellicoe Park. The gala day included a game between the Pagewood All-Stars and Windgap Warriors, the team which I was fortunate to be a member of. I am proud to announce that the Windgap Warriors got up 6-2. It was also the 11th anniversary of the Dimos shield, a game against Waverley named in honour of Dimos Mastoris, who tragically passed away 11 years ago during a match against Waverley. There was also a 24-hour six-a-side game to raise money for local charities. I am pleased to say that the Pagewood Botany Football Club raised $13,000 for local charities. On the day, I was very proud to be able to present the club with a cheque for $18,000 from the Stronger Communities Program to upgrade lights at the oval to ensure that more soccer can be played around the community.

I wish to pay tribute to the founding members of the club for their vision and foresight. It is a club that has grown from strength to strength. I congratulate the thousands of members of our community who have volunteered their time over the last 40 years. Pagewood Botany Football Club is a great community organisation. Happy 40th anniversary!

**Herbert Electorate: Infrastructure**

Mr EWEN JONES (Herbert—Government Whip) (13:41): Townsville was founded just on 150 years ago as a port town. Today we are a port city. We are the most significant city north of the Tropic of Capricorn in the entire country. We are now developing our port into a major container and logistics hub, a transport hub for northern Australia. We have direct shipping from Townsville to China in eight days, the shortest trip from anywhere in Australia. What we must be doing is ensuring that we are growing our port, because that is what is important to all of north Queensland. A growing port, a busy port, means a busy Townsville and jobs for all. The key to a busy port is making sure it is an efficient port. The Townsville eastern access rail corridor has been mentioned among the top 10 projects for Australia by Infrastructure Australia. The ability to bring in trains of 1.4 kilometres in length from the
north-west minerals province, with all the agriculture that will come from the development of northern Australia through our port without disrupting our city, to allow our city to develop properly and renew in the corridors along Railway Avenue near the Ross Island Hotel, right next door to the Townsville 400 and into the CBD by getting rid of those train tracks and those trains which disrupt everyone. The efficient use of our port means a busier port with high-value, good products going through with a real vision for the future. That is what this government will bring as a vision to the election coming up.

Budget

Prime Minister

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (13:42): I rise today proud to represent the people of Lalor, proudly Labor and incredibly proud to be part of the team that will go out and fight this unfair budget and this unfair government. Many people have asked, 'What is the point of our Prime Minister?' Journalists have been asking this question, community members in my electorate certainly have asked me this question. I think that across the last two days the Prime Minister has tripped over his arrogance and given us the answer to the question, what is the point of this Prime Minister. The point of this Prime Minister is a $55 billion gift across the next 10 years to corporations in this country. That is $55 billion taken from families across this nation, taken from women. What is the point, one asks, and one asks it seriously, because the one thing I thought this Prime Minister would do would be to show some respect for women and have his budget assessed for its impact on women, but on this he has critically failed. I did give him some credit for perhaps being progressive enough to do that, but he has failed. What is the point of this Prime Minister? We are starting to see his true colours come through. You can see it in the things that have changed. What has changed? A blue tie to a gold tie is all that has changed. This millionaire Prime Minister wears a gold tie.

Barton Electorate: Orthodox Easter

Mr VARVARIS (Barton) (13:44): Last week I had the privilege of participating in the celebration of Orthodox Easter with my family, my community and fellow Orthodox members of the electorate of Barton. Easter is, above all, the most sacred observance in the Orthodox faith. It is a time to mourn, to celebrate, to love and to come together under one faith. On our holiest day, Holy Friday, we see flags hung at half mast; however, with great mourning and sorrow come hope and renewal.

Perhaps what is most impressive to see in these celebrations is the traditional customs continued into modern celebrations and, furthermore, to see those traditional customs undertaken across generations and by entire families and communities. That is what makes Orthodoxy so special in my electorate. One such tradition is that of the egg. From ancient times, the egg has been a symbol of the renewal of life, with the red egg signifying victory over death.

The Orthodox community accounts for a significant proportion of my electorate of Barton, and it always brings me such pride and joy to spend time with members of all faiths. This could not be more evident than with the outpouring of love, celebration and worship at the midnight mass held at the Greek Orthodox Church in Kogarah under the care of
Archimandrite Sophronios Konidar and Father Angelo Masteas. So to all members of the House, and to all members of the electorate of Barton: Christos Anesti—Christ has risen.

**Health Care**

**Mr STEPHEN JONES** (Throsby) (13:45): It's back! It is bigger and more horrendous than ever before! It sounds like the leader for some B-grade horror movie, but it is not; it is a description of the GP tax mark V. First introduced by the Abbott government in its failed 2014 budget and then rebadged on no less than three occasions, the GP tax played a significant part in ending the prime ministership of Tony Abbott and bringing to an end the tenure of his first health minister, Peter Dutton. Now the current Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, is smuggling it back, on election eve. Of course, he is not calling it a GP tax; he does not have the courage. He is calling it an extended Medicare Benefits Schedule rebate freeze—in short, it is a GP tax.

As Christopher Harrison from the University of Sydney's Family Medicine Research Centre explains: the rebate freeze will lead to higher costs for patients. In fact, the Abbott government's plan for a $7 co-payment will look like a minnow compared to Malcolm Turnbull's GP tax. Patients are going to be slugged a $14.40 co-payment that patients will be paying by 2020 alone. Of course, the problem is worse in regional Australia, where incomes and bulk-billing rates are already lower than in the rest of Australia. It strikes me as very surprising that those members from regional and rural Australia are not standing here today and saying, 'We disagree with our Prime Minister's GP tax.' *(Time expired)*

**Infrastructure**

**Ms LANDRY** (Capricornia) (13:47): The Turnbull-Joyce government will release a $2 billion pool of money earmarked specifically to build water infrastructure. I welcome this news and I will now focus on fighting for money to be provided to fund two vital reports into the future development of water infrastructure in Central Queensland.

Two key projects that need to be explored further are: the potential construction of Rookwood Weir near Rockhampton, and preliminary work on the possibility of developing Urranah Dam near Collinsville. There is a need for about $2 million to go towards final investigations and a state government business plan required for the potential construction of Rookwood Weir near Rockhampton. There is also a need for up to $3 million towards a feasibility study into the Urranah Dam near Collinsville. Both of these projects are incredibly important to Capricornia and have the ability to expand agricultural production and create new jobs in the future. Before they can be fully funded, the reports I have outlined are required to be submitted. Capricornia faces a major jobs crisis due to the coal mining downturn, and what we critically need here is water infrastructure to secure future growth, jobs and exports.

I would also like to wish you well in your retirement, Mr Deputy Speaker Scott, and thank you for all the support you have given me.

**Budget**

**Mr ZAPPIA** (Makin) (13:48): The Turnbull government's first budget, handed down on Tuesday night, was a shallow attempt to win over swinging voters at the next election. More disappointingly, it was a budget that continued the harsh cuts for low income Australians who are already struggling. It was a budget where the devil was actually in the detail—a budget...
where pensioners, the unemployed, veterans, low-income families and the sick will all pay more for the tax cuts that higher-income earners and businesses are expected to get. In my own electorate of Makin, 84 per cent of income earners will not get any of those tax cuts that were announced.

This is a budget that maintains $29 billion of cuts to education, over $50 billion of cuts to health expenditure, the freezing of the GP Medicare payments—and, as my colleague just said, the bringing back of a $14 GP tax—a billion dollars of cuts to aged-care providers, 20 per cent funding cuts to universities and cuts to family tax benefits. A couple on a single income of $65,000 with three children in primary school will be over $3,000 worse off and will receive no tax cut at all. This is a budget where the national debt will continue to grow. But, even worse, it is a budget where the gap between the rich and the poor will continue to widen.

Maquarie Electorate: Western Sydney Airport

Mrs MARKUS (Macquarie) (13:49): I rise to speak today to let the people of the Macquarie electorate know I am honoured indeed to represent them and, whilst I and the coalition have been working to deliver a sound and responsible budget, I have also spent this week, as I have in the past few months, advocating on their behalf regarding the Western Sydney Airport. I want to see a second airport—one which is safe, environmentally responsible and community minded—but I will not let go of meeting with my colleagues and the decision makers. I notice the minister for infrastructure here; he has given me and my community many hours of listening; he is one of the decision makers for an alternative, particularly to the current proposed flight paths over Blaxland.

The policy recently announced by Labor and their local candidate is flawed. It only works as long as the wind does not blow and it does not rain, making their plan unworkable, unreliable and unsafe. How can residents trust a candidate who has been advocating against an airport but last month stood beside Labor hierarchy in supporting Labor's national platform for an airport?

I have said this from the start: I am for an airport, for the jobs and benefits it will bring to our local economy. But I have fought and will continue to fight for alternative flight paths—ones that are safe, are not formulated on the run, and have the approval of the relevant aeronautical bodies.

Charlton Electorate

Mr CONROY (Charlton) (13:51): This will be the last time that a member for Charlton will speak in the House of Representatives. With the recent redistribution, Charlton has been split three ways: into Shortland, Hunter and Newcastle. I want to thank the great electors of Charlton for giving me the privilege of representing them for the last three years. I want to honour the three previous members for Charlton: Bob Brown, Kelly Hoare and my friend and mentor Greg Combet.

It is a great shame that the Electoral Commission has abolished the name of Charlton. Matthew Charlton was a legend of Australian politics. He was a Newcastle coalminer who became a state member, and then a federal member representing the seat of Hunter, and he led the Labor Party for six years during the darkest days post the World War I conscription split. To have that name lost from political history while we have seats in this place named after
politicians who opposed Federation is, to me, a most curious thing. In fact, I think it is a disgrace.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to my good friend and close colleague Jill Hall, who will be retiring as the member for Shortland. She will be speaking later today. This parliament will be poorer for her absence. She has represented the great Lake Macquarie and Central Coast regions for 25 years. I want to put on the record my great admiration for her. She has done our region great service. She has been a personal friend and mentor to me, and I wish her every success in retirement.

Diabetes

Mr MATHESON (Macarthur) (13:52): I rise today to speak about an issue that is close to my heart and something I have been campaigning on since entering parliament—juvenile type 1 diabetes. In 2012, I spoke in this House about Will Cullen from Harrington Park in my electorate of Macarthur. Will, now 11, was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes as a baby and has bravely battled this chronic illness throughout his young life. He now uses an insulin pump and continuous glucose monitor with a sensor attached to his body. This wireless technology transmits his blood glucose levels to the pump.

Continuous glucose monitoring, or CGM, as it is known, is a critical piece of technology because it sets off an alarm, warning Will either that his blood sugar levels are either dangerously low, avoiding loss of consciousness, seizure or even death, or that his blood sugars are extremely high, which can lead to long-term complications such as blindness, kidney failure, amputations, heart disease and stroke. Australia is way behind countries like the US and the UK in providing subsidised access to CGM. Without this technology kids like Will are at risk of dying in their sleep because their pump cannot detect low blood sugar and pump insulin to dangerous levels. Parents are expected to pay as much as $5,000 for this technology on top of all the other costs associated with managing type 1 diabetes. We need to catch up with the rest of the world and find a way to fund CGM so that parents have peace of mind and their child is safer and healthier long term.

Budget

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (13:54): The nasty surprises from Tuesday night's budget keep coming. One of the things that we have also learnt from that nasty budget is that this government, the Turnbull government, have continued with their plan to cut the Financial Entitlements Guarantee, FEG. This government have said that they want to cut the entitlements that these workers are owed. It is heartbreaking when a company goes into receivership and workers are faced with having to lose their entitlements. It is not their fault the company has gone into receivership. They need this government's support.

For example, a worker for Queensland Nickel could face being $58,000 worse off because of this government if they have worked for the company for 10 years. Where is the member for Herbert's tears now? Where are his sighs? Why isn't he calling on the Treasurer and this government to back down on cutting the Fair Entitlements Guarantee? Prior to the last election, I sat with cleaners at the Bendigo marketplace and helped them complete their FEG forms for another time when they had worked for several contractors that had gone into receivership. It is good we have a scheme in place that protects workers entitlements. It is so
disappointing that, yet again, this government are trying to cut the Fair Entitlements Guarantee. *(Time expired)*

**Taxation**

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (13:55): Shame on Labor for their complete disregard of the Australian property market through their desire to decrease property values, forcing people out of rental accommodation and increasing the burden on public housing. It is estimated that areas of high negative gearing, such as the Central Coast, under Labor's ill-conceived property plan, will experience a nearly 30 per cent decrease in possible home values. Many investors would have no choice to off-load their properties because they cannot afford it; others would seek to offset their losses through increasing rents.

In Dobell, we have 13,878 rental dwellings. That is a lot of families, a lot of couples and a lot of singles who would be impacted by Labor's disgusting policy. The reason negative gearing exists is to assist in providing rental accommodation as opposed to providing public housing. The average rental deduction is $2,000 per investment claim per annum. No government can provide accommodation at $2,000 per annum per tenancy. It would cost the taxpayer much more to provide government assistance to 30 per cent of the population who rent. This government will not put up rents. We will not devalue people's homes. We will not increase the demand for public housing. We will not put 1.1 million builders and tradies' jobs at risk. Property accounts for 11.5 per cent of the Australian economy. It requires steady, stable economic management, not a plan for devolution of people's homes for political gain. *(Time expired)*

**Budget**

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (13:57): I am not a fan of public spearing but, can I say, do not watch David Spears's interview of the Prime Minister today. It is all pain, having the Prime Minister of this country unable to put a figure to his key budget measure—his corporate tax changes. It was an awkward moment as David Spears put it to him and he could not answer it. By the way, from now on I won't be going on his show, as a result of seeing what happened to Malcolm Turnbull. Malcolm Turnbull has had such a great week—

The SPEAKER: The member for Chifley will refer to members by their proper titles.

Mr HUSIC: The Prime Minister has had such a great week, telling us that it is okay to give a baby a house as a present. On that basis, I do not want him to invite me to any of his baby showers! Or as James Jeffrey said, 'By 2020, no child need live without a property portfolio under this government.' It has been terrific. Another man who got to get the great advice from our great Prime Minister was Jon Faine, who was told, 'Just shell out if you have a concern.' It has been a trifecta of perfection. It is truly an exciting time to be alive and it is an exciting time to be Malcolm Turnbull.

**Federal Election**

Mr NIKOLIC (Bass) (13:58): Without anticipating what may transpire in the next few days, this may be the last sitting day of this House of Representatives in the 44th Parliament. The next election will be the 45th since Federation and it will be a double dissolution, one of only six since 1901. Many of those voting for the first time will not have voted in a double dissolution but, because of the electoral reforms passed recently, the choice of every voter at the ballot box will be faithfully replicated in the outcome of this House and, most importantly,
the other place. It is, of course, the cynical gaming of Senate preferences which has led to the current parliamentary situation, where a government's legislation, for which it has a popular mandate, is continually frustrated by certain senators, and most disgracefully by the Labor Party, which prevents essential reforms to benefit the Australian economy and society for base political reasons. They opposed Senate voting reforms and put the union interest above the national interest. But to stand up for principles requires courage—the courage of men like Gary Gray. Australians will have a stark choice when they go to the polls—between a government they can trust to continue the economic stewardship of Australia in challenging times or a return to the turmoil and tax-borrow-spend days of the Rudd-Gillard years. The people of Bass who sent me here are not mugs. They know the choice that will be offered to them and they know that a re-elected coalition will never let them down.

The SPEAKER: In accordance with standing order 43, the time for members' statements has concluded.

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:00): The Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Materiel will be absent from question time today. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will answer questions on his behalf.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Budget

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:00): My question is to the Prime Minister. This morning, in an extraordinary interview with DavidSpeers on Sky News, the Prime Minister said of his 10-year tax cut for big business, 'The Treasury has not identified the dollar cost of that particular item.' Why did the Prime Minister make his 10-year plan the centrepiece of his budget when, by his own admission, he has not even asked Treasury to identify the 10-year cost?

Mr Pyne interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will cease interjecting.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:01): The Leader of the Opposition's childish efforts this morning, rehearsed now again, overlook the fact that, as he well knows, the Charter of Budget Honesty Act stipulates the budget papers must contain details of policy and estimates for the budget year and the following three years—forward estimates. That is precisely what has been followed at every budget, including those brought down by the member for Lilley, since 1998. The exact forecasts and projections of costs of our enterprise tax plan over the forward estimates are clearly set out in Budget Paper No. 2, on page 41.

Labor are on record as acknowledging that a company tax cut is good for jobs and good for the economy. Modelling published by the Treasury last year shows that, for every dollar of company tax cut, there is a return to the economy of as much as $4. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for McMahon, the shadow Treasurer, know this, which is why they have previously strongly supported a cut in company tax. Let us get to what is really motivating Labor's interest in this issue. They are desperately scurrying around trying to find money in the budget to fill up their massive black hole. In stark contrast, our national
economic plan for jobs and growth encourages the very enterprise and investment we need to create the jobs of the future.

In terms of the medium-term projections in the budget papers, as the honourable members opposite know full well, they do not set out in the budget papers all of the line items that underpin those projections. They know that. It has been ever thus. Indeed, they understand that the medium-term projections make assumptions about the continuation of government policy and, as I said to Mr Speers, they take into account, as the Treasury has done, the government's Ten Year Enterprise Tax Plan. They are taken into account and they show, as the honourable members know—as it is set out in the graph on 311—the budget returning to balance within that medium term.

The SPEAKER: The only reason I did not sit the Prime Minister down through that wall of interjections was that I am not going to continually interrupt the House. There was a wall of interjections, mostly from members who are warned every day. I am not going to repeatedly warn through this day. I know passions are running high, but the members for Griffith, Adelaide, Wakefield and Ballarat are warned. If they continue behaving in that fashion, they will be out of question time straightaway.

Mr Pyne: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During the Prime Minister's answer, the member for Lilley, who should know better, was swearing disgracefully at the Prime Minister. He was swearing and shouting profanities at the Prime Minister and he should be required to withdraw.

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my right will cease interjecting. Did the member for Lilley make an unparliamentary remark?

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my right will cease interjecting.

Mr Swan: I certainly was not swearing, Mr Speaker.

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I say to the member for Lilley that he has been asked previously to withdraw unparliamentary remarks. I am asking him whether he made an unparliamentary remark, and I caution—

Mr Swan: I did not make an unparliamentary remark.

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I say to—

Mr Frydenberg interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Resources will not interject while I am addressing the House. I say to the member for Lilley that I am in a difficult situation when I have not heard the remark through that wall of interjection. As a senior member of the House, he has attested to the House that he did not make an unparliamentary remark.

Mr Pyne: Mr Speaker, I do not want to repeat the word that he was using, because that is exactly what he wants me to do. But he knows that he has just told a gross untruth to the House.
Mr Husic interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Chifley is warned!

Mr Pyne: The word that he used could not possibly be parliamentary. I am happy to write the word down for you and hand it to you, Mr Speaker, but I will not put it on the Hansard and give him the respect that he is looking for to have that remark repeated.

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I am going to hear from the Manager of Opposition Business, and I ask the Leader of the House to resume his seat. I give the call to the Manager of Opposition Business.

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, the claim that was just made by the Leader of the House, an allegation against a member deliberately misleading the House, is itself unparliamentary and needs to be withdrawn.

Mr Pyne interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will resume his seat. I am going to rule on this—

Mrs McNamara interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Dobell will resume her seat. I am well aware that she is wanting to ask a question when we get to back to question time. In the circumstances I can only accept the word of the member, but I will be listening as closely as I can and, if I hear unparliamentary remarks from the member for Lilley or, for that matter, any other member, I will take that matter very seriously. I caution the member for Lilley, because he has refused to withdraw unparliamentary remarks before. I am assuming that he wishes to hear the Leader of the Opposition's speech tonight. We are now going to move on, and I give the call to the member for Dobell.

National Security

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (14:08): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister update the House on the campaign to defeat violent extremists in Iraq and Syria? How is the government's strong and resolute approach to counter-terrorism helping to keep Australians safe and secure?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:08): I thank the honourable member for her question. I can confirm that the government has been advised that Neil Prakash, an Australian citizen, was killed by a US airstrike in Mosul in Iraq on 29 April. Prakash has been considered the most senior Australian operative in Daesh. He actively encouraged acts of terrorism in the West. He has been linked to several Australia-based terrorist attack plans promoting random killings of innocent civilians.

Prakash used cyberspace to promote the evil ideology of Daesh and recruit Australian men, women and children—many of whom are either still in the conflict zone or dead. Prakash and others ruthlessly target and groom our children—vulnerable children—with hateful propaganda of terrorism which perverts the religion of Islam. We must be, and are, unflinching in our resolve, and we work with our allies to identify and target Australians and others who are seeking to do our people harm.
We have also been advised by the United States government that Shadi Jabar Khalil Mohammad was killed in an air strike near al-Bab, Syria, on 22 April, along with her Sudanese husband. She is the sister of Farhad Mohammad, who late last year shot dead the New South Wales police employee Curtis Cheng in Parramatta. Mohammad and her husband were both considered active recruiters of foreign fighters for Daesh, inspiring attacks against Western interests. This should serve as a reminder to any Australians who seek to go to or are in the conflict zone that they are targets and should expect to be killed as we continue our campaign to eliminate this terrorist group. Whether it is Brussels or Paris, Ankara or Istanbul, Beirut, Bamako, Sydney or Jakarta, the world is so interconnected. Australians and our interests are so widespread that nowhere is far from home. The fact that terrorist attacks in Australia were being planned by Daesh from Syria and Iraq underscores the importance of our military contribution against that organisation in Syria and Iraq, in which we have been the second-largest contributor to the coalition effort. We are working with our allies to eliminate the so-called caliphate by defeating it in the field and ensuring that the political solutions are there to sustain the peace that follows.

The first duty of every government is the safety and security of the Australian public. No government can guarantee the absolute absence of terrorism, but we must not let terror groups like Daesh change us. We will remain both secure and free. We will keep our borders secure. We will maintain the shared values of freedom and mutual respect for all cultures and all faiths that have made ours the most successful multicultural society in the world.

Budget

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:11): My question is to the Prime Minister. Economist Chris Richardson has said that the Prime Minister's centrepiece 10-year tax cut for big business would cost $55 billion. This morning, when asked about this $55 billion figure, the Prime Minister said, 'He may well be right.' Prime Minister, Australians want to know: is he right? Is it $55 billion? And, if not, what is the 10-year cost?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:12): The estimations and forecasts and calculations of experienced economists like Dr Richardson are always taken into account by the public and, indeed, by members of this House. I took care to say that I am not confirming or commenting on his estimate other than to say he is a former Treasury economist and we should heed his advice: it may or may not be correct. His estimate depends, as we all know, on the assumptions that he has made. Whether the assumptions are well founded or whether they prove to be correct, time will tell.

Let me be very clear about this. The opposition is entitled to ask what the 10-year cost of the enterprise tax cuts will be. They are entitled to ask that. But, as the member for McMahon knows very well, as a former Treasurer and a biographer of many treasurers, the practice has been for many years that detailed line items for all measures are set out over the forward estimates—over a period of four years. The medium-term projections, which are also set out in the budget papers, do not identify those individual line items, and they are not and have not historically been provided in the budget papers.

The fact is that what the opposition is seeking to do, as I said a moment ago, is distract attention from the enormous black hole they have in their own forecasts. They have over-estimated the receipts that would come from an increase in tobacco tax by $20 billion. Their black hole keeps on getting bigger.
Mr Brendan O'Connor interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Gorton is warned!

Mr TURNBULL: What we have done is set out in the budget papers detailed four-year estimates, as has always been the case, and then a medium-term outlook that sets out what the overall outcome of the budget is likely to be over that 10-year period, recognising the many uncertainties that attend such a long projection. That has always been the case. What honourable members opposite are asking the government to do is to provide a detailed element in the Treasury's calculation, which has never been the practice of Treasury to provide before.

The projections over the medium term, as honourable members know, are to give the parliament—the public—an estimation, a projection, of the direction the budget is heading in, and that is exactly what it has done.

Budget

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (14:15): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister please outline to the House how the government's economic plan and growth will open up new opportunities for young Australians?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:15): I thank the honourable member for his question. Every measure in our national economic plan is driving jobs and growth so that we continue our successful transition from the mining-construction investment boom to the new economy. We are at a critical time in this transition. Every policy under our plan is directed at securing continued strong economic growth and more and better paying jobs for Australians, their children and their grandchildren. Our plan includes the Innovation and Science Agenda, to generate the jobs and industries of the future. It makes a historic investment in our defence industries to underpin our 21st century defence capabilities and advanced manufacturing for years to come. Our economic plan has delivered export trade deals with the large and growing economies of Asia to provide unprecedented access for our farmers and service industries. Our economic plan ensures that our tax and superannuation systems are sustainable and that the government moves towards a balanced budget. And we have a Ten Year Enterprise Tax Plan to lower company tax rates, with the small business sector the early beneficiary. That encourages more investment, higher wages and more jobs.

Our plan includes an ambitious program for employers to work with young unemployed people to prepare, trial and hire. It is a path from welfare to work. Our PaTH initiative is vital for workforce participation and productivity. It is important on just about every social measure that we have as many of our young working-age Australians in gainful employment as possible. It helps a young person to get in a job and stay in a job. It helps them build the skills and experience and confidence that they need for a fulfilling working life. Our new PaTH program will help up to 120,000 young people over four years to get into an internship with businesses around Australia. The internships will last from four to 12 weeks. The program will see young people learn on-the-job skills and build relationships with employers and work mates. After that, we will be encouraging a transition into ongoing employment through wage subsidies of between $6,500 and $10,000.

Industry and the welfare sector have been very supportive. As ACOSS CEO Cassandra Goldie said, it is 'an opportunity for young people to get work experience in real jobs' with a
wage subsidy, something we have urged for some time and something that should be used more widely. BCA's CEO, Jennifer Westacott, said, 'Business will offer as many opportunities to young people as possible.' This is a plan to give young people a great opportunity, to set them up not just for a few months but for decades to come. (Time expired)

Mr Perrett interjecting—
Mr Mitchell interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The members for Moreton and McEwen will cease interjecting.

Budget

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:18): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to the Prime Minister's previous answer. Does the Prime Minister know the Treasury 10-year costing and is simply refusing to say? Or does he just not know what the cost of his budget centrepiece will be over 10 years?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:19): I thank the Prime Minister for the opportunity to respond, because both of us know full well every single measure that is in the budget, because this is our national economic plan for jobs and growth. But as the Prime Minister has rightly said, it has been the longstanding practice of governments of all persuasions to produce the estimates over the budget and forward estimates, and you will find within this document a more—

Ms Butler: Mr Speaker, a point of order: the state of the knowledge of the Prime Minister is a matter within his own knowledge exclusively. The minister is not able to answer the question.

The SPEAKER: The member for Griffith has no point of order. The member for Griffith has already been warned. The Treasurer has the call.

Ms Plibersek interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Sydney is warned!

Mr MORRISON: I know those opposite are looking for taxes. I know they are looking for some revenue to find to fill the hole in the Leader of the Opposition's speech tonight, but they need to understand how budgets are put together. They will find on page 25 the full summary of costings of all the revenue measures that are contained in the budget over four years.

Mr Dreyfus interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Isaacs is warned!

Mr MORRISON: They may have forgotten, but I refer them to the comments of the then finance minister, Penny Wong, on 18 March 2012. In relation to these sorts of questions, when they are put, 'What is the 10-year cost?' of the particular item, she said, 'We don't release 10-year costings.' That was the policy of their government. It has been the policy of pretty much every government. So we follow the practice put in place by those opposite.

If they go to Budget Paper No. 1, page 3-11, they will find the underlying cash balance predicted to 2026-27 and they will know, if they have had an involvement with the budget before, that what happens is you take the individual measures and you combine them all together and you look at what the long- and the medium-term projection is over 10 years to
2026-27. What that document means is that our Ten Year Enterprise Tax Plan ensures that, on projections, we move to a position of budget balance in 2021 and we stay there until 2026-27. That includes our Ten Year Enterprise Tax Plan. So every measure across the medium term, across the short term in the budget and forward estimates is affordable, and the way we have done it is we have not spent more than we have saved and we have not taxed more and increased the tax burden over previous projections. But, from those opposite, every time you see the Leader of the Opposition's lips moving tonight, he will be spending more money, which means only one thing—he is going to be taxing you harder and harder and harder.

**Australian Public Service**

Mr WILKIE (Denison) (14:22): My question is to the Prime Minister. Prime Minister, 'Public Service efficiency dividend' is just budget-speak for job cuts. They are regrettable at any time and even more so in places like Hobart, where local economies are smaller and the effect of job loss is greater. Considering this, do you rule out further Public Service job cuts in Hobart or have you abandoned the government's 2014 plan to shift Public Service jobs from Canberra to places like Hobart?

Mr Ewen Jones interjecting—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Herbert will cease interjecting.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:22): I thank the honourable member for his question. The honourable member would be well aware that the government recognises the importance of a reliable, dedicated and responsible Public Service. But it faces the same challenges as the rest of the economy and must become more efficient and innovative in how it operates. That is why we are making $500 million available to transform and improve the efficiency of service delivery by the Australian Public Service. We recognise that investment is needed to drive modernisation and deliver savings.

We are all committed to ensuring that the stronger economic growth from Tasmania that it has been enjoying in recent times will continue and be stronger still. As the honourable member knows, Tasmania's economic future is not going to be led by Public Service engagement. It is going to be led by the economic activity arising from the big opportunities that our national economic plan offers. In particular, I draw the honourable member's attention to the real upswing in tourism, the significant increase in tourism, the significant increase in exports, arising from the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement. That has been—

Mr Wilkie: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order on relevance. The question goes to the planning that was being done by the government in mid-2014 about moving jobs out of Canberra to regional centres like Hobart.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Denison will resume his seat. As he will have heard many times in question time, the question had a long preamble and it had a lot of material in it. That was certainly one part of it at the end. The Prime Minister is in order.

Mr TURNBULL: I thank the honourable member for his question. I gather that he sees great prospects for the Tasmanian economy arising from the engagement of more public services. I simply want to remind him that the real opportunities for Tasmania come from our economic plan, which is delivering right now stronger growth and more jobs in Tasmania—and it is not among the ranks of the Public Service. Given the honourable member's strong interest in the Tasmanian Public Service and the federal government's activities in Tasmania, I
draw his attention to a number of items. The honourable member will be aware, I trust, that the CSIRO is establishing a climate science centre in Tasmania with 40 full-time CSIRO scientists. He will understand the strong commitment to Antarctic research, which of course is based in Hobart—and I am sure he has visited the centre of those operations in Hobart in the past, as I have recently. He should recognise that we have ordered a new icebreaker, which will be uniquely tailored to meet Australia’s needs. More than $1.1 billion—

Mr Wilkie: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order on relevance.

The SPEAKER: The member for Denison will resume his seat. Members can only raise a point of order once on relevance. Has the Prime Minister concluded his sentence?

Mr TURNBULL: I simply note that the government will expand infrastructure in Hobart to accommodate the icebreaker, which will of course be based there.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER (14:26): I inform the House that we have present in the gallery this afternoon Professor John Langmore, a former member for Fraser. On behalf of the House I extend a very warm welcome.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Budget

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (14:26): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer advise the House how the government’s economic plan for jobs and growth will create new employment opportunities and help more young Australians to get into the workforce and stay there?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:27): I thank the member for her question. I know of her long-running interest in and passion for supporting young people, getting them into jobs and dealing with the many youth issues in her community, for which she has a great passion. This government has a national economic plan for jobs and growth, an innovation and science program for start-up businesses, a defence plan for local high-tech manufacturing and technology, export trade deals to generate new business opportunities, tax cuts and incentives for small business and hardworking families, a sustainable budget with crackdowns on tax avoidance and loopholes, and of course guaranteed funding for health, education and roads that is paid for—not pretending to be with funding sources that are not there and only let people down.

In this budget we have also ensured that we can put in place, as the Prime Minister was referring to, a new jobs plan for young people, called PaTH. It is one that has been worked up on the basis of listening to young people and listening to business. Businesses want to give young people a go and get them into jobs, and young people want to get that go so that they can stay in jobs. We have to get past the ‘just keep them busy’ training programs, which do not get the job done. This is a very important program where we have stopped funding elements of programs that we just do not think are getting the results, to put them into a program where we believe we will get the results. I am very disappointed that the union movement has come out in opposition to this plan.

This program will first invest in getting young people to the starting line of a job by getting them job ready, by teaching them the expectations that they will have to meet to get a job.
Secondly, it puts an internship in place—real work for the dole—which means that when they are getting those support payments they are in a real business doing real work and getting the real skills they need to be able to keep that job. Thirdly, it gives a wage subsidy to create a program at the end where they can be in a real job, where they continue to get their income support payment and the employer tops it up so that they will be paid a proper wage when they are doing the real work. At the end of that period it is up to that business and that young person to take the next step. What we have done is to de-risk and de-cost the opportunity for business to take people on. We have removed that risk.

The members opposite heckle and speak against this plan. I remind them that when they were in government 12 per cent of children aged under 15 were growing up in jobless families. This program does something about that. They should support it, not their union mates.

**Budget**

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:30): My question is to the Prime Minister. This morning, when asked what the cost of his 10-year corporate tax cuts plan is, the Prime Minister replied, 'Well, the Treasury has modelled that.' Is the Prime Minister refusing to release the cost of his budget centrepiece because it is unfair and unsustainable? If the Treasury modelled the cost, why won't the Prime Minister tell the Australian people what it is?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:30): The Treasurer has already provided the answer to that, as indeed I have. As the shadow Treasurer knows full well, a cut to company tax drives investment, employment and growth, which is why the honourable member has advocated it.

Mr Bowen: It has a cost.

Mr TURNBULL: The honourable member calls out that it has a cost to revenue, and of course it does. No-one is suggesting that it does not. The cost over the forward estimates has been calculated, taken into account by the Treasury and built into their medium-term projections, as I said earlier today—including in this question time. It is not the practice of the government—or, indeed, governments—to release itemised elements of the medium-term projections beyond the forward estimates, and the honourable member understands that. Indeed, the Treasurer quoted his colleague Senator Wong, when she was finance minister, making precisely the same point. So, the honourable member is asking the government to provide an itemised figure from medium-term projections that governments do not provide and that have not been provided in the past, and which Labor governments have declined to provide.

Of course, this remarkable change in attitude is hardly surprising. After all, this is somebody who is trying to find some justification for, grasping at straws to fill, the enormous black hole that he has created. You see, Mr Speaker, the problem that the shadow Treasurer has is that he knows as well as everyone does that forecasting over 10 years has a great deal of uncertainty, as the budget papers always say.

Mr Husic interjecting—

Mr TURNBULL: Of course it does.

The SPEAKER: The member for Chifley has been warned.
Mr TURNBULL: And he knows that much greater precision can be encountered over a four-year estimate. But he also knows that his huge tax and spending plans will not look too good over four years, over the forward estimates, so he wants to kick them right out into the long grass over 10 years. He is not prepared to own up to what his plans, his black holes, will cost over the forward estimates because he knows, when they are lined up against our national economic plan, his proposals will stop employment, stunt growth and deter investment, whereas our plan drives jobs, drives growth, sets Australia up for the future.

Budget

Mr O’DOWD (Flynn) (14:33): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. Will the Deputy Prime Minister update the House on how the coalition's jobs and growth plan will deliver benefits to the people of Central Queensland and elsewhere?

Mr Husic interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister will resume his seat. I have warned the member for Chifley. I have reminded him that I have warned him. He cannot stop interjecting. He will leave under 94(a).

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: He will leave under 94(a) immediately, before I call the Deputy Prime Minister.

The member for Chifley then left the chamber.

Mr JOYCE (New England—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (14:34): I thank the honourable member for his question. When we came to government, we came with a promise of a better future of strength and prosperity and a better return through the farm gate. We have been delivering on that—record cattle prices, record sheep prices, record almond prices, record chickpea prices and a strong turnaround in citrus, tropical fruits and wine prices. We have delivered on a stronger country-of-origin labelling system and on a new ACCC commissioner, Mick Keogh. We are making sure that the Rural Financial Counselling Service and concessional loans are being rolled out across the nation. We are making sure that we look after people with the new farm household allowance criteria—that it is actually delivered to the people who are doing it tough.

We have delivered with the stronger rollout of mobile phone towers—in fact, more mobile phone towers than the previous government, the previous Labor-Green-independent chaos, ever delivered. We have delivered on a stronger NBN rollout that has actually been done with a budget and to a plan. We have upgraded highways and we have duplicated highways—the Pacific Highway, the Bruce Highway and the New England Highway—with $100 million to be spent on new beef roads in the North. We have delivered $2½ billion in the budget and previously towards building new dams and water infrastructure. This goes on the back of the 100 per cent write-off on water infrastructure and the $2.5 million we spend a day on the upgrade and refurbishment of the Murray-Darling Basin.

We have delivered on three new free trade agreements—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister will resume his seat. The member for Hunter, on a point order? He will state the point of order. I just point out, in all fairness, I
have warned him of the consequences of frivolous points of order before, but I will hear the point of order.

Mr Fitzgibbon: And introduced a backpackers tax.

The SPEAKER: The member for Hunter will leave under 94(a). The Deputy Prime Minister has the call.

The member for Hunter then left the chamber.

Mr Joyce: We are delivering on jobs for the electorates of Flynn, Capricornia and Dawson. We are making sure that the people of the Riverina have jobs. We are making sure that they have jobs at Shepparton. We are making sure that they have jobs in Western Australia.

We are making sure that we are delivering for the future. The best way to deliver for the economic future, for jobs for ourselves, for our children and for our grandchildren is to make sure that we have the financial and economic management of our nation under control. People well remember that when we handed the keys of the Treasury over to the Labor Party after the Howard government the world owed Australia, the world owed us tens of billions of dollars. Yet when we got the Treasury back from the Labor-Green-independent chaos we owed the world hundreds of billions of dollars. So where is your future better secured? Where is your future better delivered? Where does the competence reside for a better future for jobs and for the prosperity of so many people in regional Australia? It is quite clear: competence of good government resides with a strong coalition.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: No. The member for McEwen has been warned. He should—

Mr Mitchell interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Yes, you have. You did not hear it because you were continually interjecting. If you interject once more, you will be ejected. I am glad that I have had the chance to remind you while it is quiet.

Budget

Mr Bowen (McMahon) (14:38): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to the Prime Minister's repeated claims in previous answers today that previous budgets have not outlined 10-year costings. Given that the 2014 budget outlined $80 billion worth of cuts to schools and hospitals over 10 years, why does this budget not reveal the 10-year cost of his budget centrepiece? Why is the Prime Minister not honestly explaining to the Australian people the reason why he will not tell them?

Mr Pyne: Is that the best you can do?

Mr Turnbull (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:39): Yes, indeed: is that the best you can do? A very good question addressed to the shadow Treasurer. The shadow Treasurer knows full well that the budget papers provide detailed estimates of revenues and expenditure over the forward estimates and then provide medium-term projections, as described on page 319 of Budget Paper No. 1, based on projecting the assumptions arising from existing policy with certain constraints placed into them, which I described. All of us understand that the closer a forecast is the more likely it is to be correct because there are so many uncertainties attendant on long-range forecasts.
One of the things we understand is that the direction of our national economic plan is going
to deliver strong economic growth and strong jobs. It is going to deliver the jobs growth that
Australians deserve. It is going to do that because we are backing Australian enterprise. We
are backing innovation. We are encouraging Australians to invest in start-up companies. We
are backing our defence industry, advanced manufacturing and technology here in Australia.
We are ensuring that our tax is sustainable and fit for purpose into the future.

We are making very major changes to superannuation and also improving the fairness and
flexibility of the superannuation system in particular to benefit women who have interrupted
work patterns and who will be able to take advantage of a flexibility that enables them to
catch up when they return to the workplace.

There are many other features of our superannuation changes, and there is a cost to be
borne undoubtedly by people on very high incomes. But the benefits of those changes are to
be found by people on lower incomes, whether they are the benefits of the LISTO or the relief
in taxation on people earning $37,000 or less, and by people who are independent contractors
and want to be able to contribute to super in the same way they would if they were an
employee or, indeed, people over 65 who are still working and want to be able to contribute to
super.

So right across the board we are making our tax system more sustainable, backing
enterprise with the company tax cuts, backing small business with the expansion of the small
business concession, backing innovation and backing the return of the budget to the balance
that it needs to reach in order to ensure that we live within our means. We have an economic
plan for growth and jobs to secure the future of our children. Everything Labor proposes stand
in the way.

Innovation

Ms SCOTT (Lindsay) (14:42): My question is to the Minister for Industry, Innovation and
Science. Will the minister update the House on how the government's implementation of the
National Innovation and Science Agenda is creating jobs and growth by supporting start-up
businesses?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry and Innovation and Science)
(14:42): I thank the member for Lindsay for her question. I can tell her that, in very good
news for start-up businesses, the Senate passed the government's tax incentive for start-up
innovative businesses yesterday. That is a 20 per cent income tax offset and a 10-year capital
gains tax exemptions for assets held for more than 12 months.

Ironically, while this government is cutting the capital gains tax, Labor wants to increase
the capital gains tax by removing the 50 per cent capital gains tax exemptions. While this side
of the House is cutting income tax in this place for people who invest in start-up businesses,
Labor wants to increase income tax by increasing the top rate of the marginal tax rate for
income tax. So Labor wants to increase income tax; this side of the House is reducing income
tax. Labor wants to increase capital gains tax; this side of the House is reducing capital gains
tax.

Why are we doing this? We are doing it to drive jobs and growth. This side of the House
knows that if you incentivise the business community and individual Australians then you
will create investment, jobs and growth, whereas Labor thinks that, if you tax people more, somehow that will improve the economy. Of course, the opposite is the truth.

This has been very well received. Alex McCauley from StartupAUS, well known to many people in this place, said:
This is a huge win for Aussie start-ups … they now have the world’s most generous incentive to explore the investment opportunities available …

…… …

This reaffirms the centrality of start-ups to the Turnbull government’s national economic agenda.
It has been well recognised throughout the economy that we are driving jobs and growth through the National Innovation and Science Agenda. This is just one of the government's important platforms for driving jobs and growth. The national innovation and science agenda is turbocharging the defence industry in high-tech manufacturing. Export trade deals are creating jobs and wealth across our economy. Tax cuts for middle-income earners and small business, the toughest crackdown on tax avoidance by multinationals in the world and real funding increases for health, education and roads are guaranteed in the budget.

The choice could not be clearer at the upcoming election. If you want to drive jobs and growth, you must vote for the Turnbull government. If you want more taxes, more spending and the unions back at the cabinet table, feel free to vote for the Shorten opposition.

**Budget**

**Mr SHORTEN** (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:45): My question is to the Prime Minister. Since the government came to office the deficit has tripled, schools, hospitals and pensions have been cut and now the government is running scared on revealing the 10-year cost of its budget centrepiece. Why is the government delivering the exact opposite of what it promised Australians?

**Mr TURNBULL** (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:45): Two premiers summed up the opposition leader's approach to spending very well. Jay Weatherill, the Labor Premier of South Australia, said, with respect to the Leader of the Opposition's plans for education school spending, that he had no 'coherent plan' to fund them—

*Mr Conroy interjecting—*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Charlton has been warned.

**Mr TURNBULL:** and that was before Jay Weatherill knew about the $20 billion black hole in their calculation of the tobacco tax! There was no coherent plan before that was revealed; now the black hole looks even deeper and darker.

The other Premier who absolutely nailed the reality of these promises from the Labor Party was Colin Barnett. Colin Barnett is the only Premier still in office who was at the famous Gillard COAG meeting where all of these promises and deals were signed—the 27 different funding arrangements relating to schools funding and the hospital commitment. Colin Barnett nailed it when he said that everybody knew the money was not there; everybody knew that she could not pay for it; everybody knew that it was a fantasy.

The Leader of the Opposition is presenting Julia Gillard's unfunded promises with a fresh coat of paint.

*Opposition members interjecting—*
Mr TURNBULL: They call out: 'rubbish'. Well, we will find out tonight. Tonight is the night they will tell us how they are going to fill in the black hole. I will be there. Will it be more taxes? I think it must be. Will it be lots more borrowing? I think that is going to be part of it.

We are living within our means. We have set out a budget. Every dollar of spending in that budget is funded. It is set out there. Everything is funded. We have set that out and we have set out our national economic plan for growth and jobs. We have set out generous increases in funding for schools and for hospitals—record funding every year. It is the highest funding for schools in the history of the Commonwealth, but it is tied to outcomes, because we think literacy and numeracy are very important. What we are doing is ensuring, for example, that children will be assessed when they go to school, so that they can be given the support they need.

Mr Bowen interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon will cease interjecting.

Mr TURNBULL: But, above all, we know that every measure we laid out—every measure—will encourage economic growth. It will encourage investment; it will cover employment; it will encourage jobs. Everything the Labor Party has proposed to date, whether it is its increase in housing tax, with the abolition of negative gearing— (Time expired)

An opposition member interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I am giving the call to the member for Lyons. The member for Lyons is next. The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition take precedence, but not shadow ministers.

Economic Competitiveness

Mr HUTCHINSON (Lyons) (14:49): My question is to the Minister for Small Business and Assistant Treasurer. Will the minister advise the House how the government's jobs and growth plan is supporting people like Steve Lubiana, a wine and prospective whiskey producer in my electorate of Lyons, and other small businesses around Australia? Is the minister aware of any threats to small businesses in our strong new economy?

Ms O’Dwyer (Higgins—Minister for Small Business and Assistant Treasurer) (14:49): Thank you very much to the member for Lyons. He is such a powerful advocate for the small businesses in his beautiful electorate. I have enjoyed on a number of occasions being able to go down there and meet with them directly.

First, what are we doing for small business? I can tell him that they are benefiting in so many ways from the Turnbull government's economic plan, a plan that is going to provide jobs and growth. As a winemaker, Steve is going to benefit from the record investment in the wine industry. Over the next four years, there is going to be a record investment of an additional $50 million in the promotion of Australia wines. Now this is going to turbocharge the investment and the growth through our exports, particularly through our new free trade agreements. I understand that Steve is so impressed with the government's budget announcements that he is now thinking of expanding his small business to extend it into a whiskey business, to do whiskey distillery. Why? Because next year we will be extending the brewery excise refund scheme to domestic spirit producers, including producers of whiskey, gin, rum, vodka, liqueur and producers of low-strength fermented beverages. Now Steve will
be amongst 100 distillers eligible for a refund of up to 60 per cent the excise paid, which is around $30,000 per financial year, which he can reinvest in his business and he can reinvest it to purchase new equipment.

And, in more good news for Steve, the Turnbull government is expanding tax incentives and tax cuts for small businesses so that they reinvest in their businesses and they can create more jobs. More than $3 million small businesses will benefit from the government’s cuts to tax and the change in the definition of small business from those with a turnover of less than $2 million to a turnover of less than $10 million. Steve’s turnover is around about $2.5 million, and he is going to pay a company tax rate now of 27.5 per cent on 1 July this year—a reduction of 2.5 per cent. He will also be able to take advantage of the instant asset write-off off $20,000, and he will be able to restructure his business and take advantage of that with the rollover release.

Honourable members interjecting—

Ms O’Dwyer: Now there are some risks. I hate to tell you that they are sitting opposite us. Because the member for McMahon says that a small business is a business with a turnover of less than $2 million. He will force Australian small businesses to pay more under Labor. That is because Labor are a handbrake on our economy, and on small business we do not stand in their way.

Mr Nikolic: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. For most of the answer by the small business minister, the member for Isaacs, inconsistent with standing order 62, has been loitering in the aisles, talking from outside his place and generally disrupting the proceedings of the House.

Honourable members interjecting—

The Speaker: The member for Isaacs has been warned.

Mr Nikolic interjecting—

The Speaker: The member for Bass will cease interjecting. I think I heard the member for Wakefield’s voice again.

Opposition members interjecting—

The Speaker: It was not? Okay. I am going to address this matter very briefly. Members should remain in their places. If I picked up everyone that moved around during question time, I would be disrupting it constantly. I say to the member for Isaacs: if you were doing that, you should not be doing that, but it might explain why I did not hear you interjecting.

MOTIONS

Prime Minister

Censure

Mr Bowen (McMahon) (14:54): I seek leave to move the following motion:

That the House;

(1) notes:

(a) in Question Time yesterday, the Government refused to outline the 10-year cost of the centrepiece of its Budget, its 10-year tax cut for big business;
(b) in an extraordinary interview on national television today, the Prime Minister declined on 18 separate occasions to tell Australians how much his 10-year tax cut for big business will cost, with the Prime Minister also stating 'the Treasury has not identified the dollar cost of this particular item'; and

(c) in Question Time today, the Prime Minister repeatedly refused to provide the Parliament and the Australian people with the cost of the centrepiece of his Budget;

(2) further notes, if the Prime Minister does not know the cost of the centrepiece of his Budget, he is incompetent, or, if he does know, he is being untruthful; and

(3) censures the Prime Minister for hiding the true cost and fundamental unfairness of his centrepiece 10-year tax cut for big business.

The SPEAKER: Is leave granted?

Mr Pyne: Mr Speaker, given the shadow Treasurer has not asked the Treasurer one question about the budget, we will give leave for this debate.

Mr Bowen: I move the motion. The only question before the Australian people is: is this government incompetent or is it dishonest? It is quickly becoming apparent that it is managing to do both. It has managed to be incompetent and dishonest about its budget. Its centrepiece measure is a fraud—its centrepiece measure is a fraud on the Australian people—and the Prime Minister is being dishonest about the reasons that he will not be honest about the cost. The Prime Minister is not only covering up the cost of the centrepiece of his budget; he is covering up the reasons why. He should learn the lessons of history. As Richard Nixon learnt, it is always the cover-up that gets you. The Prime Minister seems to have forgotten that point.

The Prime Minister is being tricky with the Australian people, and he is being dishonest as he goes about his incompetence. We learnt today the Prime Minister is going to lock in the cost of his tax cuts over 10 years, but he will not even tell the parliament or the people what the cost is. He seriously seeks to come into this House and put legislation before the Australian people, and he will not tell the parliament or the people the cost of his plans. It could be spent on budget repair. But, no, the Prime Minister has to also be dishonest about why.

He said in question time today that budgets never include a 10-year cost in dollars—that that never happens. He has forgotten he was a cabinet minister in a government with a budget that did. When the member for Warringah cut $80 billion out of health and education, at least he had the guts to be honest about it. At least he had the courage to tell the Australian people what he had done. The member for Warringah would have told us the 10-year cost, because we know he has form. When he was cutting schools and hospitals, he managed to tell the Australian people. At least the former member for North Sydney managed to be honest with the Australian people as he was going about his incompetence. This Prime Minister is so bad he has managed to be dishonest and incompetent all at once.

The Prime Minister has been found out. He thought he could bring in a 10-year plan, a 10-year cut to the company tax rate, but not explain what it costs over 10 years. You just cannot do that. The Prime Minister lectures us—lectures the parliament, lectures the Australian people—about living within our means. 'We've got to live within our means,' he says. But he
decides to change the means. He decides to reduce the corporate tax rate and reduce the means of funding schools and hospitals, and he just cannot be honest about it.

What a budget. What a budget. And what a launch for an election campaign! The Prime Minister is off to see the Governor-General in the next couple of days, and he launches his election campaign by not being honest with the Australian people—and not even being honest about the reasons he is being dishonest with the Australian people. He could just come clean, stand at the dispatch box and reveal the cost.

He says the Treasury has modelled it. We were not sure whether he had been incompetent. Now he says in question time today that Treasury has done the work—that Treasury has done the modelling. Well, stand up and tell us what the number is. Defend your decisions. You have decided to give away money; won't you tell us how much and defend it before the Australian people? Why won't you stand before the Australian people and say, 'You have a choice on 2 July. You can vote for Malcolm Turnbull, and I will give billions of dollars away for a corporate tax cut, or you can vote for Bill Shorten, and he will invest in schools and hospitals, and budget repair which is fair.' That is what he should do, but he will not. He will not tell the Australian people how much it costs and he will not be honest about why.

Can you imagine around the cabinet table, around the ERC table, the Prime Minister, the Treasurer and the ERC saying: 'I think we'll get away with this one. I think we'll do a 10-year plan. They'll never notice it is a 10-year plan. They won't ask us what the 10-year cost is. It's a no-brainer. Of course we will get away with it.' That is what they would have said—'They'll never get onto us; they'll never notice it's a 10-year plan.' Then they forgot they had written into the budget that it was a 10-year plan. The budget says it is a 10-year plan. The Prime Minister says budgets do not include 10-year plans, but his budget does. It says it in there. I can tell you on which pages. He said on national television this morning there is a page where it outlines the cost. He is wrong. There is not. It shows a balance over the years, and—guess what?—if the Treasury can predict the balance then they know what the cost is. It is very simple. If the Prime Minister knows the answer he should tell the Australian people the answer. If he does not know, he is incompetent—but we now know he knows.

This is very simple—we are giving the Prime Minister an opportunity. We gave him one this morning; we moved a motion in the House inviting the Prime Minister to come in and clean the situation up. He had the opportunity to do that this morning but he did not. We are giving him the opportunity now. He had the opportunity 18 times on national television this morning. You are about to go to an election, Prime Minister, on a budget that is fundamentally dishonest, that is flawed in its conception—but you could at least tell the Australian people what the cost is. The Prime Minister is treating the Australian people with contempt. He had this all planned out for weeks; we know that. He went out into the Prime Minister's courtyard with his cunning plan, and he called us back for three weeks—that went well; two days later we were all on the plane home. He had it all mapped out for the 2 July election. He was going to bring down a budget and the budget was going to be the launching pad for an election—'Malcolm Turnbull in his rightful place as Prime Minister of Australia after all these years,' he thought to himself, and he was going to use the budget as the launching pad.

There was one little problem with that plan: his budget was a dishonest document. His budget was a flawed document. His budget tells us all about his priorities when it comes to
tax—who gets a tax cut; who does not. Nobody under $80,000 a year gets a tax cut and somebody on $1 million a year gets a $16,750-a-year tax cut. He is so desperate to give big business a tax cut that he has decided to define small business as any business up to a turnover of $1 billion. That is how desperate he is. With all these priorities, all these grand plans and all these plans of attack, he has decided not to tell the truth about it. He has decided not to tell the truth to the Australian people. The Australian people can take the truth. The Australian people want the truth. The Australian people demand the truth from this Prime Minister. This is not the new economic leadership we were promised when he knifed the member for Warringah. This is not what his backbench was expecting. Wasn't the backbench excited during question time today? Weren't they—the members from Tasmania and the members for the Central Coast of New South Wales—just leaping out of their seats in excitement about the coming election? They were looking forward so much to going for re-election on a platform of redefining small business as any business under $1 billion.

Mr Pasin interjecting—

Mr Nikolic interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The members for Barker and Bass will cease interjecting.

Mr BOWEN: Giving big business a tax cut is their big re-election pitch to the Australian people. Almost $17,000 worth of tax cuts to somebody on $1 million a year—that is their big pitch for re-election. Well, good luck with that—but tell the truth about it as you go. The Prime Minister was kind enough during question time to mention that I have written a book about treasurers. I have, and none of them had a budget as bad as this one, none of them had a budget fall apart as quickly as this one has and none of them tried such dishonesty as the government has with this one. None of them did that, Labor or Liberal.

This is a government based on a fundamental premise of being dishonest with the Australian people, a fundamental premise of not telling the Australian people the truth. We say this carefully because we know it is the case. We know it is a serious charge to level, but there is no other conclusion you can reach. The Prime Minister knows the cost—he told us today he knows what the cost is. He got the briefing in the Expenditure Review Committee. The Treasury did the work. He knows what it is. If you know what it is, Prime Minister, tell the Australian people what it is. The Prime Minister sat around in the cabinet as they approved the budget with a 10-year cost in it. The Prime Minister lectures us that schools and hospitals should be funded over 10 years and that we need a 10-year funding plan. They make erroneous claims about the National Disability Insurance Scheme, but they say it should be funded over 10 years. We agree, and that is what we do: we funded our plans over 10 years. The same test applies to this Prime Minister. He thinks he is above all. He thinks he is the smartest person in Australia. He might be the smartest person in Australia—I cast no judgement—but he is still required to be honest with the Australian people. He is still required to tell the truth.

Mr Pasin interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Barker is warned!

Mr BOWEN: The Prime Minister is required to be honest with the Australian people as he seeks their trust and a mandate, and if he cannot be he does not deserve that trust. He does
not deserve that mandate. The Prime Minister does not deserve the term in his own right that he so desperately craves. The member for Warringah knows it.

Those people on the backbench who are not supporters of the Prime Minister know it. Aren't they excited about this budget—the Abbott forces over there. They are so excited about the budget. Aren't they saying: 'Well, that went well. Glad we changed the Prime Minister. That went really well. That was worth all the grief to change Prime Minister.' All this new economic leadership. The Prime Minister, we know, does not have the courage of his convictions. The Prime Minister, we know, wanted to increase the GST and then thought it was too hard. He announced the greatest reform to Federation at the Penrith oration. That lasted to the next day. Now his big conviction is a corporate tax cut and he does not have the courage to tell us how much it costs. It is pretty basic.

We are happy to have the debate; we are happy to have the argument; we are happy to put our case about our priorities and the government's priorities. We are happy to explain why we think our priorities are more important, why investing in our schools is more important, why investing in hospitals is more important, why returning to budget balance is more important and why retaining and protecting the AAA credit rating is more important than the Prime Minister's thought bubble of a corporate tax cut. We are happy to have that debate. I will be debating the Treasurer, if he turns up, three or four times during the election campaign. Bring it on. Let's have the debate. But you have to come with the facts as well as policies. They have finally come up with an economic plan, but it has fallen apart.

I said yesterday in the House that at least the budget—I give it that—has gone better than most of the Turnbull government plans. It lasted to day 2. It turns out that I spoke too soon. It has collapsed on day 2, just on the basic fundamentals of knowing what it costs. How can you say to the Australian people, 'These are our priorities, but we can't tell you, we won't tell you, we refuse to tell you how much it costs?' That is what the Prime Minister says. He is going to the election on this platform: 'I don't trust you. I don't trust the Australian people.' He says the election is about trust and he is right. He does not trust the Australian people enough to tell them the truth. He does not trust them to tell them what the cost of his plan is. It is amazing that a Prime Minister would go to an election on the fundamental platform of not telling the truth to the Australian people. That is what this Prime Minister is doing. We are happy to have this debate; we are happy to debate government economic policies. Now you have come up with one, finally. After you have been rolled so many times, you finally have your act together and had a plan, and it has just fallen apart because you thought you could get away with it. The Prime Minister thought he was such a good explainer, of course. The world's greatest debater. 'I'll get away,' he thought, 'with a 10-year tax-cut plan without explaining what the cost is. Of course I'll be able to do it. I am, of course, Malcolm Turnbull. It's self-evident that I'll get away with it.' Well, he does not get away with it.

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon will refer to members by their correct titles.

Mr BOWEN: He is required to conduct himself with fundamental honesty in the great office that he holds, but the Prime Minister is showing that he does not deserve the great office he holds, because the Prime Minister who holds this great office has one integral responsibility: to tell the Australian people the truth. Everything else flows from that. All his responsibilities flow from that one fundamental responsibility to the Australian people: to be honest with them and tell them the truth. If the Prime Minister cannot tell the Australian
people the truth, then he does not deserve the office he holds. If he cannot go to an election on the basis of fundamental honesty, then he does not deserve to win that election.

The Prime Minister may think it is more important to give a tax cut to big business than to invest in schools. The Prime Minister may think it is more important to give big business a tax cut than to invest in hospitals. The Prime Minister may think it is more important to give big business a tax cut than to invest in support for Australia's families. If he thinks that, he should tell the Australian people that. If he thinks that, he should be honest with the Australian people about that. And he should tell them how much his plan costs. We know he knows the cost. We know it is billions and billions of dollars. And we know why he does not want to tell them. It is because he actually fundamentally does not think he could win the argument. He does not think he could win the argument that investing in schools and hospitals is less important than a big business tax cut.

Prime Minister, it is time to fess up to the Australian people. It is time to fess up that you do not want to tell them the truth. It is time to finally look the Australian people in the eye and say, 'This is what I believe; I believe in spending tens of billions of dollars on a corporate tax, and I'll tell you how much it costs.' If you will not do that, you do not deserve to win this election and you do not deserve a mandate—

Mr Pyne: Mr Speaker, given that the shadow Treasurer is yet to make a substantive point, I move:

That the member for McMahon be given a five-minute extension of time.

Question agreed to.

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon for five minutes.

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my right! The member for McMahon has the call.

Mr Dutton interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Immigration will cease interjecting.

Mr BOWEN: I tell you what this government have not done: they have not made a fundamental point which justifies their re-election. That is what the Turnbull government have not done. This government have not made a fundamental point that justifies a mandate from the Australian people. If you have the courage to seek a mandate from the Australian people for a corporate tax cut, then tell them the truth about it. If you have the courage to go to the Australian people and say, 'These are my plans and this is what they will cost,' then you should go ahead and do it. You go and call that election, Prime Minister. Go down to Government House tonight and call that election. We welcome it. We welcome it very much. We will be saying in every electorate conference across the country and at every press conference we hold: 'This is a Prime Minister who does not trust you. This is a Prime Minister who will not tell you the truth. This is a Prime Minister who thinks a corporate tax cut is a good idea.' Well, good luck to him, but we fundamentally disagree with him.

We are prepared to be honest with the Australian people. We are prepared to lay out our plans, as the Leader of the Opposition has been setting the political agenda in Australia for two years. This Leader of the Opposition has been announcing policies. This Leader of the Opposition has been talking about high-income superannuation and announcing policies, not
coming up with a retrospective thought bubble at five minutes to midnight. He has been leading the debate. This Leader of the Opposition has been leading the debate on multinational tax. This Leader of the Opposition has been leading the debate when it comes to budget repair which is fair. This Leader of the Opposition has been leading the debate on school and investment. This Leader of the Opposition has been leading the debate on hospitals.

You have been in his wake. This Prime Minister is playing desperate catch-up in the wake of the Leader of the Opposition. You have been exposed and now you have been exposed again as somebody who will not tell the truth. This Prime Minister's been exposed as somebody who treats the Australian people with contempt. This Prime Minister has been exposed today and he will be exposed on 2 July. We welcome an election. We welcome an election based on your budget. We welcome an election based on our alternative policies, because we have had the courage to put our policies out there, to explain them, to back them and to campaign on them across the country.

This Prime Minister has shown in the last 48 hours that he is simply not up to the task of being Prime Minister. And this Treasurer is not up to the task of the being finance minister of a G20 economy. It is time for this Prime Minister and this Treasurer to be replaced, but not in another party room coup; not with the Abbott forces circling around planning their return—

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon will refer to members by their correct titles.

Mr BOWEN: This Prime Minister and this Treasurer deserve to be replaced on 2 July by an alternative team who have been outlining their policies, an alternative team which does have an alternative vision for Australia, an alternative team which has the courage to explain why we should be elected and which has the courage to explain our policies and just how we will fund them. That is the alternative facing the Australian people. On 2 July, the Australian people will go to schools and halls across the country knowing that their Prime Minister does not trust them and knowing that their Prime Minister is not prepared to tell the truth.

The Prime Minister can fix this now. He can stand at the dispatch box now. He can table the Treasury modelling. He has plenty of notes and paper there. Somewhere in those notes there is some modelling. Somewhere in those notes is a cost. Somewhere in those notes is a figure. Why doesn't he get up and table it? Why doesn't he get up and tell the Australian people the truth? Why won't he justify his actions? Why won't he support his budget?

A Prime Minister and a Treasurer who bring down a budget are now hiding from it 48 hours later. Never has that been seen before. Never has a Prime Minister and a Treasurer been so ashamed of their policies that they are not prepared to defend them. Never has a Prime Minister and a Treasurer been so embarrassed about the cost of one of their measures that they have gone to such lengths to hide it. Never before has a budget gone into the witness protection program—individual members have, but never before has a budget been hidden in a safe house, not to be spoken of. Never before has a budget been such an embarrassment to a Prime Minister and a Treasurer that they will go to such lengths to avoid scrutiny. Never before has a budget been such an embarrassment that the Prime Minister will go on national television and refuse to answer a question about it 18 times in one interview. Never before has a Prime Minister been so exposed as not being up to the job. The member for Wentworth is not up to the job. The member for Wentworth is not fit to be a Prime Minister. I tell you what: the member for Maribyrnong is. And on 2 July the member for Maribyrnong will seek and
receive a mandate from the Australian people based on honesty, based on policies and based on courage.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my left!

Mr Ewen Jones interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Herbert! Obviously, the level of interjections is far too high. I have warned a number of people. I am going to lower the temperature instantly. The members for Barker and Griffith have been warned and have interjected continually through the member for McMahon's contribution. They will both leave under 94(a).

The members for Barker and Griffith then left the chamber.

The SPEAKER: I call for a seconder of the motion.

Mr Burke: I second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (15:16): I move:

That all words after "that" be omitted with a view to substituting the following words: "This House welcomes and supports the Government's economic plan for jobs and growth."

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, on a point of order. I think that counts as a direct negative and therefore is out of order.

Mr Nikolic interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Bass will cease interjecting. The Clerk and I have had a chance to review the motion. The motion is in order and there is ample precedent. The Prime Minister has the call.

Mr TURNBULL: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In 2016 Australians face opportunities of a kind they have never seen before. We live in an age of extraordinary economic change. We live in an age when the pace and the scale of economic change is utterly unprecedented. The challenge for this government, the challenge for every member of this House, is: how do we ensure that Australians are able to take advantage of those opportunities?

Mr Champion interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Wakefield has already been warned.

Mr TURNBULL: How do we ensure that, at a time when we see the slowdown of the mining and construction boom, we maintain strong economic growth, strong growth in employment? How do we ensure that our children and our grandchildren have the great opportunities that await them if their government leads them with wisdom and with an economic plan that is designed to ensure that they achieve the greatness that awaits this nation in the 21st century? Every element of our economic plan is pulling in that direction of growth and jobs. We began with our Innovation and Science Agenda. We recognise at a time of rapid technological change that Australians need to be more innovative, more productive, more competitive. So, we have set out in our innovation agenda real incentives for Australians to invest in start-up companies, for our best scientists and researchers to collaborate with business and industry to ensure that we are at the cutting edge of technology.

We need to ensure that our defence forces have the 21st century capabilities they need to protect us in the years ahead. But we also need to ensure that every dollar that we can spend
in Australia on Australian technology, on Australian advanced manufacturing, is spent here. So, we have set out a defence industry investment plan that will drive thousands of jobs in Australia directly and thousands more in the industries and the businesses that will spin off that high-tech advanced manufacturing base that we are creating.

Growth in our region is, as I said, unprecedented, in scale, in its size and in its pace. Forty years ago, China was barely part of the global economy; now it is, by many measures, the world's largest single economy. We have opened up the doors to those huge markets with free trade agreements with Korea, with Japan and, of course, with China. We are seeing across Australia, therefore, the response to that with more jobs, particularly in the services industries, in education, in tourism and, of course, in soft commodities, particularly from agriculture. Enormous opportunities have been generated, and that is why we had 300,000 new jobs created last year and three per cent real growth. That is why we had 26,000 jobs created last month. We have to continue with this agenda for economic growth. We cannot afford to risk it by changing tack in the way the Labor Party would propose.

In the budget on Tuesday night, the Treasurer set out the other elements of this national economic plan, including an enterprise tax cut plan over 10 years which will see our company tax rates become far more competitive with other countries around the world and in our region. In particular, it will benefit small companies—smaller businesses with turnovers up to $10 million, rising to $25 million, $50 million and $100 million in the earlier years. We know that those smaller companies that turn over up to $10 million employ 3.4 million Australians, and we know that reducing company tax to make it more competitive will result in more investment, more employment and more jobs. It drives economic growth and will add, over the long term, one per cent to GDP. Of course, it adds GDP to our economy every year, but it adds real growth over that period—as, indeed, the shadow minister who spoke so heatedly a moment ago has acknowledged in his own remarks and his own books in the past. We know that this will drive growth.

We also need to ensure that our tax system is sustainable over the long term, so we have made the tough decisions with respect to superannuation by scaling back very generous tax concessions to Australians on very high incomes and Australians with high levels of wealth, so that the superannuation system is more sustainable, fairer and, above all, more flexible. As I said earlier, in question time, it will be more flexible for women in particular who find themselves out of the workforce with family. When they come back, they will have the flexibility to catch up with concessional contributions if they are able to do so. Of course, people who are self-employed will be able to contribute to super in the way that they should be able to. Indeed, it will be more flexible for people over 65.

We have also set out to ensure that young Australians who are unemployed have a pathway to get into the workforce. The best way to ensure a young person is employable is for them to be employed. We need to give them the preparation—to give them the internship that gets them into the habit of getting up, turning up to work punctually, working with other people and getting the confidence to become more employable in the years ahead. These are enormous changes—life-changing policies that will transform the future of up to 120,000 young Australians in the years ahead. This is our commitment to ensuring that this works for every Australian right across the board.
What we are also doing here in the budget is ensuring that we live within our means. This is vitally important—bringing the budget back to balance. We have to ensure that we are able to slow the deficit, bring the deficit down, bring debt down and relieve that massive burden of debt and deficit that was left on future generations by the six misguided years of Labor government. We cannot forget that the Labor Party inherited a government which had cash at the bank and left Australia with a government mired in debt and with a huge structural deficit. All of our policies are determined, calculated and designed to drive growth and jobs. That is what they will deliver. What the Labor Party are proposing, on the other hand, is one measure after another that will stand in the way of enterprise. We all agree we need more investment in Australia. Who could argue with that? Well, apparently the Labor Party do, because they want to increase the tax on investment by 50 per cent—they want to increase capital gains tax by 50 per cent. That can have only one consequence: there will be less investment. And if there is less investment, there will be fewer jobs.

The Labor Party claims to be concerned about housing affordability. What they propose is a ban on negative gearing which will have the consequence that no Australian who lives by the sweat of his or her brow will be able to offset an investment loss against their personal income—it might be a salary, a wage or a professional income. What that will mean is that someone on average earnings or less—as is the case with 70 per cent of the people who lodge returns with negative gearing—in the future will not be able to purchase an investment property and offset a net rental loss against their income. This will take thousands of people out of the investment market. It will ensure that rents will go up. They have to go up because investors will have to seek a higher after-tax return. The availability of rental properties will decline, because the pool of investors will be gone and when investors sell they will have to sell to owner occupiers.

When you pull so many people out of the market the price of housing will crash. Not so long ago in the House I made the point that, all other things being equal, if you reduce the demand and the pool of buyers by a third, values and prices will fall. I recall the member for Isaacs cried out, 'You are making that up.' This is just the law of supply and demand. Every measure we have set out will drive growth and jobs—every single one: trade, innovation, investment and backing enterprise. Everything Labor has proposed stands in the way of jobs, stands in the way of enterprise, stands in the way of growth.

The SPEAKER: The original question was that the motion be agreed to. To this the honourable the Prime Minister has moved an amendment. 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 BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (15:26): I was going to move an extension of time for the Prime Minister, but I thought his backbench would have killed me. They are back there, sitting there like house bricks—without the animation or the enthusiasm. The reason they are feeling that way over there is that they know full well that ultimately the Prime Minister has not been capable of providing the economic leadership our nation needs. That is exactly where we have ended up. There is no longer a point to this Prime Minister; there is no longer a point to this government. How out of touch would you have to be to think you could get away with this? You might think, 'There are some budget measures I will not be questioned on. There are some I might not need to know the cost of.' But it is a fair bet that
you ought to know the centrepiece—a fair bet. Of all the measures for which you might think, 'Maybe there is a figure I should carry in my head,' surely the centrepiece of the budget is not a bad starting point.

I loved hearing the Treasurer complain today, 'Why aren't you directing more questions to me?' It is because yesterday every time we asked, 'What is the cost,' he would not say. We thought that maybe they had not modelled it. We thought maybe they had been so incompetent that they never even checked what the cost would be. Maybe they are so hopeless at their job that it never occurred to them, when they were giving money to the big end of town, to even bother to check a little detail like what the cost to the budget would be. But it turns out, from the answers the Prime Minister has given today, they did know. They knew full well. They know the answer to this question, and they think they can get through from today all the way to 2 July and keep it a secret from the Australian people.

They have made the choice to prioritise the big end of town over families, over schools and over the health system with Medicare. They think they can get away with costing their cuts over 10 years and with spending the beginning of this week talking relentlessly about 10-year projections; they reckon they can get all the way to 2 July and not touch at all—all of all their measures—their budget centrepiece. The problem is they do not want to talk about their budget centrepiece at all anymore. The amendment that was moved by the Prime Minister does not mention the budget centrepiece. It is as though it is gone. The amendment is to take all references to that tax cut out of the motion. That is what the Prime Minister has moved. Not only has he moved it in his own handwriting; he has then added that they will not just support it—he has written the little addition: 'and welcomes'. It is an emotional thankyou, as we get rid of any reference to the centrepiece of his own budget.

When the Prime Minister was describing the centrepiece of his own budget, he deliberately did not tell the full story not only of the cost but of the measure itself. He talked about small businesses growing. 'Here are the figures', he said, 'to $10 million, to $25 million, to $50 million, to $100 million' and then he stopped there. But the budget plan does not stop there at all. Sure, right now, and last year under the Abbott government, we had the establishment of a bipartisan basis of the small business tax rate. We have bipartisan agreement that the small business tax rate should be lowered, but what they want to do is change the definition of small business every year—and it does not stop where the Prime Minister stopped.

Over the next seven years, we end up with eligibility for the small business tax rate going to businesses worth $1 billion. I have to say, in the history of this nation, there has only ever been one Prime Minister who would regard that as a small business! It has only ever happened once and it has happened here. The budget documents that we have been presented with this time around are extraordinary. My favourite is 'Making multinationals pay tax on what they earn in Australia' and it has a little picture of a map of Australia and a picture of an island tax haven. They have actually put it in their own budget documents. I do not know what that island might be. I do not know what is presented in there—and I expect a public servant will pay very dearly for the graphic design at some point in time.

Budgets are about choices and when they say, 'Why should we have to tell you what the 10-year projection is?' the answer is simple: they have told us what their 10-year cuts will be. They told us from the start what the 10-year cuts would be to hospitals and what the 10-year cuts would be to schools. We know what the 10-year projections are on the cuts that they give
to families. We know that this is in the context of a budget where they put off all their talk of child care. Remember at the hearing that workplace participation was going to be the key—all pushed off in this budget, all gone. That is gone because choices have been made. The choices that they have made are fundamentally different to the choices that a Labor government would make.

If it is as we were told, 'Well, maybe, it is $55 billion'—as though it is small change between friends—if it is that, that is bigger than the entirety of the education cuts; in the order of the cuts to hospitals. The money we are talking about here is not like it is just a free kick in spare change to business. This government have decided who they will help and who they will hurt. While they wanted to say, 'It's some sort of class war,' it is not that. It simply runs against the grain of an old-fashioned concept of Australian fairness. That is it. It is not like the benefit is going to the top half of Australia versus the bottom half of Australia; it is going to about the top two per cent of Australia and the rest of Australia, at best, gets $6 a week—and that is only if you are somebody who does not have a family.

Even at the top of that $87,000 area, where they have a shift in the name of bracket creep, if you are a single parent on $87,000 a year with two high school kids, even after you have had that tax benefit, you are still $4½ thousand behind. That is the choice that has been made. I am sure they are out there thinking, 'But I've got my $6 a week!' That is the choice that has been made. That is before they get to the reality of someone who brings in $1 million in a year being $17,000 better off.

The concept of saying, 'Would we like taxes to be lower?' does not answer the question when you also have to say, 'Is the price of that an attack on every family in Australia?' Is the price that you are going to gut what we were told before the election, which was a bipartisan approach on school funding? We were told before the election that pensions would not be changed and then we saw a government come in here, budget after budget, and try in every different way to cut the pension. That money that is being cut from them is the same money that will now go to billion dollar companies under their plan. That is exactly why they do not want to say the number out loud.

Well, it does not take much for people to be able to say that they know the priorities of those opposite. We know, and the Australian people know, that the government was given a choice, and they chose the top end of town over the vast majority of Australia. That is the choice they made. And the price of that is that if you are a pensioner you get cut; if you are a family you get cut; if you are sick, Medicare goes backwards, hospitals go backwards. If you believe in jobs and growth, no-one delivers jobs and growth by cutting education, cutting infrastructure and making the internet slower. No country in the world would try to do that. But that is the prescription that is offered by those opposite.

What we have today is not the opposition choosing some corner of the budget to debate. We have gone directly to the budget centrepiece, and the Prime Minister believes that he can get away—even though he knows how much it will cost—with not letting the rest of Australia know how much it will cost. They know the cost of the cuts. They know that the price of the cuts is this benefit to the big end of town, the redefinition of small business, all the way up to companies with a $1 billion turnover. It is about choices, and the choices those opposite make are against the vast majority of Australians. Labor stands proudly against them.
Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (15:36): I am very pleased to be speaking in favour of a motion for our national economic plan for jobs and growth. As I said in the House earlier, this is a plan that consists of six points: an innovation and science program for start-up businesses; a defence plan for local high-tech manufacturing and technology that does not just benefit the shipyards, obviously in Adelaide in Perth, but the defence supply chain all around the country, supporting high-tech jobs for the future for decades; export trade deals to generate new business opportunities; tax cuts and incentives for small business and hardworking families, which I will return to in a second; a sustainable budget with crackdowns on tax avoidance and loopholes—things that those opposite voted against when they had the chance to support them in the parliament, and they decided not to—and of course guaranteed funding for health, education and roads, money that is made available by providing the savings that are necessary to spend in these areas so that we can give the genuine commitments, such as the genuine commitment of $1.2 billion extra for schools, which will see schools funding increase by 26 per cent over the next four years, and for public schools by a third over the course of the budget and forward estimates, and, as the health minister will know, some $2.9 billion extra for health spending. It has been agreed with the states, signed together with the states and meeting those commitments.

The House may know, if they have read the budget papers, that now 53 per cent of all schools funding, all education funding at a state level, when you include the transfer payments of the Commonwealth, is actually met by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth, under this government, is more than a partner when it comes to supporting education and schools funding by the states, because we account for more than half of those contributions. And we do that because we invest in the things that drive our economy as we move through this transition from the resources and investment boom to a more diversified and stronger economy with more jobs. And central to that plan is to ensure that we are providing the incentive for businesses, particularly small and medium businesses, to be able to go out there and keep doing what they are doing. These are the businesses that are taking more people on, particularly more young people. They are typically Australian owned businesses that will invest back into their business to get the jobs and growth that we are looking for in this budget.

So we have made the decision, as part of our enterprise tax plan, to drop the corporate rate for small and medium businesses to 27½ per cent over the budget and forward estimates. This is an important program that will back them in to keep doing the things they would do. I would have thought that those on the other side of the House would have supported those initiatives, because they certainly have in the past.

The shadow Treasurer is no longer in the chamber for his own debate.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr MORRISON: Oh, he is over there. He has moved seats. I am happy to acknowledge his presence, because I can remind him of what he said in that great, lengthy tome Hearts and Minds, where he said—

Dr Leigh interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Fraser will cease interjecting.
Mr MORRISON: and he reminded us of his great mentor, the former Treasurer and Prime Minister Mr Keating—that 'Keating knew that the corporate tax rate needed to be cut'. That is what he said. He went on to say:

At 30 per cent, our company tax rate is now above the OECD average … it is how the rate compares to that of our competitors that counts.

This is the bit I really like. He said:

… it's a Labor thing to have the ambition of reducing company tax …

It is apparently a 'thing'. Is it your thing anymore, shadow Treasurer—through you, Mr Speaker? Is it a Labor thing still to want to reduce company tax?

Others have certainly said so. I go to the Leader of the Opposition in an editorial in *The Australian* in 2005, as the Prime Minister reminded us, where he said: 'The top marginal income tax thresholds should be raised to create a fair, productive and competitive tax system. It should be remembered that reducing the top marginal rate is part of the solution.' He also said, 'All the income tax brackets and terms of tax should be lowered, and that obviously includes the top rate.' These are his views. He said, when he was the Assistant Treasurer, 'The government recognises that higher taxation reduces incentives to work, save and invest.'

But I can go no further than the budget that was brought down by the member for Lilley when he was Treasurer. In that budget, in 2010-11, he actually proposed to reduce the company tax rate.

A government member: Is that right?

Mr MORRISON: He did! He proposed to reduce the company tax rate. Do you know how he was funding the reduction in the company tax rate?

A government member: The mining tax.

Mr MORRISON: The mining tax. That tax was going to fund his company tax cut. I admire him for saying he wanted to reduce the company tax rate; it is just that he came up with a tax that did not raise any money to actually pay for that. What he said in those budget documents was that:

… in conjunction with the introduction of the Resource Super Profits Tax—

the member for Lilley remembers all this very fondly—

- It will improve the international competitiveness of Australia's tax rate.
- By remaining competitive with similar countries, we can reinforce Australia's recognised advantages as an investment destination.

*Ms Plibersek interjecting—*

Mr MORRISON: The member for Sydney says, 'We said how we could pay for it.' How they paid for it was with the mining tax! She seems to think this is an excellent point to make in the middle of this debate. They proposed a company tax rate that they could not afford because they came up with tax measures that did not work. That is the big difference.

Tonight the Leader of the Opposition will come to this dispatch box and he will need to explain to the Australian people what he plans to do and what he plans to spend. That is the reckoner when he comes to the dispatch box tonight. This is only over the next budget and four-year forward estimates period. That is what it is when you have to produce a budget. We know they have a $20 billion black hole in their excise estimate, but over the budget and
forward estimates it is actually $3.2 billion. So I will be happy if he can come to the dispatch box tonight and explain where he is going to find the missing revenue that is supposed to be going to support school funding.

There is $20.16 billion in savings and revenue measures the government has proposed that the Labor opposition are now blocking. They must reveal tonight which of those measures they are going to stop blocking and support, otherwise that is additional expenditure on top of the budget and forward estimates that they will have to find the savings and revenue for.

Secondly, there is $44.39 billion of spending that Labor says we must restore from the bank savings. Some of those were referred to by the member for Watson when he came to the dispatch box and pounded away. Through the Leader of the Opposition, he has to tell the Australian people tonight how many of the things that they say are the wrong savings—the wrong savings which they apparently oppose, including changes to the pension eligibility in last year's budget—they will no longer oppose. Every one that they say they are going to continue to oppose is additional expenditure. It is $44.39 billion over the budget and forward estimates.

Then there is $11.79 billion in spending proposals that they have put forward since the last budget which are additional to what is in the budget and forward estimates. That comes to $76.34 billion over the budget and forward estimates. That is a starting line in the red. When the Leader of the Opposition comes to the dispatch box tonight, that is what he has to make up.

What he has announced so far is $12 billion over the budget and forward estimates in increased taxes. They like to call them savings. They are not savings; they are increased taxes. And they are increasing taxes by $12.09 billion on top of what is there. That is how they are going to pay for those—with $1.86 billion only of savings. So there is $76.34 billion in additional expenditure but just nothing—$13 billion to $14 billion worth of increased taxes and savings measures—to pay for it. That is just over four years—forget 10. Over four years they have a budget black hole of $62.39 billion before the Leader of the Opposition comes to that dispatch box tonight. That is before they even start talking.

We know that, when the Leader of the Opposition comes here tonight, as long as you see his lips moving he will be spending more. That means he will be taxing you more. That means he will be putting up debt and he will be putting up the deficit, because the reason they tax more is that they cannot control their expenditure. That is the problem: they cannot control their expenditure. So every time you hear him announce something new, you will pay for it. You will pay for it over and over again. I am glad they have raised the issue of costings today, because, as I have just outlined, they are starting $62.4 billion behind. That is equivalent over the budget and forward estimates to about one per cent of GDP. That means that, if they went forward with that plan, they would be bigger spenders than Rudd. *(Time expired)*

**The SPEAKER:** The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided. [15:51]

(The Speaker—Hon. Tony Smith)

Ayes ....................82
Noes .....................53
Majority .................29
AYES
Abbott, AJ
Andrews, KJ
Baldwin, RC
Bishop, BK
Briggs, JE
Broadbent, RE
Buchholz, S
Christensen, GR
Cobb, JK
Coulton, M (teller)
Entsch, WG
Frydenberg, JA
Gillespie, DA
Hartseyker, L
Hawke, AG
Hendy, PW
Howarth, LR
Hutchinson, ER
Jones, ET
Keenan, M
Laming, A
Ley, SP
Marino, NB
Matheson, RG
McNamara, KJ
Nikolic, AA
O’Dwyer, KM
Porter, CC
Price, ML
Ramsey, RE
Roy, WB
Scott, BC
Southcott, AJ
Sudmalis, AE
Taylor, AJ
Tudge, AE
Van Manen, AJ
Vasta, RX
Wicks, LE
Wilson, RJ
Wyatt, KG

Alexander, JG
Andrews, KL
Billson, BF
Bishop, JI
Brough, MT
Chester, D
Ciobo, SM
Coleman, DB
Dutton, PC
Fletcher, PW
Gambaro, T
Goodenough, IR
Hastie, AW
Henderson, SM
Hogan, KJ
Hunt, GA
Irons, SJ
Joyce, BT
Kelly, C
Landry, ML
Macfarlane, JF
Markus, LE
McCormack, MF
Morrison, SJ
O’Dowd, KD
Pitt, KJ
Prentice, J
Pyne, CM
Robert, SR
Ruddock, PM
Scott, FM
Stone, SN
Sakkar, MS
Truss, WE
Turnbull, MB
Varvaris, N
Whiteley, BD (teller)
Williams, MP
Wood, JP
Zimmerman, T

NOES
Bandt, AP
Bowen, CE
Burke, AE
Byrne, AM
Champion, ND
Clare, JD
Collins, JM
Danby, M
Elliot, MJ

Bird, SL
Brodie-Mann, G
Burke, AS
Chalmers, JE
Chesters, LM
Claydon, SC
Conroy, PM
Dreyfus, MA
Ellis, KM

CHAMBER
Question agreed to.

**The SPEAKER (15:55):** The question is that the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

The House divided. [15:56]

(The Speaker—Hon. Tony Smith)

Ayes ................... 82
Noes ................... 53
Majority................... 29

**AYES**

Abbott, AJ  
Andrews, KJ  
Baldwin, RC  
Bishop, BK  
Briggs, JE  
Broadbent, RE  
Buchholz, S  
Christensen, GR  
Cobb, JK  
Coulton, M (teller)  
Entsch, WG  
Frydenberg, JA  
Gillespie, DA  
Hartsuyker, L  
Hawke, AG  
Hendy, PW  
Howarth, LR  
Hutchinson, ER  
Jones, ET  
Keenan, M  
Laming, A  

Alexander, JG  
Andrews, KL  
Billson, BF  
Bishop, JI  
Broad, AJ  
Brough, MT  
Chester, D  
Ciobo, SM  
Coleman, DB  
Dutton, PC  
Fletcher, PW  
Gambaro, T  
Goodenough, IR  
Hastie, AW  
Henderson, SM  
Hogan, KJ  
Hunt, GA  
Irons, SJ  
Joyce, BT  
Kelly, C  
Landry, ML  

**NOES**

Feeney, D  
Fitzgibbon, JA  
Gray, G  
Hall, JG (teller)  
Husic, EN  
King, CF  
Macklin, JL  
Marles, RD  
Neumann, SK  
O'Neil, CE  
Palmer, CF  
Perrett, GD  
Ripoll, BF  
Rowland, MA  
Snowdon, WE  
Thistlethwaite, MJ  
Vamvakinou, M  
Zappia, A  
Ferguson, LDT  
Giles, AJ  
Griffin, AP  
Hayes, CP  
Jones, SP  
Leigh, AK  
MacTiernan, AJGC  
Mitchell, RG  
O'Connor, BPJ  
Owens, J  
Parke, M  
Plibersek, TJ  
Rishworth, AL  
Ryan, JC (teller)  
Swan, WM  
Thomson, KJ  
Watts, TG
AYES
Ley, SP
Marino, NB
Matheson, RG
McNamara, KJ
Nikolic, AA
O'Dwyer, KM
Porter, CC
Price, ML
Ramsey, RE
Roy, WB
Scott, BC
Southcott, AJ
Sudmalis, AE
Taylor, AJ
Tudge, AE
Van Manen, AJ
Vasta, RX
Wicks, LE
Wilson, RJ
Wyatt, KG
Macfarlane, IE
Markus, LE
McCormack, MF
Morrison, SJ
O'Dowd, KD
Pitt, KJ
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Stone, SN
Sakkar, MS
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Bandt, AP
Bowen, CE
Burke, AE
Byrne, AM
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Clare, JD
Collins, JM
Danby, M
Elliott, MJ
Feeney, D
Fitzgibbon, JA
Gray, G
Hall, JG (teller)
Husic, EN
King, CF
Macklin, JL
Marles, RD
Neumann, SK
O'Neil, CE
Palmer, CF
Perrett, GD
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Bird, SL
Brodtmann, G
Burke, AS
Chalmers, JE
Chesters, LM
Claydon, SC
Connroy, PM
Dreyfus, MA
Ellis, KM
Ferguson, LDT
Giles, AJ
Griffin, AP
Hayes, CP
Jones, SP
Leigh, AK
MacTiernan, AJGC
Mitchell, RG
O'Conner, BPJ
Owens, J
Parke, M
Pibersek, TJ
Rishworth, AL
Ryan, JC (teller)
Swan, WM
Thomson, KJ
Watts, TG

Question agreed to.
Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (15:57): I ask that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper.

AUDITOR-GENERAL’S REPORTS

Report Nos 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 of 2015-16

The SPEAKER (15:57): I present the Auditor-General's Performance Audit Reports Nos 30 to 37 for 2015-16. Details of the reports will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

Ordered that the reports be made parliamentary papers.

COMMITTEES

Government Response

The SPEAKER (15:58): For the information of honourable members, I present a schedule of outstanding government responses to reports of the House of Representatives and joint committees, incorporating reports tabled and details of government responses made in the period between 3 December 2015, the date of the last schedule, and 4 May 2016. Copies of the schedule are being made available to honourable members and will be incorporated in Hansard.

The schedule read as follows—

THE SPEAKER’S SCHEDULE OF OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND JOINT COMMITTEES

(also incorporating reports tabled and details of Government responses made in the period between 3 December 2015, the date of the last schedule, and 4 May 2016)

5 May 2016

THE SPEAKER’S SCHEDULE OF OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO COMMITTEE REPORTS

The attached schedule lists committee reports tabled and government responses to House and joint committee reports made since the last schedule was presented on 3 December 2016. It also lists reports for which the House has not received a government response. Schedules of outstanding responses will continue to be presented at approximately six monthly intervals, generally in the last sitting weeks of the winter and spring sittings.

The schedule does not include advisory reports on bills introduced into the House of Representatives unless the reports make recommendations which are wider than the provisions of the bills and which could be the subject of a government response. The Government's response to these reports is apparent in the resumption of consideration of the relevant legislation by the House. Also not included are reports from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, the House of Representatives Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests, and the Publications Committee (other than reports on inquiries). Reports from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights are only listed where the committee has examined and reported on a specific item(s) of existing legislation. Not listed are that committee's regular reports on the human rights compatibility of bills and legislative instruments that come before either House of Parliament.

Government responses to reports of the Public Works Committee are usually reflected in motions for the approval of works after the relevant report has been presented and considered. Reports from other committees which do not include recommendations are only included when first tabled.

Reports of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit primarily make administrative recommendations but may make policy recommendations. A government response is required in respect...
of such policy recommendations made by the committee. Responses to administrative recommendations are made in the form of an Executive Minute provided to, and subsequently tabled by, the committee. Agencies responding to administrative recommendations are required to provide an Executive Minute within six months of the tabling of a report.

The attached schedule now includes a table which provides a summary of responses received and responses outstanding for the last four parliaments.

5 May 2016

Table of responses received and outstanding (current as of 4 May 2016):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parliament</th>
<th>Awaiting response (six month period expired)</th>
<th>Awaiting response (six period not expired)</th>
<th>Response received (six month expired)</th>
<th>Response received (six period not expired)</th>
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<tr>
<th>Description of Report</th>
<th>Date Tabled or Published</th>
<th>or Date of Government Response</th>
<th>of Responded in Period Specified</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (House, Standing)</td>
<td>Everybody's Business: Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Stores 16-11-09</td>
<td>No response to date</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sport: More than just a game—Contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring 24-06-13</td>
<td>No response to date</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agriculture and Industry (House, Standing)</td>
<td>Circumvention: closing the loopholes —Inquiry into Australia's anti-circumvention framework in relation to anti-dumping measures 01-06-15</td>
<td>15-03-16</td>
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<td>Smart farming—Inquiry into agricultural innovation 04-05-16</td>
<td>No response to date</td>
<td>Time has not expired</td>
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<td>Agriculture, Resources, Fisheries and Forestry (House, Standing)</td>
<td>Report on the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation Annual Report 2011-12 28-05-13</td>
<td>11-02-16</td>
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<td>Australia Fund Establishment (Joint, Select)</td>
<td>Joint Select Committee on the Australia Fund Establishment: Report 2015 25-06-15</td>
<td>No response to date</td>
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<td>Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (Joint, Statutory)</td>
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<td>Integrity of overseas Commonwealth law 24-06-13</td>
<td>No response to date</td>
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<td>Committee / Enquiry</td>
<td>Date 1</td>
<td>Date 2</td>
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<td>Examination of the Annual Report of the Integrity Commissioner 2014-15</td>
<td>02-03-16</td>
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<td>Broadcasting Legislation (Joint, Select)</td>
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<td>Climate Change, Environment and the Arts (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Managing Australia's biodiversity in a changing climate: the way forward—Final report</td>
<td>17-06-13</td>
<td>02-05-16</td>
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<td>Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (Joint, Select)</td>
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<td>Progress report</td>
<td>27-10-14</td>
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<td>Final report</td>
<td>25-06-15</td>
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<td>Corporations and Financial Services (Joint, Statutory)</td>
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<td>Report on the 2012-13 Annual Reports of bodies established under the ASIC Act</td>
<td>19-03-14</td>
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<td>Statutory oversight of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, the Takeovers Panel and the Corporations Legislation</td>
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<td>Inquiry into proposals to lift the professional, ethical and education standards in the financial services industry</td>
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<td>Economics (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Review of the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority annual report 2014 (Third report)</td>
<td>7-12-15</td>
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<td>Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia annual report 2015 (First report)</td>
<td>13-04-16</td>
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<td>No response to Time has not expired</td>
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<td>Review of the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority Annual Report 2015 (First Report)</td>
<td>13-04-16</td>
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<td>Review of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Annual Report 2015 (First Report)</td>
<td>13-04-16</td>
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<td>Education and Training (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Adolescent Overload? Report of the inquiry into combining school and work: supporting successful youth transitions</td>
<td>16-11-09</td>
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<td>Education and Employment (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>International education support and collaboration: Review of the 2010-2011 annual report of the Department of Education,</td>
<td>27-05-13</td>
<td>15-03-16</td>
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<td>Committee</td>
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<td>Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>TAFE: an Australian asset—Report of the inquiry into TAFE and its operation</td>
<td>24-11-14</td>
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<td>Electoral Matters (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Getting business booming: Report on the inquiry into barriers for small business employment</td>
<td>15-03-16</td>
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<td>Electoral Matters (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Inquiry into the implications of the <em>Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Amendment (Automatic Enrolment) Act 2009</em> (NSW) for the conduct of Commonwealth elections</td>
<td>25-02-10</td>
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<td>Electoral Matters (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Report on the funding of political parties and election campaigns</td>
<td>09-12-11</td>
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<td>Electoral Matters (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Review of the AEC analysis of the FWA report on the HSU</td>
<td>20-09-12</td>
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<td>Electoral Matters (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Interim report on the inquiry into the conduct of the 2013 Federal Election: Senate voting practices</td>
<td>09-05-14</td>
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<td>Electoral Matters (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Second interim report on the inquiry into the conduct of the 2013 federal election: An assessment of electronic voting options</td>
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<td>Employment, Workplace Relations and Workforce Participation (House, Standing)</td>
<td>Making it work: Inquiry into independent contracting and labour hire arrangements</td>
<td>17-08-05</td>
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<td>Environment (House, Standing)</td>
<td>Streamlining environmental legislation: Inquiry into streamlining environmental regulation, 'green tape', and one stop shops</td>
<td>23-02-15</td>
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<td>Electoral Matters (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Report on the visit to Singapore and Malaysia, 25 to 30 October 2015</td>
<td>29-02-16</td>
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<td>Electoral Matters (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Inquiry into the register of environmental organisations</td>
<td>04-05-16</td>
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<td>Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (Joint, Standing)</td>
<td>Partnering for the greater good: The role of the private sector in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty in the Indo-Pacific region</td>
<td>22-06-15</td>
<td>31-03-16</td>
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*CHAMBER*
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<td>Principles and practice: Australian Defence Industry and exports</td>
<td>01-12-15</td>
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<td>Review of the Defence Annual Report 2013-14</td>
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<td>Empowering women and girls</td>
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<td>Australia's trade and investment relationships with countries of the Middle East</td>
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<td>Health (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Skin Cancer in Australia: our national cancer</td>
<td>24-03-15</td>
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<td>The silent disease: Inquiry into Hepatitis C in Australia</td>
<td>25-06-15</td>
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<td>Health and Ageing (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Lost in the labyrinth: Report on the inquiry into registration processes and support for overseas trained doctors</td>
<td>19-03-12</td>
<td>No response date</td>
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<td>Diseases have no borders: Report on the inquiry into health issues across international borders</td>
<td>20-03-13</td>
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<td>Bridging the dental gap: Report on the inquiry into adult dental services</td>
<td>17-06-13</td>
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<td>Thinking ahead: Report on the inquiry into dementia—early diagnosis and intervention</td>
<td>24-06-13</td>
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<td>Human Rights (Joint, Statutory)</td>
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<td>Ninth Report of 2013: Migration Legislation Amendment (Regional Processing and Other Measures) Act 2012 and related legislation</td>
<td>19-06-13</td>
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<td>Indigenous Affairs (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Interim report: First steps for improving educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</td>
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<td>Infrastructure and Communications (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Finding the right balance: Cabin crew ratios on Australian aircraft</td>
<td>21-11-11</td>
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<td>At what cost? IT pricing and the Australia tax</td>
<td>29-07-13</td>
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<td>Planning, procurement and funding for Australia's future infrastructure: Report on the inquiry into infrastructure planning and procurement</td>
<td>04-12-14</td>
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<td>Infrastructure, Transport and Cities (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Smart ICT: Report on the inquiry into the role of</td>
<td>15-03-16</td>
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<td><strong>Intelligence and Security (Joint, Statutory)</strong></td>
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<td>Review of the re-listing of Al-Shabaab, Hamas’ Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades,</td>
<td>12-10-15</td>
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<td>Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Palestinian Islamic Jihad</td>
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<td>Advisory report on the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2015</td>
<td>15-02-16</td>
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<td><strong>Law Enforcement (Joint, Statutory)</strong></td>
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<td>Examination of the Annual Report of the Australian Federal Police 2013-14</td>
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<td><strong>Migration (Joint, Standing)</strong></td>
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<td>Immigration detention in Australia: A new beginning: Criteria for release from</td>
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<td>Immigration detention in Australia: Community-based alternatives to detention—Second report of the inquiry into immigration detention in Australia</td>
<td>25-05-09</td>
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<td>Immigration detention in Australia: Facilities, services and transparency—Third report of the inquiry into immigration detention in Australia</td>
<td>18-08-09</td>
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<td>Report of the inquiry into the Business Innovation and Investment Programme</td>
<td>24-03-15</td>
<td>No response to No date</td>
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<td><strong>National Capital and External Territories (Joint, Standing)</strong></td>
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<td>Etched in stone? Inquiry into the administration of the National Memorials</td>
<td>23-11-11</td>
<td>No response to No date</td>
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<td>Ordinance 1928</td>
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<td>Governance in the Indian Ocean Territories: Interim report—Economic Development</td>
<td>23-06-15</td>
<td>No response to No date</td>
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<td>Governance in the Indian Ocean Territories: Final report—Economic development</td>
<td>15-03-16</td>
<td>No response to Time has not expired</td>
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<td>and governance</td>
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<td>Second progress report on the implementation</td>
<td>12-11-15</td>
<td>17-03-16 Yes</td>
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<td>04-12-14</td>
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<td>Pivot North: Inquiry into the Development of Northern Australia—Final Report</td>
<td>02-12-15</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Scaling Up: Inquiry into Opportunities for Expanding Aquaculture in Northern Australia</td>
<td>29-02-16</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Time has not expired</td>
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<td>Procedure (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Role of the Federation Chamber: Celebrating 20 years of operation</td>
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<td>No response</td>
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<td>Maintenance of the standing orders</td>
<td>22-02-16</td>
<td>No response</td>
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<td>Report 447: EPBC Act, Cyber Security, Mail Screening, ABR and Helicopter Program</td>
<td>22-06-15</td>
<td>No response</td>
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<td>Report 449: Regional Development Australia Fund, Military Equipment Disposal and Tariff Concessions</td>
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<td>Report 452: Natural disaster recovery; 07-12-15 Centrelink telephone services; and Safer Streets program</td>
<td>23-11-15</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Time has not expired</td>
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<td>Report 453: Development of the Commonwealth Performance Framework</td>
<td>07-12-15</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Time has not expired</td>
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<td>Report 454: Early Years Quality Fund Review of Auditor-General Report No. 23 (2014-15)</td>
<td>22-02-16</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Time has not expired</td>
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<td>Report 455: Parliamentary delegation to New Zealand and Fiji by members of the JCPAA</td>
<td>22-02-16</td>
<td>No response</td>
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<td>Social Policy and Legal Affairs (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>FASD: The Hidden Harm—Inquiry into the prevention, diagnosis and management of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders</td>
<td>29-11-12</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>No date</td>
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<td>Eyes in the sky: Inquiry into drones and the regulation of air safety and privacy</td>
<td>14-07-14</td>
<td>No response</td>
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<td>Revisiting recognition: Report on the roundtable with Australian South Sea Islanders</td>
<td>22-02-16</td>
<td>No response</td>
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<td>Roundtable on surrogacy</td>
<td>24-03-15</td>
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<td>Reviewing Troubled Waters: Consideration of the Government response to the 2012 inquiry into arrangements surrounding crimes at sea</td>
<td>22-06-15</td>
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<td>From conflict to cooperation: Inquiry into the Child Support Program</td>
<td>20-07-15</td>
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<td>Surrogacy Matters: Inquiry into the regulatory and legislative aspects of international and domestic surrogacy</td>
<td>04-05-16</td>
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<td>Tax and Revenue (House, Standing)</td>
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<td>Tax disputes</td>
<td>26-03-15</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>The Tax expenditures statement</td>
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<td>Trade and Investment Growth (Joint, Select)</td>
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<td>Inquiry into Business Utilisation of Australia's Free Trade Agreements</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Treaties (Joint, Standing)</td>
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<td>Report 157: Treaties tabled on 13 October 2015</td>
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<td>No response required</td>
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<td>Report 158: Treaty tabled 10 November 2015</td>
<td>22-02-16</td>
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<td>No response required</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report 159: Treaty tabled on 1 December 2015</td>
<td>15-03-16</td>
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<td>No response required</td>
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<td>Report 160: A history of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties: 20 years</td>
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<td>No response required</td>
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<td>Report 161: Treaties tabled on 1 December 2015, 3 December 2015 and 2 February 2016</td>
<td>04-05-16</td>
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<td>No response required</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report 162: 20th Anniversary Seminar</td>
<td>04-05-16</td>
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<td>No response required</td>
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**Notes**

1. The date of tabling is the date the report was presented to the House of Representatives or to the Speaker, whichever is earlier. In the case of joint committees, the date shown is the date of first presentation to either the House or the Senate or to the President or Speaker (if presented earlier out of session). Reports published when the House (or Houses) are not sitting are tabled at a later date.

2. If the source for the government response date is not the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives or the Journals of the Senate, the source is shown in an endnote.

3. For reports up to the end of 42nd Parliament, the time specified is three months from the date of tabling. While the Government has undertaken to continue to respond to reports within three months, from the 43rd Parliament (28 September 2010 onwards) the period within which the House requires a response is six months—see resolution of the House of Representatives of 29 September 2010. This resolution also puts in place additional steps for reports not responded to within that six month period. The period from when the 43rd Parliament was prorogued on 5 August 2013 and the commencement of the 44th Parliament on 12 November 2013 is not included in the response period.
4 A response to this report is no longer expected, as the issues covered in the report are no longer current. This listing will be removed from the next schedule.
5 The committee still awaits a response to this report.
6 Since December 2014 the Government has advised that the need for a response was overtaken by legislation introduced by the previous Government and passed by the previous Parliament. The committee still awaits a response to this report.
7 On 7 February 2012 the Government provided a statement regarding the reasons for the delay in presenting the response, in accordance with the House resolution of 29 September 2010 on government responses to committee reports. The Government advised that the 37 recommendations required detailed consideration and analysis, and that as an interim response to the report, and to progress the priority measures, the Government intended to introduce legislation in the 2012 Autumn sittings. Since December 2014 the Government has advised that given the passage of time and the change of government, the Government does not intend to respond to the report. The committee still awaits a response to this report.
8 Since December 2014 the Government has advised that given the passage of time and the change of government, the Government does not intend to respond to the report. The committee still awaits a response to this report.
9 Since December 2014 the Government has advised that given the passage of time and the change of government, the Government does not intend to respond to the report. The committee still awaits a response to this report.
10 In June 2009 the Government advised that it did not intend to respond formally to this report. In November 2009 the Government indicated a response was being considered and would be tabled in due course. In November 2011 and December 2013 the Government indicated it was in discussion with the committee on this matter. In July 2014 the Government advised that the Independent Contractors Act 2006 was assented to on 1 December 2006 and that the Government's response was covered during debate on the Bill. The committee has not agreed to the removal of this report from the schedule.
11 On 22 June 2015, during debate on the Copyright Amendment (Online Infringement) Bill 2015, the Senate noted that the Government has not responded to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications report on its inquiry into information technology pricing. The committee still awaits a response to this report.
12 On 4 December 2014 the Government provided an interim response to the report, advising that the committee's report is informing the Government's White Paper, which is being prepared. The White Paper will set out a clear and well defined policy platform for unlocking the full potential of the north, including actions through to 2030. The Government indicated that it will respond to the committee's specific recommendations through the White Paper. On 18 June 2015 the Government released the White Paper on Developing Northern Australia: Our North, Our Future. The committee still awaits a response to this report.
13 This Report contained a series of recommendations directed at multiple Agencies. The Committee has received responses to some recommendations.
14 On 14 July 2014 the Government advised the committee that on 25 June 2014 it announced funding for the National FASD Action Plan, and that the plan would form the basis of the formal response to the inquiry. The committee still awaits a response to recommendations of the report.

DOCUMENTS

Presentation

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry and Innovation and Science) (15:58): Documents are presented in accordance with the list circulated to honourable
members earlier today. Full details of the documents will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

BUSINESS

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry and Innovation and Science) (15:59): by leave—I move:

That standing order 31 (automatic adjournment of the House) be suspended for this sitting and that, after the Leader of the Opposition completes his reply to the budget speech, the House automatically stands adjourned until 10 am on Monday, 9 May 2016, unless the Speaker or, in the event of the Speaker being unavailable, the Deputy Speaker, fixes an alternative day or hour of meeting.

Just to explain to members who might like to know what is happening with the rest of the day, there are a couple of items that I wanted to deal with in this debate. The first is to explain that, obviously, we are suspending the adjournment so that the Leader of the Opposition can return to the House at 7.30 and do his reply to the budget. We will have a dinner break suspension from six till 7.30, as is traditional. The government has no intention of knocking off the MPI. We are very much looking forward to the member for Sydney’s 150,000th MPI speech in this parliament, so that will go ahead. But there are some members who are still to give valedictories. I think the member for Holt and the member for Shortland—sorry, Bruce.

Mr Byrne interjecting—

Mr PYNE: I thought you were retiring. Are you running again?

Mr Byrne interjecting—

Mr PYNE: What are you running again for? The member for Bruce and the member for Shortland will give their valedictories. I should just let people know that the government will not make that six o’clock a hard time, so that the members who are yet to give their valedictories can continue—obviously not well past six o’clock, but they should not be shut down at six o’clock. Finally, on another matter, I would like to clear up that I did, unintentionally, verbal the member for Jagajaga this week and I apologise for doing so.

Question agreed to.

STATEMENTS ON INDULGENCE

Reserve Bank of Australia

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (16:01): The government has taken a number of decisions, which I am pleased to report to the House. I am pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Philip Lowe as the next Governor of the Reserve Bank when the current governor, Mr Glenn Stevens, finishes his term on 17 September 2016. It is important for markets and things of that nature that there is continuity in these matters and that these issues are well telegraphed, particularly for such a sensitive position, so we have taken the decision as a government.

I am pleased to announce that Dr Philip Lowe will be the next Governor of the Reserve Bank. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role of governor, having served as the deputy governor since early 2012, having headed up many of the RBA’s analytical departments and having published on a wide range of issues relevant to the operation of monetary policy over his three-decade career with the RBA.
Dr Lowe also served as head of the Financial Institutions and Infrastructure Division of the Bank for International Settlements between 2000 and 2002, where he authored important research on the financial stability role of central banks in low-inflation environments. Dr Lowe earned a PhD in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology after being awarded the university medal for his undergraduate studies in economics at the University of New South Wales. Dr Lowe is well regarded in the central banking community, the financial markets and the Australian business community, and will, I have no doubt, reinforce existing confidence in the institution. I am also confident that Dr Lowe will support the Reserve Bank Board in successfully discharging its duties under the act and in managing and setting the strategic direction for the RBA.

The Governor of the Reserve Bank tells me that, in his opinion, Dr Lowe is the most qualified person to have ever been appointed to the role. I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to Governor Stevens, but there will be an opportunity to say more about that at a later time. I am sure other members in this place would like to take that opportunity—should they be in this place to be able to do so—at that later time. The appointment of Dr Lowe will create a vacancy at the deputy governor level in the RBA, the filling of which will be considered in the second half of the year.

I am also pleased to announce today the appointment of Professor Ian Harper as a part-time member of the Reserve Bank Board for a five-year term from 31 July 2016. He will be taking up the position that will be vacated by Dr Edwards on 30 July 2016. Professor Harper's combined experience in public policy development and academia will enable him to make a very strong contribution to the Reserve Bank Board's deliberations. He recently chaired the competition policy review, served as a member of the Financial System Inquiry and was the inaugural chairman of the Australian Fair Pay Commission. He brings strong academic credentials as an economist to the Reserve Bank Board, having spent two decades as a professor at the University of Melbourne—first as the NAB Professor of Monetary and Financial Economics and then as the Ian Potter Professor of International Finance and the Sidney Myer Professor of Commerce and Business Administration at the Melbourne Business School.

I also want to thank Dr Edwards for his important contribution to the Reserve Bank Board deliberations during a challenging period for the economy. I thank him for his service and I wish him every success.

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (16:04): On brief indulgence, Mr Speaker, can I firstly acknowledge the service of Glenn Stevens as Governor of the Reserve Bank. When you think of the 10 years of service of Governor Stevens, it was a very tumultuous 10 years in the Australian economy through the highs of the mining boom, through the global financial crisis and through the recovery. The Reserve Bank is a vital national economic institution and Governor Stevens has led it very well for 10 years. He is in the front rank of central bank governors around the world, and I know the member for Lilley joins with me in wishing Governor Stevens the best.

I also welcome the appointment of Dr Lowe as Governor of the Reserve Bank. Dr Lowe is one of the finest Australian economists of his generation. He joined the Reserve Bank in 1980 and has only interrupted his service for his doctoral studies at MIT and a secondment to the Bank for International Settlements in Switzerland. As the Treasurer knows, I have previously
expressed a view that in this period the Treasurer should be consulting the opposition, but, if he had consulted on this measure, I would have supported the appointment of Dr Lowe as an appropriate one and one which is in the best interests of the bank.

I also want to pay tribute to Dr John Edwards for his service. He has been a very fine servant of our nation. He joined *The Australian Financial Review* in 1970 and has worked in both the public and private sectors. He has a claim for his contribution to the Australian economy over the last 40 or so years—it has been a very substantial one—and I know that Dr Edwards will serve the Australian economy in different ways into the future. I will say that I do believe Dr Edwards would have been very suitably qualified for appointment to a second term. I do believe that he would have been very suitably qualified to continue his service to the Reserve Bank. I note that that is not the decision that has been taken, but I believe that a second term would have been entirely appropriate given Dr Edwards's long and meritorious service and his outstanding knowledge of the Australian economy. I do, however, also acknowledge Professor Ian Harper's appointment to the board and wish him well.

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Budget**

The SPEAKER (16:06): I have received a letter from the honourable the Deputy Leader of the Opposition proposing that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely:

The Government’s unfair Budget hurting ordinary 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 PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (16:07): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I note that the Deputy Speaker is approaching the chair; it is wonderful to have him here now for the matter of public importance.

We heard debate on a censure motion today which allowed the government to make the case for the budget they brought down a couple of days ago. The Prime Minister and the Treasurer were able to talk about why this budget would benefit Australia and benefit Australians. And what did we get? Instead of a convincing argument about a budget that can benefit Australia, we got a damp squib. We got a missed opportunity to first of all admit what the 10-year cost of the 10-year tax plan was, but we got a damp squib of defending the budget. I have to say that this unfair budget, which will hurt ordinary Australians, is actually indefensible.

When the Prime Minister rolled the member for Warringah to take over the leadership of the Liberal Party, the argument he made was that the government lacked economic leadership, that it lacked a narrative, that the country was going nowhere. Well, this budget, according to the Prime Minister himself, would be the launching pad for the government to reclaim the agenda and to go into the election campaign showing Australians what they are capable of, what this country is capable of, what that government is capable of. Instead, it has been an entirely predictable, standard Liberal budget—you cut out the people who already have the least, you cut health and you cut education, and you help out the one per cent, the two per
cent, the big end of town, the multinational companies. It is an entirely predictable Liberal budget.

I will tell you what has not been so predictable about this government. After making a big fuss about the state of the economy under Labor and telling Australians that they would be responsible economic managers, what have we seen? We have seen the most extraordinary thing. We see spending up, we see taxes up, we see debt up, we see the deficit up—and they are still cutting services. How can you put up taxes, put up debt and still cut services? What a triffecta that is. This is a government that has actually tripled the deficit for next year. I tell you what: they are not telling Australians about that, are they?

Mr Bowen: No.

Ms PLIBERSEK: They are still trying to run this fiction that somehow this pain is necessary for the good of the budget. We have got to cut health. We have got to cut family payments. We have got to cut pensions. We have got to cut education. For the good of us all, we have got to tighten our belts. I tell you what: they are managing to push up debt and spending at the same time they are cutting these services. Why is it? It is because their priorities are wrong. It is because their priority is to help out the big end of town and people on or above $180,000 a year.

This government has presided over an Australian economy where inequality is at a 75-year high. Living standards have fallen for seven straight quarters. Consumer sentiment is down. What do those opposite do? They say, 'Oh, it's a problem with commodity prices.' When we were in government, there was no drop in commodity prices. We had the worst economic circumstances in three-quarters of a century with a global financial crisis, but we did not use that as an excuse. We got on with the job of building a strong economy, as well as a fair society. What is the centrepiece of this budget? The centrepiece is a tax cut for companies with a turnover of up to a billion dollars. That is a 10-year plan without a 10-year costing. Imagine if a Labor government had walked into this place and tried to present a 10-year plan, without a 10-year costing.

There is something that is really, really bad about this budget, and I think it is something that most Australians are not aware of. They are not aware that all of the zombie cuts of the 2014 budget are still here. The health cuts are still in this budget. The education cuts are still in this budget. The attack on pensioners and the attack on university students are still all here, and loaded on top of that are further cuts. Let's just look at the fairness aspect of this budget for one minute: 75 per cent of tax cuts go to the top 10 per cent of income earners. A sole parent with an income of $65,000 and two kids in high school will be about—

Mr Hutchinson interjecting—

Ms PLIBERSEK: Someone on $65,000 a year pays no tax according to the member opposite. They will be $5,000 worse off per year, while a couple earning a single income of $300,000 a year are $2,715 better off a year. Under this budget, a single working mum on $87,000 a year, with two kids in high school, will be $4,463 worse off—and that is even after the tax cut. That is after the pathetic $6-a-week tax cut. She is still going to go backwards under this government. But someone who earns a million dollars a year will be almost $17,000 a year better off. How can it be fair that these working parents, struggling to make
ends meet, cop a cut, while someone on earnings of a million dollars a year gets a $17,000 tax benefit?

I will tell you this about the health cuts in this budget. In the eight months since the Prime Minister took over from the member for Warringah as Prime Minister, there has been another $4 billion in cuts to our health system. The one that I have to say breaks my heart—I mean truly, truly breaks my heart—is the kids dental program. Why did we do kids dental? Why did we invest in kids dental when I was the health minister? Because I went to too many communities where little kids had teeth rotting in their mouths and their parents could not afford to take them to the dentist. We live in a first world nation. This should not happen in Australia. We know that if children grow up with good oral health they will have good teeth as adults. But, if their teeth start rotting in their mouths and their gums start suppurating as children, they are never going to have good oral health. So what has this government done? It has completely killed off the kids dental program and said, 'We're going to add a few extra million people to the public dental waiting lists.' At the same time, they have said to the states, 'By the way, if you don't pay for more than half of it, it's not going to happen.' What an extraordinary thing, to cut this scheme and throw millions of extra kids onto public dental waiting lists. It is like saying: instead of being able to go to the GP, go and queue up in hospital emergency and then you can see a doctor. Go and queue up in the emergency department. That is exactly what it means, and it is not saving money, because those kids will have lifelong problems because of what the government is doing.

This budget still has all of that e cuts from 2014. The 80,000 new mums every year are going to lose paid parental leave because on Mother's Day a year ago they started calling new mums 'double dippers' if they were lucky enough to already have paid parental leave. Women who are trying to escape domestic violence will find it harder because of the cuts to community legal services. This is a budget that does the most for those who already have the most. The Treasurer has obviously missed the fact that the average Australian woman working full-time earns nothing like $80,000 a year; on average, she earns $68,900 a year. Only 29 per cent of working Australians who earn more than $80,000 and will get this tax cut are women.

This is not a plan to grow Australia. This is not a plan to support families. This is not a plan for jobs. This is not a plan for education. This is not a plan for good dental care for our kids. This is not a plan that will grow the Australian economy because, as inequality grows, our growth will slow. This budget is a plan for the re-election of the Turnbull government. But I am pretty confident that it is not even going to work as a plan for the re-election of the Turnbull government—because Australians value fairness and at its heart, at its core, this is one of the least fair budgets this country has ever seen.

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell—Assistant Minister to the Treasurer) (16:16): The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is like a fight looking for an argument. Every year we have to endure a lecture from the opposition that everything in the universe is unfair, that lowering the tax burden on Australians and reducing the income tax bracket for average income earners is the most unfair measure that any government could come up with. Where do you start in attacking what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has just said? Where do you start in making an argument about it? It is full of myths and hyperbole. They are trying to build a narrative that tax cuts for small, struggling Australian businesses are somehow unfair. They
are saying that preventing 500,000 Australians from moving up to the second highest tax bracket is somehow an unfair measure. These are hardworking people.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition shows her economic illiteracy. A member opposite pointed out that sole parents who are earning $60,000 are actually net recipients of the tax system and our welfare system.

Ms Plibersek: Bludgers?

Mr HAWKE: No, I did not say 'bludgers'; you said it. We have a generous safety net. We have family payments. We already have in place measures that support people on low incomes. But we also have to be fair to people who work very hard and pay tax. As a government, we have to ensure that we provide incentives for people to continue to work hard and do not punish them when they earn more and more money up the scale in the middle and average brackets. That is what we have to do, and that is what this government is doing. That is what our economic plan is designed to do—a far cry from the most unfair thing the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has ever seen. I think she should really cast her eye over the plan again. If you lower the tax on average full-time income earners in this country, you are doing the right thing to provide incentives for people to get ahead.

What has been missed in the debate from the Labor Party and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition this week is that, with our business enterprise plan, we are increasing the threshold for small business from $2 million in turnover—not a dollar of profit has necessarily been earned at this point—to $10 million in turnover and reducing the tax rate. These are Australian small businesses. These are mums and dads who run small businesses. These are hardworking people who work their guts out running their own enterprise every day—turning over money and keeping the economy going. These small businesses actually employ about three million people in this country. We are providing them with a growth plan for the future. We are cutting their tax. It is what every business lobby in this country has called for. It is what the Leader of the Opposition called for before he came to parliament. It is what he said in last year's budget-in-reply—and I am going to get to this year's budget-in-reply in a minute. I would remind everybody here that in last year's budget-in-reply he said that he wanted the government to join with the opposition in a bipartisan way to lower the business tax rate in Australia to 25c in the dollar. That is what he said. That is how he began his speech.

In our plan for jobs and growth in this economy and in the economic plan that we are outlining, the government is lowering the business tax rate to 25c over a decade. The reality is that a big business in this country will not get a tax cut for eight to 10 years. But a small business or a medium business—a person who wants to grow their business and add more workers; a person who wants to add more shifts and employ more young Australians—will get a tax cut. These businesses, 90,000 of them, will get a 2.5 per cent tax cut immediately. They will be able to add that extra worker. They will be able to put on that extra shift. They will have access to the government's instant asset write-off program. They will now be able to take advantage of spending money through the transactions this economy needs, and they will spend money on their businesses to grow their businesses, to add those employees, to add those extra shifts—and this is how you grow an economy.

How else do you grow an economy? If Labor is going to oppose us on increasing the threshold from $2 million of turnover—this is not profit; this is just a business generating $2 million of turnover—to $10 million of turnover, if Labor does not accept that small and
medium businesses in Australia deserve a tax cut, how else will you grow this economy? How will you get more jobs? Every person you get a job for gets off welfare. Every payment that the government does not have to make increases our ability to get back into surplus.

Of course, that is an obscenity in this place. Every time a Labor member rises and talks to us about debt and deficit, we know the reason this country has debt and deficit. Every Australian knows. Every member of the public will remember why Australia has a debt and deficit problem. It is because of the six Rudd-Gillard-Rudd years—one of the most wasteful times in our nation's history—which saw the racking up of the largest debt and deficit that has ever been racked up in such a period. Now we are dealing with the legacy of that. When you look at the difference between the economic plan that the government has and that which the Leader of the Opposition will propose tonight you will see a sustainable path to surplus and living within our means, which are the kinds of things that households and businesses want to see the government doing. The government has to live within its means as well.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr HAWKE: There is a collection of shadow ministers opposite me—the big-spending group of the opposition you could call them because they are the big spenders. They are members of the Gillard supporter group. When Julia Gillard said to the state premiers, 'You think of a figure for your education and I'll sign anything that you like,' without any ability to ever fund it, there was not a tax regime that you could come up with to fund the promises that Julia Gillard made. You would never be able to fund it.

We have learned in recent weeks that your great plan has been to link tobacco tax funding, a declining revenue, to health and education funding. You have hypothecated health and education funding to a declining tax. Every economist in the country has said you will never get $47 billion of revenue over a decade out of cigarettes. The point of increasing the price of a pack of cigarettes to $35 or above is to have a decline in the smoking rate. It is to have less smoking. You will get less revenue. If you believe that your changes will bring $47 billion into the government from cigarettes, say so tonight. Tell us tonight if you are going to use cigarettes to fund your education promises.

It is very important that when governments make promises there is real money attached to them. That is what Australians want to see. When we promise increased health funding, as we have, and increased education funding, as we have, Australians want to see that they are reasonable amounts and that they are actual, real dollars that have been offset. Whenever you go through the budget papers—and I would bet my bottom dollar not many shadow ministers have actually opened a budget paper, but I am going to open one for them and go through it—everything is costed. What you will see is our 10-year enterprise plan. If you go to Budget measures: budget paper No. 2: 2016-17, page 41, you will see 'reducing the company tax rate to 25 per cent', and in the forward estimates everything is pay for. Every dollar of spending has been offset by a saving, and that is a sustainable way to run a budget and run the country.

But tonight we are going to hear from the Leader of the Opposition about their plans. What we do know is that they have a big, massive—or supermassive, I should say, in the lingo of the time—black hole in their costings, which already starts with $20 billion. That is true: they have a big, supermassive black hole. Some members of the opposition have allegedly referred to $20 billion as a 'rounding error'. We are still trying to round up who those people were!
Ms Plibersek: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. That has been corrected, and—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Craig Kelly): That is not a point of order. The assistant minister has the call.

Mr HAWKE: The deputy leader should have listened carefully to what I was saying. I said 'some members of the opposition'—we have not been able to identify who—

Ms Macklin: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order: 68.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Go ahead.

Ms Macklin: That is it: standing order 68; he cannot repeat that misrepresentation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The chair has expressed his difficulties with interpreting that section. I do not have reference to your previous speeches. The assistant minister has the call.

Mr HAWKE: I will move on. I can understand why members of the opposition are sensitive about costings, going into the budget-in-reply speech tonight.

Ms Macklin interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Jagajaga will take her seat.

Mr HAWKE: In the budget-in-reply speech, you have a $60 billion black hole. You need to identify tonight where you are going to come up with the measures. Are you going to tax people more? What we know about the Labor Party, going into this election, is that every time the Leader of the Opposition's lips move tonight he will be increasing taxes; he will be increasing spending; he will be increasing borrowing to pay for that spending. All the sensitivities of the shadow ministers opposite will not explain away why their plan for Australia is to tax more, to spend more and to borrow more.

This is a government that has an economic plan: to lower the burden of tax on our businesses and our hardworking Australians. We have a plan to sustainably get back to surplus. And we will not increase tax and increase spending endlessly in an unsustainable way.

Ms MACKLIN (Jagajaga) (16:27): Well, here we go to the next election. We all know this is the last day. So I think it is important that we remember what this lot promised before they went to the last election. Remember what they promised last time: no cuts to health. And what did they do in their first budget? They slashed public hospital funding. They promised no cuts to education. And what did they do? They slashed school funding. And what was the third promise they made? They said: 'No cuts to pensions.' And in the 2014 budget, of course, they decided that they would cut pensions by up to $80 a week over a 10-year period. Of course, we were able to defeat that measure. So, as we go to this election, every Australian will be listening very carefully to what these people say, because they know: nothing they promise can be believed.

This Prime Minister is taking the following things to this election. This is what is in this week's budget: cuts to Medicare—and my colleague the member for Ballarat will set out how the cuts to Medicare will lead to increased prices every time someone has to go to the doctor—cuts to schools; cuts to family tax benefits; cuts to pensions; cuts to Paid Parental Leave; and cuts to young job seekers.
This Prime Minister's budget is fundamentally unfair. What this Prime Minister is doing, at the same time as he is cutting Medicare, pensions and schools, is giving a tax cut to the wealthiest Australians while, at the same time, cutting money out of the pockets of millions of ordinary Australian families. One and a half million Australian families face enormous cuts to their budgets. And this genius at the dispatch box says, 'These are cuts from two years ago.' Yes, they are—they are still in the budget, you genius! You're an absolute genius!

How much better off is a single working parent going to be, with an income of $87,000 and with two children in high school, after this $6 tax cut they will receive? Once you take into account the cuts to family tax benefit that she faces, she will be $4,463 worse off each year. They are the promises you are taking to the next election. That is what you will have to face up to every time you walk down the street and talk to families who are working hard with children in both primary and secondary schools. You are going to leave those families worse off and there are 1½ million of them right around Australia.

We also know that the other measures from the 2014-15 budget are now election policies that all of you are going to have to defend over the next two months. You are going to have to say to all of those people born since 1966 that you will have to work until you are 70, and, of course, when you retire you will get less.

They are also taking to the next election a cut to paid parental leave that will mean 80,000 new parents will be up to $11,800 worse off. That is what you are saying to young mums, 'You are going to be $11,800 worse off when you have your newborn baby.' There are cuts to family payments and of course there is still that cut in the budget, as they are saying to young unemployed people: 'You are going to have to wait a month, living on nothing, before you get access to Newstart.' All of the cuts from the reviled 2014 budget are still in this budget. They are still policies that this government is taking to the next election, all done with a special kind of incompetence, because at the same time they have trebled the deficit. What an extraordinary achievement. (Time expired)

Mr HUTCHINSON (Lyons) (16:32): What every Australian knows, including those in the gallery, is that in 2007 we had a country that had money in the bank. We had the world paying us interest on the money we had in the bank. Six long years later, and we owe the world. In fact, today we are still paying the price for the unfairness that we were subjected to for six years by those opposite. There is $1 billion dollars every month that could be spent on hospitals, education, roads and other things but we cannot do that because of those opposite. There was nothing fair about what Labor did to our nation in six short years. All they know is how to tax more, borrow money and then spend it—other people's money. But we have a plan for a stronger economy, a more diverse economy, as we transition from the very important mining production phase, a phase that saw so much prosperity wasted by those opposite. Our nation's record revenues were squandered by those opposite who only new how to spend. We have a plan for jobs and growth.

I say to those who may be listening today, 'If you work for a business with a turnover of less than $10 million, your job is now safer because the taxation rate that your employer was paying yesterday, from 1 July, will be reduced from 30 per cent down to 27½ per cent, enabling them to invest more—quite probably enabling them to expand their business and employ more people. They will now be able to access the instant asset write-off—which may enable them to invest in a new piece of equipment which will make the job in which you are
employed safer and more productive. If you are struggling to find a job, we understand.' I know the member behind me would acknowledge that the PaTH initiative is a wonderful initiative to prepare and train our young people who are struggling to find work, and if we train these young people we will see opportunities within business for them to get a real job.

I ask the question: do you think it is unfair that some multinational corporations operating in Australia do not pay their fair share of tax? Despite Labor's best efforts, we changed that. Those opposite voted against the measures that we put before the parliament in December. Lo and behold—and I know this will amaze you as well, Deputy Speaker—we were supported in the Senate by the Greens. Stranger things have happened, I know. Those opposite voted against it. We have extended those laws. We have increased them, with new anti-avoidance tax laws, and the diverted profits tax is expected to raise $650 million over the next four years. We have put penalties in place of up to 40 per cent for businesses that are found to be diverting profits overseas. That is fair.

Do you have children? Do you have a healthcare card? Do you need dental work? Have you been to the dentist in the last six months? We have increased access to the public dental scheme: $1.7 billion for 10 million children and adults. Before, there were only three million people in Australia who were able to access this scheme.

Do you own a car? Do you take the bus? Do you use trains? Do you think the infrastructure in your area needs further work? Over the last three years we have delivered the biggest infrastructure investment that our nation has seen—$50 billion. This is the biggest investment in our nation's history, funding smart infrastructure projects that create jobs and growth. This is part of our plan for a smarter Australia—safer and easier transport. In my own state, local councils are benefiting through the Roads to Recovery program, and we have seen significant investment in the Midland Highway, in the Black Spot Program and in the Bridges Renewal Program.

Do you use schools or hospitals? I see the young people up in the gallery. Do you understand, Deputy Speaker, that if you use schools or hospitals you can be guaranteed that the funding is now there to support you. Do you think, as I started out by saying, that governments should live within their means—in the same way that the families in the gallery and the businesses all around Australia are forced to do everyday? Governments should have the same obligation. We are the custodians of the taxes that we take from businesses and individuals all over Australia. For those on the other side, the plan is to tax more, to borrow more and to spend more of your money. (Time expired)

Ms KING (Ballarat) (16:37): It is always a delight to follow the member for Lyons, who I think represents some of the poorest communities across Australia. He seems to be such a champion of those poor people in his community that he somehow thinks that this budget, which puts most of the investment into the top end of town over people in his electorate, is somehow a fair budget.

Let me go to one of the areas in particular where this budget has again cut funding to services. The budget on Tuesday night proved that, no matter who the leader is, Medicare will never ever be safe under a Liberal government. This is a government that has sought at every stage to attack bulk-billing, undermine universal access to health care, make patients pay more and more, and wreck the Medicare that Australians know and love. That pattern was confirmed again in Tuesday night's budget, when the Treasurer again lined up the patients of
this nation for billions of dollars worth of cuts. Having already imposed a four-year freeze on Medicare payments—a $1.3 billion freeze—in a shock move to doctors and what will be a shock move to patients, the government decided to hit them again, with another $925 million freeze, by extending it for another two years. Six years is not a freeze; it is an ice age when it comes to Medicare. It is designed to drive down bulk-billing, force patients to pay more and end universal access to health care. As the Rural Doctors Association have said, it is putting the health care of rural and regional patients into Siberia. In short, it is not just a GP tax by another name but a GP tax on steroids. Tony Abbott's now discredited GP tax only wanted to make patients pay $7. If this Prime Minister gets his way, Sydney University's Family Medicine Research Centre shows that by 2020 patients will be paying twice as much—a $14 GP tax. For many practices, this is the final straw, and we are already reading about clinics abandoning bulk-billing altogether and being forced to charge $10 or $20, even for children and concession card patients.

Mr Hawke interjecting—

Ms KING: I hear the minister at the table say, 'I pay $60 for a co-payment.' What you don't actually understand—

Mr Hawke: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order. The shadow minister has misrepresented what I said, and I ask her to withdraw it. It is offensive and I ask her to withdraw it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Craig Kelly): There is no point of order.

Ms KING: So he claims it is $60 in his seat. What you do not understand is that you will not be paying just $60—and that is people who are not being bulk-billed; bulk-billing rates are already high in this country and they will start to drop—it is concession card patients who are currently being bulk-billed who will be paying more and more, and patients who are currently paying co-payments will also be paying more than they currently pay because they will be cross-subsidising those patients. You do not understand how this works. What we are trying to do, and what we have done in health care for well over a decade now, is to make sure we have high rates of bulk-billing because that keeps fees low for everybody.

We heard the AMA president, who is often ridiculed by the other side of the House, say on budget night that the measure the government has put in this budget will mean 'the poorest, the sickest and the most vulnerable will be the hardest hit'. It confirms, as the Minister for Health has made clear, that this government is committed to forcing down bulk-billing by making more patients pay to see a doctor. Of course, that was just the start in this budget. We saw another $182 million hit from the health flexible funds, taking the total cuts to these crucial programs that fund drug and alcohol services, chronic disease services, communicable disease services to $1 billion under this government. They are cuts that will hurt. Of course, we have seen $1 billion cut out of the Child Dental Benefits Schedule.

This government is kidding itself if it thinks that millions and millions more patients on the public dental waiting list will somehow get seen when in Tasmania there is a waiting list of three years for public dental—if you can actually access it. The government is kidding itself. The budget has been described as smoke and mirrors. It has been described as a hoax and a fraud on the Australian people, and that is exactly what it is. A billion dollars cut out of kids dental in this budget. *(Time expired)*
Dr GILLESPIE (Lyne) (16:42): The budget delivered last night by the Treasurer is a sound economic plan that is going to drive jobs and growth in our economy, and a stronger, bigger economy will deliver the revenue that the nation needs to balance our books. Not only have we the Innovation and Science Agenda, we have the defence industry plan, high-tech manufacturing jobs in defence industries that will spill across into other areas of the economy. We have the continuation of our infrastructure plan. That is a $50 billion spend that was budgeted for in last night's budget. That means the accelerated build of the Pacific Highway will continue, as will the Bruce Highway and other projects all around the country.

The most exciting thing for my part of the world, in Lyne, were the tax announcements. There are over 10,000 small businesses in my electorate. That is not the big end of town. It is not Macquarie Street; it is Main Street. The businesses in Lyne—all of them—are small. We have one or two successful medium sized businesses. To give them a tax cut of another one per cent is such an incentive. It improves their cash flow. The instant asset write-off was extended and the threshold has been raised to $10 million for some of our bigger businesses.

The other exciting thing in the budget last night was the pathway offered for youth unemployed. They get a real job in an internship with a real boss—not a made-up scheme or good deeds in community work. It is real experience. They learn the skills they need to get a job and then they spend up to 25 hours a week in a real job. It gives them a chance to perform for their supervising boss. She might like what she sees and she might think: 'This young person deserves a break. I am going to employ them.' And there is bonus wage subsidy as well to encourage the employer to continue. That is really great news. I do not know what people are objecting to. Is the other side upset that 30,000 young people per year for the next four years are going to get that opportunity? You have to be joking. It is a great idea.

There is also over $500 million for road and rail. Look at inland rail. That is going to open opportunities and deliver growth in inland agriculture and produce across Victoria and New South Wales. It will get a whole lot of heavy transport off the east coast rail and road lines. It is going to be brilliant. We committed $630 million towards that.

We are also closing tax loopholes. Everyone complains about multinationals avoiding tax. We have a 1,000-person task force that is going to apply the tax avoidance legislation and a diverted profits tax. There will be a penalty of 40c in the dollar for any money that is deemed to have been transferred overseas through hybrids or other obscure mechanisms.

In my part of the world, the Lyne electorate, we have a lot of hardworking mums and dads, hardworking Australians. They are not the so-called high end of town that the other side are talking about. They are just hardworking families. We are helping them by raising the threshold for the middle tax bracket by $7,000. They should not be on the second highest tax bracket, but bracket creep is forcing too many of them up. Their families are going to be $378 every year better off.

The best predictor of future performance is past performance. Look at the deliveries of budgets by the last Labor Party Treasurer. We had a deficit that they outlined at $18 billion which came in $48 billion. That is a $30 billion blackhole. They do not need a plan; they need to go through a NAPLAN. They need to work on their arithmetic. (Time expired)
Ms KATE ELLIS (Adelaide) (16:47): We know that government is all about priorities. We know that budgets are all about setting out and making clear what those priorities are. This government have made it very clear this week that ordinary Australians are a long, long way from being their priority. Their priority is big business. Their priority is millionaires, who they can afford to give a big tax cut to. Their priority is not the ordinary working Australians and the families who have been hit and hit again by these budget measures.

We know that, when it comes to ordinary Australians, they care about the education that their children receive. We know that they want assistance when it comes to balancing work and family through the childcare system. But we also know that these are issues that this government are happy to talk about, but we will judge them on their actions. Some people may have been excited when they picked up the newspaper on Sunday and read the headlines that this government would invest $1 billion into our schools. But what the government did not point out is that they are still going to rip out $29 billion first. You cannot change what was a $30 billion cut to our schools to a $29 billion cut to our schools and expect ordinary Australians to be grateful for it. Every student in every school will suffer if this government is re-elected. We know that in just the last two years of the current agreements alone Australian schools will be $3.5 billion better off if Labor is elected than under this government's plan for our schools.

Today we saw the centrepiece of the government's budget collapse in almost record time. We have seen it implode. But it turns out that there is a precedent for this. If we cast our minds back to the budget of just 12 months ago, we might remember that that had a centrepiece as well. The centrepiece of that budget was the government's plans to reform child care and make it more affordable for the Australian public. It was important that they announced this as a big plan because this was a promise they went to the last election with. In fact, in 2013, the then Prime Minister Tony Abbott said very clearly to ordinary Australians: We're going to have much more affordable childcare with more money in parents' pockets and that's going to be very good for families.

Well, guess what, families of Australia: for those families who had a child when Tony Abbott made this pledge, that child will now be in school before this government plans to do a single thing to help with affordability or accessibility when it comes to child care. It was quietly announced in this year's budget that the centrepiece of last year's budget was all a bit hard and they are going to delay it. They have gone for three years without doing a single thing to assist Australian families with child care—except, I might add, cut out over $1 billion out of the system and out of existing payments. And now they are going to the election saying: 'Vote for us. We promise we won't do anything when it comes to child care for another two years.' That is what is in this budget.

The Australian public and Australian families deserve better than that. The Australian public and Australian families deserve better than having a Prime Minister who stands up and waffles and waffles but delivers absolutely nothing for them. We know that Australian families will hurt as a result of the cuts to schools—cuts which were first announced in the 2014 budget by the former Prime Minister and the former Treasurer but now have the current Prime Minister's name on them. Make no mistake, $29 billion has been ripped from our school system under this Prime Minister, going to this election; and the childcare system was such a priority that they promised the Australian public they were going to reform the whole
system. They were going to 'make child care much more affordable, with more money in parents pockets'. But when it comes to outlining what the actual priorities are, child care is not one of them. And when it comes to outlining and justifying why they can rip $29 billion out of our school system, it is because, they claim, it is not affordable.

Well, I will tell you what is not affordable. It is not affordable to not help families be able to participate in the workforce by having an affordable childcare system; and it is certainly not affordable to rob this country of our future prosperity, our future economic growth, by not investing in each and every young Australian. Regardless of their postcode, regardless of the local school they attend, every single Australian should have the opportunity to access a great school education. That is something they will get under Labor. That is something that is just not the priority of those opposite.

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (16:52): When I sit in the chamber I am often absolutely stunned by the lack of connectivity I see from those in the opposition when they talk about ordinary Australians. In the diverse and sometimes disadvantaged areas of Gilmore, I work with and talk to ordinary Australians every day. Those opposite are under the delusion that this budget is somehow unfair. Good grief! I will tell you what is unfair—it is the debt they delivered last time they were in government. This is what Ian, from my electorate, has to say: Make no mistake, the election will be won on the grounds of who can manage the economy best. As an observer of politics over 50 years, the experience of Labor has always been irresponsible financial management. It would be a disaster to see Labor in charge of the Treasury benches once more. We hurt whilst they were in power. Things are tight now. Australia would face ruin if the same incompetents who made the mess in the first place were back in power.

When the Rudd-Gillard government came to power in 2007 in the guise of being fiscal conservatives, they blew away Australia's nest egg in the most deplorable way. There will be cries of, 'But the GFC hit and we had to save the Australian economy!' In the first instance, that was correct. But then to go on and spend and spend and spend long after the GFC was over and done with was totally irresponsible. It left absolutely no financial buffer for the future of Australia. Well, let me tell you, that was unfair—to us, to our children, to their children and to our older Australians in their retirement years. And then in 2013 the Labor government's budget put in ticking financial time bombs with an explosive shrapnel effect that we are still stuck with today.

Often when the subject of budget deficits is mentioned I hear the shrill mantra of, 'You doubled the deficit!' emanating from the opposition benches. It reminds me of the complete lack of fiscal understanding by many of those sitting opposite. If you have a business—and I do not expect many of those opposite to understand this, because there is a distinct lack of business expertise there—and you lock in expenditure items at the end of the financial year and borrow additional funds for a project, then you have an increased debt as a result of the outstanding creditor and interest payments. We are paying off a million dollars a day in interest on Labor's debt. Talk about unfair! That was totally unfair to not just the incoming government in September 2013 but the financial sustainability of our nation as a whole. I deplore dishonesty at any level, but trying to sell a mythological set of figures like that was quite amoral.

What was unfair was the carbon tax, which created electricity price hikes for families and businesses, along with job losses in mum-and-dad small businesses. What was unfair was the
mining tax, which was not just a thought bubble of extraordinary proportions but the cash cow for proposed education and health expenditure based on revenue, on 'taxes received', that never—and, I repeat, never—eventuated. This is exactly the same as telling your children that you are going to win the lottery. Then you buy each of them a new car, take them to Disneyland, buy new iPads and computers and take that holiday you all want. Oops! You did not win the lottery. But it is all the government's fault. You cannot go out on a spending spree. That is unfair.

Let's get this right: Australians want consistency. They want the chance for their families to have a better life, and you cannot do that while you are paying off mammoth debts, like those accumulated under Labor, to overseas nations. We as a nation must live within our means. The people we know as ordinary Australians are the hardworking small business owners and wage earners, who are all about raising their families and providing a better life for their kids. Some businesses will welcome the tax cuts so that they can reinvest in their livelihood, pay off their mortgage—because that is what they have used to finance it—buy equipment and employ more people. That is fair.

The PaTH program initiative was described just this week in the 2016 budget. The program for vulnerable young people having trouble breaking into the job market is a transformational change and very welcome for the 12 per cent of our unemployed young people who do not have a working adult role model in their home. This is fair. It will give workplace preparation and assisted work trials to these people, yet they will still receive income support as well as additional pay. This takes the risk factor away from getting a job—where the job may or may not work out, and then they are struggling to get back onto support.

The budget is just the beginning of good things to come. We have only just begun to take advantage of the potential in our nation with the free trade agreements, the recently announced business incentives, innovation platforms and a plan for economic stability to take Australia to a healthy financial future. Now, that is fair.

Ms BIRD (Cunningham) (16:57): As the day draws to an end, it is obvious to many of us that we will be heading off to an election and unlikely to meet here in jovial good company on Monday, as the manager of government business intimated at the end of question time. So, it might be worth taking the opportunity in this MPI to have a little think about what has happened in our journey over those three years, because we have had three budgets in those three years.

Ms Claydon: And haven't they told a story.

Ms BIRD: They do indeed, as the member for Newcastle says, tell a story. The government encapsulated it themselves with the term 'continuity with change', because each of those budgets has been exposed consistently—and, I have to say, with increasing speed—to be fundamentally unfair at the heart of what they represent. We had the infamous 2014 budget—the first budget of the Abbott government. It put in place such reprehensible changes that the government had to back-pedal on them or hide them away or freeze them. They were so objectionable to the community that the government simply could not get them through this place.

In that budget, we saw broken promise after broken promise. It went to the heart of the trust that people had in the government that they had elected. There were broken promises on
school funding, broken promises on health funding, broken promises on pensions, broken promises on cuts to the ABC and the SBS.

Mr Giles: Consistency.

Ms BIRD: If there was consistency in that budget, it was: if they had made a promise, they went out of their way to break it in that budget. It was an absolutely discredited budget. One would think that, having been exposed relatively quickly for how bad and unfair it was, it might have disappeared off the landscape. There is more to that story, and it is not going to give any great comfort to the Australian public.

So, we then had another budget: 2015. This was a budget that said: ‘Let's just stay under the radar a bit. It didn't go too well last time. Let's just try to stay under the radar a bit and maybe try to get everyone to focus on our commitments around child care.' As my colleague the member for Adelaide very clearly outlined for the House, that did not go too well either. Having travelled through two budgets in not quite two years of government, for quite a few on the other side, obviously the message got through. And they thought: 'We need a solution to this. We don't have an economic narrative. The Australian public are not coming on this journey with us. We're being exposed for breaking election promises. We're unable to articulate a case for the future.'

Now, what could be the solution to that? We would have suggested: drop your unfairness—that might have been a start—get in contact with where average people are actually at in their lives, seek to put in place a plan for jobs, invest in the things such as education that contribute to people being able to get jobs or create their own businesses. We could have given them a couple of options like that. But no. What did those opposite decide to do? They decided to swap their leader. The current Prime Minister stood in the courtyard, not far from this place, and said: 'It's time to end this farce. I'm going to challenge, because I'm going to give economic direction to this country. I'm going to bring the reforms that are needed to set us up for the future.' And what hope there was as a result of that, particularly on the backbench! People were hoping that this would be the circuit-breaker that got them where they needed to be. Well, what a disastrous experiment that has been! We now have this new Prime Minister's budget—naked and ashamed in front of us within less than two days of its having been brought down. It should not surprise you, because fundamentally we have a Prime Minister who is the emperor with no clothes. People are in the street pointing out that he is a great disappointment.

This budget prioritises millionaires and it prioritises big business over the average, ordinary people it is supposed to deliver for. It is exposed, it is an embarrassment, and it is no wonder the backbench was so deathly silent in question time. (Time expired)

Mr WILLIAMS (Hindmarsh) (17:02): The member for Cunningham, with whom I have participated in Education and Employment Committee hearings, is generally a constructive member of parliament, and I have enjoyed working with her on some of those occasions. It is just a bit disappointing for the gallery and for us here that there was not more constructive dialogue in our MPI. Child care is an interesting case study. It is an investment in the future. It is an investment in our kids—and I know there are some up there in the gallery—and an investment in our education, because it is a great form of education, with the quality childcare teachers we have. The thing is, we actually put $3 billion into child care. And guess who
blocked it? They blocked it in the Senate. So, how hypocritical of them to stand up here and say that we were not supporting it!

The onus, the responsibility, lies with them. They were the ones to block it. We supported it, and we are, on education, investing around 25 per cent more across Australia, including in my state of South Australia, over four years—a considerable increase in funding that will help teachers and help students. But I am sure the people in the gallery know, as everyone else out there in Australian society knows, that although money is important for education there is more to it: there is parental engagement; there is school leadership. These are some of the many important pieces of the education puzzle that Labor continually forgets to acknowledge and focus on, and it does not do the whole discussion of better educational outcomes any justice. We know that over the past 10 years, although there has been a 40 per cent increase in education funding, by the coalition government in particular, our results internationally have declined in some areas. And that is what we are seeking to address, to provide a better future.

I will just touch on a couple of elements of this budget. We have heard about the tax cuts and incentives for small business—the engine room of the economy. That will mean more jobs. That will mean more capital and, hopefully, greater productivity. We have the export trade deals that will open up even further the middle class of Asia for Australian companies, with more Australian jobs resulting and more economic growth and prosperity. I want to say something about defence shipbuilding, in particular, and defence plans for local high-tech manufacturing. We know that, after the last two weeks, there have been 54 defence ships and submarines commissioned in Australia by the federal government, and there were zero from Labor—54 to zero. Not just is it important for those major projects; it is also important for suppliers. I know we have some members here from the state of Victoria and the state of New South Wales. I will just read out a few suppliers, because they might think that their companies are missing out.

Mr Giles: Because they are.

Mr WILLIAMS: I tell you: they are not. I will give you some names from right around Australia. You might like to take notice and learn something. In New South Wales, we have Dowding & Mills. That is for the Collins class submarine program right here and now, so they are well placed to get further work. In Victoria, we have Pump Technology, Mackay Consolidated and ABB Turbocharging. In New South Wales, we have Stealth corporation, Vulkan Industries, Ampcontrol, Teterin Engineering—the list goes on. Millions and millions of dollars of work for suppliers all around Australia. We have quality radar technology that, I think, is made in the ACT to go on our Defence ships going forward.

We have guaranteed funding for education. It is an essential part of the Australian society to fund those services: health and education. Real revenue is banked—real money. And it will not go up in smoke.

In concluding, I know we have some departing members present in the chamber. I want to pay tribute to the member for Bruce. He has been a great colleague of mine on the soccer field. I call him the John Terry of the parliamentary soccer game every Wednesday morning. I will miss you, 'John'! I will miss you, the member for Bruce. I see the member for Hunter smiling. I am not sure whether he is coming back. I hope he is coming back. If he is, I look forward to—
Mr Fitzgibbon: We're sorry you won't be here!

Mr WILLIAMS: We'll see about that! Up there in the corner, to the other members who are departing, thank you for your contributions. I will miss the banter. I will miss the collegiality. I will miss you all, but I am sure some of us will be back. Good luck. It has been nice to have been a part of the 44th Parliament.

COMMITTEES
Public Works Committee

Approval of Work

Dr HENDY (Eden-Monaro—Assistant Cabinet Secretary and Assistant Minister for Finance) (17:07): I move:

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, it is expedient to carry out the following proposed work which was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and on which the committee has duly reported to Parliament:

- AIR 5428 Phase 1 - Pilot Training System Facilities Project.

I will not speak to this motion or the other five, in deference to the members who are about to give their valedictories. I commend the motion to the House.

Question agreed to.

Approval of Work

Dr HENDY (Eden-Monaro—Assistant Cabinet Secretary and Assistant Minister for Finance) (17:08): I move:

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, it is expedient to carry out the following proposed work which was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and on which the committee has duly reported to Parliament:

- Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation Waste Management Facilities' extension and upgrade.

Question agreed to.

Approval of Work

Dr HENDY (Eden-Monaro—Assistant Cabinet Secretary and Assistant Minister for Finance) (17:09): I move:

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, it is expedient to carry out the following proposed work which was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and on which the committee has duly reported to Parliament:

- Fit-out of new leased premises for the Australian Taxation Office located in Gosford, NSW.

Question agreed to.

Approval of Work

Dr HENDY (Eden-Monaro—Assistant Cabinet Secretary and Assistant Minister for Finance) (17:09): I move:

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, it is expedient to carry out the following proposed work which was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and on which the committee has duly reported to Parliament:
Fit-out of new leased premises for the Australian Federal Police at 45 Commercial Road, Newstead, Queensland.
I commend the motion to the House.
Question agreed to.

Approval of Work

Dr HENDY (Eden-Monaro—Assistant Cabinet Secretary and Assistant Minister for Finance) (17:10): I move:

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, it is expedient to carry out the following proposed work which was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and on which the committee has duly reported to Parliament:

Puckapunyal Military Area high voltage power supply upgrade, Puckapunyal, Victoria.
I commend the motion to the House.
Question agreed to.

Approval of Work

Dr HENDY (Eden-Monaro—Assistant Cabinet Secretary and Assistant Minister for Finance) (17:11): I move:

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, it is expedient to carry out the following proposed work which was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and on which the committee has duly reported to Parliament:

C-17 Maintenance Facility, Aircraft Apron and Associated Infrastructure Project, Royal Australian Air Force Base Amberley, Queensland.
I commend the motion to the House.
Question agreed to.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH

Address-in-Reply

Debate resumed on the motion:

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

To His Excellency the Governor-General

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 (Mr Craig Kelly) (17:11): I give the call to the member for Shortland for her final speech in this chamber.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (17:12): As you rightly say, this will be the last speech I make in this parliament. I will start by saying that it has been an absolute privilege and honour to represent the people of Shortland for almost 18 years and to contribute to the national political agenda. It has been an absolute privilege to be part of the Labor caucus and to have my colleagues here with me in the chamber and to have my three colleagues from the
Hunter here and to have Pat Conroy, who will be the next member for Shortland, here—and I will talk more about that later in my contribution to this debate.

Mr Fitzgibbon: They are big shoes to fill.

Ms HALL: They are different shoes. That is what we tell everybody: different shoes. I thank the people of Shortland for the trust they have placed in me and for their friendship, and I thank everybody in this parliament on both sides for their friendship over the time that I have been here.

I joined the Labor Party back in 1975 when Gough Whitlam was sacked. The first time I voted, I voted for Labor and I felt that my vote had absolutely been ignored. I felt that it was wrong that a Governor-General could decide who the Parliament of Australia would be. I thought, 'Well, do you sit there and complain about it or do you do something?' and I joined the Labor Party, and I know colleagues on this side of the House have joined the Labor Party and been inspired by Gough Whitlam over the years.

I am one of the few fortunate people who have represented the area at the local, state and federal level. I was a councillor on Lake Macquarie council, and I think that gave me the skills that you need to interact with people. I know that Joel, the member for Hunter, was also a councillor, and it really gives you that understanding of grassroots politics, the things that impact on people's lives. The member for Newcastle was also a councillor on Newcastle council—and, yes, the member for McMahon. We have a lot of former councillors on this side.

Ms Rowland: And me.

Ms Vamvakinou: And me. I was a councillor too.

Ms HALL: Goodness. Okay, everybody on this side of the House was a councillor! I will leave it at that. No—a large majority of us were councillors, and we learnt the skills and we learnt to understand the things that impact on people's lives at that very grassroots level, and we took that very grassroots level to the national agenda. I spent a little bit of time in the state parliament, but I would have to say that this is absolutely the ultimate place in which you can make a contribution to the political agenda.

When I was elected to Swansea, I was actually the first woman from the Hunter to be elected to a lower house seat in either the state or federal parliaments. But the really good news is that 70 per cent of all elected representatives in the Hunter are now women. That is phenomenal—really phenomenal. It shows that Labor has a real commitment to seeing women in this parliament and women in every parliament in the country. I can see Joel sitting down the front there, endorsing my comments!

Mr Fitzgibbon: I'm partly taking credit!

Ms HALL: And taking credit! Yes, our candidate in Paterson, Meryl Swanson, is an absolutely outstanding woman and will make enormous contributions in this parliament.

I was the 949th member to be elected to this federal parliament. That shows just how few people have actually had the honour and the privilege of serving in this House. I made my first speech on 11 November 1998—and 11 November is a special date for all of us. I see the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; she also made her first speech on that day. We were elected together, back in 1998. I am only the third member for the division of Shortland, which was
proclaimed in 1949. And I believe I have the fourth member for Shortland sitting right next to me now! I am really proud of the fact that we will have someone of Pat Conroy's quality taking over from me.

To be elected to this parliament is a privilege, a privilege that few people are afforded, and I have always been mindful of that great honour. I believe that all members elected to this place enter politics because they want to make a difference. It is just that, on different sides of the House, we have a different idea of what makes a difference. We have a different vision, different beliefs and different philosophies, and we all strive to see that our vision becomes the reality. And, without a doubt, I believe the Labor vision is the vision that should be the reality in Australia and the one that benefits Australian people. I have always been motivated by the need to make a difference and to see that the values of social justice, equity and egalitarianism are embraced in Australia. As a federal member of parliament it is a unique opportunity to actually do this.

In my first speech, I emphasised that good government is inclusive. It ensures that all people share the wealth of our great nation, and not just a few. It ensures that we have a society in which everyone is valued. It does not govern by fear or by marginalising one section of our society whilst advantaging another. A good government governs for all and delivers fairness, equity and social justice, not division, scaremongering and fear. I have to say that I have sat in this House on many occasions and felt that it was the latter that was being delivered to the Australian people. We as members of parliament should be showing leadership. We should be giving people confidence. We should not be scaring them. We should not be frightening them. We should not be trying to get elected by appealing to the lowest common denominator—by creating fear.

In my first speech I touched on Belmont Medicare office. One of the things I came to this parliament saying was, 'Labor will reopen Belmont Medicare office.' And do you know what? We delivered. We reopened Belmont Medicare office. The Howard government had closed it—yes, shame!—but there is worse to come. The Turnbull government closed it recently.

Opposition members interjecting—

Ms HALL: Yes, they closed it. Not only did they close it, but they decided that it was not really a closure; they were going to co-locate it to Charlestown. They had previously co-located the Charlestown Medicare office to the NDIA office—guess where? Charlestown. And now they were co-locating Belmont, which is 12 kays away from Charlestown—

An opposition member: Down the road!

Ms HALL: yes, just a short walk for those pensioners who live at Belmont, Swansea and Gwandalan! It is just a short walk for them! And they were co-locating it 150 metres away from the existing Medicare office in the NDIA, so it was going to be co-located with Centrelink 150 metres away from the existing Medicare office. Poor old Belmont. They have no Medicare office, but Charlestown are lucky; they have two.

But the story does not finish there. You would think that maybe this was a cost-saving exercise. You would, wouldn't you—a cost-saving exercise? Well, guess what. I believe it costs in the vicinity of $100,000 to break the lease and to have the fit-out removed. Is that an example of good government?

Opinion members: No.
Ms HALL: No, I do not think so. The member for Swan is a friend of mine in this place, and I know that he has a Belmont Medicare office. It was opened at the same time as my Belmont Medicare office, but I suspect his is still open, whilst mine is now co-located 150 metres from another one. Shame!

The other local initiative that I mentioned in that first speech was the Fernleigh Track. We lobbied the Howard government time and time again to have the Fernleigh Track built. They ignored us. They were not interested. Maybe it was because it was a Labor electorate. I decided that I was not going to be put off by this. When we were elected in 2007, not only did we build the link between Whitebridge and Redhead but we built the link between Redhead and Belmont, and now we have this fantastic cycle-walkway that goes all the way from Belmont into Newcastle along the old rail line.

It really shows that, for the people of Shortland, you need a Labor government to ensure that you get the basics like a Medicare office. By the way, people who were travelling to Belmont Medicare office are now finding it absolutely impossible to contact Medicare on the hotline.

My proudest moment in this parliament was when Kevin Rudd delivered the apology to the stolen generations. It was long overdue. I see Jenny Macklin sitting down the front, and I know that she was very involved in that as well. It was a day where the whole of parliament came together. These galleries were absolutely filled. To see Indigenous people throughout Australia standing up and cheering and crying was just unbelievable—unbelievable—and I felt so proud to be an Australian, so proud to be a member of this parliament. It was long overdue. It was like a veil had been lifted from our society while positioning Australia to become a better, more inclusive country.

On Sorry Day in 2000, I—and, I am sure, many members on this side of the House—walked across Sydney Harbour Bridge. It was really one of the most fantastic experiences I have had. As we got to the other end there were three young girls from Taree who were hopping on the train to go back over. They said, 'We've walked across three times already and we're going to do it again!' It meant so much to them that 250,000 Australians had turned out to walk across the bridge that day.

That was followed up by the apology, which I would have liked to see happen a lot sooner than it did. It happened, but we still have work to do with closing the gap. The Closing the gap reports have shown that there has been some progress made but not enough. There is still so much work to be done there. Aboriginal Australians get sicker and they die earlier. They are overrepresented in our prisons. That is something we cannot be proud of as Australians and something we need to address. Of course, our next challenge in that area is constitutional recognition. Constitutional recognition must be something that really delivers. We need to make sure it is not something that just makes people feel good. It has to be meaningful. That will be a challenge for those of you who are left behind, and I know each and every one of you is definitely up to it.

I have always been a politician driven by passion and belief. I have had the philosophy: 'Do what you believe in and believe in what you do.' That has driven me all the way along. One issue that I do not believe has been addressed is asylum seekers. I think history will judge us very poorly when it comes to the way this parliament has treated asylum seekers. We cannot leave people on Manus Island and Nauru forever. There has to be some light at the end of the
tunnel. We need to make sure that we are seen as a compassionate nation, a nation that actually does something and does not use asylum seekers and refugees as election fodder. There is a real challenge for members of this parliament to show that we can right this atrocity. It is not good enough and we need to deal with it.

Another issue I have always been passionate about is live exports. I know my colleague Joel Fitzgibbon has been working very hard on this. Mahatma Gandhi said that the greatness of a nation can be judged by the way it treats animals. I have to say that animals leaving these shores as live exports have been treated appallingly. I know Joel has been working on this and is very keen to see the appointment of an independent inspector-general of animal welfare. Labor has a good policy in this area. Like the asylum seeker issue, live exports are an issue out there that needs to be addressed.

I would also like—Joel, while I am talking about your area: another little job for you—to talk about the export of greyhounds.

Mr Fitzgibbon: We're onto that too.

Ms HALL: There we go: we are onto that too. Australian greyhounds, in particular those being sent to Macao, are basically sent over there to be mistreated. They are not even euthanased in a humane way. There is no record of the greyhounds that leave this country. I think that as a parliament we need to address that.

Mr Fitzgibbon interjecting—

Ms HALL: 'A passport system', Joel says. I will be watching. I will not be here but I will be watching—and you know I tweet!

The next issue is health. A passion of mine in this parliament has been health, and it is great to see Steve Irons here because we have both been involved in the health committee over a very long period of time and we have co-chaired a lot of parliamentary friendship groups, such as Parliamentary Friends of Seniors and Ageing and Parliamentary Friends of Rare Diseases, and I know that he is just as passionate about health as I am. I believe that the government is really letting people down. Thank you for your work on the health committee and thank you for working with me, Steve. But I need to make some pretty strong comments about government action in the area of health.

Access to health should be based on a person's need. It should not be based on whether or not a person can afford it. We cannot afford to have a health system here in Australia like the health system that exists in the US. I feel like I have made this speech before, talking about this! And I have made many speeches on health! But going back to the Howard government: under the Howard government, bulk-billing rates fell to 60 per cent, and they came up to 82 per cent when Labor was in government. Now they are on the decline again; we are transferring the cost—we are putting in place a GP rebate, but we are getting the GPs to collect it—and putting in place extra charges and costs for all people who go and see doctors.

We have Catherine King, who is a fantastic shadow health minister. I know she is across it. And the only way Australians can stop these health changes coming into play is by voting Labor.

On education: education is fundamental to everything. If you do not have access to a good education, you do not have access to a quality of life that those of us who are afforded a good education have. To have a system where some people are denied that access to the highest
quality of education is unacceptable. Gonski needs to be fully funded. It needs to be put in place to help the most disadvantaged students in schools in Australia. So, once again, it is another job—and we have got Amanda here, who I know is well and truly up to the task.

As to the NBN—well! Pat will be taking up the fight on the NBN. And the rollout in our area has been abysmal. In my office, in the first week that the NBN was rolled out we had 200 people who lodged complaints because they had lost their phone line, they had lost their computer—and on and on it went. Some two months later, they were still without a phone or without a computer. So I am very confident that Pat will take up that issue.

On climate change: I think climate change might be a dirty word at the moment—is it? Does it exist or does it not exist? On this side of the House, we are committed—absolutely committed—to turning it around. The challenge is for those on the other side to match our commitment, because it is of vital importance to not just Australia but the whole of the world. I was in the Pacific recently at the Pacific women's forum. At that forum, the women voted to have climate change as the agenda item for next year's Pacific women's forum. So that is putting it on the agenda and saying how important it is.

As to domestic violence: how can we address domestic violence when funding has been cut? It is so important. You cannot have a situation where two women in Australia are being killed every day. Once again, I know that we on this side are committed to seeing that that is well and truly addressed.

One of my favourites has always been a republic and that is something I am going to work on once I leave this place. Australia needs to be a republic. We need to have our own Australian head of state.

Mr Fitzgibbon: You should be our first President!

Ms HALL: No, I do not think I am presidential material, Joel! Remember, I have that opinion that I always have to express.

I would like to see Palestine recognised. It has been far too long that we have allowed that dreadful situation to exist. I have visited Gaza. I have seen the blockade. I have seen the appalling conditions that people are living in there, and it makes me really sad that that has been allowed to continue.

That now brings me to unions, penalty rates, wages and an area that is a real difference between us and the other side. When I came into this place we had the Patrick’s dispute, and I mentioned the MUA. Now we have Work Choices on water. I know that Anthony Albanese, sitting down the front, is really taking it up to the government, because it is not right that Australian seafarers should be losing their jobs so foreign seafarers can be employed on ships working in Australian waters. We should be about Australian jobs in this place. We should be about ensuring workers get a fair wage.

The other union that I mentioned at the time was the CFMEU. This parliament is about to be dissolved because of the trade union royal commission. The CFMEU figured very strongly in that. There are two arms of that union that I have worked closely with over the years. From my previous life as a rehab counsellor, I know how important workplace safety is. Without the work of the CFMEU going into those workplaces and looking at the work safety that takes place on those business sites, there would be far more people losing their lives. I know that
that union supports the families of those who lose their lives. So they get in there, give those families money and support them over a long period of time.

It is really important that we have a balance between unions and employers. We need to have unions to make sure that employers really do the right thing on their work sites. I am sorry for those opposite—I know that what I am saying does not necessarily fit with what they believe, but it is something that I am quite passionate about. Of course, CFMEU mining have been fantastic supporters over the years and have done so much in one of the most dangerous industries. Both building and mining are two of the most dangerous industries, with the highest rates of fatalities and injuries in Australia. I recognise the good work that they do and give them my full support.

Now I come to the hard part. I would like to firstly thank the Labor Party members who pre-selected me to represent them in 1998 and who have continued to support me. Pat has some tissues down there that he is supposed to shake at this particular time! They have always been my eyes, my ears and my heart when I am away from the electorate. I have wonderful branch members that go out there and do what they do because they believe in Labor. They believe in what we do here. Each and every one of us has a responsibility to those wonderful branch members. I thank them from the bottom of my heart. They have been wonderful.

Next, I would like to thank the wonderful people of Shortland. You have been my inspiration. My motivation has been to make your lives better and have your voices heard in Canberra. You will always be in my heart. Thank you for the trust that you have placed in me. I have had the privilege to share your lives, to offer assistance to you, to accept offers of assistance from you, and to build friendships and relationships that will last well past my time in this parliament.

I would also like to thank the wonderful community groups and volunteers in Shortland. I have worked with schools, sporting groups, RSLs, Meals on Wheels, pensioners, seniors groups, Men's Sheds, CWAs, environmental groups, caring groups and so many others. You have always made me feel welcome, and I have always felt like I am a part of who you are.

I now turn to my incredible staff. As we all know, we are nothing without our staff. First, there is Kathy. Kathy worked with me when I was the state member for Swansea and she has worked with me for basically all the time that I have been the federal member for Shortland. She is one of the most incredibly loyal and strong people you will ever meet. She has nearly finished studying to become a social worker and she is just an incredible person who will always be my friend. Next, there is Chris. Chris bosses me, tells me what to do, tells me where to go, tells me how I should do it and tries to organise me. He is the extreme boss. I think we all need a Chris to tell us where to go and how to do it! Vicki is the one I probably get the most thank you calls in my office about. She sends out the birthday letters to people and the messages of congratulation. She handles all the requests for Order of Australia awards. She has been with me practically all the time. She is family. Next is Lisa. She is a media person extraordinaire. She too has found herself another job. She is going to be working with Urban Growth at their Parramatta office. She is a phenomenal media person and a person of great calibre. Urban Growth is very lucky to have Lisa.

Alex is sitting up in the gallery. He works part time. He is a uni student studying law. He is going to be a fantastic Labor Party member. He has a really big future in front of him. And then there is Mark. I know that people here know Mark; we had a very close relationship with
Nola's office. Mark cannot be with me here today. His wife is very ill. People on this side absolutely adore Mark. He will always be very special and he has made enormous contributions.

Melanie would have been here today but she is attending a funeral. Last Tuesday we had a sporting champions presentation in the office. While we were conducting this presentation—and there were a lot of people who received awards from the Novocastrian Swimming Club—young Jade Frith was hit by a car when crossing the road, and she lost her life. The funeral was held at three o'clock today. I would like to see traffic lights installed in that area to make it safe. It is right near Warners Bay High School. Tracey Blair is up in the gallery. Tracey comes into the office on Thursdays and Fridays. She is a volunteer extraordinaire and she makes our office fantastic. Thank you, Tracey, and thank you, Lorraine, for bringing Tracey here today. We also have Krystle Brown, who also comes in on a Friday and does some volunteer work.

Alex Craig is sitting up there. Alex and I had a photo taken—she is looking all embarrassed, but I love embarrassing people—when she came down here in year 6. Now she works for Michelle Rowland, and I am sure that Michelle would say what a fantastic staff member she is. She is talented and—the icing on the cake—the ACT Young Environmentalist of the Year. Congratulations! You can see that I have been very, very lucky to have some wonderful people around me.

There is one more—I haven't forgotten—Nelson. Everybody knows Nelson. Nelson was working in the whips office. He made sure everybody got there on time. Thank you for coming along today, Nelson.

I also have to acknowledge Chad Griffiths, who is a councillor on Lake Macquarie council—he has done so much work for me as campaign director over the years—and John Jenkins, who has been the president of the Federal Electorate Council.

The Thursday Club: every Thursday I have a group of guys come along—Adrian Vaughan, Jim Bridge, Jim Anning, Paul Daly, John Goverd, Kevin McFadden, Tony Dybell and Des McMeekan—to put together all the books that I hand out. They sit in a back room and they argue with each other and they have very, very lively discussions, just like my granddaughter Ella is—she is crying up there in the public gallery. Sorry, Ella, I didn't mean to bore you! The Thursday Club guys always leave a seat at the table for Wal Drane, who was a foundation member of the Thursday Club. Wal died a few years ago. I made the mistake one Thursday of walking into the room and sitting in Wal's chair. I was told very, very quickly to get up and go!

I have to acknowledge the fantastic support I have received from Anna George—everybody on this side of the House knows how wonderful Anna is—and Debra Biggs. Sitting up in the gallery is Roger Price. Roger and I were whips together. We were quite a team, Roger, me and Chris Hayes, who is now the chief whip. We were a pretty mean team. I have to acknowledge both Roger and Chris. Thank you, Roger, for coming down today. It is wonderful.

Mr Husic: That'll learn ya!

Ms HALL: That is what he always says—that'll learn ya. I'm really making the most of this last speech, aren't I? Sorry!
That now brings me to my wonderful family. When I was elected to this parliament my daughter Shayne, who has disappeared out of here with her daughter, and my son Chris were at university and none of my children were married. If you look up into the gallery, you can see there are lots of little people. They have been born while I have been down here. I have been really lucky when I have come down here, because my daughter and her husband, Cris, live here, and I have been able to spend time with them.

Lindsay, my husband, is sitting there thinking that I am going to tell the story of one election day. I am not going to tell you that the one person on this particular election day I got a letter of complaint about happened to be a person who had grey hair, who was handing out cards at a particular school that Lindsay was at at that particular time. I had to write this very apologetic letter saying 'I can't imagine who it could have been.' But I am not going to tell anyone that. It is a story for another time. Lindsay has been fantastic. He has always been there to support me. He is a doorknocker extraordinaire, Pat Conroy. You are going to use him, I am sure. He loves doorknocking. I am not going to tell you the doorknocking story. I will tell you that later.

An opposition member interjecting—

Ms HALL: No, not now. Maybe that is why he likes doorknocking! Peter, my eldest son, doesn't come to parliament very much, but he is always telling me what we should do. If we need some advice, we should go and talk to Peter, because he has very strong opinions. He is quite critical at times, I must say, but he always votes Labor—and he has the best position for a sign in the electorate. So, thank you, Peter, and thank you so much for coming down today. He now has three daughters. Selina, who speaks three languages, or maybe even four. She speaks English, Cantonese, her grandmother's dialect—and she speaks Mandarin as well. One of my other grandchildren, Jessica, who I will get to in a moment, was telling me how Selina was giving them lessons in Cantonese. That is pretty special. Selina's sisters, Mieien and Maicy, are not here.

Chris has Sam and Jessica. Where is Sam? Sam wanted me to give a speech like you, Chris Bowen. He thought that you made a fantastic contribution today. He told me to go down there and be strong and give a Chris Bowen speech. He is very, very interested in politics. He tells me that he knows more about politics than anyone in his school, including his teachers. My beautiful Jessica gave me one of the most interesting campaigns I ever had. At that particular time she had ended up in hospital with a multiresistant staph infection. She nearly lost her life. I did most of my campaigning in that election around John Hunter Hospital. She is a very special girl, very bright—and I call her 'my treasure'. Next there is Chris. Chris has always been there. He is the rock in the family.

Then there is Shayne and Cris—Shayne has disappeared yet again. Cris is her husband. He is sitting up there with Asher. Asher is a little boy who always likes to do everything the right way. I forgot you, Jonny. Jonny, you are very special too. Hi, Jonny! Next I have Hallie—hello, Hal! Hallie is Miss Personality. Asher always tells us how we should do things. He always used to run and tell tales on Lindsay because he used to say 'bloody'—is that unparliamentary? It is not, is it? Not now! He would tell his mother that Poppy used bad language. Finally there is Ella, who has taken Shayne out of here.

I cannot, of course, forget my sister Robyn. Robyn is here today. She has come all the way from Nambucca Heads. She is my only sibling and very important to me. At my first speech
my mother was here, but, unfortunately, she is no longer here. Robyn embodies my mother—so, thank you, Robyn.

Finally—nearly 'finally', anyhow—thank you to all the staff in Parliament House who make it possible for us to do our job: the attendants, who look after all of us so well, the clerks, the sergeant's office, the Comcar drivers, the cleaners, the staff in the Table Office, the catering staff, and every other person that makes this place very special. I also thank the committee secretariats—the staff who work on the committees.

Now it is time for me to sit down. But before I do I want to pledge my 100 per cent support to having a Shorten Labor government elected. The Labor team has the policies that will make Australia great—inclusive policies that provide opportunities for all Australians. Bill Shorten will be a fantastic Prime Minister. Now, I did not vote for Bill. I voted for my friend, Albo—the person who has given me so much support throughout my political career. Whenever I needed support or whenever I had a problem, I could always go to Albo. Albo is absolutely fantastic. Thank you, Albo, for everything that you have done over the years. I have really appreciated it.

Finally—and these are my final words—I have to say something about Pat Conroy.

Mr Conroy: Don't!

Ms HALL: No, I will. You can't keep me quiet. This is the last time. Pat will be the next member for Shortland, and he will continue to make an enormous contribution in this parliament. Anyone who has seen him operate here will know that he is a quality member of parliament. He is a quality politician; a quality parliamentarian. He will bring so much to Australia. The people of Shortland are very lucky that Pat will be their next member. I feel confident in being able to stand down and not re-contest the next election when there is Pat Conroy to follow on. Thank you, Pat. You are so special. He is a person with the strongest possible Labor values. I know he will deliver to all the people in Shortland and to Australia.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. It has been an incredible experience. I will finish where I started. As I was saying, what an honour it has been to serve the people of Shortland. Thank you very much.

Mr Griffin (Bruce) (17:56): I would like to start by thanking the gallery for turning out in such numbers for my valedictory speech. It is something that I did not expect. I am very touched. I would have to say that, in some 23 years here, it is the largest crowd of interest that I have had from the gallery—other than the time I put a set of sunglasses on at about 6 in the morning. But I digress.

I was not going to do a eulogy, but I am going to do a eulogy. The reason I say it is a eulogy is: I mean, really, what is a valedictory? A valedictory is a eulogy that you get to do yourself. You get to check and see who is paying attention. You get to watch and see what the reactions are. You get to get back at people who do not give you the respect that you think you deserved on the occasion. You also get to go to the wake. So, in those circumstances, this is a valedictory, but to me it is more of a eulogy. And what better day to effectively end a career. Donald Trump is now a serious political figure in America. Surely, it is time for me to forget that I could ever be a serious political figure here.

It has been a privilege to serve, as all have said before me. But I also have to say that it has been a surprise in some way. When I got here, I probably was not supposed to. And, once I
got here, I am sure as hell I was not expected to stay. Back in 1993, I had the honour of winning the seat of Corinella, which was held by the now member for McMillan, Russell Broadbent. I have to say, though, that I did not beat Russell; John Hewson did. And that is the truth. I also have to say that, of all the people that I have served with, or of those opposite in this House, Russell is one of the ones I have come to know, to respect and to hold in incredibly high regard. He also holds the honour, I think, of the best intro. In my time as minister, when I went around the country to various functions, I was introduced by many people—many members of my own caucus, members of the opposition. I think he gave me the best intro of anybody. And I think, also, he genuinely believed it.

What happened after Corinella, of course, was that I got abolished. It was quite confronting because of the fact that I had actually been largely responsible for the Victorian branches' actual redistribution submission. So, if it could ever be said that I did not have much to say about what happened, I think I proved it on that day—and I think others would argue I have proved it on many occasions since. I was then in a situation where I was—to use a term which relates to Trump and the current situation—pretty much the presumptive member for Holt, at least for about 24 hours. Then things went on from there and, as people know, in the end I conceded Holt to Gareth Evans, the then Senate leader. And let me put on record, because I know he does not think I really believe it, I think Gareth was a great Labor icon who made a tremendous contribution to this caucus and to government over many years. I also still think he should have retired then.

Then I went on to Bruce in the '96 election. In the '96 election, as members will recall, things did not look that good for us from a long way out, and I was sitting on a margin of about 1.2 per cent, so I was not planning anything other than 'I'm outta here' once that election was called. Somehow I won—and I still do not know how. But I remember, after the event, getting a range of phone calls from people and catching up with people. One that I remember is Senator Robert Ray, who said to me, 'Fantastic!'—and people who know Robert, and many of you do, know he was very much into football analogies—'Mate, you're a champ. Two for two. You've beaten Broadbent of Corinella. We moved you to Bruce; you've beaten Beale. Two for two. We've got to get you your hat-trick.' I will not use the exact words that I used in that situation, but you will get a sense of what I said. I paraphrase— and I paraphrase politely—'Gee willikers! Robert, if it's up to you and bloody Kim Carr, the chances are I'll be running in Mallee. And I'll bloody well win it.'

Moving on from that, if I talk about the question of my longevity or the fact that it was many times under threat, we come up to 2006 and a situation where the Victorian branch was descending into anarchy. It has never happened before! There was much blood and there was an attempt to knock me and a range of other people off at preselection, and it was successful on a number of occasions for other people. But, anyway, I won that preselection on 50.007 per cent.

An opposition member: Never in doubt!

Mr Griffin: It was never in doubt. It all came down to one vote. Howard Smith, I will always love you. He has already retired; it is okay, I can get away with that one. I might add that Howard Smith did it. I have lost count of the number of people who have claimed it. But I thank all of them with the sincerity with which they operated at the time. But the thing I would say about this—it says something about what it is like being in a marginal seat, and
those of you who are in marginal seats know what it is like—is that being in a marginal seat is like being a gunslinger: it does not matter how fast you are, it does not matter how good; eventually your gun jams, someone comes along who is faster or who shoots you in the back. I guess the point there is that most people do not get the chance to decide when they go and, frankly, I am astonished that I have been here long enough to be able to do that—23 years. As I have said to many of you, if I had killed someone I would be out by now.

Mr Broadbent: You did!

Mr GRIFFIN: Member for McMillan, I tried, but we are both hard men to kill. I am going to jump around a bit because, as I said, I was not going to make a valedictory and I got talked into it. I was also threatened by a number of colleagues. You are just so lucky: 90-second statements today were going to be a rolling version of 'what I would say if I were Alan Griffin', and I decided that I really was not ready for that. So I will jump around a bit.

I want to make a couple of comments about policy issues and some of the policy that I was involved in and make a couple of comments about the time that I have had on the front bench. I was there for a long time and in a range of different areas. I particularly want to thank Jenny Macklin in terms of the assistance she gave me when I became shadow parl sec for health back in '98. I was going to tell the story about how that happened, but I probably won't at this stage—that is probably one for a beer on another occasion! But the great thing about it is: Jenny actually was prepared to give me a very sizeable component of the health portfolio and allow me to do it myself. Occasionally, she would be checking with me about what I was doing but, at the end of the day, she pretty much gave me free rein. And I appreciated that. To be honest with you, a lot of shadow ministers and a lot of ministers do not do that with parliamentary secretaries. But she gave me that chance, and I think I rewarded her with not only my loyalty but also my hard work over that time.

I will focus on one policy issue in terms of that, and that was the debate and the work around the setting up of the gene technology regulation system at that time. The debate on the Gene Technology Bill 2000—and on other related matters, as they always are—was, at that stage, I think, one of the 10 longest debates in the Senate. It was a very complex area. It had those on the extreme left, in terms of the Greens party, basically calling for everything under the sun; those on the extreme right—as in the Hanson party—pretty much asking for the same things; and a need in the middle to try to come up with some sensible policy for the future, and we worked very hard on that. In the end, we were able—at nearly 6 o'clock in the morning, on the day that Nathan Albanese was born, as I recall—to get that bill through. I will quote, from the Hansard, Michael Wooldridge, who was health minister at that stage:

I should put on the record my thanks to the member for Bruce—occasionally in this place you can work together to create a good outcome.

This was met with uproar—from my colleagues. The only one who made the Hansard was Bob McMullan, who said: 'You've just wrecked his career.' I am not going to tell you what Leo McLeay was yelling out! It was very interesting to have that reaction from my colleagues. I do not think it quite wrecked my career. But I have got to say: for a while there, I walked carefully and quickly with my eyes all around!

The other policy area that I will talk about is the one—and I am surprised it ended up being this way—that I am very much identified with, which is the veterans' affairs and defence policy area. I will just tell a couple of quick stories, if I can, about that. I have to be honest: I
never wanted veterans' affairs. I see the member for Dunkley over there—another former minister, a sparring partner and a man I respect—and I think he will know what I mean when I say that, as, I am sure, will Deputy Speaker Scott, as a former minister, as would others who have served in this area. I got the call from Kim Beazley after he had come back as leader to come down and see him, when he was doing a reshuffle in mid-2005. I went in to see him—and I had just been to the gym, so I was standing there looking very seductive in a nice pair of shorts! And he said to me: 'You've been in sport and recreation and, frankly, you're not working hard enough; I'm going to give you a real job.' And I said, 'Oh. Right.' And he goes: 'Yeah—veterans' affairs.' And I will not use the exact words that I used, but I said, 'Oh golly! Veterans' affairs. Ohhh.' And he looked at me crestfallen and said, 'You look disappointed.' And I said, 'Well, mate, I mean, they're really hard.' And he said, 'Yeah, but, you know, it's really interesting.' I said: 'Yeah, but they're really, really hard. These people fought for their country. They have no problem fighting with a minister or a shadow minister or anyone else. A lot of them have had problems, and they're still dealing with them. A lot of them stay up late at night on the computer and can be a little bit offensive. And, frankly, it's an area where there's so much passion and often not a lot of clarity.' And he said to me: 'Well, you're wrong.' Then he said, 'Well, actually, you're right, but I'll tell you where you're wrong.' He said: 'You will learn more about your country and its people in this portfolio than in any other portfolio you can have.' And I thought to myself, 'Yeah, right.' We said we would talk about it again, but we never did. And I walked out grumbling. But I then got down to it. And about six months later, I was with Kim in his electorate and we were doing some presentations, and we were in the car, and I said to him, 'Um, I've got to apologise. You were right.' And Kim said, 'Of course I was right. What was I right about this time?' And I said: 'You said to me that in veterans' affairs I would learn more about my country, our country, than I could learn anywhere else.' And I said: 'And you were right: they are hard work, but it's worth it. It's worth every bit.' I have to thank him for that, even though I think that in the process I probably ended up being little bit typecast.

In terms of working with that community, it has encapsulated to me a really important part about service for the country, about the really great things about our young people, because so many of them are young and the need for us to do what we can to ensure that, once they come back, we do everything we can. You never, ever get this stuff all right; you never will. And there are a lot of misinformed stories that go around about what actually happens. I have to say that, although there are, rightfully, reasons for complaint at times, the bottom line is: this country treats its veterans better—from what I can tell and from what I have seen—than any other country in the world. You never end it there. You always have to work to the future and there is always more that can be done, but, frankly, that is the case.

I met some great people in that area. I still meet them. I still catch up with some of them. I will always respect them. But, gee, they suck it out of you; they make it real hard. But, nonetheless, I am very proud of the friendships that I made over that time. I am very proud of the work that I did in that area. I am touched by the fact that, even now, I still get people coming up to me at functions and elsewhere and basically telling me, 'We really appreciate what you did.' I might add that they say the same thing about the member for Dunkley, and they say the same things about some of the other former ministers that are here today, such as the member for Lingiari.
I want to get serious for a minute, beyond that seriousness, and talk a little bit about some of the things that I hope people will remember. Because, after 23 years, I have worked it all out now. I have got all the answers. So now I just have to explain why the hell I did not do it while I was here—and that is hard. This is something that I said at a meeting that we had last night about the diversity of the parliament and the fact that we need to ensure that we maintain that and a worry I have about whether we will.

I have always said that I think that there are two types of parliamentarians. There are parliamentarians and there are politicians. You can be both, and some have done that. I will use as an example the member for Berowra and also Kim Beazley. A politician, in my view, is someone who comes here to seek to actually wield power. And when I say 'wield power', I do not mean it like it is evil; I mean to actually be part of an executive government and to make changes or to implement the things that they think need to happen for the country. That is their predominant focus. And then, as a separate group—but, as I say, they overlap—are parliamentarians; that is, people who come here and become an important part of the institution in terms of celebrating difference, diversity, issues, being in a situation of getting up and saying the things that you cannot necessarily say when you are part of a government or part of an opposition. They are both really important roles. They are both essential roles. They are both roles that we need to celebrate and maintain into the future.

There is a danger, I believe, in the way parliament has gone over the years that I have been here of a situation where the focus is solely on the issues of the politician. I have been as much at fault in that as anybody, because I have been a factional headkicker; I have basically done what I could at various times to do what had to be done, in my view, to keep things together and to hold it in one piece. I have to say that on some of that stuff now, with hindsight, that I think I have been wrong. I think we need to be able to celebrate that diversity more. We need to be in a situation where we are more able to confront other issues and have those debates. We need to work to achieve those sorts of outcomes. Dissent and discussion—they overlap and, frankly, neither is bad.

I will turn to the media in the context of that because it is actually very relevant. It goes to the question of the nature of how this place is reported and the nature of what that means. I will start off, given there are so many up there in the gallery, by saying that in my experience the journalists in this place are overwhelmingly good, decent people who are trying to do their jobs. That is the nice bit, guys. Having said that, I think that job is made more difficult by a range of things. The adversarial nature of this place does lead us to a situation where we will all tend to put things in black and white and in a manner which actually avoids the grey. That is understandable and it is often the way reporting needs to be done, because of that need to simplify things, but it is not always healthy.

When I first got here, I used to hate the news service. When I say the news service, I mean I used to hate watching the news on WIN TV or the ABC, because you got the Canberra bulletin. You got a half-hour bulletin; 20 minutes were about Canberra and 10 minutes were about Sydney—or theabouts. On the 20 minutes about Canberra: I think that the ACT government, most of the time, has done a really good job, but I do not really care that the Chief Minister of the ACT has opened another toilet block! I just do not think that that is national news, but that is what we used to get at that time. There was no point watching it, because frankly it was all very Canberra-centric. Now I miss those days. I really miss them,
because now we have a couple of 24-hour news channels that are running, predominantly, the same bulletin over and over and over again.

When I was a minister and something went wrong, I would turn the TV off. Normally, I would watch Sky or ABC24 just in case something happened. But when it happens to you, the last thing you want is to have that going over and over again. It is one step off suicide watch. There is a repetitive nature to it. We have lots of programs where it is journalists interviewing backbenchers, interviewing ministers, interviewing shadow ministers, interviewing journalists, interviewing former politicians, interviewing someone who once met a former politician, or interviewing the tea lady. You go through it, and it is all there. The problem with that is that it tends to be very repetitive and it tends to be very much rote learned, and it is a big part of how we now present ourselves. I think that there are some real worries there for the body politic in terms of how we train to actually play roles in the executive government.

I know when I started out in the old days, if you put a press release out, you had to have something to say. It did not get printed, but you had to have something to say, you had to have an argument and you had to present it. Now we circulate transcripts from programs where we are speaking from the lines of the day, and I do not think that is healthy.

Also, we have that whole situation around social media. Everything is so much more immediate. Everything is so much more reactive. It is like we are living in one great big reality TV show. I understand we have to do it, but the fact of the matter is that I do not think it really helps with the debate that we need to have here on so many issues. The other point I would make about the gallery is that, if we went back 20 years, the gallery would have been absolutely chockers, because there were a lot more people employed. There were a lot more people employed to analyse—a lot more people employed to drill down, understand and report the news. I think the situation that many of the bureaus are in now is incredibly difficult. It impacts on them in terms of how they can do their jobs, and it impacts on us in terms of how we are reported.

Another issue is the Public Service. I think we have a great Public Service in this country, but I have to say I worry about exactly how much more we can cut it. I worry about the question: when do we get to the stage where it is efficient and when do we get to the stage that it is deficient? I am genuinely of the view that that stage is coming. There are cultural issues there as well that need to be looked at. I, for one, am not in favour at all of waste, but I have to say we have to be careful about that.

An issue which the member for Berowra raised was around the question of parliamentary committees. I think parliamentary committees are absolutely essential, but I worry about whether we are in fact ensuring they are resourced properly. We have had an explosion in the number of committees in recent times. Although I can see why some of those committees needed to be formed, and they should have been, I do think maybe we have too many committees now. I certainly do not know that we have enough secretariat staff to ensure that they are able to resource them properly. That is going to impact on the quality of reports. There are also impacts on the number of committees people are on and, therefore, how they can engage. It might look good on a CV to have three or four committees, but I do not see how anyone can actually play the roles they need to play in those committees in that way.

The Parliamentary Library is absolutely essential, as other speakers have said. It is an incredibly important part of the support that is provided to members on both sides of the
House. Again, the cutbacks there are now starting to have a real impact, and that is going to have an impact on the quality of what we say and what we do, which will have an impact on the quality of the democracy we are part of.

Enough serious stuff for now! Some fun times. I note the member for Grayndler is present, and I had to say something about that. I am putting this on the record because there are attempts being made in other parliaments, in other places, to endeavour to undermine a great tradition, a great icon. Let me be very clear: the fun faction started in 1996. I have to concede it was his name; the member for Grayndler chose the name. There were two co-convenors, and it is for life—and it is me and it is him. Anyone else is a pale imitation and it just will not work. We spent a lot of time in 'red square' as we called it. It was mentioned earlier by the member for Chisholm. I have to address the question that the member for Chisholm half raised in her speech! I want to make very clear that the fact that the member for Grayndler and I endeavoured to engage her in activities around red square as a convivial opportunity to share time with one's comrades is one thing. The fact that she got pregnant soon afterwards is completely unrelated to either of us totally! But we did have some fun times.

I will give you one story from around that time. Back in those days, we used to have a lot more late night sittings. I remember one night there was an immigration bill that was on. It was probably about 11.30 or 12 o'clock at night. It had got to the stage where the member for Berowra was doing something terrible—I forget exactly what—and a number of us were in line to explain to him, in vivid detail, why in fact he was wrong. I had the misfortune of following on from the member for Grayndler. I came in for his last five minutes, and he was haranguing the member for Berowra, the minister. He basically went on along the lines of, 'I will say this to the minister for immigration and ethnic affairs: I will be at functions in Sydney next week on at least four nights out of five, and on those four nights out of five I will be watching him and waiting to see that he does what he said he will do tonight. And I want to make sure he understands that.' He then sat down. And I stood up and I said, 'It's not often that I feel sorry for the minister for immigration and ethnic affairs, but if he's got to spend four nights next week with the member for Grayndler, he has nothing but my sympathy, nothing at all.' He, of course, took offence at this and spoke to me about it later.

But the funniest thing was a week later. I was in my office and he bounds in with a letter. 'See, I have fans,' he said. 'Here is a letter.' A branch member had been listening to the debate at midnight and his letter basically said: 'Good onya, Albo. You were fantastic. You took it right up to the government. They are a bunch of you-know-whats'—dah, dah, dah. 'What a pity you were followed by that right-wing bastard, the member for Bruce, who treated you with such disrespect. He should be deselected—as some have tried!' Another aside which relates to around that time is when I first became parl sec to Jenny in health. Those who knew me at that stage would know that I was a chain smoker—two packs a day. I actually made some of my best friends in this place in terms of both the member for McMillan and the then member for Kooyong, and also Senator Ronaldson, who was then the member for Ballarat. We spent a lot of time outside airports, outside doors, outside anything, fagging away and, frankly, often solved the world's problems much better than we did when we were in here. The day I became the shadow parl sec for health, I arrived back in Melbourne and I was in my office. I was sitting there and all of a sudden one of my staffers came in. Luckily for me, it was a staffer who just cannot hold a poker face, one of my oldest
and dearest friends, Pat Gibson. Pat came in, but she was shaking as she handed me a piece of paper. I was thinking, 'Sugar, what's this?' It was a press release from the AMA which basically said, 'Shadow parl sec for health, quit or resign,' and a diatribe about the fact that you cannot possibly have a parl sec in the health area who basically is a chain smoker, and, 'It's an outrage,' and all that. I was reading this, and I was going, 'Oh my God, oh my God,' and then Pat just could not hold it. She just said, 'No, it's a joke! It's a joke!' The current Premier of Victoria and the current Minister for Finance in Victoria very much enjoyed that. I will never forgive them.

In this game, luck is a fortune. I have been sometimes lucky and sometimes unlucky, and some of the times I was unlucky it actually turned out I was lucky. That goes to the question that timing is everything in this business. I am not going to name all the ones that I know, but I am going to name a handful, Arch Bevis, Daryl Melham and Kelvin Thomson, and there are a number of others here as well, who never got the chance to actually have ministerial rank, and in those circumstances it was because of timing. And there are many more like that.

Other than that, just very quickly: leadership contests have effectively had an enormous impact on both sides of the House over the years. It has meant to me and to others that we have lost friends, or those friends have taken a long time to be able to forgive, and it has been a cathartic experience all round. I regret many of the things that happened, although I believe the circumstances were that I did what I had to do. But I fully understand why others would disagree with that, and I respect their views. I am sorry that it all played out that way on so many occasions. But I would say to everyone: we need to learn the lessons of what happened, and we need to understand those lessons. One of the reasons why I have spoken about this at times is for that reason, and I think it is important that we do. Instability is not good for the political system as a whole. The way we have been going, I am reminded of the words of Clarence Darrow when he said: 'When I was a boy, I was told that anybody could become President. I'm beginning to believe it.'

Thanks—and I have to be quick, I am told, so I will be very quick—to my family. My three daughters, Hannah, Bridget and Sophie, grew up while I was here. They are now adults. I am very proud of them. It is a great credit to the work that their mother did to look after them, and it is probably no small fact that I was away for a large part of it. That probably did not hurt!

In the Labor Party, branch members one and all are an enormous support. Whether it be the Wonthaggi branch in the early days or right the way through to the branches around Dandenong and Glen Waverley, they have done me proud, and I hope that they are proud of me. People like—and I will only name a couple—Dale Wilson, who was a state member of parliament and very cruelly treated, as an example, and people like Lee Tarlams and so on have been there for me right the way through. I want to mention unions and in particular the old Federated Clerks Union, the ASU and all those involved at that outfit. In this situation I particularly want to mention a handful of other colleagues I have not mentioned already, people like Lindsay Tanner, from Victoria; from the Victorian government, Dick Wynne and Gavin Jennings; and I have to say, from the other place, Senator Carr—although there have been times when he has driven me mad.

Parliament House staff one and all—whether it be security, attendants, cleaners, COMCAR, clerks, the sergeants-at-arms, office staff, library, Hansard—you have been fantastic, and you have basically made this place work. I have a temper, and I reckon I have
spoken rudely to about five of you in that time. That is amazing. You should all be very proud of the work you do.

As I said, there have been some great public servants that I have worked with. I want to particularly mention Ian Campbell, Mark Sullivan, Ed Killesteyn and Bill Rolfe. Bill recently passed away. They are examples of a great tradition. It is a tremendous credit to them, and it is a great service to me.

We have not got time to do all of my staff, for a whole bunch of reasons, but I want to particularly mention Ian Campbell, Mark Sullivan, Ed Killesteyn and Bill Rolfe. Bill recently passed away. They are examples of a great tradition. It is a tremendous credit to them, and it is a great service to me.

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About all my other staff I will make a couple of points. Some of them have gone on to greater things. I mentioned by title Daniel Andrews, who is the Premier of Victoria; Jill Hennessy is the state minister for health; and Gabrielle Williams is the member for Dandenong. None of them have ever done anything I have told them after they have gone, but at least I can drop their names.

Beyond that, Mr Speaker, I would like to note that at the end of this speech I will seek to table a full list of my staff. In order to assist Hansard I have an electronic version. I am just not quite sure that the nature of the parliamentary computer system is such that it will be able to take it without a separate hard drive.

My electorate is a diverse community. It is a community that has struggled in parts but is a community that has always come through. Dandenong has changed a lot over the years. It has, in my view, a good future but it is a work in progress. Glen Waverley is very impressive; I just wished they voted better.

I will end with this: I have found the last 23 years to be at times a great struggle, at times a great privilege and at times too much to bear, but here I am today. As I have said to a few of you, I feel a bit like one of the characters in The Shawshank Redemption: I am about to be de-institutionalised after 23 years. The question will be: can I cross the road? Am I going to be able to do basic tasks? Some have said, will I in fact—

An opposition member: Will you sit in the gallery?

Mr Griffin: No, I will not sit in the gallery! And if I do, people are happily allowed to have me shot—well, maybe I'll go once.

If you look at The Shawshank Redemption and the characters, the question is whether I am going to go and work in a supermarket and hang myself or whether after metaphorically crawling through acres and acres of excrement I will end up in a situation where I smite my enemies. My children, I am glad, think I will do the latter. I was very proud of that until I thought to myself, 'I hope they mean that's because: "Dad, you fight and you always try and win."' I was a bit worried that they thought I had covered myself in excrement too often.

I am conscious of the time, that it is time to go. I am conscious of the fact that it has been a great honour. I thank you all. It has been—fun?

Debate adjourned.
Debate resumed on the motion:
That this bill be now read a second time.

Sitting suspended from 18:33 to 19:30

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (19:30): After seven months of waiting, after months of ruling in and ruling out, after all of that on and off the table, after apprehension and great expectations this budget has fallen apart in 48 hours. This budget was meant to be Malcolm Turnbull's justification for rolling Tony Abbott. After Tuesday night, Australians are left to wonder why he bothered. The same $80 billion of cuts to schools and hospitals are still in the budget. The same cuts to working and middle-class families are still in this budget. The same cuts to Medicare, child care, aged care, paid parental leave, pensioners and carers are still in this budget. The same wrong priorities for Australia. Was this really the point of the Turnbull experiment? Tax cuts for high-income earners and nothing for families—not one cent for ordinary working families and working Australians. From Tony's tradies to Malcolm's millionaires, this is a budget for big business over the battlers.

And this budget fails the test of fiscal responsibility, too. Having banged the drum of budget emergencies for so long, despite all their cuts and broken promises, in the past three years the Liberals have tripled the deficit. They are collecting more tax than at any time since John Howard's last year in office, and yet they have added $100 billion to Australia's national debt. And at a time of falling incomes, flat wages and declining living standards, this budget promises fewer jobs and lower growth. Now, more than ever, we must be honest about what our budget can afford. We must jealously guard the AAA credit rating that Labor worked so hard to secure.

This is why my team and I are treating the Australian people with respect. We are being straight about our plans. We are making the hard choices to fully fund investments in Australia's future to remedy these Liberal deficits and deliver budget repair that is fair—restoring the national budget without smashing the family budget, and building a stronger economy without hurting the things that help it grow. You do not hurt the jobs of the future by cutting education, by cutting infrastructure and by making broadband slower. If there is one fact that defines this budget, this Prime Minister and this government it is this: a working mum on $65,000 a year, with two children in high school, will be over $4,700 a year worse off, but someone on $1 million will be almost $17,000 better off every year. Three-quarters of Australian workers will receive no tax relief in this budget but will disproportionately bear the burden of cuts to schools, hospitals, Medicare and family payments that people rely on. On Tuesday night, the Treasurer said he did not want to talk about winners and losers. Now we know why: the more you have, the more you get; the less you earn, the more you lose.

This Prime Minister has the audacity to accuse us of waging class war. Prime Minister, class war is cutting money from families on $50,000 and $60,000 a year in order to give millionaires a tax break. Class war is cutting $80 billion from schools and hospitals but spending billions on tax cuts for big business. It is not class war for Labor to speak up on behalf of everyone that this government has forgotten and betrayed—women, young people,
pensioners, carers, veterans. Labor will never apologise for standing up for Australians who go to work every day and want to come home safe, who rely on penalty rates to make ends meet, who do not want to be forced to work until they are 70.

This Prime Minister loves to talk about aspiration. But that is a part of it that he always leaves out—the aspiration to equal opportunity, to a fair start for everyone, to a fair go. That is the aspiration that Labor will always fight for. Tonight, Labor offers a more sustainable approach to growing the economy and making the budget serve the interests of all Australians. We will support the government’s modest measures on bracket creep. However, in the face of continuing deficits, now is not the time to give the richest three per cent of Australians another tax cut on top of this; now is not the time to reduce the marginal rate for individuals who earn more than $180,000 a year.

According to a preliminary estimate from the independent Parliamentary Budget Office, this decision by Labor will improve the budget by $16 billion over the decade. Last year, from this dispatch box, I invited the government to cooperate on cutting the tax rate for Australian small businesses to 25 per cent. We meant it then and we stand by it now. Labor will support a tax cut for small businesses with a turnover of less than $2 million a year—because that is what a small businesses. We will deliver tax relief for small businesses representing 83 per cent of all Australian companies.

But billion-dollar businesses are not small businesses—never have been, never will be. Coles is not a small business. The Commonwealth Bank is not a small business. Goldman Sachs is not a small business. As important as they are to our economy, they do not need a taxpayer subsidy which Australia cannot afford to pay, especially when our imputation system means a cut in the corporate tax rate delivers no meaningful benefit for mum and dad investors. The only shareholders who will win out of this live overseas. Labor will support a tax cut for small business but, unlike the Prime Minister, we will not use this as a camouflage for a massive tax cut to big multinationals, and especially when the government is refusing to tell us the 10-year cost of their 10-year plan.

The Turnbull budget is built on a fraud of a grand scale. The Prime Minister knows what his big business tax cut will cost all taxpayers but he does not trust them enough to tell them. Labor will do the right thing by the budget and by families. Labor will not support Mr Turnbull’s 10-year tax cut for big businesses. Indeed, based upon a preliminary estimate from the independent Parliamentary Budget Office, this will mean a budget improvement of $49 billion over the decade: two decisions; $65 billion in budget improvement.

On Tuesday night we heard a few familiar lines. It could have been Chris Bowen making the case for tighter concessions on super, Tony Burke and Andrew Leigh pledging tougher action on multinationals, Michelle Rowland advocating a small-business tax cut, or Anthony Albanese outlining our new infrastructure approach. Never has an opposition had so many of its policies adopted by a government with so few of its own! We are flattered, but there is a difference: we have actually done the work and we have put in the time. Our policies have purpose; they are not optics we converted to five minutes before an election to bloat a savings number. Our positive plans reflect our values. Who do you trust to make multinationals pay their fair share: a Labor Party who made this our first economic priority more than 12 months ago, or a Liberal leader who only last week on radio gave his prime ministerial blessing to tax avoidance?
Labor will gladly support our own clear and costed policy to close the unsustainably generous superannuation loopholes at the very top end. We welcome the fact that, three years after they voted to abolish Labor's low-income superannuation contribution, the Liberals have decided to keep it and simply rename it. Labor's reforms to maintain the fairness and integrity of superannuation, however, will only ever be prospective and predictable so that people can plan for the future with security.

The coalition's changes are chaotic and unprecedented. They were made with zero consultation. They dangerously undermine what is acknowledged as the world's best system for securing a decent retirement for all Australians. The Treasurer claims that only a small number of superannuation account holders will be affected. That is untrue. When the system is undermined, everyone is affected; everyone is at risk. Every superannuation account holder can now only guess at what Mr Turnbull and Mr Morrison will do next. This is a matter of principle for us. Labor have very grave concerns about retrospective changes, which is precisely why our reforms to negative gearing and capital gains explicitly rule out retrospectivity.

My fellow Australians, tonight I also want to share Labor's plans for the future: for a growing economy where opportunity belongs to everyone; our plans for securing Australian jobs today and creating jobs tomorrow; preparing for our transition to a knowledge economy by investing in education, from early childhood and schools to TAFE and university; a health system where it is your Medicare card, not your credit card, which guarantees you access to the treatment you need; for real action on climate change and the new jobs and new industries created by renewable energy; putting the great Australian dream of home ownership back in the reach of working and middle-class families, who have been priced out of the market by taxpayer funded subsidies; and championing the march of women to equality — closing the gender pay gap, properly funding child care and not cutting paid parental leave. A Labor government will ensure there are more women around the cabinet table and in the parliament than ever before.

There is much more that a new Labor government would seek to achieve that cannot be covered tonight in the detail it deserves, but we must close the justice gap. It is wrong that we live in a country which is better at sending young Aboriginal men to jail than helping them finish year 12. We must work to deliver redress for the survivors of institutional child abuse, who have shown such incredible courage. We must eliminate the scourge of family violence from our society once and for all. And Labor will ensure women are safe at home and supported in the courts by putting back the funding that this government has cut from community legal centres. If we accomplish nothing else in our time here but to ensure the equal treatment of women in our society, our nation and its daughters will have a brighter future.

Australia should never accept the false choice between growth and fairness. Each is essential to the other. There is nothing fair, though, about a 15 per cent GST on everything. We remain completely opposed to it. If Australia does not want a 15 per cent GST, the only way to guarantee that is a Labor government after 2 July.

Full employment and creating better paid and better protected jobs is Labor's economic priority. The jobs of the future will be powered by infrastructure in renewable energy. Taking real action on climate change will create new jobs. It will attract new international investment
and power our industries and services. Of course, advocating climate action is hard and running a scare campaign against it is easy—you should know that, Mr Turnbull; you have done both of those things—but delaying action will be a hit on Australians' cost of living, a drag on our national economic growth and an attack on our farmers' way of life. More than this, it would be a betrayal of the duty that every generation owes to the next, to hand down an environment in a better state than the one we inherited. Refusing to act on climate change will leave Australia isolated from the biggest economic opportunity of the next few decades.

By 2030, there will be $2\frac{1}{2}$ trillion of investment in renewable energy in the Asia-Pacific region alone. Australian enterprises should be collaborating with our universities and researchers to design, manufacture and export battery technology, solar panels, turbine parts. These are not niche markets or boutique industries. Embracing clean technology and renewable energy can revitalise advanced manufacturing in our country.

In just the last two years, the global economy has added two million renewable energy jobs, but Australia lost 2,600. The world is powering ahead and under the Liberal government we are going in the wrong direction. It is time to turn things around. That is why a Labor government will deliver 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030. Or, to put it bluntly: you cannot trust action on climate change to a government controlled by climate sceptics.

Instead of cutting infrastructure by a further $1 billion, as this government has done in this budget, Labor will turbocharge Infrastructure Australia with a new $10 billion funding facility, a concrete bank to get investment from the private sector, particularly big super funds, flowing into projects. Instead of taking selfies on the train, we will get new projects underway—nation-building not ego boosting. If we do not get projects up and going, by 2031 congestion on our roads will cost Australia $53 billion. This is why a Labor government will invest directly in public transport—Brisbane's Cross River Rail, the Melbourne Metro, the Western Sydney rail line, the Perth Metronet, Adelaide's Gawler line electrification and Adelaide light rail. That is just the start. This will create a stable pipeline of 26,000 jobs and boost productivity. And the most important piece of infrastructure to any 21st century economy is a first-rate fibre national broadband network. That is what Labor will deliver.

We will create jobs. We will plug us into Asia. We will link small businesses in the regions to the new markets in our region. But securing Australia's prosperity must commence with education. Over the next 10 years, Labor will invest $37 billion to guarantee every school in Australia receives fair funding on the basis of need. We will deliver on the Gonski promise and go beyond. As the son of a teacher, as a father of three, and as Prime Minister, I will ensure that every child in every school gets every opportunity for a great, world-class education.

This is not more money for more of the same. This funding guarantees that schools can teach the basics better, build a strong foundation to inspire a love of learning and impart the skills needed to thrive in this century—coding skills, computing skills, technology and science skills. Achieving this requires more individual attention for every child from better trained, better resourced teachers. This is an investment in our economy, in productivity, in growth, in a workforce ready to win the jobs of the future. But the Liberals mock the idea of spending extra resources on our kids—the same Liberals who have cut more than $30 billion from Australian schools and bemoan the cost! Why does the Turnbull government always look at funding for our schools as a cost not an investment? The Prime Minister has
arrogantly dismissed our policy—the same Prime Minister who only a month ago was talking about cutting every single Commonwealth dollar from every single government school! The people of Australia who pay tax to the Commonwealth have a legitimate expectation that some of that money will be reinvested in government schools to which they send their children throughout Australia.

Now, in the shadows of this election campaign, having ripped $30 billion out of our schools, they have promised to put $1 billion back, and there they sit awaiting the thanks of a grateful nation! But Australians know they cannot trust this Prime Minister on education. And when they hear Liberals lecturing parents and teachers, saying, ‘More money won’t solve this problem,’ Australians know that the only people who ever say this are those for whom money has never been a problem. We hear so much talk from this Prime Minister about innovation, but Australia cannot be an innovation nation unless we are an education nation. You cannot build an ideas boom whilst you are sacking CSIRO scientists, and we will not get smarter by charging university students $100,000 for a degree.

Unlike the Liberal-Nationals, who have cut $2½ billion from vocational education, Labor will make training and skills a national priority, creating jobs in our regions, retraining adult workers, and helping modernise our industries and technologies. And tonight I declare that the pendulum has swung too far to private providers. Labor is backing public TAFE all the way. We will restore integrity to the training system by cleaning out the dodgy private colleges that have been ripping Australians off. In 2014, the 10 largest private training colleges in Australia received $900 million in government funding, yet less than five per cent of their students graduated. Tens of thousands of Australians are being loaded up with massive new debt but not the qualification they need to find their next job.

For the past three years, the Liberals' only response has been to blame someone else. But, at last, Malcolm Turnbull has acted. He has demanded a discussion paper! The Prime Minister may not be capable of making a decision, but I am. While Mr Turnbull dithers, Labor will deliver. A Labor government will cap vocational education loans at $8,000 per student per year. We will cut this wasteful spending, saving an estimated $6 billion over the decade.

Tonight I have outlined $71 billion of additional budget improvements over the decade. These are the decisions that our nation needs. This is what a responsible budget looks like.

In Australia, the health of any one of us matters to all of us. That is why Labor created Medicare. Medicare speaks to who we are as a society, as a nation—a guarantee that you are treated according to your illness, not to your income. Medicare drives economic growth and productivity, keeping us active, healthy and productive at work. It saves employers the costs, the red tape, the hassle of organising health insurance for their workforce. It saves our nation money. It is the most efficient payment system for treatment at the most important time. And it saves families money, keeping down the cost of living.

By contrast, the two-tier privatised American system is driven by profit for health insurers, not people who need help, delivering massively worse outcomes for families, for health budgets and for economic productivity. But this is the two-tier model that the Liberals have always wanted—great for the profits of private health insurers and a disaster for ordinary Australians.
Make no mistake, 2 July will be a referendum on the future of Medicare. In the past three years, the Liberals have cut Medicare, they have taxed Medicare, and in this budget it only gets worse for Medicare and the Australians who depend upon it. This is a budget that health professionals have already condemned for undermining patient care, particularly in regional Australia. It cuts money from general practitioners, the frontline troops in our constant battle to keep Australians well. It cuts money from the bulk-billing for pathology and diagnostic imaging services for Australians fighting cancer.

But the Liberals are spending $5 million on a secret Department of Health task force to investigate the fastest way to privatise parts of Medicare. This is just the beginning, the thin edge of the wedge. The Liberals will not rest until they have savaged bulk-billing and eliminated universal health care in this country. But Labor will always protect Medicare. Under a Labor government, Medicare will be in safe hands and in public hands. We will not support the privatisation of the Medicare system, full stop. Tonight I announce that we will legislate to protect Medicare within our first 100 days.

From infrastructure to health and education, Labor has made it clear how we will fully fund each and every one of our positive plans. We will cut wasteful spending for a stronger budget and more jobs. We will save $1.4 billion by repealing the National's new baby bonus and another $1 billion by abolishing the discredited Direct Action. Paying big polluters to keep polluting will stop under Labor.

And we will not spend $160 million of taxpayer money on a divisive plebiscite dredging up all kinds of harmful prejudice. Instead, the parliament of Australia will do its job and, within our first 100 days, vote to make marriage equality a reality.

Building a stronger budget also demands an honest look at housing affordability and tax subsidies such as negative gearing and capital gains that make the problem worse. These two tax subsidies will cost the budget over $10 billion this year alone—more than this government spends on higher education or child care. These are not tax breaks for battlers; half of all the benefit goes to the top 10 per cent of income earners.

Mr Turnbull has said that this is all beside the point. Actually, this is the whole point. Taxpayer dollars that ordinary Australians work hard for every day are pushing the price of housing beyond the reach of working- and middle-class families. It is those at the top end who receive the higher benefit. It is not sustainable and it is not fair. Labor's plans for a fairer system will not affect any existing investment property—no-one will be left high and dry. Instead, we will redirect investment into new housing after 1 July next year, saving the budget over $32 billion over the decade to help pay for the economic investments in education and health care that Australia needs.

Our policy will mean more new houses, a greater supply, and thousands of new jobs for carpenters, tilers, electricians and plumbers. Back in 1990, a typical home in Sydney cost five times a young person's average income. Saving for a 20 per cent deposit took about three years. Today, the same home costs 15 times a young person's average income and saving for the 20 per cent deposit takes nearly 10 years. Buying a home is only getting harder, yet the government thinks the priority is tax breaks for investors.

Yesterday on ABC radio this out-of-touch Prime Minister stunned listeners by announcing his new housing plan: get yourself some rich parents and get them to shell out! This country
deserves better than that. If the Prime Minister really believed in aspiration, he would support Australians who aspire to own their own home. He would support Labor's policy. Tonight I say to all aspiring homeowners and their parents that Labor will provide a level playing field. Instead of telling you to have a go, we will give you a fair go.

My fellow Australians, in 58 days you will have your say on who governs the country for the next three years. We might be the underdogs in this election, but we never sought to be a small target. We are offering a social and economic program for the betterment of this nation. The markers we set for the future of Australia—jobs, education, Medicare, climate change, affordable housing, fair taxation, equality for women and our belief in young Australians.

By contrast, this budget punishes people who cannot afford it and rewards those who do not need it. Worse than that, it speaks for a lack of vision, a lack of understanding of what makes this country great. It shows that the Liberals have never given up on the idea that it is up to each individual to fend for themselves, and those who fall behind get left behind.

Prime Minister, Australians honestly thought that you were so much better than this, because Australians are so much better than this. Australians built superannuation and created Medicare. We are delivering the National Disability Insurance Scheme. We opened ourselves to Asia and forged a new identity as a leader in our region. We said sorry.

We are a nation the world admires as prosperous and fair; an economy where growth comes from extending opportunity to all; a country where your destiny is not predetermined by your postcode or your parents' wealth; a country where aspiration is encouraged and success is earned, not inherited; a nation of courage, community and compassion.

This is the Australia I witnessed at Beaconsfield 10 years ago, at Black Saturday and through the Brisbane floods. It is the Australia that I have had the privilege of representing my entire working life, standing up for people every day; an Australia enlarged by all who call it home, striving for the best but caring for each other; an Australia of common effort and shared reward. This is the Australia that Labor believes in. It is the nation I hope to lead.

Tonight my team and I offer ourselves as your next government. We have learned the hard lessons of the past. We put forward our positive plans. We are united. We are ready—a Labor government that will always put people first.

House adjourned at 20:02 until Monday, 9 May 2016 at 10 am, in accordance with the resolution agreed to this day.
Thursday, 5 May 2016

COUNTRY STATEMENTS

Wakefield Electorate: Kapunda Football Club

Mr CHAMPION (Wakefield) (09:30): It is my great pleasure to talk today about the 150th anniversary of the Kapunda Football Club, the Bombers, who are from my home town, and the anniversary dinner. In that club I played just a single season of under-17's football. It was a pretty desperate year for the town to have to draft a player like me as I was not the best footballer when I played in 1989. We won one game all year against Gawler Central, so I always cherish going to Gawler Central oval and reminiscing about that single victory. Our coach, Ducky Ryan, talked a bit about that year at the dinner.

The Kapunda Bombers is one of the oldest clubs in South Australia at 150 years. I have a great book by Paul McCarthy, who was my old year 12 legal studies teacher, and someone who, I think, first told me about this parliament and taught me about the way our government was structured. He was something of an inspiration for me to come here, although I know he would be somewhat distressed to hear me saying that because he does not like receiving praise. He and Danny Menzel did a great job on the night describing of the Kapunda Bombers' great history. It has a treasured role in my home town. Like so many country towns, it is the social life and your weekends revolve around the footy and the netball. Certainly this is the case in Kapunda. I lived across the road from Dutton Park and every Saturday morning it was a hive of activity.

It was a really great night with 400 or 500 people at the Kapunda trotting track. It got a bit cold towards the end of the evening but everybody really enjoyed it. I should pay tribute to Matt Ryan, the club president, and to Andrew Hollis-Hayward, who was the emcee, and to the many other speakers on the night. I also pay tribute to Kapunda's greatest football player, Jack Dermody, who is described in the book. He was a state captain and a great champion of Port Power, or the Port Adelaide Football Club as it was then constituted.

It was a great night and it is a great club. I look forward to going, maybe in another 10 or 20 years' time, to another anniversary dinner when we will have even more history to put into the book, First Use of the Ball, which describes all of Kapunda's achievements over the years since it was first founded.

Ryan Electorate: Sport

Mrs PRENTICE (Ryan—Assistant Minister for Disability Services) (09:33): I rise today to recognise and pay tribute to all the aspiring young sporting stars in my electorate of Ryan and to highlight the ways our government is encouraging participation in sport and assisting these young athletes to meet their goals. Involvement in sport has always been a way of life in Australia, but with the rise in technology we are seeing a decline in young Australians' physical activity.

There are a number of ways our government is encouraging active living and participation in sport as well as encouraging assistance for young people to ensure that they can achieve their goals. The Australian government, through its annual $3.14 million Local Sporting
The Champions program, allocates grants of $500 to successful applicants. These grants can be put towards the cost of travel, accommodation, uniforms or equipment.

The most recent local sporting champion to my electorate include Austen Callahan and Ethan Zeelie for cricket; Callum McCarthy, Carly Hess and Jayden Lilley for athletics; Connor Adcock and Cailan Burchmann for hockey, Lachlan Donchak for rowing; Ryan Woodrow for baseball, Connor Leggett for skiing and Dominic Fielden for swimming. Congratulations to these athletes. They are to be commended for such dedication and commitment.

Another Ryan local achieving her sporting dreams is Charlotte van Gerwen, who is with us in the chamber today. Charlotte's chosen sport is diving, and she recently moved to the ACT from my electorate for her father's job, but I am told she will be back to represent Ryan and Queensland next year. Charlotte represented the ACT at the Pacific School Games in Adelaide in November 2015 and was also selected to represent the ACT at the national schools competition. Charlotte's long-term goal is the Tokyo Olympics in 2020, and I wish her the best of luck. We will all be cheering for her.

We have some excellent sporting and aspiring athletes, and the federal government is committed to continuing Australia's reputation as a great sporting nation. We are doing this with two initiatives. The Girls Make Your Move campaign encourages young Australian women to exercise and be physically active, and the Sporting Schools program, which is part of the coalition government's preventive health initiative, aims to get more students involved in physical activity. Many schools in my electorate of Ryan are taking part, and I am sure we will see the development of many more up-and-coming young athletes like the ones I have mentioned.

While we are on the subject of aspiring sports stars, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate some of the members of the Ryan electorate who have qualified for the 2016 Australian Olympic swimming team: Madi Wilson, Jake Packard, Bronte Barratt and Cate Campbell. I wish them all the best for success in Rio.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Landry): I thank the member for Ryan and I congratulate Charlotte too. Good luck to you for next year.

Canberra Electorate: Budget

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (09:36): What Canberra has seen from this budget is what we have seen from Liberal government budgets for the last 20 years. Prime Minister Turnbull's budget for Canberra is one that would make his predecessors proud. He has learnt from former Prime Minister John Howard's cuts from 1996. He has used the disastrous 1996 budget not as a warning but as a template. We face cut upon cut upon cut—cuts to Medicare, cuts to universities, cuts to pathology, cuts to family payments—and those cuts are felt around the country.

But some of the deepest cuts have been reserved for Canberra. Some of the Turnbull government's most significant cuts are targeting my constituents. The Prime Minister and the Treasurer are out in the media telling everyone who will listen that their budget is a plan for growth and jobs. It is a bitter irony for Canberra because, when it comes to the Liberal government's plans for Canberra, it is a plan to cut jobs, it is a plan to stall growth, it is the economic plan you roll out when you have no economic plan.
This Liberal government has packed their budget with gifts for themselves and their mates, and they have asked Canberra to pick up the tab. Once again Canberra is being forced to find billions of dollars worth of savings. Compare this government's record in Canberra to that of Labor. Labor invested in trade training centres right throughout the ACT. Labor invested in hospitals. Labor invested in every school in Canberra. Labor invested in major road projects like the Majura Parkway. Then compare that to the Prime Minister and his Liberal government—the Liberal government that has just cut $1.9 billion from the Public Service. They are not investing in Canberra; they are cutting. They are not cutting fat; they are cutting bone; they are hitting vital organs. But do not tell them that.

The Liberals are out there saying that this is a good budget for Canberra. How they can say that, god only knows. What makes them say that? It is not the nearly $2 billion worth of cuts. It is not the thousands of jobs being cut. It is not the lack of prioritisation of the NBN rollout—where, just 25 kilometres from Parliament House, we have got some of the worst speeds in the country. It is not the cuts to our national institutions. No, they think this is a good budget for Canberra because they had the good manners to include $300,000 in terms of a consolation prize. There is $1.9 billion in savings and cuts to the Public Service, and what do we get in return? We get $300,000. That is the only good news for Canberra in this budget from this government, and they think that that is enough. It is an offensive underscore to this government's persistent hostility to Canberra. It seems that, no matter who leads this government, old habits die hard.

Rose, Reverend Peter

Budget

Ms SCOTT (Lindsay) (09:39): After that very positive contribution, I would like to start my address today by acknowledging the presence of Peter Rose here today. I would like to thank you, Peter, for your contribution and the service that you have provided to so many in the parliament. You will be missed. Your stewardship and your ministry will be well missed here, so thank you for your service.

I rise today to talk about the future of jobs right across our country and what the budget means for the people of Western Sydney and, in particular, my part of Western Sydney, which is Lindsay. Our part of Western Sydney is changing at a rate of knots. It is time for our region to reimagine our potential: what we can be. That is what I think is so exciting about this budget. This budget goes through a suite of infrastructure projects that are going to enable our region to get to its feet and start moving.

Since the Abbott government initially brought forward for our region $3.6 billion of infrastructure, we have seen the unemployment rate of my region drop to 4.36 per cent, well below the Sydney, New South Wales and Australian averages. In fact, that unemployment rate has dropped over the past 12 months by 2.37 per cent, or 2½ thousand jobs for the people of Lindsay. This is great, great news.

The Turnbull government are now going further with our innovation boom, with the way that we are now looking to unlock the potential of the Innovation Corridor, a master plan that really came from the brain of Barney Glover, a brilliant academic and a brilliant leader of the University of Western Sydney, where we will see many thousands of smart jobs move to
Western Sydney. In Sydney Science Park, there will be 12,000 jobs, 10,000 research positions and the first STEM school in the country.

We will be supporting this growth and this development in this budget with continual upgrades to stage 1 of Mulgoa Road, which of course is the element of Mulgoa Road outside Penrith council between Union Road and the Museum of Fire. NorthConnex will move the M1. That will connect to the M2. That will be great for people travelling north. Of course, WestConnex will enable people to get from Parramatta to the city much, much more quickly.

The Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan will see the Werrington Arterial Road built and, of course, the upgrade of the Northern Road from Narellan all the way through to the hospital at the Great Western Highway. The Western Sydney Airport foundation works will see $115 million to start the preparatory work there and the commencement of the rail box so that we can ensure that into the future we will also be connected by rail right across our region.

Finally, the work that this government has done with the New South Wales Baird government in regard to asset recycling will see massive work done to the metropolitan part of the Western Line, which will increase capacity and improve the efficiency of our region. That means you can get the city quicker. That means you can get your jobs quicker. I would like to thank the government for its work, and I would like to see you all out there in hustings very soon.

Budget

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (09:43): It is two days after the budget, and the details are becoming clearer. First of all, we need to note that this government's budget includes income tax cuts that will see income tax cuts for one in five in my community—one in five—but the kicker comes with the cuts to income that will go with them, the cuts to the family tax benefit and the cuts to the schoolkids bonus, which will see those families worse off under this government. Even those families who are earning over $80,000 a year who may receive some form of income tax cut will be hit again by the family tax benefit cuts and the schoolkids bonus cuts. The whole country will be hit by a billion-dollar cut in infrastructure.

This economic plan—as those opposite are claiming it is—is actually going to entrench unfairness for 10 years. That is an uncosted 10 years, we might add. We are calling it a budget; those opposite are insisting on calling it an economic plan. It is an economic plan that entrenches unfairness. It brings with it cuts to health. There have been estimates this morning of $14 per doctor visit. I know how Australia reacted to a GP tax of $7 per doctor visit. I wonder how they will be reacting in their homes this morning when they read that it could be $14 up front to see a doctor, and that is without talking about the pathology cuts and the increases that families will see.

We know it includes enormous cuts to education. We know it includes an attack on Medicare. We know that this government is obsessed with the Americanisation of our health system, and we find this morning that they are going to continue to pursue the Americanisation of our higher education system. These are things that the Australian public has already rejected, but they insist.

I was not surprised this morning to hear that former Prime Minister John Howard had suggested that the member for Warringah would go out and sell this budget around the country. Good luck with that. He tried to sell the 2014 budget. He tried to sell the 2015
budget. Those opposite removed him from office. But now he will be out around the traps selling this 2016 budget that backs in all of the cuts.

There are some this morning who are claiming that Labor is talking about envy. This is not envy, and the people in my community know it. They know that I stand here an advocate for fairness, an advocate for opportunity, an advocate for a fair Australian system that sees every child, in every school, given the opportunities that they deserve—something those opposite seem to fail to understand. Labor will put people first.

**Menzies Electorate: Doncare**

**Rose, Reverend Peter**

**Mr ANDREWS (Menzies) (09:46):** Last week I had the opportunity and the pleasure of attending Doncare's annual community showcase at the Veneto Club in Bulleen, in my electorate. Doncare is the major community welfare agency in Manningham, in the Menzies electorate. It has served for many years the youth, the disabled, the aged and others who are vulnerable in different circumstances throughout the city. It was a pleasure to be there with the chairman of the board, Tony Monley; the director of Doncare, Doreen Stoves; their patron, Rosie Batty; some of the professional staff; and some of the more than 500 volunteers who give their time to this agency. This is a unique agency in that it has a hybrid arrangement of professional staff and many volunteers from the local community who provide their time and effort to help others within the community.

One of their programs at the moment is iMatter, which is a relationship program particularly aimed at young people. Its aim is to help young people to build self-esteem, respect and resilience and to prevent violence and promote healthy relationships by raising awareness and creating change around societal pressures and social attitudes, identifying potential risks to relationships, looking at problems, including abusive behaviours, and understanding the dynamics of what makes a healthy relationship. It was a pleasure to be able to provide some funding, through the Stronger Communities Program, for some iPads which will be part of the training process for this.

I thank all those who are involved in Doncare. I would particularly like to mention the sponsors—the Bendigo Bank of Doncaster East and Templestowe, the Silverstone Volvo dealership in Doncaster and the Veneto Club in Bulleen—who have made Doncare their major charitable activity for this year and, in addition to that, the ongoing support of the Manningham City Council, which was represented at the event last week by the deputy mayor, Councillor Dot Haynes and other members of the council. This is a wonderful organisation and deserves the ongoing support of the people in my electorate.

In the moments remaining to me, can I add my best wishes to the Reverend Peter Rose. I have known Peter for a long time. He has been the chaplain here, as I recall, for about a decade now and will be retiring at the end of this parliament. Peter, can I say on my behalf—and I am sure on behalf of many others you have interacted with over your period of time here—a very profound and sincere thankyou for your presence, for your counsel, for your wise words and for your listening ear on many occasions. Thank you very much, God bless and good luck.
**Broadband**

Mr **MARLES** (Corio) (09:49): I might start where the member for Menzies left off and add my words of heartfelt appreciation to Reverend Peter Rose. I wish you all the best for the future. Your presence in this building makes an enormous difference. Having someone to talk to, and your giving your time, is certainly something that I have appreciated. Good luck.

If everyone is experiencing troubles downloading onto their computer, if it is taking hours, if the excitement of getting Netflix is turning into the experience of watching buffering on their TV, they can all blame the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister was a failure as communications minister, and his second rate NBN is a complete mess. He promised the entire country that the NBN would be rolled out this year, and yet 83 per cent of the country are still waiting for his second rate NBN to arrive. The costs of the second rate NBN have doubled and the time taken to build it has doubled, and in that time Australia has dropped from being 30th in the world for internet speeds down to 60th. By any definition this is a disaster. What in 2013 the then communications minister said would cost $29.5 billion is today costing $56 billion, for this second rate NBN, and the rollout will not occur until 2020.

In Geelong, this is particularly felt given that Labor's planned fibre optic rollout was one of the first things cancelled by this government, and the replacement in the electorate of Corio and Corangamite is the plan for the second rate NBN, for which we are all still waiting. That means that suburbs like Bell Park and Bell Post Hill, in my electorate, are still waiting for the NBN. East Geelong, the city, Geelong West and South Geelong are all waiting for the NBN. From Lara to Leopold, from Chilwell to Corio, everyone is waiting for the NBN. The same is the case across the river in Corangamite, in suburbs like Grovedale, Highton, Belmont, Marshall, and Wandana Heights. They are all waiting for the NBN. What is amazing is that the member for Corangamite is running on the delivery of the NBN. Indeed, a sign she has put up—reputedly, some say, at the cost of a $40,000 a month—in Waurn Ponds, a suburb which does not have the NBN, says that Sarah Henderson is delivering NBN fast broadband to Geelong. That is an amazing statement to make. There is an old adage that says that nothing kills a bad product quicker than good advertising. When you make people aware of that about which they are grumpy, they become even grumpier. What we say to the member for Corangamite is: keep rolling out the NBN signs because you are certainly doing a better job of that than you are of rolling out the NBN itself.

The Prime Minister was a failure in this regard—only a Labor government can fix this and 2 July will provide the opportunity to elect a Labor government.

**Valedictory**

Mr **BROADBENT** (McMillan) (09:52): I am here to place on record my thanks. My thanks go to the transport office, to Greg, Maureen, Joy, Jessica, Judy, Catherine and John. I will not tell you which ones are my favourites. I say thanks to the Reverend Peter Rose, our parliamentary chaplain, who is retiring this day, and to David Elder, our Clerk, and the clerks that have gone before him in my time—Lyn Barlin, Ian Harris and Bernard Wright. I also thank our clerks team and the Deputy Clerk, Claressa Surtees; I particularly thank her for the help she has given me. There are the ministerial staff and government liaison officers; the Whip's office and their staff; the attendants, Luc and his team in the chamber; and those in the Library—angels of knowledge and accuracy, ably headed up by Diane Heriot. There are the cleaners, the gardeners, the catering staff, Tim in the parliamentary dining room, the Hansard...
staff, the telephone operators, committee staff and support, our security team and particularly the AFP.

I thank my fellow parliamentarians—to those who are staying on to the next parliament, and those who are leaving—when this place changes and you leave, the personalities will change and the parliament will change and it will not be the same without you. I thank the Speaker and Deputy Speaker and all the deputy speakers who have given their time and effort on our behalf. My staff, Jennifer and Pru, make sure I am in the right place at the right time in this House—they are angels of my own. Cynthia Cotton, my landlady, has been a special blessing to me for the last four years and four months. She is now moving on to greater things and a new stage in her life, and I want to wish Cynthia all the best in the changes that are to come for her.

We in this parliament cannot do our job without the staff and support we get. I have seen criticisms of the benefits that accrue to members of parliament and the support those criticisms get from around this building at odd times in papers that want to make a push about the facilities we are given here. The facilities we are given here are a real gift to us in that that gift enables us to do our job in this place on behalf of our constituents. We really appreciate all the support that surrounds us.

So I say to the parliament today: I wish those who are leaving—and there is one here today; Jill—the best yet to come for you. For all of you who are leaving the parliament by choice, the best is yet to come. Thank God I was born in this great south land, this great nation of Australia. We are a wealthy nation with so much to give. We have some problems to sort out. Together, in the new parliament, we will sort those problems.

**Shortland Electorate: Medicare**

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (09:55): Thank you to the member for McMillan. One of the issues that I have been confronted with in Shortland electorate is the delays that my constituents have been experiencing with the processing of Medicare claims—or, to be quite honest with you, the delays in actually even contacting Medicare to lodge a claim. When those claims are lodged, a number of them are defaulted. I am reliably advised that 40 per cent of online services are unsuccessful.

I just want to quickly cite two particular cases here. One is Bob Irvine from Swansea. He made the mistake of travelling to the Beaumont Medicare office the day after it had been closed by this government. Since that time, he has been trying to lodge his claim both online and by telephone. He wrote to me at the beginning of April saying that he had great success—he had actually got through to the Medicare line, only to be told, 'We're experiencing large volumes and cannot take your call.' I know that my constituents are not the only ones experiencing this problem. This system is flawed. The system is not working. Constituent after constituent are being disadvantaged. It is particularly bad in Shortland electorate because we have a number of older people living there. It is just totally unacceptable that we have a situation where 40 per cent of all incoming calls result from failure of an online services. I think that the government needs to actually deal with this.

I am just putting another one from a different perspective. He is a doctor who is unable to claim the money that he is entitled to because part of it is private health and part of it is Medicare. He cannot claim the private health part until such time as the Medicare component
is completed. The Medicare component cannot be completed because there are too many delays with Medicare. The system is flawed. So this doctor is missing out on two sets of payment, the Medicare payment and the private health insurance payment, because the private health insurance cannot complete the claim.

I call on this government to actually fix this flawed system.

**Valedictory**

Mr JOHN COBB (Calare) (09:58): To my staff and the various people who have run my office over the years—Ev, Pinky, Melissa, my current staff like Cathy and Gordon, John McDonald, who I had for years, and Bernice, Anthony and Kylie—all said I would never remember them. I remember you.

I also need to say something that I had meant to say when I delivered a report yesterday—that is, how wonderful the secretariats are in the committees here. Peggy and her staff, and Ashley and the rest of them, who were in our secretariat for the environment committee, were just so professional and so good. On behalf of the committee and the parliament, I thank them and their colleagues. I had not actually been involved in committee work for something like 10 years until I took over this committee recently. I had forgotten just how very good they are. I thank them.

In my very first speech here I talked about the injustices done to agriculture by green groups and governments, so I think it is pretty fitting that I finish up the same way. I have long been a critic of what Senator Robert Hill did when he introduced the EPBC Act—not the act itself, but the fact that he misled us to believe it did not give federal government the power to override states in some circumstances. It most certainly does, and it most certainly quite draconian. The member for Watson, in his time as the environment minister, did not make it any less so. With all the state laws we have seen—New South Wales, who went so hard—it is not surprising the current government is looking at making it actually workable for agriculture. In Queensland, I remember warning a mate of mine when he bought country over the Macintyre River. I said, 'If you're going to clear, mate, do it now.' He said, 'They won't interfere.' I said, 'They will.' He did clear it, and he thanked me profusely because 12 months later he could not have done it. In the same way, Queensland has relooked at what previous governments have done and mitigated those laws. New South Wales has to do the same thing.

The last thing Australian agriculture needs is for the federal government to dream up laws to get on top of state laws on native vegetation, because, by God, they are bad enough now. They do not allow agriculturalists to look after the thing they treasure most—their land. There is nobody more interested in leaving the land better than they find it than farmers, who, more often than not, pass it on to their own children. Stand up for them; do not screw them.

**Same, Mr Saul**

Mr DANBY (Melbourne Ports) (10:01): Avshalom Shmulewitz, the son of the Mukhtar of Kastiel, and better known as Saul Same, came to Australia from British mandated Palestine in 1918. His family became farmers in Western Australia, where they still have a property. Later, as the Second World War commenced, Saul joined the RAAF. He was training pilots in the far north of Western Australia when he was called back to his family business, Gloweave, which became the king of the textile industry in Melbourne in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. It
was the main advertiser on *In Melbourne Tonight* and probably the best-known textile and clothing business in Australia of that era.

Former prime ministers have described Mr Same as a man of pure heart. He was a Labor man through and through, who cared deeply for social justice and the less fortunate in the community. He was a man who matched his passion with action, donating large amounts of his personal wealth to philanthropic causes. My dear friend Mr Beazley recently recalled the famous functions that would take place on the Sunday before every election at Mr Same’s home in Armidale, where we all gave what former Prime Minister Keating called the ‘tennis court oath’. In the years before matching funding, these functions enabled the Labor Party to operate. They were never reported by the media, but they were probably some of the most significant political events on our side of politics in Australia. It is for that reason that the very large bereavement notice that I caused to be published was signed by four prime ministers of Australia—Gillard, Rudd, Keating and Hawke—together with opposition leaders Beazley and Crean.

As Mark Dreyfus said, ‘While success itself is not an uncommon experience for those who are lucky enough to live in Australia, success is rarely achieved with such grace and is rarely shared with such generosity as it was by Saul Same.’ I consider myself extremely lucky to have known Saul for the years that I did. He always gave me good counsel, and he did so with a disarming warmth and wit. I learnt a great deal from Saul and I will miss him greatly. For the last 10 years of life, I sat next to him every Saturday in the Elwood synagogue. The wisdom that he imparted, the generosity of his spirit and his stories of Australian public life, business and politics were legendary. We are blessed to have such a memory of a great citizen of Australia. From his service in the RAAF to his membership of the Qantas board, he is an example of the success of migrants who come to this country and put everything into it. *(Time expired)*

**Page Electorate: Casino Beef Week**

**Page Electorate: Maclean Lower Clarence Hospital Auxiliary**

Mr HOGAN (Page) (10:04): Casino is the beef capital of Australia. Others claim it; they are delusional. Deputy Speaker Landry, you are a friend of mine, you are a colleague of mine and you are the member for Capricornia, which takes in Rockhampton—which you unfortunately and very sadly think is the beef capital of Australia. You are wrong and you know it!

Coming up in a few weeks time, it is Beef Week in Casino. It is a very exciting annual event. Celebrations kick off on 22 May and will continue for 11 days with more than 100 events, including the legendary crowning of the Beef Week Queen and Mr Beef. This year’s potential queens are: Chelsea Law, Mikala Thomas, Lucy Amey, Olivia Hooton, Georgie King, Madeline Mayer, Alice Magner, Holly Miller and Angelique Dillon. Of course, there is gender equity with Mr Beef, which will happen later in the week. The fun does not end there: we have Beef Meets Reef at Evans Head, street parades, Breakfast with the Butchers, rodeos, busking, the Beef Week races and the ever-popular cowpat lottery.

I thank the organising committee again. A lot of work goes into putting this event on and, again, they have done a great year. I thank the committee: Stuart George, Frank McKey, Belinda Dockrill, John Hamilton, Grant Shedden, Sarah Yeo, Sam Chilton and Cherie
Holdsworth. Again, sponsors are very important for this too. I thank: the Northern Co-Operative Meat Company, the Richmond Valley Council, the Casino Returned Servicemen's Memorial Club, Westlawn, TURSA, Richmond Dairies, 2LM, ZZZ, NBN, *The Land, The Richmond River Express Examiner* and *The Northern Star*. Madam Deputy Speaker, you know it and I know it: Casino is the beef capital of Australia.

Tomorrow I am attending a Mother's Day morning tea organised by the Maclean Lower Clarence Hospital Auxiliary. This is an annual event organised to give those mothers who are on their own an opportunity to celebrate the day. The women's auxiliary do a wonderful job of raising money for the Maclean District Hospital to purchase much-needed equipment. They did this through raffles; functions like Mother's Day morning tea; and staffing a trolley throughout the hospital five days a week and selling papers, lollies, magazines—et cetera—to patients. They do a fantastic job of helping others.

The auxiliary have a total of 107 members. To the executive committee of Rhonda Shaw, Rita Nutt, Sandra Bradbury, Edie Quick, Margaret Annand, Alida Morley and Janine Adams—I thank you. They have a lot of longstanding members. This financial year, they have raised $170,000; $75,000 has already been spent. The hospital has a wish list, which the auxiliary continues to fill. I thank the auxiliary for their service.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Landry):** I thank the member for Page. I would just like to correct him: Rockhampton is the beef capital of Australia!

**Vocational Education and Training**

**Ms VAMVAKINOU (Calwell) (10:07):** I recently raised my grievance in this chamber about the manner in which some of my most vulnerable and disadvantaged constituents were treated by the private provider Keystone College prior to its closure in February this year. Keystone College was a registered training organisation which was approved to offer VET FEE-HELP funding. Unfortunately, the situation in which the staff and students of Keystone College found themselves in is becoming an increasingly common occurrence. All too often, we have seen private, for-profit colleges spring up only to quickly go into administration, leaving significant numbers of students out of pocket without qualifications and often with large debts. Therefore, it is my belief that we must do more to protect the vulnerable members of our community who use these services. It is also important that we uphold the integrity of the VET FEE-HELP loan regime to ensure that taxpayer funds are used for proper purposes and to achieve the best possible outcomes for students.

I believe the TAFE and not-for-profit sector have distinguished themselves in delivering services to our community. One such not-for-profit is the Meadow Heights Education Centre in my electorate of Calwell, a not-for-profit community neighbourhood house and registered training organisation. It does not offer VET FEE-HELP loans, but seeks to provide affordable training in a variety of courses to members of the local community. It also has offered a range of free services, such as pro bono lessons for adults. In pursuing Keystone College and other for-profit RTOs, it was never my intention to suggest that the not-for-profit community sector were engaging in similar practices by charging exorbitant fees or engaging in ruthless and unethical practices.

The work that Meadow Heights Education Centre does in providing a wide range of skill development, life skills, job readiness and social support is quite clearly different to the model
of a for-profit college that offers limited and narrowly defined certificate courses at a cost of thousands of dollars. In speaking today I wish to clarify the distinction between the recently closed RTOs who were making a mockery of the vocational education system as it currently operates and the community based not-for-profit providers, such as the Meadow Heights Education Centre. Indeed, I will be writing to Mr Charles Cilia, the director of the Meadow Heights Education Centre, clarifying this point.

My efforts to seek fair and quality services for my constituents were in no way directed at the not-for-profit sector, and I look forward to these organisations, including the Meadow Heights Education Centre, joining me in a campaign against abuses and fighting for a properly regulated and well-resourced training and vocational education system which includes a strong TAFE sector.

**Defence Procurement**

Mr WILLIAMS (Hindmarsh) (10:10): This week's announcement of 12 submarines being built in Adelaide is a great result not just for the state but also for our country, and let me explain why. As a South Australian member of parliament I am naturally very pleased to have secured the project in Adelaide, but I disagree with some of the comments from those around Australia that the government's decision to build submarines in Adelaide was based more on politics than on national security and the needs of our Royal Australian Navy.

Believe it or not, Adelaide is strategically and geographically important for our national security, and I understand the experts at the Department of Defence who provided advice to this government know this as well. A series of federal government decisions over the last few decades has helped create a long-term defence hub in Adelaide. We have the established infrastructure from the Collins Class program and the Air Warfare Destroyer program, and South Australia also has a community of defence companies supporting these programs. This is recognised internationally too. During her visit to Adelaide in 2012 United States presidential hopeful and then Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, said:

Adelaide is, from our perspective, one of the great, critical industrial centers in the world, the heart of Australia's defense manufacturing, and a place where American and Australian companies work in close partnership every day.

Given we have this hub of defence industries at Techport, it makes sense for Australia to build on this existing infrastructure for the future submarines. This is acknowledged by international defence companies too. Leading defence companies have said to me that Adelaide has the best defence shipbuilding infrastructure.

An often criticised point about Adelaide is its location and it is argued that it is too far away from our submarines for servicing. Few people think about the strategic benefit of Adelaide's isolation. Having little naval activity off the coast means our submarines are easier to protect when they are going in and out of service, which happens quite regularly. Being able to slip under water in a quiet and unobserved location is a huge technical advantage few people think about.

As to the national benefit, I want to touch on the suppliers around Australia. Most of the work will be done in Adelaide in terms of the build—and many suppliers are in Adelaide and South Australia. DCNS has confirmed that 90 per cent of the build is likely to occur in Australia, and this is great news for the supply chain around Australia. The member for
Canning, from Western Australia, has just left the chamber and the member for Banks is here. Those two states are huge beneficiaries. I will not go through all of the companies, because there are so many, but I will say that a significant number of companies are involved in not only the submarines but also the Air Warfare Destroyer program. There are 15 in New South Wales and eight in Victoria. I know Tasmania builds the accommodation units and I am sure Queensland also has a few quality suppliers. There is also the multiplier effect, which is estimated to be $2.3 billion per annum for suppliers around Australia. Seventy per cent of Australian-made goods go into these projects and also other service industries. This is a great nation-building project for Australia.

Petition: Mobile Phone Coverage

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (10:14): It gives me great pleasure to be here today on our last day of term, as it feels, and to bring this really important matter to the attention of the House. I present two petitions that have been approved by the Standing Committee on Petitions.

The petitions read as follows—

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

This petition of the residents and landowners of the Thowgla Valley and Nariel Valley, Shire of Towong, Federal Seat of Indi, Victoria, draws to the attention of the House: to the need for mobile telephone coverage in both the valleys detailed above. The valleys are virtually side by side geographically, and neither presently has mobile coverage. They are both in a high danger bush fire area. A bushfire can easily cut power and landline telephone services to the areas designated, removing the ability for any of the residents or visitors to monitor their personal safety or the level of danger to other persons and property.

We therefore ask the House to instruct the Federal Minister for Communications of the Department of Communications and the Arts to ensure that the Telstra Corporation installs the facility for mobile telephone coverage in both the Thowgla Valley and the Nariel Valley without delay. In addition we respectfully request that the House advises us, through our Principal Petitioner, when the requested services will be provided.

from 129 citizens

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

This petition of the friends and relatives of the residents and landowners of, and of the visitors to, the Thowgla Valley and Nariel Valley, Shire of Towong, Federal Seat of Indi, Victoria, draws to the attention of the House: to the need for mobile telephone coverage in both the valleys detailed above. The valleys are virtually side by side geographically, and neither presently has mobile coverage. They are both in a high danger bush fire area. A bushfire can easily cut power and landline telephone services to the areas designated, removing the ability for any of the residents or visitors to monitor their personal safety or the level of danger to other persons and property.

We therefore ask the House to: instruct the Federal Minister for Communications of the Department of Communications and the Arts to ensure that the Telstra Corporation installs the facility for mobile telephone coverage in both the Thowgla Valley and the Nariel Valley without delay. In addition we respectfully request that the House advises us, through our Principal Petitioner, when the requested services will be provided.

from 53 citizens
Petitions received.

Ms McGOWAN: The principal petitioner, it gives me great pleasure to say, is Mrs Sue Sullivan.

I would now like to talk about these petitions and why they are so important. The communities of Nariel Creek and Thowgla Valley are in the more isolated areas of north-east Victoria. They are up near Corryong. If you travel south from Corryong heading towards Benambra, in Gippsland, you travel through the Nariel Valley to reach them. So they are right up in the hill country of rural and regional Australia. There are many, many people who live there. There are many people who visit there to visit family and friends and then participate in the outdoor sports that are a growing characteristic of this region.

We have no mobile phone coverage, and we regularly have bushfires that sweep through this hill country. In 2003, massive fires came through there. Many, many areas were burned. The need for mobile phone coverage was then noted, but nothing has happened.

And then, when I went to look at the budget, the Treasurer said, 'This is a plan for Australia,' but it was not a plan for rural and regional Australia. There was no plan for mobile phone coverage, no round 3 and no round 4. So I call on the government to seriously commit to making sure that, wherever you are in rural and regional Australia, you can use your mobile phones. It is not only the people up in these isolated valleys; it is the people in Beechworth; it is the people in Yackandandah. The people in Wooragee cannot even use their phones. We need a national plan, but it needs to include mobile phone coverage so that, wherever you are in this wonderful country, you can do what the people in the city can do, which is use your mobile phone.

Penshurst RSL Youth Swim Club
Resourceful Australian Indian Network
St Cuthbert's Anglican Church

Mr COLEMAN (Banks) (10:17): I am pleased to have the opportunity today to acknowledge the great efforts of the Penshurst RSL swim club. On 2 April, I attended the Penshurst RSL Youth Swim Club's annual presentation evening at the Peakhurst West Public School pool, which is a very highly used pool in my electorate. I presented the Banks Outstanding Sporting Achievement Awards on the evening. The club is run entirely by volunteers—president Ray Roy and a whole host of other volunteers—who keep things ticking over every year. Importantly, the club provides not only the swimming and various races and so on but also learn-to-swim classes for the smaller kids. That is of course so important, particularly in our nation. I want to thank Penshurst RSL swim club for all of the opportunities they provide for local kids, and I look forward to continuing to work with the club.

The Resourceful Australian Indian Network is an important group located in my electorate at Penshurst. RAIN provides a range of support services for people in the Australian Indian community in my electorate. I was pleased that recently RAIN was awarded a grant of $9,000 under the federal government's Stronger Communities Program for audiovisual equipment in its centre in Penshurst. This will enable RAIN to better run various seminars and other information sessions at its Penshurst location. RAIN provides cultural activities, recreational events, information sessions, health and fitness programs and a range of other really important
programs in the Indian community. I would like to thank Sudha Natarajan, the CEO, and all of the other members of the executive committee.

At Carlton in my electorate, St Cuthbert's Anglican Church is a real centre in the community. The church provides not only the traditional church services but also a range of broader services for the community—things such as information on parenting skills, internet safety and a range of other issues as well, run by the St Cuthbert's community. I would like to thank Minister Steve Wakeford for his leadership, and also to Lyndon Mitchell for the large amount of work that he puts in for the St Cuthbert's community and, indeed, for the broader Carlton community which benefits from the efforts of St Cuthbert's.

**Melbourne Innovation Centre**

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (10:20): I want to dedicate my constituency statement to another electorate as I visited the member for Batman's electorate the other day. I was going to make a contribution talking about how good looking, svelte and fun he is, but since the standing orders stop me from misleading the House, they have sucked the fun out of this place. I did enjoy spending some time with Mr Feeney in his electorate. What was especially fun about it was that we got to visit the Melbourne Innovation Centre. It is located in Alphington and it is one of their three locations in Victoria.

The centre has some impressive staff, including CEO, David Williamson, who took us on a tour of the centre, which involved seeing a number of small businesses that have made a great start with a bit of help. One business we saw was Gourmet Lovers started by Theo Arapoglou. He runs the Melbourne business, Gourmet Lovers, which produces premium Australian olives and extra virgin olive oil, and it even secured a $1.5 million with Costco, which is huge. They cover the US, Canada and the UK with those sales. They started exporting to Europe in 2005 and later to Taiwan, South Korea and Japan to access better sales margins through that process. Theo had found that the grocery market in Australia had a lot of pressure on margins as supermarkets went into battle with each other and the retail market became quite different, so Gourmet Lovers, in exporting their products, found a way to become more sustainable and profitable.

We also got to meet Eva from La Sirene Brewery. La Sirene is an artisanal brewing company—you learn something new every day—that produces small batches of unfiltered and unpasteurised beer, which uses natural processes for their refermentation and extended maturation in the bottle. Another entrepreneur we met was Raoul Luescher who is the director of Luescher Teknik that produces carbon fibre bikes. He was employed previously by Boeing and the Australian Institute of Sport before starting his own set-up. He is doing terrific work.

The centre is assisting new, innovative enterprises to create the jobs of the future. It has been operating for 18 years and has become self-sufficient during that time. These are exactly the types of suburban based centres that require more support. They will help people find a way to get ideas off the ground and create new jobs. It is important from my perspective that innovation is something not done just in the inner cities and in our capitals but that suburbs and regions have a role to play. Under Labor's regional innovation fund we looked to promote just that with $16 million to promote these types of centres to get the ideas and the jobs of the future.
Forde Electorate: Community Organisations

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (10:23): I would like to take this opportunity to speak about some of the wonderful community organisations in the electorate of Forde that have benefited from the coalition government's Stronger Communities Program. Firstly, I would like to speak about Twin Rivers community care at Eagleby. They have received $10,450 through round 1 of the Stronger Communities Program to put towards air conditioning of their food co-op. The food co-op offers fresh food and other essential grocery items at very low cost, which provides a tremendous service to the people in our community who are on a tight budget. Their motto is that their service is about treating people with the dignity and respect they deserve and offering a hand-up rather than a hand-out.

People who grocery shop in supermarkets do so under the comfort of an air conditioned centre, so why not the people who work and shop at Twin Rivers Food Co-op. The centre can get quite during the summer and this federal funding will help Twin Rivers Community Care offer comfort and support to Eagleby and surrounding communities.

Secondly, is Calvary Lighthouse Care at Loganholme, which is another great local organisation to benefit from the Stronger Communities Program. Ron and Debbie Hill are two amazing and hardworking people in our community who also offer low-cost groceries, including their popular $25 shopping trolleys. Their next project is the Lighthouse Care kitchen project, which has been given a boost with a $10,000 grant under the Stronger Communities Program. It was a pleasure to announce Lighthouse Care as recipients of this grant, as they are such a deserving organisation. They are currently working on a great project to open a cafe at their Loganholme site, where they will provide support and assistance to those in need. It is a terrific initiative, and I look forward to our contribution giving them the boost to complete the project.

Providing funds over a number of years under Stronger Communities across all electorates across Australia is a tremendous way that this government has sought to support those smaller organisations and groups in our community that do so much tremendous work—work that very often does not get the publicity and recognition that bigger organisations' work does. It is true that the work of these many small organisations across the country allows people who are in need—who need a hand up rather than a handout—to go to these organisations and find support and help. So I commend the work that the Stronger Communities Program is doing across the country to support these great organisations.

Infrastructure

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (10:26): I thought the Quarterly Essay by George Megalogenis was magnificent. In it he said that the country is in an almost impossible position because the Liberals will not borrow money, which means, of course, that they cannot do anything. What they spend this year will be what they spent last year. But if you want to develop a dam or a Galilee Basin or whatever then you have to borrow. A magnificent example of that in the budget was the decision not to give loans for water development but to allow the states to borrow the money, which was very, very cunning indeed. Minister Joyce can run around building dams, but in actual fact the federal government will have no debt burden. So it is impossible for the Liberal Party, because of their ideology, and their lapdogs, the National Party—and I say that with some malice—to do anything.
As to the Labor side, Megalogenis makes the point that, yes, they borrow money—they have no hesitation to borrow money! They put pink batts in your roof; they make improvements to school buildings. It is magnificent stuff for the future of Australia—things that we really need. They have already announced that it is no problem at all to borrow $4,000 million to put a rail bridge across the Brisbane River—

An honourable member: Under.

Mr KATTER: or under. Another tunnel—good! I am pleased you raised that, because Brisbane is the most tunnelled city in the world, per head of population, by a long way. To put it in context, Brisbane has 21 kilometres of tunnels and Sydney, with five times the population, has 14 kilometres of tunnels. If you compare that with London, New York, Tokyo or anywhere, it is the most tunnelled city in the world.

The Courier Mail—and there is a sticker that says, 'Is it true, or is it in The Courier Mail?' but on this occasion I will quote them—said that this tunnel will allow people to get home 15 minutes earlier; that is 15 minutes extra they will get at home. Isn't that wonderful! Well, those are their words, not mine. A few thousand people will get home 15 minutes early. That is what you get for the tunnel—a few thousand people getting home 15 minutes early! (Time expired)

Petrie Electorate

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (10:29): I rise to speak, as the 44th Parliament comes to a close, to give a bit of a personal recap. I want to say to the people of my electorate: I have really enjoyed being your federal member for the 2½ years since I was sworn in. Having grown up in Bracken Ridge, which is one of the suburbs in my seat of Petrie, it has been a real honour to be able to represent people from Bracken Ridge and throughout the federal seat of Petrie. I want to put on record that I have really enjoyed that. I particularly enjoyed bringing the current Prime Minister and the former Treasurer Joe Hockey to a Politics in the Pub event that I had at the Bracken Ridge Tavern and getting those cabinet ministers to mix with the people. It was a real honour. As I said in my maiden speech, life is about relationships with other people, and I have had the great honour of talking to many people over the last 2½ years and getting to know them personally. That has been fantastic.

There have been a lot of wins for the electorate. At the last election, there were three big areas of concern for people. They were around jobs, infrastructure and stopping the people-smuggling boats that were coming in terribly under the last government. Jobs have been a big issue, and I have managed to have job seeker boot camps. I did one just a couple of weeks ago, where we had about 50 unemployed people attend. From that, seven people now have jobs.

Infrastructure has been rolled out, with the Dolphins Stadium—$4 million for that; the Moreton Bay Rail Link, some $450 million; the Bruce Highway upgrades; the Gateway Motorway north upgrade that is happening at the moment; and NBN coming sooner into North Lakes, Bracken Ridge and other areas, which has been really good. The environment has been a big winner, with the Green Army projects. I have two currently underway and two completed. There have been community grants to people like Redcliffe Coast Guard and the Deception Bay PCYC. The Redcliffe PCYC has been good. We have been able to raise awareness about domestic violence. Uptake of solar panels in my electorate has gone through
the roof, as we have promoted local solar. Child care has also been good. We have a lot more childcare changes we want to make if only Labor would put through the changes in relation to the family tax benefits which they are blocking so the childcare changes are not coming through. There are the Boundary Road and Rothwell Roundabout upgrades.

But there is a lot more to do—in relation to tourism, boosting the Bruce, the Bald Hills Memorial Hall, more Green Army projects and more work for jobs. I say to people in my electorate: this budget is about jobs and growth. It is about transitioning from the mining and construction boom to the future economy. Do not elect Labor at this upcoming election, where they have $100 billion in more taxes and more spending, as we just heard from the member for Kennedy. That is all they want to do. We want to get the nation on track—jobs, growth and ensuring that the future of Australia is in safe hands with the coalition. I will be fighting hard.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Wicks): In accordance with standing order 193, the time for members' constituency statements has concluded.

BUSINESS
	Rearrangement

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (10:33): by leave—I move:
	That order of the day No. 1, Committee and Delegation Business, be postponed until a later hour this day.

Question agreed to.

COMMITTEES
	Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee
	Report

Debate resumed on the motion:
	That the House take note of the report.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (10:33): Nobody would deny the heartache felt by somebody who has been dealt the terrible misfortune of being unable to become a parent when they want to. The urge to be a parent can be overwhelming, compelling, all consuming, as I am sure the member next to me, the member for Kingston, would attest to. Sadly, one in six women miss out on having a child, and many of them want to have a child. Nowadays, advances in medical technology have given people options not available even a decade ago. Even so, there are still Australians who cannot attain parenthood through assisted reproductive technology without the assistance of another woman willing to carry the child during gestation and give birth. This is commonly called surrogacy. I took part in the Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into the regulatory and legislative aspects of international and domestic surrogacy.

There are many happy stories of people experiencing surrogacy. They have achieved their dream of parenting through engaging a surrogate. The vast majority of people who undertake the surrogacy journey become wonderful parents with healthy children. They have happy, healthy babies and they are devoted to those children. Sadly, it has been reported that some commercial surrogacy arrangements have not protected the rights of those involved, including
the child, and in others the commissioning parents have not entered into these arrangements with pure motives.

Australian laws struggle to keep pace with advancements being made in assisted reproductive technology. More than 800 children born through surrogacy arrangements have been brought to Australia through citizenship by descent applications in the past five years—meaning that the child has the genetic material of an Australian. This wave is cresting and maybe could get even bigger yet. There are two types of surrogacy arrangements recognised in Australian laws: altruistic surrogacy, where the surrogate is only remunerated for reasonable expenses, and commercial surrogacy, where the surrogate is paid a fee for her services. Commercial surrogacy is illegal in all states and territories. In the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and Queensland, it is also illegal to enter into commercial surrogacy arrangements outside of those jurisdictions. In those states and territories, residents would commit a criminal offence if they entered into a commercial arrangement with a surrogacy from overseas.

Notwithstanding these existing laws, more and more people are entering into overseas surrogacy arrangements. For children born by altruistic surrogacy in Australia, fitting within the state and territory legislative schemes, the Family Law Act 1975 deems those children to be the children of the commissioning parents. Where commissioning parents have entered into commercial surrogacy arrangements overseas, notwithstanding the illegality, there are no laws available for them to be legally recognised as the parents of the surrogate child. The only avenue currently open to them is to apply to the Family Court for a parenting order. However, a parenting order does not recognise that the child is legally a child of those commissioning parents applying for the order. The parenting order would merely convey parental responsibility for the child onto the commissioning parents.

The Family Court is in a bind when presented with applications by such commissioning parents for parenting orders. In such cases, the commissioning parents may have committed an illegal act. The child has been brought to Australia from his or her country of birth. The commissioning parents will be looking after the child but not recognised as a child's parents. The birth mother is overseas and not completely, if at all, involved in the application in front of the Australian Family Court. Such situations are problematic: Family Court judges have been complaining about the state of the laws and the difficulties they face when determining such applications.

Before commissioning parents can apply to the Family Court, they must bring the child to Australia. To do so, they can apply to the Australian embassy in the country of birth for citizenship by descent for the child if at least one person, who was a parent at the time of the birth, is an Australian citizen. This does not confer any parental status on the commissioning parents. There are numerous cases where birth documents have been falsified or do not exist at all.

While the current state of the laws and the obstacles that need to be overcome in order to obtain a child are a problem for the commissioning parents, there are other lives affected by these arrangements that also need further consideration. Surrogate mothers are usually the hidden face of such arrangements. While she has the most important role for the child, the commissioning parents very often do not wish to create a relationship with her nor do they often consider her position or plight in the arrangement they have entered into.
The first question is whether the surrogate freely consented to the arrangement. It is a seemingly simple question that must consider the age and understanding of the surrogate and her overall capacity to enter into the arrangement. An economic imbalance may result in a poor surrogate mother being practically coerced. Moreover, the surrogate mother is also at risk of fraud being visited on them by the procuring middleman. A surrogate mother may be left literally holding the baby during a contractual arrangement.

However, poor surrogates would hardly be bargaining as equals. She would most typically not be literate or have any education. It is reported that surrogates have not been told what procedures are being done to them or how many embryos are being implanted. It is common practice to perform caesarean sections on surrogates so that the commissioning parents can obtain flights at the correct time to be there for the birth. There appears to be little concern about the lasting health effects on surrogate mothers once the baby has been handed over. Once the baby has been born, the surrogate mother's job is done. There appears to be no concern for the emotional upheaval of handing the baby to the commissioning parents. Sadly, in most cases the surrogate mother will never see the child again.

In Australia we would never allow our citizens to be treated in the way surrogates are treated in some overseas countries. Our laws protect the most vulnerable from such abuse and contractual imbalances. While the commissioning parents have made a decision to enter into the surrogacy arrangement and the surrogate mother may have had limited choice, the child borne has had no choice in the arrangement at all.

Three commonly used types of surrogacy are in use: total gestational, where the embryo is created from the egg and sperm of the commissioning parents; gestational where one of either the egg or sperm is donated but the other is from the commissioning parents; or gestational with the use of a donor embryo. In each of these types of surrogacy the surrogate mother has no biological connection with the child unless her egg has been donated. Where the child is born overseas, that child is subject to the laws of that country until removed to Australia. In some countries the birth mother is recognised as being the parent of the child regardless of his or her biological make-up. Where a donor embryo is used, the child is not entitled to Australian citizenship by descent. The birth certificate issued in the foreign country may not always be accurate and does not necessarily help in any application for Australian citizenship. Consequently, the child may be left stateless. Once in Australia, if the child is able to obtain citizenship by descent, the child will consequently have no official parents recognised by Australian law. At best, the child may have parents who have parental responsibility until the child is 18 years old.

The other less spoken of but no less important aspect of children born of surrogacy is the potential for long-term psychological issues. Such children may never know the identity of their biological mother or father or of the person who gave birth to them. This lack of identifying information may impact not only on the child's self-perception but also on their relationship with commissioning parents and others. It could be argued that the Convention on the Rights of the Child supports the right of all children, including children born through surrogacy, to know their biological identity. Along with knowing their own personal identity, the biological history of a child can be important in identifying any health concerns that may be woven into their biological history, into their DNA.
There has been increasing awareness and debate about surrogacy within the general population due to the Baby Gammy case and other reported cases, and there has been an increasingly vocal call from judges to do something about this issue and to do it soon. Chief Judge Pascoe of the Federal Circuit Court has been particularly vocal about this issue. He made a submission to the inquiry and appeared to give evidence. The chief judge has consistently stated that Australia should adopt a uniform approach to all jurisdictions and move towards a model of domestic commercial surrogacy regulation open only to Australian citizens. He also suggests a short list of countries be approved for international commercial surrogacy. These countries would meet a minimum standard of protections and human rights conventions and will share details of the applicants with Australia. If a commissioning parent enters into a surrogacy arrangement with a surrogate not in a short-listed country, then that would be unlawful and the government should enforce the law to prevent the child ever entering Australia. Whilst this would be harsh, the message would quickly filter out to commissioning parents.

This is a very difficult area that sparks very emotive responses from stakeholders. Hearing the evidence was particularly troubling because of the heartache involved from the children and the parents and all involved. The recommendations from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs may not go as far as some would like, but they are a start. The recommendation that the Attorney-General request the Australian Law Reform Commission to conduct a 12-month inquiry into the surrogacy laws of the Australian states and territories with a view to developing a model national law on altruistic surrogacy would be a huge step for those wishing to enter into altruistic surrogacy arrangements in Australia. I know this is an emotive issue but I do not think that our laws have caught up with our technology. I would urge the government of the 45th Parliament—whoever that might be—to consider this more closely.

Debate adjourned.

Standing Committee on Agriculture and Industry

Report

Debate resumed on the motion:

That the House take note of the report.

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (10:44): It gives me enormous pleasure to speak to the report Smart Farming: Inquiry Into Agricultural Innovation presented by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Industry. Our terms of reference were to conduct an inquiry having regard to, in particular, improvements in the efficiency of agricultural practices due to new technology, and the scope for further improvements; emerging technology relevant to the agricultural sector, in areas including but not limited to telecommunications; and barriers to the adoption of emerging technology.

This has been an excellent committee to be part of and I am very proud that we have bipartisan recommendations that fundamentally set in place the foundations for the future of policy in agriculture and innovation for the 21st century and, I hope, for the 22nd century. We have looked in particular at innovation and productivity being the key to growth in Australian agriculture. In Indi, productivity and growth are key to our ability to increase agricultural
production, agricultural manufacturing, agricultural profitability and, in the long term, sustainability for the many people who live and work in our communities and our valleys.

I am very proud to be part of this committee and, in particular, this inquiry as it brings together my interest—indeed, my passion—for agricultural research, extension and adoption and the ability to increase the economic viability of our farming communities and, as a consequence, the economic viability and sustainability of our nation. As a farmer since 1980, I know how important research is. I have always been an active learner and participant in many of the extension groups. I have enjoyed our Wooragee women and sheep group, learning about DSEs, introduction to soil tests and analysis as well as being able to be part of a group learning activity in a community where we actually saw productivity increase.

I love extension. I love the impact it has to improve people's lives, to improve their farming ability and to bring the community together. As a business woman, I have worked with most of the rural development corporations over 20 years. I have had extensive insight into how our research gets funded and how it is transferred to farmers. I have enormous respect for the scientists, the researchers, the extension officers and the people who work on those RDCs.

In my community work, I have worked as a volunteer with Australian Women in Agriculture, eventually rising to become president of the organisation and being awarded the great honour of 'life member'. So I have participated in the organisational structure of the NGO right through to being a representative on many government boards in that position. As a woman in agriculture and as a farmer, I am totally conscious of the importance of language and how it defines our paradigms. I take enormous exception when people refer to 'the farmer' or 'he'. Very few of our Australian farmers are actually 'the farmer' or 'he'. Most of our farms are run by family businesses and they contain men and women and young people. I am particularly conscious of how this language defines our research and development. Over the period of time, my research has shown that we have a bias towards working with male farmers as opposed to the women farmers and young people who are active partners of our farming business. So I have spent 20 years working with the agricultural research and development corporation to, in particular, bring women into the mainstream of accessing knowledge and innovation so that they can be part of taking up those innovations on their farms. So I would give that little bit of attention to the language. It is important that we talk about farming businesses and not just name individuals on the farm. It is important that we be inclusive of men and women and young people and older people when we try and take our innovations onto farms.

The second large area where my voluntary work has given me great insight is as a regional councillor for the Victorian Farmers' Federation over a number of years and, through that, participating in the NFF and seeing how national NGOs can have such an impact on our ability to deliver really sustainable growth on our farms. We are partners together.

And the final bit of background that really adds to my love for being on this committee was as an active member of the group of people who brought together the national strategic plan for rural R&D in Australia. We looked at the grand picture of Australian rural research and development and came up with a national investment plan for what we needed to do to step up to the next stage of development. With that background, it fitted logically for me to be on this committee and to be an active participant in the committee.
Today I am really pleased to talk about some of the 17 recommendations that were made. In particular, I would like to concentrate on three areas where we made recommendations. I would like to talk about the recommendation regarding women and the recommendation about funding of CRCs and the Rural Research and Development Corporations and I would like to finish by addressing my remarks to the mobile phone blackspot program.

There is a wonderful recommendation in this report that I am really proud to acknowledge and work towards, and that is recommendation 6:

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government ensure that rural women’s groups are included in future government-led policy-building activities and inquiries.

In 1996, the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, RIRDC, undertook a major project looking at the contribution Australian women in agriculture make to agriculture. The report, Missed Opportunities, had the figure of $14 billion—and that was 20 years ago—as the contribution of women to agriculture. So it is vitally important that, if we are to have the innovations we need and make the step-ups that we need to really take Australian agriculture to the next level, we need to involve our women and we need to involve our young people. I rest my case there. It is obvious; it just needs to be done.

The second recommendation I would like to pay some attention to is recommendation 9:

The Committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, in conjunction with the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, investigate establishing appropriate incentives for the greater allocation of resources from rural Research and Development Corporations to relevant Cooperative Research Centres.

We had a major discussion in our committee about the role of RDCs and the role of CRCs, cooperative research centres, and how the CRCs can really take us into the next stage of our development. There was one particular that I would like to bring to the attention of the parliament. It was the need for working together for cooperation around our soils. Our soils underpin all of our agriculture. They are probably the most important resource we have. Yet we have no RDC that looks at soils as a whole and we certainly have no CRC that looks at soil. We heard that the problem is that soil is so all-encompassing it is really hard to get everybody to work together.

So my huge call to the people involved in rural research and development is: can we please pay attention to our soils? Can we bring wool, meat, dairy, horticulture, grains, sugar and the rest together and provide a cooperative looking at how we take our soils and our knowledge of soils to the future? This is not just for carbon and the micro-life that exists there; if we could grow our soils we could really grow our agricultural productivity. So I put out a call for a CRC on soils and I really hope that, in the next period of parliament, we can work together on that.

Finally, I would like to talk about recommendation 2:

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government commit to the continuation of the Mobile Black Spot Programme beyond the second round, and that the Department of Communications and the Arts consider changes or additions to the selection criteria to capture the telecommunications requirements of agricultural activity.

Here I am scathing of the government and I am scathing of the budget that came down on Tuesday night. The Treasurer, Scott Morrison, got up and said that he has a plan for Australia. Well, he might have a plan for Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and South Australia and he
might have a plan for defence, but he certainly did not bring down a plan for regional Australia. The absolute effrontery of not having money in that budget for the continuation of delivering mobile phone coverage to rural and regional Australia is something to absolutely ashamed of.

So, Scott Morrison, I call on you to do something about this. Prime Minister, you were in charge of communications and you understand how important mobile phone coverage is. It is not an add-on; it is not an additional extra. We need mobile phone coverage in rural Australia and we need it for agriculture. So I call on my government colleagues here—I call on all of you people who live in rural Australia: pay attention to what needs to be done. We need rounds 3, 4, 5 and 6, until wherever you are in rural Australia you can use your mobile phone to do the business of this country. That is so absolutely urgently needed.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (10:55): I move:

That the Federation Chamber do now adjourn.

Health Care

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (10:55): We are on the eve of an election and a lot of issues will be discussed during the election period. I have put on record in this place many times the stark difference between Labor and the coalition when it comes to education. Today I want to put on record the stark difference when it comes to health care. In my first speech in this place I talked about the importance of money not determining what level of health care you get in this country. It seems that what I spoke about nine years ago will be a matter for debate in this election. It seems that the government is slowly walking away from the concept of universal health care. That was on stark display in the budget—the government is now planning to freeze Medicare rebates, which is really a GP tax by stealth. Reports today suggest there will be a $14 out-of-pocket expense for those who are currently bulk-billed, and for those who are already paying a gap one would assume that that $14 will be put on top of the out-of-pocket expenses already incurred. We are starting to see very much that the out-of-pocket expenses are going to be more than the Medicare rebate, which suggests that there is no real concept of universal health care anymore in this country.

Late last year the MYEFO also included savage cuts to Medicare, particularly removing the bulk-billing incentive to pathology and diagnostic tests. That was incredibly short-sighted. Diagnostic and screening tests are all about prevention. Making those diagnostic tests more expensive would mean that people could delay getting these really important tests. Of course if you delay those tests, in the case of, for example, ovarian cancer, it could have deadly consequences—not to mention the increased costs to our medical system when individuals might have to go through extensive, invasive surgery and more longer term cancer management treatment as well. It is very short-sighted.

Today I want to touch on the impact that removing the bulk-billing incentive payments has on women's health. That has been raised a number of times with me. Removing the bulk-billing incentive for diagnostic tests will mean that mammograms will be more expensive, ultrasounds will be more expensive, pap smears will be more expensive. All of these have an impact on the availability of services particularly for women. As I said, these will lead to
either higher out-of-pocket costs or, more importantly, women putting these tests off—which will, as I said, have deadly consequences. This will be a cost burden that will affect women in particular.

The message has been coming to me loud and clear, and grassroots women's movements in South Australia have been getting more and more angry about these cuts. In particular, one of the groups—the Labor Women's Network—has put out this excellent poster sending a message to Malcolm Turnbull, 'Women's health is not for sale.'

Ms RISHWORTH: This is a very important message. Women's health is not for sale, Malcolm Turnbull. They are running a very strong campaign.

I would like to put on the record my thanks to Emily Bourke, Tess Farell and Georgie Bah, who worked on this campaign. They were motivated by these cuts, and they said, 'Enough is enough.' They are all mothers and activists in this area, and they said, 'Enough is enough.' We need to put a spotlight on what these cuts mean for women. They are running a campaign that has been taken up nationally. This will be an issue that I will be talking about, as I know all of my Labor colleagues will be. Women's health—and, indeed, the health of Australians—is not for sale. Malcolm Turnbull and his government need to bring back universal health care in this country, not walk away from it. (Time expired)

Banks Electorate: Community Organisations

Mr COLEMAN (Banks) (11:00): Recently, I attended the Oatley Bay Sea Scouts located in my electorate. It is a tremendous group. It is a very active group, with dozens of kids involved in scouting, cubs and other activities. Because, as the name suggests, they are located on the bay, the kids have the good fortune of being involved in not just the traditional scouting activities but also canoeing, kayaking and a range of other water-based activities, as well. On the night I attended, the group was practising various emergency scenarios—what to do and how to help in different emergencies. It was good to see them having fun and learning a lot at the same time. I would like to thank Mark Connell, the group leader, John Vickery, the cub leader, and also Jen Attard, the scout leader, for having me along on the evening. It is a beautiful location where Oatley Bay Sea Scouts conduct their activities. It is great to see such an enthusiastic and strong group of kids getting involved in the scouting movement.

On Good Friday this year, I attended the Good Friday liturgy at St Charbel's Church in Punchbowl. I have attended this service over a number of years in recent times. I thank the Maronite community for the invitation to attend these important services. The Good Friday service at St Charbel's in Punchbowl is traditionally attended by thousands of people who practise the Maronite Catholic faith. I was, again, very privileged to attend this year. I would like to thank Father Joseph Sleiman for all of his leadership of the St Charbel's community and, also, Bishop Antoine Tarabay, the national leader of the Lebanese Maronite Church in Australia, for the many great works that they do in the broader Sydney community.

Earlier in the year, I attended the opening of the Oatley War Memorial outside Oatley Public School. This memorial had, in fact, been in place for some decades. But, in recent times, it had fallen into a state of disrepair, with shrubbery and so on growing over the memorial. A number of people in the local community decided that that was not good enough. They decided that the memorial should be reinvigorated and reopened to commemorate the
sacrifices of Oatley residents in war. The Oatley Heritage and Historical Society did a lot of work on the history of the memorial. Oatley Public School played a very important role in putting together all the necessary documentation to make the memorial reopening proposal a reality. I am pleased that the federal government was able to provide a Saluting Their Service grant to assist in this project. I would very much like to thank all the people who were involved. On the day, the Oatley Public School captains Anna Sheehan and Jackson Ryan spoke with great reverence about the sacrifices of soldiers, particularly in World War I. I would like to thank them for their contribution. I would like to thank Principal Debbie Hunter and Ros Ingram from Oatley Public School, Bill Wright from the Oatley RSL Sub-Branch and Kim Wagstaff and Rodger Robertson from the Oatley Heritage and Historical Society. The reopening of the memorial is a great example of what can be done when communities come together to make good things happen.

Recently, I attended the 1st Padstow Heights Scout Group—a very active group with a long and proud history in the Padstow area. They are involved in all of the traditional Scouting activities, such as bushwalking and learning survival skills and so on. There are a number of issues about the amenity of the Scout Hall at Padstow Heights and its surrounds, and I am certainly seeking to assist the Scouting movement in addressing those concerns with the local council. I would like to thank James Sillato, the group leader, for inviting me along on the evening, and all of the other parents who do so much work to make Padstow Heights Scouts such a successful group in our local community.

**Bushfires**

**Petition: Mobile Phone Coverage**

Mr CHAMPION (Wakefield) (11:05): I have spoken in this chamber before about the terrible situation of the Pinery bushfires, and in 2015 I and my electorate started the year with bushfires in Sampson Flat and devastating bushfires through One Tree Hill in the Adelaide Hills, and we ended the year, very sadly, with the fire in Pinery and Mallala, which had its epicentre, really, in places like Wasleys, Hamley Bridge, Owen and the Pinkerton Plains. When you went out to these communities just after the fire, you saw the intensity of the fire. It was literally like a moonscape out in these communities. The fires had burned so hot that everything was gone—fence posts, fencing and every bit of crop. Quite often the loam had burnt out of the soil and there was nothing but sand left at the side of the road. So it really was quite the dystopian vision. And obviously there were very devastating losses of stock and to farming communities and farming families, and, tragically, there was loss of human life and there was injury.

Today I rise to present the petition by the community of Wasleys in South Australia regarding poor mobile phone coverage, which they have had to endure prior to this issue, but of course not having mobile phone coverage during the period of the fire did present a number of issues. There are many people who have spoken to me—including Mo Shepherd, who is a pillar of the community out there, and Stella Bliss, who is the principal petitioner in this petition—about the fact that not having very good mobile phone coverage exacerbated some of the evacuation issues that were experienced on the day. Often messages were not received at all. Sometimes they were received late. And, tragically, receiving messages late, in an untimely fashion, with a fire like this—a fire which burned so quickly, and had a front, at one point, of 50 to 60 kilometres, and which changed direction, and burnt with an intensity that
had not been experienced in living memory on the Adelaide Plains and in the mid-north—
exacerbated issues. Certainly it opened all of our eyes to the interaction between mobile
phone and internet communications. Obviously we rely on those things in all of our
communities, and we rely on them to give us timely information, but in this situation we
learned that there were some issues with that reliance on technology.

So I present this petition, which has been approved by the Petitions Committee.

The petition read as follows—

This petition of the community of Wasleys, South Australia draws to the attention of the House:
inadequate mobile phone coverage within the township of Wasleys which resulted in a crisis situation
due to poor mobile phone coverage during the Pinery bushfire of 25 November, 2015.

We therefore ask the House to: provide funding for the upgrade of telecommunications infrastructure
for the township of Wasleys under the Federal Government’s Round 2 of the Mobile Black Spot
Programme.

from 769 citizens

Petition received.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Wicks): There is a division in the House, but please
continue, Member for Wakefield.

Mr CHAMPION: Notwithstanding the issue of the division bells—and they are going
off, on and off—in presenting this petition I would just say: this is a very important issue for
my electorate.

A division having been called in the House of Representatives—

Sitting suspended from 11:10 to 11:34

Mr CHAMPION: It gives me great pleasure to return to the subject of the Pinery
bushfires, which devastated my local community out there in the Adelaide plains in the mid-
north. Many of the people I grew up experienced loss in this fire. They were farm lads back in
the day but now they are farm owners out at Freeling and places like that.

Before the suspension I was talking about mobile phone communications on the day.
Messages arrived late, and often those messages were about evacuation points and where to
evacuate to. Obviously that is a very serious issue. This petition calls for new towers at
Wasleys, Hamley Bridge and Roseworthy to ensure mobile phone communications in this
area. This area, which is not that far from Adelaide, deserves modern telecommunications.
This fire certainly highlighted that need, and I have been writing to the Prime Minister and
also to the Premier and the state Treasurer about properly funding mobile phone
communications out in this region. In the wake of these terrible fires—we are now five
months on from them—the need is still there and the communities look to their governments
for a sign that we are listening to them and that we are prepared to commit to local
infrastructure which will improve their communities.

Tasmania

Mr HUTCHINSON (Lyons) (11:35): In what will possibly be my last contribution in this
parliament, I would like to go back over the last three years and some of the things I have
been able to achieve for not only my electorate but the state of Tasmania, which is in a much
better state than it was three years ago. When we came to government, unemployment had an
eight in front of it in Tasmania. We still have more work to do, but today it has a six in front of it. Business confidence was low. A major driver in the Tasmanian economy had been smashed thanks to the Labor/Green double whammy of Hobart and Canberra working in tandem to shut down the forest industry in Tasmania. We have supported and enabled growth again in that sector, and Tasmania's business confidence now is amongst the highest in the nation. Last week Minister Greg Hunt announced that Warwick Smith, the former member for Bass, will do a feasibility study on the capacity for and the benefits of a second interconnector to be built between Tasmania and Victoria. This will enable investment—whether it be in tourism, agriculture, aquaculture or energy—to flow into Tasmania and also will provide a greater degree of energy security. Tasmania is a leader in renewable energy in this country, producing 40 per cent of Australia's renewable electricity.

Over the last three years we have had the nation's single biggest infrastructure investment—$50 billion around the country—and Tasmania has benefited substantially as a result of that commitment. The rollout of the Mobile Black Spot Program has seen 19 new phone towers committed to in the first round in my electorate of Lyons. Some of those are about to begin construction, which is great news for those communities which have poor or no mobile phone coverage. There has been investment in roads, whether it be at a local level through the Black Spot Program, whether it be through the Roads to Recovery Program or whether it be through more substantial projects such as upgrades of the Bass Highway and the 10-year action plan to upgrade Tasmania's major arterial, the Midland Highway. The expansion and improvement to the rail network in Tasmania is very important in moving freight around and keeping some of that heavy traffic off Tasmania's roads.

The expansion of the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme was a major initiative for our state, and this came on the back of the decisions that were made by those opposite in their time in government, when they changed the coastal shipping legislation. That had a terrible impact on our state. We lost our only international shipping service as a result of that and therefore the cost of moving freight to and from Tasmania went up, in some cases by as much as 60 per cent. The Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme expansion to exports was a welcome, but not total, fix of the damage that previously had been done under Labor.

The investment in irrigation is an enabler for so many communities in my electorate. It is not just about the investment that farmers are making; it is about the investment that is occurring in those regional communities that will benefit businesses and employment in those regions and make things such as schools and businesses more sustainable in local towns.

We have embarked on a second phase of that and we are continuing our plan to develop a stronger, more diversified economy, and that was the document, the plan, that was released on Tuesday night. It is about investing in the National Innovation and Science Agenda to support new start-up businesses. It is about using and leveraging off the procurement that will result from defence spending. Indeed, in my electorate, One Atmosphere at Eaglehawk Neck and the Defence Science and Technology Group facility up at Scottsdale are examples of where Tasmania can benefit from that.

Of course, the free trade agreements have been a wonderful thing for Tasmania, and I think Tasmania has captured and imagined the opportunity that exists to our north perhaps better than some other parts of the country. The tax cuts are also a huge boost to small and medium businesses in our state. We have fewer big businesses in Tasmania. We have more small
businesses by proportion, and the extension of the tax cut—a 2½ per cent tax decrease—from businesses with a $2 million turnover to those with a $10 million turnover is significant.

**Budget**

Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (11:40): The coalition government's budget has put higher income earners and big business ahead of vulnerable older Australians. The Prime Minister, when he came to power, usurping the member for Warringa, promised fairness, but this budget is fundamentally unfair to older Australians. The budget gives tax cuts to the big end of town at the cost of $1.2 billion to aged-care services for older Australians. These savage cuts will hit older Australians in residential aged-care facilities the hardest, with a 50 per cent cut to the indexation of complex healthcare subsidies.

The Prime Minister's budget is also telling for what it omits. The budget has failed to provide any direction for the future of aged-care reforms, and I really must question whether the minister has read the aged-care road map that it took her months and months to discover somewhere in the bowels of her office here in Canberra after it had been delivered to her by the committee inquiring into the aged-care sector. Once again, the budget has failed the 353,000 Australians living with dementia. While the Prime Minister has plans for the top end of town, he has no interest in addressing what is the second-leading cause of death in the country. There is no funding in the budget whatsoever for an aged-care workforce strategy nor even any mention of an aged-care workforce strategy. There is no plan at all in the budget for an age friendly Australia, even though this is world's best practice adopted by the WHO.

When this government came to power, one of their first acts was to get rid of the aged care workforce supplement, which was addressing problems in terms of development of an aged-care workforce. We are going to need to treble this workforce in the next few decades. Then, after slashing that funding, putting it back in and seeing no appreciable difference in terms of the development of a workforce, they cut the funding for dementia and severe behaviours, a supplement which we had provided. Then they cut the aged care payroll tax supplement, which was directly affecting the for-profit providers. They cut 15 per cent out of the budget last time for the development of workforce. Then they rebadged and put together health and aged-care workforce development and, in MYEFO, cut $595 million. Then, in MYEFO, they cut $472 million for complex needs. Now, in this budget, they have cut another $1.2 billion. What does it say about the coalition's attitude to older Australians that they have inflicted $3.1 billion in cuts in three years for services and residential home care, Commonwealth home support and dementia funding for older Australians?

Leading Age Services Australia spokesperson Beth Cameron said that the additional $1.2 billion in cuts to direct care services reveals that the Turnbull Government and Minister Ley are in denial about the true cost of providing complex care to older Australians. ACSA—Aged and Community Services Australia—said in their press release that last night's budget was:

... lackluster for aged care with the most significant announcement being a downgrade in funding to counteract higher than anticipated growth in expenditure.

... ... ...
ACSA is disappointed there was no substantial commitment to the implementation of any aspect of the Aged Care Roadmap which proposed freeing up supply …

Alzheimer's Australia, disappointed again, said:

Tonight's Federal Budget contains no new major policies or programs that would significantly improve the lives of the more than 353,000 Australian's living with dementia and their carers.

What a disgrace this government is with respect to older Australians. It will take the election of a federal Labor government under Bill Shorten to address issues in relation to aging and aged care, to show some vision for this country—(Time expired)

Hindmarsh Electorate: Stronger Communities Program

Mr WILLIAMS (Hindmarsh) (11:45): In the Hindmarsh electorate, I am pleased to be able to work with local community groups regularly, whether it be attending their events or providing support through federal government programs and sponsorships. For Hindmarsh, the Stronger Communities Program has been extremely helpful in providing assistance to clubs and organisations looking to improve facilities and amenities for the benefit of their members and the wider community. I am always visiting the local groups in the electorate to meet the members, present Australian volunteer recognition certificates and witness firsthand the federal funding that is helping to grow clubs and organisations.

Today I want to speak about a few of these major initiatives. The Edwardstown Bowling Club is one group that I have been pleased to see benefit from the Stronger Communities Program in round one, receiving over $9,000 to support the upgrade of the current lights on the green, allowing members to play well into the evening, especially in winter. I have also supported the bowling club with a ramp so that some of their members with movement challenges can reach the green and play to the best of their ability. That disabled access ramp is proving a great win for the local club. On a broader scale, the redevelopment of the Edwardstown sport complex is something that I have worked hard on with local councillors and others to try to get a good outcome for the local community and have better facilities in the future.

The Adelaide Sailing Club has received nearly $10,000 to upgrade its outdoor amenities. Having attended the sailing club opening days for a number of years, I can see that it is a great place for the club members and others in the community to get involved, whether it be sailing or just enjoying a fine meal down there by the water.

West Beach Surf Life Saving Club is a club I have a lot of familiarity with. It is just down the road and is where my children go to engage in the Nippers program. It is receiving some federal funding which will help the club patrol the beach for many years to come, ensuring that its emergency service products remain safe and in good order. The West Beach Surf Life Saving Club does a great job on many fronts. The Pink Swim for the Breast Cancer Foundation is just one of those.

Other clubs that have been supported include the Glenelg Lacrosse Club—and I congratulate Steve Mortimer and his team on the lighting upgrade at Barratt Reserve at West Beach—and the Glenelg Brass Band, who I saw on the weekend. Bob Owen does a great job of ensuring that they have the necessary upgrades to their musical instruments—which is great—and they had many members of the public there supporting them on a Sunday afternoon. St Michael and All Angels Netball Club recently saw the Adelaide Thunderbirds
netball team train. I congratulate George from Kalymnos Pastries, who helped facilitate that with me and the Thunderbirds. Thanks to everyone involved. It was great to see the girls learn from some of the best netballers in Australia.

Others to receive funding include the Glenelg Bowing Club, for a kitchen upgrade; the Coptic orthodox church, for the insulation of its community hall; and the Rotary Club of West Lakes, which is working with the local council for a playground down at West Lakes reserve. In addition to this project, I understand that the Rotary Club of West Lakes is working with other Rotary Clubs—Henley or Kidman Park—on the carousel down at Semaphore Park, which provides great enjoyment for local families, especially children, on many weekends and school holidays. The Adelaide University Hockey Club received almost $9,000 for a upgrade of their facilities. Funds went to Henley Football Club, one of the great strong local amateur clubs in the South Australian Amateur Football League; Fulham United Football Club, for another lighting upgrade for their facilities; and the soccer clubs around the districts, which are expanding in great numbers with more young girls, in particular, and young boys playing. They need support to upgrade their facilities. As we know, sporting clubs and registrations are becoming more expensive, so it is great that the federal government can get behind those clubs and help support them to improve their facilities. The Messinian Association of South Australia Inc. and the soccer club that plays at King's Reserve at Thebarton are also receiving an upgrade to their kitchen.

So it is a great program, and there are so many great local organisations that are receiving benefits. They have worked hard. They have worked well with me and my independent panel to determine who receives support. I congratulate them all for the fine work they do on behalf of the community and wish them all the best for their work in the future.

Holt Electorate: Stronger Communities Program

Mr BYRNE (Holt) (11:50): I rise also to speak about the Stronger Communities grant program, which has provided much-needed funding to local organisations in my federal electorate. The Holt Stronger Communities Program aims to support local community groups and sporting organisations to provide funding for projects that would improve local community participation and cohesion and contribute to vibrant and viable communities. Each project was considered by our Holt Stronger Communities grant committee. I would like to thank the members—Leanne Petrides, from the Cranbourne Information & Support Service; Amanda Carron; Barry Rogers; Judy Owen; and Stephen Hallett—for volunteering their time and assisting very assiduously in the assessment of each of the grants.

In round 1 of the Holt Stronger Communities grant applications that were submitted last year we had five projects approved by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development. One of the grants that was approved was for $12,465 for the Narre Warren State Emergency Service unit. This is a very busy emergency service unit. The Victoria SES Narre Warren received a grant to fund a kitchen replacement. This project will replace the existing kitchen area and will include the installation of new sinks, taps and wall units. The grant will assist the SES to increase the internal space in key areas of the building and provide a safer working area to cook and prepare meals.

This grant is a welcome funding boost for the Narre Warren SES, particularly given—as I said—the amount of work that they do. For example, in the recent severe weather events in Melbourne, they had 170 call-outs around the Narre south area on Saturday night. Another
example is when we had the Hampton Park floods in 2011, when we had 600 residences flooded, and we had 735 call-outs. They are a very, very busy organisation, full of good volunteers who do the necessary work to support and keep our community safe.

Another successful recipient was the Nanaksar Thath Sikh Temple in Lynbrook, which received over $5,000 to establish and to furnish a new community centre. This will include the purchase of new tables and chairs, laptops and shelves. This community centre aims to equip the local migrant community, not just the Sikh community, with the tools and skills required to integrate with Australia's way of life whilst maintaining a connection with the faith and the culture of the Sikh community and the migrant communities that access this particular facility.

The Sikh temple plans to conduct information sessions in the community centre to educate migrants in how they can contribute to the wider society—these are their words—in a positive way as citizens, parents and individuals. As English is not the first language of many migrant families, English language and other lessons will provide essential skills to navigate day-to-day life and also help navigate through the sometimes byzantine and complex systems of government agencies. I want to congratulate the Nanaksar Thath Sikh Temple on receiving this grant.

The Casey Life Church in Hampton Park, served beautifully well by pastors Graham and Julie Shand, also received $8,863 in a grant for the purchase of equipment to assist in conducting iconic community events like the annual Hampton Park Carols by Candlelight. This event started small, but last year we would have had about 5,000 to 6,000 people attending. It is because of the work of the Casey Life Church that we are getting that building of the community in the Hampton Park area, which has taken a number of hits over the past six to seven years. They will be given funding for the project to upgrade their existing sound system, amps and audiovisual equipment, including the purchase of a digital sound desk, amplifier, wireless microphones and related equipment. They are a very deserving group of people.

In addition, the St Paul Apostle Catholic Church has received a $5,000 grant for upgrading their kitchen and meeting room appliances. This project will entail the purchase of a new stove, fridge and freezer. The project will also entail the purchasing of a new oven, microwave oven, hot water dispenser and television for the community meeting room. That church is used quite extensively by the Endeavour Hills community. The church kitchens are mainly used to prepare sandwiches and soup for distribution via a soup van that at present operates twice-weekly to provide for local residents in need.

All in all, they are very deserving organisations. The Southern Migrant Refugee Centre was another one that received funding out of round one, but there are many more organisations that have applied for round two. They are deserving organisations. These organisations are the lifeblood of the community. They provide much uncosted work to the community to keep the community ticking over. I would like to thank everyone who participated in those community organisations and hope that a number of the other organisations that have applied for round two funding will be successful.
Capricornia Electorate: Infrastructure

Ms LANDRY (Capricornia) (11:54): Today I welcome the appointment of a Central Queensland face onto the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility board. Yeppoon-based Karla Way-McPhail was appointed to the seven-member board, which will supervise the rollout of the northern Australia funding pool for major infrastructure. Mrs McPhail is CEO of a resource training company, Coal Train, based on the Capricorn Coast. As the local federal representative, I have been pushing for a Central Queensland face on the board and Mrs McPhail's appointment is very significant for Capricornia. The Capricornia community will benefit from the development of infrastructure in northern Australia through the government's $5 billion Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility. It is the role of NAIF board to oversee aspects of this facility. Meanwhile, speaking of infrastructure, I am pleased to inform the House of progress that I, and our coalition government, are making positive progress in delivering serious and tangible infrastructure projects to my electorate of Capricornia.

I am proud to report that in the 2½ years that I have been working hard for Capricornia I have helped to secure over $550 million in funding for infrastructure projects across the electorate. Such projects are designed to stimulate economic activity and employment. Recently, $20 million in new federal funding was announced for three key projects under the federal government's National Stronger Regions Fund. This includes $2.34 million for the Capricorn Helicopter Rescue Service to construct a new hangar and medical aviation centre in Rockhampton; $7 million which will go towards the revamp and upgrade of the Rockhampton riverbank redevelopment on the Fitzroy in the city's CBD—this funding will support the Rockhampton Regional Council's project for better facilities and the opportunity for greater economic activity in the area; and $10 million which will go towards stages 4 and 5 of the Yeppoon beachfront foreshore redevelopment on the Capricorn Coast as part of a major economic job creation and tourist drawcard.

Further to this, the federal government has partially contributed to the $12 million rebuild of the Scenic Highway, or Statue Bay Road, in Yeppoon following Cyclone Marcia, $3 million to continue further rebuilding of Kershaw Gardens in Rockhampton and $5.2 million towards fixing stormwater problems in Frenchville and York Street at Splitters Creek Crossing in Rockhampton. There is also the strengthening of the rebuild of Pilbeam Drive, Glenmore Water Treatment Plant, Dean Street, Capricorn Street and Elphinstone Street in Rockhampton. The people of Frenchville and other parts of North Rockhampton deserve to have their problems fixed.

I am proud that this coalition government is chipping in. It is recognised that due to the current mining downturn the local economy in Capricornia is doing it tough. The $30 million investments in infrastructure I have just outlined will go a long way towards stimulating economic activity and job potential in these areas. Our federal coalition government has already been investing heavily in roadbuilding projects to provide jobs to help offset the mining sector downturn. This includes $166 million to fix up the Eton Range section of the notorious Peak Downs Highway, west of Mackay, where work began in January; $38.26 million to replace seven old bridges in Isaac and Rockhampton shires under the federal Bridges Renewal Program; $8.5 million on overtaking lanes on the Bruce Highway near Sarina; $15.5 million to construct three new overtaking lanes and to extend a fourth along the...
Bruce Highway from Rockhampton to north of Gladstone; $29.4 million in Roads to Recovery grants over five years to help fix up council roads and streets in five shires including Rockhampton, Livingstone, Isaac, Mackay and Whitsunday; and $136 million to complete the stage 2 Yeppen South floodplain project on the Bruce Highway south of Rockhampton, which opened in December.

Further to this, we are improving mobile phone coverage in Capricornia, with a $3.14 million program to build or upgrade four new base stations, delivering better services to families in areas around Clarke Creek, Marlborough, Mt Chalmers Road—between Rockhampton and Yeppoon—and Gargett in the Pioneer Valley.

**Bendigo Electorate: Volunteers**

**Ms CHESTERS** (Bendigo) (12:00): The Bendigo electorate is a diverse electorate. It is a country electorate, and therefore takes in lots of smaller towns as well as the large population centre. But our diversity is also our strength. I just want to place on the record, and give a bit of a shout out to, the many organisations that help make our part of the world a great place; our volunteer organisations in the Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander and Bendigo; and the critical volunteers that help other volunteers connect with organisations.

Next week is Volunteer Week in our part of the world, and it is disappointing that I leave this place to inform them that there has been a $12 million cut to support services for our volunteer organisations in this budget. I would like to give a shout out to our SES and CFA—volunteer-based organisations that help make sure that, in an emergency, our homes and roads are protected and safe. Unfortunately, this government's closure of the Australian Emergency Management Institute after their first budget has hurt the coordination and our ability to respond. I hope that this will not continue into the future.

This is a shout out to our environmental groups—and we have so many in central Victoria that are connecting and switching to green energy. For example, there is MASH, based in Castlemaine, a bulk-solar organisation purchasing bulk solar and helping to connect more homes, businesses and community organisations to green energy. And you cannot go past the people's republic of News—republic and their plan to go 100 per cent renewable energy.

Our small business organisations work hard to make sure that they are sharing networks and that they are supporting one another. A big shout out to the organisations that I am a member of: the Bendigo Business Council and Networking Bendigo. I know they have been watching and listening to the detail of this budget—and the devil is in the detail of this budget. They will be concerned, like I am, that small business measures will be extended to include businesses of up to $1 billion in turnover. There are not too many small businesses in my part of the world that have that kind of turnover.

A big shout out to the Believe in Bendigo crew who, when our community was faced with a big challenge, stepped up to say: 'We believe in Bendigo. We are an inclusive and multicultural community. We are donning the yellow and coming together to celebrate our diverse cultures and to share them.' To the businesses, the organisations, the counsellors and my state colleagues: we came together under yellow to say that we believed in Bendigo. It was a moment for our community to say that we do not support the policies of the UPF; that we support our council and are moving forward to be able to build our first mosque in Bendigo.

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**FEDERATION CHAMBER**
A big shout out to our welfare and support organisations like the Salvation Army, Uniting Care and St Vincent de Paul and organisations like Saltworks, who have also suffered under massive cuts by this government in their first, second and now third budget. They are still getting on to support the most vulnerable people in our community, despite having less funding to do so. The Bendigo community have stepped up to help them. They say that demand for their services has increased by 30 per cent over the last three years and yet they have less support from this government, and that is where this government's priorities are wrong.

To the schools in our electorate who are campaigning strongly for equity-based funding: I stand with you. Whether it be our smaller primary schools like Taradale Primary School or Eppalock Primary School, or our larger schools like Bendigo Senior Secondary College, every single school in the Bendigo electorate would have benefited from Gonski funding, so therefore every school will suffer a cut because this government is not restoring the full Gonski funding in this budget.

As I said, the strength of our community is our diversity. We reach out to make sure that nobody is left behind. We are people that work together to grow our businesses, to make sure that nobody is left behind and to build a strong and inclusive community. The failure of this government is: it has not got behind the people of Bendigo and central Victoria. Its policies have failed to really understand what is going on. One of the clearest areas where this government has failed and let people down is in relation to the workers of Bendigo. Eighty-five per cent of the workers of Bendigo earn less than $75,000 a year. On budget night, this government said that they were not entitled and did not earn enough to get a tax cut. It is ridiculous to suggest that some of our lowest-paid workers are not worthy of this kind of attention. The government has let Bendigo and central Victoria down. (Time expired)

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (12:05): Working for the people and communities of Gilmore has been rewarding—advocating for small and large allocations of funding for both new and continuing projects that risked being defunded. In total I have delivered well over $350 million to Gilmore, and that does not include the almost half a billion dollars of defence investment in HMAS *Albatross* for the helicopter fleet acquisition and the Helicopter Aircrew Training System. Incidentally, we almost lost this facility but, after a tip-off, I went straight to the minister and argued to retain this development in Gilmore.

Some of the significant funds and projects include the delivery of $51 million in infrastructure investment for road safety packages, black spot funding, Roads to Recovery and heavy vehicle safety investment; 25 Green Army projects, delivering environmental improvement, youth employment and training; more than $3 million invested in local business growth grants, training, up-skillin and funding to accelerate commercialisation; and the delivery of election promises, including $2 million for the Dunn Lewis Centre, the Kiama Harbour side works, the shared walkway construction in Vincentia, skate parks and CCTV installations. There have been dozens of smaller grants, such as Saluting their Service, the 2015 commemorative Anzac grants, and the Stronger Communities funds.

I am actually pretty good at getting projects funded, but my reward is to see them completed. I just say, ‘Job done; now what’s next?’ I am not one to seek glory for every little issue, which for a politician is not actually a good idea, because nobody knows what you are
doing. However, being a federal politician can also be personal. For example, when you are asked to intervene in the potential deportation of visa holders who employ eight Australians and have a BAS payment of about $35,000 per month, you call the minister and you fix it. Or when a local kitchen business is about to go belly-up because an employee embezzled the company and the ATO is about to bankrupt them, you call the minister and get it sorted. There are endless cases, many of them heartbreaking.

It has been an honour to put my teaching and business experience to work as a community advocate while in government. I was part of the team lobbying for the hep C cure to be put on the PBS, also for Kalydeco, a cure for some forms of cystic fibrosis. I lobbied the minister and was successful in the rollout of the shingles vaccine for people aged between 70 and 79. After November this year, they will not be paying the whopping $195 for it. It has been terrific to assist community groups such as A Taste of Paradise, for their greenhouse; the Culburra Beach Skate Park; the Kiama Netball Association; Killalea State Park, for the computers to help their Green Army team to get white cards and learn to write CVs; the Sailing for Everyone Foundation, for disability pontoon access for their boats; the Shellharbour Surf Life Saving Club; the Sussex Inlet community, with the help of council, to get funds for their Learn to Ride facility; Kids Korner and their great new outdoor play equipment; the Shoalhaven Community Transport Service, for administration equipment; our wonderful Shoalhaven Youth Orchestra, for new instruments; our Ulladulla Children's Centre, for a new floor and facilities; and, most recently, there have been funds for the all-inclusive playground in Batehaven. These are projects that really make a difference to these groups, and to see the joy on their faces is inspirational. I will continue to lobby and fight for the new Nowra Bridge. It is an essential infrastructure linchpin for our residents, tourism growth, business expansion and consequential employment opportunities.

I see youth who need to be part of our social fabric rewarded for participation and taking on responsibility, like with the recently launched digital hub business, now funded for two years, that will assist around 120 young people into work. I sponsored two participating businesses. I commend the initiative of the PaTH program—described just this week in the 2016 budget—for vulnerable young people having trouble breaking into the jobs market. It will help them with solid preparation and assisted work trials while they still receive income support, taking the risk factor away from getting a job for a short time, so that people do not struggle to get back into support if the job does not work out, and then having incentive payments to the employer. This has been a hard-won change and very welcomed for the 12 per cent of our unemployed young people who do not have a working adult role model in their home. It is transformational.

Working for Gilmore and the residents has been an honour, and I hope to continue that advocacy in the next parliament, for we have only just begun to take advantage of the potential in our region. With the free trade agreements, recently announced business incentives and a plan for economic stability to take Australia to a healthy financial future, we are setting ourselves up for a great plan for our children, our grandchildren, our businesses and job opportunities. We have potential and we have great people. It is time to make the most of everything we have in Gilmore and keep it moving along.
Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (12:10): I rise on what is expected to be the last day of this 44th Parliament to stand up for a young woman and help her fight for justice: 32-year-old Megan McLean, a constituent in Corangamite. In 2004, whilst studying in New Zealand as a young paramedic, Megan was brutally raped and abducted. The perpetrator, Akeel Hassan Abbas Al Baiiety, was an Iraqi asylum seeker who had been granted New Zealand citizenship. At the time he attacked Megan, he was on parole for raping two other women and attempting to rape a third woman, for which he was jailed for nine years in 1998. The New Zealand government subsequently revoked his citizenship. Megan's attacker was convicted and sentenced for abduction and rape—for what he did to Megan—in 2005 for seven years and is on preventative detention. Like the man who killed Jill Maher in Brunswick—that absolutely shocking case—Megan McLean's attacker should not have been out on parole. He was a monster.

Megan is still living with trauma and with terrible internal injuries she suffered—injuries that I am not able to speak about. Each year, Megan is required to travel to New Zealand to give evidence to the New Zealand Parole Board in order to ensure this perpetrator is not released. Megan is now a paramedic. She is married with two children and pregnant with her third child. Despite the incredible struggles she faces every day, she is doing an amazing job coping.

She did receive some initial compensation, but the fact is that she has incurred tens of thousands of dollars of medical bills, which has left her and her family under severe financial stress. I have made various representations to our government on behalf of Megan, and I want to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs for taking this matter up with the New Zealand government. The foreign minister wrote to New Zealand minister responsible for the Accident Compensation Corporation in New Zealand seeking financial support and help to assist Megan with her rehabilitation. However, a key issue is that there is a statutory ban on the ACC, the compensation body in New Zealand, paying for overseas rehabilitation. Section 128 of the Accident Compensation Act 2001 limits this payment for rehabilitation outside of New Zealand and there is only a very limited exception relating to the provision of attendant care.

Today, as part of this fight for justice, I call on the New Zealand government to overturn this ban, so that Australian victims of crime in New Zealand are able to receive ongoing treatment for the injuries they suffered in New Zealand and are now paying the price for in Australia. The Australian-New Zealand relationship is a very special one, and when Australians suffer, as Megan McLean has suffered so terribly, our close neighbour and very close friend must stand by us. The New Zealand justice system has badly failed Megan, and now we need to ensure that this wrong is righted.

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (12:14): This is the third speech in a series. The federal government has made enormous noise about developing northern Australia. They have the ignominy of going into this election having done absolutely nothing: not one cent of money has been allocated and there is not one single job. They have also spent, as far as we can make out, another $20 million on looking into. We spent over $200 million on looking into. In terms of today's money, some of that goes back about 15 years—it is close to $300 million in looking into. Well, as the famous Joh Bjelke-Petersen said on numerous occasions: 'If you
cannot make a decision, get the hell out of the cabinet room.' This place is for decision makers, not for looking intoes and mirror men.

The Galilee Basin has half of Australians known coal reserves. It is a treasure trove of massive proportions. For those who see no future in coal fired power stations, let me just correct you and say this on the problem with CO\textsubscript{2}: BHP; Ergon, the big electricity supplier in Queensland; and the CSIRO have already established that all of your CO\textsubscript{2} emissions can be absorbed in ponded areas so that the modern power station will have no CO\textsubscript{2} emissions whatsoever. When it goes into the pond, it grows algae, which is of fabulous value to the cattle industry. It is 23 per cent protein, which is extraordinarily high.

What we need in the Galilee is the building of a railway line. The first railway line was built in Queensland in the 1960s, when Australia was a coal importing country. Can you imagine convincing the public that we could go from a coal importing country to being a coal exporting country? Upon that gamble, $1,500 million dollars of public funds was committed from a budget of $3,000 million dollars. I am using today's terms. It probably predated currency in dollars. If the Queensland government then proceeded to lay down 6,000 kilometres of coal line over the next 20 or 30 years.

The coal industry has gone backwards now for about seven or eight years. In 25 years since the Country Party—then calling themselves the National Party; it was knocked over in the 1990s—to my knowledge there has not been a single kilometre of rail line put down. The Adani mining company has said that they are going to produce $3,000, $4,000 or $5,000 million worth of coal annually and they need the railway line. They have now been struggling for three years to overcome 400 hurdles to get the railway line built. If the railway line is built, then the Australian economy benefits the tune of somewhere between $4,000 and $7,000 million a year. That is assuming that only Adani goes on stream.

What in heaven's name are we fooling around with? There are no hurdles for a government initiative—none whatsoever. So build a railway line. It is $2,000 million. Build the Hell's Gates dam. Heaven only knows, the government has done a study on it about every five or six years now, back to 1984 when the giant Bradfield Scheme was announced. This is the major component of that scheme. We are not advocating Bradfield; I would love to, but I am not doing that. I am just saying: build the Hell's Gates dam. That will give your economy an income of $2,000 million a year. There would be $7,000 million from the Galilee and $2,000 million from the Hell's Gates dam.

Above Hell's Gates, which is just south-west of Townsville—Charters Towers, if you like—and south-west of Cairns—Ravenshoe, if you like—is the giant status proposal on the upper Herbert River, which again will give you another $2,000 million dollars a year in income. Build a canal to get our fertiliser out—$200 million is probably all we require there—and we will give you back $4,000 million dollars a year in fertiliser production. We are already doing nearly $2,000 million dollars worth in Mount Isa now. So we have all these wonderful things, along with the realisation of what we should be achieving in the cattle industry: a quadrupling of our present figures with irrigation. *(Time expired)*

Question agreed to.

**Federation Chamber adjourned at 12:20**