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FORTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

Governor-General
His Excellency General the Hon. David John Hurley, AC, DSC, FTSE (Retd)

House of Representatives Office Holders
Speaker—Hon. Anthony David Hawthorn Smith MP
Deputy Speaker—Mr Kevin John Hogan MP
Second Deputy Speaker—Mr Robert George Mitchell MP
Members of the Speaker’s Panel—Hon. Kevin James Andrews MP, Mr Ian Reginald Goodenough MP, Mr Ross Xavier Vasta MP, Hon. Dr John Joseph McVeigh MP, Mrs Lucy Elizabeth Wicks MP, Hon. Sharon Leah Bird MP, Ms Sharon Catherine Claydon MP, Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP, Mr Steven Georganas MP, Hon. Dr David Arthur Gillespie MP, Mr Trent Moir Zimmerman MP
Leader of the House—Hon. Christian Porter 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 Butler MP

Party Leaders and Whips
Liberal Party of Australia
Leader—Hon. Scott John Morrison MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Joshua Anthony Frydenberg MP
Chief Government Whip—Mr Albertus Johannes van Manen MP
Government Whips—Mr Rowan Eric Ramsey MP and Ms Nicolle Flint MP

The Nationals
Leader—Hon. Michael Francis McCormack MP
Deputy Leader—Senator Hon. Bridget McKenzie
Chief Whip—Hon Damian Kevin Drum MP
Deputy Whip—Mr Kenneth Desmond O’Dowd MP

Australian Labor Party
Leader—Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Richard Marles MP
Chief Opposition Whip—Mr Christopher Patrick Hayes MP
Opposition Whips—Ms Joanne Catherine Ryan MP and Ms Anne Maree Stanley MP

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<td>Wyatt, Hon. Kenneth George, AM</td>
<td>Hasluck, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young, Mr Terry James</td>
<td>Longman, QLD</td>
<td>LNP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zappia, Mr Antonio</td>
<td>Makin, SA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zimmerman, Mr Trent Moir</td>
<td>North Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PARTY ABBREVIATIONS**

AG—Australian Greens; ALP—Australian Labor Party; CA—Centre Alliance;
IND—Independent; KAP—Katter’s Australia Party; LNP—Liberal National Party;
LP—Liberal Party of Australia; NATS—The Nationals;

**Heads of Parliamentary Departments**

Clerk of the Senate—R Pye
Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder
Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—R Stefanie
Parliamentary Budget Officer—J Wilkinson
## MORRISON MINISTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Minister</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prime Minister</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Scott Morrison MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for the Public Service</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Women</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Marise Payne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Greg Hunt MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Indigenous Australians</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Ken Wyatt AM MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Ben Morton MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Michael McCormack MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Water Resources, Drought, Rural Finance, Natural Disaster and Emergency Management</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. David Littleproud MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Population, Cities and Urban Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Alan Tudge MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Scott Buchholz MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Andrew Gee MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Nola Marino MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Treasurer</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Treasurer</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Alan Tudge MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister for Superannuation, Financial Services and Financial Technology</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Michael Sukkar MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Finance</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Mathias Cormann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Vice-President of the Executive Council)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(Leader of the Government in the Senate)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister for Finance, Charities and Electoral Matters</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Zed Seselja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Agriculture</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Bridget McKenzie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Jonathon Duniam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Foreign Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Marise Payne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for International Development and the Pacific</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Alex Hawke MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Trade and Investment Minister</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Mark Coulton MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister for Regional Tourism</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Jonathon Duniam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attorney-General (Leader of the House)</td>
<td>The Hon. Christian Porter MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Industrial Relations</td>
<td>The Hon. Christian Porter MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Health</td>
<td>The Hon. Greg Hunt MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Youth and Sport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Home Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon. Peter Dutton MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon. David Littleproud MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon. David Coleman MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Customs, Community Safety and Multicultural Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon. Jason Wood MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Education</td>
<td>The Hon. Dan Tehan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon. Steve Irons MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Industry, Science and Technology</td>
<td>The Hon. Karen Andrews MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Resources and Northern Australia</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Matthew Canavan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction</td>
<td>The Hon. Angus Taylor MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for the Environment</td>
<td>The Hon. Sussan Ley MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Defence</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Linda Reynolds CSC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Defence Minister</td>
<td>The Hon. Alex Hawke MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Veterans and Defence Personnel (Deputy Leader of the House)</td>
<td>The Hon. Darren Chester MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Defence Industry</td>
<td>The Hon. Melissa Price MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Families and Social Services (Manager of Government Business in the Senate)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Anne Ruston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme</td>
<td>The Hon. Stuart Robert MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Government Services</td>
<td>The Hon. Michelle Landry MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Children and Families</td>
<td>The Hon. Luke Howarth MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Community Housing, Homelessness and Community Services</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. The title of a department does not necessarily reflect the title of a minister in all cases. Ministers are sworn to administer the portfolio in which they are listed under the ‘Minister’ column and may also be sworn to administer other portfolios in which they are not listed.
Assistant Ministers in italics are designated as Parliamentary Secretaries under the *Ministers of State Act 1952.*
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<td>The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Cabinet Secretary</strong></td>
<td>Senator Jenny McAllister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Richard Marles MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Defence</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Shayne Neumann MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel</td>
<td>Pat Conroy MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister Assisting for Defence</td>
<td>Matt Keogh MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister for Defence</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leader of the Opposition in the Senate</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Penny Wong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Pat Conroy MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister to the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate</strong></td>
<td>Senator Jenny McAllister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Kristina Keneally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Home Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Andrew Giles MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Immigration and Citizenship</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister Assisting for Immigration and Citizenship</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Tony Burke MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for the Arts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Manager of Opposition Business in the House of Representatives</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Bill Shorten MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Carers</td>
<td>Emma McBride MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Education and Training</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister for Education and Training</strong></td>
<td>Graham Perrett MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Skills</strong></td>
<td>Ged Kearney MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Treasurer</strong></td>
<td>Dr Jim Chalmers MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Treasurer</td>
<td>Stephen Jones MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Financial Services</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister for Treasury</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Dr Andrew Leigh MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister for Charities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister for Financial Services</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Climate Change and Energy</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Mark Butler MP</td>
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<td>Pat Conroy MP</td>
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<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Health</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Chris Bowen MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister for Mental Health</strong></td>
<td>Emma McBride MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Catherine King MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Cities and Urban Infrastructure</td>
<td>Andrew Giles MP</td>
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<td>Senator Carol Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Tasmania</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Senator Glenn Sterle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Resources</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Western Australian Resources</td>
<td>Matt Keogh MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Special Minister of State</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Don Farrell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Sport</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Tourism</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader of the Opposition</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Attorney-General</td>
<td>The Hon. Mark Dreyfus QC MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Constitutional Reform</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for the Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Communications</td>
<td>Michelle Rowland MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Communications</td>
<td>Tim Watts MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Finance</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate</td>
<td>Sen Kimberley Kitching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Government Accountability</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Reconciliation</td>
<td>Senator Patrick Dodson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians</td>
<td>The Hon. Warren Snowdon MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister for Indigenous Australians</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Ageing and Seniors</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Julie Collins MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Women</strong></td>
<td>Ged Kearney MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Employment and Industry</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Brendan O'Connor MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Science</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Small and Family Business</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Innovation, Technology and the Future of Work</td>
<td>Clare O'Neil MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister Assisting for Small and Family Business</td>
<td>Matt Keogh MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Shadow Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Manufacturing</td>
<td>Senator Louise Pratt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government</td>
<td>The Hon. Jason Clare MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness</td>
<td>The Hon. Warren Snowdon MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for External Territories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>The Hon. Amanda Rishworth MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Youth</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for the Environment and Water</td>
<td>Terri Butler MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for the Environment</td>
<td>Josh Wilson MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Trade</td>
<td>Madeleine King MP</td>
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Thursday, 1 August 2019

The SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Smith) took the chair at 09:30, made an acknowledgement of country and read prayers.

BUSINESS

Rearrangement

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (09:31): I move:

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the Member for Isaacs from moving the following motion on notice standing in the name of the Member for Isaacs being called on immediately for debate and being determined by the House—That the House:

(1) notes:
   (a) the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General announced on 13 December 2018 that a Commonwealth Integrity Commission would be established;
   (b) on 13 December 2018, the Prime Minister said on 2GB the decision to establish a Commonwealth Integrity Commission "was something I had to resolve by the end of the year";
   (c) on 26 May 2019, the Attorney-General said a Commonwealth Integrity Commission was a "priority"; and
   (d) the Government has not established a Commonwealth Integrity Commission; and
   (2) calls on the Government to keep its promise to establish its Commonwealth Integrity Commission.

This government is not serious about integrity or tackling corruption. If they were, they would establish a national integrity commission now.

I can see why at least some members of this government may not want an integrity commission. It's the sort of thing that may make, for example, the Minister for Home Affairs a bit nervous—the same Minister for Home Affairs who said that he had no sight of the payment of $423 million by his own department to a company called Paladin, which was based in an empty beach shack on Kangaroo Island, all without an open tender or other transparent process. This is the same Minister for Home Affairs who awarded a $591 million contract to a mysterious Brisbane based company to run garrison and welfare services on Nauru without an open tender or a transparent process—a company whose chief executive officer made a personal donation to the Liberal-National Party while the terms of that contract were still being negotiated. This is the same Minister for Home Affairs who agreed to extend that lucrative contract in the same month that the Liberal-National Party received a donation from a related company registered to the same Brisbane address—or did the minister have no sight of that contract either?

I can think of something that the Minister for Home Affairs did have sight of: he personally intervened to award visas to at least two au pairs who were facing deportation for breaking Australian law—au pairs who were employed by the minister's former colleague and the family of a well-known Liberal Party donor. He can't hide behind his department for that one. This Minister for Home Affairs is very lucky to be a member of a government that refuses to set up a Commonwealth integrity commission.

It's a Commonwealth integrity commission that may make quite a few Liberal Party MPs a bit nervous.

Government members interjecting—

Mr DREYFUS: I'm hearing from the government benches, 'That's rubbish!' Why is it that the government hasn't set up the Commonwealth integrity commission? Why is it that the government hasn't even listed a bill to be brought into the parliament this year, for the whole of 2019, to set up a Commonwealth integrity commission? It is because this government is not in the least bit interested in integrity. They prove it on a daily basis in the way in which they ignore the scandalous conduct of their own ministers and the way in which they cover up the scandalous conduct of their own ministers. I say again, a national integrity commission might make a few Liberal Party MPs just a bit nervous.

I doubt that Senator Cash is a fan of the idea. Remember her? She's the minister who refused to cooperate with an Australian Federal Police investigation into the potentially criminal leaking by her own office of sensitive information about police operations. Let me say that again: a minister in this third-term Liberal government has refused to cooperate with an Australian Federal Police inquiry into possible criminal wrongdoing by her own office. This is a government committed to integrity for everybody but itself. Senator Cash is also very lucky to be a minister in a government that refuses to set up a national integrity commission.

What about the Minister for Health? What does he think about the idea of a national integrity commission? He's still got questions to answer, which he's refusing to do, about why he awarded a lucrative Medicare MRI licence to a clinic operated by the vice-president of the Liberal Party of South Australia. That's despite the clinic operating
within five kilometres of nine other partially or fully Medicare-eligible MRI machines. We've got another minister that's very lucky to be a minister in a government that refuses to set up a national integrity commission.

You can't have a conversation about integrity and this third-term government without mentioning Bronwyn Bishop, the former Speaker. Who could ever forget the 'choppergate’ scandal, in which the former member for Mackellar so comprehensively disgraced herself? What about the Attorney-General himself, the architect of ensuring integrity for unions and welfare recipients? He's treated the Administrative Appeals Tribunal like a Liberal Party employment agency, appointing dozens of high-paying, taxpayer-funded jobs, which should be going to properly qualified and experienced experts, to former Liberal Party MPs, former Liberal Party staffers and failed Liberal Party candidates. Again, we have yet another minister who's very lucky to be a minister in a government which is refusing to set up a national integrity commission.

Then we come to another minister, the member for Fadden. This is the same member for Fadden—now in cabinet, extraordinarily—who was sacked from the ministry by a previous Liberal Prime Minister over multiple conflicts and the misuse of his ministerial position in the pursuit of the business interests of Liberal Party Donors in China. This Prime Minister has brought him back into the ministry of this third-term Liberal government, presumably because it would be a gross inconsistency to exclude someone from this particular ministry just because of a lack of integrity.

Then there's the member for Hume, who, along with his friend the Treasurer of Australia, still has questions to answer about the alleged illegal poisoning of critically endangered grasslands on a property partly owned by—guess who? The member for Hume. We know that his own department—the Department of the Environment and Energy, no less—is now investigating this same honourable member because of his interest in a company called Jam Land Pty Ltd, which was involved in that alleged poisoning of critically endangered grasslands. We also know that record-breaking amounts of money were paid by the Commonwealth to buy water from a company with links to that member for Hume, a company that was owned by a Cayman Islands based entity—

The SPEAKER: I will ask the member for Isaacs to resume his seat for a second. I'm listening very carefully to the member for Isaacs and being as tolerant as I can. I need to remind him, his motion is to suspend standing orders. This is not a substantive motion where he can be making accusation upon accusation. I've been listening to him. I've been as lenient as I can. I'm going to invite him to stick to the substance of his motion: why standing orders should be suspended. If he manages to succeed in having that motion passed, there will then be an opportunity for him to go to the substantive points, but it is not an opportunity for him to—I'll put it in the most candid way I can—go on a wide spray of members of the House. He's just got to argue why standing orders should be suspended.

Mr DREYFUS: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the guidance. Standing orders should be suspended because it is long past time for this parliament to be considering legislation to establish what the government seeks to call a Commonwealth integrity commission but, either way, a national integrity commission—an integrity commission that is capable of looking at the scandals after scandals that have beset this third-term Liberal government. The reason standing orders should be suspended is that this parliament is not being given an opportunity to debate, and, unless standing orders are suspended, we won't have an opportunity to debate why it is that this country needs to have a national integrity commission now, why this government needs to keep to the promise that the Prime Minister made as long ago as last December, that the Attorney-General made as long ago as last December and confirmed after the election. Yet we see from the list of legislation produced by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet that this government has no intention of bringing legislation before the parliament this year. We have no indication that they ever intend to bring legislation before this parliament to establish the national integrity commission that is sorely needed. We have had no indication from this Attorney-General when he is going to do this. All we have is the negative indication that the Prime Minister has no intention of doing it because the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has not even listed legislation to establish a Commonwealth integrity commission for even introduction this year, let alone passage this year.

We have been given a list of legislation by the government that lists a whole lot of other bills that the government may be bringing into the parliament, including a small number of them that the government has indicated are for passage this year, but not one of them deals with this vital subject of the establishment of a Commonwealth integrity commission, which this tired third-term Liberal government promised to do at the election and has failed to do.

The SPEAKER: Is the motion moved by the member for Isaacs seconded?

Mr BUTLER (Hindmarsh) (09:42): I second the motion. It is critically important that standing orders be suspended to help get this flailing government back on track. It is less than 10 weeks since the election, the end of
the third sitting week, and broken promise after broken promise after broken promise have already been backed up by this Prime Minister.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Hindmarsh, you heard what I said to the member for Isaacs about speaking to the motion. You're straight off the road already. You need to speak to the motion. I'm fairly lenient in these matters, but I'm going to flag now that, if you don't speak to the motion, I'm going to sit you down.

**Mr BUTLER:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Among those broken promises is the complete lack of any attention to an integrity commission by this Prime Minister—a Prime Minister who only last November said that this was a fringe issue, then a few weeks later said to the Australian people later that he would establish an integrity commission. The now Attorney-General said that it was not a priority for the government back then, but—as the shadow Attorney-General has just said—then said to the Australian people in May that this was now a priority for the government. But, on the Notice Paper, there is no indication of any attention or effort on the part of the government to establish what the Australian people are crying out for, which is an investment in trust and greater faith in the offices of government through an integrity commission. So it is important that standing orders be suspended. We've given this government three weeks of sitting to show that they are actually going to deliver on another promise that the Prime Minister made before the election and bring before this parliament legislation to establish a national integrity commission or a Commonwealth integrity commission and start to lift public faith again in the operations of the Commonwealth government.

It's very clear, I think, to those who observed the debate that happened over the last 12 or 18 months around the establishment of an integrity commission why there is nothing on the Notice Paper to indicate any effort by the government and why standing orders need to be suspended to allow the parliament to grab control of this issue, because the government is clearly intending to do nothing about it. The first reason is that it's quite clear the Prime Minister, and I suspect the Attorney-General, never really supported the idea of an integrity commission. It can't be left in the hands of the executive. The parliament needs to grab control of this issue again and restore faith. The other reason is that it just doesn't suit this Prime Minister's third-term agenda, which is to avoid at any cost any possibility of legislation coming to this parliament that might be the subject of agreement between the two major parties.

It's quite clear that a properly constructed integrity commission could obtain the agreement of, at the very least, the two major parties. For that reason alone, this Prime Minister, who is focused on building a third-term agenda around conflict and division, will avoid, at any cost, any idea that this parliament might come together, bring the country together, around an important reform like an integrity commission. We've seen it with his new approach to the operations of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, we've seen it with this Prime Minister's approach to energy policy, since he started to line up with the hard Right and dump the National Energy Guarantee, and we're seeing it now with the integrity commission. We're seeing it now with his complete lack of attention and energy on the establishment of an integrity commission. We know why it is. It's because he wants division, he wants conflict, he wants to avoid any legislation that might be the subject of support from the Labor Party and he also wants, as the Shadow Attorney-General said, to distract from his lack of any agenda to deal with the very real economic issues that are confronting the country.

But this is important. The Australian people have been looking at this building for two years wanting it to establish an integrity commission. Last December we dragged this Prime Minister to a commitment to deliver it. There is nothing on the Notice Paper that indicates any intention by this government to act on that. The shadow Attorney-General has had a notice of motion on the Notice Paper. It is clear, at the end of the third sitting week, that if this executive government is not willing to deal with this matter then the parliament must bring it on and must have a debate and repay the confidence that voters gave both major parties at the election when we both promised that when we came back for the 46th Parliament we would act to establish an integrity commission. That is why standing orders must be suspended—so we can start getting on with the job.

**Mr PORTER** (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (09:47): Perhaps, not unsurprisingly, we won't be supporting the motion.

**Opposition members:** Why?

**Mr PORTER:** I'll explain why for members opposite. The motion is, in effect, a complaint that the government has not introduced a bill for the establishment of a Commonwealth integrity commission in the first three weeks of this parliament. They may think that that should have occurred and that those three weeks was a reasonable period of time.

**Mr Dreyfus:** We do.

**Mr PORTER:** Indeed. So what I might do is commence by reading from the Labor Party media release, which is essentially as far as their policy went on a Commonwealth integrity commission:
In government, Labor will continue to consult with experts on the design details of the Commission. Legislation to establish the National Integrity Commission will be introduced into Parliament within the first 12 months of a Shorten Labor Government.

What's fascinating is that it's totally unreasonable that we take more than three weeks to do something as complicated as design an integrity commission, but, had the Shorten Labor government become the Shorten Labor government, 12 months would have been an entirely reasonable period of time for them to do that. That does strike me as something of a double standard in this area.

It is true, for the benefit of the shadow Attorney-General, that we are very substantially more advanced than they ever were in the design of something as complicated as an integrity commission. It is true that, in December last year, the Prime Minister and I announced our commitment to an integrity commission. We did that with a discussion paper of over 3,000 words. It is true that the commitment of members opposite to an integrity commission is effectively a press release with six, what you might call—or they call—design principles. So vague are the design principles that no-one knows what on earth it is that they're committing to by their commitment to an integrity commission. So vague are their design principles that they would have needed to consult experts for 12 months about what it is they actually promised to do before they introduced legislation. But, somehow, the screaming urgency of this is so great that 12 months would have been a reasonable period of time for them for something this complicated, but three weeks should be the time limit for the government.

Mr Giles interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I would just remind the member for Scullin that he is interjecting and he is not in his seat.

Mr PORTER: What we have done is set out a very clear model for what an integrity commission would look like. It may not be agreed with by members opposite but it is very detailed. It is far more than these vague design principles. What's also notable is that we have already gone through a consultation phase. What is also notable is that we allocated in our last budget $106.7 million of new money that will underpin the establishment of the Integrity Commission. What is also notable is that that is in addition to the $40.7 million of existing funding for ACLEI, which will be a very important part of the Integrity Commission that we will build and legislate for. I note that Labor's commitment of $58.7 million is $89 million less than the financial commitment that we have made in our forward estimates for the establishment and operation of this body. So this motion, I think, has at its heart a complete and ridiculous double standard.

One of the reasons why you have to be cautious and detailed in your approach and take the time that is necessary to design an integrity commission properly and soberly—and not on the basis of wild accusations of impropriety or lack of integrity on the part of members of this side of the House or indeed any people in civil society—is that, if they are not designed properly, cautiously and cleverly, they result in very significant injustices. The history of integrity commissions is that the poorly designed ones very often exhibit those injustices at their peak and most egregious in the early operation of those integrity commissions. Having been tasked with the design of this Integrity Commission, I think back very often to a case in 2008 of a very senior public servant by the name of Mike Allen in Western Australia. I will read directly from the report into the Corruption and Crime Commission's investigation by the Parliamentary Inspector for the Corruption and Crime Commission. Mike Allen was a very senior and very well-respected public servant. It was noted that the CCC had made a finding of misconduct against Mr Allen. It had concluded in its report of 5 October 2007 that he had complied with the wishes of one Brian Burke in August 2006 by agreeing to appoint a DPI officer to write a report on a matter, and I am expressing a view as to why the development of a crime and integrity commission should be just as struck me as something of a double standard in this area.

Mr PORTER: The motion to suspend standing orders expresses the view that there is an urgency to this matter, and I am expressing a view as to why the development of a crime and integrity commission should be sober, cautious and take the time that is needed to get it right. What was found in the case of Mr Allen—and I will read directly from the PICCC report—was:

The CCC should publicly acknowledge that it was in error in finding that Mr Allen was guilty of misconduct, and withdraw not only the "opinion" of misconduct by Mr Allen as expressed in its October report but also its "substituted" opinion of February 13, 2008, as neither opinion is supported by evidence, and both are inconsistent with evidence which the CCC had, but did not refer to in its report, as well as evidence of other relevant witnesses not interviewed by the CCC.
The point is that this highly respected civil servant, in the early days of a poorly designed corruption and crime commission, had his career totally destroyed and his life, in essence, professionally ruined because the design was poor and the findings of corruption were totally unfounded. I think that would send a chill down the spine of every civil servant at the Commonwealth level in Australia—and, indeed, the headlong rush based on wild accusations of a lack of integrity or misconduct by members here or opposite.

The shadow Attorney-General has made a range of allegations of misconduct and a lack of integrity. In fact, one of those was made last night against the Treasurer with respect to an electoral advertisement. I know that props are forbidden, so I will not show this, but I have before me a sign made up to look like it is a Liberal sign. It says 'Liberal' in the top left-hand corner—

The SPEAKER: I've got to say to the Attorney: I'm struggling to see how this is relevant to why standing orders should be suspended. I made the ruling with respect to the member for Isaacs. He can make the point he is seeking to make but not in this debate. He can make it at other times throughout the day.

Mr PORTER: I think the relevance of it is that the shadow Attorney-General is a wild hypocrite on these matters. It is a shocking level of hypocrisy beyond the level of imagination. What he did in this debate was make wild accusations. It's that wildness of slurs and accusations which is the very reason why you would take great caution in designing one of these commissions, because people like the shadow Attorney-General would demonstrate their well-known propensity to refer matters in a vexatious, frivolous and politically motivated way based on hypocrisy.

This is a direct response to the matters raised by the shadow Attorney-General in his arguing for this motion. The idea that this motion should be supported should be rejected. This will be done cautiously. It will be done carefully. It won't be done by media release. It won't be done by wild accusation. It will be done with consultation. It will be done in a way that is consistent with the best operative models for corruption and crime commissions. It will be done in a reasonable period of time. It'll be done a lot quicker than the promise those opposite made as to when they would do it; it'll be a lot quicker than the 12 months that they promised. A reasonable period of time needs to be taken for this, and it will be taken. The accusations that were levied were wild and demonstrate hypocrisy of a vast nature.

The SPEAKER: The time allotted for this debate has concluded. The question is that the motion moved by the member for Isaacs to suspend standing orders be agreed to.

The House divided. [10:01]
(The Speaker—Hon. Tony Smith)

Ayes ...................... 68
Noes ...................... 73
Majority ................ 5

AYES

Aly, A  Bandt, AP
Bird, SL  Bowen, CE
Burke, AS  Burney, LJ
Burns, J  Butler, MC
Butler, TM  Byrne, AM
Chalmers, JE  Champion, ND
Chesters, LM  Clare, JD
Claydon, SC  Coker, EA
Collins, JM  Conroy, PM
Dick, MD  Dreyfus, MA
Elliott, MJ  Fitzgibbon, JA
Freelander, MR  Georganas, S
Giles, AJ  Gorman, P
Gosling, LJ  Haines, H
Hayes, CP  Hill, JC
Husic, EN  Jones, SP
Kearney, G  Kelly, MJ
Keogh, MJ  Khalil, P
King, CF  King, MMH
Leigh, AK  Marles, RD
McBride, EM  Mitchell, BK
Mitchell, RG  Mulino, D
Neumann, SK  O'Connell, BPJ
O'Neil, CE  Owens, JA
Payne, AE  Perrett, GD
Phillips, FE  Plibersek, TJ
AYES
Rowland, MA  Ryan, JC (teller)
Sharkie, RCC  Shorten, WR
Smith, DPB  Stanley, AM (teller)
Steggall, Z  Templeman, SR
Thistlethwaite, MJ  Thwaites, KL
Vamvakinou, M  Watts, TG
Wells, AS  Wilkie, AD
Wilson, JH  Zappia, A

NOES
Alexander, JG  Allen, K
Andrews, KJ  Andrews, KL
Archer, BK  Bell, AM
Buchholz, S  Chester, D
Christensen, GR  Coleman, DB
Conaghan, PJ  Connelly, V
Coulton, M  Drum, DK (teller)
Entsch, WG  Evans, TM
Fletcher, PW  Flint, NJ
Frydenberg, JA  Gee, AR
Gillespie, DA  Goodenough, IR
Hammond, CM  Hastie, AW
Hawke, AG  Hogan, KJ
Howarth, LR  Hunt, GA
Irons, SJ  Joyce, BT
Kelly, C  Laming, A
Landry, ML  Leeser, J
Ley, SP  Littleproud, D
Liu, G  Marino, NB
Martin, FB  McCormack, MF
McIntosh, MJ  McVeigh, JJ
Morrison, SJ  Morton, B
O’Brien, LS  O’Brien, T
O’Dowd, KD  Pasin, A
Pearce, GB  Pitt, KJ
Porter, CC  Price, ML
Ramsey, RE (teller)  Robert, SR
Sharma, DN  Simmonds, J
Stevens, J  Sukkar, MS
Taylor, AJ  Tehan, DT
Thompson, P  Tudge, AE
Van Manen, AJ  Vasta, RX
Wallace, AB  Webster, AE
Wicks, LE  Wilson, RJ
Wilson, TR  Wood, JP
Wyatt, KG  Young, T
Zimmerman, T

Question negatived.

BILLS
Treasury Laws Amendment (Ending Grandfathered Conflicted Remuneration) Bill 2019
First Reading
Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Frydenberg.
Bill read a first time.

Second Reading
Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—The Treasurer) (10:06): I move:
That this bill be now read a second time.

On 4 February 2019, the government released its response to the final report of the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry.
We have committed to taking action on all 76 recommendations of the final report and, in a number of important areas, we will go further.

Since the release of the final report of the royal commission, the government has:

- instigated and responded to the APRA Capability Review;
- expanded the remit of the Australian Financial Complaints Authority to require it to establish a new historical redress scheme to consider eligible financial complaints dating back to 1 January 2008;
- amended legislation to extend ASIC's product intervention power to, and impose design and distribution obligations on, all financial and credit products within ASIC's regulatory responsibility;
- initiated work with the states and the territories towards establishing a national farm debt mediation scheme;
- passed legislation banning the inducement of employers by superannuation trustees and introduced civil penalties on superannuation trustees and directors for breaching the law; and
- released consultation papers on the removal of the exemption for insurance claims handling, the enforceability of financial services industry codes, the merits of universal terms for MySuper products, and superannuation binding death benefit nominations for Indigenous people.

Through this bill the government takes another important step in implementing the recommendations of the royal commission by enacting legislation that will end the payment of grandfathered conflicted remuneration to financial advisers.

While conflicted remuneration to financial advisers has been banned since 2013, remuneration arrangements that had been entered into before this date were not subject to the ban. This allowed financial advisers to continue to receive conflicted remuneration under these arrangements.

However, grandfathered conflicted remuneration can entrench customers in older, poorly performing products. This is because financial advisers may be unwilling to switch customers into newer, better products if it means the adviser will lose their entitlement to the grandfathered conflicted remuneration.

The Productivity Commission, in its report *Superannuation: Assessing Efficiency and Competitiveness* released earlier this year, indicated:

... members of 11 retail funds identified in data from the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry are estimated to have paid in excess of $400 million in (grandfathered) trailing adviser commissions in 2017.

The continued payment of these commissions is eroding the superannuation savings of Australians.

Commissioner Hayne put it very succinctly in the royal commission's final report, saying:

There can be, and is, no justification for maintaining the grandfathering provisions.

This bill implements this recommendation of the royal commission to end grandfathered conflicted remuneration.

Consumers will be the major beneficiaries from this reform. The government's actions will mean they will receive higher quality advice and stop paying higher fees to fund grandfathered conflicted remuneration.

It is also important to point out that the government's actions go even further than the royal commission recommendation, because we will also require grandfathered benefits to be passed through to retail clients, where these commissions remain payable in contracts after 1 January 2021.

Otherwise, it will be the financial product manufacturers, not customers, who will benefit from no longer having to pay grandfathered conflicted remuneration to financial advisers.

As a result, the bill includes a power for regulations to be made that will require the pass through of grandfathered conflicted remuneration to clients.

Specifying these requirements in regulations is the most appropriate approach as it provides the ability to make more detailed rules on how benefits must be passed through and also provides for flexibility to respond to changing industry circumstances in a more timely manner.

The government recognises that the industry will need time to implement and adjust to the abolition of grandfathering. In response, the bill provides industry until 1 January 2021 to end all conflicted remuneration, facilitating a smooth transition to the end of grandfathering.

However, where industry can move earlier than 1 January 2021, the government expects firms to do so, and to do it in a way that results in the benefits being passed through to consumers.
To ensure the industry acts swiftly to end grandfathered arrangements and passes through the benefits to clients, the government has issued a direction to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission to monitor and report on industry actions in the period from 1 July 2019 to 1 January 2021.

The government's action through this bill to end grandfathering is an important part of the actions we have taken since releasing our response to the royal commission.

Restoring trust in Australia's financial sector is part of our plan for a stronger economy.

Full details of this measure are contained in the explanatory memorandum. I commend this bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (Partner Service Pension and Other Measures) Bill 2019

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Chester.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Minister for Veterans and Defence Personnel and Deputy Leader of the House) (10:13): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (Partner Service Pension and Other Measures) Bill 2019. The bill is designed to improve outcomes for former partners of veterans, and separately, extend benefits available to Australian Defence Force (ADF) members who served on submarine special operations.

As the Minister for Veterans and Defence Personnel, I recognise the Australian community has a clear expectation that veterans and their families will be well looked after and, of course, as a government, we are absolutely committed to putting veterans and their families first.

Schedule 1 of this bill will improve financial outcomes for the former partners of veterans. Schedule 2 of this bill extends benefits available to ADF members who served on submarine special operations. Schedule 3 of this bill is a technical amendment to align marriage related definitions in veterans' legislation with the definition of marriage made by the Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Act 2017, known as the Marriage Amendment Act.

The amendments to the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) under schedule 1 align all of the partner service pension provisions for former married and non-married partners to ensure equity in treatment. This will ensure a modern legislative provision that recognises the differences in relationship types and removes any discrimination.

Once this bill is passed, all eligible former partners of veterans will remain on partner service pension after separation from their veteran partner for a period of up to 12 months. Additionally, where special domestic circumstances apply, including domestic abuse, legislative instrument amendments will allow all former partners to remain eligible to receive partner service pension until they enter into a new relationship. This preventative measure, part of the government's fourth National Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, will assist partners to leave a violent relationship by providing them with financial support.

The amendments to the VEA under schedule 2 will extend the benefits available to ADF members who served on submarine special operations. Operations between 31 December 1992 and 12 May 1997 will be recognised as operational and qualifying service, giving access to the disability pension and assessment of claims for treatment and compensation, as well as eligibility for the service pension at age 60 and the gold card at age 70.

Once this bill is passed, for those veterans involved in submarine special operations between 31 December 1992 and 12 May 1997, their service will be recognised as operational and qualifying service under the VEA.

Further, the period between 13 May 1997 and 30 June 2006 will not require legislative change, and will be subject to future determinations of non-warlike service, providing further support to eligible ADF members involved in submarine special operations.

Schedule 3 is a technical amendment arising from the changes to the definition of marriage made by the Marriage Amendment Act.
The Marriage Amendment Act amended the Marriage Act 1961 (Cth) to remove the restrictions that limit marriage in Australia to the union of a man and a woman and allowed two people the freedom to marry in Australia, regardless of their sex or gender.

These amendments will mean better outcomes for veterans and their families.

I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

COMMITTEES
Road Safety
Appointment

Mr SUKKAR (Deakin—Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (10:17): On behalf of the Leader of the House, I move:

That:

(1) a Joint Select Committee on Road Safety be appointed to inquire into and report on steps that can be taken to reduce Australia’s road accident rates, trauma and deaths on our roads;

(2) the committee present an interim report on or before 30 March 2020 and its final report on or before 31 July 2020;

(3) the committee consist of nine members, four Members of the House of Representatives to be nominated by the Government Whip or Whips, two Members of the House of Representatives to be nominated by the Opposition Whip or Whips or by any minority group or independent Member, and one Senator to be nominated by the Leader of the Government in the Senate, one Senator to be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, and one Senator to be nominated by any minority group or independent Senator;

(4) participating members may:

(a) be appointed to the committee on the nomination of the Government Whip in the House of Representatives, the Opposition Whip in the House of Representatives, the Leader of the Government in the Senate, the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate or any minority party or independent senator or member of the House of Representatives; and

(b) participate in hearings of evidence and deliberations of the committee, and have all the rights of members of the committee, but may not vote on any question before the committee;

(5) every nomination of a member of the committee be notified in writing to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(6) the members of the committee hold office as a joint select committee until presentation of the committee’s final report or until the House of Representatives is dissolved or expires by effluxion of time, whichever is the earlier;

(7) the committee may proceed to the dispatch of business notwithstanding that not all members have been duly nominated and appointed and notwithstanding any vacancy;

(8) the committee elect:

(a) a Government member as its chair; and

(b) a non-Government member as its deputy chair who shall act as chair of the committee at any time when the chair is not present at a meeting of the committee;

(9) at any time when the chair and deputy chair are not present at a meeting of the committee, the members present shall elect another member to act as chair at that meeting;

(10) in the event of an equally divided vote, the chair, or the deputy chair when acting as chair, have a casting vote;

(11) three members of the committee constitute a quorum of the committee provided that in a deliberative meeting the quorum shall include one Government member of either House and one non-Government member of either House;

(12) the committee:

(a) have power to appoint subcommittees consisting of three or more of its members, and to refer to any subcommittee any matter which the committee is empowered to examine; and

(b) appoint the chair of each subcommittee who shall have a casting vote only;

(13) each subcommittee shall have at least one Government member of either House and one non-Government member of either House;

(14) at any time when the chair of a subcommittee is not present at a meeting of the subcommittee, the members of the subcommittee present shall elect another member of that subcommittee to act as chair at that meeting;

(15) two members of a subcommittee constitute the quorum of that subcommittee, provided that in a deliberative meeting the quorum shall include one Government member of either House and one non-Government member of either House;

(16) members of the committee who are not members of a subcommittee may participate in the proceedings of that subcommittee but shall not vote, move any motion or be counted for the purpose of a quorum;

(17) the committee or any subcommittee have power to:
(a) call for witnesses to attend and for documents to be produced;
(b) conduct proceedings at any place it sees fit;
(c) sit in public or in private;
(d) report from time to time; and
(e) adjourn from time to time and to sit during any adjournment of the House of Representatives and the Senate;
(18) the committee or any subcommittee have power to consider and make use of the evidence and records of any former committee on related matters;
(19) the provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders; and
(20) a message be sent to the Senate acquainting it of this resolution and requesting that it concur and take action accordingly

Ms CATHERINE KING (Ballarat) (10:17): The opposition supports the establishment of this committee but, to be quite frank, it would be better for the government to get on with responding to the inquiry which it commissioned two years ago. In September 2017, the government appointed a panel of road safety experts to conduct an inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy, which was clearly failing to make a material difference in our road toll. The report was handed to the Deputy Prime Minister in September last year. Ten months later, the government has yet to respond to that inquiry.

In March this year the two co-chairs, eminent Australians in this field—Dr John Crozier, a leading trauma surgeon at Liverpool Hospital, and Associate Professor Jeremy Woolley, Director of the Centre for Automotive Safety Research at the University of Adelaide—publicly released a video saying that they were underwhelmed by the government's lack of response to the inquiry's findings. Here we are, with another four months having gone by, and the government's response is to set up this committee. There's still no formal response to the inquiry already completed.

This committee will hear from some of the same people who made submissions to the government's previous inquiry. Nothing has changed other than more lives being lost while the government, frankly, has done very little. We've seen today that the Australian Automobile Association has released a report that shows the road toll is now higher than it was four years ago. One thousand, two hundred and fourteen Australians have died on our roads in the 12 months to 30 June 2019 compared to the 1,170 in the 12 months to June 2015.

Of the 33 individual indicators of the National Road Safety Strategy, which has been in place since 2011, only nine are on track to being met over the strategy's 10-year time frame. It is eight years into a 10-year strategy and the government still cannot measure eight of the indicators, including one of the strategy's two headline targets: reduction of serious injuries by 30 per cent. So, yes, the opposition believes that it is critical for all of us to work together to bring down Australia's road toll and that one death or injury is one too many. But the government needs to get on with actually responding to the work already done in this space.

The committee that we're debating here today will not report until July next year. I know that transport infrastructure ministers are meeting on Friday. I would hope that a proper and formal response to the inquiry that the government undertook and action to improve the road toll are a matter of urgency for those ministers, particularly the Commonwealth ministers. Our view is, whilst we support the committee and support many backbenchers being involved in the work of the committee, we do say that the government does need to get on with the job. We simply cannot wait until the committee reports in July next year to actually start taking real action on road safety.

Question agreed to.

REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Mr BROADBENT (Monash) (10:21): As required by resolutions of the House, I table copies of notifications of alterations of interests received during the period 4 December 2018 to 10 April 2019.

COMMITTEES

Economics Committee

Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training

Membership

Mr SUKKAR (Deakin—Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (10:22): by leave—I move:

Ms Payne and Ms Sharkie be appointed as supplementary members of the Standing Committee on Economics, Ms Payne for the purpose of the committee's review of the Reserve Bank of Australia annual report 2018, and Ms Sharkie for the
purpose of the committees inquiry into the Banking Amendment (Rural Finance Reform) Bill 2019; and Ms Sharkie be appointed a member of the Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training.

Question agreed to.

BILLS

Treasury Laws Amendment (2019 Tax Integrity and Other Measures No. 1) Bill 2019

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:
That this bill be now read a second time.
Question agreed to.
Bill read a second time.

Message from the Governor-General recommending appropriation announced.

Third Reading

Mr SUKKAR (Deakin—Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (10:24): by leave—I move:
That this bill be now read a third time.
Question agreed to.
Bill read a third time.

Fair Work Laws Amendment (Proper Use of Worker Benefits) Bill 2019

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:
That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (10:25): It's another day and another anti-union bill from the government.

Dr Chalmers: Must be Thursday.

Mr BURKE: As the member for Rankin says, it must be Thursday. Every day there has to be something where they decide to bash the unions, because when they look at low wage growth, wage theft and challenges with occupational health and safety their response is, 'Clearly the workers have too much representation, and that's what we need to attack. Today's is the Fair Work Laws Amendment (Proper Use of Worker Benefits) Bill 2019. I want to get right back to first principles about why the funds we're talking about today exist. But before I do, I also want to let everyone know that the arguments from the government about this bill in front of us today are the opposite to what the government argued on their last industrial relations bill. In the last bill they argued: 'We need everything to have corporate equivalence. As much as possible, we need the way we treat people under corporations law to be the same as how we treat people under the Fair Work Act.' We never accepted that test, because from our perspective, if you look at it logically, trade unions and companies are in fact different. They have different purposes. Unions first and foremost are representative bodies.

But if you accept the government's test that the last bill they debated was all about making sure that you treat unions the same as corporations—guess how the funds they're dealing with today are currently regulated? Under the Corporations Act. What we have right now is something where there is complete corporate equivalence. The regulation for the funds we're talking about in this bill right now is under the trusts section of the corporations law. It is identical to how companies are treated—and what has the government decided? 'We need to change that.' If ever we wanted to see how transparent their arguments are—their concept of corporate equivalence is inconsistent; their concept of dealing with health and safety is never consistent—but there's one thing that's consistent: wherever they can find a way to blame workers' representative organisations, single out trade unions and create rules for them that apply to no-one else, they will, and that's exactly what has happened today. So I say, before we get into any of the detail, that if the government believes there is a problem with the funds they're talking about then there's a problem with trusts law, because that is how they're regulated.

But guess what? This government is not about to bring in laws to make it tougher on trusts. This government is not going to bring in laws to this parliament to have a higher regulation of all trusts under the Corporations Act. Why? Because too many of their friends are benefiting from trusts in a whole series of ways and they don't want to have corporate equivalence. They want to make sure of that. I will go through some of the arguments during the time I have, but if any of the arguments of the minister were valid then the problem is in the Corporations Act. But they don't want to amend the Corporations Act; they want to single out anything that involves trade unions and create a different set of rules for them. The reason the funds that are the subject of this bill exist in the first place is
this: with phoenixing and insolvencies, all too often workers lose their entitlements completely. Then the workers lose their entitlements when the company goes under, and, if there's no other fund or no other security available for them, then they come to the taxpayer, and the taxpayer has to deal with it.

These issues were dealt with by the Senate Economics References Committee in December 2015. The title of its report was *I just want to be paid*—not a bad title for a committee report, I've got to say. The committee looked particularly at the construction industry, an industry which has been notorious for phoenixing and insolvencies—some pretty high-profile insolvencies, even in the papers today. When the committee did the calculation in that report of total unpaid employee entitlements in 2013-14, for wages it had the minimum amount owed and the median amount owed. The minimum amount owed for wages is $6.4 million. The median amount is $12.4 million. As you go through wages, annual leave, pay in lieu, redundancy, long service leave and superannuation, the total median amount owed is $136 million.

Let's have a think about how workers' entitlements are normally retained and what normally happens if there are earnings off workers' entitlements. Let me give a quick description again of the magnitude of the problem, with the insolvency examples that were in that report. Walton Constructions went into administration in 2013. They'd operated in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales. They were placed into voluntary administration in October 2013, owing tens of millions of dollars to more than a thousand subcontractors and suppliers, including plumbers and landscapers.

Steve Nolan Constructions went into administration in 2014. They left 200 subbies unpaid, owed up to $30 million. Records also revealed that the company had donated $150,000 to the Liberal Party in New South Wales and $50,000 to the LNP nationally in late 2012 and early 2013. Apparently there was no problem with those donations; they were never raised as a problem off the back of subbies not being paid.

Q Structures went into administration in 2013. In July 2013 Q Structures closed its doors overnight, leaving approximately 32 employees, various suppliers and subcontractors unpaid. Ferro Con, another company owned by the same person who owned Q Structures, went into administration in 2013. In May 2013 Ferro Con was fined $200,000 for the failure to provide a safe workplace on the Adelaide desal plant, which resulted in the death of a 35-year-old rigger. Ferro Con was placed into liquidation prior to the penalties being imposed.

Queensland Nickel is owned by somebody who found a fair bit of spare cash to spend on an election campaign aimed not at getting elected but squarely at Labor. He was probably able to pay his advertising bills, but he didn't pay his workers. Clive Palmer's refinery was closed in 2016, leaving 546 people unemployed, owing more than $70 million in entitlements. Taxpayers ended up with a $66 million bill under the fair entitlements guarantee.

The reason that some employers and unions have got together and said, 'We need to provide these funds,' is that we've seen what happens. We've seen too many situations where the workers' entitlements disappear. We've seen too many situations where the taxpayer has to foot part of the bill but the taxpayer money comes through late, and the workers lose both their jobs and their entitlements on the way through. But, in these situations, what happens to the earnings on that money? This is the bit that the government will never, never talk about. The subject of this bill is the occasions when employees' organisations—unions—and employers have got together and said, 'Okay, to avoid insolvencies, to avoid the situation where you move from job lot to job lot in some industries and, therefore, you never get 10 years up somewhere'—so if you're going to get long service leave, it needs to be paid into a separate fund—'we'll create a separate fund, and the workers' organisation and the employers' organisation will manage it together.' When that happens the workers' entitlements become guaranteed. If the company's insolvent, it doesn't matter. Well, it matters; it's still a problem for a whole lot of subcontractors who might not be covered. But, in terms of the employees, it means that their entitlements are already secure in a different account. When these funds don't exist the entitlements disappear. What the government will then say is, 'No, no. What this bill is about is the earnings and wanting to have transparency on the earnings.'

Let's just logically think through what happens to the earnings when a fund like this doesn't exist. What happens in almost every industry if the employer puts aside, either into a separate bank account, into a fund that they administer or just into their own cash flow, the future entitlements for the workers? It goes into their bank account. Yet, in different ways, it will bring earnings. It might help them with their cash flow. They might earn interest on the money. They might invest the money. What happens to those earnings? We heard from the Minister for Industrial Relations that he regards those earnings as also being workers' money. So what happens in the vast majority of employment situations with those earnings? They go to the profit of the employer, and the employer keeps every cent. And the government don't have a problem with that! If an employer keeps all the future liability for leave, all the leave entitlements, and they keep it in their bank account or they invest it and make money from it, is it then workers' money? No. It's theirs. So we end up with an extraordinary situation. The hypocrisy of the legislation in front of us is that if you have the earnings of workers' entitlements being spent on a donation to the Liberal Party or the profit of the employer then they have no problem with it, but if the earnings on
set-aside entitlements for workers are spent on different programs run by the union or the employer organisation for the benefit of the workers then they're outraged!

If those opposite want to be true to their word, if they actually believe that the earnings on future workers' entitlements are entirely the workers' money, then let's regulate it across the board. Come up with a bill that is true to the rhetoric of the government, and we'll receive it in good faith and work through it. But you can't claim that there's only a concern about the earnings of the workers' money if it's not going entirely to the profit of the employer. That's what this bill says. There's even a clause in there that says, 'If there's a fund that's not jointly managed, if there's a fund that's entirely controlled by the employer, you're exempt from everything that's in front of us. Take it all as profit. Go on a holiday playing golf.' That gets a tick. But spend it on programs for the benefit of the worker and for the benefit of employers and there's a whole regulatory regime that will descend on you. The level of hypocrisy here is breathtaking!

There's only one way to explain how the government got to this conclusion: they just hate unions. They just hate the concept that unions and employer groups are working cooperatively. If they're working cooperatively, there's a problem. But if the employer gets every cent of the cash—tick; there's no problem with that. There's no argument against that from this government. If all the earnings go to the employer, they're happy. If the earnings are jointly managed, we need a new regulatory regime. I've got to say to those opposite: don't pretend you're a centrist government when you're bringing forward this sort of rubbish. Don't pretend that you're about anything other than trying to attack the organisations that argue for better pay and that argue for safer workplaces when you bring in this sort of rubbish.

I've referred a couple of times to the sorts of purposes that these funds then use for the earnings. It's managed under trust law, as I said. We have employer groups and employee groups managing it jointly. They guarantee that the workers' entitlements can't go missing, which is better for the workforce, it's better for good employers who want to provide that sort of loyalty to their workforce and it's much better for the taxpayer, because otherwise a big chunk of the bill comes to the taxpayer. But there are then earnings, because the money is invested in different ways, and so extra money is available that is then managed jointly between employee and employer.

What sorts of projects is that then spent on? There are the free counselling hotline and free domestic violence awareness seminars. As I go through these, think of the contrast; they have no problem if the money is spent on the employer's personal profit, but we get this bill if the money goes to a free domestic violence awareness seminar. They have no problem if the money goes to the employer's profit, but they do have a new regulatory regime if the money goes to free postnatal depression awareness training, free gambling prevention seminars, anxiety stress management services, first aid for babies and children services, women's self defence, autism behaviour management support, free legal advice or free will kits.

They don't have a problem if all the money goes to the profit of the employer, but they do have a problem when it goes to free financial counselling. They don't have a problem when all the money goes to the employer and they can spend it on whatever they want, but they do have a problem when it goes to a fund that's been delivering free funeral cover. They don't have a problem when all the money goes to the profit of the employer, but they do have a problem when it goes to free or discounted asbestos awareness training, when it goes to a whole range of issues for health and safety or when it goes to a whole range of benefits—funeral cover and ambulance cover. That's where they say, 'Oh no, that's the problem.'

If an employer has a fund governed by the employer only, there is a clause in this bill that says, 'Do what you want; you are exempt.' If the employer doesn't even bother to set up a fund of their own and they just keep it all in their own bank account then the bill doesn't even try to address them at all. But if you get cooperation between employer groups and employee groups then the government is exercised and worried about where the earnings might go. I don't mind the argument that any earnings on workers' future benefits and the investment of future benefits should go to workers. Both the Prime Minister and the Minister for Industrial Relations have come in here and said, 'It's the workers money.' Well, if it is then don't only be upset in the circumstances where workers have some degree of control and turn a blind eye to the vast majority of cases where the employer has sole control.

For every example that those opposite want to bring—and they'll bring different examples—with the different purposes that I just referred to, I haven't heard the Minister for Industrial Relations refer to those in his answers. He'll refer to the dollar amount, but he won't refer to the funeral cover that it's being used for. He'll refer to the dollar amount, but he won't refer to the different training that's being provided. He'll refer to the dollar amount and he won't refer to any of the courses that are then run by the employer organisation to make sure that their members become better employers and can deliver safer workplaces to the benefit of the employer, because employers don't want deaths at their workplaces either!
And, if workers' earnings are being spent on that, surely that is exactly the sort of circumstance where you don't bring down a whole regime of red tape and a whole compliance burden, and certainly where you don't put the Registered Organisations Commission in charge of it. That's the very body that was shown to be so discredited and so politicised that it decided that the biggest industrial issue it had to chase wasn't anything that was happening now but went back to a time when the previous Leader of the Opposition just happened to be in charge of a union, and it was so concerned about it that it would make sure, in its liaison with the minister's office, that the media turned up before the police did! And that's the organisation that the government wants to be involved here.

But think about this. I don't have a lot of time for the trade union royal commission—I'll be honest. I was the one who came to this dispatch box and just pointed something out. I was holding a Liberal Party invitation at the time. I don't often hold a Liberal Party invitation, but I came in here and held one up. I didn't accept the invitation, but, in fairness, after that speech, the event slightly changed: they lost their key guest speaker—because, at that point, the guest speaker for the Liberal Party event was going to be the person who just happened to be heading up the royal commission. When we made allegations about the bias, how was that resolved by the royal commission? Well, the royal commissioner held a hearing into himself. He decided that he was not biased, and, having reached that determination, went ahead with the inquiry. And even he didn't recommend this bill!

Even he recommended that you would not put the Registered Organisations Commission in charge of this; you'd have ASIC look at it. And why would you have ASIC look at it? Because these are already regulated under Corporations Law. These are already regulated under trusts law. If those opposite believe, as to any of these funds—and it would be a serious allegation—that a breach of trusts law is taking place, then trusts law will need to be strengthened. They won't do that, because they want so many of their friends to have tax protection under trusts law. That's what they want. So they won't come in and deal with the issue in a proper policy, ethical way.

If you accept that it's under Corporations Law, and if you accept any of the arguments they offered on the previous bill, then you'd be in a world, right now, where corporate equivalence mattered, instead of the absurd proposition that: 'Corporate equivalence matters on the previous bill and, now that we're in an area where corporate equivalence already exists, we'll rush for a new argument.' And the new argument is: 'Any earnings on workers' benefits belong to the workers—unless they belong entirely to the employer.' As arguments go—hint to the other side—that's not your strongest one. But it's the only way of arguing for this bill, because embedded in this bill is a very simple principle: if workers have nothing to do with the earnings on their entitlements then the employer can use that money for whatever they want. If workers do have a cooperative say in what happens to the earnings on their entitlements, then the government's exercised by it.

The proliferation of single employer funds, which would happen outside the registration regime created by this bill, leaves an extraordinary and deliberate loophole. Let's not pretend that this is an accident of drafting, because, even if you take that loophole out, employers don't have to set up a fund at all; they can just keep the future entitlements in their bank account, and they get every single cent for themselves. There are the different amounts that the Leader of the House, the Minister for Industrial Relations, has quoted here from that dispatch box. We've all heard the answers, and there'll be more, and there'll be some wonderful gestures—the higher the number, the hands tend to get to a different angle at the moment of crescendo!

Whatever that number is, here's the hint to interpreting it: if that amount of money came off workers' entitlements and went entirely to the employer for profit, he has no problem with it. He has no problem with it at all. It doesn't matter how many millions of dollars the figure is because, in most industries, these funds don't exist. So think about that. Think about major employers in industries where they don't have these funds. Think of what the earnings, in fact, are on the future entitlements of workers that the employers keep in their bank accounts.

I've got to say that this is not something that Labor has been moving forward with a policy on. It wasn't until those opposite raised the argument that I thought, 'The logical conclusion of what they're saying is, if earnings should always belong to the employees because that's employees' money, then there is a principle that will create a major shift for every employer in this country other than the ones that already have these funds operating.' Those opposite should be careful what they wish for, because they've embarked on an argument that is really dumb. They've embarked on an argument that I don't think they, in fact, believe.

But the argument from those opposite is, I suspect, driven by their true motivation. What's really going on in the heads of those opposite is that, wherever employees' organisations have any power at all, they want to stamp it out. If all the money's going to employers then that's good, but if unions have anything to do with it at all then they've got big problems with it. Have the guts to argue that. Have the guts to come in here and say what you really believe. But don't come in here pretending that there's an outrage over funds being spent for the sorts of purposes that I went through—suicide prevention services, apprentice training, personal protective equipment or even employer subsidies with respect to apprentices. Don't pretend to be outraged by all of that when you've got
the massive loophole here that, if those programs don't happen, it's fine for that same amount of money to go to the employer and be spent on a holiday playing golf or that it's fine for them to buy a new car with it—no problem with that. Apparently it's fine for them to buy a new investment property with it—no problem with that. It's fine for them to get a new bonus out of the earnings on employees' entitlements—no problem with that. But if it's going for any decent purpose there's outrage.

We know why those opposite hate unions. We know, because those opposite told us that low wages were a deliberate design feature of this government's economic policy. Those opposite told us that low wages were something that they sought as a policy objective in itself. We know what unions do. Unions argue for better wages. We know what unions do. Unions argue for safer workplaces. We know what unions do. Unions argue against wage theft at the same time that those opposite accept donations from those who commit wage theft. Those opposite receive donations from people like Gerry Hanssen, a member of the Liberal Party, and they have no problem with that. Those opposite want to increase the gap between rich and poor. They like that wages are flatlining.

This bill, with the hypocrisy that was written all over it, is about one thing: if workers have any degree of additional power through their organisations, those opposite have a problem with it. I say to those opposite: sorry, but you've been found out. It was a nice try! There was a bit of a crescendo in a couple of question times. But the loopholes that you put in this are entirely to the benefit of one side of the bargaining table. Do you know what? The employers who are involved in these sorts of funds don't even want that advantage; they'd rather make sure the entitlements of their workers are safe. This bill will be opposed, and I don't care whether it's amended in the Senate. In whatever form it comes out, Labor is going to continue to oppose it.

I move:

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

"the House:
(1) declines to give the bill a second reading; and
(2) notes that:
   (a) this Government has not proposed legislation to deal with important workplace relations matters, such as wage theft, flat lining wages growth, or deaths in the workplace;
   (b) this bill and the Act it seeks to amend represent an inconsistent approach by the Government to responding to Royal Commissions; and
   (c) the Government's entire approach to workplace relations laws is to attack workers' organisations with the specific intention of weakening the capacity of those organisations to combat wage theft, achieve wage growth, and ensure that workplaces are safe".

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Claydon): Is the amendment seconded?

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (10:55): I second the amendment, and rise to say a few words in support of the amendment before my colleague the member for Fraser makes his first speech in this place.

The member for Watson has outlined the flaws in this Fair Work Laws Amendment (Proper Use of Worker Benefits) Bill 2019 in a way that many of us on this side could probably not compete with. He has actually set out in fine detail that this bill is basically about attacking workers. It is an hypocrisy in the way in which it attacks workers who have a say over entitlements as opposed to companies which do very little or hold on to workers' entitlements. There is hypocrisy involved in that.

The people listening were probably quite concerned by what was being said. What happens is that all workers in this country have leave entitlements: long service leave, sick leave and annual leave. Employers, in the main part, are expected to put that money to one side and not spend it. They are to have it there in case a worker wants an entitlement. In some industries, like the construction industry, as has been pointed out by the member for Watson, workers' money for these entitlements is actually paid into a separate fund. It is that fund that is being attacked under this bill—it is that fund, where workers actually have a say in how the earnings on these savings are spent.

Workers don't have a say when their employer makes money from their other entitlements that are put to the side. Workers don't have a say or don't even know what the employer does. The truth is that most employers don't put it aside for when the worker wants an entitlement and then complain when a worker wants their entitlement because it hits their cash flow.

The hypocrisy in this bill is large. In question time, the minister has tried to introduce this and say that because of the way in which these funds spend or how they distribute the income made from these entitlements savings that it's wage theft. Let's actually look at what wage theft in this country is. It is in an Orwellian way, and using a
I'd like to remind the House of some of the examples of wage theft that are actually occurring in this country. What is real wage theft in this country? The government, by introducing this argument in question time, allows everyone on this side to remind the House what wage theft actually is. It is basically stealing. It is when employers deliberately underpay their workers. It has become part of a business model that so many employers are now using as a way to cut costs. It's become a race to the bottom in so many industries. What once was considered to be a problem in the contract cleaning industry or the security industry, or for our farm workers—people working in agriculture—is now popping up in every single industry across Australia.

Stealing is wrong, yet thousands of Australian workers every year fall victim to wage theft. This is what the government is trying to link to funds which do good for their members. They spend the earnings made from entitlements that have been saved on programs that support workers. There are some cases of wage theft that have hit the media recently. We all know about what's happening in the hospitality industry, and I do want to recognise the work of Hospo Voice. This government tried to claim that it was the work of the Fair Work Ombudsman but it was only after the complaints of Hospo Voice, United Voice and those workers standing up and saying, 'We've been underpaid by this celebrity chef.' Hospo Voice is hospitality workers getting together, standing out the front of restaurants and actually shaming them and damaging their reputations by saying, 'You haven't paid me; I deserve to be paid.'

Some of the underpayments are alarming. In my own area of Bendigo, it is rife. One of the cases that I want to highlight to the House relates to a particular restaurant that underpaid nine casuals and a part-time employee. One of the underpayments was about $11,000. The company actually refused, in the first case, to pay back pay and was then fined by the Fair Work Ombudsman. What rate were they paying these workers? A flat rate of $10.50 per hour. Some of the workers didn't complain because they were here on visas and they were threatened with deportation. Other workers who were born and bred in Bendigo did speak up, and threats of violence and threats against their life were made. It is companies like this that the government are protecting by their failure to take real action on wage theft. They talked about it before the election, but where's the legislation before this parliament? Instead, what they have focused on is anti-union, antiworker bills. Instead what they've focused on is demonising the people who expose the insidious nature of wage theft.

As I said, it doesn't just happen in the hospitality industry; it is rife in the transport and trucking industry. The way in which they are ripping off drivers—all of a sudden their penalty rates have gone. They've been told that they're on a flat rate from now on. In one particular case, again in my electorate, a worker was short-changed $16,635. And, for raising the complaint, this particular worker was sacked and then had to fight an unfair dismissal case! A lot of the workers who are victims of wage theft are also casuals and are suffering from economic insecurity. They go through the torture and trauma of, and put up with, being underpaid because they're too scared to lose their job. This is a big problem for us in this country.

Apart from the work done by the Fair Work Ombudsman—and I should highlight that the number of wage theft cases they've been able to follow up on is just the tip of the iceberg—there have been a number of surveys and research done to try and expose the insidious nature of wage theft. One was the National Temporary Migrant Work Survey. It covered a lot of temporary migrant workers, but at the heart of it was wage theft and the scope of underpayment of these workers. They found that 30 per cent of surveyed participants were paid $12 per hour less, approximately half the minimum wage. Almost half, 46 per cent of participants, earned $15 an hour or less, well below the minimum wage.

This is what is happening in our country. This is the extent of wage theft. Yet this government had the audacity to link workers having their wages stolen to what a fund is doing to support workers, thinking the Australian people would just accept it. Just because you say it's so doesn't make it so, but this government is classic at doing that.

It's not just our backpackers, international students, and people working here on a temporary work arrangement; it's people working on our farms. Again, we talk a lot in this place about the farmers, but what about the farm workers? Whether they're people who were born in Australia or who have become Australians through citizenship, or people who are here on temporary arrangements, many of them are underpaid. They're not sure what the piece rates are. They're rarely paid a proper full-time wage. These workers are not being paid well.

At the beginning of my contribution I talked about what this government says is wage theft. They say it is funds that have gone to a union where members have decided to prioritise certain programs. I'll read out some of the programs that are being funded. Rank and file members have decided—through the organisation of Protect, which is off the earnings of workers' entitlements—that they're going to offer a free counselling hotline, domestic
violence awareness seminars, free gambling prevention services, free first aid for babies and children, women's self-defence courses, free legal advice, family baby packs, emergency transport cover and retirement planning. These are a lot of the things we would expect our government to do, but the construction industry has been so frugal in managing workers' entitlements. When they have put workers in charge of it, they have benefited workers, yet this government has a problem with that. They would much rather see this money in the hands of the employers. They would much rather see the government of the day pick up the pieces and pay the workers entitlements when companies go broke.

This is a bad bill. It is another example of how the Liberals want to attack unions, attack workers and tear down anything that is working and is good in our country.

Debate adjourned.

BUSINESS
Rearrangement

Mrs ANDREWS (McPherson—Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) (11:06): I move:

That consideration of government business order of the day No. 3, Water Amendment (Indigenous Authority Member) Bill 2019, be postponed until a later hour this day.

Question agreed to.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH
Address-in-Reply

Consideration resumed of the motion:

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

May it please Your Excellency:

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

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bird): Before I call the honourable member for Fraser, I remind honourable members that this is his first speech. I therefore ask that the usual courtesies be extended to him.

Dr MULINO (Fraser) (11:06): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. I add my wish to those who have spoken before me that the 46th Parliament can achieve overdue meaningful constitutional recognition for this nation's Indigenous peoples.

During my inaugural speech in the Victorian parliament, my then six-month-old daughter Carina left the chamber in tears. She is yet to indicate which policy position she found the most objectionable! Carina, who is here today, is now five—and may last longer this morning! In preparing this speech, I've tried to write for two people. The first is Carina in thirty years' time. When Carina downloads this speech in 2050, her AI assistant will inform her that it has been accessed seven times since it was delivered and that she is the first person to download it other than the author or his mother! Although I can even now see her roll her eyes at my attempt at quips, hopefully the values I profess and the aspirations that I outline inspire her to press the 'like' button. The second person is the younger me, when I joined the Australian Labor Party thirty years ago. I enter this place less animated by idealism and ideology than 30 years ago and more focused on using experience, consensus and realism to achieve practical sustainable benefits for the people in the community I now represent. I hope that this speech reflects sufficient foresight to resonate with Carina in 30 years' time and that it is also ambitious enough to satisfy my earlier self who started the long journey to this place with such hope.

I have the great honour of being the first member for the new seat of Fraser—named after the 22nd Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Fraser. While naming a Labor-leaning seat after a Liberal Prime Minister might appear somewhat incongruous, it quickly became apparent to me that there is a meaningful connection. The Vietnamese community is a large, growing and vibrant part of the Fraser community, constituting over 30,000 people. Many in that community still remember with great respect Malcolm Fraser's generosity after the arrival of refugees following the war in their country. One woman told me she named her son Fraser and took him to be photographed with the then Prime Minister. She is now an ALP stalwart but still remembers with great fondness Malcolm Fraser signing that photo with her son.

The division of Fraser reflects Australia's multicultural tradition at its best. In addition to a thriving Vietnamese-Australian community, there are many other large communities drawn from the four corners of the globe now proudly calling Fraser—and Australia—home. On Harmony Day earlier this year, I visited a primary
school in Sunshine West, with an enrolment of fewer than 200 students, displaying flags from 45 countries, all represented among the student body. Those students' journeys to that school reflect my own family's experience. I was born in Italy. To any High Court justices in the gallery, I renounced my citizenship long ago. My mother, who is in the gallery today, was travelling in Europe following success at teachers college. She met my father and the rest, as they say, is history. When my father and mother emigrated to Australia in 1970, they had nothing but a suitcase and an 18-month-old son who, before each mealtime, was already honing his vocal chords for future stints in question time.

Much as political families are team efforts, my father's success in completing high school equivalence at night while working multiple jobs and becoming a nurse, reflected both his hard work and my mother's tenacious support of him. She provided this support while raising my sister and me and working full-time as a teacher herself. My mother and father created a happy and fulfilling life for my sister and me and, in doing so, also contributed greatly to the broader community. This is a story repeated thousands of times across Fraser. Australia is not unique in having a large foreign-born population, but I don't believe that any other country is better at knitting together disparate communities.

Reflecting on the privilege of being the first person to represent the new seat of Fraser made me think about my own journey to this place. I was inspired to join the Labor Party by the transformational reforms of the Hawke-Keating governments. These reforms spanned the full gamut, including major social, economic and environmental policies. The economic reforms of that era made our economy more competitive and outward looking. These policies weren't slavish gestures to economic abstractions. They were motivated by outcomes: higher incomes, better quality of life, access to services, and security in retirement. In outlining my vision for the next wave of economic reform, I believe we must craft a new agenda for new times—one that is as unrestricted by comparisons with this earlier era as it is proud of that legacy. I believe that, at its core, future reform should balance reward and risk.

First, reward: with the right policy settings, our nation could reap huge rewards. Many economic reforms over recent decades created productivity growth by tearing down comfortable yet unsustainable decades-old arrangements and unleashing competition, creativity and responsiveness to price signals. We should continue to embrace this agenda. We also have an opportunity to add to it through effective, targeted regulation that achieves co-ordination and co-operation in ways that have only recently become possible. Our modern, interconnected society is fueled by technological advances across many fields, including computing and telecommunications. However, much of the innovation that we experience on a day-to-day level depends not just on increasing the number of diodes that we can squeeze onto a pinhead, but also on advances in fields such as economics and psychology—and usually without us realising it.

For example, ride-sharing applications rely on remarkable telecommunications and computing technology, and combine these almost instantaneously with optimisation and coordination algorithms to achieve vastly improved outcomes for consumers. Recent public sector policy successes offer a glimpse into the benefits that flow from governments embracing this convergence of innovation occurring across seemingly disparate fields. In Victoria last year, in coordination with some of the world's top market design experts, the state government created a market for bus routes for a special school. At this school, students with autism were travelling for up to four hours every day, and some also had to change buses. This was terribly stressful for students and their families and also disrupted students' learning time. However, after a route optimisation and a separate purpose-designed auction for each of seven bus routes, travel times were reduced by over 50 per cent with no students required to change buses. And the cost to government fell. One mother said she was a 'big fan', and stated that her son's travel times:

... have been cut from 90 minutes each way to 30 minutes and that he is much, much happier and his behaviours are much more manageable both at school and at home.

This is an example of using modern technology not for profit but for the public good.

Markets like this could be used to benefit the students of every regional and rural school in Australia. Markets like this could improve access to train stations, shopping centres and healthcare providers in the outer suburbs of every capital city and in regional cities, places just like Fraser. This is where public transport options are often limited and force people into their cars or into isolation. Markets like this, which harness the confluence of emerging technology and regulation, could drive positive change that reaches every part of society.

Even now, governments in Australia and overseas are developing modern markets that dramatically improve outcomes in relation to biosecurity, environmental regeneration, educational placements, matching organ transplants with donors and many other life-changing applications. The next wave of microeconomic reform should simultaneously harness cooperation and coordination through communication technology; competition through efficient markets with rules designed for consumers' benefit; service differentiation through big data with consumer controls; and optimisation through advances in computing.

CHAMBER
Of course, not all areas of service delivery are the direct responsibility of the Commonwealth, but, by creating appropriate incentives and regulation that creates more opportunities for transparent and informed choice, the next wave of productivity enhancing reform could benefit the public, private and not-for-profit sectors alike. And that is the grand trifecta.

Why do incremental improvements in productivity matter so much for our quality of life and, more importantly, for our children's quality of life? Albert Einstein once described compound interest as the eighth wonder of the world. Long-run economic growth is like compound interest. It has a transformative power that almost defies comprehension. Even a slight change in economic growth, if sustained over time, makes a huge difference in living standards. Australia's per capita GDP growth has grown at around two per cent per annum on average since World War II. Even though this ranks highly for an advanced economy, our rate of per capita GDP growth has slipped in recent years. We are currently experiencing the steepest decline in living standards since the early 1980s. This is also reflected in our multifactor productivity, which has stagnated since 2000, having grown strongly in preceding decades.

To give a simple example: if our GDP grew at an average of 0.5 per cent per annum for the next 30 years, GDP per capita would be 16 per cent higher in 2050 than it is today. If it grew at two per cent per annum for those 30 years, it would be 81 per cent higher. This is the marvel that Einstein described. We must ensure that the Australia of 2050, when it looks back on 2019, knows that it didn't miss the opportunity for economic development and the better living standards, social outcomes and environmental protections that come with it.

I'm very optimistic about Australia's prospects for growth. The technological and regulatory advances, however, that could drive that growth worry many people who, rightly, fear that they might be disadvantaged by the disruption that change brings. The flipside of reward is risk, and risk is not borne equally among all Australians. Our understanding of risk has been deepened by the work of Robert Shiller, who won the Nobel prize for economics in 2013 for his research that included many practical policy applications. Among Shiller's lesser accolades was teaching me macroeconomics when I studied for a PhD at Yale. His approach has shaped my thinking on policy ever since.

Risk pooling, the idea that we are better off working together and sharing risks, has been central to social interactions ever since humans started living together. In comparatively recent times, the modern welfare state represents a bold expansion of risk management practices. While the welfare state is partly motivated by the need to provide some services on a universal basis, such as education and health, it is also designed to protect those suffering unexpected loss.

It is no accident that three of the key pieces of legislation underpinning Bismarck's revolutionary safety net included the word 'insurance' in the title: the Health Insurance Bill of 1883, the Accident Insurance Bill of 1884 and the Old Age and Disability Insurance Bill of 1889. Similarly, Labor Prime Minister Andrew Fisher's age pension and FDR's New Deal framed the provision of unemployment and retirement benefits as insurance schemes.

Australia's most significant policy reform of the last 30 years, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, extended risk management to an area where government already provided some support but where that support was 'underfunded, unfair, fragmented and inefficient'. The NDIS is universalist in spirit, but it is also designed to deliver the advantages of better risk management. I believe that we need to extend risk management further.

Much of the frustration and disillusionment with political, economic and social systems that has been expressed so vocally through social media and at the ballot box in recent years is driven by a feeling that the risks and benefits of technological change and globalisation are not being shared equitably. Most of us benefit almost imperceptibly from globalisation and technological change: we casually buy a fancier phone each year or a well-priced bottle of red from an exotic location. But for some people — for many people — the changes wrought by automation, by trade and by organisational restructuring bring uncertainty and loss. These people may experience lower incomes, greater job and financial insecurity, and possibly redundancy and long-term unemployment. These people may have mortgages. These people may have dependants. These people may have insufficient savings for retirement.

This is the lived experience confirmed by research that shows a hollowing of Australia's middle class in recent decades. Globalisation, deindustrialisation and an expansion of the so-called knowledge economy have driven rapid growth in the employment share of high-skill jobs. At the same time, medium-skill jobs susceptible to automation have fallen significantly as a share of employment. The share of low-skill jobs has not changed greatly, but the quality of many of those jobs has worsened, thanks to the 'exponential growth in the relatively unregulated gig economy' and the weakened bargaining power of many workers.
We as democratic representatives, and especially as social democrats, must listen to recent expressions of discontent aimed at our political and social institutions. We must avoid the trap of dismissing these concerns as 'populism', unworthy of serious consideration. I believe that one of the great lessons of recent elections here and abroad is that we ignore the human cost of change at our peril, no matter our party allegiance.

Like many advanced economies, we have some programs to assist with people's vulnerability to this change. But, much like pre-NDIS supports, I believe that these are 'underfunded, unfair, fragmented and inefficient'. We need a better way.

I propose an approach that could be described as productivity insurance. As a nation, we should commit to sharing a proportion of the benefits of productivity growth with those most adversely affected by change. A new, risk-management-oriented approach could be built around several core principles.

First, existing programs should be coordinated to create a holistic and lifelong approach for each individual. I again think about Carina and her generation in 2050. Her generation will change careers far more frequently than mine did. Our society will have to invest far more in skills, training and education, particularly for mid-career transitions. As a nation, we cannot afford to be glib about lifelong training and learning.

Second, I believe that assistance should be targeted. Some people cope well with economic disruption and may thrive on the opportunities it creates. Many won't, and government should target assistance to those who are most at risk of long-term unemployment and underemployment.

Finally, each person's individual path needs to be practical and sustainable. We can't comfort people losing well-paid jobs in manufacturing, the resources sector or the energy sector with the vague notion that they might get a job in a totally unrelated field, thousands of kilometres away, and expect them to be satisfied. People don't generally expect government to protect them from all uncertainty. But, when government rightly assumes some responsibility for helping individuals and communities cope with change, people will only have faith in that assistance if they believe that their personal transition is both realistic and fair.

Fraser is home to the historic Harvester decision. It was a world-leading judgement that set a benchmark for how we think about fair rates of pay. More than a century later, we need to build on this fundamentally humane approach so that our social safety net includes protection not just for how much people are paid but also for how they are provided assistance in transitioning from one career to another.

A key challenge for our nation is to find the right balance between reward and risk. With better risk management, people will be in a position to take on more risk, and that can drive productivity growth. In turn, with better risk management, we will share the benefits of that productivity growth more fairly.

I conclude by thanking the many people who made it possible for me to be here today—first, the hundreds of ALP members in the Fraser electorate. These people are the lifeblood of the party. Many thanks also to my incredibly dedicated campaign team, who put in a 24/7 effort, come rain, hail or shine. Special mention is due to my campaign manager, Jake Cripps.

The Fraser community constantly reinforces to me the legacy of the four members that preceded me. I acknowledge Bill Shorten, Tim Watts, Maria Vamvakinou and Brendan O'Connor. I also thank the state MPs who so ably represent the Fraser community: Natalie Suleyman, Marlene Kairouz, Katie Hall and Natalie Hutchins.

In addition to acknowledging the member for Maribyrnong's outstanding representation of almost half of Fraser, I thank Bill Shorten for the privilege of working in his office on some of the great Labor reforms of recent times. In a crowded field of achievements, one stands out. Success has many parents, but the NDIS is the brainchild of one MP. I also acknowledge Jacinta Collins, who gave me my first opportunity in this building and was a great role model on many fronts: her integrity, her policy rigour and her courage.

My association with the labour movement started over 30 years ago when I worked at Big W when at high school, joining the SDA and then becoming a shop steward. The SDA taught me the importance and impact of collective action and has supported me in innumerable ways since those days on the shop floor. I thank Michael Donovan for his support over many years, and my good friends Senator Raff Ciccone and Lizzie Blandthorn. I also acknowledge the union movement as a whole, which is so critical to underpinning social justice and delivering equitable economic outcomes in this country.

An occasionally disruptive and unruly young man I worked alongside at Big W and attended school with was called Dave Smith—or should I say, Mr Speaker, to preserve order, the member for Bean. Dave and another high school class mate, Stuart, joined the ALP slightly before me, and Dave entered the other place around a year ago. Given that I am giving my first speech 20 minutes before Dave, perhaps after three decades, I am finally catching up. You have both been role models to me throughout my life, and I thank you for a lifetime of friendship. I also
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Thank my good friends Jules and Paul, who have always supported my political career, even when they were
highly sceptical of my policy positions.

Thanks to my parents for a lifetime of support, even when the inner workings of politics often appear
inexplicable; to my incredible sister, a remarkable mother and decorated police officer, and an inspiration to all
who know and love you; and to John, who enthusiastically shares my wonkish interest in policy.

Lastly and mostly I thank Sarah and Carina. Sarah and I met while volunteering together tying ALP balloons to
the arms of unsuspecting small children in the Kmart car park in Boronia, in Melbourne's outer suburbs. We have
not yet made a pilgrimage back to this place that is so easy to underestimate for its romantic potential. Since
working to a common cause that day, Sarah and I have maintained a unity of purpose: sharing our lives and, now,
building a family. Sarah and Carina, you are both my motivation for being here and also the reason I desperately
want to leave at the end of each sitting week. I hope that the tension between me wanting to be in this chamber
and wanting to return home helps to make me a better father to Carina in 2019 and able to contribute positively to
the world that she will live in over the coming decades.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bird): I congratulate the member on his contribution. Before I call the
honourable member for Bean, I remind the House that this is the honourable member's first speech and I ask the
House to extend to him the normal courtesies.

Mr DAVID SMITH (Bean) (11:32): Let me begin by acknowledging that we meet on the most beautiful land
of the Ngunawal and Ngambri people; a land I grew up on and know intimately. I pay my respects to the wise and
caring elders past, present and emerging. In my time here, I will work tirelessly to ensure that this House does not
simply acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians but that it actively empowers their
communities, including my own here in the nation's capital.

I have a confession to make, which is that during these first parliamentary sitting weeks I have spent much of
my time in escalating panic. I have been sitting here listening to the first speeches of my cohort, which have been
at varying times moving, incisive, deeply personal, witty and inspirational, all the time conscious that my own
contribution was not doing so well.

As you would be aware, I am in the unusual but not unique position of making a second first speech. It is,
however, unusual to be making a second first speech within 12 months, particularly when that original first speech
was itself unexpected. In my joy at first entering parliament in the Senate chamber, I gave my all to that first
presentation of my thoughts and desires about what I wanted to contribute to public life, not pausing to think that
I'd have to do it again so soon. As a result, this second time around was looking decidedly less inspired.

In my desperation for some inspiration, I contacted Bob McMullan, a former member for the former seat of
Fraser, and asked him how he tackled the herculean task of a second first speech. His response? He didn't do one.
After further research I found that neither did Cheryl Kernot. I didn't realise that this was an option! While I
briefly contemplated going down the same path, I couldn't for a number of reasons.

Firstly, I could not refuse the opportunity to state again publicly what a privilege it is to be elected. I am
honoured to stand here in this chamber as the first member for Bean, representing the most beautiful part of the
Australian Capital Territory and Norfolk Island, ready to serve the people of Bean from the Lanyon Valley to
Burnt Pine. It's a privilege that a young David Smith would certainly never have thought was possible and yet a
privilege which I take with the seriousness that it deserves.

Secondly, I did not want the first ever member for Bean to have been recorded for posterity as not proffering a
first speech. It would be a disservice to the wonderful people of my electorate and the extraordinary man for
whom it was named.

Thirdly, I wanted to stand with this new Labor cohort and particularly follow the member for Fraser, my long-
time friend since high school. The member for Fraser and I met in 1983, in year 8 at Marist College Canberra,
with a thirst for knowledge and an appetite for the common good. In the Hawke and Keating governments we
could see an exciting agenda that married policy innovation with a reinvigoration of the social contract, a
government prepared to lead at home and abroad. Our journey in the world of work began together at Big W in
Woden. A key part of our pay packets—yes, they were literally still those then, for the millennials in the
audience!—were the penalty rates we received for working weekends and evenings.

We honed our debating skills in the ACT schools competitions, competitions that like so many other
community activities relied upon the tireless efforts of volunteers. After all those debates, this is the first occasion
on which I have spoken after the member for Fraser! It is true that we had the capacity to be rather annoying at
school, always ready with a smart answer involving some terrible pun and sat in the back row tormenting those at
the desks in front of us. It is a joy for me to see some of those tormented people here in the galleries today. But
that is why, in the infinite wisdom of the member for Fowler, we are seated nowhere near each other in this chamber!

So, deciding that I would proceed with a second first speech, I shamefacedly unburdened myself to my wife about the trouble I was having pulling together what I wanted to say. My reasons were that much of what I said the first time still held. I am still proud to carry on the tradition of Labor members for the south of Canberra, including Gai Brodtmann, Annette Ellis, Ros Kelly, Kep Enderby and Jim Fraser. Our region has been represented by teachers, public servants, a journalist, a barrister and, now, a Smith with an ‘i’. They have set a standard I stand ready to uphold. This region has a long history of electing Labor members, and I am honoured to be one of them and the first of what will hopefully be many for Bean.

I am still passionate about the causes that motivated me 12 months ago. It won’t be surprising that the positions I outlined in my first first speech in relation to the labour movement, the value and importance of public service, an Australian republic, homelessness and inequality, the importance of STEM education and STEM jobs, and regional responsibilities are ones that I continue to hold.

My wife's response to all that was to say that, while that may be true, having had the privilege of 12 months in parliament, surely there were things that had happened that had taught me invaluable lessons that I would carry forward into this term, that my experiences at various times had surprised or chastened me or maybe even confirmed what I'd thought being an elected representative would entail. This made me reflect on my time in the Senate and so today, in this unusual second first speech, I wanted to take the time to share with you some of my lessons from my first 12 months in this place as well as to talk about Bean.

I learnt that putting dad jokes in speeches recorded by Hansard does not make them any more endearing to my children!

I have asked, 'How much of this government can a koala bear?' and it's not unusual for me to make a Tom Jones pun. I will keep trying in this place. I learnt that, when you quote from The Betoota Advocate, you should ensure that mainstream media outlets know that you are aware that it is a satirical website! That said, there were times when it was difficult to differentiate between satire and the reality of parliamentary life last year.

I realised that, despite changing houses, I continued to get phone calls for Senator Dean Smith. The temptation to grant pairs is overwhelming! I found out that the standard of question time responses doesn't improve despite the change in chamber, but the Senate, with Senators Cormann and Cameron, had much better accents. I've discovered that, every time you put food in your mouth, there will be a division. This is called tactics!

I learnt that a moment of well-intentioned lightheartedness can be inappropriate in hindsight. After my first first speech, late in the evening, when we thought no-one was around, I indulged my daughter, Stella, to skip hand-in-hand down the length of the corridor that ran past the Senate chamber. But, alas, we were caught by a very sombre-faced senior journalist who commented, 'At least someone is having fun.' I thought that was a bit harsh until the next morning, when we had a new Prime Minister.

On a more serious note, I learnt very quickly that Parliament House is really run by the amazing staff, from the chamber attendants, the cleaners and the security staff all the way to the Usher of the Black Rod and the Clerk of this chamber. As a mid-term entrant to the Senate, without the benefit of the formal processes at the beginning of parliamentary terms, I learnt I could rely on the invaluable expertise and kindness of the staff here, whether it was asking questions of the Parliamentary Library, working with the Parliamentary Education Office or asking Events for a tour of this great building.

Often in this noisy chamber, we hear about 'the quiet Australians'. Well, the quiet Australians that make this place work are public servants. One of those quiet Australians, Gina Hall, is retiring after 25 years serving this great parliament and guiding a few hundred thousand visitors through Parliament House. Gina joined as a guide in September 1994 after two decades of service in the Air Force. Her friends joked at the time, 'Imagine Gina getting paid to talk!' She retired yesterday after 25 years serving the visitors, members and senators of Parliament House. Thank you, Gina, for your amazing service.

I have had it confirmed that striking a work-life balance can be hard, even if you're from Canberra. The first sitting weeks caused complete upheaval in my household as my children did not at all anticipate how all-encompassing my new role would be: that I would be gone by the time they woke, and they'd be asleep by the time I came home; that attempts at conversation would often be shut down by phone calls that I had to take; that they would have to see their dad's face everywhere, and so would their friends; and that, outside of parliamentary sitting periods, there was a calendar full of competing events at home and events that took me away from Canberra on committee work or to Norfolk Island. Things have gotten much better as we developed the rituals that became touchstones to remind us of our connection, even though we saw little of each other physically: a
promised kiss goodnight even if asleep, and ensuring that time in non-parliamentary sitting periods is carved out for family time and that my children also see this as being like any other workplace in this country.

The advice from fellow members has been invaluable in this regard. I can only imagine how much more difficult it would be for members, senators and their families who have to travel significant distances or are constantly on the road. The sacrifices that are made by your families for the public service are enormous. In particular, I pay tribute to the member for Maribyrnong and the extraordinary sacrifices that he and his family have made for the common good over the last six years.

Last year, I also learnt that we deal with complex issues where there are not always easy right or wrong answers. One of the best examples of this was the Restoring Territory Rights (Assisted Suicide Legislation) Bill 2015 considered by the Senate last year. At its essence, the bill was about whether citizens living in the territories should have the same right, through their local legislatures, as citizens in the states to make their own laws. In my view, recorded in Hansard, there can be no doubt the answer to that question is yes.

While my own personal view is not in support of the legalisation of euthanasia—for me, the risk of exploitation of the vulnerable is too great—this is not something that should be restricted from consideration by the ACT and Northern Territory legislative assemblies in a way it is not restricted from consideration by state parliaments. I agree with the former senator and chief minister Gary Humphries when he said:

… we may not agree with the ACTs legislative choices, but we have an obligation to respect them where they are democratically made.

If this matter returns to this parliament it is a position I will maintain.

I also learnt that territory rights issues are not just about the ACT and NT. An unusual part of the electorate of Bean, in addition to southern ACT, is the external territory of Norfolk Island. You can imagine that being part of an electorate that is largely urban and landlocked and is 1,900 kilometres away is not the most obvious fit for effective representation. This is exacerbated by the lack of representation at a territory level of a kind similar to that which exists in the ACT or NT. Indeed there is an absence of any democratically elected territory-level representation.

Just like the rest of Bean, Norfolk Island has a rich history. The Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area is one of the best surviving examples of large-scale convict transportation and colonial expansion of European powers. The descendants of the HMAV Bounty mutineers and Tahitians from the Pitcairn Islands gives the island a unique culture and language. It has unique flora and fauna, and is one of the most beautiful places on earth. Its history presents challenges that have vexed this place since its incorporation into the Commonwealth early in the 20th century. Many of those challenges are a result of its remoteness and topography. It has no natural harbour, no place for ships to shelter. To this day, sea freight is still unloaded at sea and lightered into the port.

However, many of the issues the people of Norfolk Island face are of our making, and we certainly have the power to solve them together. We need to promote Norfolk Island as a place for Australian and international visitors and investors, whilst preserving its unspoiled beauty and world heritage areas. We need to ensure it has modern and fast communications facilities so its beauty can be shared, and to overcome the tyranny of distance so residents and visitors can work, play and integrate with the broader Australian economy.

Most importantly, however, I want to reflect on what I said a year ago when I stood in the other place and spoke in favour of the repeal of the Andrews act. I quoted from the Hon. Clyde Holding whilst introducing the Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Bill:

However, unlike every other person in this country, where a fair go is the creed by which we live, they cannot elect a member of their own community to their own government. They have no say in the decisions which affect their everyday lives. What an extraordinary admission in a country so committed to democratic ideals, and why? Are these people somehow different from other Australians? Are they second-class citizens in some way? Do they not understand, or have opinions on, the issues that confront them daily? Can they not be trusted with their own destiny? The answer to all these questions is very simple. The only difference between these people and the rest of Australia is that they live in the Australian Capital Territory.

These words hold true today for Norfolk Island. We should not abridge the basic right of all Australians for self-determination in the delivery of services that affect them in their daily lives. At the moment there is significant doubt over the delivery of education services to Norfolk Island once the New South Wales government withdraws its services in 2021. My commitment to my constituents on the island is to work with them and the government over the next three years to tackle these challenges and issues and work on a path towards ensuring the people of Norfolk have a genuine voice and influence over matters that we take for granted. A good start would be providing external territories a voice at COAG.

I realised that the many faiths that make up this parliament are a strength. Like many in this parliament, faith is something that is important to me. I look across our great parliament and am proud to be in a nation where our
citizens are entitled to their beliefs, where all beliefs are respected, where we can have a Jewish member for Macnamara, a Muslim member for Cowan, and a Christian member for Bean—and all from the same party. It is essential for me that members of all faiths and those with no faith at all can respectfully gather in our capital and focus on our common cause: to make life better and more equal for all Australians.

There are many of Christian faith who I look to for examples of leadership, but two schools in my electorate hold the names of no finer examples of them. The first, Caroline Chisholm School, is a wonderful public school in Chisholm. Caroline Chisholm offers us all a great example of activist leadership, calling on the British to support the social needs of people in the colonies and helping female immigrants as they arrived in Australia. The second is St Mary Mackillop College in Wanniassa and Isabella Plains. St Mary Mackillop reminds me that this parliament should not just be a place of words but of action; for young people look up to us and, as she said, 'We must teach more by example than by word'.

My faith journey began at home but was augmented by the influence of Father Parker Moloney, the parish priest at St Augustine's Farrer for most of my childhood and young adult life. The son of the Hon. Parker Moloney, a minister in the Scullin government, the great talent that Parker had was to make the mysteries of the faith meaningful in the daily lives of parishioners but with an emphasis on social justice. He never forgot that Christmas Day was the greatest of the year because:

It's the day before the races out at Tangmalangaloo.

The key questions for Parker were: who is my neighbour, and what am I prepared to do for my neighbour? These are, I believe, the critical questions to ask in relation to our work here. It shouldn't be about picking sides or making statements about unfunded empathy.

In my 12 months here I've been reminded that the difference you can make in individuals' lives is enormous, but I've also been continually surprised by the realisation that what happens in your electorate can really impact the world. Two weekends ago, on Sunday, 21 July, more than a thousand people gathered down at the Canberra Deep Space Communications Complex under the watchful eye of the old Honeysuckle Creek dish to watch those fateful moments when Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon. You could barely hear a pin drop as the images that had been relayed from Honeysuckle Creek in the ACT radiated around the world.

The Bean area has a rich heritage. A rock shelter just north of the Namadgi National Park contains evidence that our First Peoples were living in the region thousands of years ago. The first pastoralists settled in the valleys at the southern end of the Namadgi National Park in the 1830s. They initially struggled to establish themselves in a remote area subject to severe weather.

Geographically, Bean covers most of southern ACT, as well as Norfolk Island, from the National Arboretum, through the Woden Town Centre and right down to Mount Clear in Namadgi National Park, and everywhere in between. It consists the whole of Tuggeranong, the Lanyon Valley, the suburbs of south Woden, including Phillip and Weston Creek, and the Molonglo Valley.

One of my regrets is similar to that voiced by the former member for Canberra, the Hon Ros Kelly MP. Most federal politicians and their staff spend so much of their lives in Canberra travelling like cruise ships in the night, arriving at port and disembarking but never going beyond the parliamentary triangle. They come so often yet they see so little. I get the reasons why; it's because of the pressures of political life. But it wouldn't hurt to get outside the political bubble. If they did they would realise that the people of Bean share the same dreams and hopes as the people back in their electorates. Bean is made up of young people who have the same hopes that I had when I was young: hopes to meet a nice partner, to start a family, to own our own home and to make sure our kids are looked after.

Bean is made up of many, many families who, just like me, are following through with that dream, through the trials, tribulations and struggles but also in those special moments, like seeing your children play their first game of soccer or netball or attending their graduation. Bean is also made up of many older residents, just like my parents; people who have worked hard and want to make sure they are looked after with dignity. One of the differences in my electorate, though, is that most of my constituents are working for the Australian people every day.

So, to Bean. Over the course of the campaign I discovered that not many of my constituents knew why the seat of Bean was so named. Bean is named after one of Australia's greatest war historians, Charles Bean. A couple of weeks after the federal election I received correspondence from his granddaughter Anne Carroll, congratulating me on the election and providing me further insights into this extraordinary Australian's life.

Many in this chamber will know the basic story of Bean: born in the 19th century; a scholarship at Oxford; a judges' associate, then later a journalist and Australia's first official war correspondent. Bean travelled with the first contingent of the AIF, landing at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. A determined man, he stayed close to the
battleground in Gallipoli and the Western Front, devoting himself to telling our story of national sacrifice, mateship and bravery—helping, in some way, to define what we now know as the ANZAC spirit.

It was in 1919 that Bean returned to Australia, moving to the Tuggeranong Homestead, in what is now Bean, to complete the official history of World War I, a task so detailed it took him 23 years to finish. It was indeed our next wartime Prime Minister, the great John Curtin, who congratulated Bean on his work when the final volume was completed in 1942.

During his time covering the war, Bean conceived of the idea of the Australian War Memorial as a place to commemorate those who’d died in battle and a museum to house objects from war. His time as a civilian covering World War I made him uniquely aware of the sacrifice of our troops, and he wanted to ensure that that sacrifice was commemorated properly. He actively worked in the decades that followed to ensure that that memorial materialised. Bean’s vision for the Australian War Memorial was realised when it opened on Armistice Day, 11 November 1941.

However, Bean was a much more complex character than just the military Bean, thinking deeply on social policy as well. He knocked back a knighthood as it did not sit with his values. He was an early environmentalist, founding the Parks and Playground Movement; a supporter of universal education; and, in addition to the War Memorial, a driving influence behind the establishment of the National Archives of Australia. He was also a man who once supported the White Australia policy and then, later in life, took a much more internationalist view. While his early views of the great John Monash were almost certainly anti-Semitic, later in life he recognised his error. Bean, like our nation, grew and changed with life.

Charles Bean’s contribution, as an exceptional correspondent and a social philosopher, to enlivening our national story is extraordinary. It’s only right that he is honoured in such as way as to have a federal electorate named after him.

Finally, a lesson that all new members here will have learned is that it takes a village to get here. I wish to particularly acknowledge my staff from the other place and here who have worked so hard for the people of the ACT: Chris, Kim, Karl, Nick, Mikey, Terry, Jess, Ben, Tony and Bryce; my amazing core campaign team: Brendan, Johnno, Kerry, Karl, Terry, Steph, Francis and Natalie; and the army of letterboxers, doorknockers, prepoll volunteers, booth captains and scrutineers who all worked so hard right up until polling day. I’m delighted to see so many of these people in the gallery today.

To a particular band of friends who have provided my whole family with support across this last mad 12 months: Charmaine, Simon, Jules, Jacqui, Paul, Toni, Mike, Gab, Ang, Seb, Roger, Jacqui, Chris and Lily, your childcare responsibilities might be called upon by other members of the 2019 cohort. And thanks to my great friends in the Australian labour movement and the mighty Australian Labor Party, which has been a major part of my life since I went on a school excursion to the Old Parliament House to meet my local member, Ros Kelly MP, and then joined the union on my first day of work at Big W, Woden.

Finally, I could not be here without the support of the Smith/Centenera/Garcia/Grealy clan—the support and inspiration of my parents; my brothers, Paul and Bernie; my nieces, nephews and cousins. My road to Bean began when my parents made the decision to come here before Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon. In particular, I could not be here without the support of my immediate family: Liesl, Marcus, Eamonn and Stella. Liesl Centenera, as anyone who knows her, is a deadset legend, and I am lucky every day I can walk beside her.

Every day I have walked into this building, I have done so in the knowledge that I am honoured to serve. But while I am one representative of many, each of us has a responsibility to work together to make Australia a nation where everyone has a chance to succeed. We owe this not just to our future generations but those who have gone before us, and, in particular, those who have paid the ultimate price.

I want to end with a piece of writing by Charles Bean, written in the aftermath of World War I. Reflecting on the sacrifices of thousands of Australians during the Great War, he wrote:

Only by one means can we work out our thanks to them—by continuing the task which they were forced to drop when the bullet took them, and devoting our lives to make this country the happy, great, and generous land whose future with their death they gave into our hands.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the honourable member for Indi, I remind the House that this is the honourable member’s first speech and I ask the House to extend to her the usual courtesies.

Dr HAINES (Indi) (12:04): Mr Speaker, congratulations to you on your appointment as Speaker and thank you for your warm welcome to me in this place.

Today as I rise in this House to give my first speech, I acknowledge the Ngunawal and Ngambri peoples, who are the traditional custodians of the Canberra area, and pay respect to the elders, past and present, of all Australia's
Indigenous peoples. I especially acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands across my large electorate of Indi—lands of the Wavereeo, Dhudhuaroa, Bangerang and Taungurung peoples. I honour the resilience, wisdom, dignity, scientific knowledge, the stories and art of the world's longest surviving culture.

The honour of being a representative in this place is one that is bestowed upon few. I am humbled by the privilege and so very conscious of the responsibility. I thank the people of Indi for placing their trust in me. Of the 1,202 people who have been elected to the House of Representatives, 132 have been women. I am proud to be one of them, but we remain too few. We will not create the best public policy for this nation until we have a diverse parliament in all senses and until, at the very least, we have equal representation of women.

I pay tribute to my fellow MPs in this the 46th Parliament of Australia. I thank the honourable members for their welcome to this place and I wish each and every one of you the very, very best. I thank the many staff who work here for their expertise and guidance as I adjust to this new and very challenging life.

As the member for Indi, I pay tribute to those who came before me in this magnificent Federation seat. And let me say that its first member, Sir Isaac Isaacs, raised in the town of Yackandandah, set the bar pretty high! He rose to become Attorney-General of Australia, Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia and the first Australian-born Governor-General. Another member for Indi, John 'Black Jack' McEwen, born in the town of Chiltern, was a long-sitting minister and briefly Prime Minister of Australia after the death of Harold Holt in 1967, but he was of course the member for Murray by then. In total, 17 MPs preceded me, including Ewan Cameron, Lou Lieberman, Sophie Mirabella and Cathy McGowan.

And it is to my most recent predecessor, the first ever Independent member for Indi, Cathy McGowan AO, that I pay particular tribute. Cathy has left an enduring legacy on the federal Parliament of Australia. Importantly, she is widely recognised by all sides of politics to be someone with strong values and integrity who put her electorate first on matters of policy and debate. Cathy is a mentor, a teacher and a friend and, like all great teachers, she has given me a clear and magnificent path to follow.

My electorate of Indi covers 29,187 square kilometres of magnificent north-east Victoria, adjoining the border of New South Wales in the north and stretching to Kinglake on the edges of Melbourne in the south. The geography is characterised by mountains, rivers and fertile land. Indeed, Indi's river basins contribute 38 per cent of the total water to the Murray-Darling Basin. It includes nine local government areas in addition to the unincorporated areas of Falls Creek, Lake Mountain, Mount Buller and Mount Hotham Alpine Resort.

The economy is driven by tourism, food and fibre, forestry, viticulture, agriculture, timber processing and manufacturing, and by the countless small businesses providing a vast array of goods and services. The people of Indi are leaders in the renewable energy revolution. Indi is home to 11 community energy groups—the most of any region in the nation—many generating and sharing power using microgrid technology. In Barnawartha, we have the largest producer of biodiesel.

My electorate is as diverse and beautiful as the 142,000 people who live there. It is a place of outdoor adventure, with visitors from all over the world drawn to Indi for skiing, cycling, canoeing, kayaking, fly fishing, bushwalking and camping and for our internationally renowned wine and gourmet food. Indi is what is termed the legends, wine and high country.

While many people can feel like a legend after enjoying some of our famous north-east Victorian wine, Indi is 'Kelly country'. Ned Kelly is a polarising figure, seen by some as a hero, by others as a villain. He lived in Greta, was jailed in Beechworth, robbed banks in Euroa and his last stand was in Glenrowan. The Kelly story looms large in the Australian psyche with no less than 11 feature films and more biographies than any other Australian. Journalist Martin Flanagan wrote:

But what makes Ned a legend is not that everyone sees him the same—it's that everyone sees him. Like a bushfire on the horizon casting its red glow into the night.

To careful observers of Australian politics, it should come, then, as no surprise that the rural communities of Indi have also been seen with a powerful orange glow in the last three federal elections. Some have spoken of the 'quiet Australians' post this most recent election, but I speak from an electorate who chose not to be quiet. They chose to use their voice not to drown out the voices of others but to hear the voices of others.

The vision and leadership of a small group of people who began Voices for Indi in 2012 started a great big community conversation about doing politics differently. What they created is what has been described as 'new power'—open, participatory and peer-driven. It operates on shared values and radical trust. The Voices for Indi movement has given inspiration to other electorates around the nation modelling new democratic norms. In a growing number of democracies across the world we are seeing the impact of an erosion of trust in democratic institutions. Disengagement from politics is being exploited into fear and polarisation. In Indi there is a different story. Division and polarisation are not the inevitable outcome of disengagement; it can be channelled.
productively. This election has shown that this model, though time consuming and labour intensive, has staying power.

At this election, every one of the 1,700 people who signed up to the values and contributed to the campaign were volunteers. Not one person was paid. Over 900 supporters staffed the 68 booths on election day. They covered more than 1,040 rostered shifts for the pre-polls over three weeks and across five sites. They made more than 2,000 metres of orange bunting, 700 orange cockatoos and countless cakes. They designed and distributed corflutes and how-to-vote cards. They did websites, they did media, they did policy and they did flash mobs. They staffed no less than 14 campaign offices in high streets across every corner of the electorate. They stepped out of comfort zones and into conversation zones. To each and every one of you, I say: thank you. In the galleries you see some of these people. They have travelled here from Corryong, Kancaoona, Taggerty, Tallangatta, Marysville, Merrrijig, Mansfield, Wangaratta, Benalla, Upotipotpon, Euroa, Wodonga and Wandiligong, to name but some. They are here because, like all Australians, this is their House. I am honoured to be their representative.

Each of our stories begin well before us and include people both known and unknown to us. If we are lucky, our story extends beyond us. I am, like each of you, the sum of my family, my community and the ecology of the places I have lived in. I grew up on a dairy farm with my mother, Marion Ryan, my father, Jack Carew, and my four brothers in a small place called Eurack—Gulidjan country—in south-west Victoria. We lived next door to our grandmother's farm. My grandfather Will Carew died young, leaving my grandmother to run the farm and raise her four young boys: my father and his three brothers Bill, Richard and Peter Carew.

The untimely death of my grandfather, with the consequences of economic hardship, meant my father left school at 13. He told many stories of tough times but they were the preamble to the tales of rural adventures recounted with such humour and intrigue that, as a child, I honestly thought my home of Eurack, population approximately 95 people, the most exciting, exotic and daring of places to belong.

My grandmother Mary Carew, formerly Mary Farrell but always known as Dolly, milked dairy cows, raised geese, planted crops and cooked rabbits trapped by her boys. She was a quiet but powerful presence as I grew up. Less quiet were her sisters, my great aunts: Johanna, known as Sis; Lizzie, known as Tom; and Tess, known, oddly, as Tess! Tom and Sis had trained as nurses at St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne. They were always referred to as 'the aunts', and it was they who pretty much predetermined that I should also be a St Vincent's nurse—and so it was. In the gallery today are some of my wonderful lifelong nursing friends from St V's.

Today, 1 August, is the thoroughbred horses' birthday. That is fitting, as my maternal grandfather, John Joseph Ryan, was keen on racing. He too was a dairy farmer, but also a horse trainer. Together with my uncle Tim Ryan, they produced some fine horses and could be seen riding bareback through the bush around places like Irrewillipe, Pirron Yallock and Tomahawk Creek. I never knew my maternal grandmother, Marion Ryan, formerly Rankin. She died at age 40, leaving her five young children, John, Valda, Marion, Peter and Tim, behind.

Subsequently, my mother, her namesake, grew up largely in the dormitories of St Brendan's and Sacred Heart boarding schools. As a little girl, on a still day she could see, from the balcony of her boarding house, smoke from the chimney of her home on the banks of Lake Corangamite. Mum was a determined farmer. She had an unstoppable work ethic. She was clever, a good tennis player, a committed local community contributor, a wonderful wife and a devoted mother. She developed a terminal illness in her early 50s and died a few years later. Her death reinforced for me on a personal level what I knew from my work as a nurse: life is short, family is everything and there is honour in the service of others. I think of Marion every day, as I do my beloved storytelling father, Jack, who carried on farming until his death, aged 82. I'm betting that if they were alive today their advice to me in this place would be: sit up straight, clean your shoes and don't put up with too much tommyrot.

Early life for me outside the farm centred around our little rural school, our local church and the tennis courts alongside the Eurack memorial hall. Last Christmas, our extended family returned to that hall. Inside, the walls are liberally covered in the glorious sporting victories of the now long gone Eurack State School 3448: framed photographs bathing me, my brothers, my cousins and our mates in the triumph of being western plains' athletics champions (small schools section).

Ours was a one-teacher school, and total student numbers rarely exceeded 12. We trained for these sports by running barefoot, Zola Budd style, around the perimeter of a paddock of lucerne. The whole district turned out on sports day to cheer us on. Noting the flat landscape of my birth country, the salt pan lakes and the faded photos on the walls, the young ones at the party noted, with a bit of cheek: 'You were not even big fish in a small pond. You were small fish in a very small swamp.' Don Watson, in his book The Bush, described the families of places like ours as:
… having inserted themselves into a crack in the nation's development … schools, churches, halls, hospitals, agricultural shows, libraries, mechanics institutes.

A persistent effort in the small things, says Watson, that laid down a lasting pattern in Australian rural life. The hamlets and towns of Indi tell similar stories to mine, of good people, persistent effort and small things.

And so it was that small things continued for me in proximity to small swamps. In 1986, after completing my nursing and midwifery education in Melbourne, I moved from north Carlton to central Chiltern, having been lured to the north-east by my sweetheart, the handsome Phil Haines, agricultural scientist from the Rutherglen Research Institute. I became matron at the Chiltern Bush Nursing Hospital. I was 26; a very young matron in a very small hospital in a very small place with a very small lake, a lake overlooked by one of the former homes of Henry Handel Richardson; a lake familiar to Black Jack McEwen and to another favourite son of Chiltern—and well known in this House—Mr Barrie Cassidy.

The next three years I spent in that job gave me plenty of great stories and a keen understanding of place based solutions to the challenges of rural health. The hospital kitchen crammed with locals making jam, peppered with a surprise visit from the health inspector. Jacky Byron, who could recount watching the lads march off to the Boer War, would arrive daily by bicycle to deliver freshly caught fish from the lake for his cobber, Martin Balsarini, a light horseman who rode in the charge of Beersheba. There were midnight call-outs for a variety of reasons with the local GP and the local policeman, including an encounter with a villain on the run hiding in the hospital casualty room. The matron, the sergeant and the doctor—we were quite the trio.

In time, we moved from Chiltern to our small farm on a billabong of the King River in Wangaratta. This, too, was a special place where, if you look carefully, the signs of the Bangerang people abound—ring trees, canoe trees, birthing trees; signals that this area is abundant in food, water and spirit. Here I was drawn to further study. The internet arrived, which literally opened a world of opportunity for me as a young working mother in a rural region. I pursued an interest in epidemiology and public health through a master's degree, which took me and my family, rather surprisingly, to a much bigger swamp on the shores of beautiful Lake Malaren, to Uppsala University in Sweden, where I eventually completed a doctoral degree in medical science and, later, a post-doctoral research fellowship at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. This period reinforced for me that just and equitable health and education outcomes are not accidents in the Nordic countries but the result of sound public policy. It gave me opportunities on an international level I could never have foreseen. It gave our kids a lifelong 'appreciation' for sour herring!

Mine has been a very lucky life. Mr Speaker, as you have heard, I have a large and loving family, many of whom are here today. To my brothers John, Damian, Paul and Gerry; their wives Shirley, Mary Anne, Vanessa and Grace; my Haines family of brothers Ian, Andrew and the late and loved Pete; Chris, Wendy, Maureen and Annie; my late parents-in-law Eric and Dorothy Haines; my 27 nieces and nephews and their children; and my countless cousins—thank you.

No love is as fierce as that of a parent for their child. So I say to my three children Will, Nick and Georgia Haines: you are bold, you are brave, you are loved. Use your talents wisely. To Maddy and Chris, thank you. You have joined a family that loves nothing more than a hot dinner served with a delicious side salad of political debate!

And to that ag scientist from Rutherglen, Phil Haines, my husband of 33 years who has always believed I could do things I never thought I could: no-one could ask for a more loving soulmate.

In total I have spent three decades working in rural health care as an academic researcher, administrator, not-for-profit company director, midwife and nurse. I salute my colleagues in health care all over Australia for their expertise and devotion.

Throughout my career I have been privileged to care for people as they take their first breath of life and as they take their last. A great joy to me was in being a foundation member in what is now the longest-running rural midwifery caseload practice in Australia at Northeast Health Wangaratta. Midwives are the hand that guides the hand that rocks the cradle that rules the world. Comprehensive national and international evidence has proven that continuity of midwifery care improves outcomes for mothers and babies in a safe, satisfying and cost-effective manner. Yet it is a model of care that remains unavailable to the majority of Australians.

Australia is a nation that is envied by many. We have much to be grateful for but we have some serious responsibilities to face up to. We have a responsibility to the generations that will follow us—young people like Alice, Ailish, Pascal, Dymphna, Fergal and Anna.

I am a regional Australian and I am a defiant optimist, but one who recognises the scale of the challenge ahead. We have some essential issues to tackle both in Indi and across rural Australia. Firstly, there is the health of rural Australians. Suicide is twice as high in rural areas compared with urban areas, with males three times more likely
than females to die by suicide. Timely access to mental health care should not be reliant on your postcode nor your ability to pay once your 10 Medicare funded services run out.

Older Australians want to stay in their own homes and maintain a good quality of life for as long as possible. But too many people are waiting too long for home care packages and this disproportionately impacts negatively on rural Australians.

On disability: to every person, family and carer across this nation who is waiting in frustration for full access to the NDIS, I hear you. This parliament must work conscientiously to ensure that the incredible system the NDIS was set up to be lives up to the promise and hope felt by so many when it was created.

On education: we understand that people succeed when they have a chance to get a decent education and learn new skills—and, by the way, so do those businesses that hire them or the companies that they start. But this is still out of reach for many in Indi, where the average completion rate for a bachelor's degree or higher is half the Victorian average. There are many systemic reasons for this. However, what extensive international research tells us is that two years of preschool education has the most potent impact on positive long-term educational outcomes. This is an intervention that could change life courses in my electorate if it were universally available.

I've come to this place to talk positively about what we hope to start in regional Australia and not simply what we want to stop. We can grow our regions to a greater, sustainable prosperity. There is a big role for the federal government to play in that, and it starts with better connectivity, better rail, better internet, better mobile phone coverage and better access to health and education. Raising the rate of Newstart is part of this conversation. There is near-universal community and business consensus on this. It's the right thing to do for the people receiving it, and it's the right thing to do for regional communities which, again, are disadvantaged significantly in access to the job market.

I bring the voices of rural Australians from my electorate of Indi—a region which is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. It's impacting us right now. We are experiencing extreme summer heat, less reliable autumn breaks, reduced winter and spring rainfall and decreased snow cover. We may well see the complete loss of the Victorian alpine zone this century.

Our physical and mental health is being impacted. The Black Saturday fires of 10 years ago, which ravaged the southern areas of Indi, are still fresh in the memory of the community of Murrindindi. We urgently need greater investment in research and development, together with innovative policies to assist agriculture and health to adapt to our rapidly changing climate and to identify new, profitable and sustainable opportunities. The evidence is clear: we are facing a climate change crisis. We are also presented with a once-in-a-generation opportunity for regional Australia to lead the way in the development of renewable energy and to prosper from new economic opportunities. We need a just transition to renewable energy, and we need to get on with it. Let's grasp these opportunities.

It was Florence Nightingale who told us, 'How very little can be done under the spirit of fear.' When it comes to our immigration policies I and many other Australians are left asking the simple question of who we are as a country. I bring the voices of so many people in my electorate who call for an end to the human suffering that is caused through indefinite detention of asylum seekers and refugees both onshore and offshore.

On these big issues, so many Australians want change desperately but are equally scared of change when it comes to trusting the political system to bring it about. Research in 2019 shows that Australians' trust in federal parliament is very low and, in fact, has declined since 2017. I will advocate strongly in this place for a robust federal integrity commission. Such a commission can help restore the trust that so many Australians have lost in their elected representatives.

In conclusion, this 46th Parliament opens a new chapter in our history. And those of us elected here have the humble responsibility to help write it. History shows us that some parliaments take small steps, and others take large leaps. One such opportunity to leap stands before us now. With the Uluru Statement from the Heart, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have invited all of Australia to walk with them to achieve 'Voice, Treaty and Truth'. I embrace that offer, and I commit myself and the privileges I have by virtue of being in this place to walking with them. The Constitution of this great nation is ours to use to bring about justice and freedom. I can think of no task more worthy of this parliament than that.

Don Watson described the generations of Australians who quietly inserted themselves into the crack in our nation's development. The people of Indi have done just that. They started something far bigger than they could have imagined. Their goal in 2013 wasn't to storm the doors of parliament in one campaign, but they did. Some wrote this off as a flash-in-the-pan moment—a battle of personalities that could not be replicated when those personalities were no longer in the frame. They pointed out rightly that an independent had never succeeded an independent in Australian federal parliamentary history—until now. It is my honour to hold that crack in our
The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Rob Mitchell): Before I call the honourable member for Mallee, I remind the House that this is the honourable member's first speech. I ask the House and the galleries to extend to her the usual courtesies.

Dr WEBSTER (Mallee) (12:31): Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the Ngunawal and Ngambri people on whose land we meet on today and the 11 traditional owner groups across Mallee. I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

Sometimes a place chooses you rather than you choosing it. Going back more than 40 years, a complex array of circumstances relating to my honeymoon, a computer glitch, the tardy invention of mobile phones and a visit by the CIB conspired to bring me to Mallee. Two weeks after our wedding, my husband and I found ourselves driving from Melbourne for many hours up the Calder Highway, flanked by red dirt, Mallee scrub and saltbush. I remember asking him, 'Are you sure you know where you're going?' Just out of Red Cliffs, we caught sight of undulating hectares of vineyards, heavily laden with beautiful ripe grapes. It was an oasis in the desert. I can tell you that the sight of the Mildura township brought relief to this young bride. That was the beginning of a one-year internship for my husband at the local hospital. The rest, as they say, is history.

The Sunraysia district remains an oasis in the desert, due to the irrigation system developed by two entrepreneurial Canadian brothers, the Chaffeys. The challenge was the desert; the solution was the river; the innovation was irrigation pumps and systems to manage water. These brothers dreamt of dry, dusty plains becoming lush, productive industry and livable settlements. The settlers who moved to the Sunraysia region, including our soldier settlers, shared that dream. They developed sustainable farming practices, which have modernised over the years.

Throughout Mallee today, innovation is alive and well. Water drip systems have replaced flood irrigation and overhead sprays, and pipes have replaced open channels. Agricultural practices use less water and produce more, due to developments such as no-till farming and large-scale sowing and fertilising systems—creative solutions born out of necessity. I saw evidence of this on the farms of Allen Harmer and Ron Hards. I thank them for showing me around their properties, and I'm deeply grateful that Allen and his wife, Rhonda, have made the long journey here today from the Millewa. Allen has lived through the worst drought years of 1943 to 1946, and he tells me that the current drought is worse. Australia has faced many challenges as the driest inhabited continent on the planet, but these challenges have been met by people such as Allen, who are innovative and resilient.

I have the great privilege of representing the people and communities of Mallee, from Maryborough in the south, Cohuna to the east, Edenhope to the west and Mildura to the north. The electorate is just shy of 82,000 square kilometres, over a third of the state of Victoria, and boasts prime agricultural and horticultural land that grows stone fruit, grapes, vegetables, wheat, legumes, olives, almonds, dairy, sheep and beef, to name a few. The people of the Mallee contribute an estimated $4.2 billion in agricultural GDP alone, with the total value of crops being 47.6 per cent of Victoria's gross value and 14.2 per cent of Victoria's livestock gross value, not to mention the other key industries that play a vital role in our economy, such as minerals and energy.

The people and communities of Mallee are particularly resilient and thrive on challenge. Hundreds of farms across this sweeping electorate have responded overwhelmingly to the advent of the Wimmera Mallee pipeline. Towns at risk of demise have risen like a phoenix through determination and enterprise. Just consider Luv-a-Duck in Nhill, True Foods in Maryborough, Kooka's in Donald, Southern Mallee Diesel and Mechanical Services in Hopetoun, the Woomelang cooperative general store, and the small towns hosting the Silo Art Trail—if you haven't been through that, I encourage you to do so. Community based enterprises are a key component in connecting people to keep towns alive and services operating.

Another example of resilience in Mallee is the extraordinary development and uptake of digital agriculture to access global markets. The Victorian Farmers Federation tell me that young people are coming back to the farm precisely because farming has become high tech. They can reach global markets on their digital devices while driving their auto steered harvesters.

But opportunity does not exist for all. I have had phone conversations, many times, with people who must stand on a chair, climb a hill, or hang off a silo in order to have any signal. Community is built on communication. If you don't have it, the result is entrenched isolation. Nobody thrives in isolation. While mobile coverage has improved significantly under the coalition government in Mallee, with 41 base stations funded under the Mobile Black Spot Program, there is more to be done. I will be advocating for ongoing funding to improve connectivity for all in Mallee.
We face many challenges, socially and economically, but the people of Mallee work together to address problems and create solutions. They bring enterprise and endeavour to create and sustain wealth. I am pleased to say this Morrison-McCormack government takes our responsibility seriously to foster productivity and opportunity and to remove the barriers that impede social and economic growth. I will strive to assist the hardworking and deserving people of Mallee in every way possible.

One of the most significant challenges we face every day in Australia, and magnified in Mallee, is that our relatively small population is spread over large distances. Roads, rail and bridges are essential for productivity and community life. Locals and tourists alike need safe passage to travel throughout this vast electorate. Our farmers and industry need efficient transport mechanisms and systems to access domestic and export markets. Millions of tonnes of product are transported on road and rail each year, but both are in dire need of significant infrastructure expenditure.

Due to the hard work of the National Party, there will be more upgrades to the Calder and Western highways in the next 12 months, and while the Mildura rail line has been upgraded to standard gauge through to the Port of Melbourne, the Murray Basin Rail Project lies in disarray. My farming friends in Murrayville cannot justify moving their product to market on rail at the current speeds of 15 kilometres per hour. The Victorian state Labor government has failed the people of Mallee. They must complete this project in a timely manner.

As someone who travelled 30,000 kilometres on Mallee roads during the campaign, I can tell you that an efficient regional rail system would bring many social, safety and productivity benefits for everyone. More trains mean fewer B-doubles and B-quad on the road.

One of the key issues in my electorate during my campaign was water—surprisingly! Our most precious national resource, it must be measured and managed responsibly and in the interest of all if our regions are to thrive. Water cannot be a political football. Ongoing bipartisan support that commits to balance social, economic and environmental sustainability must remain our focus.

The Murray-Darling Basin Plan is critical to the Mallee electorate. The people of this electorate rely on us getting this right. I look forward to continuing to work with the minister for water resources, the member for Maranoa, to improve the management of the plan, protect farmers and ensure greater regulation, accountability and transparency. These complexities must be managed in a way that considers the continent, not parochial corners of it, as Edmund Barton would say.

Our continent also requires dedication to a cleaner future. I am committed to emissions reductions, lowering energy prices while ensuring sustainability and reliability. Mallee is perfectly positioned for renewables, but the capacity of our existing grid infrastructure is making some promising options unviable. I look forward to working further to improve connectivity to the grid in Mallee.

I will also strive to assist all businesses in Mallee, including the 19,997 small and medium businesses—many family-owned—who are struggling to attract workforce. The media has recently highlighted this as it relates to horticulture, but it's not just an issue found in the agricultural industry. It is evidenced among both our unskilled and skilled workforces, from mechanics to veterinary practices and health care. I commend this government on its current focus on population issues, and look forward to working towards implementation of policy to better support our businesses to grow and flourish in regional settings.

As for all Australians, access to quality health care impacts every person in Mallee. Our regional cities are growing, and with many retirees, while smaller towns are declining. We need responsive and sustainable health care, aged care and palliative care. We need to focus on the unique rural and regional settings in which services are delivered. Funding models currently do not reflect this. One size does not fit all.

Isolation is a key contributor to poor health outcomes and risks. While isolation might be mitigated by telecommunications and a network of first responders, distance and the lack of workforce are key concerns for Mallee communities. We need more doctors, nurses, and allied health and mental health workers. We have reached crisis point.

Our government is implementing some great initiatives to overcome some of the barriers to adequate health care that are specific to regional and rural areas. But more work is needed, and I will be a strong voice in this space. An integrated healthcare network model would ameliorate the current negative health outcomes many experience in Mallee. The model incorporates a multidisciplinary health team, including nurse practitioners and allied health professionals, with oversight by a doctor. Pharmacies need to be part of the conversation to improve health outcomes across the electorate. The role of nurse practitioner could be expanded to service aged care and palliative care, and to increase reach into remote communities. I am advocating for additional funding in our tertiary education system to support more local nurses to upskill to practitioner level for this reason. However, structural change is also needed, including broadening Medicare activity funding to increase nurse and allied
health services to manage chronic disease. Our regional towns are in desperate need of these changes, and the changes must be holistic.

Perhaps my passion and focus on health care is in part motivated by my own experiences. In the decades I have lived in Mildura, I have needed to rely on emergency services and specialist health care on many occasions. A five-year period of infertility meant many road trips to Melbourne to seek IVF assistance. The birth of my son at 27 weeks required a lifesaving flight with Air Ambulance to the Royal Women's Hospital, and then four months of neonatal intensive care in Melbourne for my son while my husband continued working in Mildura. He would drive six hours after work to see our son in the early hours of the morning in intensive care. We would have a precious day and a half together, and then he would drive back for work on Sunday night. Our third child was born following a four-month period of bed rest for me in Melbourne under specialist care, with a toddler and preschooler in tow. Supportive family in Melbourne helped us through these events. But what about those who have no family in Melbourne?

More recently, our first granddaughter Emmeline was the recipient of a liver transplant at the tender age of 14 months. I am proud to say she is here today. The Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne was her home for months, and the care she received was exceptional. We are so grateful to her donor and their family for their gift of life. It is for this reason that I am establishing the Parliamentary Friends of Organ Donation, co-chaired by my colleague Dr Michael Freelander. I am thrilled to announce this during the national DonateLife Week campaign. I want to thank those members from both sides of the chamber that I have spoken to for supporting this initiative.

I also wish to talk about my family's current experience with cancer and what it means in a regional setting such as Mallee. My father has courageously battled cancer over the last two years. All of his surgery has been in Melbourne. Again, we are grateful for the expert care he has received. But there are additional challenges when you have to travel to Melbourne for surgery, check-ups, tests and treatment. My sister Deb, who is here today, and my brother Guy supported my parents while in Melbourne. But, again, what about those who have no family or support in Melbourne? This is the greatest tyranny of distance. My father has been told this week there is no more that can be done. He is about to embark on palliative care. As always, we will walk this journey together. Love you, Dad.

Our geographical and social isolation requires us to develop solutions such as fly-in fly-out specialist care, retrieval services, such as the air ambulance, and telehealth, which connects specialist services with local health providers. I am pleased that the Morrison-McCormack government is focused on improving access to health through innovative measures and I will be active to advance the wellbeing of all in Mallee. A person's postcode should not determine health status, but, for many in Mallee, it currently does.

I have always been passionate about injustice and understand the need for holistic approaches to the barriers faced by regional and rural communities. Becoming a sociologist and social worker has helped me understand the cultural, political, social and economic factors that impact individuals and their ability to thrive. It led me to one of my proudest career achievements to date, working with a small team in the creation of a not-for-profit organisation called Zoe Support. Zoe Support offers holistic, wraparound and place based support to meet the needs of teen mothers and assist them to re-engage in education. Zoe Support has had extraordinary outcomes, impacting two generations and sometimes even triple. Homelessness, mental health issues, drug and alcohol use and family violence have been significantly reduced through this essential service.

In seven years, Zoe Support has helped more than 200 young women in Mildura. Our current statistics show that 32 per cent of these long-term clients are now employed, and 62 per cent of our current clients are engaged in education. The mission of Zoe Support is 'connecting, inspiring and learning'. As I have stated, nobody thrives in isolation. At Zoe Support, young mothers connect and inspire one another. The staff and volunteers live by the value of unconditional positive regard. When people are accepted and not judged, it is surprising how they can thrive. The learnings of this model, I believe, can be replicated across many diverse and specific disadvantaged groups.

Over the years I became particularly interested in vulnerability. I saw it in the mums at Zoe and it provided great insight into our service approaches. I recently completed a PhD that looks at the vulnerability of women who make the choice to adopt-out in Australia today. I understand that the vulnerable are all around us and are us: young mothers, Indigenous Australians, refugees, farmers in drought, the unemployed, the aged, the chronically ill, those who live with a disability and returned soldiers, among others. The factors of vulnerability are irreversibility, dependency and unpredictability. While these factors are present every day in all of our lives to some extent or other, for the vulnerable they can be overwhelming and paralysing.

But we can act to mitigate vulnerability through responsibility, interdependency and hope. The unexpected result of this election has been to revive hope, evidenced by the stock market and the collective sigh of relief I'm
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I want to acknowledge the support of the former members for Mallee: Peter Fisher, John Forrest and Andrew Broad. I acknowledge Victorian Nationals Leader Peter Walsh, state members Emma Kealya and Melina Bath and former member for Mildura Peter Crisp. I want to thank the many mentors in my life, including former Member for Macquarie, my uncle Alasdair Webster, and Jim Wallace.

I thank the Nationals in Victoria, particularly those in my own electorate who generously supported me financially and also gave their time, knowledge and energy. There are far too many to name, but I'll take the risk: Allan and Gwen Malcolm, former member for Lowan Hugh Delahunty, Bill Ower, John Keating, Robyn Ferrier, John Watson, Toby Hiel, Daniel Linklater, Jon Armstrong, Mel Webb, Daniel Cadmore, Anita Rank—and there are many, many more. I also want to thank my family for their amazing effort during the campaign and for generally being incredible. I am so thankful for all of you. I also want to pay tribute to my staff, who have been long-term servers for the people of Mallee—I have 'workers' in my notes, but they are servers—Tracey Mooney and Di Whitelaw. Thank you, ladies.

I am deeply humbled to be given this opportunity to represent the people of Mallee in this House, and to contribute to the prosperity and wellbeing of all Australians. Thank you.

Debate adjourned.
PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION

Election Petition

The Clerk: I present copies of the following petitions filed in the High Court, sitting as the Court of Disputed Returns: Oliver Tennant Yates v Joshua Anthony Frydenberg in respect of the election of a member for the House of Representatives for the Division of Kooyong; Michael Robert Staindl v Joshua Anthony Frydenberg in respect of the election of a member for the House of Representatives for the Division of Kooyong; and Naomi Leslie Hall v Gladys Liu in respect of the election of a member for the House of Representatives for the Division of Chisholm.

BUSINESS

Rearrangement

Mr PORTER (Pearce— Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (12:57): I move:

That business intervening before order of the day No. 7, government business, be postponed until a later hour this day.

Question agreed to.

BILLS

Criminal Code Amendment (Agricultural Protection) Bill 2019

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (12:58): Labor strongly agrees that farmers and those in other agricultural businesses should not be subject to intimidating and unlawful actions by activists trespassing on their land. Of course the theft or destruction of farmers’ property is unlawful. And, if there are gaps in the criminal law that permit such behaviour to go unpunished, it is appropriate for the government to legislate to fill those gaps. But are there gaps in the criminal bill that this bill now before the House, the Criminal Code Amendment (Agricultural Protection) Bill 2019, will address? Or is this bill primarily a political device from a tired, third-term government which has run out of ideas—because, as the last few weeks have shown, this is a government that is focused almost exclusively on the political benefit it thinks it can squeeze out of parliamentary debate, rather than on doing the work required to design and pass legislation that will actually benefit our nation. As we know, this is a government that had run out of ideas long before it ran on a thin and cynical election platform focused almost entirely on what it wouldn't do rather than on what it would, and now, back in government for a third term, it is still desperately searching for a reason to be here.

We in Labor haven’t yet had a chance to fully audit the criminal laws in all states and territories with respect to the subject matter of this bill, but our preliminary examination of those laws suggests that, if passed, this bill may add little to the legal protections that farmers already have against those who would trespass on their land, damage or steal their property or incite those crimes to be committed by others. The fact is that the criminal laws of all six states and both territories already prohibit trespass to property. The criminal laws of the states and territories already prohibit damage to and theft of property. The criminal laws of the states and territories already prohibit inciting, counselling, procuring or sharing in a common purpose in the commission of criminal offences of this kind.

As an example of this, I note that just last week the New South Wales government announced that it would be passing tougher new laws in this area, including $1,000 on-the-spot fines for trespass to an agricultural property. Because of longstanding state and territory laws already prohibiting the conduct that is the subject of this bill, legal experts have, not surprisingly, raised concerns that this bill may do nothing but complicate the existing legal framework. In the process, this could have unintended consequences and end up doing nothing to improve existing legal protections for farmers.

Aware of these problems of jurisdictional overlap and a range of concerns with this bill that I’ll come to shortly, on 4 July this year the Senate referred this bill to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee for inquiry and report by 6 September 2019. I have no doubt that the Senate committee will look carefully at the overlap between the offences proposed by this bill and existing state and territory laws that already criminalise trespass, damage to property and theft and that could already form the basis of criminal liability for those who incite those offences. Labor will carefully review the report of that committee when it is delivered. The Senate committee is likely to examine a number of other matters, too.
Australians are rightly proud of our nation's robust democracy, which is founded in part on a guarantee of freedom of political communication. That fundamental freedom has been recognised by the High Court of Australia as a right implied by our Constitution and the system of representative government that the Constitution establishes. As part of our history and character as a robust democracy, we in Labor believe in upholding the right of all Australians to call for and engage in lawful protest action. We in Labor also believe that protest activity should not involve unlawful trespass on private land and damage or theft of private property. But concerns have been raised that the laws this bill would create might be used to try to prosecute and perhaps jail those who merely call for protest on the internet. No federal laws should unduly restrict the basic democratic rights of Australians, particularly when those rights are being exercised to merely call for action to be taken against something that almost all Australians, including all of our farmers, deplore: the mistreatment of animals.

Similarly, farmers themselves may become targets of the laws that this bill would create. The Lock the Gate Alliance and other organisations have sought to organise to protect farmers from unwanted resource developments on their farms. If farmers call for or engage in protest actions that involve any trespass to agricultural land, could they be jailed under the laws in this bill? For these reasons, too, Labor will be carefully examining and consulting with stakeholders on this bill over the coming weeks to ensure that it does not have any unintended consequences in terms of criminalising the mere discussion of protest actions online, including by farmers themselves.

I say again: our concern is not about the stated intent of this bill but, given the repeated and proven incompetence of this government, about whether it has been appropriately drafted to ensure it actually improves legal protections for farmers without infringing on basic democratic rights and freedoms enjoyed by all Australians.

Labor is also concerned to ensure that this bill will not criminalise the actions of whistleblowers and journalists who are seeking to expose and prevent illegal cruelty to animals. While the government claims the bill will provide adequate protection for journalists and whistleblowers, over recent weeks Australians have had graphically demonstrated the Morrison government's contempt for the public's right to know, particularly when those activities embarrass the government. The Morrison government has clearly shown its willingness to use the criminal law and police to intimidate independent journalists and whistleblowers who seek to expose wrongdoing. We in Labor are concerned to ensure that this bill will not add to the already unacceptable list of threats to journalists and whistleblowers, and are not prepared to accept at face value the Morrison government's promise that journalists and whistleblowers will be protected from these laws.

The protections in this bill are expressed to extend to material relating to a news or current affairs report that is made by a journalist in the public interest and in their professional capacity, but this takes the form of a defence with a reverse onus of proof rather than a full exemption from the law. Members of this government have on occasion criticised reverse onus provisions, but they seem to have no hesitation in creating new reverse onus provisions when they're trying to shut down the public's right to know about wrongdoing. This is a government which hates with a passion those who expose wrongdoing and corruption by the powerful. Australians have not forgotten the royal commission into banking, a royal commission that the members of this government fought tooth and nail against. A royal commission that the Prime Minister himself derided for years as a populist whinge. The Morrison government seems to have no problem with rampant law-breaking when that law-breaking is by wealthy companies acting against the interests of poor Australians, including farmers.

But those who the Morrison government really hate, who the Morrison government really want to throw into jail, are those who reveal wrongdoing. It is those troublesome whistleblowers, who risk their careers to reveal systemic crimes by the Morrison government's mates, that the Morrison government thinks must be punished. Given the Morrison government's appalling record on corruption, it is unsurprising that the protection for whistleblowers in this bill also appears to be very limited. The protection is expressed as a defence, again with the onus on the defendant to demonstrate it applies, where statements by the alleged offender would otherwise be protected by state or Commonwealth law, such as public interest disclosures in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013 of the Commonwealth. This defence appears far too narrow to be of much practical use in circumstances where a person could be charged with offences this bill creates—for example, the claimed protections for whistleblowers in this bill would appear not to protect a farm worker who sought to expose unlawful cruelty to animals at the farm on which he or she worked. The adequacy of the whistleblower protections in this bill is therefore another matter for consideration by the Senate committee.

Labor is also examining whether this bill may criminalise legitimate industrial action by unions, such as actions to improve worker safety at Australian abattoirs or to expose foreign worker exploitation on farms. Concerns have also been raised about whether this bill may have unintended consequences for access to land by holders of native title. The need to carefully examine the interaction of these newly proposed criminal laws with existing native title laws is another reason why Labor is concerned that these laws should receive appropriate consultation and review.
Labor understands that the vast majority of Australian farmers respect the law and care for the animals that are their livelihood. I am sure that a similar vast majority of farmers would agree with us that laws should not be made that have the unintended effect of criminalising legitimate journalism and whistleblowing by those who would seek to expose wrongdoing.

This bill was introduced only three weeks ago, and there has not been time for public feedback and rigorous consideration of its potential impacts. Labor is concerned that the government is seeking to push criminal legislation through the parliament without time for proper consultation and review. And to again make Labor's position clear: our concerns are not with the stated purpose of the bill, but with the many potential unintended consequences that could flow should this bill become law. For these reasons, Labor will not oppose the bill's passage through the House and will announce our position when the bill comes before the other place, following consultation with farmers and legal experts, and following review of the recommendations of the report on the bill by the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee. I would invite the government also to carefully review the matters that are raised in that Senate committee inquiry.

Mr FITZGIBBON (Hunter) (13:10): I want members to imagine they're at home on a nice summer afternoon on their deck looking over the pool, if they are so lucky, and suddenly 30 young people burst through the gate and into the backyard waving placards. That would be a pretty confronting situation. Worse, imagine if they started tearing down the pool fence. That would be enormously distressing. Even worse, imagine if they started slashing the tyres on the ute that you rely on to secure an income for the family—pretty distressing stuff. That's happening on farms and in food-manufacturing facilities on an increasing basis, on an unacceptable level.

There is a difference. If I am at my place, the police station, as the crow flies, is maybe two kilometres away. But if you are on a farm, the police station might be many hundreds of kilometres away. At my place, if activists come through the front gate, I know pretty much immediately that something is going down. But on a sparse property, it might be a day or two before a farmer is aware that trespass has taken place and/or damage has been done.

There is another difference: this is the means of production of the food we rely upon for our lives. So I think it is more than appropriate that parliaments respond in recognition of those additional challenges and the additional importance of us protecting our food production systems. I am delighted that state parliaments have also acted with increased penalties for trespass and damage.

The shadow Attorney, quite rightly—and in a sophisticated way, as you would expect of him—highlighted some deficiencies in this bill, some potential unintended consequences. I am very pleased that it is going to a Senate committee so those issues can be addressed. Let's hope the Senate committee is able to satisfy the shadow Attorney's concerns and, indeed, make some recommendations that make this bill better than it is in its current form before the House.

Sadly, the hype around this bill and the pace at which it is being rammed through this House today suggests that the government is looking for an opportunity to divide, not unite. And on this issue we absolutely should be attempting to unite. We don't want to hear from the Prime Minister, "Whose side are you on?" This parliament is not divided into two groups: one which supports our farmers and one which does not. That is absolutely not the case. We all stand united behind our farming community—the producers of our food and fibre.

I doubt that the next young person who is recruited on campus and energised and encouraged to join a protest on a farm will ever know anything about this bill or its increased penalties. It is just not the way the world works. Young impressionable kids will go along for the ride even without any commitment to the ideology behind the activists; sometimes it is just for fun. But I do know one thing: they are more likely to enjoy the event—or, if they are ideologically committed, draw satisfaction from the event—if it receives publicity, or the attention of the broader community in some other way. That's what they are looking for; they're trying to make a point. So this is a far more sophisticated question than this bill would suggest. It's a very sophisticated question. Activism is on the rise in many facets of our society, not just in our food production systems. The bill is okay, subject to the Senate review. We want it to be okay; we want it to pass. We want to be told either that there are no unintended consequences or that, if there are, they can be fixed quickly and we can get this bill through, because this bill can do no harm and it does demonstrate that we are watching and expressing concern for farmers and doing all we can to assist.

But there are other key players. First, there is the sector itself. The overwhelming majority of people in the food production system do the right thing, but it's not always the case. There is no group in our society whose members collectively are all the same and do the same thing. Of course, they don't. So we need to work with the sector through its leadership groups to ensure that, while it can never be perfect, we are conscious of changing community attitudes and a higher standard is being imposed on all of us. All of us in this place, I think it's fair to
say, are having higher standards imposed upon us. Those in small business are constantly having higher standards imposed upon them through various regulatory regimes, and we need to ensure that the consumer knows with great confidence that our food production system is progressing in a way society would expect it to progress.

Farm leadership groups, of course, have a role to play. I'm going to tell a story, and I'm confident Fiona Simpson won't mind. Fiona, of course, is the president of the National Farmers' Federation. She called me one day when the Aussie Farms Map story first broke and said, 'I hope you're going to come out today and condemn Aussie Farms.' I said, 'No, Fiona, I will not, and I'm hoping you don't either,' because my view is that that's what they're looking for. They want a whole rush of publicity to highlight their protest. To that day, I had never heard of Aussie Farms, and I think that, if Aussie Farms had not got any publicity that day, I may still never have heard of them. We have to be smart about how we respond to these things. Those of us here, as individual members, have to be careful about how we respond to these things, too. Live sheep trade and live cattle trade are great examples. When politicians jump on these things because they see political opportunity in securing political capital as a result of the pain of others, we risk only making the matter worse. Again, we need a more sophisticated response.

But we also need a whole of policy response because, while farm invasions, trespass et cetera are serious matters that we need to respond to collectively, they are just one matter weighing on the budget and on the minds of Australian farmers in this year, 2019. Drought, of course, is weighing most heavily, and I say, after six years in office and after seven years of drought, that this country still lacks an overarching, comprehensive drought policy response. And I suspect that the long dry spells and hot spells we are experiencing are, unfortunately, the new normal. I don't understand why we still don't have a dairy code. I don't understand, with respect to the dairy industry, why all we've got coming is a dairy code. I don't understand why we still don't have an agriculture visa. Workforce is still the biggest challenge facing our agriculture sector, and a so-called agriculture visa may or may not be the answer—the government seems to wax and wane—but I know one thing: up until now, at least, we've had no answer. We've had no response from this government to one of the two most pressing issues facing agriculture, and that's its workforce shortage problems.

I don't understand why, after all this time, we still don't have a biosecurity levy. After the Craik review, the government promised we'd have one by 1 July. Now it says 1 September. But we've seen no draft legislation. If you look at the parliamentary time table, there is no hope of having a biosecurity levy by 1 September. It's not happening. Wendy Craik made it clear: if we want to secure our biosecurity system, we need to put more money into the system. If the government is not prepared to kick it in then we need to get it from industry. Industry is prepared to pay if it's done in a responsible way. Yet, the government hasn't been able to put together a policy design, a tax design, acceptable to industry and hasn't been able to bring legislation into this place to get that job done.

I don't understand why, despite all of the talk, we still haven't built a dam in six years. We've had a dam here. We've had a dam there. We've had a dam everywhere. We've had nothing but talk about dams in this place and on the campaign trial by those who sit opposite, but there's still no dam. We've had plenty of reports, but no action. As I mentioned, I still don't understand why we don't have a comprehensive drought policy. I don't know why so many of our producers still don't have access to the China market, despite all the hype of the free trade agreement. Many of our horticulture products are still locked out. We don't have access to the chilled beef sector, for example, a point of great frustration for the country's largest manufacturing sector, our red meat processing sector.

I don't know why we don't have a plan to lift productivity. I don't know why we don't have a plan to tackle our natural resource misallocation. I don't know why we don't have a plan to tackle one of the other big challenges in agriculture, which is the deteriorating state of our soil resources. We can't lift productivity until we have a serious plan to address those issues. And there is no plan. To paraphrase Fiona Simpson—I don't have the quote with me, but I remember it vividly; when I say 'vividly', I can't remember the whole quote—she said at the National Press Club not that long ago: 'In Australia we lack a comprehensive plan for the agriculture sector.' The National Farmers' Federation is a pretty conservative organisation. I think it's fair to say, without offending them, it's pretty close to the conservative parties in this country. So it is more than passing strange that this conservative organisation, after six years of a conservative government, has to declare that this government, which talks so much about our food production system, doesn't have an overarching strategic plan for the agricultural sector.

I think it says, in essence, everything about this government. In question time, they talk incessantly about the agriculture sector. They take every opportunity to draw political capital from the agricultural sector, even though it's at a time when our farmers are hurting, whether it be from trespass, damage or drought. Yet, their response is, at best, piecemeal. It's at best piecemeal. It's certainly not strategic. It's certainly not forward looking. They're always talking about the opportunities, but they don't talk about the challenges. But we can't take advantage of the opportunities if we don't overcome the challenges.
Let us be serious about this bill. Let us join together in supporting what this bill seeks to do. But let us not use this bill or the drought fund—you know, that thing that's on the never-never, which will do very little—as an excuse to do no more. That's what this government does. There will be a Dorothy Dixer a day on the drought fund or on the trespass laws, and those on the other side think that's all they have to do. I must say, given the recent election result, maybe that is all they have to do to retake the Treasury benches. But sooner or later it's going to catch up with them. As the new member for Indi said, our farmers are facing a crisis in terms of a changing climate, and this government have no response whatsoever. All they have are a dozen members and senators freelancing on climate change, saying that climate change is either not real, or, even if it is real, there's nothing we can do about it.

I hope my great-grandchildren will not be lamenting the fact that this government, all those years ago, just declared that there was nothing it could do. We need to demonstrate to them today that we tried our very best. Denial is unacceptable. Action is possible, even if you only subscribe to the precautionary principle—in other words, if you're not sure, do something before it's too late to do something. Let's not have this mob come in here with a trespass bill and run off that for the next year as if it's mission complete; let us have a government, for a change, come in here and present a comprehensive plan for Australia's agricultural sector.

Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (13:25): A lot of people make the choice to buy free-range eggs from the supermarket because they hope it means the hens have had a better life and have been able to roam freely. The CSIRO have said that free-range eggs are from 1,500 chickens per hectare. That is the standard that counts: enough room to move. That would be said to be genuinely free range. You think that's what you're getting if you go into a shop in Australia and buy free-range eggs. In Australia the standard by law is not the CSIRO standard of 1,500 hens per hectare but 10,000 chickens per hectare. That's what counts as free range in Australia. A few years ago, Labor and Liberal ministers did a deal to change the rules to say this is now what counts as free range in Australia. If most people found out about that, they would be very concerned. When you're buying free range you wonder whether that's in fact what you're getting—something where the chicken's welfare plays a part. That's only for free range. Free range is up to 10,000; what about all of the hens who are in battery cages? There's nothing to outlaw that. The pain and suffering they go through their whole lives is the untold story behind getting eggs on our table.

The same goes for pigs. You will still find in Australia that when some sows are pregnant they are put in stalls where they have the ability to take one step forward and one step back. That is being phased out in many places, which is a good thing, but it still exists. We can talk about what happens to piglets who get their tails sliced off and teeth cut and so on. We could talk about how we treat our animals when we put them on ships and the countless numbers that die as they're sent off in the live export trade.

If you want to stop people protesting about animal welfare then lift standards of animal welfare and pass legislation to improve conditions for animals on farms in this country. If you're so worried about protesters, the best way to stop them is to remove their cause for protest in the first place. We've been pushing for many years for a national animal cruelty prevention act, a proper independent office for animal welfare and changes to national standards so everyone in this country would feel comfortable knowing animals here are being properly treated. We've met resistance from all the vested interests in this place, who are not prepared to give animals a voice.

Over the last few years some whistleblowers have been prepared to stand up and say, 'We are going to show you some footage of what is actually going on behind the scenes before the animals get to your tables so that you can make an informed choice and that, hopefully, the parliament might see its way clear to changing the law to improve standards for animals in this country.' Instead of dealing with the problem, what is this government's approach? It's to shoot the messenger and say, 'We have no interest in improving conditions for animals in this country; we're just going to do with this what we do—'

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hogan): The debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 43, and the debate may be resumed at a later hour.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Chifley Electorate: NAIDOC Week

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (13:30): The electorate of Chifley, I am very grateful to say, sits within Dharug land, and we acknowledge their custodianship and pay respect to elders past and present within those lands. I'm also very proud of the fact that Chifley is home to the largest urban-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the country.

During July, our community hosted a range of NAIDOC Week events, celebrating and respecting the rich history, culture and achievements of our First Nations people. It was terrific, too, that we were able to attend events like the one held by the Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation in Holy Family Church in Emerton, where we
hosted, for his first official visit to Chifley, Labor leader Anthony Albanese. I am grateful for his attendance on that day, as we all were. It was heartening to see so many young Aboriginal people embracing their culture and providing us with an insight into First Nations history through dance. It was a personal highlight for me, and I want to acknowledge those students from Chifley College Shalvey Campus and Lethbridge Park Public School who performed on the day. Across Chifley, it's incredibly important that young Aboriginal people perform these dances. I want to celebrate, congratulate and encourage every single young Aboriginal performer across our electorate for keeping their culture and history alive and being the generational bridge to ensure that this culture continues to be celebrated.

Chisholm Electorate: Blackburn Football Club

Ms LIU (Chisholm) (13:31): Congratulations to the Blackburn Football Club reserves for their 176-18 win over Doncaster on 20 July, just a week and a half ago. Thank you to the president, Mr Matt Breen, and members of the executive committee for hosting me on the day; thank you to the member for Deakin for looking after the club prior to the last redistribution; and thank you to the team mascot, young Austin Pilley, for the good conversation. It was great to be there to see the game, to do a tour of their dated facilities and to discuss the upgrade, which will be commencing soon following funding from the federal government. As I said in my first speech, I have a passion for improving access to local sport. When these new facilities are finished, they will be a great vehicle that can bring communities together across cultural and economic boundaries. I look forward to many more visits to Morton football ground in the future.

Adelaide Electorate: Ghan Kilburn City Football Club

Mr GEORGANAS (Adelaide) (13:33): I too rise to talk about a great football club in my electorate, the Ghan football club—‘Ghan’ being short for ‘Afghan’. It’s part of the Afghan community, which set up a football club a few years ago to service the Ghan community and the refugee Afghan community in the suburbs of Kilburn and Blair Athol in the northern parts of my electorate of Adelaide. It is a wonderful, inspirational story where we see how these wonderful people, who came out here as refugees and are now running small businesses in the northern part of my electorate, set up a football team. They share an oval and club rooms with the Kilburn Aussie Rules football team, and they’ve been assisted by the Kilburn Football and Cricket Club. They bring in kids who perhaps have come here as refugees—youths under 18, including 14- to 16-year-olds—and make them part of the community. They do a lot of outreach work. Certainly Rahim, the president, has done some magnificent work up there, getting kids jobs, getting them connected to their community and assisting them with social services and a whole range of other things.

The Ghan Kilburn football club have now reached a level where they want to go into the super league, and they’re going to apply to go into the super league, the top league in the Football Federation South Australia. We wish them all the very best of luck, and I will be there to assist them to get to that stage. They will continue to contribute great things in South Australia.

Schools: Local Schools Community Fund

Mrs McIntosh (Lindsay) (13:34): People in Lindsay and in Western Sydney want to know how the Morrison government is creating the jobs of the future for our children and preparing young Australians to enter these emerging industries. This is a process which starts at the foundation of educating our kids in high-quality facilities, providing the resources they need in the classroom and on the sporting field, and ensuring we are supporting their mental health. The Morrison government is providing record funding for Australian schools, and we will increase funding for all primary and secondary schools—on average, 62 per cent for every student.

The Local Schools Community Fund is another initiative to contribute to improving the education of our young Australians. We are investing $30.2 million in the Local Schools Community Fund because we know how important it is to look after our children during their time at school and prepare them for the future beyond. Local schools in Lindsay will be able to apply for funding from $1,000 to $20,000 to go towards a project that will benefit students and the school community. Making sure children in Lindsay have access to the resources they need—from a stock library and new computer facilities to safe playground equipment and counselling services—is integral to our commitment to help students get the best educational experience. The local students who have visited me in parliament were excited to know what we are working on in Lindsay, and I’m pleased that we are investing in them.

Eid-ul-Adha

Dr ALY (Cowan) (13:36): While members and senators are away on break over August, millions of Muslims around the world will be celebrating Eid-ul-Adha. In my family, we call this the ‘big Eid’, which is unlike Eid-ul-Fitr, which is observed at the end of Ramadan. Eid-ul-Adha is celebrated after the completion of hajj, the Islamic
pilgrimage to Mecca. Eid-ul-Adha is a four-day celebration, celebrating the spirit of sacrifice. It re-engages those of Muslim faith with the principle of not putting worldly possessions before their relationship with God.

Just as we in this chamber are going on break and will have time to spend with our families, Muslims around Australia and around the world will be taking time to renew their connection with family and God. This is another reminder of how a diversity of faith and culture in this nation draws people together. Many Muslims will be inviting their non-Muslim friends to participate in Eid ceremonies, and I would encourage all members, if invited, to participate. The food is great, and I particularly recommend the hummus!

It is also fitting that I am on my feet today, as, three years ago, I delivered my first speech in this place on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Adha. I hope all members in this place will join me in wishing Muslims, both here and around the world, a blessed and, particularly, a peaceful Eid-ul-Adha. So, from my family to yours, happy Eid!

Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway

Dr MARTIN (Reid) (13:37): I would like to briefly discuss the importance of the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway to our veteran community in Reid. This unique memorial commemorates the Australian troops who fought the World War II Papua New Guinea campaign of July 1942 to January 1943. The walkway links Concord hospital to Rhodes train station, running along the mangrove-studded foreshore of the Parramatta River. The tropical feel of the location of this place of remembrance recalls New Guinea's vegetation.

The walkway is both commemorative and didactic. We must understand the history of our nation's service men and women if we are to truly remember their sacrifice. The track is installed with 22 stations equipped with plaques and an audio track, each marking a significant event in the Papua New Guinea campaign. This unique memorial, linked closely with Concord hospital's veteran community, has played a significant role in Reid's commemorations of all Australian service men and women. Over the years, the ongoing community project has gathered state and federal government support and significant contributions from the former Concord council, now Canada Bay council, Concord Rotary, Concord hospital and RSL New South Wales, as well as various federal government departments.

Shakir, Mr Omar

Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (13:39): As deputy chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, I've had much to do with Human Rights Watch. They've brought to my attention the fact that they've been monitoring Israel and the occupied territories for 30 years. But now there's an upcoming Israeli Supreme Court hearing against Omar Shakir, who is Human Rights Watch's Israel and Palestine Director. There is a suggestion that he is to be deported, basically. Amnesty International, a group of former Israeli ambassadors and other international bodies have raised concerns about deporting someone who is monitoring and watching to make sure that human rights are not being infringed upon in Israel.

I'm not going to make a judgement on the individual case—if people want to have a look at Omar's case, they can Google it and look at the Washington Post and others that have done op-eds on this—but I would suggest that it's a dangerous precedent for a healthy democracy like Israel. Hopefully, Australian diplomats will be there attending the hearing, which will be opening to the public. It would be a dangerous precedent if a good, strong democracy like Israel were to deport someone for just monitoring what was going on in Israel and the occupied territories—something that Human Rights Watch has been doing for 30 years.

Groom Electorate: Stronger Communities Program

Dr McVEIGH (Groom) (13:40): Our electorate of Groom is keenly anticipating the next Stronger Communities Program round. These very much needed community grants help support projects that bring our communities together, strengthen social connections right across the board and really develop community participation. There's no better example than to look to recently funded projects or projects funded in previous rounds. I refer in particular to the Pittsworth Men's Shed. A $20,000 grant towards the cost of a new shared facility really leveraged the community to invest more than $70,000 in total off the back of that grant for this important work in the beautiful town of Pittsworth.

There's also the Toowoomba West Lions Club, who do so much work towards the Christmas Wonderland affair every year in our city, bringing joy to young and old. There's the DownsSteam Tourist Railway, which has much tourism potential. There was some work there to continue to renovate old locomotives. There was some work at the Toowoomba Bowls Club on their commercial kitchen facilities for their work in the community—not only for their members but also for others who use the facility. There's also of course Brightside on Victoria. There was very important work there. There was some money invested to continue to renovate their disability day-care.
centre. Dollar-for-dollar grants up to $20,000 are very important for the cohesiveness and important work in our community.

**Dairy Industry**

**Mr KATTER (Kennedy)** (13:42): Next month will be the 20th anniversary of the deregulation of the dairy industry. The Queensland dairy industry has gone from 1,580 farmers down to 324. The Atherton Tablelands, the most concentrated and wealthiest dairy area in Australia, has gone from 230 farms to, last time I looked, 48 farms.

In 2019, export earnings in dairy were nearly $3,000 million—over $4,500 million in terms of today's money. So deregulation has taken us from $4,500 million in export earnings to under $2,000 million last time I looked. Farmers in New South Wales and Queensland were receiving over a dollar, in today's money, per litre of fresh milk and are now receiving 58c.

We did all this because free markets were going to be wonderful for us! Well, come up to North Queensland and talk to the beef farmers, the cattlemen. We've got no entry into Europe, no entry into Brazil, no entry into India and we've got minuscule entry into China—60,000 tonne. To put that in context, the last time I looked, 147,000 tonnes go into South Korea.

**PETITIONS**

**Mental Health**

**Mr LLEW O'BRIEN (Wide Bay)** (13:43): Libby Packer, a constituent of mine from Marcus Beach, represents just one of the countless Australian families devastated by mental ill health and suicide. Following the tragic death of her nephew, Libby set out to boost mental health services in regional areas by starting a petition to improve access to life-saving specialists and inpatient care. She then set out, quite literally, to walk 1,000 kilometres from Warialda in New South Wales to Canberra, collecting signatures to present in parliament. She walked tirelessly through all kinds of weather, passing through towns like Bingara, Gunnedah and almost to Gulgong. Libby heard stories about people in desperate need of help; families sending their children to Sydney for expensive private hospitals, as happened to her nephew; and needless deaths that may have been prevented if the services were available locally.

While Libby's physical health forced her to stop during her walk, she covered some 415 kilometres to drive this message home, and her resolve remains. Almost half of all suicides occur outside major cities, but people in remote and rural areas struggle to get specialist services. We must do more. I congratulate Libby, who was in the gallery with her family today, and everyone who supported her. I present her petition to the House and her paper petition for consideration by the Petitions Committee.

*The petition read as follows—*

Department of Health records show that between 2010 and 2017 the rate of suicide in rural and remote areas was almost two and a half times greater than that of major cities. In 2017 the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) counselled 24,500 people in desperate need of help; families sending their children to Sydney for expensive private hospitals, as happened to her nephew; and needless deaths that may have been prevented if the services were available locally.

We therefore ask the House to consider the development of a national rural mental health strategy ensuring: 1. Improved access to psychiatrists, psychologists and trained healthcare workers in rural communities. 2. Residential accommodation is provided in rural communities while patients receive support from these professionals.

from 565 citizens (Petition No. EN088)

Petition received.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hogan):** The document will be forwarded to the petitions committee for its consideration and will be accepted subject to confirmation by the committee that it conforms with standing orders.

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**Economy**

**Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith)** (13:45): The Prime Minister is fond of the term 'Canberra bubble', but what are people outside of Canberra saying about this Morrison government? Well, I can tell you, based on the emails and consultations that I've had with Australians, they are not too happy with this Morrison government. They are struggling with living standards going backwards under this conservative government.
They're struggling with the fact that their incomes haven't been growing for the last six years. The median household income has actually fallen by $500 under this conservative government. They're struggling to pay bills, wracked by the fact that electricity prices have been skyrocketing. They've risen by 18 per cent over the course of the last three years. We've got underemployment at record levels. Unemployment is increasing in Australia again. We've got the longest commute ever for people to get to and from work.

Poverty has actually increased under this government. That's right, there are more poor people in Australia because of this Morrison government, yet they refuse to countenance an increase in the Newstart allowance, instead trying to ridicule people who are trying to get a job. Consumption levels have stagnated and small businesses are struggling in Australia. Business investment has been smashed under this government, leading to a per capita recession. Our economy is foundering. Families, pensioners and small businesses are under enormous pressure, yet this government has no plan. Their only plan is to blame the Labor Party for everything and to try to wedge Labor. They should get outside the Canberra bubble and listen to how much Australians are really struggling under this government.

Morrison Government

Mr O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (13:47): One of the things you learn when you grow up as the youngest of nine kids is that the world is far bigger than just you. That degree of humility is reinforced when you're in this place. I have to say that listening to the series of first speeches over recent weeks has been truly inspiring. The previous speaker talked about the bubble. Well, I have to say I've actually enjoyed the bubble this last week because of these maiden speeches. The diversity of real-life experience on this side of the chamber, of the Liberal Party, the National Party and the LNP, is second to none. But there is something that binds people together regardless of their background. What binds them together is a common set of values. Values around freedom above all else, and virtues of balancing rights with responsibilities. I want to take this opportunity at the front end of this parliament to not only compliment my colleagues who are making their first speeches but also to renew my pledge, the pledge that I made when I was fortunate enough to enter this place, a pledge to the people of the Sunshine Coast. That is to be the Sunshine Coast man in Canberra and not Canberra's man on the Sunshine Coast.

Solomon Electorate: Top End Gran Fondo

Mr GOSLING (Solomon) (13:48): The Top End Gran Fondo is a cycling event that's held in Darwin each year. There are four riding distances. You can do three kilometres, 25 kilometres, 75 kilometres or 145 kilometres. I did the 145 kilometre in the past and I couldn't walk straight for a little while, so this year I'm doing the 75 kilometre. I'm joining Team Happy Days.

Team Happy Days has been organised by Territorians Gareth and Michelle in honour of their mate Kyle, whose saying in life was, 'Happy days!' They're doing it to raise awareness for mental health and suicide prevention. As well as raising awareness, we're also raising funds for MATES in Construction to assist them in their very important work in the territory to reduce suicide amongst construction and mining workers. So I say to cyclists in the Territory that it's not too late to dust off your bike and to join Team Happy Days in the Gran Fondo.

I'd like to quickly pass on a message from Kyle's mum, who lost her son in 2014:

I'd like to thank Michelle and Gareth who were friends of my darling Kyle who have done an awesome job in getting the information out regarding suicide and mental health.

Well done, Michelle! Well done, Gareth! Come and do the Top End Gran Fondo as part of Team Happy Days!

Hinkler Electorate: Local Schools Community Fund

Mr PITT (Hinkler) (13:50): I acknowledge those in the press gallery. Clearly, they've come in early to hear my contribution about the coalition government's Local Schools Community Fund!

They may well be very interested to hear that schools can apply for grants of between $1,000 and $20,000 to contribute to a variety of school projects and associated costs. I'm fairly certain that my local schools, and yours, Mr Deputy Speaker Hogan—and the member for Barker's and others—will be very keen to get some support. Those projects could include small-scale extensions or classroom refurbishments; new computer facilities; mental health and counselling services; playground equipment; library resources; or sports facilities.

It is important for schools to lodge one application for each of their campuses. The Local Schools Community Fund is open to government, independent and Catholic schools—so that is all schools. Eligibility conditions do apply, and the proposed projects will be assessed by a committee which I will appoint. The federal government has announced $30.2 million for the Local Schools Community Fund in the 2019 budget. Schools can apply through the website—the SchoolsHub. Applications close on 30 September 2019.

And, once again—and very briefly—round 5 of the Stronger Communities Program is open. We are calling for expressions of interest from Monday 5 August. This is a fantastic program that has supported our local
communities for a long time. Look at the things we've done: buses with wheelchair access, rowing trailers and kitchen upgrades—and it goes on and on. Have your applications into my electorate office before 9 September.

**Newcastle Electorate: Rugby League**

Mr CONROY (Shortland) (13:51): A grave injustice is being foisted upon rugby league fans, and ABC Radio Newcastle rugby league fans in particular. On 13 July, *Newcastle Herald* columnist Barry Toohey broke the news that long-time rugby league caller Craig Hamilton would not be calling Newcastle Knights home games next year and that the Titans clash on 31 August would be his last call. A replacement caller, part of the *Grandstand* NRL team, will travel up from Sydney to call the games to bring 'consistency' to the call across the state.

Well, Aunty, Knights followers who have contacted me are not interested in 'consistency' across the state. They want to hear Hammo's voice on the radio. Let me be clear: Hammo still has a full-time job at ABC Newcastle and will be part of the league coverage. He just will not call Knights home games. But Hammo's calls are what Knights fans expect. He's been doing it for 15 years. As one constituent wrote to me: 'Craig is a tremendous asset to the local and regional community, and the decision to drop him from calling Knights home games is certainly not supporting local radio and not a good use of the ABC budget. We all know Craig is the best person for this job, and we all know how important rugby league is in this area.'

The Knights are a religion in Newcastle and Hammo is part of that religion. Hammo's call must go on!

**Rural Road Safety Month**

Mr PASIN (Barker) (13:53): This month is Rural Road Safety Month. The chamber may not be surprised to learn that 1, as a passionate member who represents a rural and regional electorate, spend a lot of time on the roads. What it might be surprised to learn is that it equates to 100,000 kilometres a year, often very late at night or very early in the morning. As such, I'm acutely aware of the dangers that present themselves on our roads. Indeed, I've hit my fair share of kangaroos, and that's just recently—as you may have read in the media.

These dangers are bad enough, but add to that research that I've come across today from the Australian Road Safety Foundation. That is that, despite two-thirds of road deaths occurring on regional roads in 2018, a third of rural road users admit to taking risks behind the wheel. Whether this be speeding, using a mobile phone or driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the fact is that rural road users can't afford to take these risks. Over 1,300 people are killed on Australian roads every year.

I implore everyone to take extra care, not just for themselves but for their passengers and for other road users. Road safety is a community issue, and we've all got to take responsibility to minimise the risk of crashes and to save lives, because 1,300 are 1,300 too many.

**Macquarie Electorate: headspace**

Ms TEMPLEMAN (Macquarie) (13:54): The newest research from Origin tells us that young people asking for help for depression should be able to access psychotherapy as the first line of treatment, with medication as the second line. Whether it's a counsellor, a psychologist or a psychiatrist, young people need a place they can go to talk about their options and receive that therapy. That's what headspace should be, and my commitment to the electorate of Macquarie in the lead-up to the last election was to invest $3.5 million if Labor won so that we could have a full-service headspace in Katoomba, plus $2 million for serious outreach services in the Hawkesbury.

By contrast, the Morrison government made no headspace commitment for the Hawkesbury—nothing. Their only commitment was for a satellite headspace in the upper mountains, but these typically don't offer the full range of headspace services. When you consider the investment is less than half of a full headspace, I'm concerned that it's a shell of what it should really be. We know that often, when a young person seeks help, you only have a little window to give them what they need. By branding it headspace but making it only a satellite service, the danger is going to be not only that it won't be the quantity of service that the mountains need but that it won't be the quality of service they need, and that will have a consequence for how effective it is and how much trust people will have in this very important organisation.

**Prostate Cancer**

Mr PEARCE (Braddon) (13:56): Last week, I attended a fundraiser at the Burnie Yacht Club in my electorate of Braddon in order to raise funds for prostate cancer. The organiser was Mr Brian Britt, who was ably assisted by his daughter Melissa. Brian himself is struggling with an aggressive type of prostate cancer. As we appreciate in my electorate of Braddon, the business community got right behind Brian and donated some amazing prizes for the auction. It was a great night, and thousands of dollars were raised. Brian was inspired by the success of this fundraiser, so once again he got together with his family, his neighbours and his friends, and they're now chopping wood and selling it in order to raise further funds. His vision is to fund a prostate cancer bus to move around the state and assist in the education program.
More than 3,300 men are expected to die of prostate cancer in Australia this year, a staggering statistic. Brian’s message, and indeed my message, is simple: blokes, have a regular blood test to measure your PSA because, if you’re a candidate for prostate cancer, the earlier you treat it, the better the outcome will be. In just a few weeks, Brian and his helpers have raised around $30,000 towards their cause. I congratulate him on his tremendous effort. Brian, you’re making a real difference in raising the profile of this terrible disease and raising much-needed funds to educate others.

Newstart Allowance

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (13:57): I rise today to express my disappointment, and the disappointment of many in this place, about this government’s continuation—six years now—of division in this country—six years of pitting one Australian against another. The worst example that I have seen in my time here happened this week. When people from across the spectrum, from across the country, call for a rise in Newstart, this government hits back by demonising people in this country reliant on our social network. This is a disgrace.

I want to draw people’s attention to what I find to be the saddest piece of this: the hypocrisy at the heart of it. The government want to demonise people reliant on this network, but at the same time they come in here with soaring rhetoric about mental illness and how they want to destigmatise mental illness. In my electorate, I know many young people who have been breached on Newstart not because they’re not looking for work but because they are unwell. When a young man contacts my office and tells me that he was breached and, as a result, ended up in another episode in a mental health institution locally, I want to call this Prime Minister out: you’re dividing this country when what we need is unity and action.

Abortion

Mr JOYCE (New England) (13:59): On 1 June Vikki’s and my son Tom took his first breath. This was not the start of his life. The reality is that he was part of this world for some time and was merely passing from one room to another. We had, and have, an absolute responsibility to Tom, but we never owned him. He was more than merely a property right; he was a person. He attained this indivisible right of being alive long before he was born. Tom had rights, even though he was not conscious of them. They should not be removed by a parliament. He committed no crime.

The hour of birth is an arbitrary point in modern medicine, within a range of two to three months. His birth, to Tom, did not endow him with greater meaning as a person. As parents we had no lesser responsibilities than when Tom left the hospital, being totally reliant on our nurturing and protection.

Inside the womb, Tom kicked, punched, grabbed his umbilical cord, felt pain, slept and dreamed. With ultrasound, he was most certainly seen in real human form. To say he didn’t have the rights of other human life is to say he must have been subhuman. Historically, that concept is not unusual; people were informed by the social mores of their time. But I don’t believe that any person, any doctor or any parliament has the power today to declassify another person as less than human, and, by so doing, remove their most fundamental right: to be alive.

In the New South Wales parliament, they are debating whether Tom had no classification of human rights. Whether before his umbilical cord was cut—(Time expired)

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

MOTIONS

Cowra Breakout: 75th Anniversary

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:01): On indulgence, and at the strong suggestion of the Deputy Prime Minister, I move:

That this House record its remembrance of the 75th anniversary of the Cowra breakout and offer its thanks to those who gave their lives in service to Australia, remember the costs of war that are inflicted on all peoples and recognise the people of Cowra for their contribution to reconciliation and Australia’s contemporary relationship with Japan, an ongoing relationship with Japan, a great friend.

Cowra is, in the words of a former Japanese ambassador to Australia, the spiritual home of Australia-Japan relations. The story of Cowra is the story of unimaginable consequences, militaristic ideology, the goodness of ordinary people and the willingness of two enemies to become the best of friends. During the Second World War, Cowra was the location of prisoner-of-war and internment camps that housed thousands of Japanese and Italian prisoners of war and Indonesian civilian internees.

The Cowra breakout of 5 August 1944 was neither expected nor, in its time, properly understood. By all accounts, the relations between captors and prisoners before the breakout were benign. Cowra was a world away from the war and its many fronts. The prisoners were not required to work. The camp met the requirements of the Geneva convention and it was regularly inspected by representatives of the International Red Cross. But, below
the surface, there was a cauldron of angst and despair. Japanese prisoners felt deep shame about being in captivity. The words of their field service code were clear: do not in death leave to posterity a stain on your honour by having suffered in life the disgrace of being a prisoner.

At Cowra, in the words of the Red Cross delegate, the Japanese soldiers experienced moral isolation. To them, they had been disowned and discarded. They were dead to all but themselves. They lived in a deep and mistaken sense of shame. This adherence to a militaristic code of duty resulted in the men deciding to break out of Cowra and end their lives.

On 5 August 1944, at two in the morning, around 1,000 Japanese prisoners of war, armed with improvised weapons such as kitchen knives, baseball bats and pieces of wood, attempted to break out from the Cowra detention camp. They met brave resistance from Australian soldiers. Three Australian soldiers were killed that night: Private Benjamin Gower Hardy and Private Ralph Jones, who were posthumously awarded the George Cross, and Private Charles Henry Shepherd. Three more men were wounded. Another Australian serviceman, Lieutenant Harry Doncaster, was ambushed and killed during the recapture of the prisoners. During the breakout, 234 Japanese servicemen died—many at their own hand, some at the hands of their comrades, all in line with the perceived expectations placed upon them. A subsequent military court of inquiry found that conditions at the camp were in full accordance with the Geneva conventions and that the actions of the Australian garrison resisting attack averted an even greater loss of life.

It was after war's end that something deep, wonderful, and human started to occur at Cowra. In 1946 the men of the Cowra sub-branch of the RSL noticed that the graves of the Australian soldiers who were killed during the outbreak were unkempt and overgrown. The men started to tend them. Then it was noticed that the Japanese graves nearby were also untended, so their working bees were extended. In time they started to plant trees: gums, kurrajongs, wattles, pines and oleanders. Gardening became meditative and, through pulling up the weeds, mowing the lawns, carting water and planting trees, forgiveness was found. Peace and reconciliation were found.

In 1964 it became an official war cemetery. It's the only Japanese war cemetery outside of Japan anywhere in the world. Today the Australians and Japanese both lie in peace in Cowra soil. And that was just the start. A Japanese garden and cultural centre was built, student exchanges and cultural exchanges took place and, in time, the former prisoners would return as free men to Cowra and bring their families. They were welcomed in our country by Australians as friends. The Cowra peace bell is a tribute to their ongoing commitment to peace and the spirit of friendship, respect and reconciliation that now unites Australia and Japan.

Seventy-five years on we pause to reflect on the price of war and the courage of all those who accept the burden of service, we pause to honour the past and ensure it is never forgotten and we give thanks that, in the years after the brutality of war, Australia and Japan have forged a deep and enduring friendship. I can think of no better reflection of that than the honour I had to join Prime Minister Abe in Darwin as we remembered the bombing of Darwin—an act of silent grace by Prime Minister Abe that I’ve never seen before. On this anniversary we remember all who lost their lives, both Australian and Japanese, and commit ourselves to a world in which such conflicts are consigned to history and peace is our future.

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (14:06): I rise to support the motion moved by the Prime Minister. Across the lake from here, within the walls of the Australian War Memorial, there is a musical instrument that has clearly seen much better days. It's a bugle, one that has travelled a long way in its remarkable life. The first thing you notice about it is its bell, the part from which the sound emanates. Battered, part-crushed, it looks almost like a mouth now. Then you notice just how dinged up the rest of it is. T

Mr ALBANESE: (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (14:06): I rise to support the motion moved by the Prime Minister. Across the lake from here, within the walls of the Australian War Memorial, there is a musical instrument that has clearly seen much better days. It's a bugle, one that has travelled a long way in its remarkable life. The first thing you notice about it is its bell, the part from which the sound emanates. Battered, part-crushed, it looks almost like a mouth now. Then you notice just how dinged up the rest of it is. The brass is so pockmarked it looks like it's covered in craters, and the reinforcing loop is separate from the body. It was made by Boosey & Hawkes in London during the 1930s, the final years of peace before the world once again plunged into madness.

No-one knows when this instrument was brought to Australia, but what is certain is that by 1944, when World War II had already been raging for half a decade, it had made it all the way to the crowded prisoner-of-war camp in Cowra in the central west of New South Wales. Like the man who was about to turn it from a musical instrument into an important historical artefact, that bugle was a long way from home.

Around 2 am on Monday it will be 75 years since that bugle made its most significant sound. At 2 am the bugle was in the hands of Hajime Toyoshima. A few years earlier Toyoshima had been at the controls of a Mitsubishi Zero fighter, one of the many launched from the Imperial Japanese Navy aircraft carrier Hiryu. As he climbed into the sky he joined up with the aerial armada bound for Darwin. This was the first in a devastating series of air raids that would ultimately see the Japanese drop more ordnance on our northern capital than they did even on Pearl Harbor. How much of that was on Toyoshima's mind that cold Cowra night as he pressed his lips to the bugle's mouthpiece? Did he think about Darwin harbour, convulsing and burning so terribly beneath him? Or did he think about the heat of Melville Island, where he crash-landed his damaged plane after the raid only to be captured by a Tiwi Islander, Matthias Ulungura? Ulungura took Toyoshima across the narrow straight to neighbouring Bathurst.
Island to hand him over to Sergeant Leslie Powell of the 23rd Field Company, Royal Australian Engineers. He was now a prisoner of war. His journey to Cowra had begun.

The journey had, at last, brought him to this point. At 2.00 am on 5 August 1944 he pressed his lips to that silver mouthpiece, and the chilly Cowra air was pierced by shouting and the sound of an English-made bugle. It was the start of the biggest mass escape of POWs of the war, and the only one to occur here in Australia. It was the start of mayhem, confusion and terror. We can scarcely contemplate the fear that even the bravest Australian soldier must have felt: suddenly face-to-face with an act of such mass desperation by men so ashamed of their captivity.

We can hardly imagine how it was for Privates Benjamin Hardy and Ralph Jones, overwhelmed as they courageously manned their machine gun posts and were killed. Their final dying act was to disarm the gun, which saved many lives even as they lost their own. We cannot fathom the final moments of Private Charles Shepherd, killed so far from any of the war's multitude of frontlines. Figures vary, but it's agreed that in the end 108 Japanese were wounded, and there were more than 230 dead—Toyoshima amongst them. Everyone else was eventually recaptured, an ordeal that saw one more Australian, Lieutenant Harry Doncaster, lose his life.

As we think back on the mayhem, chaos and terrible carnage of that night three-quarters of a century ago, we think about the peace since. We think about how Japan, our once terrible enemy, became our great friend and partner. I think about being present in this very chamber for the historic address by Prime Minister Abe. We think about those who fell that night. We think about how we will remember them. We think about those graves in Cowra—nurtured, as the Prime Minister said, by so many of the local community, and we pay respect to them and thank them for their ongoing work and service.

We think about the ornamental garden near the side of the old POW camp, a piece of Japan framed by the deeply Australian tranquillity of eucalypts—a fitting monument to peace which arose from the ashes of those years of conflict. May our friendship deepen in the years to come. Lest we forget.

Reference to Federation Chamber

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (14:13): by leave—I move:

Further statements be made an order of the proceedings for the next sitting in the Federation Chamber.

Question agreed to.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Morrison Government

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (14:13): My question is addressed to the Prime Minister. Is the Prime Minister comfortable with the government's decision both to permit Mr Raheem Kassam to enter Australia and to allow government members to share a public platform with him when Mr Kassam has made many extreme comments, including remarks about the Scottish First Minister that I'm certain he'd agree are both misogynistic and completely unacceptable?

Mr COLEMAN (Banks—Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs) (14:14): In relation to the question, of course, all applications to enter Australia are dealt with under the provisions of the Migration Act, and all non-citizens must meet the character test. For people who may hold controversial views, any impact of those views must always be balanced against Australia's well-established principles of freedom of speech, but I won't be making any comments about specific applications or cases.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition on a point of order?

Mr Albanese: Yes, Mr Speaker, on a point of order: the question also went to whether the Prime Minister's comfortable with government members sharing a platform with this bloke. So I—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. Just again, for the information of those asking questions, the Practice makes it very clear: the Prime Minister can refer any question to any minister.

Morrison Government

Ms BELL (Moncrieff) (14:15): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister inform the house how the Morrison government is demonstrating it's on the side of Australians by backing the choices they are making for themselves and their families, their communities and their future?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:15): I thank the member for Moncrieff for her question, and I congratulate her on her first, or maiden, speech in this parliament. The life experience and the skills that she has will make an enormous contribution in this place, and I congratulate her.
The Australian people made a choice that they wanted a government that believes in lower taxes not higher taxes. They made a choice that they wanted to be able to keep more of what they earned—that's the choice they made—and not just as individual taxpayers going to work every day but as small businesses going and doing the hard slog of taking risks and putting in businesses. They wanted and made a choice that they wanted a government that believes that taxes should be lower, not higher.

They made a choice that they wanted a government that knew how to put the conditions in place to create more jobs. And, after more than 1.3 million jobs being created in the first two terms of this government, they chose to see another 1¼ million jobs created over the next five years.

They chose that a surplus is what this government needed when it came to responsible financial management, and they chose responsible economic and financial managers who knew how to deliver surpluses. And we are now in the first year of surplus in 12 years.

They chose to have the services, the essential services, that they rely on; affordable medicines, 2,000 of them, listed on the PBS; record funding for hospitals and schools. They chose to have those essential services guaranteed—not by higher taxes but by a stronger economy and a government that understood that.

They chose that they wanted Australians to be kept safe and their borders to remain secure. That's what they chose.

They chose that they wanted Australians to get home sooner and safer. They chose that they wanted their kids to be able to buy a house and that the house that they owned would not be eroded by the reckless policies of the Labor Party.

They chose practical policies, realistic policies, that reduce our emissions and take action on climate change, without destroying the livelihoods of Australians all across this country with reckless schemes that the Labor Party could not even answer a question on as to what their impact would be on Australians' daily lives, their jobs, their economy and the cost to them. They chose to decide that they would make the consideration about what industries would be in their communities, and they wouldn't have people coming up in caravans from the south parading around North Queensland and other places telling them what jobs they could have and making them feel guilty about the industries that they have always depended on and will continue to depend on. They chose a government that knows how to keep the lights on and reduce power prices. (Time expired)

**Morrison Government**

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (14:19): My question is addressed to the Prime Minister, and it follows my previous question. Is the Prime Minister comfortable with members of his government sharing a platform at a conference with Mr Matt Gaetz, who invited a Holocaust denier to the 2018 State of the Union address by the President of the United States?

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my right! Members on my right, the Prime Minister has the call.

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:19): I thank the member for his question, and I concur with the statements made by the Leader of the Government in the Senate in relation to that matter, which I'm happy to table.

**Regional Development**

Dr WEBSTER (Mallee) (14:20): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development. Will the Deputy Prime Minister update the House on how the Morrison and McCormack government is on the side of Australians who choose to live and work in rural and regional Australia?

Mr MCCORMACK (Riverina—Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development and Leader of The Nationals) (14:20): I thank the member for Mallee for her question. I thank her for her first question in this House—the first of many. What an outstanding inaugural speech she made earlier in which she set out the plan for the Liberals and Nationals, particularly for regional Australia, and also some of her own visions and ideas that will make regional Australia a better place in which to live, work and invest.

The member for Mallee has an outstanding public record of supporting her local community. She was the founder, former director and patron of Mildura based Zoe Support, a not-for-profit organisation providing prebirth support for young women and, post birth, connecting them with social and educational programs, getting them back in the workforce and building a better future for them. She's been a champion of women, the member for Mallee, and she's going to be a champion for the people of Mallee.
The government is delivering on its vision for regional Australia. We’re establishing a House of Representatives select committee that will examine the future needs of the regions. It will bring together the vast stories and experiences of how regional economies are diversifying, how regional industries are finding their way and how regional communities are boosting their resilience and hope and working together collaboratively and cooperatively to secure their future. When the regions are strong, so too is our nation. The member for Lyne says that all the time, and he's right. The new committee will be chaired by the member for Barker, who like all of the rest of us on this side of the House wants to see our regional communities continue to flow and flourish.

Mr Fitzgibbon interjecting—

Mr McCormack: The member for Hunter can participate on that committee if he's so selected. The good people of Mallee know their member has come to this place to advocate for them and their needs. Whether it's the $60 million Swan Hill bridge, the $2.5 million Cohuna Airport upgrade or the $1.5 million upgrade of the Horsham livestock exchange, we are backing, and the member for Mallee is backing, those fine Victorians.

The significance of our investment in regional Australia was best summed up by the mayor of Mildura, Simon Clemence, when I announced a $2 million instrument landing system for the Mildura Airport. In the scheme of $100 million infrastructure and investment in our nation, $2 million mightn't sound that much, but he said that it was probably the biggest investment in Mildura's future there has ever been. This investment will support an estimated 600 international flight students and inject up to $90 million worth of economic activity into the local economy. Already, there have been expressions of interest from six potential flight schools and pilot academies in coming to Mildura, boosting the economy and boosting the economies of the surrounding towns as well.

Since we came to government in 2013, we have committed almost $33 billion to economic and social infrastructure programs that specifically benefit rural and regional Australia. Rural and regional Australians can certainly depend on the Liberals and Nationals to have their backs. (Time expired)

Climate Change

Mr Butler (Hindmarsh) (14:23): My question is to the Minister Energy and Emissions Reduction. Does the minister agree with the member for Longman that children should be taught that climate change is not real?

Mr Taylor (Hume—Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction) (14:24): We heard from the member for Longman a fabulous first speech this week. Climate change is real, and we are taking practical action to deliver emissions reduction. We know we are on track to meet our 2030 targets. The Climate Solutions Package is doing exactly that for us, with $3.5 billion committed to ensure that we will achieve our 2030 targets, exactly as we achieved our 2012 Kyoto targets and will achieve our 2020 Kyoto targets as well. We will do that whilst maintaining a strong economy, in contrast to those opposite.

Newstart Allowance

Dr Haines (Indi) (14:24): My question is to the Minister representing the Minister for Families and Social Services. The Newstart allowance, paid to more than 4,400 people in Indi, is indexed to the CPI with inflation now 1.6 per cent. Since 2000, the cost of essential goods and services has increased far greater than CPI. I, like many in this place, including a growing number from those on the government side, support an increase to the Newstart allowance. When will the government increase the Newstart allowance, and will the government consider using a fairer index for future payments that better reflects the cost of essential goods and services?

Mr Fletcher (Braddon—Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts) (14:25): I do thank the member for Indi for her question and I congratulate her on completing her first speech. The government has a very clear and consistent position when it comes to Newstart. The purpose of Newstart is to assist people to get into or return to the workforce, and our focus is on helping people move from welfare into work. The best form of welfare is a job. Of course, we are very focused on generating an increase in jobs. Indeed, since we came to government in 2013, we’ve generated more than $1.3 million new jobs. As at June 2018, there were 230,000 fewer Australians of working age on income support payments than in June 2014. The proportion of Australians of working age on income support payments has fallen to its lowest level in 30 years, at 14.3 per cent.

Every Australian who moves from welfare into work achieves a personal victory. They achieve a victory in terms of a sense of contribution and self-esteem and, of course, an improvement in their financial position. So what we are determined to do is to support Australians on Newstart in making that transition from welfare to work. We’re doing that by driving growth in the economy and generating jobs. And we’re doing it also with targeted assistance to people who are on welfare, through schemes like PaTH—the Youth Jobs PaTH program, prepare, trial and hire. We’re spending almost $800 million over four years—

The Speaker: The minister will just resume his seat. The member for Indi, on a point of order.

Dr Haines: Relevance: I asked in relation to the rate of CPI.
The SPEAKER: Yes, and I'll just point out to the member for Indi, as I pointed out to crossbenchers previously, that certainly was part of the question. There was one question but there were many other statements. Although it didn't take up the full 45 seconds, it took up nearly all of the time, and, for that reason, the minister is in order. In other words, CPI wasn't the only thing the member spoke about.

Mr FLETCHER: The PaTH program is one of a number of targeted ways in which we're assisting and supporting Australians to move from welfare into work. Nearly $800 million has been committed to that over four years, and, to date, some 47,000, or 63 per cent of participants, have succeeded in getting a job. Of course, the ParentsNext program—another program targeted at people who are moving into the workforce, in this case, parents who are out of the labour force—helps them to build work readiness, and $350 million has been committed to that program. So our government is determined to assist people make the transition from welfare into work. There is more to do, but there is very significant process being made.

Budget

Dr ALLEN (Higgins) (14:29): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer outline to the House how the Morrison government is on the side of Australians who quietly chose sound budget management as a key priority for Australia's future? Is the Treasurer aware of any alternative policies?

Mr Husic interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Chifley! It's always at about this time in question time that he's warned!

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—The Treasurer) (14:30): I thank the member for Higgins for her question. She brings to this place an enormous amount of experience in the medical research field and as a leading paediatrician. She'll be a fantastic representative for Higgins.

The member for Higgins knows, and we on this side of the House know, that we are backing Australians who want a stronger economy. We're backing Australians who chose at the last election responsible financial management and lower taxes. We have an economy which is in its 28th consecutive year of economic growth, a AAA credit rating from the three leading credit-rating agencies, more than 1.4 million new jobs that have been created on our watch and a budget that is coming back into surplus. It's a budget that's coming back to surplus because we have a record number of Australians in a job, because the proportion of working-age Australians on welfare is at its lowest level in 30 years and because we have targeted spending.

We know that when we came to government we inherited $240 billion of accumulated deficits from those opposite. And, instead of them missing their final budget outcomes, in 2016-17 we delivered a final budget outcome that was around $4 billion better than forecast. In 2017-18 it was around $20 billion better than forecast, and in 2018-19 I'm confident that we will also outperform our budget forecast.

But I was asked if there are any alternative approaches. We know that those opposite talk down the Australian economy. We know that just months ago they took to the Australian people a plan for $387 billion of higher taxes. And we know that when they were last in government they announced invisible surpluses that were never delivered. Who did that? Euromoney Treasurer of the Year the former member for Lilley did that—the former member for Lilley, with his carbon tax and his mining tax. But maybe we were too harsh on the former member for Lilley, because do you know who his former chief of staff was, Mr Speaker? Do you know who was pulling the strings? Sir Taxalot!

The SPEAKER: I'm going to say to the Treasurer that I know he has used that term a couple of times, and the fault for that lies with me. We are not going to return to unparliamentary language or not referring to members by their correct titles.

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my right, I think the Treasurer wants to get back to his answer when he can. He needs to withdraw, and I'm not going to allow that situation to continue. Government ministers certainly won't like it if there is return fire, if I can put it that way.

Mr FRYDENBERG: Okay, Mr Speaker, I withdraw. But I make the point that the member for Rankin was the co-architect of $387 billion of higher taxes. There he was, with the silent member for McMahon and a retirees' tax, a superannuation tax, new taxes on family businesses and new taxes on hardworking Australians. We know on this side of the House that we always stand for lower taxes.

Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction

Mr STEPHEN JONES (Whitlam) (14:34): My question is to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. Why did the minister register Eastern Australian Irrigation in the Cayman Islands?

The SPEAKER: I think that question is out of order.
Taxation

Mr CONNELLY (Stirling) (14:34): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Morrison government is on the side of Australians who choose lower taxes and keeping more of what they earn as critical to their future? Is the Treasurer aware of any alternative higher taxing policies?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—The Treasurer) (14:35): I thank the member for Stirling and congratulate him on an outstanding first speech. He comes to this place having represented Australia on the battlefield with distinction. He has a great passion for small business, and I had the opportunity to visit him in the electorate of Stirling and talk to small businesses. We know that around 20,000 small businesses in the electorate of Stirling will be able to access the extended instant asset write-off for businesses with a turnover of up to $50 million—it was extended in the budget to $30,000—and around 70,000 taxpayers in the electorate of Stirling will be getting a tax cut as a result of a tax package that we on this side of the parliament passed through the House. Around 70,000 people in Stirling will be the beneficiaries.

I can inform the House that 4½ million Australians have put in their tax forms for the 2018–19 year. The Australian tax office has provided over $6 billion worth of refunds. That's money that will be spent at local cafes and local shopping strips and with local tradies.

The Australian people were given a clear choice at the last election. They could have voted for those opposite with $387 billion of higher taxes, but they rejected them. They voted in favour of a coalition government, the Morrison government, that is in support of lower taxes for millions of Australians. We're abolishing a whole tax bracket. We're lifting the threshold of the 19c-in-the-dollar tax bracket, and we're lowering the rate, creating one major tax bracket between $45,000 and $200,000, where the rate will be 30c in the dollar. That is where the bulk of Australian taxpayers will be, and it will tackle bracket creep. If you get another job or a promotion, or you do some overtime, you won't necessarily pay a higher marginal rate of tax.

It goes back to the values we stand for on this side of the House. We want Australians to earn more and to keep more of what they earn. We believe in the aspiration of hardworking Australians—a term that mystifies the member for Sydney. We understand aspiration and we are delivering benefits to those Australians who have aspiration. It was a very clear choice at the last election. The Australian people could have voted for the superannuation tax put forward by the Labor Party and the retirees tax, the housing tax, the tax on family businesses and the tax on hardworking Australians, or they could have voted for tax cuts. They voted for our tax cuts, and now we're delivering them.

Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction

Ms BUTLER (Griffith) (14:38): My question is to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. I refer to his previous answers. Did the minister or any of his associated entities or indirect interests receive any payments, income or benefit from the $80 million water buyback from Eastern Australia Agriculture?

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Leader of the House—members on my right!—I haven't called you yet. I am trying to persuade some people to stop interjecting before I eject them. The Leader of the House?

Mr Porter: Mr Speaker, the question goes to matters that the minister is not responsible for or officially connected with as a matter of public affairs administration or pending proceedings in the House.

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, to the point of order: the Leader of the House is correct, if we were relying on that, but we're not. We're relying on the previous answers that the minister has given, where he referred to his different interests and where he referred to associated entities. That's what the question draws on.

The SPEAKER: I'm just going to take the House back to when we were in this situation before, and I'm just going to reaffirm an earlier ruling I made. I did listen to the question very closely. I had a problem with it instantly, I have to say. I think if we go back to when we had a series of these questions which occurred a couple of years go, and the member for Isaacs was asking a lot of them, I allowed a number of them where a connection was made but what I also said was that that did not then open it up to simply just say, 'I refer you to your previous answers' and ask a question not related to the minister's responsibilities and accept somehow it connects together. That question falls in that category and I'm ruling it out of order.

Housing Affordability

Mrs McINTOSH (Lindsay) (14:40): My question is to the Minister for Housing and Assistant Treasurer. Will the minister update the House on how the Morrison government is on the side of Australians who choose to buy their own home? Is the minister aware of any alternative policies?
Mr SUKKAR (Deakin—Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (14:40): I thank the member for Lindsay for her question. The member for Lindsay, before coming to this place, had a great history of experience in the housing sector. I say to the member for Lindsay and, indeed the whole House, that the Morrison government's supporting hardworking Australians trying to get into a new home. We've already passed the First Home Super Saver Scheme, which has helped 3,500 first home buyers get into the market—a policy opposed by those opposite. We are working on the First Home Loan Deposit Scheme, which will start on 1 January next year, which will allow first home buyers to purchase a property with a five per cent deposit supported by the government. We've also set up the National Housing and Finance Investment Corporation, which has already assisted with 560 new affordable homes throughout Australia. We've also removed the impediments for older Australians looking to downsize, freeing up more housing for the next generation. That's why we've seen so much confidence flow back into the housing market since the election of the Morrison government.

I'm asked by the member for Lindsay about alternative policies. And, surprise, surprise, there are some alternative policies that are relevant here. Indeed, I note that today a report was released by Deloitte Access Economics, analysing the impacts of Labor's housing taxes—abolishing negative gearing and doubling capital gains tax.

Mr Thistlethwaite interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Kingsford Smith is warned.

Mr SUKKAR: The House would be interested to know that this report found that construction of new housing would fall; 7,800 construction jobs would be lost; rents would increase; construction activity would reduce by $766 million; and GDP would be hit by $1.5 billion. So it's no surprise that the disastrous housing taxes have mysteriously disappeared from the ALP website.

Ms Plibersek interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Sydney will cease interjecting.

Mr SUKKAR: We've got the co-architect of the housing taxes, the member for Rankin, along with the member for McMahon and the member for Maribyrnong left carrying the baby. I'd say to the Leader of the Opposition: stand up to the member for Rankin and decide whose side you are on. Are you on the side of the 42,000 nurses who have invested in property? Are you on the side of the 1.2 million Australian workers in the building industry?

Ms Ryan interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Lalor is warned.

Mr SUKKAR: Are you on the side of potential first home buyers? From Canning to Chisholm and from Leichhardt to Lindsay, we are backing hardworking Australians to get into the housing market.

Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction

Ms BUTLER (Griffith) (14:44): My question is to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. I refer to the minister's previous answers and his statement in this House that he has disclosed interests in accordance with the rules.

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Griffith pause. There are a couple of people interjecting, and I'm finding it hard to hear the member for Griffith—which is rather ironical because I always hear her interjections. I'm trying to hear the question. I'll ask the member for Griffith to start again, if that's okay.

Ms BUTLER: My question is to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. I refer to the minister's previous answers and his statement in this House that he has disclosed interests in accordance with the rules. Does he stand by that statement and has he disclosed any income or other benefit derived from consultancy fees to Eastern Australian Agriculture, Eastern Australia Irrigation or any of their associated entities?

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House.

Mr Porter: At least the second part of that question violates the same standing order 98(c) that we've just spoken to. The fact that the minister in a previous answer said that he'd disclosed interests in accordance with the rule is not a linkage in to ask him about any matter outside of his portfolio.

Mr Albanese: He gave himself up.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I'm patiently listening to the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business.
Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, in following on from the earlier ruling that you gave, where you specified that the connection should be made, this question refers to the previous answer, refers specifically to what the statement made was in the previous answer and then specifically tests whether or not that was true.

The SPEAKER: I have a difficulty with the question, and we're just going over the same ground we did the last time this occurred. I agree with the Leader of the House that the second part of the question is out of order. The first part of the question, I believe, is in order, but I'm saying now the minister can direct himself to the first part of the question. I'm saying it's going to be very difficult, given the nature of that and what that now becomes, for there to be too many complaints about how he addresses it. I'm saying that up-front. But I'm also flagging that, if questions are asked that have one section that is clearly out of order, I'm not going to allow that mechanism to occur in the question, and I've warned on that before. On this occasion, I'll just say to the minister the first part of the question was in order and he can ignore the second part of the question.

Mr TAYLOR (Hume—Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction) (14:47): Thank you, Mr Speaker. All my interests are declared in accordance with the rules.

Trade Unions

Mr TIM WILSON (Goldstein) (14:47): My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Will the minister advise the House how the Morrison government is backing Australian workers who choose better protection of their entitlements over lining the pockets of unions and employer associations? And is the minister aware of any other approaches on this important issue?

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (14:47): I thank the member for his question. Of course we are a government on the side of those Australians who have money in workers benefit funds and want to see that money properly spent on workers benefits and properly accounted for. Why do we need this transparency? Yesterday, we found out that the Protect workers benefit fund had transferred, in two years, $45 million to the ETU, $10.4 million of which went to NECA, an employer organisation. The bill before the House would simply require proper accounting for what goes into the benefit funds, what comes out and how it's spent so that we can all actually know that it is spent to the benefit of workers. The shadow minister's position is stated this way. He says:

… I don't think it's legitimate to say … we need more scrutiny over the jointly managed funds, where all the money has been going to specific programs that workers benefit from …

But that is the question, isn't it? Is all the money going to specific programs that workers benefit from?

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr PORTER: We have a yes from members opposite. What about the $10.4 million that went to NECA just to improve their bottom line? How did that $10.4 million benefit workers? How much money is enough before you start wanting transparency? Is it $45 million or $100 million? How about $125 million, because when you reverse-engineer and look at the money going into the ETU, how much money has gone into the ETU over the last 10 years? There's $125 million from sources that it is just impossible to determine. A huge amount of that money is clearly from workers benefit funds. Let's look at the specific programs that apparently workers are benefiting from. For management fees to the ETU, there's a total of $27 million. That's $27 million in management fees. There's admin income of $26 million, trust distributions of a paltry $67 million, and how about, just for good measure, directors fees and interests of $5 million.

Last week the shadow minister said he was very alarmed at all of this. Now, the shadow minister is 'entirely comfortable' with what the ETU has done. If Charles Darwin had uncovered the survival of the 'most comfortable' rather than the survival of the fittest, these people would rule the earth. They are the most easily assuaged. A yes with the question, and we're just going over the same ground we did the last time? (Time expired)

Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction

Mr BUTLER (Hindmarsh) (14:50): My question is to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. I refer to the minister's previous answers and his statement that he has disclosed interests in accordance with the rules. Can the minister confirm that he has never disclosed his interest in an entity called JRAT to the parliament?

Mr TAYLOR (Hume—Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction) (14:51): All my interests are declared in accordance with the rules.

The SPEAKER: The member for Hindmarsh is seeking to table a document?
Mr Butler: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I seek leave to table a media report in which the minister confirms that he has not disclosed that and should have.

The Speaker: The member for Hindmarsh will resume his seat. I've made it very clear that I'm not even going to ask the Leader of the House for leave on publications that are widely available.

National Security

Mr HASTIE (Canning) (14:52): My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney update the House on how the Morrison government is on the side of Australians who quietly chose policies that strengthen our national security essential to our safety? Is the Attorney aware of any other policies?

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (14:52): I think the member, who obviously, as the chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, takes an enormous interest in these matters. Since its return to parliament the Morrison government has clearly demonstrated that it is on the side of Australians who have made a quiet choice to strengthen our national security and to keep our nation safe. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those officers recently involved in the rest of Junaid Thorne in New South Wales. No doubt, that matter will proceed in the usual way.

But it is very useful to remind members that what the Morrison government has done over the last three weeks is all directed at keeping Australia safe. In the first three weeks of parliament, there have been three notable achievements. Firstly, we have passed legislation for a temporary exclusion order scheme to protect Australians from the threat of returning foreign fighters. The ability to delay, audit and control extreme high-risk individuals is absolutely critical to our future security, and it is instructive to note that we as a nation and as a government have learnt from past experience. Of the 25 Australians who travelled to Iraq to fight in that conflict and returned, eight were ultimately convicted of terrorist offences. So this is utterly critical legislation for this country.

Secondly, today we have introduced a bill that will ensure terrorists and their supporters are kept behind bars and improve the operation of the continuing detention order scheme for high-risk terrorist offenders. And we are doing that by extending the presumption against bail and parole to those who are not merely charged with terrorist offences but may be serving time for other offences that have clearly demonstrated terrorist sympathies.

In addition, and thirdly, I note that the Minister for Home Affairs has this week been in London. He has been working with our Five Eyes allies to ensure that technology companies help our police forces obtain access to encrypted services that shield the actions of child sex offenders. Why is that important? One of the pieces of data that has become known through that Five Eyes process is that there has been a near 20-fold increase in industry referrals of child abuse material to the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children between 2014 and 2018. That's an increase from one million referrals to 18 million referrals in that time.

Lastly, perhaps most positively, the best news for those who quietly choose the safety of themselves and their families this week is that it appears the Leader of the Opposition, finally, after two years of opposing this policy, now supports the measures to introduce mandatory minimum penalties for child sex offenders. This is a very long overdue change of position from the Australian Labor Party, notwithstanding previous opposition recognition of the choices made by Australians. Australians at the last election chose for a very clear strength in these things. We will protect their safety. We very much welcome the change of position, I might say. (Time expired)

Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction

Mr BUTLER (Hindmarsh) (14:55): My question is again to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. I refer to the minister's previous answer and a report dated 11 May which says:

He—

acknowledged JRAT was not among the companies listed on his register of parliamentary interests—

and goes on to say, and I quote from Mr Taylor:

It should have been.

Does the minister stand by his previous answer?

Mr TAYLOR (Hume—Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction) (14:56): I do. All my interests are declared in accordance with the rules.

Women's Economic Security

Ms LIU (Chisholm) (14:56): My question is to the minister representing the Minister for Women. Will the minister outline to the House how the Morrison government is backing Australian women who choose to have more choices about how they live their lives?
Mrs ANDREWS (McPherson—Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) (14:56): I thank the member for her question. Both Australian men and Australian women chose the Morrison government's positive plan for our future less than 11 weeks ago.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mrs ANDREWS: I understand that those opposite who have just laughed are clearly having an issue coming to terms with the fact that they are not in government and that their plan was rejected.

Mr Brendan O'Connor interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Gorton is now warned.

Mrs ANDREWS: But our government has been working every single day to repay the trust that the Australian people have put in us and to back the choices that they made at the last election. Australian women chose aspiration and strong economic management over Labor's plan to take more of their money and to decide what's best for them. Our government has always been about expanding choices for women and delivering more opportunities. We've already delivered a strong economy, with over 1.4 million new jobs, and about 55 per cent of those jobs were taken up by women. Women's full-time employment and female participation have reached record highs under our government, and we now have the lowest gender pay gap on record.

Earlier this year we delivered the 2019 Women's economic security statement. It's a $151.4 million investment to improve the financial security and independence of Australian women. It had some very practical assistance contained in it, such as the Future Female Entrepreneurs Program to help young women start their own businesses, because we know that, when you empower women financially, you empower the whole community. We're also pleased to be making the largest ever investment, $328 million, in frontline services to reduce violence against women. Since our new childcare package was introduced last June, childcare costs have come down by 7.8 per cent on average around the country. We're helping women save for retirement and we're supporting women in rural and regional Australia.

I know that the Prime Minister is backed by some amazing women in his family. He also has the backing and experience of a record number of women in cabinet. We have outstanding female additions to the classes of 2019. That's why Australian women can be certain that the Morrison government is on their side. We're supporting their choices and we'll continue to deliver for them and for all Australians.

Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction

Mr BUTLER (Hindmarsh) (15:00): My question is again to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. I refer to the minister's previous answer in relation to his disclosure. Why, in his latest statement of members' interests, did the minister disclose Gufee's interest in the Maclaughlin River Pastoral company but not Jam Land?

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members will cease interjecting. I call the Leader of the House.

Mr Porter: Again, the second part of that question is clearly with respect to matters that are outside the minister's portfolio responsibilities. It's an effort to link back a very, very straight answer, which was that the minister has disclosed his interests in accordance with the rules—to try and create a linkage—to matters that are not within his responsibilities.

The minister's answer that he disclosed in accordance with the rules is simply to state that he disclosed his trusts and nominee companies in exactly the same way that all the members opposite do and that everyone else over here does—and, indeed, like the one that I'm looking at right now, which is not the minister's.

Mr Dreyfus interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Member for Isaacs, my left ear is getting injured by you. I might take responsibility for seating arrangements if this continues. I'm going to hear from the Manager of Opposition Business. I have the problem I forecast last time, with part of the question being clearly out of order, but I'll still hear from the Manager of Opposition Business in case he has come up with something miraculous.

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, on your previous ruling, where you said that we were allowed to refer to and question a statement that has been made in the House: this question refers very specifically to a statement that the minister has repeatedly made in the House concerning his disclosures, and then challenges it very specifically by referring to the exact disclosure he has referred to, where one company has been included and another company, which the same Gufee has invested in, is not mentioned.

The SPEAKER: I understand—

Mr Burke: There is no other way for us to test a statement made in the House other than to put forward evidence that we don't believe it's true.
The SPEAKER: Well, I say to the Manager of Opposition Business: none of that overrides the standing orders or the minister's responsibility. Whilst you're referring to the previous answer, the second part of the question refers to his responsibilities as a member of the House of Representatives, not as a minister, and the connection hasn't been made.

Mr Albanese interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition just interjected something that wasn't in the question, so it might give you a hint. I'm going to go to the next question—

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: In deference to the Manager of Opposition Business.

Mr Burke: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The most important obligation of the obligations you referred to for ministers is to not mislead this House. We believe he has made a statement to this House that's not true, and that's what we want to test.

The SPEAKER: I say to the Manager of Opposition Business: I appreciate his efforts, but—

A government member interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Whoever's interjecting on my right is not helping. The member for Goldstein looks guilty.

A government member interjecting—

The SPEAKER: It wasn't? All right; I'm sorry. It was someone behind him. I'm just going to say to the Manager of Opposition Business, with respect: the point of order you made highlights my point, because that was not the question. The question wasn't whether he misled the House. That question wasn't asked. It asked about his individual responsibilities as a member of parliament.

Energy

Mrs ARCHER (Bass) (15:04): My question is to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. Will the minister update the House on how the Morrison government is on the side of hardworking Australians who choose keeping the lights on and getting electricity prices down as their priorities?

Mr Rob Mitchell interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Member for McEwen, the minister has the call.

Mr TAYLOR (Hume—Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction) (15:05): I thank the member for Bass for her question, because I know she is passionate about a fair deal for energy for the people and businesses in her electorate of Bass. Just a few months ago, I spent time with her in Bass. She took me around a number of the small businesses in her electorate, talking about a fair deal on energy and the importance of affordable, reliable energy for small businesses—including George's Dry Cleaners, who we visited when I was there in Launceston. With the member for Bass, along with the member for Braddon, we've been working closely on ensuring that Tasmania can realise its full potential in providing energy to Tasmanians and to Australia through the Battery of the Nation project and the Marinus Link project.

At the last election, the Australian people chose a government focused on driving down power prices, because we know an extra dollar in the pockets of hardworking Australians will be well spent. At the last election, Australians chose a government taking action to lower prices from 1 July through the price caps we have established that are bringing down power prices, particularly for those not in a position to be able to negotiate with the big energy companies. They are seeing savings of up to $663 for households and over $2,000 for the sorts of small businesses I was talking about a moment ago.

At the last election, Australians chose to stop dodgy discounting and charges from big energy companies, including sneaky late-payment fees which were crippling those who could least afford them. At the election, Australians chose a government that is establishing a retailer reliability obligation that ensures that the supply necessary to meet customers' needs is in place, years ahead of time. And we see this agenda is working, because just yesterday the ABS confirmed that power prices dropped 1.7 per cent, just in the last quarter alone.

But on 18 May Australians did face a fork in the road, and they voted against Labor's reckless energy policy that they couldn't explain to the Australian people, for which the costings weren't done and which was a tax on energy—electricity, gas and fuel—and a hit to jobs, wages and the economy. This government is clearly demonstrating it is on the side of the Australian people.

Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction

Mr BUTLER (Hindmarsh) (15:08): My question is again to the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction. I refer to the minister's statement that 'all disclosures have been made in accordance with the rules'. I also refer to
the minister's obligation under ministerial standards to disclose private interests to the parliament and not to mislead this House. Why, in his latest statement of members' interests, did the minister disclose Gufee's interest in Maclaughlin River Pastoral Company but not Jam Land?

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House, on a point of order?

Mr Porter: Mr Speaker—

Mr Brian Mitchell interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Member for Lyons, do you want to walk or do you want me to go through it? We've done it enough. The member for Lyons will leave under 94(a).

The member for Lyons then left the chamber.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House.

Mr Porter: So this time the member wedged in the words 'ministerial disclosure', but eventually asked a question which was the same question again about the member's disclosure as a member of parliament, which again is not inside his ministerial responsibility.

The SPEAKER: I'll hear from the Manager of Opposition Business.

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, to make plain what the question specifically referred to, it referred to the Statement of Ministerial Standards, which itself includes the statement:

All parliamentarians are required to disclose private interests to the parliament. Given the additional powers of Ministers and Assistant Ministers, I expect them—

to provide me with additional information about their private interests to ensure there are no conflicts with their roles as ministers.

The SPEAKER: I will hear from the Leader of the House again.

Mr Porter: The last part of the question was 'why in his latest statement of members' interests' and then went on to add some information there. It was a question about members' interests.

The SPEAKER: I just make the point to the Leader of the House that I listened to the question closely. The substance of the question was about the ministerial code. That was in the question. The substance of the question was about the ministerial code, and I'm going to allow it. The minister has the call.

Mr Taylor (Hume—Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction) (15:10): Well, the answer is: because I have declared my interests in accordance with the rules. If Labor is proposing to change the rules, it would require many changes in disclosures, including from those opposite.

Morrison Government

Mr Young (Longman) (15:11): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister outline how the Morrison government has demonstrated in this parliament that it is on the side of the Australian people? Have there been any alternative approaches on display?

Mr Morrison (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (15:11): I thank the member for Longman for his question and I note his outstanding maiden speech to this House and the incredible life experience he brings to this place. I would commend his speech to all members.

I was asked about alternative approaches and about how we are dealing with ourselves in this place. We used to have a Leader of the Opposition who used to agree with people when he didn't even know what they said. We now have a Leader of the Opposition who wants the Labor Party to vote for things that they don't even believe in. We on this side of the House have seen this on display since we've returned to the parliament. We have supported delivering tax relief for all working Australians so they can keep more of what they earn. The Labor Party had to be dragged kicking and screaming, and they finally voted for something that they themselves said they don't believe in. It's very clear that the Liberal and National parties are for lower taxes and the Labor Party remains committed to higher taxes.

The same was true when it came to supporting our farmers and graziers and those in rural and regional parts of the country with the drought fund. On this side of the House, we put that forward after the Drought Summit last week. The Labor Party opposed it every step of the way to the election, and then we put this bill into the House and, once again, the Labor Party had to be dragged kicking and screaming to support those in rural and regional Australia and voted again for things they don't believe in. The same was true when it came to protecting Australians against foreign terrorist fighters. The Labor Party said there were 40 amendments that needed to be in place for that bill. None of them passed and they still voted for it—voting again for things they don't believe in.
But, when we want to stop union militant thugs pushing their way around building sites around the country and when we want to make sure that workers' entitlement funds in the hundreds of millions are not siphoned off in the gravy train of union excess, that's when the Labor Party show up. That's when they say that they're going to vote for what they believe in—but they will sell the rest out. They'll get another opportunity when we come back. The workers' entitlement fund bill will come back into this place, and we'll see whose side they're on. Another bill that's going to come back into this place is on drug testing to ensure that our welfare system has integrity and that we support Australians who are trying to get off welfare and into work. Just like with the cashless debit card, we will see that, when it comes to these issues, Labor are not for taxpayers, nor are they for people who want to get off welfare and get to work.

The member for Longman knows this: that, if you have a go, you get a go in this country. And the member for Longman knows this: that you don't have to hold people back to let others go forward. The member for Longman knows that we will never engage in Labor's politics of envy. The Australian people chose the economics of aspiration.

On that note, I ask that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Clerk of the House of Representatives

The SPEAKER (15:14): Very soon I will call the Prime Minister to move a motion to record the House's appreciation for the service of its Clerk, David Elder. As I mentioned a few sitting days back, everyone is aware of David's retirement, but today is his last day here at the table. We, of course, all want to recognise that incredible service.

I will just make a few brief remarks at a personal level. David, I met you a long time ago—in fact, 29 years ago—just after the 1990 election when I came to work in this building. After my election in 2001 I got to know you a little better, and over the years I have got to know you very well, particularly when you were the Deputy Clerk, with my role in committees. I was very, very fortunate that you were the Clerk when I became the Speaker—I had a huge learning curve—and I've been very fortunate every day since; I really have. Your encyclopaedic mind is matched by first-class judgement and also a first-class temperament. And, can I tell members, it is accompanied by a wicked sense of humour; it really is!

David, as we recognise your last day here in the House, we reflect on your incredible public service and your service to this House of Representatives. In your 38 years, beginning in 1981, you have seen nine different prime ministers, 14 different speakers and 17 leaders of the opposition. But, as you know, David—and this might surprise members—you are only the 16th Clerk of the House of Representatives since Federation. In so many ways the wider public possibly don't appreciate the role our clerks play as guardians of our democracy in giving frank and fearless advice to ensure the rules and conventions are upheld through the decades, and David has certainly done that. You've been a great leader here in the House of Representatives. You've served your House and our nation with distinction.

David's wife, Louise, and some of his family are with us today in the gallery. We wish you all the best, David. I'll miss your friendship. I know you've got great plans for your retirement to spend time with your family, particularly with your grandchildren. We will miss you. We hope you'll miss us! But we will miss you.

MOTIONS

Clerk of the House of Representatives

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (15:18): I move:

That this House place on record its appreciation of the long and meritorious service to the Parliament by the Clerk of the House, Mr David Elder, and extend to him and his wife and family every wish for a healthy and happy retirement.

The Clerk is a very humble man. He has been a gentle reminder to all of us who have had the good grace to serve in this parliament during his tenure, whether here or down the road—and there are many who have had that opportunity; hundreds of members, if not over a thousand, whom he's stewarded have come through this place—of the dignity and great honour it is to serve in this chamber. There are 151 members here, many of those for the first time, following the last election. All of us remember—I'm sure new members do, because it was only a few weeks ago for them, and I'm sure all of us do, whether it was 12 years ago, as it was for me, or much longer than that, as it was for the Leader of the Opposition, who was first elected back in 1996—the day when we first walked onto this carpet and how special a privilege it was for us.
We approach the parliament in the morning, and we look up at this atrium; you leave the chamber, you see the flag and you nod to the speaker—a reminder of our country, our history and our responsibility to it. It's something that connects us all, despite our often very significant differences at a partisan or any other level. But we are united in this, and this House is united in showing its deep appreciation to the Clerk.

This place doesn't just rely on the beliefs, the courage, the passion and the integrity of all of those who come here and the enthusiasms of all of us who have been elected; it also relies on the dignity and institution of this House—the impartiality, the judgement and the enthusiasm of those who serve this parliament, whether as Clerk, attendants, Serjeant-at-Arms or others. Our Clerk—the 16th Clerk of the House of Representatives—has worked, as the Speaker has just reminded us, in this building and the one down the road for 38 years. I'm pleased you've only had nine prime ministers, not 10!

**Mr Albanese**: Don't speak too soon!

**Mr MORRISON**: It's his last day, mate, so I can be confident of that!

But in keeping with the tradition of all those years, he has not spoken a word in this parliament in one of these microphones. You won't find any word he's said in the Hansard, really, in terms of offering commentary on bills or anything of that nature. Though he has been among us, he has not joined us in those debates, muttering interjections or any of those things, but for 38 years, he's let his actions speak for him in the dignified way that he's conducted himself—his judgement, his integrity, his demeanour. We have seen the true character of the Clerk through the very decent, honest man that he is. He reminds us that we are all—from the father of the House to the newest member—only temporary custodians of this institution in which we inhabit for a time.

So, can I say more informally to you, David: thank you for your service to our country and to this parliament. You have served it with tender love and devotion, because that has been your passion and your service, and we thank you. We thank you for your dedication. We wish a very happy and long retirement to you, Louise and your family, who have earned, I have no doubt, this retirement with you that you can share with them. So on behalf of the government, I want to extend our thanks and appreciation for everything you have done for us, for this parliament and for our democracy. May God bless you.

**Mr ALBANESE** (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (15:23): I join with the Prime Minister in supporting this resolution acknowledging David Elder's quite extraordinary contribution as a public servant. The key is that second word—servant. It is an honourable profession and we, in Labor, honour you as one of the best. You've spent 41 years in the service of the Commonwealth, 38 of which were in the Department of the House of Representatives. You've been the Serjeant-at-Arms twice, Deputy Clerk and, of course, Clerk since 2014. On a personal level, I've had a fair bit to do with you as the Leader of the House and as the Manager of Opposition Business, before my current role.

Just like your immediate predecessor—and unlike the overwhelming majority of the 16 clerks of this House—you've known what it was like to have that role in a minority parliament for a brief period of time. That changes the dynamic in this place, and it means that your role is elevated in importance by many multiples. Many of us on both sides over many years have benefited from your advice. You deal with us calmly, in a considered way. You are always courteous, always impartial and—perhaps most remarkably, and I reflect on myself, on the Prime Minister and on most of us, I think!—always patient, which does take a fair bit of character from you.

One of your roles is to edit Practice and this is your work—the seventh edition. It reminds us that the office of Clerk has its origins in the 13th century. And I say to new members, read Practice. It will serve you well if you do because one of the things it outlines is where the tradition of the Clerk reading bills—first readings, second readings et cetera—comes from. It's because of literacy levels. Many members literally couldn't read the documents that were before them, and, in order to save embarrassment, this tradition came about of the Clerk playing that role. And Practice outlines that great history and how our democracy has evolved.

Your life as well extends to service outside of this place. I wasn't aware until we did a bit of research that, for two decades, you've been involved in the Model United Nations Assembly for senior high-school students that is held in the Old Parliament House.

We thank you for your dedicated service to this parliament and the nation. We wish you and Louise and all of your family all the best for the future.

**Mr PORTER** (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (15:26): As Leader of the House, it's a great delight to speak to the motion. As has been noted, David Elder has devoted essentially his entire working life—38 years—to this parliament. To give all of the members present a sense of the scale and depth of this commitment to our Public Service, by my rough calculations, 38 years means that David has spent 1.7 per cent of his working life listening to Phillip Ruddock's valedictory speech.
I hope I can add a celebratory tone to this motion, by noting that, since 1981, David must have seen political slogans pass by him with the repetition of scenes, like those outside HG Wells's time machine. Since 1981, David has seen off new leadership, proven leadership, and the very catchy 1996 slogan of just plain old leadership. He has seen this parliament choose real change, go for growth, and strive for hope, reward and opportunity. He knows when Australia deserves better and when we're heading in the right direction, and he's seen a new way for Australia's future for all of us. He knows about moving forward, not standing still, standing up, standing up for Australia, standing up for your family and standing up for real action, and he's seen good government starting now. He is well schooled in easing the squeeze, keeping Australia safe, keeping Australia in safe hands and building Australia's future.

To end your very significant service as you have, David, means that you're a very significant individual part of the office of the Clerk of the Commonwealth parliament. That, as the Leader of the Opposition has noted, is a wonderful history, and if Marvel were to do an origin story for parliament itself, then the Clerk would feature in the very earliest scenes. The Leader of the Opposition has noted those early scenes, but some people date the first official appointment of a Clerk to 1863, and some historians point to that as the actual origins of modern parliament. So the role of the Clerk has been indissolubly important to parliament and you have proven yourself individually to be indissolubly important to this parliament.

I might just add, finally, that you've also made a very significant contribution to the future of our region, in a very subtle way. Historians writing in the golden age of parliamentary statute express that the very essence of English history might be conceived of as the birth and evolution of the constitutional form, and above all, parliament. I think it's very clear today that the history of parliaments and of democracies are inseparable, but that that history has not yet been finished in its writing. Right now, there are younger and smaller but critically important parliaments in our region and beyond that are evolving and learning and underpinning stronger democracies, and you have made a very significant quiet contribution to those parliaments, which might be more important than all foreign policy contributions of any government from either side. Thank you for your service.

Mr Burke (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (15:28): As Manager of Opposition Business, I want to join in the comments of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the House, except when the Leader of the Opposition encouraged government members to read Practice. We're in a much stronger position if they don't.

Throughout most of my time as Manager of Opposition Business, David Elder has been the Clerk of the parliament. It's very telling: the truth of that word 'Elder'. It's very much earned in terms of the wisdom that David has brought to the role.

In relation to what the Leader of the Opposition said about when you have a minority parliament, what is really significant is the extent to which the Clerk, and the respect for the Clerk from everybody in the room, becomes basically the linchpin of our democracy, because both sides, whatever we will argue and quibble with on different rulings, know that whoever's in the Speaker's chair is relying very heavily on the advice of the Clerk, and that means there is a consistency in our democracy. It also means the Clerk's in a different position to anyone else in the room, in the sense that the rest of us get to enjoy the fact that we pursue what we want to have happen, whereas the Clerk, who personally always wants order, has to be in a position to answer the question: what do the standing orders allow? There was one Thursday early in the last term when there were different questions that I was asking the Clerk in the early afternoon. David wasn't that happy with the questions I was asking but still gave very honest answers, which resulted in an evening that we thought was wonderful but that David doesn't view as the best in his career. But the professionalism of that was extraordinary—his professionalism in saying, 'Here's the precedent; here are the rules,' and not pursuing what he might want to have happen but pursuing the dignity of the House and the consistency of the rules of the House.

For that principle to now be something that David has helped provide support for, particularly in nations in the Pacific, goes to the heart of the role that Australia can play. It would be difficult to think of a time in our history when it was more important for us that governance in the Pacific be functioning well. In that way, as the Leader of the House said, you have served our nation way beyond the specifics of your role in the parliament. We really do thank you and wish you well.

The Speaker (15:31): I've got a note from the Clerk. You just saw the Clerk hand me a note: 'Can I thank you, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business for the very kind words about me. I wish members and the House all the best for the future. David.'

Just before I put the motion, I think it would be appropriate that the House do as it did with the retirement of the last Clerk several years ago, and that is that I'll put the motion and I think it's appropriate that members signify
their support by simply rising in their places. The question is that the motion moved by the Prime Minister be agreed to.

Question agreed to, honourable members standing in their places.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL’S REPORTS**

**Report No. 5 of 2019-20**

The SPEAKER (15:33): I present the Auditor-General's Audit report No. 5 of 2019-20, entitled *Performance audit—Australian Research Council's Administration of the National Competitive Grants Program: Australian Research Council.*

Document made a parliamentary paper in accordance with the resolution agreed to on 28 March 2018.

**BUSINESS**

**Leave of Absence**

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (15:33): I move:

That leave of absence be given to every Member of the House of Representatives from the determination of this sitting of the House to the date of the next sitting.

Question agreed to.

**DOCUMENTS**

**Presentation**

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (15:33): A document is tabled in accordance with the list circulated to honourable members earlier today. Full details of the document will be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings.*

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Morrison Government**

The SPEAKER (15:34): I have received a letter from the honourable Leader of the Opposition proposing that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely:

The failure of the Government to represent the interests of all Australians.

I call upon all those honourable 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—

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (15:34): Just a few weeks ago we all stood in this House and debated the passing of Bob Hawke, a great Australian who stood for all Australians. Bob Hawke's prime ministership was characterised by an understanding that together we are stronger. He looked for common ground. Nothing could stand in more contrast with that than what we've seen from this government in its three-week self-indulgent vanity project, this victory lap where it has brought parliament back in July.

The fact is that the Prime Minister is in search of an agenda. In place of that, he's chosen division. He characterises that himself when he stands in parliament and has the talking points for all the ministers about, 'Whose side are you on?' Billy Bragg, at the beginning of the year, said about international democratic politics at the moment that:

This is a time of dismissive demagogues promoting a know-nothing politics of swaggering arrogance driven by scorn and spite.

I'm reminded of that comment every time I see this Prime Minister—the hubris of a government overcome with arrogance, where no-one is too right-wing or extreme to share a platform with.

This is the first time I've seen a Prime Minister stand in this parliament and refer to the statement of a senator as this one did when asked his view about some of those opposite sharing a platform with Raheem Kassam and Matt Gaetz. The fact is that those opposite have a hide to ask, 'Whose side are you on?' But, in response, let me give them exactly which side Labor is on. We're on the side of unity, not division. We're on the side of equality, not inequality. We're on the side of political conviction, not political expediency. We understand that we need to promote what we are for, not just what we are against, unlike those opposite. We understand that we want an economy that works for people, not people who work for the economy. We understand aspiration, but we understand that that's not just about individuals. That is about the better life that working Australians want for their family, neighbours, community and country.
We support those who are struggling and who need a helping hand. Those opposite say that people have never been better off, in spite of the reports just this week. We understand that free markets left alone, because they have no conscience, entrench existing relationships of power, both economic and social. Those opposite still support trickle-down economics. They say it will all be okay if government just gets out of the way. We understand that unions have a critical role in a democratic society. Those opposite just want to attack them. We understand the importance of holding business to account, which is why we supported the banking royal commission at the same time as they voted against it 26 times. We support building infrastructure; they support talking about building infrastructure. We respect public servants; they cut public servants. We respect the science of climate change; those opposite want equal time for climate sceptics to teach in the classroom. We regard education as being about creating opportunity; those opposite see it as just entrenching privilege.

We support Medicare being at the heart of the health system. Those opposite undermine it at every opportunity. We support increasing Newstart. Those opposite regard that as just ‘unfunded empathy’. We support addressing homelessness. They want more positive spin about homelessness, to talk about the 99 per cent who are in homes rather than the one per cent who are homeless. We support pensioners. Those opposite say that the pension is too generous. We support aged care that looks after our vulnerable older Australians. Those opposite want to get rid of regulation and just let the market rip. We support superannuation as being critical for our nation. Those opposite undermine it. We support a free media. Those opposite have engaged in cynical, politically motivated raids and intimidation against journalists. We on this side of the House support a voice for First Nations people in our Constitution. Those opposite have roadblocks in their cabinet—like the Minister for Home Affairs, who walked out on the apology. We on this side of the House understand that you can protect your borders without losing your humanity.

Mr Tim Wilson interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hogan): The member for Goldstein is warned!

Mr ALBANESE: Those opposite have engaged in dehumanising people in our care for political gain. We on this side of the House appeal to hope. Those on that side of the House rely upon fear. We want to shape the future in the interests of all Australians. Those opposite are frightened of the present and terrified of the future. Nowhere is that better characterised than in the National Broadband Network: we understand that fibre is the technology of the 21st century; those opposite rely on copper to go forward.

We on this side want genuine support for our farmers who are struggling in the drought, who need real action on climate change, who need real funding. Those opposite want legislation that gives them some money in the following financial year—$100 million rather than the $5 billion that they talk about. We on this side of the House are absolutely determined to bring the nation together. We reject those who seek to divide us. In their No. 1 talking point, the Prime Minister, the Treasurer and the minister opposite talk about ‘Whose side are you on?’ That shows exactly what they are about. They don't have a positive agenda, they rely upon negative politics and they seek to divide at every single opportunity.

We on this side of the House are united. We know exactly what the values of the Labor Party are, we know what we stand for: a strong economy and jobs. We know we stand for social justice. We know we stand for lifting people up, not leaving people behind. We know we stand for engagement on the environment. Australians don't want that much and they don't ask that much from their government, but they expect a bit of respect. They expect that the government will actually have a plan. And a third-term government should have developed that plan into a coherent narrative. Yet what we see is just more and more scare campaigns.

The fact is that Labor's values are shared not just by people here who have a common interest, who are united not just because we happen to be in parliament and not just because we happen to be in the Labor Party, but because it is our shared values that have brought us to the Labor Party—a party that has been in existence since 1891, a party that has proud origins and a proud history, a party that will continue to contribute to this nation's history into the future.

So I say to the Prime Minister: you asked the question, consider it answered. We on this side of the House know exactly whose side we are on. On that side of the House, they are so divided they can't even get an answer from a Prime Minister about senior members of the Liberal Party and the National Party appearing on the same platform with extreme right-wing ideologues in order to promote division in this country, allowing in the sort of talk that will just divide us.

I will conclude with the Prime Minister's question. We know exactly who we are and we know exactly whose side we are on. We are the Australian Labor Party and we are on the side of Australia's national interests. It's a pity that there is a government that isn't—a government that is just on the side of its own selfish political interests.
and seeks to divide people, promote fear and engage in negative politics because they don't have a positive agenda for their third term.

Mr SUKKAR (Deakin—Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (15:44): I think the Leader of the Opposition's speech makes it abundantly clear that he is in absolute denial about what happened at the election. We've seen it time and time again. I was reflecting in question time today, 'Imagine being a backbencher in the Labor Party.' You wouldn't want to too forcefully argue against any given policy, because the Leader of the Opposition and the leadership of the Labor Party might turn around and tell you to vote for a bill that they've been arguing against. We've seen it time and time again. When we were re-elected, we had spoken every day during the campaign about tax relief for hardworking Australians, about ensuring that there was structural reform of our tax system to reward hardworking Australians and to make sure they earn more and keep more of what they earn.

What did we see from the Labor Party? The Labor Party could not accept the verdict of the Australian people, and put every obstacle in the way of delivering tax relief for everyday Australians. We saw the pantomime from the Labor Party for weeks on end in the lead-up to the legislation. They were arguing against it. The Leader of the Opposition humiliated himself by moving an amendment to change the title of the bill. In the end, what happened? They voted for it, presumably due to political expediency, not because they believed in it. Not because they believe that the Australian people made the right decision at the election. Not because they've accepted the decision of the Australian people at the election. No, I'll tell the people in the gallery: the Labor Party think Australians got it wrong. The Labor Party think Australians got it wrong. They are in denial. That is highlighted in no better way than the Leader of the Opposition's contribution just now.

That continued. The Counter-Terrorism (Temporary Exclusion Orders) Bill 2019 was a solemn commitment we made during the election to keep Australians safe, telling Australians that we wouldn't let murderous individuals who had travelled to the Middle East to rape and kill and maim come back to Australia. What did we get from the Labor Party? Obstacles the whole way through. Obstacles and diversionary tactics. In the end we welcomed their support, but it was very, very begrudging support. Again, the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party are in denial about what the Australian people said at the election. They sent a very clear message at the election: 'Yes, we want lower taxes. Yes, we want a safer country.' The first order of business from the government was to deliver both of those things, and what did we see from the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party? We saw them in denial and not willing to accept the message sent by the Australian people.

The Leader of the Opposition also can't outline any policy. We presume that every single policy the Labor Party took to the election is still policy, but we don't see the Leader of the Opposition defending it. We don't see the Leader of the Opposition defending their $387 billion of higher taxes, their retirees' tax or their housing tax, which I spoke about in question time today, which would see a $1½ billion reduction in GDP. The Leader of the Opposition spoke about superannuation in his contribution, yet, presumably, it's still Labor Party policy to impose $34 billion of additional taxes on Australians in superannuation.

We've got the retirees' tax, which is still Labor policy. We've got housing taxes, which are still Labor policy. We've got superannuation taxes, which are still Labor policy. What on earth is different? Why did you change your leader? What on earth is different? I must say, I've been sitting in parliament this week, and the member for Maribyrnong has been looking decidedly happier in the last couple of days than he was last week, and I can understand why. He must be sitting there wondering: 'Why on earth is this man the Leader of the Opposition? He has not changed one thing.' Again, highlighting to the Australian people that the Labor Party, in their bones, think that the Australian people got it wrong. They don't believe that the Australian people made the right decision. There's no self-reflection going on in the Labor Party about why the Australian people rejected their higher taxes and their weaker borders. I hope that happens at some point in time, but we can't obsess or focus too much on the Labor Party, because it's very hard to know who's in charge or what's going on at the moment.

What are we doing? We're focusing on, again, what we said to the Australian people. One of the important things we spoke about from budget night, which was essentially the kick-off of the campaign, was that the Australian budget is back in the black. We will have an update to last year's budget, and I expect that it will be in an improved position because, unlike the Labor Party, we underpromised and overdelivered—better not get that one the wrong way around! That's important in budgets, because for years the Australian people, particularly when Wayne Swan was Treasurer, saw governments making grandiose promises about budget surpluses or reduced budget deficits that would come in wildly out and were always worse. From Treasurer Morrison to Treasurer Frydenberg what we have seen consistently is a budget that outperforms forecasts. That is what will be the case when the final budget numbers for last year's budget are brought forward.

Importantly, in the 2019-20 year we are committed to delivering an additional budget surplus, the first in 10 years. They're not easy, particularly when the needs and demands of government are increasing. How do you do it? You have to show discipline. You must have the ability to live within your means, because a government is no
different to a household or a small business. We have ensured that real growth in spending is down to 1.9 per cent, which is the lowest in 50 years and vastly lower than the 3.5 per cent we inherited when we came into government. It ensured that in the 2017-18 year we had a final budget deficit of 10 billion—$19 billion better than was expected, to highlight the point about overdelivery.

We’ve been able to return to surplus through not only disciplined budget management but also, as I said at the beginning of this contribution, delivering significant tax relief for Australians. That is the issue that was discussed every single day of the election. It's extraordinary that we saw the pantomime from the Labor Party, throwing up obstacles, arguing every single day about why our policies were so terrible, then they ultimately supported it. The question is: did the Labor Party ultimately support those tax cuts because they had a ‘road to Damascus’ conversion overnight and believed that the Australian people got it right or is it just political expediency that they don't believe in? I think it's clear to Australians that it's the latter. I'd say to the Labor Party—

Mr Champion: This is the longest minute and a half. Stop the clock!

Mr SUKKAR: and I'd say to the member who's interjecting as well: don't deny the Australian people their rights. They sent a very strong message at the election. I know you think they got it wrong. I know you don't want to accept that they rejected your higher taxes.

Ms Butler interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hogan): The member for Griffith is warned.

Mr SUKKAR: You've got a wonderful opportunity now to break from the past, because thus far there's absolutely nothing that distinguishes the current Leader of the Opposition and his $387 billion of higher taxes from the member for Maribyrnong. As we saw today, just as an example in my own portfolio, Labor's housing taxes—abolishing negative gearing, doubling capital gains tax, costing 7½ thousand jobs, costing $766 million of economic activity, reducing GDP by $1.5 billion. These are such destructive policies and the Australian people have sent you such a strong message that now is the time for reflection, now is the time to listen to the Australian people and stop denying them the message that they sent to you.

Mr MARLES (Corio—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:54): After 2½ months and three weeks of sittings, what is completely clear is that this is a government without an agenda. This is a government with no vision. This is a government that finds itself completely surprised to be sitting where it is, and it has no idea what it's going to do. This is a government that has absolutely no answers whatsoever to the challenges that are facing our nation today. Indeed, the only contribution that this government has made to Australia since 18 May is to pose one question: whose side are you on?

When the Prime Minister said of all of us who were campaigning and speaking on behalf of those who are on Newstart and about the woefully inadequate income they receive, including the Governor of the Reserve Bank and John Howard no less, that we were engaging in 'unfunded empathy' he made completely clear that he was not on the side of the most vulnerable Australians, who this winter are trying to work out how they are going to make ends meet, whether they will have the heater on at night and what they will not be able to buy with the money they do not have when they go to the supermarket. Indeed, if you are any person in this country who gets the deserved support of government—if you are a single mother, if you are one of the 155,000 people on Newstart over the age of 55, if you are a pensioner—do not expect an extra dollar from this man, because when those of us who campaign on your behalf engage in that activity he will be the person saying that we are engaging in 'unfunded empathy'.

When the Treasurer this week came into this place and said that Australians are better off now than they were in 2013 he made it completely clear that he was not on the side of every working Australian in this country, because the truth is that median household income, as we've discovered this week, fell by $500 in 2017 alone and right now is much less than it was in 2013 when this government came to power. Indeed, growth is at its slowest now since the global financial crisis. We are experiencing alarming rates of poverty and we have seen record low wages growth. It is completely clear to every worker in this country that wage stagnation remains the stand-out feature of this economy. When the Treasurer said that we've never been better off than what we're seeing now and that the situation now is better than it was in 2013 he made it clear, in that moment, that he was not on the side of working Australians.

As parts of this country are, right now, going through the worst drought since records have been kept, the Deputy Prime Minister came into this place and made it completely clear which side he was on. The Deputy Prime Minister came in here and made it completely clear that he stood for his own self-interest when he said, 'We're on this side and you're on that side and get used to it.' I mean, that was an act of refined arrogance. In that moment, the Australian people heard everything they needed to hear about the fact that this government is on its own side and is absolutely not on the side of the Australian people. If you are on Newstart and you are struggling,
if you are in receipt of a robo-debt that is asking you to pay money that you do not owe, if you are a farmer in this country, if you are a pensioner who is struggling, what is absolutely clear, from the way in which this government has been acting from the moment that it was re-elected on 18 May, is that this is a government that is not on your side. The only thing it's interested in is being on that side, and, in doing so, the only side it's interested in is its own. But, over the days and years ahead, as every Australian comes to understand exactly what is going on here, they will, when the time is right, issue their judgement that this is a side that they do not deserve.

Mr Morton (Tangney—Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet) (15:59): This government is on the side of hardworking, aspirational Australians who back a strong economy and a government that will deliver the essential services that they rely on.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr Morton: I hear interjections from those on the other side. They invite me to speak from the despatch box, but, like this government, I'm humble—it's not about me; it's about the Australian people, and I'm quite comfortable addressing their concerns from here. This government took to the election a plan: to create 1.25 million jobs over the next five years; to maintain budget surpluses and pay down Labor's debt; to deliver tax relief for families and for small businesses; to guarantee increased investment in schools, hospitals and roads; and, importantly, to keep Australians safe and our borders secure.

But it's very interesting that the opposition leader and the member for Corio have moved this MPI today. It's very interesting—particularly from the member for Corio, who has told The Australian newspaper that his party is going through a grieving process. And we are seeing that grieving process being played out today in this chamber.

Those opposite do not understand the result of the election that has been played out before them. They do not understand that the Australian people have backed this government because the Australian people know that this government is on their side. And no wonder there is such confusion on the other side of the chamber, because we see, on the other side, a party that opposed the government's tax package—something that we took to this election and which the Australian people endorsed and expected this place to deliver—but then supported it! They opposed aspects of the government's drought fund, and then they turned around and supported it. They opposed the government's foreign fighter legislation, and then they passed it.

The question really is: does the Labor Party know whose side they're on? The opposition leader has advised his members that they will have to get used to supporting the coalition's bills. Labor, incredibly, is not ruling out reversing the tax cuts that this government has legislated and has taken to the election and delivered upon. It's quite interesting how Troy Bramston in The Australian has noted that the Labor Party has had more positions on the coalition's tax package than there are in the Kama Sutra. Some members—

Honourable members interjecting—

Mr Morton: Troy Bramston has used an oldie but a goodie! And it demonstrates the fact that the Labor Party are not clear in relation to the policies that they are advocating in this House.

Yesterday, we saw Labor powerbroker Senator Kim Carr urging Labor to think twice before junking the platform they took to the election. It's a grieving process which is getting in the way of this government delivering on its commitment to deliver to the Australian people.

Let's look at some of these inconsistencies. I've done some research and I've looked back to the eighties. The eighties was an era when I was in single digits. But the Leader of the Opposition was very active in politics. He moved a motion urging the Hawke government to introduce a wealth tax and gift and death duties. That was the position he held in the eighties—and, perhaps, even today; it needs clarity from the Leader of the Opposition.

At Labor conferences in the eighties and nineties, he opposed the deregulation of financial markets, the privatisation of government assets, tariff cuts, wage restraint, fiscal consolidation and the export of uranium to France. He even voted with the Left faction to re-regulate the currency, years after the float in 1986. This guy is stuck in the eighties, and his politics show it. At Labor's 2015 national conference, he urged his Left faction colleagues to oppose Bill Shorten—that's the loyalty that this Leader of the Opposition showed—and he opposed his deputy leader, perhaps the next Leader of the Opposition, in relation to their support for asylum-seeker-boat turnbacks. And we're about to see the organisation of the Labor Party led by someone whose left-wing politics is even more extreme than the person who is currently leaving that position. The Labor Party do not represent the interests of Australians. (Time expired)

Ms Kearney (Cooper) (16:04): I'm pleased to speak on this matter of public importance today. This government is failing to represent all Australians. There are so many different groups of Australians who know that the government is not governing in their interests it was hard to choose some to focus on in five minutes. But I decided to choose three groups of Australians which highlight this government's shortcomings very plainly.
Firstly, in my short time as shadow assistant minister for aged care, I have seen and heard many examples of how this government has forgotten older Australians. Our aged-care system and older Australians are being left behind by the government, which is intent on cutting services and making it increasingly difficult for them to access the assistance they need. Take, for example, this government's failure on home care packages. We know that 129,000 older Australians are languishing on waiting lists for home care packages. That's nearly 130,000 older Australians who can't get the care they require at home. Instead, they have to rely on friends and family, who have to juggle their work rosters and are stressed trying to make sure their loved older ones get the care they need.

Shockingly, 30,000 Australians died or were forced into an aged-care home last year while waiting for their packages. I ask: did these people die experiencing what the Prime Minister disgracefully calls 'unfunded empathy'? They died waiting. I think their families would have something to say about that and would definitely query if this government is governing in their interests. It is a government that applauds mismanagement of the economy and has the nerve who say that aged-care services are flourishing under its watch. Well, I say the evidence is damning and it is clear. This government is failing to represent the interests of older Australians.

Secondly, I'd like to highlight this government's failure to represent the interests of young people, too many of whom are stuck on the too-low payment of Newstart and simply cannot find work. The youth unemployment rate in Australia currently sits at 12 per cent, more than double the national average. You might ask yourself how this could be. This government has told us that all is well, that our economy is on the right track. Then how could we have such a high rate of youth unemployment, which sits around the 15 per cent to 20 per cent mark in regional Victoria and at an appalling 25 per cent in some parts of the country? The reason is that this government does not listen to young people when they say that they need skills training and that industry needs to be properly resourced and it doesn't listen when the sector tells them they can't continue to sustain funding cuts.

This government has gutted the skills training sector, cutting $3 billion from vocational education, presiding over a drop of 150,000 apprenticeships, and it has caused the closure of TAFE campuses right around the country. How can young people get a job when the government is cutting the funding that provides the skills training and services they require? If, as the Prime Minister tells us, the best form of welfare is a job, how can they get a job when he continues to turn his back on them and when he continues to allow providers to gouge the system and take advantage of young people who just want a chance. I urge the government to do what it is tasked with—to listen and to actually govern.

Finally, I will turn to the government's favourite target, union members. Before going on to lead the union movement in Australia, I had been a union member nearly my whole working life. Let me tell you this: I have never seen a coalition government represent the interests of union members and working people. Those opposite like to tout the line, 'If you have a go, you get a go.' I'm telling you now: union members around this country are doing just that. They have a go. They get out to work, they build our cities, they care for our parents and they serve this country every single day, and their unions give back to them. They fight for safe and fair working conditions, they fight against this government's policy of wage stagnation and they stand up for workers when things aren't fair.

This is in stark contrast to the government's treatment of our unions and our union members. The government led debate this week on the ensuring integrity bill, a bill that is not about integrity but does a lot to weaken the voices of working people in this country and seeks to target their ability to organise. This government's answer to the problems of working people in this country is to give itself more say in who runs a union than the union's own members. It seeks to give itself the power to deregister a union and take away working people's rights to organise and fight for fairer conditions. I say that enough is enough. It's clear this government is failing to represent working people and young people, and it certainly isn't representing older Australians.

Mr TIM WILSON (Goldstein) (16:09): One of the reasons why I'm so proud to be a Liberal—

Mr Josh Wilson: Not a liberal!

Mr TIM WILSON: is because—

Mr Josh Wilson: Not a liberal!

Mr TIM WILSON: I am so proud to be a Liberal because—

Mr Champion: Finally! You know where to stand.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hogan): The member for Spence and the member for Fremantle are both warned.

Mr TIM WILSON: our great political movement is built on seeing the success of our great nation. Our cause is to build the success of this great nation and realise the dreams and the aspirations of millions of Australians.
The reason that I will never sit on that side of the chamber, over there with the opposition, is that their aspirations for Australia, as far as they're concerned, will only ever be realised through themselves and their success. What we had at the last election was an opposition who thought that the solution to all the country's ills was to take more power, more control and more of the wealth of the nation for themselves.

At the election, they were full of ideas—$387 billion worth of ideas—and they still hold onto those commitments. They still want to have higher taxes. They're just pretending and keeping it quiet until they get their next chance in 2½ to three years time. They wanted higher income taxes, a retiree tax and, of course, a housing tax. They had ideas on what they were going to do to reorientate industry through unfunded, unmodelled carbon taxes to burden Australian industry and job creation without any understanding of the consequence on the Australian people.

When I went to the election, in the good electorate of Goldstein, and said, 'I am here to represent you and your interests to the nation,' Labor had no plan. Labor's candidate was a nice fellow; I'm not disagreeing with that. But when it came down to whose side he was on, was he on the side of the young women and men who play netball and who wanted the opportunity, through community investment, to build the infrastructure and the facilities they needed? He said he was not prepared to commit to fight for them—that's the tragedy. In a choice between doing the right thing by them and siding with those who sit on the opposition benches, he simply wouldn't stand up and do what was right.

This government came to office making a commitment that we would provide the funding so that the next generation can have their chance at their own success.

Dr Leigh: It's been a long break, hasn't it?

Mr TIM WILSON: But that's not a lie—when we went to the people of Hampton, of Brighton Beach, of North Brighton, of Sandy, of Bentleigh or of Elsternwick, the commuters there who every day struggle to get into town, surrounded by streets that are clogged up, said, 'Who is on our side?' The opposition promised them nothing and gave them nothing except a cursory glance and a complete disinterest, whereas we on this side said, 'If you're going to back yourself, we will back you. We will invest in new parking at local stations, to help ease your daily commutes and provide you with opportunities.' And at every point, it didn't matter what it was, whether it was health care or education, when the people of Goldstein, just like the people across this great nation, were asked: 'Who is on your side? Who is going to deliver record funding and record health and education?' they turned to the coalition.

When the people of Bayside had a chance for the first MRI in their community ever, the coalition delivered. The tragedy is that this week they saw on the opposition benches a mocking of the commitment that this government has made and delivered for the people who need essential scans.

It's quite clear who is on the side of the Australian people, who is on the side of the communities they represent and who is on the side of the aspiration of the future generations of Australia. In the last election, they faced a choice, and they made it quite clear that it is not those sitting on the opposition benches.

Dr LEIGH (Fenner) (16:14): Twenty years ago, David Dunning and Justin Kruger published a seminal study showing that incompetent people are peculiarly unaware of their own incompetence. They drew on the example of McArthur Wheeler who, starting from the premise that lemon juice can be used as invisible ink, covered his face with lemon juice and went in to rob his local bank, thinking it would make him invisible.

The Dunning-Kruger effect could have been designed for this frontbench. We have a Minister for Health who gives an MRI licence to the vice-president of the South Australian Liberal Party and says no to 443 other applications. We have a minister for families who pats herself on the back for the 'generous amount of money' that pensioners get. We have an assistant minister for homelessness who wants to put a 'positive spin' on homelessness, rather than doing anything about the problem. We have an Assistant Treasurer who knows nothing about tax havens, yet persists with the mistruth that we on this side of the House voted against the multinational anti-avoidance law. We have a minister for energy who won't admit that emissions are up.

It seems the new Morrison government has learned nothing, doesn’t want to learn anything, just wants to kick the climate emergency further down the road, hoping nothing of consequence happens on its watch.

Further proving his susceptibility to the Dunning-Kruger effect, the minister for energy won't admit that power prices are rising—up 158 per cent in wholesale terms since 2015. We would call him 'all tip and no iceberg', but, under his policies, icebergs will melt away faster than the leadership hopes of the member for Dickson. We've got a Prime Minister who won't listen to ACOSS, to the Business Council of Australia or even to John Howard to increase Newstart, calling it 'unfunded empathy'. And we have a Treasurer who thinks Australians have never had it so good, even as we're in the ninth month of a per capita recession. What does the Morrison government stand...
for? It's a bigger question than: what was the member for Fadden downloading when he racked up that $38,000 internet bill? We learned today that the number of Australians working four or more jobs has doubled over the last year, yet those opposite are flat out doing one job—just doing the job that they were elected to do.

The Morrison government is the dog that caught the car. We know about as much about their plans for Australia as we do about that mysterious bloke from Yass that the member for Hume was chatting to, or why it is that a company called Eastern Australian Agriculture had to be set up 16,000 kilometres east of Australia in the Cayman Islands. It is harder to find a Morrison government policy that is in the interests of Australians than it is to find intact endangered grasslands on a property owned by the member for Hume. The fact is, when you're talking about the interests of all Australians, that includes racial and ethnic minorities. It is no surprise that the very same Prime Minister who, in 2011, urged his colleagues to capitalise on the electorate's concerns over Muslims in Australia is now comfortable with allowing into Australia Raheem Kassam, who spreads hate speech about Muslims, about women and about LGBT+ people, and that that same Prime Minister is also comfortable with letting Liberals share the stage with Raheem Kassam.

The fact is that this is a government which is presiding over a floundering economy, where net debt has more than doubled. We've got the slowest economic growth since the global financial crisis and the longest per capita recession since the early 1980s, with stagnant wages now going up eight times more slowly than profits. Unemployment is a full percentage point higher than in Britain, the United States, New Zealand or Germany, with productivity growth running at a 10th of its historical average, and retail sales, engineering and construction, and new home starts down. And we're seeing appalling figures from the latest HILDA survey, suggesting that, adjusting for inflation, Australians are poorer now than when the Liberals came to office.

Mr LAMING (Bowman) (16:19): We finish another sitting week with a nearly empty gallery as we argue about whether the Australian voter got it wrong on 18 May. In these interesting debates where abuse is thrown from both sides and we talk in generalities about how our respective governments would run the place better, it's often useful to take the transcripts of speeches in debates like this and ask whether we could give exactly the same speech if we were in opposition, not government. It's fascinating that in this juncture we hear from the Labor Party quite detailed arguments about how the world is so unfair, how cruel the government is and how insoluble social challenges are simply not being addressed. The logical thing you would do if you have been here for more than a term is take the speeches we are hearing from the Labor Party and ask whether each of those members would be happy to give that speech if they were in government.

All of these insoluble social problems that governments have grappled with for decades saw no improvement in the six years when this group opposite were in office. But they continue to live in this dream that somehow their sort of socialist-centralist model of government somehow fixed problems when they were there—and Newstart is just a fabulous example of that. For the then Labor government changing Newstart barely crossed their mind or their lips in six years in government. In fact, as recently as April this year, when the time came to stake out exactly where those opposite stood for the 774,000 Newstart recipients in this country, do you reckon they could commit a cent to increasing Newstart? They committed to a review of Newstart, which is always a very handy way of describing to those who don't listen to politics every day and every minute that you're thinking about them, but you're actually not committing a red cent to their wellbeing. This is a Labor Party that is torn on two fronts.

In the couple of minutes I have I want to make an observation on behalf of outer-metropolitan and regional Australia. I'm an outer-metro seat. There aren't too many other outer-metro seats in this debate at the moment, and there's certainly not an outer-metro person over there—bar one, probably. The rest of them are basically Labor postage stamp electorates where you are basically amongst your high-rise buildings and inner-city elites. The streets are covered with lime scooters and the greatest concern you have is whether you can get your cold-drip coffee of a morning. This is where museums are fundamentally give-ways to Maccas's drive-throughs and you get out to outer-metro Australia. For Queensland, that tipping point in Brisbane is 16 kilometres from the CBD, which engulfs all of those Labor electorates. There are a couple of postage stamp electorates in Logan and Ipswich, but the rest of Queensland fundamentally rejected all of the arguments put by the Labor Party.

That's not to say that nothing the Labor Party says is good. The thing that most frustrates voters out there is that we can't concede that from the other side comes good ideas and we always insist on calling black white simply because we're on the other side of the chamber. Australians absolutely get sick of politicians walking two sides of the street and trying to say one thing to one cohort and another to the opposite. Nowhere was that better exemplified than the Adani debate, where friends of the opposition tried to do a convoy up into the Galilee and were stoned, egged and tomatoed out of town and sent back with their tails between their legs. This showed that there is now a geographic divide. We've got members over there, with a couple of exceptions, that fundamentally represent the inner-city post-materialist values—and, if you're not inner-city, you're in working-class electorates.
that were somehow looking after rust-belted manufacturing areas of some of our largest cities. You speak for those people, but you increasingly don't speak for the rest of Australia anymore.

The rest of Australia demonstrated an 18 May counterrevolution and simply said no to all of the ideas that that side of parliament espouse—no to the attitude that Medicare is simply about more money and indexing; no to the idea that hospitals and universities are just about more money; and no to the idea that you can remove the cashless welfare card and remove the trials that we're talking about in improving welfare payments. Those on the other side are fundamentally a party fixated with the amount of money they can transfer from one pocket to another—primarily to fix the concerns of others, not those who are actually paying for it.

The Labor Party are simply fighting two fronts: one are the squabbles the Labor Party are having with the Greens—and it was great to see your leader at the Splendour music festival being howled out of the tent because of his views on climate. Labor have got their own fights with the Greens—which they are not winning—and, as long as that's occurring, they won't win their fight with outer-metro Australia and they are not going to win their fight with regional Australia. For that reason, the values that the Labor Party hold true to in good faith are poorly articulated by their party.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (16:24): I rise to speak on this MPI, the failure of the government to represent the interests of all Australians. I did listen carefully to the member for Bowman, a man of some great intelligence, to see what vision he was actually going to detail in terms of the Liberal and National party. Unfortunately, he, like everyone who has spoken in this MPI from the coalition, just seemed to be focused on doing this victory lap speech, asking their own backbenchers to cheer on their victory lap. It's quite incredible, really, in terms of a government detailing a vision for what they're about—what they believe in.

I would suggest that there are many reasons why the Morrison-McCormack government has been so devoid of vision. That's because they've jettisoned so many of the traditional liberals. We're running out of liberals in the Liberal Party! I think that when Russell Broadbent goes he will actually turn out the lights on the Liberal Party in this parliament. He'll be the last one. They've been taken over by conservatives, by flimflam men—I said 'flimflam men' particularly because not a lot of women have come in—and by extremists. These are extremists who are prepared to stand up on stage, a stage that's going to be devoted to spraying indiscriminate hate speech everywhere. The Prime Minister wasn't even able to say, 'We are against that'. John Howard would have spoken up; Ron Boswell would have spoken up. So many good traditional leaders of the Liberal Party—the small 'l' Liberal Party would have spoken up.

I know that there are still a couple of small 'l' liberals on that side, but they're fast disappearing and they're being silenced. They are the quiet Australians in the coalition—

Mr Josh Wilson: The very quiet Australians!

Mr PERRETT: Very quiet! They've been muzzled by the conservatives. They've been muzzled by the flimflam men, the advertising people and the extremists who have taken over the coalition. They're not able to speak up. The Bob Menzies Liberals, who used to actually get that Australia was all about helping people up. That is part of our fabric—to give a helping hand to people. Wherever you are, it's all about mateship. It's a 60,000-year-old tradition that you look after the collective; you look after the tribe, the mob. We furthered that in the convict gangs and so did the settlers in areas where they helped each other out. At Gallipoli we helped people up, and at Kokoda and Long Tan—wherever it was, we'd always reach out a helping hand for people. But this party now, this coalition, is running out of liberals. They've become a husk without a heart; a shadow, without substance. The engine is ticking over but they no longer have a steering wheel to work out where they're going.

I remember when I was a kid—and I'll leave that story for another day!

Mr PITT (Hinkler) (16:28): Thank you for the unexpected opportunity to speak, Mr Speaker! We are asked what is in the best interests of all Australians. What I can say is that, firstly, it was the finalisation of the member for Moreton's contribution! I think that was fantastic! But, secondly, it is to be back in the black in terms of the Australian budget. Being back in the black is what is in the best interests of all Australians.

I note the contribution of the member for Corio. I think he may have alleged hubris. I think that was his allegation against the Deputy Prime Minister—I'm a little unsure. The point that I would like to make is that it's not the people in this chamber who decide which side we sit on, it is the Australian people who make that determination. They are the ones who have spoken very clearly. They are the ones who determine who is on the opposition side. They are the ones who determine who is in government. So we will act in their interests, and they voted very clearly against the proposition of those opposite. Being back in the black allows us to do all sorts of things in the interests of the people that we represent. The most important at the moment is to act on farm trespass. I note the member for Hunter, the rising star of the Labor Party after 20-odd years, is here, and I'm sure he's supportive of what we are doing to stop people from using a carriage service to incite individuals to trespass.
ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER (16:30): It being 4.30, I propose the question:
That the House do now adjourn.

Mr Porter: Mr Speaker, I require that the question be put immediately without debate.
Question negatived.

COMMITTEES

Corporations and Financial Services Committee

Reference

The SPEAKER (16:30): I have received a message from the Senate informing the House that the Senate has agreed to a resolution referring a matter relating to the regulation of auditing in Australia to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services.

The message read as follows—
That the following matter be referred to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services for inquiry and report by 1 March 2020:
Regulation of auditing in Australia with particular reference to:
(a) the relationship between auditing and consulting services and potential conflicts of interests;
(b) other potential conflicts of interests;
(c) the level and effectiveness of competition in audit and related consulting services;
(d) audit quality, including valuations of intangible assets;
(e) matters arising from Australian and international reviews of auditing;
(f) changes in the role of audit and the scope of audit products;
(g) the role and effectiveness of audit in detecting and reporting fraud and misconduct;
(h) the effectiveness and appropriateness of legislation, regulation and licensing;
(i) the extent of regulatory relief provided by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission through instruments and waivers;
(j) the adequacy and performance of regulatory, standards, disciplinary and other bodies;
(k) the effectiveness of enforcement by regulators; and
(l) any related matter.

BILLS

Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Amendment (Sunsetting of Special Powers Relating to Terrorism Offences) Bill 2019

Treasury Laws Amendment (Consumer Data Right) Bill 2019

Social Security (Administration) Amendment (Cashless Welfare) Bill 2019

Returned from Senate

Messages received from the Senate returning the bills without amendment.

COMMITTEES

Reference

The SPEAKER (16:30): I present a schedule showing the allocation of annual reports of departments, agencies, authorities and companies to general purpose standing committees and certain joint committees. A copy of the schedule will be incorporated in Hansard.

The schedule was unavailable at the time of publishing.

BILLS

Criminal Code Amendment (Agricultural Protection) Bill 2019

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:
That this bill be now read a second time.
Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (16:31): Over the last few years, some whistleblowers have been prepared to stand up and say: 'We are going to show you what is going on when it comes to the animals that you end up eating. We're going to show you that so that you can make your own choice about whether that's the kind of standard that you want. We're going to show you that in the hope that it might lead the government to start improving conditions for animals in this country.' So what does the government do? The government doesn't say, 'Oh, well, let's improve conditions.' The government says: 'We've got no interest in improving conditions. We are just going to shoot the messenger.' We are now going to introduce, in fast-tracked legislation, new crimes that will make it harder for people to bring to the attention of the public what is going on behind the food that they eat on their table.'

None of us supports acts that are going to harm people. We are talking instead here about striking the balance to ensure that whistleblowing can continue. Over the years, if it weren't for whistleblowers drawing attention to how animals are treated in this country, we would not have had the national debate about whether we still want to have live sheep exports, for example. In that respect, I pay tribute to people like Lyn White and Animals Australia who have done that work. Might the kind of thing that they have done, which has led a national debate when we find out how animals are being treated in our country, now become a criminal offence under this legislation? It is a very good question. I want to say that we should be thanking those people who have brought to our attention some of the appalling conditions for animals in this country, because that sparks us, as legislators, to hopefully do the right thing, change the law and improve conditions. I want to acknowledge the work of some of the people in Melbourne that I've had the privilege of dealing with over a number of years—people like Bruce Poon, Miranda Smith and Lawrence Pope. They've been working hard to draw attention to the position of animals in this country. All of this could be avoided if the government just did what people are asking, and that is to improve the way that animals are treated in this country. People wouldn't have a need to protest if animals were treated better.

The government says this is about protecting farmers and giving farmers more rights. Well, if that were what the government was really concerned about then the government would be supporting the bill that we've got in the Senate, which Senator Larissa Waters has brought in, to say that farmers should have the right to lock the gate and say they don't want coal seam gas or coal mining on their land. If this government was really that concerned about farmers' sovereignty over their land, and that was something that was driving its agenda, you'd imagine it would be backing that bill. But, no, it's not doing that. It's instead siding with its big miners and its big resource mates.

This government doesn't actually care about farmers. This is a government bereft of an agenda. So what does it do? It finds a group of people that it thinks can get it a cheap headline and says, 'We are going to come and beat you up,' and passes new laws to criminalise activity that previously wasn't criminal. If the government really cared about farmers, it would be taking action on climate change. Otherwise the record drought that we are seeing is not only going to become the new normal; it might in fact become the new good, if climate change goes the way that the scientists are telling us. The government is in fact going out of its way to make sure farmers have more droughts and more floods in this country. That's what the government is doing to farmers. I say to it: don't come in here and tell us that you're suddenly motivated by concerns about protecting farmers, because we just don't believe you.

When you look at the detail of this bill, what you will find is that this is a very broad bill that doesn't just apply with respect to agricultural land. The government dresses it up as something saying: 'Aren't those activists terrible? We've got to have legislation to protect them.' When you come in here seeking a cheap headline, like the government is doing, you've always got to be worried and look at the detail of the bill. But when you look at the detail of the bill, you will find that this isn't just about agricultural land per se. If people go and take action against coalmines that happen to sit on something that's designated as agricultural land, that's potentially caught by this. If you put up a Facebook post saying, 'Come to a protest against a coalmine,' because you want to engage in civil disobedience, then, depending on where that's located, you could be falling foul of this as well. It's not just about animal welfare either. It's much, much broader than the government is leading us to believe. That, again, should come as no surprise, because this government's approach is to criminalise dissent.

I think journalists need to be paying particular attention to this bill because we recently saw a journalist, who was doing no more than reporting a protest of civil disobedience, get arrested in Queensland. Under this bill, journalists are going to face increased penalties for doing something similar. This is not about protecting farmers, as the government wants you to believe, because there are already laws around trespass; there are already laws that deal with this. This is about the government, bereft of an agenda, doing the thing that conservative governments do during election campaigns: decide to pick a bunch of people, whack them with a big stick and then start taking away rights and liberties. To the freedom brigade that keeps coming in here time after time saying they'll swear not on the Bible but on Milton Friedman, and saying that individual rights are supreme: you
are the first ones to take them away, time after time. If you think it'll win you some votes, you'll kick some people and take away rights.

I want to pay tribute to the vegans, the vegetarians and the people who were saying, 'We need to have a discussion in this country about how we treat animals,' because more and more people are paying attention. More and more people are understanding that what is behind what goes on your plate is something that we need to know and need to be able to make an informed decision about. We only find out about what goes on behind the food that we eat when people have the courage to blow the whistle and tell us. Yes, no-one argues that people should have an unlimited right to trespass—of course not. But that is already a crime. What we've got to do in this place is work out what is the role of proper political protest and nonviolent protest, and can we protect that—especially when it becomes a question of giving a voice to the voiceless. We have an additional responsibility in this place not only to represent people but also for our broader biosphere. We have a responsibility, because they don't have a voice here. It's up to us to decide to give them a voice. We do that regularly.

We are finally debating—we have been in previous parliaments, at least—propositions to increase the standards of welfare for animals. That's the kind of thing that many, many people in this country want. People want to have a debate about whether it's right to have live sheep exports. People want to have a debate about whether it's right that in this country you can have 10,000 hens crammed together in one hectare and call that free range. People want to know what is going on, have the discussion about it and then be able to legislate. But the more that you say, 'We're going to shut down access to information so that we can't have that debate,' the crueller we become.

The government has not got the balance right with this. The government's concerned about trespass. Well, there are existing laws about that. You can deal with that under existing laws. Is this going to criminalise journalism? Is this going to criminalise someone sharing a Facebook post about a protest that they just happened to have seen without even knowing what land it's on—they just see it on Facebook and share it? Is this going to mean additional penalties for people who are doing nothing more than engaging in peaceful civil disobedience, not harming anyone and not getting in anyone's way? On the face of it, the answer to all three is yes. The government is trying to rush this bill through because it doesn't care about removing people's rights and liberties. All it wants is to deliver on the cheap headline that it tried to get during the election by kicking a group of people that is trying to draw attention to a very real and pressing social problem in this country.

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (16:41): I thank all members for their contributions on the second reading debate of the Criminal Code Amendment (Agricultural Protection) Bill 2019. The bill is obviously a firm but, we think, necessary response to recent incidents targeting Australian farmers and their families and businesses. Those incidents were enabled and encouraged by the sharing of information online. Obviously the agricultural sector is a critical part of our community and our economy, and people deserve to feel safe in their homes and at work. The bill implements measures to safeguard farmers and primary production businesses from those who would incite trespass and other property offences on their land. I thank all the members opposite for their contributions. Evidently, the matter is going to a committee. I look forward to their reporting on the bill. I commend the bill to the house.

A division having been called and the bells having been rung—

The SPEAKER: As there are fewer than five members on the side of the noes in this division I declare the question resolved in the affirmative in accordance with standing order 127. The names of those members who are in the minority will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

Question agreed to, Mr Bandt and Mr Wilkie voting no.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (16:47): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill agreed to.

Third reading.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (16:47): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.
Dr FREELANDER (Macarthur) (16:48): For some time I’ve been troubled by the national debate in this country, by attitudes of certain people in public life and by certain views consistently espoused on national platforms that go unchallenged by our society. I refer of course to the very troubling rise of hate speech, white nationalism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. As a paediatrician I have seen people of just about every race and every religion in the world and I know that we all share the same hopes and aspirations for our children as each other if we’re decent people. It’s become apparent to me over recent years that there is a troubling propensity for hate to be fostered in our communities, for some people to play on irrational fears and for some people to seek to cause widespread division. Many seek to downplay some of these issues, but I believe they are very significant and that we must confront them.

I know that bigotry and anti-Semitism have been around for centuries. My paternal ancestors fled the pogroms of Eastern Europe to England in the 15th century. It is very troubling to see similar anti-Semitism occurring in 21st century Australia. Let me remind you that the election posters of Treasurer Josh Frydenberg in Melbourne and Julian Leeser in Sydney were defaced by Nazi symbols during the most recent election campaign. Also during the election campaign I twice contacted the Federal Police about anti-Semitic emails that had been sent to some of my constituents about Kerryn Phelps, the previous member for Wentworth, who is Jewish. As a Jew, I am hurt and affronted by these terrible events. Even in Canberra, a city that has the highest per capita income of any city in Australia, Rabbi Shmueli Feldman’s home and synagogue have had repeated attacks.

The Islamic community has also suffered repeated verbal and physical attacks, and the online vitriol that I received when I published my condolences to my local Islamic brothers and sisters after the Christchurch attack was absolutely disgusting. Anti-Muslim comments, calls for burqa bans and the portrayal of Muslims as violent and uncivilised, even from parliamentarians, are shameful.

Next week there is CPAC, the Conservative Political Action Conference, in Sydney. This is an American group, and this meeting will be attended by a disparate group of racists, white supremacists, Islamophobes, anti-Semites and, unfortunately, several Australian politicians. This just enables the bigots, the racists, the anti-Semites and the white supremacists to get their way.

This hatred does not make sense to me, and needs to be vehemently rejected by this place—as does persecution and discrimination against all individuals of faith or all individuals of different colours. We have seen rallies take place in recent years by far Right fringe groups across the nation, where any individual with a microphone is able to share their extremist ideologies, spreading division and fostering hatred but then facing little or no consequences for their actions. I think this is untenable. People who speak like this and who encourage others to speak like this should be prosecuted. These people are not the true-blue Australians they claim to be. In fact, I can safely say that our ancestors who fought and sacrificed their lives to end racial and religious oppression in times past would be utterly ashamed of these individuals. The standard you walk by is the standard you accept.

There have also been remarks made in this parliament regarding the same conference that will take place in just eight days time. I want to be clear: I welcome public debate. We should foster it and constantly challenge ourselves with better ideas. But, as was brought up by my colleague Senator Keneally in the other house, this is something that we shouldn’t let go by without comment.

What I do not accept is that we should allow extremists—and make no mistake about it, we are talking about alt-Right individuals with extremist views—to ever be given a stage to spread their hate speech from. We know that there are several individuals of questionable character who will be attending this conference under the guise of partaking in a public discussion. They should not be given legitimacy or credibility by sharing a stage, symbolic or otherwise, with members of this place. As I said, the standard you walk by is the standard you accept. I would hope that all members of our democratic parliament would refuse to associate with extremists from the fringes of our society. This House needs to commit to lifting the standards of public discourse in this nation, and I request very strongly that other members who share my views talk about them in parliament. Thank you.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

Mr GEORGANAS (Adelaide) (16:53): I rise today to highlight an ongoing issue that is unfolding before our eyes, and that is the government’s failure to address the ever-increasing concerns with the NDIS. While the government fails to act, this Morrison government’s own figures reveal that Australians are languishing in limbo, waiting for care. It is quite clear from the inquiries that I have had in my electorate office and which many other members who I speak to in this place have also had that this government is failing to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Today I’d like to highlight one of those cases, that of one of my constituents who is experiencing grave difficulties with the scheme. A woman by the name of Pauline has spoken to my office and has written to us...
concerned that her own experience with the NDIS has been far from perfect. Pauline has gone on to describe that despite being permanently wheelchair-bound and facing the challenges associated with that, in her endeavour to be as independent as possible she is burdened with the unknown at this point in time because of the NDIS. We're talking about not knowing if funding will be there in the future for her for the daily care that she depends on.

Pauline is another in the long line of constituents in the seat of Adelaide, across the state and across the country who are waiting on the results of internal funding reviews. In 2008, Pauline advised the NDIA of a shortfall in the amount of funding offered to her for personal care and home supports, which was approximately two-thirds of the previously state based level of funding—a shortfall without any explanation. Today, 1 August 2019, nearly a year later, Pauline finds herself with essentially five weeks until the end of her funding for critical daily assistance. In effect, as of 7 September 2019, Pauline is facing the unknown. As a high-needs NDIS participant who is wheelchair bound, Pauline has no other forms of care and is unable to transfer without two people assisting her. If daily assistance ceases, that means at its most basic she cannot get out of bed to get on with everyday things. She will perhaps not be able to cook and do a whole range of other things. She will require immediate hospitalisation or nursing home care if she deteriorates. Any autonomy that she would otherwise have will be lost if there is no answer by 7 September.

This is an example of the government's management of the scheme, and how it is failing the Australian population. While faced with this dilemma, Pauline has nothing but praise and a high regard for the staff of the NDIA, who have always been cordial and professional but are finding blocks in front of them because of this government. This government has ripped out $1.6 billion from the system, leaving people with disability, and those who care for them, without the crucial support that they require. Pauline's request for an urgent resolution of the NDIS funding shortfall has unfortunately fallen on deaf ears. The phone calls that we have made to ministers' officers and to the departments have fallen on deaf ears. That is not on.

Another of my constituents, Caroline, a single mother with four kids, has been determined in her attempts to care for a son who has autism spectrum some disorder while trying to negotiate her way through the NDIA review process. Her son is affected by the inappropriate level of care. Her entire household, including her three other children, is impacted by the delays with this very important review. They have been waiting for an outcome for months.

We are in the midst of this government deliberately underfunding the NDIS so they can prop up their budget position. Families such as Pauline's and Caroline's are severely impacted upon. We know that the effect of the underspend on the average NDIS participant is $20,000. Caroline's son's funding was reduced by $15,000. Sadly, Caroline and her family have been reduced to a statistic by this government, with no clear steps to remedy this very, very serious problem. This is not on. Time and time again, we are all getting these enquiries in our offices. Australians and their families deserve much better than the services currently provided by the Morrison government.

Immigration

Mr Giles (Scullin) (16:58): We see revelations in The Australian newspaper that the Minister for Home Affairs is getting ready to privatise Australia's visa system, potentially selling it off to someone who has donated thousands of dollars to the Liberal Party. Under this plan a private company will be awarded a contract to run Australia's visa system—the most fundamental system of a national government—as a for-profit business. Liberal Party powerbroker Scott Briggs, whose company is one of the leading bidders for the contract, donated $53,000 to the Liberal Party in 2017-18. That doesn't pass any pub test. Australians don't want the visa system sold off, and they especially don't want it flogged off to one of the PM's Liberal mates.

And we know that the UK is experiencing this privatisation approach. There are reports of British residency being granted in exchange for a two million pound investment. So we can see what will happen here. A privatised system will inevitably lead to people paying for access to our visa system. Is that what we want here? Is that in Australia's national interest? Is that how we should decide who comes into Australia? I have met with the good men and women who work at the front line of our visa system, who strive to make our immigration system work under pressure. A good minister would support them in doing this important work instead of walking away from his responsibilities and undermining it.

Mr Sukkar: Mr Speaker, I require that the debate be extended.

The Speaker: I call the minister.

Ministerial Reply

Mr Sukkar (Deakin—Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (16:59): With the rise of anti-Semitism throughout the world, I feel compelled to make the following contribution today. Following his election
to the historic seat of Kooyong in 2010, Josh Frydenberg became the first Liberal Party representative of Jewish faith to sit in the House of Representatives. When Josh was elected by his colleagues as deputy leader in August last year and subsequently sworn in as Treasurer of Australia, he not only became the first Jewish person to hold these roles; he became the most senior politician of Jewish faith from any party in Australia's history. It's a truly remarkable story and one that would never have been told but for the survival of the Frydenberg family through the darkest chapter in the history of the world, the Holocaust.

Josh's mother, Erica Frydenberg, nee Strauss, was born in Hungary in 1943. She then survived the Holocaust, before spending time in a displaced persons camp, after which she arrived in Australia in 1950. Her documentation upon arrival in Australia clearly stated her nationality as stateless. She subsequently became an Australian citizen. This is why the move this week by a small number of disgruntled, debauched political activists is so offensive, disgusting and abhorrent. Josh has made clear that he's not and has never been a citizen of another country. Let's not forget that, when these issues were raised in the last parliament, leaders from both sides of the political divide rightly condemned the callous calls to reopen old wounds, including from the member for Sydney.

Since then, however, a man who wants, in his own words, to 'liberate the debate on the Holocaust', Trevor Poulton, who has authored a book called *The Holocaust Denier*, made clear his intent to find a signatory to take the member for Kooyong to the High Court over his citizenship. This despicable individual, with his nefarious intent, has been successful in getting Kooyong resident and Green activist, GetUp! charlatan Michael Staindl to initiate the case. Surprise, surprise, Staindl has been linked to failed Kooyong candidate Oliver Yates, with Yates admitting, 'I know Mr Staindl through his community work'.

Yates, a perennial losing preselection and election candidate got less than nine per cent of the Kooyong vote at the last election, despite boasting that he was going to win. Yates, himself, has a chequered history. While proclaiming himself a climate activist, he has, at the same time, been a director shareholder and acting chairman of Linc Energy, a coal gas company that sold tenements to Adani, was fined a record $4½ million for serious environmental harm and whose pollution was described as 'ecological vandalism' by the Queensland district court.

Staindl and his fellow travellers like Yates have stooped to the lowest of the low, trying to get Frydenberg thrown out of the parliament just weeks after the people of Kooyong emphatically endorsed him for a fourth time. You see, Yates's father, William Yates, who also served in this place, has been reported as calling international Zionism 'a terrorist military organisation'. People could legitimately ask: has the apple fallen far from the tree?

True to form, the citizenship challenge is also being supported by the other failed candidate in Kooyong, the Greens candidate, Julian Burnside. Burnside is on the record as supporting the BDS—the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement, which is, by its very nature, anti-Semitic—against Israel. Burnside has also trivialised the Holocaust on social media by equating Peter Dutton to a Nazi officer, something that Holocaust survivors have said publicly is deeply offensive to them.

What is it with these pathetic extremists—Yates, Burnside, Poulton and Staindl? They just can't accept defeat at the ballot box, and are now happy to band together, supporting bigots and anti-Semites who have questioned the Holocaust, as they seek to challenge the citizenship of the member for Kooyong. This comes just weeks after Josh Frydenberg was democratically elected, having gone through a campaign where his election material was defaced with swastikas and other anti-Semitic material. How low can you go?

House adjourned at 17:04
Thursday, 1 August 2019

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Vamvakinou) took the chair at 10:08, a division having been called in the House of Representatives.

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters

Mr KHALIL (Wills) (10:08): I would like to speak about a program that does incredible work for families in my electorate of Wills. It's called the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters, otherwise known as HIPPY. It is run by Merri Health and it prepares four-year-old children from disadvantaged backgrounds for school. The program is founded on the principle that parents are their child's first teacher. A HIPPY home tutor visits the family at home over two years, engaging the whole family and teaching parents activities which help them engage with their child's learning. Those activities help introduce literacy, numeracy and practical skills which make sure kids are ready to learn when they start school.

In my electorate of Wills, HIPPY Moreland works with 60 families in the suburbs of Fawkner, Glenroy and Hadfield. These suburbs experience high levels of socioeconomic disadvantage and are culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse, with many newly arrived families choosing to call those areas home. The HIPPY program actually helps kids in those families with migrant backgrounds to start school on an equal footing to their peers, in line with the egalitarian ethos which is so important to me and so many Australians. The HIPPY program is in high demand, attracting 60 to 80 expressions of interest every year. It is my hope that many more families will benefit from it in the years to come.

Unfortunately, due to budget pressures, Merri Health can no longer continue to fund this vital program. Merri Health urgently needs $60,000 in funding in order to keep the program up and running. Hundreds of people in my electorate of Wills, including participants and community leaders, have written to me about how important this program is to them. Fawkner Primary School Principal Roger Pell wrote to me expressing that his students who went through the HIPPY program before they went to the primary school came more prepared and ready to learn than kids who didn't. Especially in an area where there is a highly linguistically diverse population, it is so important. One letter from parents and carers about their experience with the HIPPY program said:

We gained so much from Moreland's HIPPY Program. The program enriched both girls to be ready for school … What makes HIPPY Moreland unique is that Merri Health knows our community. They have been offering the service for more than 10 years, understand and respect the needs of our multicultural community.

It's a critical service for people in my electorate. I've written to the Minister for Families and Social Services asking for federal support to save the HIPPY program. As of this speech, I haven't heard back from the senator from South Australia, Anne Ruston, but I'm sure she'll get back to me. Tomorrow in my electorate I'll be visiting Merri Health and some of the HIPPY families to hear more of their stories. I'd like to be able to give them some good news, so I might try to run over to the Senate side, to the other place, and see what's going on over there. I want to be able to tell the HIPPY kids that the federal government has found just a small amount, that $60,000, to help keep the program going. The minister may not have seen my letter yet, but I hope she can commit to education for kids in my area who really need it. It's a small amount but it makes such a big difference to so many multicultural communities.

Moncrieff Electorate: Veterans

Ms BELL (Moncrieff) (10:11): What a pleasure it is to stand in this Federation Chamber this morning to talk about my community. Today I've chosen to speak about veterans and their families. I'm proud to say that Moncrieff is home to a large veteran community. Firstly I'd like to acknowledge all those who have served and who serve today to keep our nation and our families safe. My very first public event as the candidate for Moncrieff was at the Southport RSL Kapyong Day commemoration service, where I met a number of wonderful veterans and their families. I also attended their regular morning tea a few weeks ago.

As I mentioned in my address yesterday in the House of Representatives chamber, there are three RSLs in my electorate: Nerang, Surfers Paradise and Southport. On Anzac Day I had the pleasure of attending services at all three, including the dawn service at Southport. I laid wreaths to honour those lives lost in protecting us from harm. I'd like to thank Nerang RSL President Stuart McGettigan and Vice President Darren Sapwell; Southport RSL President John Riebeling and Vice President Ken Orr; and Surfers Paradise RSL Acting President Len Guest and Vice President Garth Callender for their tireless work and dedication in helping our veterans.
On 5 May I attended the Battle of the Coral Sea commemoration at Surfers Paradise, at Cavill Memorial Park, organised by the Australian-American Association. Again, it was a beautiful sunny day to pay our respects to the 543 American and Australian men who lost their lives in this battle. Thank you to Fay and Rodney Brutlag for inviting me to be part of the service. I was pleased to sit alongside the member for Fadden, Stuart Robert, and the local member for Surfers Paradise, John-Paul Langbroek.

Last Saturday I had the pleasure of attending the Korean Memorial in Cascade Gardens, in Broadbeach, to commemorate the end of the conflict on the Korean peninsula. We were joined by the Consul General to Australia, Sangwoo Hong; Dennis Cho, President of the Australian Department of the Korean Veterans Association; Simon Jeon, of the Korean Society of the Gold Coast; and Dave Harper, President of the South East Asia, Korea and Peacekeeping Veterans Association of the Gold Coast. Our city's mayor, Tom Tate, and lady mayorress, Ruth Tate, were also in attendance. It was an honour to lay a wreath in memory of these great soldiers.

I'd like to give special mention to Maurie Pears MC. Maurie's dedication and hard work have seen the Korean Memorial on the Gold Coast nationally recognised as a memorial of national significance. I'd also like to make mention of George Friend OAM. He is a veteran who retired as a major after 36 years of service in the military. The concept plans for the Kokoda Memorial Wall at the Cascade Gardens were drawn up by the City of Gold Coast council under the guidance of George Friend in 2003.

On 18 August I'll be attending the Vietnam Veterans Day service at Nerang RSL to pay my respects to the many Australians lost in the Vietnam War. I'm looking forward to working with the veteran community and giving them a voice in Canberra. I applaud the work of Minister Darren Chester and the Department of Veterans' Affairs for their work to improve services to veterans.

Jeffery, Mrs Roma

Mr KEOGH (Burt) (10:14): I rise today in memory of one of the WA Labor movement's most dedicated and loyal volunteers, Roma Jeffery, who passed away recently. A stalwart of the Labor Party in WA and a most dedicated volunteer in what is now the federal electorate of Burt, Roma was a familiar face around the Armadale-Kelmscott area, volunteering for many years in the office of previous state member for Armadale Alannah MacTiernan and, more recently, the current member for Armadale, Tony Buti. Roma, burdened with a walking stick, wasn't overly agile, but that never slowed her down. She volunteered full time in the state Armadale MP's office for many years and was a dedicated member of the Armadale branch. With catchcries of, 'For heaven's sake,' and, 'Don't be ridiculous,' she always knew how to put us in our place, whether she was speaking to a state minister, an ALP volunteer or a fresh-faced Matt Keogh, the local kid with ideas of one day changing the world. She rarely laughed, but when she did it was exceptionally hearty.

Speaking to my colleagues in the state electorate office, they fondly retold the story of the minister's driver one day having his tie stuck in the shredding machine. Roma, bless her, had decided there was no point having the driver sitting around doing nothing, and promptly put him to work assisting with some shredding. But leaning over that shredder had some unintended consequences. Poor Peter's tie, along with a fistful of documents, went straight into the machine, his face getting closer and closer to the blades. Distracted by the hilarity of the situation, all Roma could do was cackle with laughter as his face got ever closer to the machine. Thankfully, she did compose herself enough to turn off the power and help Peter out of his predicament.

I've known Roma for nearly all of my life, and our movement, particularly in the Armadale-Kelmscott area, is much richer for her having been in it. When I used to work as a local lawyer across the car park from the member for Armadale's office, she would enlist me to take the bins out onto the highway on a Monday night. Of course, I always dutifully complied. Roma knew all of the history, all of the stories and, importantly, all of the local gossip, too. She was a very important resource for many of us, especially our local state MPs. She was the near permanent Treasurer of our local Labor branch and the FECC. She volunteered for the Labor Party for as long as she possibly could, and for that we can never thank her enough. Roma leaves behind her wonderful daughter, Veronica, who herself had the job of supervising me on school work experience in the state MP's office. Roma will be greatly missed by us all. We are also grateful for the role that she has played in our lives and the advice and guidance that she has given us through them. Vale, Roma.

Meldrum, Lilly

Mr SIMMONDS (Ryan) (10:17): One of the great privileges of being the member for Ryan is the opportunity to come into this House and talk about some of the tremendous talent that we have, the talented individuals that make up the electorate, particularly when it combines one of the other passions of mine, which I spoke about earlier this week, increasing female participation in sport.

I want to take the opportunity to talk about Lilly Meldrum, a constituent of mine in the Ryan electorate, aged just 11. She's a school captain at Kenmore State School, so she is already distinguishing herself and her leadership
capabilities. She's a talented athlete with a passion for sport. She plays touch football, she has been her school athletics champion and she has represented her school in cross-country at the state championships. You can already see that she has natural talent.

But her real love is a sport that she picked up as a hobby. Playing with her dad, Stuart, several years ago at the age of just nine, she picked up the sport of snooker. Quickly, she showed real talent in this sport, a sport that I might point out is normally dominated by men. Her coach suggested she take part in the 2018 national snooker and billiards competition in Adelaide, such was her progress at such a very young age. Lilly was the runner-up in the mixed under-12s in this tournament, and then competed in the under-18 girls tournament.

She continues to work on the sport with her coach, and she is progressing well. She has a passion for the strategy and tactics of the game, and it's driving her continuous improvement in the sport. Only 18 months after picking up the cue, Lilly won the 2019 Australian under-12 mixed gender and the under-18 girls snooker championships. What an exceptional 11-year-old it is who is the Australian girls under-18 snooker champion! What a tremendous achievement at her age!

Given her victory, she's now been selected to represent Australia at the World Open Under-16 Snooker Championships being held in Russia. That's the world championships, so if she's successful—if she wins—she will be the world under-16 snooker champion on behalf of Australia. But even if you don't win, Lilly, we will be tremendously proud of everything that you have already achieved and your success in the sport. So, win or lose, I'm sure you will make your country very proud at the upcoming events in Russia.

I look forward to seeing what she continues to do and the promise that she makes in her very impressive sporting career going forward. It's a pleasure to be able to support her and to recognise her as one of the great achievers in the Ryan electorate. Lily Meldrum, congratulations and all the best of luck.

**Forestry**

**Dr MIKE KELLY** (Eden-Monaro) (10:20): I rise this morning to talk about the importance of the plantation sector in the timber industry of this country and particularly how important Eden-Monaro is to that whole equation. The decline in the plantation industry in Australia is a dramatic issue that we need to get on top of economically as quickly as possible. It also has the sidebar synergistic aspect of contributing to our climate change efforts. I'm very proud to have worked with the Softwoods Working Group, particularly over in the South West Slopes area of my electorate—the Tumut-Tumbarumba area—and also the southern high country areas around Bombala and Delegate that play such an important role in relation to this issue.

The thing is that we need policy to promote the growth and redress this decline in the plantation industry. I was proud during the election campaign that we made a commitment to actually put money into the timber hub concept for our area. There were announcements of timber hubs made by the government, but this was not supported by funding for the hub that was identified for our region. We made that commitment, and I'm pleased to see that that forced the coalition to end up matching that commitment during the campaign. That's important.

One of the concepts we were pursuing with that was the idea of forming timber co-ops, with our farmers banding together to assign more marginal parts of their properties to dedicate to plantation resource and set up brokers to facilitate that. Beyond that, what we need is a more enhanced approach to the Carbon Farming Initiative. Without that ability to engage in the international trade around carbon farming, we will not get the investment that we desperately need flowing into the plantation sector. This will help managed funds and other funds to really get behind that, because this enhanced Carbon Farming Initiative will allow investors to get returns on plantations from day one, not at the 15-, 25- or 35-year mark, as is normally the case, which is why it's so hard to attract investment. So I urge the government to really revisit the Carbon Farming Initiative in that respect.

I was pleased to sit down with John Barilaro, the member for Monaro and Deputy Premier of New South Wales, and he's very keen to also see that happen and pursue these issues. I got John to meet with Peter Crowe from the Softwoods Working Group on the South West Slopes to understand all the dimensions that are impeding this industry over there. So I'm pleased that John did that. Good on him. He's always been a good bloke for me to work with. But we really need the federal government now to step up and address not only this issue of the Carbon Farming Initiative deficiencies but also removal of the water rule. I don't have time to go into the detail of what that involves, but the water rule is a major impediment to further plantation development. The federal government really needs to look at removing that water rule. I urge our Minister for Agriculture to sit down and talk with Peter Crowe and find out what needs to happen to make this industry work.

**Sturt Electorate: Kensington Gardens Reserve**

**Mr STEVENS** (Sturt) (10:23): I really value the opportunity to talk about one of the very important commitments we made to my electorate in the campaign that has developed greatly since election day, and that is
the upgrade of the Kensington Gardens Reserve, which is a joint project between the Commonwealth government and the local council, the Burnside council. There is a $3 million commitment from each, so it is a $6 million upgrade. It sounds smaller than some of the bigger-ticket items they were committed to during the election across the country, but it's a great example of really important local partnerships between the Morrison government and local government.

Kensington Gardens Reserve is a great, cherished asset in the middle of my electorate, and it's got quite a high level of notoriety because it's the home of the Kensington District Cricket Club, which has a very famous former member, Sir Donald Bradman, who was a member of that club for many, many decades. So it is quite a holy relic for cricket tragics from across the planet to come to Kensington District Cricket Club, be there and be associated with Sir Donald Bradman and his very long time and tenure there. But, more importantly, it has lacked serious investment for some time, so this project is timely. It's got environmental outcomes and local recreational and sporting outcomes. It involves, effectively, the removal of a lake and turning that into a wetland for the free flow and cleaning of storm water coming through the eastern suburbs of the Adelaide Hills.

We're also going to realign and resurface the tennis courts at the East Torrens-Kensington Gardens Hardcourt Tennis Club, which means that they will be lifted to a much higher standard. They'll be able to undertake much better tournaments there. They'll be compliant with the Tennis Australia rules and regulations. So that's a very exciting outcome. There's also the realignment of the playground and the oval pitch. A number of local groups are going to benefit from this—lots of sporting groups, like the Burnside Rugby Union Club, the cricket club that I mentioned and the tennis club.

It'll be a much safer place for people to enjoy local amenities, particularly those that like to bring their pets down there on a weekend or take the children there. It's been quite dangerous, and the pond that we're removing has had to be fenced off because there is a very significant risk of kids wandering over there, falling in and potentially drowning. So that risk is going to be removed. It's a great upgrade for the local community. It's something that families are going to be able to enjoy even more than they do already, and it's an excellent example, as I say, of the federal government working with local government to provide significant upgrades to key amenities in my beautiful electorate of Sturt.

**National Disability Insurance Scheme**

**Mr STEPHEN JONES** (Whitlam) (10:26): I was proud to campaign for the creation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It's Australia's most important social policy reform since the introduction of Medicare. When it was rolled out under Labor, it promised to revolutionise disability services and give people living with disability and their carers greater choice and more control over their lives.

Sadly, the coalition government's handling of the scheme has fatal flaws which mean it's not living up to its promise. Failures to fund staff properly, capping of staff, the outsourcing of core functions and funding problems have nobbled the NDIS in its infancy. I was horrified when the government announced it had underspent $1.6 billion on the NDIS and that this money would be diverted to prop up the flaky promise of a budget surplus. How could a government underspend on the NDIS when constituents in my electorate couldn't get the basic care and basic equipment that they needed and were promised?

This NDIS-funded windfall may help prop up the government, but it comes at the expense of young people in my electorate like Clara Bates. Clara is 16 years of age, and she lives with severe quadriplegic cerebral palsy. In July 2018 an application, along with an occupational therapist report, was submitted to the NDIA for a standing power chair. While standing power chairs are a costly piece of equipment, they enable the user to work towards independence, reduce the risk of injury and reduce long-term care costs. Clara's NDIS plan required funding for a standing power chair. After many follow-ups with the NDIA, the family were still waiting to hear back and simply wanted to hear a 'yes' or 'no' so that they could take their next steps.

Clara's mother contacted my office in mid-April 2019, and the issue was immediately raised with the NDIA. During the first week of May, my office was advised that the standing power chair had been approved. Her chair was delivered in mid-July, but the problem here is that it took over 12 months for her to get this vital piece of equipment. The avenue for resolving these disputes should not have to be contacting your local member of parliament, as willing as we are—all of us—to assist our constituents in resolving these complaints. The problem is the staffing and funding arrangements for the NDIS. This government have got a lot of work to do if they're going to regain the trust of the clients and their carers in the NDIS.
Guru Nanak Gurdwara Turramurra Sikh Temple

Culture Care Initiative

Mr FLETCHER (Bradfield—Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts) (10:30): On Sunday, 16 June, I had the opportunity to visit the Guru Nanak Gurdwara Turramurra Sikh Temple. It was a cold day but the temple was brimming with members of the local Sikh community offering their warm hospitality to both regular attendees and newcomers alike. While I was there, I met with Dr Daman Singh Bhatia, Dr Kunwar Singh Bhatia and Parneet Singh Bhatia, who shared with me their Culture Care initiative. Culture Care is a social healthcare project that was developed from the 2012 Sikh Youth Australia camp. The Culture Care team recognise that the Sikh and Punjabi community within Australia has rates of diabetes and cardiovascular disease that are amongst the highest in Australia.

The goal of Culture Care is to raise awareness about health issues within the Punjabi community in Australia to help them live longer, happier and healthier lives. It uses a three-pronged approach: education, assessment and improvement. Firstly, the Culture Care team developed a free mobile application to enable younger members of the community to take an interest in the health of their parents and grandparents. The mobile application is based on a standardised questionnaire used by medical practitioners across Australia. The application even gives the exact location of Punjabi-speaking GPs close by.

Secondly, the team runs pop-up clinics, which are a fun way to encourage the community to participate in a basic assessment of vital signs. Basic, non-invasive tests are conducted at the clinics to identify any potential red flags to refer to a GP. These clinics are run throughout the year at Sikh temples in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane. The pop-up clinic in Turramurra is scheduled to happen every year in June, and when I was at the temple in June this year I had the chance to go through a basic assessment myself. Happily, no red flags appeared. These clinics have been running since 2012, and young volunteers from medical, paramedical and other professions help to run the clinics. Thirdly, participants are able to register to participate in exercise programs, helping to improve their lifestyle habits.

I was very pleased to have the chance to visit the Guru Nanak Gurdwara Turramurra Sikh Temple, I was pleased to learn about the Culture Care initiative, I was pleased to participate in the service and I was pleased to enjoy some delicious vegetarian food. The standard of the catering at the Turramurra Sikh temple is always extremely high, and it was wonderful to be able to make one of my reasonably regular visits there. I congratulate all on the Culture Care team, in particular, on this wonderful initiative, and I thank all those at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara Turramurra Sikh Temple for their warm hospitality on a chilly Sunday morning.

Ballarat Electorate: Western Highway

Ms CATHERINE KING (Ballarat) (10:32): Today, I rise to speak on the need in my constituency to upgrade the Western Highway between Ballarat and Melbourne. The Western Highway is the major road corridor between Melbourne and Adelaide. It is the second-busiest national highway in Australia in terms of freight movement. It is the backbone of western Victoria.

The link that the Western Highway provides between my electorate of Ballarat and Melbourne is integral to the continued population and economic growth of our regional communities. For many residents of Bacchus Marsh and other towns at the eastern end of my electorate, the road constitutes their daily commute to work in Melbourne, while many of us use it to access Melbourne on a less regular basis. However, as population continues to boom in Melbourne's west, the pace of travel on the road is only slowing. More than 60,000 vehicles travel along the Western Highway in each direction each day, spending increasing amounts of time sitting still and going nowhere.

These delays will only grow worse into the future, with the highway projected to accommodate 85,000 vehicles per day by 2021 and 113,000 by 2031. The road, as it is, simply cannot cope. The areas of the road which require work are clear to all of those who use it. From Melton to Caroline Springs, your journey slows. The road simply wasn't built to cope with the volume of traffic that it carries now, let alone what it will be expected to carry into the future.

Required upgrades to the Western Highway would likely include new interchanges to service the Melton West and Rock Bank areas, as well as the addition of lanes and removal of at-grade access between Melton and Caroline Springs. While these works would be in the neighbouring electorate of Gorton, they would offer significant benefits to individuals and businesses in my growing regional community, particularly commuters from Bacchus Marsh and beyond. Over recent years the communities along the Western Highway have united under the auspices of the Western Highway Action Committee to push for works which have significantly increased their quality of life. The then Labor government listened to the community, carrying out works that
fixed Anthony's Cutting, built the Deer Park bypass and began the important work of duplicating the highway through to Stawell.

I am pleased that once again the community is coming together to agitate for improvements to the highway, and I'm pleased to join with my colleagues the member for Gorton and Steve McGhie, the state member for Melton. We all hear from our constituents continually about the troubles they face along this stretch of road. The government needs to stop ignoring our region and investigate the best way to move forward to ensure that our communities have the link to Melbourne benefiting our rapidly growing population. It's an important economic development opportunity for our region, but it's also about quality of life and safety for our region. It is time for the communities to once again unite to get improvements to the Western Highway in my electorate.

**Cowper Electorate: Domestic and Family Violence**

Mr CONAGHAN (Cowper) (10:36): On Saturday night I attended the Port Macquarie Chamber of Commerce business awards. I take this opportunity to congratulate all the finalists and winners. However, there is one in particular that I would personally like to congratulate and commend for their important service to the people of Port Macquarie. Liberty Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Services has helped families fleeing domestic violence for 39 years. Originally the Hastings Women and Children's Refuge, they provide crisis accommodation and support services to women and children escaping domestic violence or who are in crisis. Their vision is to create communities where women and children are safe and live to their fullest potential.

Liberty provide 24-hour crisis support with transport, food, clothing and accommodation when those crises occur—often in the middle of the night when there is no-one else to help. They were the first women's service in the state to have a registered men's behaviour change program, and last year they were selected as one of just 16 services in a pilot program tailoring homelessness services to meet client-centred wellbeing outcomes in health, education, employment and finance.

Liberty have approached their goal with a multilevel, holistic approach, building social inclusion, employment participation and education, and building skills for domestic violence teams through their wellness programs and classes ranging from yoga to financial education and literacy. Importantly, they are helping to reduce the incidence of domestic violence through their fixed address program by providing case management to men, supporting them with housing and finding new ways of engagement with men, including several outreach support groups for kids or women who have experienced domestic violence. Staff have been trained in cultural awareness to provide the best possible service to Indigenous families, who represent 52 per cent of the transitional housing clients and just over a quarter of those in crisis accommodation.

Liberty are the first non-metropolitan service involved in the RSPCA's safe families framework of offering pet-inclusive accommodation, as pet safety is one of the barriers to women seeking and maintaining the animal-human bond. In their efforts to make our community a safer place, Liberty run numerous programs and events to raise awareness of domestic violence, such as the coastal walk against domestic violence, the fixed-address program and the women's wellness centre. It is organisations like Liberty Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Services which make a real difference to those experiencing domestic violence. I commend them for their tireless efforts.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Vamvakinou): In accordance with standing order 193, the time for members' constituency statements has concluded.

**BILLS**

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2019-2020

Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2019-2020

Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2019-2020

Second Reading

Cognate debate.

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Ms TEMPLEMAN (Macquarie) (10:39): One of the things that's become clear in the weeks since the election is that this government has no vision for providing services to the Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury. They have no vision for providing health services. And not only do they have no vision but they have no interest. Hawkesbury Hospital has had no federal government investment in the last six years, no capital investment. Labor committed $2.5 million to assist with upgrades. This hospital could do with a whole range of things, including upgrading its emergency department. The population around the hospital and the number of people who come to the hospital are
Mr GEE (Calare—Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister) (10:45): I rise to support these very important appropriation bills. I'm certainly very grateful for the endorsement that the government's program received at the recent federal election. Legislation like this is going to help fund very important projects for country Australia, particularly central western New South Wales. So I'm very grateful for that endorsement and I'm very grateful that the margin in the Calare electorate increased at the last federal election to about 13.3 per cent, which was very humbling. I think that was an endorsement of the important work that this government is growing, and the state government has failed to get any construction under way to meet that growing need. So guess who bears the brunt of it? Hawkesbury Hospital. While $2.5 million could make a difference, there's not a cent committed by those opposite. If they wanted to have a vision for the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury, that would be one place to start.

The next place to go would be Nepean Hospital. While outside of the electorate of Macquarie, many people who live in my electorate work at that hospital and it is our largest major centre. Labor committed to a world-leading cancer centre at Nepean Hospital, had we won government. That's a vision for what our community needs, particularly as the whole population of the west grows. That's something else this government could adopt and we would be thrilled to work with them on that, and I'd be very happy to work with the member for Lindsay in pursuing that.

The other thing our community needs is MRI. There is not a single MRI machine in my entire electorate—4,000 square kilometres and not one. There's one in Calare, the neighbouring electorate, that the people in my community sometimes access, miles and miles away, or they have to go to Penrith. More than that, I had an email from one of my Kurrajong residents who told me she has to travel a long way from home to get to it. Some people have to go to the North Shore or eastern suburbs of Sydney to get an MRI in the time they need it. We made a commitment that, if Labor won government, we would put an MRI in the public hospital at Katoomba and that would be a start.

There is also a need for an MRI machine in the Hawkesbury. There is no MRI between Penrith, Rouse Hill and Lithgow. It's a huge expanse. And all that's happening at a time when this government gives a lucrative MRI licence to a clinic in Adelaide operated by the vice-president of the South Australian Liberal Party, in spite of one being within five kilometres of that clinic. Maybe that's what we did wrong in the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury.

Health is not being served by this government. There is no vision for it. Mental health is another area where there is scant attention paid. The Morrison government committed to a satellite headspace service to look after young people with mental health needs in Katoomba. That is going to barely scratch the surface. Our commitment was for a full-service headspace—that's one with wrap-around services. They are so important for young people when they have an early diagnosis of mental illness or when they have a general feeling of being mentally unwell. This is where we can actually make a significant difference, so to see the commitment for a satellite service is incredibly disappointing for our community. And what's more, there was not a single mention of the Hawkesbury, a huge expanse of area with an unmet need and an unrecognised need in official terms for youth mental health. But we know on the ground that the needs are really high, so Labor's commitment was $5.5 million. If this government came along in a bipartisan way to work on that $5.5 million, we could make a significant difference for young people.

As well as mental health services and hospital services, there's another area where this government has no vision—that is, services to help women who have managed to escape from domestic violence. Labor's commitment was for a $1.2 million capital investment to buy a property. People who've worked in this sector in the Hawkesbury for up to 30 years have said to me this is something that's been missing in all those 30 years. They need a home that could be short- and medium-term accommodation for a couple of families, to give them a chance to be able to re-establish their life back in the Hawkesbury rather than a have to leave and move to Penrith or move to other parts of Western Sydney, simply because there is no accommodation available for women and their children in these circumstances. People actually want to be able to re-establish back where their network is. They may have to temporarily leave but they want to come home and they should be able to come home, back to their family, back to their friends, and back to their support networks. These are the sorts of things this government could do, if it really wanted to invest in the Hawkesbury and the Blue Mountains. I know it's really easy to say, 'Well, you didn't win the election and you made lots of commitments.' That's true, but it isn't actually about me. People in my community are entitled to vote for the person they want to represent them, but every single government has a responsibility to deliver the services that people need in the areas where they live. I'm happy to work with this government to see if there is something we can do on a bipartisan basis, though, frankly, I have little hope for that. It's been six years of Liberals, six years of neglect, six years in which the Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury have seen very little.
carrying out, and a rejection of the politics of division, which we unfortunately saw during that campaign. There is far more that unites us as Australians than divides us, and I think that Australians want to see a positive agenda. They want to see things getting done in their local communities, and that's why this legislation is so very important.

One of the very important projects which we're working on is the new crossing at Dixons Long Point between Orange and Mudgee, the new road and also the crossing over the Macquarie River. There was $16 million allocated in the budget for that. Folks have been trying to get this project done for about 160 years, and no-one's ever been able to do it. They've talked about it; there have been studies done on it; there have been commitments made by various governments, but it's never happened. Yet, in the recent federal budget, there was $16 million allocated to this project. It will cut travel time significantly between the Mudgee region and the Orange region. It will link those two regions up for tourism, for industry, for health services and for commerce, and it will help open up the central west. It's the Holy Grail of unfinished road projects in our region. I was very grateful that the Deputy Prime Minister got behind this project—he came out to see it recently—and that it did receive strong endorsement and support from local governments in the area, most particularly the Mid-Western Regional Council, which is going to be driving the project, and the Cabonne Shire Council. It was very heartening to see RMS commit to helping administer this project as well. We're going to need all parties together to finally get this done. One of the great things about being back in government is that we can now see these very important projects through.

Another very important project that we've been working on is the Orange regional conservatorium and planetarium. During the election campaign, there was a $10 million commitment to make that project a reality. Conservatoriums around the region do wonderful work. They're mainstays of country communities, and one of the reasons that people want to move to regional Australia is the strong cultural and arts scenes that our communities have, and right at the heart of these are often our conservatoriums. The Orange conservatorium have outgrown their current home. They do wonderful work and employ over 30 professionals musicians and teachers, and instruct hundreds of local music lovers each year, so they play a vitally important role in our community. They've been trying to get a new home for a long time, as has the Orange Planetarium, which seeks to educate the next generation about the stars and what lies beyond our own planet. These two bodies have come together to form a new conservatorium and planetarium, and they were absolutely delighted with the $10 million announcement during the recent federal election campaign.

I'd like to pay tribute to the work of some key people on that project. Many have been involved over the years, but I just want to mention Donna Riles, who is the music director of the conservatorium; Kelly Dent, who does wonderful work as the business manager; Trevor Hazell, who is the chair and who is well known to people in Orange for his work in our community; Dr Robin Williams, who is the deputy chair and another very well-known figure in the Orange and Molong areas and, indeed, right around the central west; and Elspeth Sullivan, who has been a tireless advocate for this project and has been one of the key drivers. I'd like to congratulate Elspeth for her work. Councillor Russell Turner has been passionate about this project as well, as has Rod Somerville, the chair of the planetarium. And of course we couldn't leave out Mayor Reg Kidd, who very warmly welcomed the news of this $10 million funding. At the time, he said:

We are excited about the substantial announcement today for the Orange Regional Conservatorium and Planetarium which when constructed will complete the world class civic square in Orange, adding to the Museum, Gallery, Library and Civic theatre …

The investment in Cultural precincts is important as it supports the long-term development of creative economies, bringing about substantial economic outputs and employment, as well as significant social benefits.

This project will benefit the region through teaching, creative development and tourism for many decades to come.

We're very keen to get cracking on this very exciting project. I want to thank all of the people who have pushed for it over many years and congratulate them on a job well done. There's obviously still more work to do, but we are very excited about what is going to be achieved through this funding.

The Bathurst Railway Museum is another very exciting project that this government has been able to fund. It's due for completion in December this year at a cost of $4.6 million, and the Australian government has invested $965,000 in this project. This is alongside the New South Wales government, and there was also assistance from Bathurst Regional Council. It's forecast to generate $6.9 million in benefits to the economy in the next 20 years. Ben Chifley is known to have helped educate younger train drivers, and perhaps some older ones as well, at that very site, so it is a very historic site. Construction is taking place at the moment. It is going to be absolutely extraordinary; a wonderful community asset.

I'd like to congratulate Mayor Graeme Hanger for his passion and drive on this project, as well as Deputy Mayor Bobby Burke. The deputy mayor was here yesterday, as was Orange mayor, Reg Kidd, working on local
projects that we can achieve for our area. I'd like to also mention the general manager from Bathurst Regional Council, David Sherley, and also the council's museum unit, led by Alan Cattemole and Janelle Middleton. Well done to you both. I'd also like to make special mention of Ben O'Regan, who is the project manager; IDG Architects, led by Tony McBurnie; Tablelands Builders, led by Robert Barlow; Freeman Ryan Design, who are the museum content designers; and John Holland, and Transport for New South Wales. I'd also like to make special mention of Bonny and Paul Hennessy, who have donated an extraordinary model railway, which is a reproduction of the historic Bathurst to Tarana line. As I mentioned, former Prime Minister Ben Chifley was a proud railway man, and we're all very proud of this investment in Bathurst and its history.

Speaking of railways—and there are a lot of railway fans out there, let me tell you—we've got another exciting railway project up and running in Oberon. It's the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway. The federal government has committed $1.5 million to help restore the branch line to carry a heritage tourist train through the area. This is a very exciting project. Stage 1 involves the installation of 5.6 kilometres of new railway line, the purchase and placement of new sleepers, drainage, earthworks and labour costs.

The Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway have received grants in the past but, whilst they have the trains and some track, they haven't been able to run the trains in any meaningful way. This funding is actually going to get the trains running again. So I'd like to congratulate the president, Greg Bourne, the vice president, Martyn Salmon, the treasurer, John Brotchie, and also the committee members Graham Williams, David McMurray and Ken Lingabala and acknowledge their really important hard work and commitment. They have been passionate about it over many years, and their dream is going to be realised through this wonderful funding.

But it's not just our railways and our railway museums which are being assisted by the federal government. It's also communities right around the region, including Canowindra Showground. During the recent election campaign, the Deputy Prime Minister visited and announced $250,000 for new amenities at the Canowindra Showground. Canowindra is a wonderful town. It's a beautiful town and part of the heartland of Australia, with a wonderful main street. As anyone who lives in the bush knows, our showgrounds are the very heart of our country communities—not just shows but all sorts of activities are held there. In fact, at the Canowindra Showground this weekend, I'm starting the 24-hour Tractorthon, which Roy White is organising. The tractors will be going around the showground for 24 hours, raising money for Little Wings.

I'd like to make special mention of the show committee members and congratulate them for all of their hard work. It's a great pleasure to attend the shows out there every year, but it goes well beyond that. I was recently out there for the Canowindra Balloon Glow, where they got thousands of campers and visitors for the Canowindra International Balloon Challenge, which goes over about a week. Then there is the Balloon Glow at the end, which is quite spectacular and takes place in the evening. So thank you to Geoffrey Beath, the president, well done to you; William Watson, who is the secretary/treasurer; Andrew Holmes, the former president, and a wonderful man very committed to Canowindra and its surrounding districts, and agriculture in general—so well done to you, Andrew. I thank Wendy Bowman, who is on the committee; Daryl Fliedner, also on the committee; Sam Stranger; and Don Percival who is a committee member but also president of the Canowindra Lions Club. I want to thank the Canowindra Lions Club for all of the work that they do. They're always out at the showground working on something or supporting some very important community event. I also thank Peggy Nash, who is an honorary life member, and I thank all of the volunteers who make a contribution, both big and small, to the Canowindra Showground. It is a much loved community asset. It's a pretty town, and it's a pretty showground, and this commitment of $250,000 is going to go a long way to help bring the facilities into the modern age. When you have an event like the Balloon Glow, where you can have 10,000 people at the showground at a time, resources really are stretched, and the community has pushed for this for a long time. So it was very welcome news from the Deputy Prime Minister. It just, I think, shows what you can do when you've got your economic house in order, when you can actually run a surplus for the first time in over 12 years. You can get key projects like this done, which make a real difference to the lives of people in communities right around Australia.

It's not just the infrastructure that's being funded; it is important services—for example, the Lithgow headspace service, which we are soon to open, and which has had strong support from the minister for mental health. It's been pushed for in the Lithgow community for quite a while. There have been some tragic recent examples of young people taking their lives, and that's why getting this headspace service up and running in Lithgow has been such a priority and has been so very important, and with a commitment of just over $1 million, that official opening is going to take place and will hopefully make a real difference to the lives of young people in the Lithgow area.

We've also got great projects like the new Charles Sturt University and Western Sydney University medical school, which is going to be opening in 2021, which will train the next generation of country doctors. We've been pushing for that for many, many years. It will help, I think, alleviate the doctor shortage in country areas. We've
also got the new world-class medical research centre opening in Calare, in Orange, which will bring together the best in rural research. So there are some very exciting projects there.

There is also the upgrade to Mount Panorama, the second racetrack, with $12½ million committed over the last term of government, which will transform racing not only in Bathurst but around Australia. Bathurst is the spiritual and physical home of motor racing in Australia. Again, it shows the great support you can give country communities if your house is in order, you're running a surplus and you've got great economic management.

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney) (11:00): In the last week we've seen new data from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research confirming what we already knew about this government, which is that it is unable to provide a plan for jobs for young Australians in particular. We see that this tired and out-of-touch government continues to let down people seeking an education to help them get a better job. There's no plan for jobs and no plan for skills. In the last week, all we've heard from the government is continued criticism of Labor, because they've come back and they've got no agenda for the future and no way of mapping out what they'd like to do to ensure that young people get the opportunities they deserve. What's their plan for young people in Maranoa or Page, where one in four people are jobless? Do they think that those people aren't having a go? They are certainly not getting a go.

Australians are relying on this government to come up with an economic plan, not just a slogan or a series of slogans. They need a government that is prepared to invest in education and in skills, to make sure that families have a future and that their young people have the opportunity of a world-class education. After six years, instead of a plan for jobs, a plan for the economy, a plan for skills or a plan for education, what do we have? We have record low wages growth. We've got debt of more than half a trillion dollars. This government has doubled our national debt, which is pretty rich from people who campaigned on the debt and deficit disaster. We've got one of the highest rates of personal debt in the developed world. We've had five years of weak productivity growth. We've got falling living standards, with people paying more for education, child care and medicines. We've got chronic underemployment and youth unemployment. We've got the Reserve Bank slashing interest rates to record lows. That's not the sign of a healthy economy. I remember when Joe Hockey was the Treasurer he talked about interest rates being an indicator of an economy in crisis. Well, they've fallen dramatically since that time. Despite the Prime Minister getting up during question time and boasting about the unemployment rate in this country, we now have a jobless rate that sees us at 19th in the OECD. We were eighth when Labor was last in office. We are now at the lowest ranking that Australia has experienced since these OECD records were kept. That is a shocking indictment of this government.

Young people are want to train, people who want to retrain or re-enter the workforce after being out of the workforce, people who want more hours of work—all of these people have been failed by a Prime Minister that continues to cut vocational education and training. In case you weren't convinced of how unimportant this is to this government, you only need to look at the fact that they've put Michaelia Cash in charge! I mean, truly. At the NCVER conference that the minister attended recently, she said when trying to defend the government's abysmal record on vocational education, 'This government is about jobs, jobs, jobs.' That is the message. Well, people are going to need all three of those jobs to make ends meet given what's happened to the labour market. People are working fewer hours and in insecure work, cobbled together income from different jobs to try and make ends meet.

When it comes to vocational education, the Liberals have presided over a crisis in the sector. Vocational education has been attacked day after day by privatisation, poor regulation and unhealthy competition among dodgy providers gouging the system. Since coming to office, first Prime Minister Abbott, then Prime Minister Turnbull and now Prime Minister Morrison have cut $3.6 billion from our vocational education and training sector.

According to that latest NCVER data that I mentioned earlier, since 2014 the number of apprentices and trainees completing their qualifications has dropped to 56.7 per cent. Since 2013, we've seen apprentice and training contracts decrease by 30.2 per cent, from 271,000 to 189,000. We've seen TAFE campuses shut their doors. In South Australia, seven TAFE campuses have closed and 700 jobs have been lost. In New South Wales one-third of the TAFE workforce have lost their jobs. We've had campus closures at Dapto and Quirindi. At Padstow college the impact of the government's cuts to TAFE has seen the commercial cookery courses cut, no information technology classes and the automotive workshop closed. Students are being locked out of vocational education because of rising fees, and we have 150,000 fewer apprentices today than when the Liberals came to office. We are presiding over the decimation of the vocational education system at the same time as we see high youth unemployment and skills shortages. These things should never exist even separately, but the fact that they exist at the same time in the same economy in the same society is an indictment.
No job should be on the skills shortage list longer than it takes to train a person to do that job. Despite the fact that we have youth unemployment rates of nearly 25 per cent in places like Coffs Harbour, we still see jobs, like panel beating, which have been on the skills shortage list for 20 years. Automotive electrician has been 21 years; motor mechanics, nine years; hairdressers, five years. Every other week, we hear stories about training providers going belly-up, leaving students unprotected, in many cases out of pocket and without the qualifications they need. So fixing this mess depends on restoring the funding that's been cut, getting the regulations right and focusing on training Australians for the jobs that are actually going begging in our economy at the moment. We've seen story after story. In Western Australia just recently, Western Australians have been missing out while WA mining companies are employing more and more overseas fitters, electricians and boilermakers.

The only way that we can fix this funding crisis is to restore the funding in full and to make sure that we've actually got the quality assurance that has gone missing from the system. Labor has made a very strong commitment that we restore TAFE as the central provider of vocational education in this country. Of course, TAFE and universities should stand side by side and work together to ensure that all Australians have the opportunity of a great education. When we were growing up, in our family my parents didn't say you had to go to university or you had to go to TAFE or you had to pick one over the other. What they said was, 'You need to get a job and do something that rewards you and that makes you a contributing member of our community.' I think most families feel the same way. They don't privilege a university education over a TAFE education. What they want for their kids is a job that will give them a good income, security, stability; something that gives them rewarding work. So, whether we choose university, TAFE or apprenticeship, we need to ensure that our systems make it possible for every person that best suits them.

I've had the privilege over recent years of visiting a lot of university campuses and also many, many TAFE campuses right across Australia, looking at the aged-care training facilities, the nursing training facilities, the disability care training facilities; the laboratories that they are using to train these workforces; engineering and metalwork facilities. People could be employed in metal manufacturing and engineering and as electricians in the near future in the projects that we see around the country. We're not training young people for those jobs. We need to make sure that our TAFE system and our university system are both excellent, because nine out of 10 jobs that will be created in coming years will require either a TAFE or university qualification. The days of leaving high school, getting an entry level job and working your way up through an organisation just don't exist anymore. What we see more and more, in increasingly complex jobs and increasingly sophisticated workplaces, is an expectation that people will have a postsecondary school education, and there is increasing difficulty for people who don't. So making sure that our TAFE sector and our university sector support this workforce as it changes is absolutely vital.

I want to acknowledge the contribution of my dear friend former senator Doug Cameron, who did so much policy development in the vocational education sector for Labor before he retired at the last election. Doug will always be one of TAFE's most ardent defenders. In his time as the shadow minister for TAFE and vocational education he fought against every cut and shared in the successes of the constituents that he met.

We have seen so many uplifting stories of a second chance at education that vocational education has delivered—the 43-year-old single mum who had left school at 15, getting her first qualification and her new job in early childhood education and care, or a refugee who is now a university law student because of the English-language and tertiary preparation course that she did. These stories are the human face of our investment in vocational education and the reason that it's so important that we get this right. These examples tell the story of what a properly resourced vocational education system can do, not just for the individuals that I've met along the way but for our economy as a whole. It's through creating the skills needed in these shortage areas that we will see further economic growth. As Nobel prize-winning economist Paul Krugman said, 'Productivity isn't everything, but in the long run it's almost everything.' Skilling our workforce for the jobs of today and of the future is the key to unlocking the potential of every person in this country but also to sustaining our economy as it changes.

What we saw from former Prime Minister Abbott, from former Prime Minister Turnbull and now from Scott Morrison, the current Prime Minister, is the neglect of our vocational education system. That neglect will flow on to economic growth. By investing in our public TAFE system we guarantee jobs, productivity, economic growth and fairness. Instead of ripping out more than $3 billion from vocational education and training, we should be reinvesting in these systems, not only for the individuals that need this education but also for our nation as a whole, to guarantee our prosperity into the future.

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (11:15): I'm pleased to rise to speak on Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2019-2020, which gives me the opportunity to raise a few pertinent issues. Firstly, I would like to extend my thanks to New South Wales Senator Kristina Keneally for her fantastic promotion of the upcoming Conservative Political Action
Conference. Senator Kenneally's comments have made sure that this conference gets very wide publicity in all the newspapers, TV programs and talkback radios, and for that we must thank her.

The CPAC is the most highly respected and prestigious conference that has occurred annually in the USA for the last 46 years. We've seen previous speakers such as President Ronald Reagan, President George W. Bush and the current President, Donald Trump, over recent years. This year, it is coming to Sydney for the first time. We've got really radical speakers such as former Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson, former Labor leader Mark Latham, former Queensland Premier Campbell Newman, my colleague Senator Amanda Stoker, Nigel Farage from the Brexit Party, Janet Albrechtsen and Indigenous leaders—

An opposition member interjecting—

Mr CRAIG KELLY: I know you're not laughing there! There will also be Indigenous leaders such as Warren Mundine and Jacinta Price.

An opposition member: You can have them!

Mr CRAIG KELLY: Yes, very nice! This is the thing. You hope that Hansard caught that—what do you call it?—intervention, or whatever you want to call it. These are genuine people working hard in their Indigenous communities to uplift Indigenous Australians, and we have comments from the Labor Party saying, 'You can have them!' That says everything. Good people—Jacinta Price and Warren Mundine—are being criticised by the Labor Party because they have a slightly different view about the way that we lift up Aboriginal and Indigenous Australians' prosperity and welfare. The Labor Party vilifies these people. What a disgrace!

But, having said that, I must confess that what we heard from Senator Kenneally—although I congratulate her for the publicity that she's given us—is a disturbing trend that we are seeing in our society. Instead of debating someone that they disagree with and bringing their ideas out into the open, people ridicule them, if they think their ideas are wrong, instead of staying silent. They are shutting down debate. There is censorship. This is a track which we are heading down which I see as very dangerous for the future of our nation.

Another issue I'd like to raise, especially at a time when we see many of our children, gullible and naive, being brainwashed in our schools and indoctrinated into a doomsday cult. One of my constituents sent me a copy of what is actually being taught in our schools in New South Wales. This is from a history textbook called Pearson History New South Wales S.B. This is what our children are being taught in school. I'm quoting directly from the text. It says, 'Government responses to climate change vary.' It goes on to say: 'Prime Minister Tony Abbott, elected September 2013, made international headlines as a climate change denier. He declared that scrapping the carbon tax was his top legislative priority. He abolished the Climate Commission, whose purpose was to provide information on global warming.' Let's just go through that statement. Remember, this is not some commentator on the ABC or what someone's writing at the Socialist Alternative. This is in our New South Wales history textbook that's being taught to our kids in our schools today.

'Tony Abbott made international headlines as a climate change denier.' The 'denier' slur is directly related to the Holocaust deniers; it is an abhorrent use of the language. It has no place in our history textbooks whatsoever. 'Made international headlines'—what international headlines? I asked the author of this text to explain what international headlines he is talking about. There were no such international headlines. He has just simply made this up to suit a political agenda to brainwash kids in New South Wales schools. Then it goes on, 'He declared scrapping the carbon tax as his top legislative priority.' Does the author discuss why that was; that the carbon tax had no effect whatsoever on greenhouse gas emissions and that it just increased the cost of living for all Australians? Where was that ever discussed? Then it goes on, 'He abolished the Climate Commission.' He defunded it, because we had a group of people simply spreading mindless propaganda, mainly one—

An opposition member interjecting—

Mr CRAIG KELLY: Yes, the tinfoil hat of Tim Flannery, who walked around the place saying it would never rain again. Even the rains that fell would never fill our dams. That is what our so-called climate commissioner was telling us. And I remember what Prime Minister Abbott said at the time. He asked why the taxpayer should fund these people when they are prepared to give their opinions for free. And yet we have this comment: 'The Climate Commission wasn't to provide information.' It was to provide disinformation, to run a cover for why the Labor government at the time could put in a carbon tax, which put up the price of electricity and put up the price of the cost of living for all Australians.

This article goes on. It talks about Prime Minister Julia Gillard. It says, 'Prime Minister Julia Gillard, June 2010 to June 2013, introduced a minerals resource rent tax as a response to climate change.' Deputy Speaker Georganas, you were here on the floor of parliament when that minerals resource rent tax was introduced on 1 July 2012. I thought you were. I was here in that parliament. I actually remember debating that bill, reading through the
legislation and reading through the explanatory memorandum, and I couldn't find any mention of climate change in that bill whatsoever. I couldn't recall anything. So I went back and double-checked. Did I miss something? No!

The minerals resource rent tax that was brought in by the Labor Party had absolutely nothing to do with climate change whatsoever. It was a simple revenue-raising method on our resources sector. And here we have something that is simply factually incorrect being taught, again, in a school textbook. This is the nonsense that is being taught to our children. If they get a basic fact like that wrong, how much else is wrong in this textbook and in the nonsense that is being taught to our kids?

It goes on. It says, 'Climate change is noticeable in Australia with more frequent, extreme weather events.' Where are they getting that from? If you look at the evidence—we have to look at the evidence and we have to base it on the science—there is no evidence whatsoever that there are more frequent extreme weather events in Australia. Let's just have a look at some of what the science says, because I know there are some people in here that look at the science and look at the data, and there are others who believe in superstition and religion. What do we say about cyclones? There is a peer-reviewed study published in *Nature* in 2014 titled 'Australian tropical cyclone activity lower than at any time over the past 550-1,500 years'. That is the science. You only have to look at the data from the Bureau of Meteorology on tropical cyclones landing in Australia to see the trend is down, so you simply cannot say that about tropical cyclones. It is a complete nonsense. Again, the author of this text is just making stuff up, without any reference to the science or the data, to suit his political agenda.

Then it goes on to talk about the 2010-11 Queensland floods being examples of more extreme weather. We can have a look at the data, again from the Bureau of Meteorology. Yes, those floods in 2010-11 were extreme, but they were actually only the seventh-highest floods recorded in Queensland since 1841. There were six floods that were more significant, with the highest in 1893. The 1841 flood was also higher, as was the 1844 flood, as was the 1974 flood. So yet again what is written in our school textbooks and is being taught to our children is completely made up, completely without any factual basis whatsoever.

It goes on to talk about the 2002 to 2006 drought being evidence of more frequent extreme weather. Yes, the 2002 to 2006 drought was severe—as is the current drought, and we in this parliament are doing everything we can to support our regional areas that are suffering through this drought until it breaks, and break it will. You only have to go to a nice chart which I've actually had printed and hung up in my room and which is something that I believe should be distributed to all schools to counteract this misleading propaganda that is being taught. It's titled '119 years of Australian rainfall'. When you look at it, it shows us exactly what Dorothea Mackellar stated: we are a land of droughts and flooding rains. You can look back through our history for the last 120 years, and that's what's happened. We've had three, four, five, six years of drought, then three, four, five years of rainfall, and that same pattern has repeated over and over. If you look at the data, again from the Bureau of Meteorology, and you look at rainfall in places like the Murray-Darling Basin, all you see is great variability. There is no trend of continued drought. Yet this is what is being taught to our children in our schools, indoctrinating them into a doomsday cult where they are being taught to believe that the world will end in 10 or 12 years.

I agree with the comments that the new member for Longman made in the House yesterday, that, if we are going to teach the issues of climate change in our schools, we need to teach all the facts. We can't teach some biased nonsense without any scientific backing—in fact, the complete opposite of scientific backing—without any factual data. We can't teach it like a religious text in our schools. When those children become indoctrinated into this cult—and I have seen them come through my office—they simply can no longer reason logically and look at the facts. We have seen people gluing themselves to the road. So brainwashed are they, so indoctrinated into this cult are they, that they glue themselves to the road. How do they form these opinions? Yes, they may listen to the ABC, but, when they are being taught this nonsense in our schools, what hope do they have?

When it comes to disproving the claims that we are going to more frequent extreme weather, let us again look at the science and the data. There was a peer-reviewed paper, published earlier this year in *Environmental Hazards*, by researchers from Macquarie University and the University of Colorado. It simply shows that there was no increase in insurance losses from natural disasters and weather events from 1966 to 2017. In fact, the researchers found that, for cyclones, the trend is declining. They found that, for bushfires, for normalised losses, the trend is declining. They found that the worst year we had in this period for natural disasters was actually 1966, when we had two major cyclones hitting Queensland and we had droughts, floods and major fires affecting the nation. That was 1966. What chance is there that this peer-reviewed research—the details and the truth—will be taught in our schools? Unfortunately, it appears there is none. I would call on the ministers for education in New South Wales to look at this text, *Pearson History New South Wales*, and have it withdrawn, because it contains completely incorrect and false statements and is misleading our children in their schools. *(Time expired)*

**Mr NEUMANN** (Blair) (11:30): I rise to speak in support of the appropriations legislation. Certainly since 1975 Labor has taken a principled position in terms of supply, that governments are entitled to supply and to
function effectively with a distribution of revenue, irrespective of whether we support specific policies or programs in that budget.

I want to take the opportunity to talk about a number of local issues germane to my electorate. They principally concern Australia Post. The first one is the 4306 postcode issue. The postcode 4306 is a series of numbers in my electorate which has caused consternation to local residents. There have been two postcode regions, historically, that 4306 has covered: one, the Blackbutt region and the Upper Somerset region; and then, separated into the region known as the Karana Downs region in western Brisbane, around rural Ipswich, near the RAAF base at Amberley, down towards the new estates in the Deebing Heights area and Ripley Valley.

The problem here is that metropolitan areas are being classified as regional. The former member for Ryan and I worked in a bipartisan way to make sure that Australia Post treated seriously the concerns of residents, particularly in Chuwar, Mount Crosby, Karana Downs and the rural parts of my electorate. Fortunately, back in February 2018 Australia Post saw some sense and changed the 4306 postcode for the upper region to make it, from memory, 4314 for the Blackbutt region. That helped people who lived around Linville and Moore and the country towns in the Upper Somerset region in my electorate.

The Karana Downs region has been redistributed into my seat by the Australian Electoral Commission, and I will continue to advocate for people there. The implications of not changing the 4306 postcode for those people—residents as well as business owners—is delays in mail delivery and problems in terms of delivery cost, the cost of insurance, cost to business, cost to residents. Those areas were cut off in the 2011 floods and the problems caused to local residents there were very, very severe. They were isolated. Some of those people were not flooded themselves but had to pay much higher insurance premiums.

I'm calling on Australia Post to do the right thing. They promised me in correspondence and discussions I've had recently with Christine Holgate, the CEO of Australia Post, that they would look at this issue again after the parcel distribution centre covering all of Queensland was opened in Redbank, just outside my electorate in the eastern suburbs of Ipswich. I applaud Australia Post for creating that distribution centre, which employs a couple of hundred people across my electorate and the electorate of Oxley. But now is the time to fix the 4306 issue and assign a new postcode for people living in that area so that they will not experience the extra business costs, the insurance problems and the express-delivery issues they have each and every day. I want to make sure that the people who live in that area are treated in a fair and just way, and I'm calling on Christine Holgate and the whole Australia Post management to do the right thing by the people of the Karana Downs region.

Before question time yesterday, I received a number of emails from people and contacts in relation to an issue which had not been brought to my attention by Australia Post and where there was no consultation. Much to my shock and horror, I received, just before question time, an email from David Jancik, the senior manager of government relations at Australia Post, to advise me, subsequent to the advice given to me by local residents and business owners in Ipswich, that in fact Australia Post was closing the Ipswich post office located at shop 5, 114 Brisbane Street, Ipswich, permanently from 5 pm on 13 September 2019. The message then said that local residents could get redirected to other post offices around the place and get their mail redirected. This is an unnecessary, outrageous and insulting decision by Australia Post in one of the fastest-growing cities in Australia.

As Amanda Lee Harris said on my Facebook page, 'We must be the only city in Australia who will not have a post office in its CBD.'

I know about the problems that, as a result of the decisions made by the now sacked Ipswich City Council, the CBD has been enduring for years. There have been a lot of vacancies in the CBD in Ipswich, as some businesses have left and others have struggled. I know there are real concerns about the CBD redevelopment. I am confident that the interim administrator, Greg Chemello, is on the right track and that, when we have a new council elected in March 2020, the CBD redevelopment of Ipswich will finally be completed and businesses will be back in the CBD. Patronage will improve and, of course, residents will move— as is the case all around the world, not just in Queensland— into high-rise and other types of inner-city dwellings. Residents will move into the CBD and will like that lifestyle, as we've seen in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Many people have enjoyed it in the Ipswich region as well.

I want to quote some local residents, and I want to remind Australia Post of their obligations to the people of Ipswich. We are the sixth biggest city in Queensland. We are one of the fastest-growing regions in the whole of Australia. This is what a number of people have said. The Ipswich Turf Club have the address PO Box 1, Ipswich 4305. As was described to me by Janet Tansey, that has been their postcode and PO box 'forever'. She advises that redirections will only take place for six months. She asked if Australia Post, following redevelopment of the mall, will reopen a post office, and she asks what government businesses in town will do— private delivery or collection?
ICYS, Ipswich Community Youth Service, says:
Assuming this means we will need a new PO Box number, this will be a huge cost on businesses and not-for-profit organisations like us who have had this post office for many many years! Changing letterhead, business cards, branding, correspondence with all our government funding bodies and the hundreds of stakeholders we do business with will be a HUGE toll on us and honestly far too costly and time-consuming for us to comprehend right now.

Jodie Kochman, who is a disability advocate in Ipswich—and I really commend Jodie for the great work she's done over the years—says:
It is the most frustrating thing as a post box holder. I am now faced with finding an accessible alternative. Including height of box and accessibility of the post office itself.
Not only that but the impact will be felt as I will not have any other reason to visit other small businesses in the area, and I am not the only one who checks their mail and grabs a quick coffee or stops in to grab lunch etc.

Mike McInnes, a well-known businessman in Ipswich who recently met me in relation to a community organisation that I think Mike is the president of and that does a lot of good work for homeless people in the Ipswich area, said:
As a small business owner and a customer of Australia Post the decision to close just makes it even harder to do business in Ipswich CBD. This decision needs to be reversed—
I say amen to that—
or an alternative service needs to be provided.

Arthur Needham, who, by the way, lives in the Karana Downs region and is very well known in cricketing circles in the Ipswich and Brisbane area, said:
My dear Shayne, there seems to be a serious attempt at the destruction of the core of Ipswich despite the fact that it's going through a major and long overdue total regeneration.

Karen Ladlay, who's the Tower Central Cafe owner and whose business is directly opposite the post office said:
... it was sad news.
'That post office has been in Ipswich as long as I can remember and I've been there 40 years.'
I've lived in Ipswich all my life, and I can't remember a time when it hasn't been there.

This is simply unacceptable behaviour. It's an appalling decision by Australia Post. I call on Australia Post to listen to the voices of business owners and the Ipswich community and reverse this decision immediately. The lack of consultation in relation to the closure is a disgrace. Australia Post should listen to people in relation to this issue. It simply is not good enough for Australia Post to say that it's going to look at some sort of community postal agency and that it's going to keep us in the loop on this issue. I applaud the deputy editor of The Queensland Times, Andrew Korner, for taking up this issue. I've spoken to Andrew a number of times about this. I applaud The Queensland Times for its advocacy and for standing up for our local community. It's about time that the minister intervened in this issue. It's about time that Ms Holgate did the right thing. I have enormous respect for her through my previous work when I was Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing and she was at Blackmores. She is a fair person. She is a good CEO. I'm asking her to intervene and do the right thing by the people of Ipswich.

I have to say that this is a very disappointing outcome. The impact on Ipswich, which has gone through such a hard time, with court cases involving former mayors being charged with and then convicted of serious criminal offences and with the dismissal of our council—morale in Ipswich is bad enough without this happening. I think all of us in our community need to work together to turn Ipswich around.

We don't need to be punched in the head by a decision like this. The Ipswich chamber of commerce and the Springfield chamber of commerce do a terrific job. I'm proud to be a member of both chambers. But to look at what's happened here and think that it is the right decision because a lease may be up or patronage may be down is not understanding that we have about 230,000 people living in Ipswich; we have inside our borders the satellite city of Springfield with about 45,000, which will grow to about 110,000 in the next decade and a half; and in about 20 years time the Ripley Valley, which is inside the city of Ipswich, will have 120,000 people. And Ipswich itself is growing. We are projected to have about 460,000 living in Ipswich in the next 20 years. We'll see changes. We've seen Rheinmetall constructed in the eastern suburbs, we've got the RAAF base at Amberley—the biggest military base in the country—and yet we have being made decisions like this that are a disgrace, that neglect Ipswich, that insult Ipswich, that treat us like second-class citizens. We're part of the city of Ipswich—I'm proud to say I was born and raised in Ipswich—and we're proud of being part of South-East Queensland. But we should not be left behind and treated worse than any other area in South-East Queensland or across the country.
I know the chamber of commerce will get behind this campaign to reverse the decision. I'm calling on it to do the right thing. I know that the state member for Ipswich, Jennifer Howard, has been very vocal about this. She's calling on Australia Post to reverse its decision. I'm calling on other politicians likely to stand up and on business owners to stand up. And I'm calling on this government—this government who seems so often to be in office but not in power—to do the right thing by my local residents and stand up for the people of Ipswich. This closure is a disappointing decision. This closure is not pro-business. This closure is nothing but a punch to the guts of Ipswich. This decision is not in the best interests of our city. This is not a decision that looks after our community, and the government should intervene. If Australia Post won't do the right thing, the government should stand up for the people of Ipswich. I'm calling on the minister to intervene and save the Ipswich post office.

Mrs McIntosh (Lindsay) (11:45): We all make commitments during election campaigns, and I promise my community of Lindsay that I'll work really hard to deliver what I promised during the campaign; I'll advocate for many projects on behalf of my local community. Prime Minister Morrison and I toured our beautiful Nepean River, where he rowed as a kid. We are investing in the river to make sure that it stays healthy for future generations. We're investing in infrastructure to create jobs in Western Sydney, to ease congestion on our local roads and upgrade community facilities so local families and kids have active, healthy lives.

We committed $63½ million for the upgrade of Dunheved Road, and, in my maiden speech, I talked about the importance of having a safe road. When my husband, Stuart, was an Olympic athlete, he was hit by a car when cycling home from training. So, personally, it is very important to me to ensure that our roads are safe for all of our community. Dunheved Road has grown from a local service road to a major arterial road, and it forms a strategic role connecting the Northern Road to the newly opened stage 1 of the Warrington arterial road. Dunheved Road runs east-west through the local suburbs of Cambridge Park, Cambridge Gardens, Werrington Downs and Werrington County. During the election campaign, I doorknocked many of those houses and collected many signatures from people across our community wanting to ensure we upgrade this very important road. Dunheved Road is experiencing crashes and road-safety issues, particularly at peak times. Increased traffic and trips generated by the Western Sydney Airport together with residential growth along the Northern Road corridor and the proximity of the university campus impact Dunheved Road. The upgrade will address critical road safety and traffic efficiency issues. Once completed, there will be improved road safety and improved access to local amenities for local residents and people living in the surrounding suburbs.

We also know that, while congestion is a problem for many people accessing car parks to catch the train to work, many people in our community travel out of the area each day for work. In Western Sydney, only five per cent of people work within 30 minutes of where they live. I know what it feels like to catch that train to work—15 hours a week spent commuting. So that's why we're investing in more commuter car parking in Kingswood Station, North St Marys Station and Emu Plains Station, and we'll work closely with the New South Wales government to deliver this much-needed infrastructure.

The Morrison government's biggest investment in Western Sydney is the $5.3 billion to fund the construction of the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport and $3.5 billion for stage 1 of the North-South Rail Link, which I can proudly say runs from St Marys in the electorate of Lindsay to Badgerys Creek. During the construction of the Western Sydney international airport there will be over 11,300 jobs, and within five years of opening there will be 28,000 jobs, including jobs in construction, transport, logistics, retail, hospitality and professional services. The important thing is that there will be local jobs for local people living in Western Sydney. Construction has recently started on the Sydney Science Park, a $5 billion integrated science, research and residential facility in Lindsay, another example of the airport's ability to create local jobs and drive our economy in Western Sydney.

There are a number of community projects that I worked hard for during the campaign, and I will be delivering them for our community. Some of these include the Penrith Valley Regional Sports Centre upgrade. I was very pleased that Prime Minister Morrison visited this facility and met with many community members and families who use it every day. Funding for the internal refurbishment of the centre will take place. The Penrith Whitewater Stadium is a place that I know very well. It is an Olympic legacy venue from the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. This is a venue that has created some of our best athletes in the country, including Jessica Fox, who is an Olympic champion. We've secured funding to transform the stadium into a high-performance centre with new athlete and visitor facilities, and we know that it's accessed by international athletes, Australian athletes and, very importantly, by local families. We're funding the Chapman Gardens Sports Precinct in Kingswood for the construction of a new amenities building. The upgrade to the building at both the football field and the softball field is really important, and it's been many years since these fields have received any attention. There will also be an installation of an irrigation system to the cricket fields.
As I mentioned, our families love the Nepean River, even our Prime Minister does. The river is an essential part of our local community that families use every single day, and it is important that we look after it for our future generations. That is why I was proud to announce funding for the Nepean River health upgrade. This will assist with native revegetation and weed management. Local organisations such as Muru Mittigar and Penrith council will be assisting with this invaluable work to ensure that our river is healthy and our local families can continue to enjoy it. We're committed to the Cumberland Conservation Corridor project to conserve our natural environment. Again, this is a very important local community project.

Safety is important to our local communities, and that is why I was proud to secure the community safety package. This funding will assist with the delivery of light poles on the Great River Walk between Jamison Road and Nepean Avenue, and CCTV cameras in St Marys, Kingswood, Werrington and Penrith CBD. Our community and our small-business owners deserve to feel safe, and I welcome this project. I look forward to seeing the benefits in our community, such as social cohesion and, absolutely essentially, the creation of a stronger community.

My focus is always on our local economy and the creation of more local jobs. It's at the centre of everything I do. Not only are we delivering congestion-busting infrastructure projects but we're also delivering programs to ensure that local people can re-engage with the workforce, and access training and personal development that they need for education and employment opportunities. One of these programs is the dependence on independence job program. This will provide funding for youth in search of work to partner with a Lindsay based organisation—school-industry partnerships—to support young people in finding employment and receiving mentorship during employment, which I think is very important. I worked with women in social housing in a previous role, before coming into this place, and I found through work that I'd previously done that mentorship can be the one component that helps somebody stay in a job, so this is a very important role that I commend. We are also investing in the Inspiring the Future program, investing in our young people in Lindsay. This funding will see the ongoing rollout of the program across local schools. It connects local young people, and it has a particular focus on young women being connected with professional mentors.

As I've said before, Lindsay is home to nearly 6,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is important that we encourage our younger generation to access the best education and employment opportunities, and that's why we secured funding for the Western Sydney Indigenous jobseekers program. This funding will be provided to Muru Mittigar to connect local Indigenous students with job providers, and has guaranteed 154 job placements.

Our community facilities play a very important role. I've often said that community spirit is at the heart of everything we do and what drives people in Lindsay, and this is very important to me. The community halls upgrades project will provide funding for upgrades to four community neighbourhood centres within the Penrith local government area: Arthur Neave Memorial Hall, St Marys Community Centre, St Marys Senior Citizens Centre and the Floribunda Community Centre, which I was very pleased to visit recently and where there were lots of kids enjoying dance programs.

Another community organisation that plays an important role in our community is the Luke Priddis Foundation. The foundation supports children and families affected by autism. Earlier this year, we announced funding for the Luke Priddis Foundation digital hub to turn the foundation's offices into a digital hub to assist young people with autism. I will be very pleased to work with the foundation on the delivery of this very important project. We're delivering funding for Panthers on the Prowl. This will be delivered over two years to fund the full suite of Prowl programs. The Prowl schools program has been active since 2002 and has had an impact on over 250 young people and their families. The projects are aimed at building kids' self-esteem, social skills, resilience and leadership and at improving student motivation and engagement. Another fantastic program in our communities is the St Marys school lunch program, run by Christ Mission Possible. We've secured funding for the ongoing delivery of this program, which provides meals to at-risk young people in St Marys based schools. I know Christ Mission Possible well. They do fabulous work in the community of Lindsay, assisting people experiencing homelessness.

This week—and I like to speak this this subject—I talked about the Cranebrook Breakfast Club and how we worked together to deliver funding for the purchase of a new bus. This is very important for local children in Cranebrook. The bus will pick them up from their home and deliver them to the Breakfast Club so they get something good to eat, and then they get to school. The vehicle means that the centre can double the number of kids that are being picked up and dropped off at school each day, and these are some of the most vulnerable kids in our community. They usually have a very low attendance rate at school.
Ratha's Place in St Marys is a wonderful local disability employment provider, and I was very pleased to work with the team there to secure funding for the purchase of a new refrigerator truck so they can continue training and support for their employees that have an intellectual disability.

Another great achievement is the funding we secured for the Western Sydney Community and Conference Centre. This will assist in the establishment of a state-of-the-art community centre within the existing Panthers precinct and means that lots of local not-for-profits—small, local not-for-profit organisations—will be able to have an office space so they can continue their much-needed work in our community.

The Morrison government is investing in local jobs. It's investing in community upgrades and congestion-busting infrastructure for the people of western Sydney and for the people of Lindsay. It is absolutely one of the most critical things we can do in Western Sydney as Western Sydney continues to grow. Essentially, we need to ensure that we have this infrastructure investment and that we're also investing in jobs of the future for our kids. This means linking schools to higher education, workplace training and employment. This will ensure that our local kids won't have to commute out of the area like many of us do now. They'll have those local jobs. I'll be working hard over my term in parliament to ensure that we are delivering these projects and more.

As I talk about local kids and local schools, I very much enjoyed this week having another school, St Nicholas, come to Parliament House and share their experiences that they've had. I think it's very important for local members of parliament to ensure they stay connected with their community when they're here in Canberra. One of the top questions the kids asked me was about infrastructure, so it is a big issue in our community. They want to know how we'll deal with population growth through infrastructure. Another thing they asked about was future jobs. The kids of today in our schools in Lindsay are thinking about their future, and I am very pleased that I'll be a member of parliament working hard to ensure there are more local jobs so kids can stay and not have to move out of the area as they grow.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (11:59): I rise to speak on the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2019-2020 and associated legislation. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, 'The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable.' It is also the true measure of a government. Let's look at the coalition government's scorecard. Next month, going into their seventh year in office, how have they treated our most vulnerable Australians during their time in office?

Older Australians are some of the most vulnerable in our community. We call them the greatest generation—those who endured World War II and then the Cold War challenges that came after that. They showed courage, and they came from parents who came through World War I and the Great Depression. They are a wonderful generation. Let's look at how the coalition has looked after them. When the Labor Party declared that aged care in Australia was in a state of national crisis, the immediate response from Prime Minister Morrison was to accuse us of fearmongering. Eventually, however, when faced with scandal after scandal, Prime Minister Morrison was forced to concede that a royal commission was actually needed. But, by then, the sector was at breaking point. South Australia's Oakden aged-care facility was just one of many. It had been closed some 12 months before the announcement, after horrific evidence of elder abuse and neglect was uncovered. The Prime Minister made the announcement to hold a royal commission the day before the ABC's show Four Corners was to air a two-part investigation into treatment of the elderly. We see the master of spin before substance striking again—the great advertising person who is now our Prime Minister.

How did the aged-care sector get to this point? Well, the coalition government had been neglecting the aged care sector for six years. There were dozens of reports, reviews and inquiries about how to improve aged care, which were all left to gather dust on the shelf. The number of older Australians waiting for their approved level of home care package was growing day by day, under different ministers. It is well over 100,000 and still edging northwards. Basically, governments—Labor and Liberal—have had 60 or 70 years to get the settings right, but the coalition has got it very, very wrong. They've cut almost $2 billion from aged care. No wonder the sector hit crisis point. The royal commission has commenced hearings. Horrible stories of abuse and neglect are being heard. While we wait for the royal commission to do its job and carefully collect evidence, older Australians across the country are still left vulnerable.

There is more this government could do right now to protect older Australians. The Earle Haven aged-care facility had to close suddenly, leaving residents and their families frightened and distraught. There are many questions the government needs to answer about that closure. Did cuts to residential aged-care funding contribute to the closure of Earle Haven aged care? Does the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission have strong enough powers to protect consumers? Are current regulations for residential aged care strong enough to stop this kind of event happening again? The recommendations that will come from the royal commission will be essential for the aged-care sector going forward, but the coalition government cannot afford to sit on its hands waiting for these findings. This government has not done enough for vulnerable older Australians. It needs to act so that older...
Australians can feel safe from abuse and neglect and secure in the knowledge that they won't be thrown out on to the street at the will of a provider.

In Australia, human dignity is seen as a birthright. We say Jack's as good as his master, and, perhaps, even better. We pride ourselves not on leaving anyone behind. It's part of that core Australian value of mateship. Our welfare safety net is not an option; it's who we are as a country. It helps to define us. For six years, the coalition government has done nothing to help the unemployed. Instead, it has a very good line in shaming the unemployed. 'If you have a go, you'll get a go,' is basically saying, 'If you do not have a job, that is your decision.' Or there is, 'The best form of welfare is a job.' I agree that there is much dignity in labour—in employment—but what about those areas of Australia where there aren't enough jobs for the number of unemployed people? That's not recognised by those opposite. Just yesterday, we had the minister for employment releasing figures on how many unemployed people have had their payments suspended. It was offensive. It was an attempt to label the unemployed as dole bludgers. I suggest you look at the hashtag to see what it's really like to be looking for work. I thought we were better than that as a nation. I thought even this cold-hearted coalition government was better than that.

We know Newstart needs to be increased immediately. Newstart is inadequate. It is, I would suggest, almost impossible to live on. There is no dignity in trying to get by on less than $40 a day. There is no dignity in being labelled a 'dole bludger' when we have a Prime Minister who actually goes out and says, 'No, no, all those people on Newstart actually receive significant other payments.' As it turns out, 52 per cent of them only receive $1 extra a day. So if you pool that $14 over the fortnight, you might be able to get a burger and a milkshake, if you're lucky. There is no dignity in being told those who have a go, get a go, when you're doing everything you possibly can to get a job and no-one will actually give you a go.

The government's robo-debt scheme is so seriously malfunctioning that it is time for it to be scrapped. Their machine has gone rogue, and 160,000 Australians have been hounded for debts they did not owe. The stress and hurt these claims have caused cannot be measured. On 7.30 and other television shows, we have seen a mourning mother being hounded for an alleged debt owed by her deceased disability pensioner son. We see a widowed 79-year-old hounded for $67.55 from 1998 that he never actually owed. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported that 429 Australians under 35 have died after receiving a robo-debt notice.

Legitimate debts should obviously be claimed, but the robo-debt scheme using a computerised calculation that is claiming false debts. There is no human oversight of these claims, it would seem. Once a claim has been sent, the recipient bears the onus of proof to establish that they do not owe any money; the onus of proof is effectively reversed. Some of these debts are many years old, and obtaining the historical documents to prove your innocence can be painstaking and sometimes impossible. Robo-debt is inaccurate, harsh and unfair. It is a cruel attack on some of the most vulnerable in our society. It is the function of good governments to make sure that the processes they put in place are working and are appropriate and that the penalties are commensurate with the debt. Clearly, the robo-debt scheme fails that test, and it doesn't help having an incompetent minister administering it.

I have a very multicultural electorate, with many people who were born in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Vietnam, about 20 of the 50 or so countries in Africa, New Zealand and all around the Pacific all living in one part of the southern suburbs of Brisbane. Moreton relies on connections with overseas places. It is good for our business, good for trade opportunities and good in so many ways. Because Moreton is such a multicultural seat—the most multicultural in Queensland—as you'd expect, many have family and friends overseas who often visit and some who end up migrating. So my electorate has a large proportion of people who are well versed in dealing with the visa processing component of the Department of Home Affairs. Let me tell you, many of them are alarmed by the Morrison government's plans to privatise our visa system. You don't hear too much about this scheme, because the government knows that Australians don't like the privatisation of public assets and functions, especially in Queensland and especially one as critical as deciding who gets to come into our country. We know if we don't get it right we've seen 30,000 people arrive on planes and claim asylum under Minister Dutton. But under Minister Dutton's plan, private providers will be given licence to run Australia's visa system as a for-profit business. This could also lead to cuts to services, increased visa fraud and data security risks. Privatising our visa processing system could mean replacing most, if not all, visa processing workers with a fully automated process.

We know how well technology has worked for Centrelink's robo-debt system, don't we? It didn't go well at all. Would we trust that same technology that brought us robo-debt—with all of those complications and wrong calls—with actually issuing visas for the people who come into Australia? As one former deputy secretary of the department said recently, 'What if the company that wins the bid to take over our visa system ends up transferring the visa-processing work overseas?' This might save some costs; labour costs obviously are a big part of such a process. But what about the risk?
I love this nation too much to risk our citizens' lives with someone outsourcing a project to the lowest possible bidder, especially if they go overseas. An Australian visa would be many times the annual salary of low-wage economy staff members. Would Australian taxpayers have to cover the additional cost to monitor and investigate anything if there is corruption? We already have hints of corruption going on in our visa process now. Imagine if it's outsourced to a for-profit company—the one with the lowest tender?

Is the Australian public happy to take on such a risk given our attitude to issues such as border control and visa integrity? Under this government over the last three years we've seen it go from 9,000 people arriving and claiming asylum at our airports, and then up to 18,000 the year before last, and then up to 27,000 most recently. Minister Dutton has lost control of our airport processing procedures already, and we're going to see them try and outsource some of this visa processing.

In things like this, I think a little bit of economic nationalism is needed, where we put Australian jobs and Australian security ahead of the cold, hard economic decisions being trotted out by those opposite. It's not as if visa privatisation has worked out that well in countries where they have outsourced the system. Let's have a look at the United Kingdom, which privatised its system a few years ago. Let's see how well it is functioning there, a very comparable country we have many connections with. We end up with—who would have thought, in a for-profit operation?—high fee charges, people being forced to travel hundreds of kilometres to be able to submit their applications, and some applicants having to pay for a premium service when the regular service was actually not available. So why is Prime Minister Morrison, a former immigration minister, hell-bent on going down this route? I think it's because the government don't believe in the provision of good services, and they would rather hand over control of one of our most vital services to the lowest bidder.

Rather than a short-sighted sell-off, we need to upgrade our visa processing systems. We also need to make sure that the visa processing is owned, managed and operated by the Australian government with Commonwealth staff, and that the staff are provided with the necessary resources for them to operate effectively. Australians don't want second-rate services, and it is too dangerous to outsource this. We want world-class services that will enrich our economy and make sure the jobs stay here.

We know this coalition government has made cuts to many vital services in this country. Deputy speaker Zimmerman, I take your mind back to that shocking Joe Hockey budget, the first line-up of cuts. What we actually see opposite is big cuts done quietly and then little, loud handouts. That's the way they operate, whether it be in environment, whether it be in local infrastructure, whether it be in education. I'm going to focus on education in the time remaining. They are not prepared to spend big money providing actual services that will make the lives of all Australians better; that would cost money that might endanger their precious surplus target.

Being an advertising man, the Prime Minister knows that when you have a dud product, you need to distract with something bright and shiny. It's a classic marketing trick. Turn on the television any day of the week and you'll see it in action—especially late at night, when you can get a set of steak knives if you buy something. Buy one and get one free and all of those sorts of things. There is nothing wrong with steak knives. They are useful, and people generally want them—I know, as a son of a butcher. That's the trick. They are a sweetener to buy a dud product. The Morrison government has turned itself into a daytime or late night Demtel classic television spruiker.

It cut funding to actual education but is giving away trinkets to schools as a sweetener. I'm referring to the grant funding for local schools. Don't get me wrong; I encourage all my schools in Moreton to apply for these grants of between $1,000 and $20,000. Some of my 50 schools will get something, but what they won't get is more funding to support them to better provide the education they want their students to have and which their students deserve. They will get some shade sails, but what about having seven teacher aides? They will get shade cloth, but what about seven teacher aides who can actually make a difference?

The same can be said for the Morrison government's Communities Environment Program. The government has no policy to address climate change—none at all—so they give trinkets of funding to community-led environmental projects. Local community and environment groups can apply for funding of between $2,500 and $20,000 for eligible projects. As I said, big cuts done quietly and little, loud handouts—that's the way they operate. Again, I will be encouraging all my local environment groups to apply for this funding, but it's not addressing the actual problem of rising emissions and the devastation that will be caused by this government's lack of action.

This is a smoke-and-mirrors government. They use every marketing trick in the book to try to look like a government, but you hardly need to scratch the surface to find the true beast: a shonky salesman trying to sell a mirage. (Time expired)
Dr McVEIGH (Groom) (12:15): I relish this opportunity to speak to the appropriation bills because they represent the delivery of government service, delivery of government commitments, and excellent examples of the Morrison government's values and beliefs in supporting Australians right across our great country. Of course I do want the opportunity to refer to the bills from the perspective of my electorate of Groom. I do that in the context of representing an electorate based around the city of Toowoomba, which is Australia's largest inland private sector city. It is the second largest inland city in this country behind Canberra, but Canberra is not a private sector city, of course.

Our government took significant commitments from the last budget, endorsed at the election, to the people of Australia in relation to tax relief. That was about us not interfering in people's lives but simply ensuring that they have the opportunity to get ahead. From a small business tax relief perspective, I can refer to the 18,020 small businesses in Groom that are already benefitting from that tax relief. They cover the services area; they come from agriculture; they are involved in manufacturing and construction; they involve all of the trades; they are engaged in retail in our great city and the towns of Oakey, Pittsworth, Highfields and the many villages in between. 18,088 small and medium-size businesses in Groom will benefit from the instant asset write-off scheme, which enables businesses to invest in machinery and equipment, now up to the value of $30,000.

There is a significant continuing focus on the individual as well. In the Groom case, 62,731 low- and middle-income earners will benefit from income tax relief this year, many receiving the full tax offset of just over $1,000 per individual. Again, that is already beginning to flow. As the Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg, reminds us so often, it is about supporting people to earn more and to keep more of what they earn. That is what is happening in Groom.

We support our community to achieve its objectives and to pursue business interests by ensuring we have appropriate infrastructure in place. I am very proud of the fact that the Warrego Highway, that major east-west corridor from Brisbane through south-west Queensland and travelling through Toowoomba, continues to receive attention from our government. Under the Roads of Strategic Importance program, we're very much focused on future upgrades, not only in Toowoomba and to the west of Toowoomba, across the electorate, but in the connection through to Ipswich to the east as well, because that is a major freight corridor. If you travel on that highway at the moment, you'd say it's in pretty good nick, but our government takes a long-term view and is allocating the funds now for the decade ahead and beyond to ensure that we continue to maintain it for both local passenger traffic and freight as well. It is about efficiency and safety. For the Gore Highway from Toowoomba through to Goondiwindi it is the same issue. It is a road of strategic importance linking us to the south for freight and passenger travel.

Just west of Toowoomba is the Brimblecombe Road intersection. I am very pleased to get a commitment to that in the budget. It is now a major connection for those travelling from the west, from Oakey and Dalby and further west, wanting to make their way to the Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport. But that intersection has seen some terrible tragedies, and I'm pleased to say that the government has committed to upgrading the intersection as soon as we can get the state government organised to get on with it. The money is on the table.

New England highway turning lanes for the PMVs—protected military vehicles—at the Borneo Barracks at Cabarlah—that's part of our national security effort, and being based at a Cabarlah, the significant upgrades there mean that defence industry spending is happening in my electorate. Here again we're working with locals to make sure these heavy protected vehicles can integrate with that traffic safely.

There is the upgrading of the Warrego Highway through Toowoomba itself, at East Creek and West Creek, at the Kitchener Street intersection and at West Creek adjacent to our Police Citizens Youth Club. These were the scenes of significant flooding tragedies—in fact, deaths—in 2011. This is the final part of the jigsaw puzzle to fix up all of the drains, all of the streams, through Toowoomba for flood mitigation. The flood mitigation at the ring-road near our railway station has been quite significant. We have committed to supporting council in this last piece of the jigsaw puzzle.

There are bridge renewals right across the electorate. Then there are the big ticket items. The Inland Rail, as it crosses the Groom electorate adjacent to Toowoomba and then heads east to the Brisbane port, will be such an economic boon for our region. In fact, it already is, with the InterLinkSQ intermodal freight terminal already under construction as we speak, ahead of Inland Rail coming through. That's the private sector taking signals from our government and getting on with the job, getting ready for the excitement of the future. Similar plans at Wellcamp will mean so much for our region and for south-west Queensland.

I refer as well to the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing. The state government has funded 20 per cent of the cost of this $1.6 billion project. The federal government has funded 80 per cent, almost $1.2 billion. The state government have been managing delivery of the project. It's behind time, but finally we've got an opening date
and, just in recent days, we've got news about the tolls for light trucks, heavy vehicles, cars and motorcycles. This is evidence of what we can secure from a government that's got a sound budget and is interested in infrastructure. I'll be using exactly that approach to continue to advocate in the future for a Highfields connection road to that massive growth area north of our city.

Our city is recognised as a Refugee Welcome Zone. It has been a great pleasure to work with Minister David Coleman since 1 July, just over the last month, as he has taken on coordinated responsibility for various refugee support programs—the humanitarian refugee program, which means so much in our city; settlement grants; and fostering integration grants, which I've been able to secure for various agencies in our city, including the Peaceful Humans group, who work with Yazidi women and children, and Canvas Coworking in Toowoomba, a business incubator again assisting immigrants—refugees, in this case—to look at their own small-business opportunities and the Adult Migrant English Program. We worked very hard on that and secured significant support from the government prior to the election for settlement grant funding for Toowoomba Refugee and Migrant Support services, run by CatholicCare. Minister David Coleman is focused, with me, on ensuring we continue to make sure we've got appropriate supports in place, and hence a high-level delegation from his department is in my city at the moment reviewing our circumstances.

PFAS at Oakey has had a significant impact on our local community. Last weekend, Oakey Together was an event run by the community to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Oakey Army Aviation Centre. The whole community came together—me, councillors, state members, community representatives, the Oakey Chamber of Commerce, one and all. It was a massive turnout to celebrate what is positive about Oakey, this beautiful little town in which I spent much of my childhood. PFAS has been a challenge, and I'm proud to have been appointed just in recent days to the PFAS Subcommittee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. I will be able to look at my own community and those affected elsewhere around the country. I'm certainly very proud that earlier this year we secured the first settlement of an unlitigated claim between a landholder and the Commonwealth—the first in the country.

There has been plenty of discussion of late about climate and environment. I'm very proud of the fact that, in my part of the world, we have representation of virtually all energy sources. I talk about coal, gas, the renewables—solar and wind under development in my part of the world; the bioenergy plant just west of Toowoomba at Dalby; and the fact that the Minister Angus Taylor is overseeing the shortlisted proposal at Cressbrook Dam for a pumped hydro project under his new generation program. That shows how innovative we are. It's a pity that the state government has not moved yet on the New Acland Coal Mine Stage 3 proposal. I had the then environment minister, Josh Frydenberg, in our region three years ago when he provided the final federal approvals under the EPBC Act for that expansion. More than three years later, the state government is still dragging the chain. We are anxious to see some progress there in the very near future.

From a health perspective, I am proud that the Darling Downs local health network has seen increased funding since 2013 of more than $104 million. That is set to increase by $200 million to 2024-25. That is a massive increase of 300 per cent over that period. That fact really puts to bed the lie from those opposite during the election campaign. Funding has increased for our health service in our part of the world. There are an extra 231,056 GP services bulk-billed in Groom electorate under our government. That bulk-billing rate now stands at 84 per cent.

I can refer to the facts equally in education. I note the comments of the member for Moreton previously about school funding in his electorate. Maybe he needs to go and do more work on it, because every one of the schools in Groom, state and private, has received significant increases in funding and will continue to do so—about 50 per cent per student in the public sector, for example, over the decade to 2029. I have used examples that are available on the school funding education estimator, including Oakey State High School and Harristown State High School, which will see an increase of around $2,000 per student over that period.

We can only guarantee such essential services—stronger health and hospitals, historic high bulk-billing rates, the record number of PBS listings, school funding support right across the electorate that I referred to—if we have a stronger economy. That is exactly what the Morrison government has been focused on, has planned for and is delivering, as evidenced through these appropriation bills.

In conclusion, I want to talk about the values, as I said at the start, and the beliefs that we bring to our electorates as a government and, in Queensland, as the LNP. Freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, freedom of expression and freedom of association are the building blocks of our community: people from different backgrounds and beliefs coming together in peace and harmony and contributing to the common good; freedom of citizens to choose their own way of living, subject to the rights of others and the laws of the land, of course. Freedom of the individual and the importance of the family are the bedrock of our community. We want a government that supports that. We are a government that supports that. Sustainable level of debt—we don't want
to impose unfair burdens on future generations, whether that is in terms of our economy or our environment. That is why we focus on smaller government getting behind people right across Australia, particularly in my electorate of Groom. We're putting those values into action. We're encouraging the development of individual wealth and prosperity, people enjoying the highest standard of living they can, with health and essential education services to support them. There are tax incentives for individuals, families and small business. There are the health, education and other essential services that I've provided examples of across Groom. There is the stewardship of our environment. There are our landcare activities, and those that I have been supporting right across the board. There are those industry and community support mechanisms that I have referred to, and the fact that we can deal with the challenges facing our local economy from time to time. Of course, there is national security and the broader picture. Above all else, there is harnessing the magnificent potential of our region and allowing people to achieve their own objectives, to pursue their own dreams and not encumber them with ridiculous legislation and regulation that might affect them in an economic way, particularly in a small-business sense. I'm very pleased to speak to this appropriation bill. It is living proof of our values and our beliefs in supporting people—in my case, in the wonderful electorate of Groom.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough): It being approximately 12:30 pm, the debate is interrupted and the resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for the next sitting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr WALLACE (Fisher) (12:30): I move:
That the Federation Chamber do now adjourn.

Parliament

Mr GORMAN (Perth) (12:30): Australia's democracy and our parliamentary system have been used as a model across the world. Many of Australia's democratic values are enshrined in the United Nations charter. Sadly, recent events have made it harder to promote and protect the value and effectiveness of Australia's democratic system. I note that earlier this week, outgoing senator Mitch Fifield said that he rejected the thesis that the system is broken and he encouraged us all to embrace democracy as it is. I disagree. There is so much more we can do to promote, protect and improve our democratic system.

There is no denying that sometimes Australians look at what happens in this place and they struggle to understand the decisions we make and the way we go about our business. We can do so much better. One suggestion that some put is that we should expand the number of seats of the parliament. Australia's parliament expanded the number of seats in 1949, again in 1984. Based on this trajectory, we're due for an expansion again in the next decade. Paul Kelly said, in celebrating 30 years of this new Parliament House, that members previously, when they came into this building, represented some 69,000 constituents and now, on average, represent 104,000 constituents.

I don't believe that investing in more parliamentarians is the answer. Democracy is an expensive business but we can spend that money on doing things that engage more people in the activity of the parliament. One practical measure, I believe, we should to is increase the parliamentary education and civics rebate. Too many of the people who come to this parliament are from within a three- or four-hour drive. Fewer than five per cent of the students who visit the parliament are from South Australia and only four per cent are from my home state of Western Australia and I think the numbers would be even more embarrassing for my colleague, the member for Solomon. If we're serious about civics education, we should ensure that all students, wherever they live, should have the opportunity to see the parliament in action and visit national monuments like the War Memorial. If you were to average out the cost of what it would be to provide a serious and sufficient subsidy, it would be less than $60 per Australian high school student per year. That would allow students to visit this parliament wherever they live, wherever they study, wherever they go to school.

An honourable member: It's not a bad idea.

Mr GORMAN: It's a very good idea, and I appreciate the support. It is fundamentally democratic. One idea I might get less support on, I'll now turn to! In addition to getting more young people to come and visit the national capital, I also believe that, when we talk about engaging with Australians, we should have the parliament go and visit other parts of Australia. Often we hear from people the idea that we should move Commonwealth departments out to regional areas or to other states. I see no reason why we wouldn't in fact actually take the parliament itself, have question time in, you know, Joondalup, and that would be a good thing to make sure we actually hear from people and for people to see the parliament in action. I believe it would raise standards for parliamentarians, it would increase engagement with the work of the parliament and it would probably address some of the Prime Minister's concerns about what he calls the 'Canberra bubble'. We've done it before.
An honourable member: What's the cost?

Mr GORMAN: Democracy, as I said before, is a very expensive business. We've done this before. In 2001, for the Centenary of Federation, this parliament sat in Melbourne in a ceremonial sitting. The state parliaments in Western Australia, Victoria and Queensland have all held regional sittings, and that is something that has not been isolated to one side of politics.

Finally, we should also look to how we make sure to continue to tell our history through the medium where we most commonly do it, which is through our Australian prime ministers. I want to commend the University of New South Wales for the opening of the John Howard Prime Ministerial Library at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House. It is an incredibly important way for many of us to learn the lessons of his prime ministership and how they may be able to help us in the future. I believe that we should continue that tradition and look to have every Australian Prime Minister recognised with a prime ministerial library.

I was lucky to study at Curtin University, where the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library sits, and to learn much of John Curtin's life through that library. Some might say that maybe Frank Forde doesn't deserve to have a library of his own, although I believe there are some lessons that could be learned from his very short time in the prime minister's office.

Democracy is not cheap, but we accepted that when we set out to draft the Constitution. We should invest in ourselves and in our democracy.

Hinkler Electorate: Community Events

Mr PITT (Hinkler) (12:35): I rise to update the Federation Chamber on the fact that it's carnival time in my electorate of Hinkler and one of the main drivers and the main reasons is that, in terms of the weather, the score is Hervey Bay 21 degrees, Canberra 14. There are a lot of opportunities for individuals to come to the bay and into Bundaberg and surrounds and enjoy themselves with things like the Cane2Coral Fun Run or Walk on Sunday 4 August. It is the 10-year anniversary of the Cane2Coral fun run. It's been a great local charity fundraiser for us. It's a fantastic opportunity. You can run or you can walk. You can do four kilometres, 10 kilometres or 21.1 kilometres—I've got to say it's some time since I've run four kilometres, 10 kilometres or 21.1 kilometres. All profits from the Bundaberg Sugar Cane2Coral go back into the local community, to our local charities. We have raised $483,105 plus nearly $44,000 from the GoFundMe pages, bringing the grand total to $527,017 in the last 10 years. That is a fantastic effort, and the organisers and the supporters and the sponsors, particularly Bundaberg Sugar, should be acknowledged, recognised and supported. The course takes participants past the iconic cane fields and finishes at Nielson Park in Bargara, the home of Bundaberg Surf Life Saving Club, where I spent plenty of time as a younger member.

Not to be left out, it's also whale festival time. It's whale season in Hervey Bay. The best place in Australia to see the whales is the bay between Fraser Island and the mainland. The Hervey Bay Whale Festival started with the blessing of the fleet on 27 July and continues this weekend with the whale parade and the paddle-out on Saturday. Get yourself to Hervey Bay, and you can have a paddle out on the calm waters of Hervey Bay in the beautiful weather. The whale festival parade and concert is on from four o'clock until 8.30 at Seafront Oval. There will be live entertainment, carnival rides, market stalls and more. The parade starts at half past five and the fireworks at 8.30. On Sunday, 4 August, is the Paddle Out for Whales. It is a paddle into the ocean out for a minute's silence to recognise the importance of the oceans and whales to the world and, in particular, the Fraser Coast. The paddle-out runs from Torquay jetty and Ernie Organ Park from 9.30 am to 1 pm. Paddlers will enter the water at 10.40. There will be music, markets, face painting for the kids and everything else you could possibly think of.

The whale festival will continue next weekend with the Fraser Coast Kite Carnival on Saturday 10 August at Pier Park in Urangan. It will run from 9.30 am to 1.30. Novelty kites in the shape of manta rays, whales, octopuses and other sea creatures will be flown. There will be kids' rides, food stalls and market stalls for everyone to enjoy. One shouldn't have a favourite, but I probably do. It's the world famous Hervey Bay Seafood Festival on Sunday 11 August. Get yourself down there and catch up with all of our local seafood. It's the only seafood festival in Australia managed by the men and women who catch it for you, our local seafood and producer community. Bring a chair or picnic blanket and celebrate, relax and feast with the seafood industry in Fishermen's Park in Urangan. It is a great showcase. Get down there and get your ocean king prawns and your Hervey Bay scallops; get all the good fish from the barrier reef and surrounds. It's a wonderful opportunity and is utilised by lots of local representatives.

On a more serious note, next weekend will be the Relay For Life in Bundaberg, on Saturday 10 August. The theme for this year is musicals. As we all know in this place, Relay For Life is a fun and moving experience that raises vital funds for the Cancer Council's research, prevention, information and support services. The relay is a
chance for the Bundaberg community to recognise and celebrate local cancer survivors, patients and their carers, to honour and remember loved ones lost to cancer and to raise money to help save more lives.

I acknowledge the passing of my good mate, Michael McGaw, a former member of the Bundaberg Surf Life Saving Club. He was the king of the Relay For Life in recent times, and unfortunately lost his battle with cancer in recent months.

The opening ceremony will be at two o'clock. There's a candlelight ceremony at six. So far 42 teams have registered, would you believe, with 436 participants. Relay For Life began in Australia in 1999 in the Victorian community of Murrumbeena and raised over $75,000 for the Cancer Council. Those relays are now held in every Australian state and territory, with more than 134,000 participants. They raise over $14 million every year. Every dollar goes towards funding Cancer Council's vital research, prevention and support programs, many of which help people in our community and your community every single day.

One last note, 24 August is Oceanfest at Burnett Heads, hosted by the Rotary Club of Bundaberg Sunrise. If you want seafood, if you want to have a great time, if you want beautiful weather, get yourself up to the Hinkler electorate. There are just so many opportunities.

Northern Territory: Parliamentary Representation

Mr GOSLING (Solomon) (12:40): I want to acknowledge the member for Perth and his contribution around democratic values, and promoting, protecting and improving our democratic process. They are very important, and I'm a big supporter of an increase in—or a fairer distribution, perhaps, of—the parliamentary rebate for schoolchildren so that the kids going to schools in more remote areas of our country have the opportunity to visit our national capital, because every Australian has the right to understand more fully, participate and be fully represented. And that's what I'm speaking about today: the Northern Territory should be fairly represented in the House of Representatives into the future.

There is research from the Parliamentary Library that's shown that the territory's population is projected to decline slightly, relative to other states, and as a result, we may lose one of our two seats in the House of Representatives at the next election. We start from the premise that the Northern Territory is underrepresented anyway, because we've only got two senators. Unlike the states with so many federal representatives not only in the House of Reps but also in the Senate, the Northern Territory has four representatives in the federal parliament out of 226 members and senators. I love Tasmania, but I look at Tasmania and they've got 17 federal representatives and we've got four. They've got double our population, but relative to them, I think it's fair to say, we are underrepresented. I know there are historical reasons for Tassie having that representation, and, again, I'm happy for Tasmania that they've got that great representation, but I would hope that all members would agree that the Northern Territory, being such a massive area, needs to retain its two House of Representatives seats.

I'm preparing a private member's bill to ensure that there will be two seats for the Northern Territory in the House of Representatives into the future. This is not to try and save my seat or the member for Lingiari's seat; it's to save two seats in the federal parliament for the people of the Northern Territory. Up until 2001, it was just one seat but we've grown substantially since then. If you consider the size of the Northern Territory, the urban area of Darwin and Palmerston, the seat of Solomon that I represent, has a great chunk of people, but there is also the area out to the Western Australian border, down to the South Australian border, across to the Queensland border, Groote Eylandt, the Tiwi Islands, and even the Indian Ocean Territories, Cocos (Keeling) Islands group. So it is a very big job.

The bill will be consistent with special electoral arrangements that have been made over many years for different parts of Australia, recognising their special circumstances. The case for two seats for the Northern Territory recognises that each seat would have a population not far below the national average and significantly more than those five seats in Tasmania I mentioned earlier. The size of the Territory is almost twice the size of New South Wales. As you can see, with the amount of representation from New South Wales, it does take a lot of time to get around to every part, to every community, and I want to commend the member for Lingiari because, as I said, up until 2001 he represented the whole of the NT. Great sacrifices were made by him and his family to spend that time in every far-flung point of the Northern Territory.

Our population has grown significantly since then, and what encourages me is that in discussions I've had with senior members of the federal coalition government, they've said they also believe the Northern Territory should continue to have two seats. That's encouraging. I just wanted to let the House know that on 9 September the Northern Territory business community will be down here. The Chief Minister and the leader of the opposition will be down here in Canberra, and that will be one of the issues that we raise when we celebrate all the good things about the Northern Territory.
Robertson Electorate: Federal Election

Mrs WICKS (Robertson) (12:45): I rise in this place today to put on record my deep thanks and gratitude to hundreds of local people on the Central Coast who were a huge part of the recent federal coalition election win. It is with their help that I have the privilege to remain as the local member and continue to be able to serve the great and wonderful community of Robertson on the Central Coast.

I think all members would agree that we really can't do our job as an MP alone, and that those who join our campaign efforts play such a very important role. Sylvia Lee, I want to thank you for everything that you do, day in and day out, to help not only me and my campaign, but also people right across the Central Coast. Sylvia's given so much of her time to help in the office, to man pre-poll, answer the phones, hand-deliver mail, help with doorknocking—anything that is required. She's always the first one at train stations in the early morning, at 5.30, despite living more than an hour's drive away, she's spent many a late night helping to stuff envelopes, and she's the best on the phone. I know that in the whirlwind of a campaign it can sometimes feel that you're a small cog in a big wheel, but people like Sylvia are the cogs that make everything happen. Our campaign would not have been the same without the enormous effort and commitment of Sylvia.

I'm lucky to have a great campaign committee led by FEC president Sam Giddings. Sam's not only an experienced campaigner and friend but he also helps make sure everything runs smoothly. His eye for detail is one of the best I've ever seen. To our treasurer, Godfrey Franz, I thank you. Godfrey's a diligent treasurer and he worked tirelessly throughout the campaign—in fact, year in and year out—and he's a great asset to our team. To Simon Levy, thank you for your work, especially for going above and beyond, whether it be helping to put together A-frames, put up posters or booth boxes. To the fabulous 'Poss', or Liz Reynolds, who is not only a great friend but also a wonderful and key member of our team, I thank you. Liz is always around to introduce me to new people that she's met or to help plan a function, including our election night celebration, and she's an outstanding host. To our entire FEC: thank you from the bottom of my heart.

To Jack Wilson, Lorraine and Rob Adams, Ian Medlicott, Tim Rolls, Anne and Brian Robinson, Tony and Sharon Gardener, John and Doreen Johnson, Jim Stephenson, Steve Homann, Veronica Cusack, Bob and Judy Welch, Ann and Don McKay, Quentin and Jan Anthony, Gerry Cirulli, Don Ferrier, Terry Morris, Caroline Miller, Julie Pym, John and Pam Collins, Paul Starr, Barbara Whittaker, Irene Dunn, Anne Lyon, Lindsay Cunningham, Jarrod Wright, Harvey Thompson, Zac O'Farrell, Rhiannon Beckers, Jake Bright, Paul Humber, James Monks, Mike Hornsey: thank you.

Our victory would not have been possible without the best staff and the best electorate officer in the country, and so I do want to thank my team—Richard, Denice, Bec, Liam, Laine, Josh, Sylvia and Julie; I will speak about them at a later hour.

To Prime Minister Scott Morrison; the member for Hume, Angus Taylor; member for Mitchell, Alex Hawke; member for Bradfield, Paul Fletcher; the Hon. Scott Farlow MLC; and my friend, member for Terrigal, Adam Crouch: thank you for your friendship and your time. To the Hon. Taylor Martin MLC: you really did go above and beyond, as you always do, to help with our campaign. Whenever we needed you most, you were always there. I really can't think of a person that I'd rather be in the trenches with and to have on my side than you. I just want to say thank you, not only because you have shown an ability to be a true leader in our community and in the parliament, but also because you've shown true leadership by working behind the scenes to do whatever is required to get a job done. Whether that be late-night envelope stuffing or driving down the F3 at a moment's notice to collect campaign material, I thank you for your backing, your friendship and your support. I look forward to repaying it in spades as we embark upon a new term of government at both federal and state levels and continuing to deliver and build for our local community.

I also want to take a moment to thank my beautiful friend and colleague Jilly Pilon, who really did an outstanding job in Dobell. She's a great friend of mine and of every single person in our community. Jilly's got a heart bigger than the ocean, and she did a remarkable job given the limited time and resources that she had. As with any campaign, there are challenges, and Jilly not only rose to these challenges each and every time but exceeded expectations. To Todd Kirby, who is an incredible friend to both of us and an incredible friend to people here on the Central Coast and an outstanding campaigner, and to Brendan Rogers and the entire Dobell campaign team: thank you for the way you supported Jilly. It's only because of these people and more that I have the privilege of being back in this place, serving my community, speaking up for the constituents of the Central Coast, and seeking to build a better tomorrow than what we have today. The people in my community matter; their hopes, dreams and aspirations really matter and, with the support of the Morrison government, I will work each and every day to seek to continue to build and realise the hope and potential of my region.
Philippines: Human Rights

Mr HAYES (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (12:50): These are the hopeful words of Senator Leila de Lima following the United Nations Human Rights Council's approval of a resolution to investigate the flagrant human rights situation in the Philippines:

The door of domestic investigation may have been shut, but the windows of international scrutiny are beginning to open up toward justice for the Filipino people.

As a prominent critic of President Duterte's regimes, Senator de Lima has been arbitrarily detained without charge since 2007 for her public criticisms, but she has been most encouraged by the council's resolution.

This significant yet relatively modest step signals the start of accountability for the victims of President Duterte's policy of extrajudicial executions. On 11 July, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution calling for the independent and comprehensive monitoring of and reporting on the human rights violations and abuses occurring in the Philippines. I commend the Australian government and, in particular, the minister for this bold stance taken to address the human rights abuses occurring in the Philippines under President Duterte's administration.

The resolution is a critical development in bringing justice to thousands of victims of President Duterte's so-called war-on-drugs killings and other human rights abuses that are occurring. It demonstrates that the international community will no longer remain silent on the ongoing violations and crimes of international law committed as part of police operations throughout the Philippines. The decision by the UN Human Rights Council is also a welcome move in support of domestic agencies, such as human rights and civil society organisations in the Philippines, who have been demanding accountability for the extrajudicial executions. It also provides hope and justice, particularly for the many families of victims.

The national Commission on Human Rights in the Philippines, an institution independent of government, has expressed its willingness to cooperate with the Duterte administration and the UN to support independent, impartial and effective investigation into the alleged crimes under international law and into other serious human rights violations in the context of the war on drugs. Human rights commissioner Karen Gomez-Dumpit believes international stakeholders would not have needed to intervene had the government been open to such investigations in the first place, citing the lack of response from police and other agencies in requests for details about the reported killings of thousands of suspects. The Commission on Human Rights has urged its own government to live up to its commitments and responsibilities as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council, calling for the government to show both the international community and the people of the Philippines that it is willing and able to hold perpetrators to account, to protect all human rights defenders, to stop the killings and to end the impunity.

By the way, the Philippines police have recently—presumably acting on the wishes of the President—charged the vice-president, three opposition senators, four Catholic bishops and other religious leaders, alleging sedition and the obstruction of justice, a new low by any reasonable standard and certainly a threat to democracy. Australia's support for the UN resolution sends a very clear message that we condemn the ongoing extrajudicial killings and the circumvention of the rule of law. It also demonstrates our determination, on the UN Human Rights Council, to stand against abusive nations to demand justice and accountability.

Australia should continue to use its voice as a member of the council to ensure human rights violators are held accountable for their actions, regardless of their rank or position. I echo Senator de Lima's appeal to the international community 'to make the resolution work to continue to shrink the space for impunity in the Philippines and to widen the windows of justice for the victims of mass murder and other abuses against the people of the Philippines'. We must not waver in our strong belief that democracy and respect for the rule of law are the fundamental cornerstones for the advancement of human rights. We should continue to actively work with our partners to continue to take real action to promote the protection of human rights within our sphere of influence.

Longman Electorate: Community Services

Mr YOUNG (Longman) (12:56): Across the electorate of Longman we have many wonderful community groups and not-for-profit organisations who are actively working tirelessly every day and sometimes all day to give back to our community and the people who live in it. Whether it's holding a community event to raise money for a good cause or providing a service to a local family in need, I've always been left inspired by what these organisations and groups do for the people and the community of Longman. I've said it before and I'll say it again: we could all take a leaf out of their books.

Giving back to your community, whether it be through volunteer groups, non-profit organisations, charity or other means does so much to help those in need, creates cohesive and connected communities, and contributes to
the common good. Giving back to our community is something we can all get involved in, whether you are at a local school as a student or even a young-at-heart pensioner. All you need to do is find your passion and find other people who share that same passion.

Passion and a willingness to help others is the reason why so many Longman community groups were formed. What we sometimes forget is that, behind the scenes, these community groups are manned by teams of hardworking volunteers who are not afraid to get their hands dirty for the good of the community they live in and love. Many of these volunteers don't receive any money for giving back to the community or for the services they give, but they work from the heart and the soul, working every day to give back to the community whenever they can. Having been assisted by a small team of volunteers throughout my campaign for the seat of Longman, I have seen for myself just how hard they work.

A lot of our community groups do their work on land, but there is one that does their best work on water. On Bribie Island we have the Marine Rescue Bribie Island Inc. (VMR 445), which consists of a dedicated team of volunteers who man the waters and provide assistance to any boats or anyone in distress. Earlier this month I had the pleasure of meeting with Commodore Liz Radajewski, Vice Commodore Ces Luscombe and other hardworking volunteers from Marine Rescue Bribie Island, where they shared with me their vision for this vital service to the community.

I could tell that they take great pride in their three vessels, called Bribie 1, Bribie 2 and Jonkers Bribie 3—very original! The biggest of those is Bribie 1, which is 11½ metres in length and can fit a maximum of 10 people on board, as well as plenty of safety gear, including a stretcher, overboard container and medical kit. Bribie 2 measures at 7.2 metres in length, and Jonkers Bribie 3 is 5.5 metres in length. I was inspired by the work that VMR Bribie Island do, and I look forward to working with them to assist in whatever way I can.

What I learnt from the meeting is that VMR Bribie Island rescue vessels are on the water every weekend, and on all public holidays all hours are covered by rostered crews to ensure a full 24-hour, seven-day service. VMR Bribie Island provides a boat rescue service 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, which is a lot of work for a small but dedicated team of volunteers. Their area of operation covers some 500 square miles, including Pumicestone Passage, commencing two nautical miles south of the Caloundra bar to 10 nautical miles off Moreton Island and north of a line east-west of Tangalooma in Moreton Bay. Their radio room also operates all year round, seven days a week. They also assist police and search, rescue, medevacs and emergency services. They do a fantastic job manning the waters around Bribie Island and they are a credit to the Bribie Island community as well as to the entire Longman electorate.

The story behind the formation of the unit may be a short one, but over the years they have become well known in the Bribie community for their integrity, dedication and generosity. The unit was born out of the Bribie Island Boating and Fishing Club, which in 1970 assumed responsibility for assisting mariners in distress. In 1982 it became the Bribie Island Air Sea Rescue, and finally in March 1997 it changed its name to VMR Bribie Island Inc., by which it is well known. Their base is located on Marine Parade in Bellara. They are well affiliated with VMR Queensland, taking direction from the Queensland Police Service, the Water Police. While they receive subsidies from various governments and other bodies, the bulk of operating funds are raised by members with the generous support of the local community. An independent volunteer organisation, VMR Bribie Island is dedicated to promoting, fostering and supporting boating safety amongst members and the boating public generally by arranging training and education programs. I’m proud to be working with such a fantastic team of volunteers at VMR Bribie Island and I look forward to continuing to assist them as their local member.

Question agreed to.

Federation Chamber adjourned at 13:01