

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 10 May 2006

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.J. Snelling)** took the chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The **SPEAKER**: I advise members that I have authorised the taking of photographs from the Speaker's gallery and the northern galleries of the chamber for the use in the parliament's education programs and on the web site.

GLADSTONE EXPLOSION

The **Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier)**: I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: Yesterday we were all shocked by the dreadful news from Gladstone. The Leader of the Opposition and I travelled to the scene of the devastating explosion which has affected so many lives in the Mid North. We met with the mother of one of the young men missing in the blast, and I think that all of us were in awe of her strength as she and other families went through the agonising wait for news while emergency crews were forced to wait for the blast scene to be declared safe so that they could look for their loved ones and, of course, their friends. One can only imagine the nightmare that the families are going through.

I must also pay tribute to all the emergency workers and volunteers who banded together in the recovery effort and who continue to work at the scene as we speak. We had volunteers from the CFS and the SES working with local police, the MFS and ambulance officers. It was made all the more difficult because, for many of those involved, they were looking for these young men who were their friends and neighbours. The nature of the explosion and the materials involved made it incredibly hazardous work requiring close cooperation with the explosives and forensic experts on the scene.

This is an incredibly close-knit community which has been hit very hard by this shocking tragedy. We have had grief and loss counsellors supporting the families of the workers who were at the factory waiting for news, and they will continue to stand by the families in Gladstone, as well as those gathered around the two injured workers in the Royal Adelaide Hospital, to help if necessary with accommodation or financial support. But the situation is complicated because even some of those involved in supporting the families personally knew the victims, so they in turn need support.

This demonstrates how the ripples of this tragedy are reverberating through the Mid North. I know that the member for Frome, the local member, who was with the Leader of the Opposition and me at the site yesterday, was deeply affected by this event, and our sympathies go to him as well. In the local schools at Gladstone and Laura we have counsellors from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and Education and Children's Services working with students and staff. We have a team of experts from SafeWork SA on site to advise on the recovery, and they, like the Coroner, will conduct a thorough investigation into the cause of this awful tragedy.

Down the track, at the appropriate time, our Department of Trade and Economic Development, through the local

development board, will make contact with the owner of the company to see what can be done to help staff and the community. I know I speak for all members when I say our thoughts go to the families and friends of the workers who were caught up in this terrible tragedy, and we wish those in the Royal Adelaide a speedy recovery. We also say thank you to all the emergency services staff and the volunteers who work in a most difficult and desperate situation.

PAPER TABLED

The following paper was laid on the table:

By the Minister for State/Local Government Relations (Hon. J.M. Rankine)—

Local Government Superannuation Scheme, Actuarial Investigation—Report 2004-05.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): I bring up the second report of the committee.

Report received.

QUESTION TIME

STATE ECONOMY

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Treasurer. Given that last night's federal budget confirms Australia's economy as one of the strongest in the world, can he advise the house what action the government is taking to ensure South Australian workers also benefit from this economic boom? The recent ABS figures reveal that the gap between the average South Australian wage and those of interstate workers is growing, and that South Australia now has the lowest wages in mainland Australia. The South Australian Centre for Economic Studies economist, Jim Hancock, said:

The ABS figures show many South Australian families are under pressure. . . We are becoming worse off relative to the rest of the nation.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): Excuse me, Mr Speaker, was that a question from my side of the house? Was that a question from the union movement in South Australia to the government?

An honourable member: Should be.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Yes. I have just had the Deputy Leader of the Opposition ask a Labor government why our wages are not rising faster than they are currently. Am I in some sort of twilight zone? Am I in some sort of parallel world that somehow I have a Deputy Leader of the Opposition from the leafy suburbs of Burnside—

Ms CHAPMAN: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. My point of order is relevance. It has nothing to do with what area I represent in South Australia, as all members do—

The SPEAKER: Order! Points of order are not an opportunity to respond to things. I ask the Deputy Premier to answer the question.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. The deputy leader has asked a question about why our wages are lower in South Australia in contrast to other parts of the nation. What the deputy leader is saying is that we should have higher wages in South Australia. This is an opposition who supports John Howard's industrial relations reform which is all about driving wages lower—

Mr Williams: It is about more high skilled jobs.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: More high skilled jobs? This is the inconsistency that the opposition brings into this chamber on a regular basis.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: What do they stand for?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: What do they stand for, my colleague asks me. The economic picture in South Australia is this—and this is a very important part of the answer because it goes to the nub of the question—unemployment has never been lower in this state than under Labor. Economic growth has never been higher in this state than under this Labor government. Economic development in this state has never been more substantial than under this government. Mining has never boomed in this state as it has under this government. This economy is producing more jobs and higher wealth for our state than in any other period since the Second World War. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition in some bizarre questioning line says that we should be held accountable because somehow our wages are lower. Members should look at the productivity of this state and how we are developing and building our state's economy.

If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is saying that we should somehow trade off our competitive position on productivity, and our competitive position as a lower cost of living base, as a lower place of doing business—which means, relatively, our wages can be lower than those on the eastern seaboard—she will send us into recession. If the deputy leader is saying that we should pay our nurses, teachers and police officers what they are paid in Sydney, she will send us into recession. So the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this state in one question here today has advocated an economic tool that would send this state into recession. She should be ashamed of herself.

ADELAIDE CUP PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): Will the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing inform the chamber whether a date has been set for the 2007 Adelaide Cup public holiday? If so, what consultation has occurred with the racing industry in settling this date?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I thank the honourable member for his question; I know he is a great supporter of the racing industry. Members would be aware that this year there was a change of date for the Adelaide Cup. Over the past 10 years or so, the racing industry has been struck with inclement weather on about eight or nine occasions. As a result of discussions the government had with both Thoroughbred Racing SA and also the SAJC it was agreed to change the date to March this year. The feedback both on the day and subsequently has been that it was an outstanding success. We got great support from the public. We were lucky enough to get fine weather—which was one of the principal reasons for shifting the date—and we got wonderful support from our interstate colleagues in the racing industry.

I have consulted with both Thoroughbred Racing SA (the corporate structure) and the South Australian Jockey Club, which hosts the event, in regards to the date for the Adelaide Cup holiday for 2007 and beyond. As a result of that consultation, I can now announce that the public holiday for the 2007 Adelaide Cup will be Monday 12 March. It is the government's intention to schedule the Adelaide Cup public holiday annually on the second Monday in March each year. Of course, the racing industry has taken account of the

success of not only the event that occurred this year but also other iconic events that are held in the month of March, and, naturally, the significance of lining up with a public holiday in Melbourne, which is important in drawing support from Victorians, particularly within the racing industry.

Taking into account all those factors, the strong feedback from both TRSA and SAJC is that they want to go for the second Monday in March each year. Of course, this needs to blend in with the Australian national racing calendar. For a whole range of reasons, this will be good not only for racing but also for South Australia with respect to tourism. I am delighted that the Motorsport Board, the South Australian Jockey Club and Thoroughbred Racing SA will be working together to ensure that there is a coordinated marketing and promotional program to deliver maximum support and attendance at the Clipsal 500, the Adelaide Cup and the Magic Millions events to be conducted during March each year. We need to get behind these important events to ensure that they are a great success for South Australia.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

STATE ECONOMY

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Given last night's federal budget confirming Australia's strong economic growth, and particularly given the Treasurer's statements today, will the Treasurer advise the house what his government will do to reverse South Australia's continued decline? The ABS retail trade figures which were revealed this month show that, in relation to South Australia's share of the national retail trade, spending has fallen to a new low of 7.18 per cent. That is down from 7.2 per cent in March 2002. Our national exports have fallen from 7.4 per cent in March 2002 to a low 5.7 per cent in March 2006.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I again thank my side of the house for giving me a Dorothy Dixier. I am living in some sort of twilight zone. I have just left an economic briefing, also attended by Rob Lucas, from another place—the shadow treasurer, because, for whatever reason, the opposition prefers to have a shadow treasurer in another house when the Treasury benches are in the lower house. But, given the paucity of talent on that side, perhaps that is the answer. Bill Evans, a senior economist, as I left that briefing, said words to the effect (and I am paraphrasing and stand to be corrected if I am slightly out of line, but the context of what he was saying was) that the national budget handed down last night shows that Australia's economy remains strong, the world economy remains strong, but there are some danger signs. One of the danger signs is US housing. He predicts that US housing is in a bubble and that a correction will occur in the United States housing market, which will probably mean that the federal reserve in America will lean towards a softening in interest rates over the next 12 months having just gone through 18 or 19 increases in interest rates.

As it relates to Australia, his advice to the group was that the economy remains strong in Australia. He expects business investment to be reduced over the course of the next 12 months to two years, coming off a very high peak. He expects housing to remain in relative decline nationally. He believes that the interest rate increase that we have just seen will punish home buyers in western Sydney because of economic conditions elsewhere in the nation, and I will come to that particular point in a moment. What he also said at that briefing was that the consumption in Australia will remain

pretty static, and the petrol price increase we are experiencing now will be here for the medium term, if not the long term.

Ms Chapman: Are you going to answer the question?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am going to answer the question, because the Deputy Leader of the Opposition needs to be walked through the economy. The petrol price increase will take out of the pockets of Australian families and motorists about \$2.5 billion next financial year, from memory. And GST payments to the states—notwithstanding a report in *The Advertiser* today, and I can understand the error; it was an error—in last night's budget basically confirmed the mid-year review by Peter Costello, that is, we have a static period going forward, and they have adjusted down the payments to South Australia.

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No. Well, I am glad that 'Easy Rider', the other economic guru on the other side, has objected, because GST payments—

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Well, the member can move a motion tomorrow concerning misleading the house, because this is what I am about to say and if I am wrong the opposition can come and accuse me of misleading the house. The budget figures last night show that the mid-year review released by the Commonwealth Treasury showed for 2005-06 that GST payments will be down, I think—I stand to be corrected—by \$26 million. They are showing, in fact—

Mr Hamilton-Smith: It has gone up extraordinarily over the last four years.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Okay, so we are putting it over a longer period. Again, I stand to be corrected, but the figures last night showed that we will not be down \$26 million, and I think the figure is closer to \$18 million. But, whatever the actual number is, the federal Treasury was forecasting in the budget last night that GST payments to South Australia are down on what they were in the previous budget and will remain pretty well static going forward—and, as I said, I stand to be corrected. It shows that GST—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No, relatively, I am correct. But what it is shows is that GST payments to South Australia will not be greater as a result of petrol prices, as claimed by the shadow minister for transport and the RAA. But let me come back to the economic lecture that Bill Evans, the chief economist for Westpac, gave myself, Rob Lucas and 300 other business people, which I want to share with the house and particularly the member for Bragg.

Consumption spending in Australia will remain static going forward. He said something that I think is an exciting commentary, which I have not heard ever before from one of the nation's leading commentators, and that is that the boom economy of the nation is Western Australia's and that owners of houses in the western suburbs of Sydney are paying the penalty for a booming resource economy in WA. His prediction is that the resource boom in this nation will remain for many years to come. He then said, 'And I think it is about time that I included South Australia in that discussion about what are the boom resource economies of the nation.' When he goes around the nation, he now needs to consider including South Australia.

He said that, with copper prices at an all-time high and expected to increase over the next 20 years as the demand for resources from this nation exponentially grows, South Australia will be at the forefront. What else did Bill Evans say? He said that housing affordability in South Australia is

now in a position that means that we will continue to grow in terms of house prices and our economy going forward, because we have an affordability rate here in South Australia that makes us a attractive place for people to live. He then shows population trend figures that show that South Australia's population is growing.

The deputy leader wants to come in here and try to broadside me from some socialist left position that we should pay higher wages or blindside me from some dour pathetic attempt to talk down this economy when I have just left Bill Evans saying that this economy is booming and will continue to boom.

THE VINES CARAVAN PARK

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson): My question is to the Minister for Housing. How is the government assisting the residents affected by the impending closure of The Vines Caravan Park at Woodcroft?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Housing): I take this opportunity to congratulate the honourable member for his advocacy on behalf of the 65 residents who have been affected by this closure. He is a tenacious advocate, I have to say, because you cannot even go to a local football match without him hunting you down, buttonholing you there and asking you for something. The member for Mawson has been very creative in working out solutions for the people who are living in The Vines, some of whom have been there for many years. Since he learnt that The Vines had been sold to developers and all the permanent residents served with 90-day eviction notices, he has been working very closely with us, together with the local community and local service providers, to make sure that the residents' uncertainty is being relieved.

Today I am very pleased to be able to announce that the government is committing funding of \$30 000 towards a one-off project to support the relocation of residents. Arrangements are currently being finalised with a local non-government agency, Southern Junction Community Services, for the funds to be used to run this project. The funding that I announce today will be used for a part-time worker to assist residents into housing, to link them up with services such as financial counselling, health and other services. I have been very pleased by the way in which the local community has pulled together.

The other suggestion that the member for Mawson has made is an agency information day, pulling together The Vines Uniting Church and representatives from my agencies, Children, Youth and Family Services, the South Australian Housing Trust and Southern Junction Community Services; and we are also hoping that Anglicare and Centrelink can participate. That has been arranged for Friday of this week. I am confident that through these measures we will be able to alleviate some of the uncertainty for the residents of The Vines Caravan Park.

STATE BUDGET

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question again is to the Treasurer. Given that the economic conditions in Australia—and, according to the Treasurer, in South Australia—are as good as it gets, will the Treasurer indicate to South Australians what tax cuts he will be giving them in his budget when he eventually delivers it in September?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): Again, I thank you very much, members of the Labor Party, for that Dorothy Dixier. The tax cuts that we are delivering as a government were part of our last budget. There is \$1.5 billion of tax cuts between now and 2010. We are cutting stamp duty on mortgages. We are abolishing lease duties. We are abolishing rental duties. We have abolished stamp duty on cheque transactions. We have reduced land tax. Going out to 2010, budget after budget we are cutting taxes because lower taxes increase productivity; lower taxes increase economic outputs. I thank my members for asking me another Dorothy Dixier, which allows the government to paint the appropriate picture of our economy.

Let us be fair to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I think that this is her moment to shine and to put her stamp on leadership. What I like about the deputy leader's style of leadership is that in the parliament we should be bipartisan and we should be above petty politics and we should not simply criticise governments because that is what you do in politics, but you should give the government the opportunity to shine. You should give the opportunity to the government to talk up the economy. You should give the government of the day the opportunity to say how well it is doing as a government.

I thank the deputy leader for generous questions to me. I do not get a lot of questions but, like all ministers, we get a bit anxious when we hear 'My question is to the Treasurer,' or 'My question is to the Minister for Health.' Notwithstanding our bravado, we all get a bit anxious; we do. After four years and a few months in this job, can I thank the deputy leader because, for the very first time in my political career, when I was asked a question I did not get nervous.

ROAD TRAUMA SUPPORT TEAM

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): Can the Attorney-General inform the house about action taken to fulfil the election promise to establish a road trauma support team?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Late last year I pledged, subject to the people of South Australia choosing to re-elect the Rann Labor government, to establish a road trauma support team to help victims of road crashes and their families and friends who often suffer alone and in silence.

The Rann government has taken steps to highlight the devastating effect of road crashes, especially when someone is killed. The Kapunda Road Royal Commission exposed weaknesses in the law and we moved to repair the flaw as soon as the parliamentary process allowed. Of course, the member for Heysen would say that is inequality before the law, calling a royal commission—and she nods in agreement—but we had the royal commission, despite her opposition. Our reforms to the criminal justice system now mean that the cowardly practice of fleeing the scene of a crash where the victim is left for dead carries the same maximum penalty as causing death by dangerous driving. Moreover, the offence can now be proved without the need to show dangerous driving.

The road trauma support team gives emotional support and help to ease the suffering of any South Australian affected by a road crash, including family and friends of an injured or deceased person; the physically and psychologically injured; witnesses and bystanders to a collision; and emergency workers and police. I am pleased to advise you, Mr Speaker, that the road trauma support team is now established at the

Loss and Grief Centre in Prospect. In April it held its first meeting there. Victims of road trauma come together and share their experiences. A psychologist is present who is paid from this grant. During the government's first term, we made some of the most significant reforms to the criminal justice system in more than 50 years, but there is more to be done. We are committed to continuing this work, and we will do whatever we can to lessen the trauma for road victims and other victims.

STATE BUDGET

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is again to the Treasurer. Given that the federal government has delivered its budget with debt reduction, more money for services, provision for the future fund and, on top of that, tax cuts, will the Treasurer explain to South Australians why his government cannot even deliver a budget on time? Will he explain to the taxpayers why he is unable to manage the state finances?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I thank the deputy leader for her question—and I thank her very much. Again, I am happy to calmly, and in a considered fashion, walk us through some history and answer the question fully. I think it deserves a full response. Can I first address the issue of the September budget. The advice I was provided by Treasury, and which would have been provided to an incoming Liberal government had there been one, was this: because we had a March election, the disruption that occurred in that process, I took a decision early on that some of the bilateral processes would be wrong for me to do in the lead-up to the March election, because an incoming government, be it a Liberal—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No; I am going to come to that, because I was not as arrogant as Rob Lucas was as Treasurer. I considered the possibility that there might be a change of government. Rob Lucas, clearly, in 2002 assumed he would continue to be Treasurer, so he did all preparatory work. But what Treasury said to me was this—that we need to have a good look at the opportunity to deal with the pressures that are ever present within the health system, which I have addressed in this house, and that gives us an opportunity have a decent exercise, as we are doing now with Mr Greg Smith, to have a look at the savings options available for us to redirect more money into health, policing, and education. To do that, giving ourselves a little more time is a prudent thing to do. But what Treasury also advised me was that that does not disrupt the financial management of the state at all. We have appropriations and supply through to November. Bearing in mind that August or September budgets were the norm, budgets are but a snapshot in time. The dates of budgets vary very often and moving those dates around is no big deal, provided you maintain fiscal discipline—which we do. Maintaining fiscal discipline is what it is about.

Let me address the other issues that the leader-no; the deputy leader (I apologise to the current leader), the would-be leader, Comrade Chapman—Comrade Chapman has said to me that we should pay down state debt. When Comrade Chapman put that to me, I listened carefully. The fact is that the deputy leader is correct: when you have strong surpluses, you should pay down state debt, and that is what we did. We took out over a billion dollars of state debt and paid it down. We have just a fraction of budget debt now because that was

the right thing to do with those surpluses. But what did members opposite in the last term of government say to me? They said, 'Don't pay down debt: spend the money, spend the money.' I didn't do it. We paid down debt.

Another point Bill Evans just made in the briefing is that the New South Wales government, when it had its property boom, did not pay down sufficient debt. It spent the money, and now it is in very serious trouble. This government, when we had the property boom and the increase in flow from GST, we paid down debt, which gives us a very strong position.

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Sorry; there wasn't much left. When Rob Lucas was Treasurer, and when members opposite were in government, in the four budgets that Treasurer Lucas brought down, notwithstanding the sale of ETSA and the significant reduction in debt that occurred from the sale of ETSA, they continued to increase debt from the budget sector.

In government, the opposition ran budget deficit after budget deficit. Without the exact figures in front of me, from memory (and I stand to be corrected), we have paid down about \$1.5 billion worth of state debt since—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I said \$1.5 billion, and I stand to be corrected if that number is not quite right. Certainly, between \$1 billion and \$1.5 billion of state debt was paid down in those budgets. The deputy leader then says to me, 'Why are we not increasing spending?' You know, hello? That is what I normally get from my side of politics: 'Why aren't we spending more?' You would have thought that from the conservative side of politics it would be, 'Why aren't you spending less?' But, hello? I am in some sort of twilight zone. From memory (and, again, I stand to be corrected on the exact figure), there has been some \$900 million more for hospitals alone since we came to office.

The budget today is in excess of \$10 billion. As we get it, we are spending the money from GST on our services. Then the deputy leader says to us, 'Why aren't we cutting taxes?' Well, in just about every budget we have cut taxes, and by 2010 there have been \$1.5 billion of tax cuts. So, what is Labor's economic record? Its economic record is that it has cut state budget debt to very minimal amounts. We have increased spending by billions of dollars on vital government services. We have cut state taxes by 2010 by around \$1.5 billion, and we regained a AAA credit rating. That is what a Labor government does. Under the Hon. Rob Lucas we had four budgets and four deficits.

TAFE, BAROSSA

Mr PICCOLO (Light): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What is the government doing to alleviate the serious accommodation pressures at the Barossa Campus of TAFE SA Regional?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I am delighted that this question gives me the opportunity to bring a most important investment by the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology to the attention of members. I am referring to investment in the future of the Barossa campus of TAFE SA Regional, and in the future of training in that region. I believe that this investment has gone unremarked in this place, which I find a little surprising. The Barossa Valley campus at Nuriootpa was built in 1989 as part

of TAFE's infrastructure program to provide vocational education and training in the Barossa region.

In April 2004, an extension to the campus was completed at a cost of \$460 000. The Barossa campus continues to experience serious accommodation problems due to a population growth in the region and increased demand for training. I am pleased to say that in November last year, \$1.716 million was approved for a further building extension of approximately 600 square metres to the Barossa campus and for refurbishment. The extension includes a new resource centre, classrooms, an industry compliance specialist teaching facility for the hospitality educational program and additional work spaces for staff.

Construction commenced in the first week of February 2006. This further building extension refurbishment will provide greater capacity for the delivery of education and training in key areas of skill demand in the region. These include the wine industry, in which regional statistics predict significant future labour needs; residential aged care, which is the second largest growth industry in the region after the wine industry; the hospitality industry, in which there is a demand for workers at cellar door, restaurants and hotels; and vocational preparation, which provides literacy and numeracy training to enhance employment opportunities for youth and mature people.

I would have thought that the fact that that had gone unremarked in this place might reflect on the local member—perhaps he might have raised this matter previously. I am pleased to advise that completion of this exciting extension and refurbishment of the Barossa campus is expected by the end of November 2006, with the facility ready to be occupied by January 2007; and, if he would like one, I am happy to give the member for Schubert a briefing.

HEALTH, RURAL BOARDS

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): My question is to the Minister for Health. Given the government's announcement in December last that the regional health boards in country areas would be abolished and replaced by a new central office, can the minister tell the house when this change will occur and where the new central office will be located?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health): I thank the member very much for the question. He anticipated a question which someone on my side was going to ask me in a few moments' time, so it gives me an opportunity to rehearse my answer. The government is committed to reforming country health service, and we made that announcement prior to the election. The opposition had a look at it and had two different positions. The former shadow minister for health, Robert Brokenshire, was opposed to what I was doing, but the shadow treasurer supported it. We are not quite sure what the opposition's position is in relation to the reform. I hope it supports what we are doing because it makes good sense.

We said that we would get rid of the seven regional boards, which were adding an extra layer of bureaucracy to the system. They were established by the former minister for health, Dr Armitage, and I think he was doing it out of a sense of trying to put some organisation and planning into country health. It certainly needed it, but this was not the solution and led to more problems than it solved. I know the member for Finnis, for example, was the chair of one of those boards, and I think his board worked reasonably well, but that is not the case generally. Across South Australia

now, six of the seven boards have agreed to their being dissolved, and I think the seventh board is making that decision some time later this week. That stage has been pretty well gone through.

We will establish an interim board to hold all those responsibilities, and that should be in place by 1 July, or thereabouts. However, that is not the end of the reform process. We are holding a conference involving 300 or so people involved in country health on, I think, 24 and 25 May. These will be people from—

Mr Venning: In the Barossa?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: No, not in the Barossa. These will be people from country health services. We have invited everyone from the 56 or so country hospitals and health services that we have—the clinical director, the chair, the CE—and a variety of other people—people from rural health, the AMA and a whole range of people. There will be several hundred people attending. At that conference, I want to build a consensus for the changes that are required. The current arrangements which we have in place and which I guess go back in time to at least the 1970s mean that individual country hospitals have total power over the provision of services in their area. The state gives a budget, and then they deploy that money to provide services.

Over the past year or so, we have seen a number of problems with those arrangements. We have seen issues at the Gawler Hospital, of which the member for Light is aware, and we have seen issues at the Mount Gambier Hospital, of which the local member is aware. We have also seen issues at Wudinna and the Riverland. Many of these issues are as a result of the organisational structures that are in place. We have to reform the system. We have to have health reform which builds on the strengths of the existing small country boards and the hospitals and addresses the weaknesses in the current system. I am hoping that, at the conference we are having in May, we will get a consensus about that. The new board will be placed in the middle of the year, and then we will drive further reform beyond that.

The final issue is where the head office will be. It will be in the country somewhere—a regional centre—but we want to get that board in place and do a proper process of analysis about where it will be. It will not be in the metropolitan area: it will be in a rural setting. Members have to understand that the arrangements in place will not mean the end of regional service delivery. We will still have regional services, but they will be managed from this central country health service. The other thing I should bring to the attention of members is that the 50 or so public servants who are part of the country health service in the department will be folded into this new set of arrangements, so there will be one integrated country health service.

The aim is to have better country health service delivery and, therefore, better health for people in country South Australia. I have to say that all those who have been participating in the reform process have been collaborative and helpful, and I think they are excited about the direction in which we are heading.

Mr WILLIAMS: Will the Minister for Health confirm that all current employees of the country regional boards that are being abolished will retain their jobs?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I am sorry, member for Light: your questions will have to wait for another day. I confirmed before the election, when we were talking about the existing boards, that there would be no retrenchment of people who

work for the country health service or existing boards. Those persons who wish to maintain employment will be rolled into the new service. Obviously, over time the nature of the jobs may change and, as people retire or resign, we will reshape the organisation appropriately. Clearly, we will not need seven CEs for the regional boards and all the other infrastructure associated with them. We will not put anyone out of work: if they have a job, they will maintain it. The nature of the job may change over time. As people resign or are promoted, we will redefine the organisation in that way.

HEALTH SYSTEM

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Does the Minister for Health now concede that there are too many bureaucrats within the health system? On radio on 11 April this year, the State President of the Australian Medical Association, Dr Christopher Cain, said:

We still have too many levels of bureaucracy. We have too much duplication within our health system and we need to make sense about how we use the resources that we have.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health): It would be obvious from my answers to the previous two questions that I agree there are too many levels of bureaucracy—and I am attempting to remove one level completely in the country health area. Let me explain to the house how the system works.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Let me explain to the house, because not everyone may know the intricacies of the country health service—as does the member for MacKillop. There are something like 56 regional health services, primarily hospitals, but other facilities are associated with them, and sometimes there is a health service which manages two or more hospitals. There are about 56 in South Australia. They are virtually autonomous. They are run by their own boards of management. They appoint their own CE and that is how they organise themselves. The former Liberal government, when Dean Brown was premier, put in place a new level of organisation. They were called regional boards. He put in place seven regional boards. Those boards were—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: It was under Brown, but Armitage was the minister at the time. Seven regional boards were put in place. Their goal was to try to get some coordination about the delivery of services; and there certainly needs to be coordination, I would not disagree with that. They were appointed boards and they had the bureaucracy around that. On top of that, within the head office of the health department, there is a country health service, which is involved in planning and organisation, and then there is the health department and the health minister.

If something goes wrong in a country hospital, as it has in a number of them—and I have mentioned several of them to the house today—then who is responsible for fixing the problem? The body that is responsible, of course, is the local hospital board. If something goes wrong in Mount Gambier, it is the CE of Mount Gambier who is responsible. But a regional board is in place, which tries to help, and then there is the department's own organisation, which tries to help when it is informed. It is often not informed until the very end. Of course, in question time, when something goes wrong, the opposition asks the minister of the day, 'What are you doing to fix it?' Former ministers have tried, and I try, to explain all the bureaucratic processes put in place to try to

fix these problems. Well, that system does not work very well at all. One does not have to be a genius to work out that that system does not work at all well.

We are wanting to streamline that system, take out levels of bureaucracy, organisation and complexity, and have some proper powers in place. I have to say that the CE of the department, despite his expertise and powers, and so on, cannot direct or control anything that happens in one of the regional hospitals. He does not have the power to direct. The minister can direct under some extraordinary circumstances, and the best thing that I can do when things go really wrong is to sack the board. That is not a very constructive way of dealing with an administrative problem. There should be better ways in place, and that is what we are attempting to do. We will work through this process as well as we can. We do not want to actually sack anybody, but we want to get rid of the levels of bureaucracy and simplify the system so the resources can be put into the delivery of health services to the community.

TAFE, VICTOR HARBOR

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. Will the minister give an undertaking that a new TAFE facility will be constructed as a matter of urgency in the area servicing Victor Harbor, Goolwa and the South Coast region? The government axed the previous Liberal government's commitment to build a new \$5.5 million TAFE college at Victor Harbor to cater for students on the Fleurieu Peninsula.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I thank the member for Finniss for his question. As we discussed the other day, he can always feel free to come and chat with me about any issues that relate to his electorate as they also relate to my portfolio responsibilities. There were many promises made by the Liberal government with respect to its outgoing budget and promises in lots of areas and, when we came to government, we found that many of these were not funded and were promised on the never-never. I would say to the member for Finniss that there are quite a few areas throughout South Australia that we will be looking at in regard to the provision of further educational and training services and Victor Harbor is one of those, and he can await the budget.

SCHOOLS, CONTAMINATED SOIL

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. What action has the minister taken to ensure asbestos contaminated soil is not dumped on school sites? On 27 February this year a load of soil was delivered to the Burnside Primary School to fill in a disused swimming pool. When the soil was spread, it was found to have impurities, broken glass, 12 volt battery connections and three pieces of asbestos-like material. Tests revealed it was asbestos but of negligible danger to health. Nevertheless, on 25 March, the soil was removed as a safety precaution. The school has incurred loss, expense and damage to its service road through this situation and has sought some compensation, but also conveyed to the Department of Education and Children's Services, and the government, its concerns that this could happen in any school.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Administrative Services and Government Enterprises): I thank the member for his question. The advice that I have received is

that all top soil delivered to the school came with appropriate certification as being clean.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: Well, the member might like to listen rather than laugh. It is a very important question and deserves to be handled accordingly. Small samples of foreign material were found some time after the soil was placed and raked in the disused pool. The samples were found in a small, localised area. Spotless immediately notified the school and DECS of the find. The top soil was replaced. Independent reports confirmed the soil was asbestos-free prior to delivery and further testing found no trace of asbestos in the removed top soil. The site was the subject of other works under the school's control. I have asked DAIS to undertake an investigation into the works under its control and, when I receive more advice to that effect, I will inform the member.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): My question is to the Minister for State/Local Government Relations. Can the minister outline for the house the Labor government's policy regarding compulsory voting for local government elections?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Minister for State/Local Government Relations): I thank the member for Kavel for his question. The Labor government policy in relation local government elections is freely available on the Labor Party web site should he wish to look it up.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: As a supplementary question, in view of the minister's answer, will she outline the policy to the house?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I know where the member for Kavel is going with this and yes, I have read the Labor Party policy on local government elections. Last week I answered a question that the honourable member put to me in this house in a serious way. I thought he was being serious in relation to his questions and I suggest that he stop being silly in relation to this matter.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

JEWELLERY, MISLEADING ADVERTISING

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Little Para): Will the Minister for Consumer Affairs explain what is being done to ensure that consumers are not being misled over bargains being advertised by jewellery retailers?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Minister for Consumer Affairs): For those members who might need reminding, this coming Sunday is Mother's Day. If my calculations are correct, we have 12 mothers in this house. We all love our mums and lots of us will be out shopping for a gift for this Mother's Day and we all love a bargain. I am keen to ensure that when bargains are advertised they really are just that, so in the lead up to Mother's Day jewellery advertising is being checked. All state and territory consumer affairs agencies, together with the ACCC, are monitoring jewellery catalogue advertisements that claim savings on individual items. Our aim is to ensure that this advertising is accurate and does not entice consumers to buy goods where the prices are based on false or misleading claims.

The main focus will be on two-price advertising, where sellers promote the sale price by comparing it to the normal price. If the advertisement claims that a bracelet, for example,

is on sale for \$200, reduced from \$300, we want to see evidence of that. However, my advice to consumers is to look at the actual price charged rather than focus on the size of the discount. The \$200 discount at one store may in fact be still more expensive than the normal retail price at another store. My advice to retailers of jewellery is that catalogues have been collected and stores selling jewellery that use these practices will be asked to provide information and evidence supporting their pricing claims. It is worth noting that successful action has been taken in the past against traders who have misled the public about the price of goods in their advertising.

LABOR PARTY POLICY

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): My question is again to the Minister for State/Local Government Relations.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Given that the South Australian Labor Party platform document entitled 'A state of confidence' at page 91, schedule 4.3.1 reads, 'Labor will strengthen councils' mandate to government by making voting in local government elections compulsory', will the minister assure the house that this and other policies in that document will be carried out by this government?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the minister, I note today that members, when they are asking a question, are saying 'given that', then giving an explanation to the question and then answering it. I remind members that the standing orders provide for people to explain their questions by leave. It is best if they ask their question and then ask for leave in order to explain their question. The minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Minister for State/Local Government Relations): I congratulate the member for Kavel on being able to read the Labor Party policy.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sir, I was asked last week by the member for Kavel if I was introducing legislation for compulsory voting at council elections. I thought the member for Kavel was asking me a serious question, the basis of which I assumed was about increasing voter participation. He asked me if I was introducing legislation and I think my words were, 'It was an issue that hadn't been raised with me.'

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I gave him a correct answer on the assumption that he was being serious and asking me about serious discussions in relation to this matter. I have not had discussions with anyone about the introduction of legislation for compulsory voting.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! When the house has come to order, I will call the member for Giles. The member for Giles.

SCHOOLS, SOLAR POWER

Ms BREUER (Giles): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. What progress has been made regarding the South Australian Solar Schools Program?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): Sir, can I, through you, thank the member for Giles for her question. Of course, her

electorate is one where there is ample sun and there are huge opportunities for solar powering our education system. That was one of the first term commitments by the Premier: that we would solar power 250 schools by 2014. The symbolism of solar powering schools is an important one because, whilst it provides energy savings for schools, it is also part of a teaching program whereby we encourage and promote sustainability in our schools by giving children an opportunity to see showcase installations and learn about the opportunities and advantages of sustainability.

I am pleased to say that we have now installed—and they are functioning—74 systems within our schools and pre-schools. They are the result of the first two rounds of solar powering. These panels, of course, produce excitement within the school and it helps students to learn about sustainability, the more so because they are generating power when the schools are not working, and returning electricity to the grid after hours, on weekends, and during school holidays. This delivery of power, of course, cuts the electricity costs to schools. I am pleased to announce that we have now selected 23 new schools for the next stage of our solar powering program. These schools are from around the state and include Booleroo Centre District School, the Eastern Fleurieu School at Milang, the Monash Primary School, Port Pirie Special School, and Rose Park Preschool.

These panels are used as teaching tools and, in some schools, we have display units telling how many kilowatts have been generated. The schools can use these as part of their learning programs. We are well on the way to our target for 2014, and we will continue to work on this program, as we have, indeed, in showcasing solar panels on North Terrace, with our North Terrace power station, out at the airport, with our sustainability measures within our planning laws, and within our policy for the green city. It is important that part of our education system is not separate from the rest of our state Strategic Plan and that with our strategic plan for sustainability we encourage not just schools to be part of the improvements, but also the schools to teach programs that reflect our goals and our aspirations for the future.

BAIL BREACHES

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): My question is to the Attorney-General. Why has the government failed to act on the increased incidence of breaches of bail? Approximately 18 months ago the government was advised that the number of reported breaches of bail had increased from less than 2 400 in 2001, to more than 4 600 by 30 June 2004.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the Attorney, questions that express an opinion, such as 'Why has the government failed to do something?', are out of order. It is rather difficult for the chair to pull up ministers when they are debating an answer if the question itself has contained argument. I will allow the question.

Mrs REDMOND: I will reword the question: what action has the government taken?

The SPEAKER: Much better.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Under this government, there is a lot more intensive supervision of people on bail. Accordingly, that has led to more discovery of breaches and to those people being hauled back before the courts.

DNA DATABASE

Mrs REDMOND (Heyesen): Will the Attorney-General advise the house why South Australia has not yet signed onto the CrimTrac national DNA database? In June 2001, the then federal justice minister, Chris Ellison, announced the \$50 million national CrimTrac initiative. On 20 November 2002, the Attorney-General told state parliament:

It is very important for South Australia to have access to the database of the other five states and two territories, and I think it is also important that we place our profiles on that national database.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): My advice is that there is now no difficulty in states and territories exchanging DNA profiles, so the question is redundant. Moreover, it turns out that the federal government was mistaken in its conception of CrimTrac. It is not a unitary database: it is, in fact, a conglomeration of commonwealth, state and territory databases. We will be endeavouring to change the law to reflect the reality, and then everything will be tickety-boo.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

FEDERAL BUDGET

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Last night, Treasurer Costello, in the federal parliament, released the federal budget. Indeed, it was an excellent budget and, on behalf of all Australians, we are pleased to have received a budget that will so vividly assist Australians in the forthcoming year in the provision that has been made. The strength of last night's budget simply again highlights, very sadly for South Australia, the mediocre economic results being achieved by the Labor government in this state. Today in this parliament we heard the Treasurer—that great Mark Latham of SA Labor—start lecturing us on how fantastic South Australia is going, when the clear statistics reveal a serious drop in retail sales in this state and a very dangerous drop from 2002 to 2006 in our exports.

It is about time the Treasurer understood that the balancing of the books in relation to the state budget is not a balancing of the books of the South Australian economy. He seems to have failed to understand that, when he spends \$10 billion of South Australian taxpayers' money each year, that in itself is not the basis upon which the whole of South Australia moves forward.

Certainly, it can retard it, it can restrict it and it can upset it. However, the South Australian economy is bigger, and the Treasurer needs to keep an eye on it if he is to ensure that our state not only goes ahead but also stays alive. In the last four years, statistics after statistics have told us that, while Australia is steaming ahead, South Australia is falling behind, and that is a very dangerous situation for South Australians. All the relief in the world that is offered under a federal budget to South Australians will be decimated unless the Treasurer gets it right. The federal Treasurer, Peter Costello, delivered his budget last night on time and with debt reduction.

We have heard the fantastic news that it has abolished all the national debt. There is more money for services (and that

is something that every government claims in every budget, but, again, it has been achieved); there is provision for the future in the massive multimillion dollar contribution to the fund for future generations in Australia; and, on top of that, there are direct tax reductions, which will ensure that the taxpayers who have paid in funds to the federal government will get some of that surplus back.

Those are the four magnificent achievements of the federal government in its budget, but what do we get? In stark contrast, in South Australia the Labor government cannot even deliver the budget on time. It cannot deliver tax cuts, and, clearly, it has not done that already. It simply cannot deliver improved services. For all the money that it says it is putting into services those services have not improved. It cannot deliver our share of the national prosperity, which has been demonstrated repeatedly in our diminishing performance by all the important indicators, whether it be our young people leaving the state, or not having another 13 000 jobs just to keep up with the national perspective or whether it is to maintain an export level that will keep this state alive.

The Costello announcements last night simply emphasise the mediocrity of this government: a late budget; higher taxes and charges; no improvement in services; and little provision for the future. I indicate that it is very important that the Treasurer understands that not only should South Australians not have to put up with that situation but also they ought to know the alleged inefficiencies that he acknowledges are there. He ought to be able to place that on the table so that we can properly scrutinise the \$10 billion for 2006-07.

We ought not to be asked in this parliament this week to come along and sign off on a bill that asks for \$3.1 billion worth of funding to enable the Public Service of 70 000 to continue to be paid while we do not have any capacity at all to scrutinise that budget. That is a shameful situation by this government; it is a dereliction of the duty of this government; and it is a disgraceful performance on behalf of the Treasurer.

CITY OF CHARLES STURT

Mr RAU (Enfield): I rise today on a grievance matter which I would really prefer not to have to speak about, but, unfortunately, for me, the gentle remarks that I have made over some time—and as recently as last week in my Address in Reply—about the behaviour of the administration of the City of Charles Sturt have fallen on deaf ears. In particular, I have been advised that my brief remarks about the administration (which were very circumspect indeed last week) were reported to the council at its recent meeting, and that the Chief Executive Officer in particular found them quite amusing.

I am afraid that this makes it necessary for me to go into a little more detail so that they do not continue to find it amusing and actually do something about it. We are talking here about a democratically-elected body, namely, a local government authority. This authority is allegedly served by an unelected cabal of Sir Humphreys. These Sir Humphreys manipulate the flow of information to the elected members in order to influence and direct the deliberations of the elected members in all matters that come before council. These Sir Humphreys threaten and bully elected members of council using procedures and policies of which they are the authors and by which they consider themselves not to be bound. These Sir Humphreys deny the elected members access to relevant information, highly relevant information appertaining to their job as elected people serving their constituents.

They deny them this information. These same Sir Humphreys have taken it upon themselves to establish what amounts to a spy network which would have made Joseph Stalin proud—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

Mr RAU:—and which is used to capture, censor and read communications between the elected body and its constituents and also between elected members. The member for Bragg said that I made this same speech two years ago. Indeed, I did—and they are still doing it. Here I am having to make the same speech again. I never want to have to make this speech again. I wish to goodness that they would take some notice, but I guess they will not. Anyway, I will keep going. As I was saying, they use this spy network that they have established to block, filter, capture, read and, in effect, censor communications between elected members and their constituents and between elected members and one another.

I will give a particularly interesting example of this. On 7 May 2006, a constituent sent an email to an elected member whose name does not need to be mentioned, but it is a person of no relation to me; and in this email this particular constituent asked the elected member to ensure that they had in mind certain matters relating to libraries in the City of Charles Sturt prior to a meeting which was to take place and consider these matters on 8 May 2006. This particular email (which I have seen) does not include anything which could be vaguely objectionable, unless you were trying to keep your fingers on every single issue that is happening and ensure that the flow of information was manipulated. Surprise, surprise, the elected member concerned did not receive it until the day after. It took two days. This elected member was embarrassed by the fact that they had not responded to their constituent. And why? Because the octopus coming out of the head office had gone off and grabbed the emails.

This is getting absolutely ridiculous. Another example is how this particular elected body is not allowed to inform itself about many decisions which it is supposed to make in its capacity as a planning authority. The Sir Humphreys have decided that they should only be allowed to be told what they want to tell them, and that it is wrong for two elected members to talk about a proposal or, indeed, to look at it unless they are in the company of the minders supplied by Sir Humphrey. How ridiculous is this? In another instance, they have also made up clearly false costings in order to dissuade elected members from making a decision of which they did not approve in relation to budget outlays. This has been demonstrated in the past few weeks. We are not talking about Saddam Hussein's Iraq or even Kim Jong-il's North Korea: we are talking about local government in Adelaide.

This is unsatisfactory. When will these people get the message? The elected members run the council: the administration serves the interests of the people. They are not the elected members. If they wish to run the council, they should put their name up next time we have an election (in November this year) and have a go. If they are not prepared to do that, they should do what their job is; that is, to do what they are told.

Time expired.

RED LIGHT CAMERAS

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I would like to talk about red light cameras and bring to the attention of the house another substantial funding belly-up from the government. I refer in particular to its promise made in May 2005—almost a year ago—that it would spend \$40 million to 'make roads

safer'. The significant feature of that announcement by the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport was a \$35.6 million purchase over four years of red light speed cameras to 'make roads safer'. In particular, that money was to be spent to provide 48 new cameras to be distributed throughout the state—not only in the metropolitan area. It is an interesting amount when you break it up. It is to the tune of around \$740 000 per red light camera delivered and installed.

I asked the minister two questions about this matter yesterday—both of which were not answered. He said he would get back to the house once he had consulted with the minister in another place. I would be delighted, on behalf of motorists throughout the state, to get a ministerial statement on this matter tomorrow—before the house rises for a few weeks—because people are anxious to know. In fact, the company that was to provide the red light cameras—and I am assuming it is the same company that was alluded to in the initial announcement, namely, Robot Pty Ltd—apparently has recalled the entire complement of cameras already delivered—I understand around 19 cameras—to fix software problems that have delayed their introduction, following a period here in Adelaide when they worked unsuccessfully on the cameras in situ.

A team of engineers from the German-based company has been in Adelaide since February trying to find out what has gone wrong with the cameras. They had not been able to resolve the issue. The final shipment of nine cameras, which arrived in November, was also faulty. Apparently, the faults involved intermittent glitches of some kind in the sending of data from the cameras to SAPOL's red light camera unit for processing. These issues have been ongoing.

Apparently, the company has lent some interim camera devices to the police, the details of which are a little sketchy. I understand that a representative from the department has acknowledged that there is a problem with the contract, but few details have been provided. I note that the minister has walked into the chamber: perhaps he would like to come in tomorrow with a ministerial statement and enlighten the house as to what has gone wrong. Some \$35.6 million of taxpayers' money is a substantial sum. The company that provided the cameras has apparently advised that it does not expect the cameras to be fixed and back in Adelaide before the end of this financial year—which I assume to be the end of June. Could it be that the reason we are not getting an answer from the minister on this matter is that he wants to spin it out, delay it and not answer until June some time, when, hopefully, the cameras will be back, so he can say that the problem has been fixed?

The reality is that the problem has not been fixed. Somewhere a \$35.6 million program, announced a year ago, has gone drastically wrong. We do not know whether we have a single camera, announced a year ago, in operation at this time. It has taken a year and it is \$36.5 million of taxpayers' money. We do not know whether anything has yet been delivered. What we do know is that there is a stack of cameras in Germany and problems are being sorted out. What was the process used to secure the cameras? What went wrong? Have there been any additional costs to the taxpayer? It is a massive muck-up, and the parliament and public of South Australia deserve an answer. If we are going to be serious about road safety, let us get these red light cameras working. If we are going to run a competent procurement process, let us get it right. Those two issues are revealed by this catastrophe. The procurement system does not work and we are not getting results for road safety. It needs to be fixed.

YOUTH DRINKING

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): Today I rise to speak on a matter which was brought to my attention by some young constituents. It is a matter which affects families throughout South Australia and, indeed, the nation; that is, the federal government's inability to provide a program which has an impact on the propensity of our youth for binge drinking. In 2000 the federal government launched the National Alcohol Strategy, including the 'Where are your choices taking you?' campaign, which, to put it quite bluntly, was a total failure. In fact, when trying to find the name of the campaign, it took three people the better part of an hour searching the internet. So abysmal was this campaign that no-one remembered its name or any identifying information.

One initiative that the federal government put forward was the limited promotion of a web site for parents and children called drinkingchoices.gov.au. Upon entering this site, one is immediately directed to the Department of Health and Ageing where limited and uninteresting information for young people is displayed. It appears that the drinking choices web site has been archived, put out to pasture, retired or discontinued—call it what you will. Obviously, it was not a star performer.

Historically, families have supported the initial experience of alcohol by minors in a controlled environment. Under these controlled environments the possibility of binge drinking is greatly reduced. It is with the addition of outside influences that problems can first occur. Figures released about the alcohol consumption patterns among young Australians clearly show that amongst 15 to 17 year olds alcohol can be readily accessed at a friend's house, which can also mean it is in an uncontrolled environment. Similar figures for parties of young people where there are older invited guests or hosts supplying alcohol are just as alarming.

Whilst the federal parliamentary secretary for health likes to live in his fairy wonderland where young people are capable of making responsible and informed decisions in matters relating to alcohol use, the simple fact is that there is no advertising available to people in pubs and clubs informing them that their drink choices have high alcohol content. Disturbingly, young people believe that a Cruiser, which has a 5 per cent rating on its label, is a responsible choice. If we add to this the fact that many young people think that the percentage on the bottle is out of 100, so 5 per cent is considered to be low, therefore we have a drinking issue. The federal government likes to believe that summits and discussion papers without proper input from the age group in question can assist in combating binge drinking. It is wrong, and it has grossly underestimated the level of percentage understanding among young people—in fact, by most people.

In April 2005 a proposal put forward by the federal health department suggested raising the legal drinking age, increasing the price of alcoholic beverages and further restricting the number of licensed venues and their trading hours. A poll of young people produced an overwhelming negative response toward the proposal. One hundred per cent of people surveyed believed that changing the drinking age would not stop young people from drinking and would only cause more people to break the law. Also, they thought that raising the drinking age would not reduce alcohol abuse or binge drinking, and the government should focus on educating young people rather than changing the law.

When questioned on government advertising and the impact it has on them, they responded, 'What advertising?'

In fact, some giggled when reminded of the 'Drinking: where are your choices taking you?' campaign. Nobody recalled receiving literature from the federal government or any of its departments or seeing anything in clubs and pubs. Did the ads have any effect? No, they did not. Young people looked at them and thought, 'Yes, the ads are pretty cool but that is not my situation,' so they had no effect. The advertising showed the extreme side of binge drinking so, when asked about whether this had any impact, the response was, 'I've never seen anyone raped, nor have I seen people lying in the gutter with vomit on their face.' In fact, many young people failed to identify their drinking situation with the advertising supplied. The advertising did not address the issue of peer pressure. Many young people report that peer pressure among 15 to 25 year olds is by far the more predominant factor in their decision-making process. Young people do not see binge drinking as an epidemic, disease or an addiction. In fact, young people can be of the opinion that if binge drinking was such a problem, why does the government not stop companies, pubs and clubs, and advertisers from targeting their products to 18 to 25 year olds?

I refer to a form of advertising that is alarming and, I could call it, predatory. A young person on unlimited income who has been subjected to some of the new forms of advertising—SMS messages on mobile phones advertising happy hours—can certainly become susceptible to this sort of enticement. In fact, it would be fair to say that someone on a big night out would drink more than they should while the prices were so low, encouraging behaviour known as skolling.

Time expired.

BUS SERVICES, REGIONAL

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): I wish to speak about provincial city bus services. The regular regional passenger bus services provide services to six provincial cities—Mount Gambier, Murray Bridge, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Lincoln. Various types of services are now being offered in the provincial cities since local councils stopped paying a contribution to their town service. In Murray Bridge this was a cost of \$74 333 per annum to the Rural City of Murray Bridge, with the Department of Transport making a contribution of \$148 667. I have no problem with the Rural City of Murray Bridge deciding not to contribute from August last year. After all, why should Murray Bridge not receive full funding from the state government for the service when the government is more than happy to fully subsidise the town service in Mount Gambier?

I would like to think that the subsidy was not to shore up votes for the de facto Labor member in Mount Gambier. With the changes in funding arrangements, the government instigated an Integrated Transport Plan study for the town bus service in Murray Bridge, and I commend the government on taking this action. However, it seems to me that the study provided an option for a passenger transport service of least cost to the government but did not take into account the standard of actual delivery service. The Department of Transport seemed intent on changing the fixed route service to a full demand-responsive, dial-a-ride type of service. In the end, a combination of fixed route and dial-a-ride demand-responsive service was put in place.

According to the company delivering the combination service, the response by the public to this service has been disappointing. Whether it is because people do not like

change or because they have not been appropriately informed as to how the new service operates is a real issue. Also, the seemingly one-way negotiations between the Department of Transport and the operator on how the service is funded have become a major issue. In conclusion, I believe that the Department of Transport needs to address the issues that are of concern to the town bus service operator and residents of Murray Bridge and the delivery service required by those residents. If these issues are not addressed, the community of Murray Bridge runs a very grave risk of losing the town bus service in Murray Bridge if a suitable contract cannot be negotiated.

HEALTH, RURAL

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Little Para): It is very pleasing to see the Minister for Health moving forward on further reforms to country health governance, but I would like to make a few comments in relation to that. People may know that all health units and regional health services are governed under the South Australian Health Commission Act. They are all incorporated bodies, they have their own constitutions and are governed by boards. Historically, these boards and constitutions differed from each other, and I am not sure why this occurred. I suspect it was historically so. As they were formed and grew up in different communities, so different constitutions were put in place, and there are over 50 of them, as the minister said today in question time.

Unit boards have full responsibility as incorporated bodies under their own constitutions to deliver health services, manage finances, staffing, safety and quality etc. The CEO of a health unit or region is responsible to its board. The CEO of the Department of Health cannot direct the board or the CEO, and neither can any of his or her officers. The Minister for Health can direct boards, but this amendment to the South Australian Health Commission Act was passed when Dean Brown was the minister. This is an unsatisfactory situation in many instances, because it means that you have too many fingers in the pie.

It is a very important pie, managing the biggest business in the state but it being managed in a very fragmented way. As Minister Hill said today, seven regional boards were established in the country under Michael Armitage, but they were essentially plonked on top of the situation that was already in place. The unit boards all remained intact, the regional boards were plonked on top and nothing was changed. No hard decisions were made or hard work done trying to make things work better between them.

In the Generational Health Review, John Menadue noted that all these boards caused problems in terms of delivery of service and proper management, and he actually recommended that all unit boards be done away with and be replaced by regional boards looking after a particular population of people. The Rann government proceeded with this in the city but did not do so in the country because it recognised that things were different in terms of country communities and their relationships with their unit boards.

The minister has signalled that he will be collapsing the regional boards to make one single board to administer health services across the regions in the country. However, the unit boards will remain. This move on its own will not address the problems such as those that he highlighted occurring at Gawler, Mount Gambier, Wudinna and the Riverland, because they dealt with complex staffing issues, and those complex issues will still rest with the individual unit boards.

I believe that there will need to be further changes, in consultation with country units, about the role of country health unit boards in the management of health services in the 21st century.

I also think that many health unit boards may be ready to cede some of their functions—functions such as quality and safety, clinical standards, workforce standards, complex staffing negotiations, medical indemnity. I think some of those unit boards may be ready to cede some of those functions to another board—for example, a regional or country service board—so long as their own investment, both financial and social, is recognised and continued. Historically these country boards have worked long and hard for facilities which they treasure.

SCHOOLS, ELIZABETH VALE PRIMARY

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): I move:

That a joint committee be established to inquire into—

- (a) the conduct of any Department of Education and Children's Services employee or officer involved in the selection process for the positions of principal and acting principal, respectively, at the Elizabeth Vale Primary School since December 2003, including any process relating to the appeal by the former principal, Ms O'Connor;
- (b) the conduct and involvement of the minister and ministerial staff in this matter;
- (c) the conduct of any Australian Education Union representative involved in the appointment process of a principal and acting principal, respectively;
- (d) the conduct of any person identified above involved in the management or operation of the school since January 2006, with particular emphasis upon the—
 - (i) management of family grievances;
 - (ii) provision of learning programs;
 - (iii) management and duty of care of students;
 - (iv) management of the school's budget;
 - (v) level of consultation with the school's governing council;
- (e) establishing appropriate selection guidelines and processes for future appointments of principals and acting principals in all public schools, including increasing the level of community representation in the process; and
- (f) any other relevant matter.

It is with some reservation that I move this motion about the recent history of Elizabeth Vale Primary School because there are a number of opinions on what that recent history has been. Hopefully this committee will find the truth, because there is a need to discover what the actual truth is of the recent history at Elizabeth Vale Primary School. I will give members a potted version.

Elizabeth Vale Primary School is located in an area where there are many social and economic challenges for the people who live there. There are some families, unfortunately, who have to cope with some severe issues on a daily basis, and it is an absolute necessity that the children at Elizabeth Vale, particularly those who attend Elizabeth Vale Primary School, are given as much support as possible to take every advantage they can in achieving their ambitions and their full potential during the schooling process.

What happened at Elizabeth Vale Primary School, as I understand it, was that the former principal, Lisa-Jane O'Connor, was aware that, because of the difficulties that some children were experiencing both at home and in the community, they were not transitioning to high school in the

numbers that are desirable. The principal of the school looked at the number of children who were going on to high school and how long they were staying at high school. Nowadays, grade 7 is not an acceptable level of final education for anybody in our society. We would like all our children to continue on into secondary and probably tertiary or further education, that is, university, TAFE or into a trade as an apprentice.

At Elizabeth Vale, a number of the children who were going on to high school—mainly Salisbury and Fremont—were not actually staying at high school and were getting lost in the system. These are the claims that have been made to me, namely, that some of the children going to high school were dropping out in year 8, and many of them were dropping out by term 1 of year 9. I have been told that, of the children who left Elizabeth Vale School in year 7, only 48 per cent were left in school by term 1 of year 9. In anybody's mind, this was most unsatisfactory. Children of that young age should have been given more support. If they were not attending school, why were they not attending?

I have been told that the principal looked at the situation and thought, 'We must be doing something wrong, either in the high school or in the primary school,' and introduced what was then a fairly innovative program to extend the schooling at Elizabeth Vale Primary School (as it was then) so that it became like a middle school and included years 8 and 9. I think that there was some discussion, and even some disagreement, within DECS on whether this should happen. My information is that final approval was given for Elizabeth Vale to become a reception to year 9 school, and the funding issues were sorted out. I should also say that other financial management issues have been raised with me, but I am not fully across them at the moment. I have been given various stories, and I believe that the Department of Education and Children's Services is still finalising its investigation into the financial management of the school. I am certainly not alleging any impropriety but just stating that some irregularities were alleged.

The school became one that had an operating year 8 and year 9, although I believe that there were not a huge number of students (only 35 or 40). As I said before, I believe that the principal was aiming to prepare these children for high school so that they stayed there. I am told that, as a result of the programs implemented, the retention rate at the end of year 9, although it was still within the same school (Elizabeth Vale Primary), was close to 100 per cent. In anybody's mind, the retention rate changing from 48 to 100 per cent in year 9 is something that should be commended. Whether there are other ways of achieving the same result, such as allowing students to transition to another campus (either Salisbury or Fremont High), is a question that must be asked.

The reason for the motion is certainly not to condemn the school. We should support the community, the school, the teachers, and the programs that are in place if they are working. There seem to be various thoughts on how the selection of the new principal for Elizabeth Vale Primary School was selected. I am not here to get Lisa Jane O'Connor her job back; I have said that publicly at a meeting at Elizabeth. I am here to ensure that a new principal is selected within an appropriate time and using the appropriate protocols.

I am told that many interstate and international visitors came to Elizabeth Vale Primary to look at the programs in place because they were supposedly such outstanding programs; in fact, Dr Darryl Cross, an educational psycholo-

gist, was on public radio stating that they were of international standard. If the programs in place at Elizabeth Vale Primary School were as good as a number of people have told me they were, we need to ensure that the principal selected best meets the needs of that school community and that there is a smooth transition to the replacement principal. This is what education in South Australia should all be about, that is, providing the highest level of educational outcomes for the students and, on a larger scale, ensuring that the school community has a large part in saying what is going on within the schools.

The motion states that a joint committee should be established and inquire into:

- (a) the conduct of any Department of Education and Children's Services employee or officers involved in the selection process for the positions of principal and acting principal, respectively, at the Elizabeth Vale School since December 2003. . .

My understanding is that a standard principal selection panel consists of a member of the governing council (which it did), a peer principal, a member of the AEU and the district director. The problem in this case was that the standard panel was not quite as standard as usual. When one is dealing with a school that has as many difficulties as Elizabeth Vale in terms of its challenges in both society and in the school one really should try to stick to selecting a panel that will be most appropriate for those circumstances.

I am informed that the peer principal who was selected was chosen from what is known as a category 7 primary school, not a category 1 primary school, and I will explain briefly. A category 7 primary school is performing at the highest levels we would expect of our primary education in South Australia. I must say that some of those schools in my electorate of Morphett are blessed with a very high category. I would not be surprised if most of them are a category 7. I can speak with some personal background because I attended Elizabeth South Primary School and Salisbury High School. They were pretty tough schools in those days, and that is a number of years ago.

I still have family connections at Salisbury, Elizabeth and Elizabeth Vale. I do have some personal awareness of the problems, but we needed to ensure that the selection panel was appropriate for that school. We did not need a category 7 principal from the very best school but a category 1 principal. In other words, a principal who has some overarching awareness and comprehension of the difficulties faced by the staff and the community in a school such as Elizabeth Vale. The AEU rep is normally from within the school; and, obviously, that rep would have been from a category 1 school.

I have no problem with the AEU. In fact, I spoke with the AEU about this motion, which emphasises that I am trying to advance a smooth transition to get the best systems available for the students at Elizabeth. However, the AEU rep was from a category 7 school; again, a high achieving, high performing primary school, and not a category 1 school experiencing these particular difficulties. The normal district director was not on this panel: it was a district director from outside. That district director, I hope, would have some familiarity and ability to understand the difficulties associated with a category 1 school. I do not know about that, but, under the circumstances, it would have been nice to try to stick as closely as possible to what is considered to be a standard selection panel, and this is what paragraph (a) of my motion is concerned with.

We want to be sure that the ministerial staff were not involved other than in a supervisory role and that all assistance possible was given to both the school community and the principal selection panel to ensure a smooth transition to a new principal. Paragraph (c) seeks to make sure that the AEU was completely aware of the issues at stake. While the rep from the category 7 school may have been appropriately trained in principal selection, that rep should be acutely aware (as the peer principal should be aware) of the problems at a category 1 school. It is very difficult to try to transition from some of the best schools in this state to some of those experiencing the most challenges. It is very important that we do put the best people in the best place. Paragraph (d) of my motion inquires into the conduct of any person identified in the management or operation of the school, with particular emphasis upon the management of family grievances, and there were a number of family grievances.

Along with about 60 people, I attended a public meeting at Elizabeth Vale, and I am convinced that there were genuine grievances with the process. It is all about the process, the openness and the transparency. Everyone, including those members interjecting on the other side, should be about advancing the welfare of this school, and do not ever forget that. When this motion does not succeed (as I expect it not to in this house) I will be disappointed, but the opportunity is there to ensure that this school is given the best opportunity to select the best principal for the best outcomes for the students, because that is what it should be all about.

Paragraph (e) of the motion seeks to establish appropriate selection guidelines and processes. As I have already said, we should not be pulling in peer group principals from category 7 schools to judge the selection of staff for a category 1 school. It is difficult to see how that can be the case when selecting the best outcome for this particular school. Obviously, like every committee that is ever established, the motion always includes a paragraph (f) 'any other relevant matter'.

There is a wide diversity of opinion on the value of the system put in place at Elizabeth Vale. A number of people have said to me that this process was working exceptionally well. As I said, Dr Daryl Cross, an educational psychologist, has said publicly that this was a well set up school, its processes were great and it was internationally recognised. I have been told that visitors came from all around the world to see this school. In fact, students and staff from the school have given presentations to educational conferences both internationally and nationally. Some people are saying that it is a terrific school with fantastic programs. In fact, a teacher phoned me this morning and said that the processes at this school were not what we have been led to believe and that it did have some severe difficulties.

Well, let us set up the committee. Let us find out. Let us get to the background. Most of all, let us support Elizabeth Vale and the school community. Let us make sure that those students get the best advantage they possibly can under very trying circumstances. I know that the members opposite who are familiar with those areas, particularly the member for Little Para, are very concerned about this process. I hope that we will all work together to advance the future of Elizabeth Vale so that the children can achieve what they want—their wishes, aims and ambitions—because that is what education in South Australia should be about.

Ms STEVENS secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONSTITUTION (TERM OF MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr HANNA (Mitchell) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Constitution Act 1934. Read a first time.

Mr HANNA: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I bring to this house for the second time a proposal for the terms of Legislative Councillors to be four years only. We all know that this is a popular measure. The first time I came across the notion was in relation to the Constitutional Convention, which was held about three years ago. That constitutional convention was brought about by the Hon. Peter Lewis. He was fortunate enough to have something like a casting vote in the last parliament and therefore had considerable clout. He was able to proceed with this initiative, which was a highly worthy objective. In the event, 323 delegates, I believe, assembled to debate matters concerning the constitution, and a number of proposals came out of the Constitutional Convention.

Members will recall that, in the last parliament, I introduced in this place a number of proposals which came out of the Constitutional Convention, even though I did not agree with all of them. I did that because I felt it was important to have a public debate about those issues. I felt that we as members of parliament have an obligation to those delegates who attended the Constitutional Convention to see their thoughts and ideals debated in this place. One of the proposals which came out of the Constitutional Convention was for the term of the Legislative Councillors to serve only four years at a time. In other words, for the Legislative Council election for all members to occur at the time of the general election for the House of Assembly. I introduced that proposal into this place on 13 October 2004. For the record, I note that it was defeated in this place on 6 April 2005. However, many great reforms which have been brought into this place have had to be considered two, three or more times before finally gaining approval.

I believe this measure will ultimately gain the approval of parliament because the approval is already there in the community. Most members of the House of Assembly speak to many of their constituents and, if they discuss this matter at all, they will find there is widespread support in their community for the notion that upper house members should have no special privileges regarding their term compared to members of the House of Assembly. It was different in the 19th century. The Legislative Council had a different function in the 19th century. It was there very clearly and openly to protect the interests of propertied classes. Therefore, eight year terms were part of South Australia's constitution, so that, even if there was a groundswell in one particular election towards one particular political philosophy or another, there would be a stable, consistent approach, respectful of the interests of the propertied classes in the Legislative Council.

Having staggered elections in the upper house obviously meant that only half would be elected at each time, and therefore, even if there was popular support for a particular political philosophy, it would not necessarily greatly influence the composition of the Legislative Council. Those days are gone. Thanks to the passionate support for reform of the great Don Dunstan, a former premier of South Australia, and the reasonable view taken by the Hon. Steele Hall in his time as leader of the opposition and later premier of South

Australia, we had significant changes to the upper house. One no longer has to be a rich person to sit in the upper house or vote for someone in the upper house. In many respects it is now the more democratic of the two chambers, because it relies on proportional representation and it has a greater diversity of viewpoint than we have in this chamber.

So long as there is stable government in South Australia there is room for that diversity. Indeed, the hallmarks of a good political system allow for an appropriate balance between stability and plurality or diversity. We want various voices to be heard so that different sections of the community and different adherents to different political philosophies have a voice in this place, but, at the end of the day, we want a stable government to govern with those considerations being taken into account, but not necessarily dictating the outcome for the majority.

As I say, the upper house in many respects is the more democratic chamber today, but there is no excuse now for eight year terms. If the Legislative Council was elected in its entirety at each general election, then it would be an even more democratic place, because the will of the community would be better represented at that snapshot in time when a general election occurs. I note that the Premier and the Labor government have indicated that they wish to pursue a referendum at the next general election regarding this issue, among other issues, concerning the Legislative Council. I am picking out this one issue because there is such widespread approval for it. We know there is debate about whether the upper house should be retained or abolished. We know that is a very divisive and controversial issue, but this issue of four year terms has a large degree of support in the community—and that is why I put it forward now.

There is a complementary bill, which I will also introduce today, to provide for a referendum to take place. Although I will make reference to that bill when it is introduced, the most striking point about it is that it calls for a referendum to take place in two years, not four years, so that we deal as a community with these issues of constitutional reform in the clear light of the space between general elections; and, thus, there is an indication in the bill accompanying this proposal for there to be a referendum on the third Saturday in March 2008.

Members know that there is widespread support in the community for this measure. It will render the Legislative Council more democratic. There is no justification for continuation of the current eight year terms for Legislative Council members. If this proposal, and the accompanying bill, were to be accepted by the parliament, and a referendum was held in two years, and if the outcome of that referendum was to approve the bill which I put forward today, then at the next general election in 2010 the members of the Legislative Council would serve only four year terms. I trust that many members will support the bill, and I hope that in party room discussions for both the Liberal and Labor parties the issue is debated on its merits.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

REFERENDUM (TERM OF MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL) BILL

Mr HANNA (Mitchell) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to provide for the submission of the Constitution (Term of Members of the Legislative Council) Amendment Bill 2006 to a referendum. Read a first time.

Mr HANNA: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This measure accompanies the proposal which I have just put forward. It almost replicates the referendum bill which I introduced in this place on 13 October 2004. The difference, which I highlight, is that the bill calls for a referendum on the question of the term of members of the Legislative Council to take place on the third Saturday in March 2008. That happens to be exactly between general elections. It would allow, if the measure was passed, for Legislative Councillors elected at the next general election to serve four year terms, rather than eight year terms. I believe that this is what the community wants, and, if this and the preceding measure are passed through the parliament, I am very confident that there will be support at the referendum for this measure from the community of South Australia.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COURT (JURISDICTION) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Environment, Resources and Development Court Act 1993. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

This Bill fulfils a promise made before the last election that the Government would remove impediments to serious environmental offenders receiving the kinds of penalties Parliament intended.

At present, when dealing with serious minor indictable charges, the Environment, Resources and Development Court (the ERD Court), sitting as a court of summary jurisdiction, can neither impose a sentence that reflects what Parliament thought appropriate for the most serious offending nor remand the defendant to a superior court for it to impose a greater sentence. This problem has arisen because the maximum penalties prescribed for the most serious minor indictable environmental offences have, over time, been increased to a level far greater than can be imposed by any summary court, including the ERD Court.

The ERD Court is primarily a civil regulatory court. It is by reliance on civil and administrative remedies, rather than on criminal sanctions, that the aims of the *Environment Protection Act 1993* are achieved. The Government is committed to a greater reliance on civil enforcement than ever before, with the institution, from 1 July 2006, of civil penalties to be enforced by the Environment Protection Authority.

The ERD Court has a minor, incidental summary criminal jurisdiction like that of a Magistrates Court. In its criminal jurisdiction, the court may try and sentence summary or minor indictable environmental offences, and it shares this jurisdiction with the Magistrates Court. Environmental offences may be set down for hearing in the ERD Court or in the Magistrates Court.

For present purposes, offences are classified as summary or minor indictable offences in this way. Summary offences are those that have a maximum fine of no more than twice a Division 1 fine (i.e. no more than \$120 000), and, if they have a penalty of imprisonment, it is for a maximum of two years or less. Minor indictable offences are those that are not punishable by imprisonment but have a maximum fine of more than twice a Division 1 fine (i.e. more than \$120 000), or those for which the maximum term of imprisonment is no more than five years. A person charged with a minor indictable offence may elect to be tried by the District Court, and this will be by jury, but will otherwise be tried summarily.

Summary criminal courts, such as the Magistrates Court and the ERD Court, must sentence minor indictable offences as if they were

summary offences. Limits are set for the sentence a summary court may impose for a minor indictable offence. The Magistrates Court may not sentence a person convicted of a minor indictable offence to more than two years imprisonment, or impose a fine of more than \$150 000. The ERD Court, like the Magistrates Court, may not sentence a person convicted of a minor indictable offence to more than two years imprisonment. However, the maximum fine it may impose (\$120 000) is slightly less than for the Magistrates Court.

Sometimes the maximum penalty prescribed for a minor indictable offence may be greater than the sentence limit of the summary court that hears submissions on sentence by a person convicted of that offence.

At present, only the Magistrates Court, and not the ERD Court, can do anything about this. If a magistrate thinks the offending merits a penalty that is higher than the Magistrates Court's sentence limit, he or she may remand the offender to the District Court for sentence. The District Court may then sentence the offender within the prescribed maximum penalty.

The ERD Court, by contrast, has no authority to remand the offender for sentence in the District Court. This means that people do not face the kinds of penalties Parliament intended if they are prosecuted in the ERD Court.

Aside from the ERD Court having a lower sentence limit than the Magistrates Court, and not having the Magistrates Court's ability to remand an offender for sentence in the District Court, there is another anomaly in the present system, and the Bill also deals with this. The anomaly is that a defendant to a minor indictable environmental charge that is brought in the ERD Court has no option of trial by jury, as would a defendant to any minor indictable charge brought in the Magistrates Court. In other words, a defendant to a minor indictable charge brought in the ERD Court is deprived, by the prosecutor's choice of forum, and for no reason of legal principle, of the right to choose to be tried by a jury and, in that case, to have the prosecution make a case to answer before the court decides whether to commit the case to the superior court for trial.

This anomaly is of most concern when the defendant is charged with a serious environmental offence. The most serious environmental offence in South Australia has a maximum penalty, for a corporate offender, of a fine of \$2m, and, for a natural person, a fine of \$500 000 or imprisonment for up to four years, or both. It is a minor indictable offence because it carries a maximum penalty of imprisonment that is less than five years. But by any other standard it is an extremely serious offence and a person convicted of it becomes liable to civil orders to:

- make good the damage;
- restore the environment;
- pay the costs incurred by public authorities in preventing or mitigating the environmental harm caused or making good any resulting damage;
- compensate for injury, loss or damage; or
- pay an amount equivalent to the economic benefit gained by the commission of the offence;

or any combination of these orders.

It is therefore particularly important that people accused of serious environmental offences should be given the standard procedural and evidential safeguards afforded to defendants to non-environmental criminal charges of equivalent seriousness. A defendant to a serious minor indictable environmental offence should have, at the very least, these standard entitlements:

- to be tried by a court that routinely tries criminal cases and is experienced in applying the rules of evidence and criminal procedure;
- to have the opportunity to be tried by a judge and jury;
- to be able to know the case against them before trial;
- to be able to ask the court to assess the strength of that case and say whether it should be answered; and
- to have the opportunity to be sentenced by a court that imposes sentences for a wide range of criminal conduct, including comparable criminal conduct.

It is not appropriate to give the ERD Court the powers and functions of a superior criminal trial court, because they are not necessary for a court that does not try major indictable offences and has such a small criminal workload.

The Bill provides a better solution in these amendments to the *Environment Resources and Development Court Act 1993*.

Summary and minor indictable environmental offences are to be brought in the ERD Court only. At present, the ERD Court has jurisdiction to try a charge of an offence conferred on it by the *Environment Resources and Development Court Act 1993* or any

other Act, but the law allows those charges to be brought in either the Magistrates Court or the ERD Court.

The ERD Court is to continue to try offences summarily, as if a Magistrates Court. It will continue to operate, in its criminal jurisdiction, at the level of a Magistrates Court. Its criminal jurisdiction is to continue to be limited to summary and minor indictable environmental offences. Trials of these offences in the ERD Court will continue to be by an ERD Court judge, and, as now, the ERD Court may not empanel a jury. The procedures and evidentiary rules that apply to a summary criminal trial in the Magistrates Court will also apply to a summary criminal trial in the ERD Court.

A defendant to a charge of a minor indictable environmental offence may elect, before the ERD Court, for trial in the District Court. When a defendant to a charge of a minor indictable offence is committed for trial in the District Court, section 7(2) of the *Juries Act* prevents him or her opting for trial by judge alone. The new section 7(3b) of the *Environment and Resources Court Act 1993* spells this out. With the enactment of this section, the options for a defendant charged with a minor indictable environmental offence will be (a) trial by judge alone in the ERD Court or (b) trial by jury in the District Court. In this way the defendants to minor indictable environmental offences will have the same entitlements as defendants to any other kind of minor indictable offence.

The ERD Court's power to impose a sentence for an environmental offence will remain the same as that of the Magistrates Court except that the fine limit is to be raised to \$300 000. The ERD Court will continue to be restricted, like the Magistrates Court, to sentences of imprisonment of no more than 2 years, but may impose a greater fine than the present limit of \$120 000.

The ERD Court may remand a defendant for sentence in the District Court if of the opinion that the sentence should be greater than its sentence limit permits. This means that the ERD Court may remand a defendant to a minor indictable offence to the District Court for sentence if it thinks the offending so serious that the offender should receive a greater penalty than two years imprisonment or \$300 000 and the maximum penalty prescribed for the offence makes this possible. This gives the ERD Court a similar discretion to that of the Magistrates Court, albeit that its sentence limit will be higher. It allows appropriate penalties to be given by an appropriate court for serious environmental offending.

An appeal from a conviction or sentence for a minor indictable environmental offence by the ERD Court (where the defendant is tried summarily by a judge) will continue to be governed by section 30(4) of the *Environment Resources and Development Court Act 1993*. Section 30(4) gives parties to criminal proceedings in the ERD Court the same appeal rights as parties to a criminal action under the *Magistrates Court Act 1991*. The appeal will lie to a single judge of the Supreme Court. An appeal from a conviction or sentence for a minor indictable environmental offence by the District Court (where the defendant is tried by a jury) will continue to lie to the Full Court of the Supreme Court.

By increasing the sentencing capacity of the ERD Court and allowing it to remand defendants to the District Court for higher sentences, this Bill will further deter potential environmental offenders and punish appropriately those who do offend, and in the way that Parliament intended when setting high maximum penalties for the most serious minor indictable environmental offences. It will ensure that those charged with these serious offences have the same quality of justice as defendants to non-environmental offences.

I commend the Bill to Members.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Environment, Resources and Development Court Act 1993*

4—Amendment of section 7—Jurisdiction

This clause amends section 7 of the *Environment, Resources and Development Court Act 1993* to specify that the Court does not have jurisdiction in respect of major indictable offences and to provide that where jurisdiction is conferred on the Court in respect of a summary offence or a minor indictable offence, any proceedings for the offence must be commenced in the Court and will be dealt with in the same way as the Magistrates Court deals with such a charge. The monetary limit on the Court's jurisdiction in respect of

indictable offences is increased to \$300 000 (up from \$120 000), with a power for the Court to remand a defendant to the District Court for sentence if, in any particular case, it is of the opinion that a sentence in excess of its jurisdictional limits should be imposed.

5—Amendment of section 15—Constitution of Court

This clause amends section 15 of the Act to provide that the Court must be constituted of a Judge if it is dealing with a charge of a minor indictable offence. If the Court is dealing with a charge of a summary offence, the current requirement that the Court be constituted either of a Judge or a magistrate continues to apply.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

Mrs GERAGHTY: Sir, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

GOVERNMENT FINANCING AUTHORITY (INSURANCE) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Government Financing Authority Act 1982. Read a first time.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

The purpose of this Bill is the amalgamation of the South Australian Government Financing Authority ("SAFA") with the South Australian Government Captive Insurance Corporation ("SAICORP"). The proposal to amalgamate SAFA and SAICORP is consistent with government policy to reduce the number of statutory authorities, advisory boards and committees and boards operating within the South Australian public sector. This measure will eliminate one board and one committee.

SAFA is a statutory authority constituted as the Under Treasurer pursuant to the *Government Financing Authority Act 1982*. It is subject to the control and direction of the Treasurer. SAFA functions as the central financing authority for the State of South Australia, its businesses and agencies, and plays an integral role in the overall management of the State's finances. As such, it harnesses economies of scale and relevant expertise in wholesale financial markets and in financial risk management to provide funding, asset and liability management, liquidity and cash management and general financial risk advisory services to public sector entities.

SAFA is a subsidiary corporation of the Treasurer (subject to the control and direction of the Treasurer), established by regulations made under the *Public Corporations Act 1993*. It provides a formal structure for administration of the Government's insurance and risk management arrangements, carrying on in South Australia and elsewhere the business of insurer, re-insurer and co-insurer of all or any risks of the Crown. SAICORP also provides advice on issues relating to the insurance and risk management of the Government.

Although SAFA is responsible for borrowing, asset and liability management and investments, and SAICORP is responsible for insurance, collectively, both organisations operate in the financial services industry. Rationalisation in the private sector financial services industry particularly with banks and insurance companies has occurred in recent times. Synergies arising through an amalgamation of SAFA and SAICORP relate to governance arrangements, support services (particularly accounting, administration and systems) and funds management.

The Bill will amend the *Government Financing Authority Act 1982* to enable SAFA to act as captive insurer for the government and transfer SAICORP's insurance functions to SAFA.

SAICORP will be dissolved by regulation with its assets, rights and liabilities transferred to SAFA.

SAFA's board and governance arrangements will be expanded to cover the insurance functions. In particular, the membership of the SAFA Advisory Board and SAFA Audit Committee will be expanded to include members with insurance expertise.

internal audit arrangements will be expanded to cover insurance functions. SAFA's policies and procedures would also be reviewed to include insurance functions and other SAICORP processes.

From an operational perspective, the amalgamation will involve establishing an insurance division within SAFA to handle insurance, underwriting and claims management operating under the SAICORP brand name. Administrative, accounting and systems functions would be merged into SAFA's existing functions. Separate management accounts for the insurance activities would be maintained (which would be consolidated into SAFA's overall activities). This will assist premium setting and transparency. However, only one set of annual financial statements will be prepared and the details of SAFA's insurance activities will be disclosed in the financial accounts consistent with accounting standards for general insurers.

The amalgamation of SAFA and SAICORP has been discussed with SAICORP's insurance broker and reinsurers in Australia and around the world. No major issues were raised with the proposal.

I commend the Bill to Members.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Government Financing Authority Act 1982*

4—Amendment of section 11—Functions and powers of the Authority

This clause amends section 11 of the principal Act to include acting as captive insurer of the Crown and the provision of advice to the Crown on issues relating to the insurance and management of risks of the Crown as functions of the South Australian Government Financing Authority. These functions were previously undertaken by the South Australian Government Captive Insurance Corporation.

The clause also amends section 11(2) of the principal Act to provide the powers necessary to undertake the above functions. These essentially mirror the powers previously exercised by South Australian Government Captive Insurance Corporation.

Finally, the clause inserts in new subsection (3) definitions of *Crown* and *risks of the Crown* into section 11.

5—Amendment of section 12—Financial management

This clause makes a consequential amendment to section 12 of the principal Act to reflect the nature of the captive insurance function of the Authority.

6—Amendment of section 17—Treasurer may deposit public money with the Authority

This clause amends an obsolete reference.

7—Amendment of section 18B—Membership of the Board

This clause amends section 18B of the principal Act to alter the make up of the South Australian Government Financing Advisory Board. This reflects the new functions related to insurance, in that the Board is required to have at least 1 appointed member with expertise in insurance (as demonstrated by relevant qualifications or relevant experience at a senior level in the public or private sector). This additional requirement results in the consequential increase in the potential maximum number of members to 7, and the clause makes other consequential amendments to reflect the change in numbers and qualifications.

8—Substitution of section 19

This clause substitutes a new delegation power for the obsolete one currently found in section 19. The proposed power is consistent with current practice.

9—Amendment of section 20—Staff

This clause amends obsolete references in section 20 of the principal Act.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

SUPPLY BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 9 May. Page 206.)

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss): I support the bill, but there are a few issues that I wish to refer to. I would like particularly to point the government in the direction of road funding, especially on country roads. As outlined in the federal Treasurer's budget speech last night, we have injected another \$193 million of GST revenue into South Australia and I would like to see substantially more expenditure on country roads. This goes across the length and breadth of the state. Indeed, the member for Waite has spent four days manoeuvring around the South-East and came back heavily diseased, with a cold. The fact of the matter is that rural roads are deteriorating extremely rapidly. I would like to talk in particular about the roads in my electorate, many of which need urgent attention.

The Mount Compass to Goolwa road is one, which is getting increased heavy traffic. The Victor Harbor to Adelaide highway cannot be put on the back burner forever and needs duplication as a matter of urgency over the next few years, otherwise we will face the situation of increasing roads deaths, accidents and tragedies on that piece of road. There have been 21 road deaths on the Adelaide to Victor Harbor road from 16 fatal accidents since 1997, and one on the Southern Expressway. The Southern Expressway is another case in point, and was raised recently by the Onkaparinga Council Mayor, Ray Gilbert. The land is there and I urge that the government seriously considers duplicating the Southern Expressway, as was anticipated when it was first built.

The fact that it was not duplicated in the first instance can go straight back to the State Bank. We want to get past that, but the fact is that we need to get on and do these things. There is no question that the roads on Kangaroo Island are in a disastrous state. Only today or yesterday in *The Advertiser* there was a letter inviting the member for Waite to take his trail bike to Kangaroo Island. Twenty-five years ago, the local mayor wrote in the paper that if something was not done in 25 years' time there would be no roads left on Kangaroo Island. I point out that 25 years later a minimum has been spent and I urge the government to consider a large financial injection into Kangaroo Island roads and country roads around South Australia.

I would also like to see considerably more money spent on aquaculture research and development in South Australia. Aquaculture is a burgeoning industry and needs all the encouragement it can get. The abalone industry on the west coast and down through Kangaroo Island is growing at a rate of knots and feeding an insatiable appetite for seafood in Asia. We have the largest abalone farm in the southern hemisphere based in my electorate, with the promise of more to come. The fishing industry also needs a further injection of funds to develop further and to research where we are going. It is simply not in the best interests of the state to allow the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to take over and stifle the fishing industry.

I am all in favour of MPAs and all in favour of the marine parks that fall out of them. What I am not in favour of is having pressure groups close traditional fishing areas for no good reason. I think it is unsound and a recipe for disaster for the future. When these parks are created they can be a source of pride to South Australians wherever they may be, and they

can be a wonderful investment in the future, but we do have to make sure that the fishing industry, which is a sound export and domestic industry, has the opportunity to expand, and more research needs to be done on that.

Having said that, in agriculture we need further development in crops. SARDI does a wonderful job in crop development, but we need to expand that. The likelihood of climate change over the next 40 or 50 years has indicated that our cropping areas are going to change and the crops that we can grow will change with them. We need to be cognisant of what climate change will do to the production of wheat, barley, canola, fava beans—and the list goes on. I strongly urge that more money be put into crop development. It is a critical issue. Something that South Australia has been based on for many years is the agriculture and primary industry sector. I urge the government to commit more funds in that area.

I would also like to raise the issue of water. Much is said about water. There is much puffing and blowing about the River Murray and what should and should not be done, and what is done is something else. I believe that we are rather reticent in our efforts as to what we do with the great excess of stormwater that flows down through the metropolitan area. I happen to have bought a property in Glenelg North (in Mr McFetridge's area) and, after a very light rain on the weekend, it just staggered me to see the amount of water that was running down the huge Patawalonga drain and disappearing into the sea. Why we cannot develop some sort of aquifer system to put this water back into, if there is an aquifer there, I am unsure. It has been suggested in the past that we turn this water around and send it back down to the Murray. There are millions and millions of litres of stormwater running out into St Vincent's Gulf which could be targeted and used more usefully, on my understanding. I would like to see that happen.

Health services: a lot was said about health during question time today, and a lot more will be said about health during the term of this parliament. I have had a long involvement in the health area and I understand there will never be enough money for health. What does concern me is the capital expenditure on country health units. I am most concerned that this money is being wound back to the detriment of regional and rural communities. I think it is absolutely imperative that these communities get the services they need.

That goes hand in hand with aged care. Aged care funding is fundamentally the responsibility of the commonwealth. However, the fact is that the state government also has a great part to play in aged care. As I indicated in my maiden speech, the burden on future generations of caring for our aged is going to be almost intolerable. My own generation of baby boomers, as they seek to retire—as they are retiring already, although I have no intention of doing so for quite some time yet—but in due course we are all going to need increased aged care funding and spending to deal with the numbers that will be there.

Children's health is of major concern. The issue of obesity is appalling. Nothing struck me more—and probably struck other members as well—than the hurricane in southern America last year and the huge number of obese people that were left homeless, principally the African-American population. But the obesity in our children in Australia is most concerning. The attitude to fast foods and the lack of exercise are all indicative of the crucible that we are going to have to bear over the next few years in dealing with obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and the list goes on.

Children no longer come home from school and exercise. They come home from school and sit in front of the computer screen, or the television, or whatever. Not enough kids get out and exercise at home. We do all we can through the government sector by encouraging children to eat properly at school and to exercise properly at school but, when it is all boiled down, children spend a huge amount of time out of school and in their homes, and they need to be educated to get out and eat properly and exercise properly. I urge the government to continue with their work and encourage funding to develop an education system that inspires children to do those things.

Housing is another issue that needs more time spent on it. An article in *The Advertiser* today stated that there is a list of 19 000 people who require public housing and 10 per cent of those people have mental problems and should be catered for as a matter of urgency, in my view.

The other day the member for Newland, in his maiden speech, talked about mining uranium. I would like to expand on that further. I think it is time that we stopped fooling around and took on nuclear power and got on with it. South Australia, with our huge resources of uranium, could be a leader in Australia in developing nuclear power for our state. We have a filthy, dirty power station at Port Augusta which is going to go on spewing out emissions. I think we just have to come to grips with the issue of nuclear power. The three mines policy, to me, is a nonsense. I am glad to see that the minister in another place is urging more and more mining, and I would love to see South Australia become reliant on nuclear power rather than the systems in use at the moment.

The last issue I would like to raise is the money spent on the koala sterilisation program. I find it absolutely ludicrous that we are spending \$4 million on neutering koalas—whether they are males or females—and not adopting a much quicker fix solution to the problem on Kangaroo Island. We need to get on with that. It is simply ridiculous. Overseas visitors, when they are told about the problem, understand that there needs to be a quick fix. I am afraid that doing what we are doing is an absolute and total waste of money. We are dealing with a creature that was introduced to Kangaroo Island, and \$4 million for a program of sterilisation and giving them first-class trips to the South-East by aeroplane is not going to fix it. Even if you sterilise them they are still going to eat. I would like to urge that perhaps the minister in another place could take a more active and responsible role than has been taken in the past. With those few words, Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on the Supply Bill, and I support the bill.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): I wish to speak on supply and support the bill, but especially in regard to transport, energy and infrastructure. It is disappointing that the Rann government has spent and allocated money for the tramline extension and the opening rail and road bridges for the Port River Expressway, when it could be spent on regional roads and energy infrastructure. This money would be better channelled into offsetting the road maintenance backlog which currently sits at about \$200 million for this state. The poor standard of state roads is a concern not only for the electorate of Hammond but for all country and metropolitan electorates. An example of the potential impact the Port River opening bridges may have on primary industry is when a Panamax vessel loads grain at Outer Harbor. This is vital to all stakeholders because initially ABB grain will have only 60 000 tonnes of storage at Outer Harbour and a Panamax vessel has a capacity of 100 000 tonnes of grain. The rail

bridge has to be effective for trains to be readily able to transport the grain to alleviate storage problems. The state's farmers need security that grain trains will not be held up through the rail bridges being opened, for the sustainability of their income and industry.

Whilst developing the Port River Expressway is a valuable contribution to South Australia's economic development, the project's vision for the tourism industry and urban regeneration in Port Adelaide is taking money away from other major road transport routes that are in dire need of repair and maintenance. The safety of all users of roads, whether domestic or commercial, is paramount, and more funding from the state government needs to be invested in these roads to prevent unnecessary road accidents and fatalities.

The federal government has invested \$26.3 million of additional funding in South Australian local roads through AusLink funding to improve land transport infrastructure. I am sure that the people of South Australia would prefer the state government to spend AusLink partnering funding on upgrading state and local roads than spend \$130 million on building opening road and rail bridges across the Port River and extending the tramline from Victoria Square to North Terrace.

As far as power infrastructure is concerned, large areas of Hammond need a power upgrade to attract investment in the area. I applaud the development of the Australian Zircon mine in the Mindarie area, but it will only have access to power on a private line in the time frame required for its start-up in March 2007; therefore, no other business can utilise the power from this line. To realise the full potential of the Mallee region, more electricity infrastructure is vital, especially if more intensive animal and secondary industries are to be attracted to the region. If the Rann government is the government for all South Australians, attention must be directed to the needs of the people and businesses in rural and regional South Australia.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I have pleasure in speaking in support of the bill. It is obviously a very important piece of legislation to make sure that funds are allocated to the respective agencies, departments and areas of government and to ensure the proper and smooth running of the state. However, in relation to financial affairs and economic matters with respect to the state, I would like to raise a number of concerns today. I want to put some facts out there, because it is important when you speak about issues, particularly economic and financial matters, that you support your argument with some facts, and I have quite a number, together with some accurate information, to speak about today.

The first important point I think we need to highlight is that the current government—the Rann Labor government—is the highest taxing government in the history of the state since it was first settled and the parliament was formed over 150 years ago. It is important to put this in the context of the history of the state, that is, that this government is the highest taxing government in the history of South Australia. Taxes have increased by 34 per cent, or \$740 million—I repeat: \$740 million—compared with the last year of the former Liberal government (2001-02). That is the first point. The second point I make is that this government is collecting \$2 300 million (or \$2.3 billion) more in revenue this year (2005-06) than in the last year of the former Liberal government. So, in a four-year period this government has collected \$2.3 billion more than the previous Liberal government.

The question that must be asked is: what has happened to that money? Where has that \$2.3 billion gone? Have we seen it spent on improvements in our hospitals, our schools, or in our police service? The resounding answer is: no, we have not. Another fact that came out during the election campaign was that this state has the longest emergency waiting lists in the country. Is that an improvement in our hospital service? No; it is certainly not. It is the exact opposite: we are the worst in the country. Have we seen an improvement in our schools? You would think that, with an extra \$2.3 billion, every school in the state would be satisfactorily resourced to the level to meet the needs of the local community.

Just recently I received two letters from two primary schools in my electorate of Kavel. It takes a bit for school governing councils to write to their local member. I think they need to feel really concerned about an issue before they will move a motion at the governing council to write to their local member. Just recently I received two letters, and that is just in my electorate. How many other letters have there been if you times that number by the 47 other electorates in South Australia? This is evidence that there is real concern amongst our primary schools about the lack of resources that this government is directing into the education department.

I want to quote from these letters. I will not necessarily identify the schools, but I will read some of the text of the letters. One letter states:

We have studied the proposals put forward by the South Australian Primary Principals' Association. Accordingly, we wish to support their priorities for future funding and resourcing.

A heading reads, 'Class size reductions', and the letter states:

Our year 3 to 7 classes are all 30 or more students. We believe that funding extra adult teachers into these year levels for specific purposes, that is, literacy and numeracy, would be of great help to these students. . .

Resourcing for mental health.

We have many students whose special needs are met to a minimal degree.

One would think that, with another \$2.3 billion, which this government has received in its four years (in addition to going into this new term), those special needs would be met at a far higher degree than just minimal. The letter further states:

We annually allocate as much of our school budget as possible to helping individual students, but this is far from adequate. We need more professional staff to diagnose and support these students.

Another heading states, 'Counsellors in every primary school', and the letter continues:

Our school has no allocated counselling resource. This has become an increasingly important part of the work by our school leaders and staff, but we believe a professional counsellor with dedicated skills and knowledge is needed.

The letter is signed by the chairperson of that school's governing council. Another piece of correspondence I received in late March states:

Dear Mr Goldsworthy,
Congratulations on your re-election. . .

The letter starts with a very nice opening congratulatory message for me, but then we get to the areas of concern. The letter states:

Our parents continue to be concerned though that once students reach the primary years the class numbers are much higher.

The letter was previously talking about junior primary classes. The letter continues, 'We have class sizes of 30 or more in years 5, 6 and 7.' This letter is not dissimilar to the previous letter which I received from another school which

said that its years 3 to 7 classes comprise 30 or more students. It says exactly the same, but the letter from this school states:

We have class sizes of 30 or more in years 5, 6 and 7. The physical and emotional growth of students in these years means classrooms are incredibly crowded and teachers are pushed to the limit to cater adequately for the complexity of student needs in such large classes. We would welcome action by the government to address these needs promptly and creatively. We agree with the suggestions made by the South Australian Primary Principals' Association that flexible use of extra staff would enable the core learning areas of English and mathematics to be more appropriately addressed in larger classes.

That message is pretty blatant from two primary schools in what could be described as a relatively conservative electorate in the Adelaide Hills. They are really voicing their strong concerns about the way in which this government is not resourcing its educational responsibilities. One would think that, with an extra \$2.3 billion, which is a significant amount of money in anyone's terms, such larger primary schools in the Adelaide Hills would not be subjected to this level of inadequacy.

We have not seen any real improvements in our hospitals, which is another glaring example of the totally inadequate stance of this government in terms of its responsibility for health services, that is, the extremely unsatisfactory situation in which the community finds itself in relation to the Mount Barker Hospital. I support the board, the senior staff, the nurses and everyone who resources that hospital, except the government. They do a very good job with the resources available to them, but there is a real need for the government to provide an all-night, after-hours doctor care service.

At present, from memory, the Monday to Thursday roster for doctors finishes at 10.30, and on the weekends they finish at midnight. Doctors do not attend anyone who presents at the hospital for medical attention after those times. If someone needs doctor care they are put in an ambulance, a taxi or a private vehicle and taken to either the Flinders Medical Centre or the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Mount Barker and the surrounding towns of Nairne and Littlehampton are a growing community, and I have spoken about that in this place previously. It is the government's responsibility to find a solution to this problem, not to ignore it.

I have written letters to the minister and I asked questions in the last parliament, and all I have heard is deafening silence. It is similar to the response from the Minister for State/Local Government Relations about my questioning on compulsory voting. She obviously does not agree with the Labor Party's policy concerning compulsory voting—

The Hon. J.M. Rankine: Don't put words into my mouth.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY:—otherwise she would confirm or deny it. Anyway, that is an issue for another day. I am talking about the health needs of the Adelaide Hills at the moment, so I should not digress. I know it upsets the minister; I cannot help that. I know it is a very sensitive issue for her; that is, her opposing Labor's policy on the issue. However, it is the government's responsibility to resource satisfactorily the health care needs of that growing community. We have seen the population in that part of the Adelaide Hills—the Mount Barker, Littlehampton and Nairne area—grow significantly over the past four years. I gave some example of that residential growth in my Address in Reply contribution.

Four years ago, whole parcels of land did not have one house on them, but now, four years down the track, there are no spare blocks. They have all been built on. I campaigned heavily throughout that area and I think I received majority

support, which is very pleasing. The other day I was reading an article in the latest newsletter of the Adelaide Hills division of general practice. I see that the division is now trying to resolve the issue of after-hours doctor care at the hospital. It has progressed somewhat, but it should not have to reach the stage where the division of general practice needs to be involved. The government should have been aware of this problem years ago. It is not ignorant of this fact, but, if it is, it is more stupid than I thought.

It is not ignorant of the fact that that area of the Hills has a growing population. It should put measures in place before it reaches a crisis. But, no, it has done nothing. That is a hallmark of this government; that is, something has to spiral out of control before it even pays any attention to it, and then it has to get into a worse situation before it acts. We have seen that occur in a number of areas, and this is a glaring example.

My other point is police services. I must admit that we are very happy that a nice, new police station has been built at Mount Barker. It was actually previous Liberal government policy that a new police complex be built at Mount Barker. However, unfortunately as a result of a decision made by a person who is no longer a member of this house and who supported the formation of a Labor government in 2002, a Liberal government was unable to fulfil that promise. That person got their just desserts by being unceremoniously dumped by the electorate of Hammond, and we now have the new member for Hammond who won by a significant majority. It was a very pleasing result. That is a good example of how cross and bitter the people of Hammond were about the actions of the previous member. I know the Minister for Transport will not disagree with that. He held the previous member in really high regard—not.

As I said, we are very pleased that a new police station has been built, along with additional police to enable that station to carry out its duties over a 24-hour period. It is a 24-hour station. However, they are the only resources this part of the state has received. There is a really strong and clear demand for increased police resources, particularly in the Adelaide Hills. I regularly receive calls from concerned constituents about the fact that there are not enough police in the Hills to maintain a satisfactory level of law and order. Not only do members of the community tell me that but the local police tell me that, too. Over the past four years, I have come to know and earn the trust and respect of a number of senior police in the Hills. They confide in me and tell me that they certainly need more resources to carry out their duties satisfactorily.

I do not have much time left, but there are some other glaring examples that I could highlight regarding the government's poor performance in handling the financial situation of this state. As I said before, we have seen taxes go through the roof. In question time today the Treasurer was saying how they have given taxes back. I am not sure how that figures when it has an extra \$2.3 billion in its coffers. There are really some striking examples of government waste and blow-outs. That is where the extra \$2.3 billion has gone. If I have another opportunity to talk in the near future, I will expand on those points. I have pleasure in supporting the bill.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): As people living in the driest state in the driest nation in the world, I implore South Australians to wake up. Their future development depends on a good quality water supply for all, and our future is being stolen by an incompetent government that is using water as

a cash cow and not reinvesting in our future, as it should be. We have the biggest 'Yes Minister' fiasco where no one minister is responsible, and our most valuable resource is at the whim of everyone and no-one. Until last week I could not understand why I could never pin anyone down. Then 'The transparency statement: water and waste water prices in metropolitan and regional Adelaide 2006-07', was tabled in parliament and I understood a major part of the problem for the first time. It is summed up in what is called in the report 'the institutional framework'. It is certainly not a business framework. The document states:

The 1994 COAG strategic framework requires separation of the roles of water resource management, standard setting and regulatory enforcement, and service provision. This separation principle is met through the following institutional arrangements. The Minister for Administrative Services, who is responsible for SA Water providing water and waste water services, brings to cabinet matters relating to water and waste water price setting, including the price setting methodology. The Minister for Environment and Conservation and the Minister for River Murray are responsible for water resource management policy. The Treasurer is responsible for budget deliberations and financial performance monitoring relating to SA Water's functions. The Treasurer, as the minister responsible for ESCOSA, refers water and waste water pricing decisions to ESCOSA. ESCOSA is an independent statutory authority.

I will attempt to explain for members; that is, it is one organisation representing all Australian governments—six states and two territories and one federal government—plus four separate state ministers and all their departments and cabinet plus one independent statutory authority. In addition, there are three public/private service maintenance contracts managed by SA Water. It is a very complex monolith. This organisation is expensive, cumbersome and risk adverse, and could not possibly behave like a business. It is no wonder that the decision making is difficult and slow and not working in the best interests of the state.

There are also the new natural resource management boards and levy—which I have not attempted to put into this water equation—to be considered at some stage. Taxpayers' money should not be wasted by any government, and it is of particular concern that this is happening with the funding that is being paid into SA Water; and not being used by this Labor government for the provision of water and sewerage as the taxpayers believe it is. This is the same problem that was inflicted on ETSA when it was a government controlled but corporatised instrumentality. The funding was siphoned into Labor government coffers to pay State Bank debts and not used to build the businesses, as taxpayers assumed it was. It resulted in the lease of ETSA, which was so run down that it would have cost more money than the government had available to build it up again. However, when it was leased—not sold, as this government would have us believe—this problem was shifted to the private sector to help pay state Labor government debt.

A similar running down and gutting cannot continue to be allowed to happen to water businesses and assets, as water is the basis of our state's economic survival and our children's future. The 1996 United Water 15 year operations and maintenance contract for the management of Adelaide's water and sewerage systems has been working well, but it is drawing to an end with only four to five years to go. The Labor government is such a master of misinformation that many South Australians believe that SA Water was sold. In reality, only parts of it were contracted—some to United Water. United Water has been able to run a successful business and, through export facilitation, grow the water industry related exports for South Australia.

The cost of infrastructure and lack of availability of water in South Australia is holding back business development across the state, particularly in the regions. It is also affecting ordinary people through huge augmentation fees and higher charges to cover services that traditionally have been paid out of government revenue, while SA Water is making \$196 million in profits in the last year alone. It is not sensible or fair that those people who did not get in early now have to pay for water services, particularly when they are often some of the most remotely located and/or first home buyers.

I was most interested to hear Mr Stephen Griffiths (who represents Yorke Peninsula) during his maiden speech say in the case of Stansbury, for the development of 50 allotments the augmentation price per allotment was set at \$10 900. That is on top of SA Water's connection fee. These charges, and others, are causing developers to delay or withdraw altogether from projects across the state. Is it any wonder that we have a housing shortage across regional South Australia that is reaching a critical level? It is one of the reasons that we cannot attract staff to the regions, not only for private enterprise but also government health, education and police positions. Where there is housing it is often old and substandard compared with what these people can obtain elsewhere.

There is a ripple effect that this government does not or will not understand. This is cost shifting directly to ordinary people from government. However, it is not the only way in which costs that should belong to SA Water are being shifted. Recently, at a local government conference in Adelaide, I was amazed to hear about a deal where the government is allocating a pitiful \$4 million per year (subject to CPI) for 30 years to local governments to alleviate stormwater problems. This will be added to councils' contributions to fund the works and, as I understand it, it is not allowed to be used for the purchase of any land that may be needed or projects under a certain size.

The report that investigated stormwater identified the need for \$160 million worth of projects, and noted that much of the existing infrastructure was built just after the Second World War, making it about 60 years old. Many of these projects will involve the capture of stormwater and reuse, and in the long term will save millions of dollars worth of infrastructure and future water requirements for SA Water. In my view, they should be the responsibility of SA Water. It should have economies of scale and be able to prioritise the work needed across the state. I can envisage that only large, wealthy councils will be able to afford to apply for this funding.

A similar problem is occurring with the small sewerage systems, called STEDs, that are built and managed by councils. In the cities, SA Water manages sewerage. In country regions the councils, and therefore the ratepayers, are responsible. At the current rate of construction, these systems are 30 years behind, and many of those already installed are getting old and need replacement. The demand on council resources to fund the renewal of infrastructure will escalate over the next 10 to 15 years, as a large proportion of the stormwater and STEDs infrastructure is either in relatively poor condition or is totally inadequate.

Because I have been so concerned about this issue and the negative effects on jobs, the environment and the welfare of the people of our state, I spent some time putting together a submission to the National Competition Council, with a request for it to investigate the business practices of SA Water and the state government of South Australia. The council's response advised that it has referred my submission on to the National Water Commission which, under the

Intergovernmental Agreement on the National Water Initiative of June 2004, 'has responsibility for managing the implementation of agreed water reforms'. I suspect that the issues relating to the Murray River will be dealt with first and, in the meantime, a disaster for our state is unfolding with the negative impact on our future caused by SA Water. We cannot afford to wait a moment longer to get changes made.

SA Water is corporatised and should be behaving like a normal private company, but that is not possible because of the institutional framework which, in my view, must be changed as quickly as possible. Currently, SA Water, as an arm of the government of the state of South Australia, is failing to deliver the water and sewerage services as required by legislation and its charter. A major cause of this dilemma is the pressure from the Treasurer and the government to extract as much money as possible from this monopoly for other purposes. Last year, the net profit after income for the year ended 30 June 2005 was \$196 million, with a dividend then paid to the state government of \$155 million, that is, 78.8 per cent. According to the Auditor-General's Report, this will increase to 95 per cent in 2005-06, leaving SA Water unable to fund the programs it may in fact want to deliver.

I believe SA Water and the government of the state of South Australia are breaching the competition provisions of the commonwealth Trade Practices Act by restricting competition through the use of their monopoly position to prevent new entrants, except on the terms they set. Adequate supplies of potable water at minimum cost and the safe disposal of effluent are two of the major issues of our time. However, they are not currently being dealt with in an optimum manner in South Australia. I understand that a similar problem has been dealt with in New South Wales and a similar solution may be applicable to South Australia.

I contend that SA Water exists as a government monopoly being used to raise revenue for the state government and is not fulfilling its charter. This negatively impacts on private companies wishing to enter the water industry in South Australia. Companies looking to supply communities that SA Water does not service, or where SA Water service is inadequate because of flow, quality and the cost of those services, are being excluded from entering the market. This monopoly impacts negatively on businesses, individuals and whole communities that receive overpriced and often inadequate water supplies and sewerage services.

The SA Water Statement of Cash Flow on page 68 of the annual report states that the dividend of \$165.1 million and tax equivalent payments of \$82.6 million flow from SA Water to the state government from receipts collected from customers of \$632.2 million. That equates to 39.1 per cent, which means that, for every dollar of SA Water revenue taken from the state's population, the government is taking 39¢ into general revenue. That only leaves 61 per cent to operate its core business, that is, to supply water and sewerage services to the people of South Australia.

The 2005 Auditor-General's Report, under 'New Financial Ownership Framework', states that there will be a dividend payout ratio of 95 per cent based on the after-tax profit of SA Water. Also of concern is the mention of a revised community service obligation agreement (CSO), which I suspect means even less will be provided by SA Water for regions outside Adelaide. That creates a round robin situation. While the CSO is paid to SA Water, apparently out of dividends paid to the government from SA Water, this is later clawed back to the extent of the tax and the dividend, and

returns to the government. This will be exacerbated if dividends are increased to 95 per cent of profits.

SA Water operations and costs are not transparent, and it will not disclose the cost of supply of water (on Eyre Peninsula, anyway) on the ground of 'commercial in confidence'. Therefore, scrutiny and assessment, and the potential for competitive delivery of cheaper water by private enterprise, are prevented. This also prevents any assessment of the application of the CSO to this area.

SA Water has decreased its expenditure on infrastructure from \$174 million to \$105 million over the last two years, just when the claimed need for more water has increased and water-saving legislation is in place, with penalties. It is the South Australian government's policy to reduce water consumption in South Australia by 20 per cent, and that is reflected in expenditure. That would not be the policy of any commercial operation which would seek to satisfy demand and increase the production of water, not decrease it. SA Water practice, despite its charter stating that 'All operations of the corporation are commercial operations', fails dismally as a commercial business.

The state government, in May 2005, announced an extension of the Morgan-Whyalla River Murray pipeline from Iron Knob to Kimba, a distance of 90 kilometres at a cost of \$48.5 million. That was not all new money: \$25 million of that amount was from a failed commitment to put a desalination plant at the Todd Reservoir. The extended pipeline had an initial 1.4 gegalitres, and even the proposed increase to 2.3 gegalitres at some future time will not bring sufficient additional water to remove existing restrictions on Eyre Peninsula. Since the advent of the Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board, SA Water was given an overdraw allowance of 5 per cent from the Uley basin on Eyre Peninsula in 2004-05 and has requested more water for 2005-06. SA Water has undertaken to 'repay' this water at some time in the future. The pipeline water comes from the River Murray which, according to extensive and repeated publicity, is already over-utilised. Water distribution will have to be reversed at an additional cost. Currently, it runs south from Port Lincoln and north to Kimba.

The alternative of a privately financed and operated desalination plant at Ceduna, using the existing reticulation system, which could supply ample water to western Eyre Peninsula, was not canvassed as a permanent solution. We now have mines up there that will require 10 gegalitres or more. The government did announce a possible desalination plant that might be built near Whyalla for BHP Billiton at some time in the future. In my opinion, the cost of supply from the Murray pumped to Whyalla and the new pipeline would be considerably greater, when all costs of operating and financing are taken into account, than a commercial desalination plant at Ceduna. If the desalination plant was in Ceduna instead of the possible BHP Billiton facility in Whyalla, a better result would be achieved without the pipeline being necessary. Is this a government-dictated policy based on an agenda outside SA Water's charter? Once built, the fixed costs are effectively permanent, as the scrap value would be minimal.

The government is requiring water tanks on every new house. This is again cost shifting to ordinary people and a high cost, ineffective solution to future water shortages in a Mediterranean climate where it rains when your tank is full and is dry when your tank is empty. The water could be readily supplied by desalination at a considerably lower cost. Waterproofing Adelaide states that tank water costs \$5.40 per

kilolitre versus indicative pricing on desalination of possibly less than \$2 per kilolitre. The combination of SA Water not investing in new and unlimited water resources using wind power or allowing private enterprise to supply, combined with government policy, is distorting the market and preventing the introduction of lower-cost solutions.

The tanks are effectively a tax on new home owners, with SA Water policy being closely aligned to government policy. SA Water takes water from underground resources without charge or consideration, while other potential commercial businesses are denied access to the same resources even if they were prepared to pay an access fee. SA Water is effectively acting as a government monopoly, supported by the state government as a community service, yet selects where it will operate and the terms and conditions of operation. This is illustrated by the water supply west of Ceduna provided by the community and Ceduna council, with some grant funding for the original infrastructure, but there were no concessions for the purchase of bulk water.

There is also the situation at Port Kenny and Venus Bay where the community and the Elliston council are expected to pay for new water supplies. The Labor government and SA Water treat customers differently depending on where they live which, because of SA Water's monopoly position, it gets away with. Ceduna, in particular, has had to put up with burst water pipes and poor quality water that would not have been allowed to persist in metropolitan Adelaide. The new marina development in Ceduna has, I believe, attracted around \$2 million in SA Water augmentation fees, despite no houses yet built and no additional water being supplied to the area, with the existing water supply being of very poor quality.

The state government has accepted financial windfalls from sewer charges due to rising property values and the amalgamation of property values without any recompense to customers or changes to pricing. I agree with Mr Baddams, who stated in his letter to me:

My properties are assessed on total value, including adjoining land. This makes no logical sense at all. How does the extent and value of my land have any effect on the sewerage system connected to my house?

At present, SA Water, despite its charter, does not attempt to supply all South Australians with water or sewerage systems.

Time expired.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I support the Supply Bill, for the fifth time in my political career. Having been around this place for some time, I do not intend to stand here and make cheap political points. I hope I have the reputation of being reasonable. I can play games like everyone else, but at this time in history we have to see where we are and what we are doing here, and what we are going to leave for generations to come. We are undoubtedly, particularly after the federal budget last night, enjoying very good economic times. Having heard question time today, I am amazed that this state government takes credit for all those things that are really in the area of the Howard federal government.

Employment and interest rates, in particular, are all certainly straight out of the federal government purview. The only rewards that this government is achieving are from the boom in the resource sector. Without a doubt, Western Australia, as the Premier said in a ministerial statement today, is leading Australia. This is because of its resources. We have as much iron ore here in South Australia as Western Australia does, but we chose through the Dunstan years to leave it in the ground. Exploration was difficult. What resources we

have are certainly booming, and we are now reaping huge benefits.

Mr Goldsworthy: No thanks to this government.

Mr VENNING: No thanks to this government at all, as the member for Kavel just said as he walked out of the chamber. The boom for the state is being resource driven, and all the actions put in place by the previous (Liberal) government between 1993 and 2002 are now bearing fruit. I know, because I was there. What hypocrisy by the Treasurer today to say that our economy is booming because of the resource sector, and he is taking the credit for that. We know that these resource things do not just come together overnight: they take decades. That is just what has happened. It takes decades. Here today he was making cheap points and then one of the members of the government was saying, 'Knocker, knocker.' I remind the house there is no greater knocker that I have seen in this house than the member for Hart when he was in opposition. He gave the word knocker a new meaning. Certainly, hearing it from him, I thought, 'Gosh! that is the epitome of hypocrisy.'

I am amazed when politicians stand up in this house and make such statements. Who does the Treasurer think he is fooling? That is all I can say. I know deep down that a lot of members have great credibility and we have many on both sides of this place. Okay, we play these political games and we say these things, but let us deal with real facts. He is not fooling me and I do not think he is fooling anybody. He is going through this political game and trying to rewrite history. Is he trying to tell us that Labor delivered us the world's largest uranium mine at Olympic Dam? Is that what he is telling us today in question time and also in the Premier's statement to the house today?

We all know the Premier was a member of the Bannon Labor government that did all it could to kill off any uranium mine here in South Australia—any at all. It was one courageous person—the Hon. Normie Foster, who has gone down in history as the Labor rat who is now in their hall of fame—because he did indeed have foresight. In hindsight, all these people here now claim that, as well, but, if it were not for Normie Foster, we would be further behind. There is no reason why we could not be in exactly the same position today as Western Australia.

We have huge deposits of iron ore at Mount Smithson and other places, and they are still in the ground because we have not helped these people to advance projects to get it out of the ground. In Western Australia, when Lang Hancock came on the scene, the Western Australian government—particularly the Court government—could not do enough to help them put in the roads and infrastructure. You have only to see now what is happening: every Western Australian is enjoying fantastic success, their economy is booming and they are leading Australia.

Mr Piccolo: Not according to the Western Australian Liberals.

Mr VENNING: These are not my words, member for Light; these are the words of the Premier in his own press release today. He said it. I am just saying what he said.

Mr Piccolo: I am just saying that the opposition in Western Australia is saying the same thing.

Mr VENNING: Western Australia is booming. The Bannon government, of which the Premier was a minister, did everything possible to stop the uranium mine here. Not only that, it stood in the way of the Beverley mine and the Honeymoon mine and did everything possible to say bad things about the mine's polluting the artesian basin and

everything else. It did not give it any credibility at all. At last, bit by bit, Honeymoon is coming on line; no thanks to the government. They would have packed up years ago and given it away if it was not for encouragement from us.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr VENNING: None at all. Such hypocrisy, and the Premier says nothing about the federal Labor's no new uranium mine policy. That is still there, you know. The member for Light may not be aware of that, but federal Labor still has a policy of no new uranium mining. Where is our courageous warrior? Where is Sir Mike? Why isn't he heading off to Canberra, saying, 'Be done with this crazy policy.' Why doesn't he take it to the federal national Labor Party convention—the last one or the next one? I know the member for Ashford is not going to agree with me, but that is—

The Hon. S.W. Key: No, I don't.

Mr VENNING: No, she doesn't.

The Hon. S.W. Key: I don't agree with you at all.

Mr VENNING: This is a resource driven boom in uranium. Roxby Downs is bringing so much to this state. We have now put power there. We are putting water there and a desalination plant there. All the opportunities this is giving us are unbelievable. You cannot put a yardstick alongside the success there.

I am amazed that Labor cannot get over this hump because, in this day and age, we have little choice. I am not going to sit here and mouth political platitudes, but members should understand this: I firmly believe that Labor, particularly this government, is being dragged kicking and screaming into accepting these policies. Do you know why? It really does not have any choice. Likewise with our power generation in this state: we have one of the dirtiest power stations in the world here in South Australia. We do not talk about it because it is not a thing we are very proud of. There are more greenies on that side than this side, so why don't we sign the protocol agreement? Why don't we? Because we can't, because we have the dirtiest power stations per se across Australia. We cannot do it. We cannot put up enough windmills, we cannot put up enough photovoltaic cells for us to generate our base load of power. There is no choice. Unless we get modern technology to enable us to burn the fossil fuels without the emissions into the atmosphere and thence upsetting climate change, we have no choice. There is no choice.

Mr Bignell: Ivan the green.

Mr VENNING: I heard the member for Mawson. Apart from yours, I heard another great speech from your side of the house, from the member for Newland. Hello! There is sunrise after the dark from that side of the house. Here is a member who has seen the light, or is he just a man with plenty of guts to get out there? Let's be honest. If there is an alternative, you come up with it. I just love to have a discussion with greenies when they say to me, 'We are not in favour of uranium or nuclear power stations. We are not in favour of that.' It is okay for us to float thousands of tonnes of pollutants into the atmosphere—that is okay; be my guest. We will fly over Port Augusta at half past six one morning, and the honourable member can take a look. He will be horrified to see what is coming out of that chimney, and the layers across the gulf. That is going into all our homes, into all our lovely bushland and into the Flinders—this foul, dirty odour that comes out of that stack. I do not know how many hundreds of tonnes a day it is, but they are amazing

figures. The dirtiest coal, the most inefficient power station, and that is our core load of power here in South Australia.

Mr Bignell: 70 per cent comes from gas.

Mr VENNING: The member is right, 70 per cent comes from gas. Again, look at the emission of gas.

Mr Bignell: It's clean.

Mr VENNING: It's clean but it still emits, and we are using up fossil fuels. How many years do we have left of that? I am happy that we have gas. The problem with a nuclear power station, of course, is the cost of it. It is very costly. Until electricity gets to such a price level, I do not think we can afford it, but it is getting to that point now when it is becoming an economic option because power is getting dearer and dearer. I have been to London and England looking at power stations, and I will probably go again. I think that the wonderful member for Stuart was with me, too.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. G.M. Gunn): I take it that the honourable member will link up his remarks.

Mr VENNING: Yes, sir; I will. I am just talking about what the government does in relation to the fund, because the government is enjoying certainly very rosy economic times. It is about to embark on its budget, which I believe should be in a few weeks and not late in the year; I do not understand why the government cannot do it earlier.

As to the nuclear option, can we at least have a healthy debate in this house? Are we allowed to discuss the subject in this house? The member for Newland has raised it. I will take up the challenge and ask: 'Will Labor give its members a free go on this matter, or will it lock them in in the caucus? Will you give your members a conscience vote on this matter?' Sir, I bet you London to a brick that no way in the world would the Labor Party allow it. The factions will do the deals, and members like the member for Newland—nice, young, fresh MP that he is—will be dragged back into the machine and smothered, and that will be the last we hear of him. He will be told, 'How dare you speak out of turn, young fella. You have this sort of debate in the party room, in the caucus, you don't have it in the house. Don't do that again ever, otherwise you will never progress to the front bench.' I say, 'Good on him.' I challenge any other member opposite to have a go. I am sure that the member for West Torrens is on the brink of saying things like this; he has not yet, but we wait and we wait.

I cannot believe the hypocrisy of the government when it basks in all this glory, but really it does not belong to the government at all. If the Premier had any credibility at all, in the same breath as claiming all this for Labor he should say, as a Labor state premier, that he will urge his federal colleagues to kill off their no new mines policy. When in government in 1993, I was honoured to be the parliamentary secretary for mines and energy to minister Stephen Baker. I can say that those two or three years were probably the most enjoyable of my career. We set the path for this resources boom. We did it in every way. We did not get the credit for it because it just does not happen straightaway. We entered into an arrangement with overseas interests, and one that comes to mind is the Krakatou trial plant in Whyalla. The minister would not know about that. It is there, and I saw it the other week.

Ms Breuer: What's in Whyalla?

Mr VENNING: The Krakatou trial shipment plant. The member would know about it. I do not know what the history is. There is plenty to read about the subject, if members wish, both in *Hansard* and in reports. We encouraged development at Mount Phillipson and other iron ore explorations in South

Australia. We put in huge resources to support our geo-seismic and exploration surveys, and I believe those are still going on. We established and expanded South Australia's core sampling library so that all this information becomes the property of the state. Any geologist can use the library and inspect the core samples. This is the cooperation the government was doing to assist these companies with their hugely expensive exploration programs.

We oversaw the huge expansion of Roxby Downs, and twice it increased. We supported the upgrade of Moomba and the new Sydney gas pipeline. We encouraged the Honeymoon and Beverley mines and the in-situ leaching process. We provided infrastructure to support these ventures with power, water and some roads, although not enough as we were halfway through those roads when we lost government and they have now fallen into disrepair. They are vital to these people. You try to move heavy equipment to these mine sites on the roads that are there at the moment. What happens? They come from Queensland; that is what happens. All the infrastructure comes out of Queensland because they build bitumen roads to the border and upgrade our roads.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr VENNING: That's right; it is all coming out of Brisbane. It is a disgrace, an absolute disgrace. We also tried to facilitate the full exploration of the magnetic anomaly at Yumbarra, and I was on the select committee. The evidence was overwhelming from the local people that they wanted the area at least explored to see what was there. In the end, we came out with a gummy-mouthed recommendation to say that we needed further research. It was a disgrace, and I was most upset. The then member for Playford was on the committee (Hon. John Quirke). He was a very talented person, and he thought he had the numbers to push this issue through. At the last minute the opposition said, 'No; you haven't,' and we had to do a deal that did not allow the full exploration of Yumbarra, and that was jolly sad. It is now the Yellabinna National Park, and you have locked it out. I have been there, sir, and so have you and many members. The Hon. John Quirke and I toured the area extensively, and there is nothing out there but sandhills and low mallee. We looked for the turkey but only found one nest; we never found the turkey at all. It must have been extinct before we got there. So, Yumbarra and the select committee was another farce. Sadly, we came out with a very unidirectional finding, which I thought was most upsetting.

The government needs to match our prosperity today with long-term decisions. I say to members opposite that people will remember who was in government. We look back at the Bannon years and say, 'You were in government. What did you do?' We had problems back then, so you make sure that your time here is marked by things that matter for the long term and for the generations to come. I know that the member for Light has two sons. He should consider them when he makes decisions in here because they will be using this infrastructure, or experiencing the lack of it, in years to come. They will say, 'Dad, why didn't you fix that up back in 2006 and 2007?' I am very conscious of this because some of the roads we are driving on now are the worst roads I have driven on since I got a licence when I was 16—and, before members remind me, that was a fair while ago. The roads I drive on are almost four-wheel-drive tracks and almost at the point where we should rip them up and rubble them because they would be smoother. You have to address this issue because, as the member for Light would know, as a former councillor and

mayor, the same rule applies to the community in the municipality of Gawler as it does to the state.

You must have a road program, and you have to put a certain amount aside every year to upgrade them. If you have five or six years of no work, suddenly you are behind, and how do you catch up? You don't, and then you have a massive problem. We have problems with our roads as well as our passenger rail service, and no speech is complete without a discussion about the Barossa Wine Train. As members know, I have been very passionate about this. Here we have a tourism icon. As I said, I have travelled a bit, and if other members stay here long enough they will too. As you get around the world and people ask you where you come from, you say 'South Australia' or 'Adelaide', but people still don't know. If you say 'Barossa,' they say, 'Ah, yes, Barossa.' Here we have a tourism destination anyone would be proud of, but how do you get there? We have rail lines that go there but we have no passenger train, and now the wine train has gone, too. I had given the wine train away as gone. It was to be sold on either 2 or 3 April to the train wreckers and to be reberthed as freight train crew vans. How debilitating for a South Australian icon. Well, sir, they have not been sold. A Sir Galahad has come through at the last minute, as this person would—and I am not going to name him.

An honourable member: It's you.

Mr VENNING: Not me. I cannot do it. This person has done it before. I will not name him. I understand they have not been purchased yet, but, if I know this guy, he will purchase them. That is okay, but if he purchases them, and gets them for a song, there is no guarantee that he can run the trains on the track, anyway, because the accreditation has been withdrawn. No-one in the government can tell me or him, or anyone for that matter—

Mr Piccolo interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I do not have long enough, but I remind his worship over there who sold the railways in the first place. SA Rail owned them and Dunstan sold SA Rail.

Mr Piccolo: Who sold that particular line?

Mr VENNING: We could go back in history and blame each other, but here is an opportunity—

Mr Piccolo interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Light will cease interjecting.

Mr VENNING: Here is an opportunity. Forget the politics, your worship, and say, 'Righto, this is a guy who is keen enough to buy the train on the track that is there, let's have the guts to allow him to run on the rail.' First, find out what is required to fix up the track, get the accreditation reinstated and then do it. He is taking the risk, after all. He is going to run the train. You just allow him to run the train.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr VENNING: No, you will do nothing. The minister has been in my electorate only once in four years. It is the Barossa Valley and she is the tourism minister, and she is also the Minister for Local Government.

Mr Piccolo interjecting:

Mr VENNING: That is appalling. As a mayor—

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. It is a delight to see you sitting in that chair, sir. I am sure that I will get adequate protection whilst you are there. It is my pleasure to join this debate because there is much to say about the Supply Bill. Over the years I have contributed

to this debate and this is the first time when about a third of the budget is the subject of a supply bill. It is intriguing that the state's Treasurer, as is often his wont, comes into this place, abuses members and calls them lazy. It is one of his favourite words. What a lazy Treasurer we have in South Australia.

We had a four-week hiatus in which the government went into caretaker mode for the election, yet the budget is being delayed by four months. From my quick calculations, that is about four times more time than what would be needed otherwise to put the budget together and present it to the parliament. I think that it is quite outrageous that we would get a quarter of the way through the year—probably even more than that; it is probably getting towards halfway through the year by the time we finish the estimates process—and the budget is accepted by this parliament.

The parliament, I think, is being abused in this instance where the finances of the state will be run for a period of at least four months—probably five months—without the parliament having approved the budget in a formal sense. It is astounding that the Treasurer could come in here and call other members lazy, in whatever their function is, when he is doing this to the state and treating the parliament with such contempt through this exercise. That is my first comment.

The other thing I want to say about the current Treasurer is that he also has a wont to distort history, and he does it continually. It is an old political ploy. I remember very well that Bob Hawke used this ploy all the time. I remember his coming to power in 1983 (I think that it was 1983), and it was his wont to say that he had the best cabinet since the war, and he would say that over and over. It got to the point that he said it so many times that even some of the political journalists picked up the line. I think that even Hawkey probably believed it. This is the ploy that our current Treasurer and some of his colleagues on the other side of the house use regularly. They distort history over and over to the point where they hope that at least some of the journalists, and potentially some of the communities and the electorate, will believe that what they are saying is the reality of historical fact, but nothing could be further from the truth. Even today in question time the Treasurer made a claim that the previous Liberal government kept bringing in deficit budgets, and that he has brought in nothing but positive or surplus budgets.

As members well know, the reality is that, when the previous Liberal government came to power in 1993, it inherited not only a state that was in crisis but a recurrent budget that was in crisis. Obviously we all know about the State Bank and the more than \$11 billion worth of debt that had been run up by the arrogant mismanagement of the previous government. We also inherited a recurrent budget that had about a \$350 million deficit on an annual basis—\$350 million in 1993 was a fair bit more money than \$350 million today. It was probably more like \$0.5 billion. That was a built-in deficit. That was created because the government of the day, the Bannon and Arnold Labor governments through the 1980s and into the early 1990s, were unable to control their spending habits.

The current Treasurer would have us believe that the problems inherited by the Liberal government on coming to power in 1993 were not there and it was a profligate government during the 1990s. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Liberal government through the 1990s rebuilt the finances of the state and, at the same time, managed to rebuild the state's economy, which was a massive effort. The amount of money spent on capital works in South Australia

prior to the 2002 election has not been increased in the past four years. It is still about \$1 billion, notwithstanding that there has been an increase of approximately 34 per cent in revenue. An extra \$2.3 billion a year is now coming into the Treasurer's coffers compared to only four years ago.

The South Australian public could be excused for asking the question: why has this government not spent some money to get on top of the backlog of road maintenance, particularly in country areas? That is \$200 million that we drive over everyday—although drive through would more accurately reflect the way in which we have to drive along many of the roads around the state. This government is receiving \$2.3 billion extra a year, yet it cannot even start to address the road maintenance backlog. That is just one example. The capital works program involves sleight of hand. They say, 'We have this fabulous capital works program'—\$111 million in converting the way in which the state fleet is accounted for. That is shoved in as capital expenditure. When you take out that figure in the first couple of years of this government with all that extra revenue, the capital works expenditure was falling.

I would argue—and I think that I would be very successful in arguing this—that, when times are good, when your revenue is increasing, you spend more. You spend on the things, which, in leaner times, you would say 'Look, we simply cannot afford it'. At the moment, we can afford to do some things. We can afford to be visionary. What has happened with this government? It has squandered the opportunity; it has squandered the money. It is exactly the same as the Bannon-Arnold government. Over 8 000 extra bureaucrats are now paid for by the taxpayers of this state. Are they delivering extra services? There would be a resounding shout of no if I said this outside on North Terrace, because they are not delivering extra services. They are not providing additional infrastructure. They are not putting a dent into the backlog maintenance—not only roads but all our state's infrastructure—and they are not improving the services.

One has to ask what on earth is going on and how on earth this Treasurer can claim that he and his colleagues are responsible for achieving a AAA rating. I would like the Treasurer to come in here and give us just one example of something he has done that has gone towards delivering South Australia a AAA rating. I give that challenge to the Treasurer or any of his colleagues, because I do not believe they could possibly do that.

The Hon. J.W. Weatherill interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: The minister says, 'What about balanced budgets?' I have just been through the fact that we inherited this huge in-built deficit, got on top of the state's debt and delivered a balanced budget. When you came to government in 2002, minister, the budget was balanced and in fact was in surplus. One thing this Treasurer did, by sleight of hand, was change the timing of some internal government payments out of the South Australian Financing Authority (the minister smiles because he knows what I am talking about) to the tune of a couple of hundred million dollars and then stood up and said, 'I've discovered a giant black hole!' It was a giant black hole of his very own making!

I welcome the minister's interjection because he has brought me to another point I want to make. I am a little disappointed that, since the election, my responsibilities on behalf of the opposition have changed a little. One of the agencies that came under my purview was SA Water, and I was starting to get to know my way around it and the way it

operated. I made the claim during the last estimates committees that SA Water is becoming a cash cow for the government. I heard some comments my colleague, the member for Flinders, was making about SA Water—and she is not a great fan of SA Water—and I share some of her sentiments. I am not sure that it is the fault of SA Water; I suggest it is probably the fault of the government which, after all, pulls the strings down there, even though they would have it otherwise and say that it is at arm's length from the government. I refer to some passages from the Auditor-General's most recent report, in particular with regard to SA Water. He talks about the contributions to the state government from SA Water. If my memory serves me correctly, in the most recent budget this financial year we expect SA Water to contribute something like \$392 million to the consolidated account.

I do not know about members of the government, but I have a few constituents who complain about SA Water's costs and charges, particularly the augmentation fees it charges when a new development is being mooted. Also, they complain about the ordinary connection fees and, indeed, the general price of water and sewerage rates. We know that the government on an annual basis does impose increases to those rates—as it does to all charges—which are a little above inflation. The government argues that the cost of providing these services is higher than the CPI inflation rate, so the increases are a bit above that. Recently, I did some calculations on the cumulative effect of that over the life of this government, and it is quite a bit; it is probably 3 per cent or 4 per cent compounded over and above the CPI. Unfortunately, the wages and salaries of mums and dads, who are having to pay these accounts, are increasing only at CPI, if they are lucky. The government does not worry about that; it makes sure it gets its pound of flesh.

The government has changed the way in which it assesses how much money is paid from SA Water into the government coffers. As at this financial year, the dividend payout ratio will be 95 per cent, based on after-tax profit. That is up from what otherwise would have been the case, if there had been no change in this system, of 78.8 per cent. Also, there have been other changes. This change itself will mean a net increase in the money that SA Water pays to the Consolidated Account of about \$10 million. The government might argue that out of \$392 million some \$10 million is not very much. Well, it is a fair bit to the mums and dads having to pay it. It is interesting that the Auditor-General says:

For four of the last five years net cash generated from operating activities has been sufficient to cover the net cash used in investing activities (that is, essentially the purchase of property, plant and equipment, and, latterly, the purchase of water allocations) but not sufficient to enable the payment of the level of dividend and return of capital required by the Department of Treasury and Finance. As a result the net borrowings of the corporation have increased to \$131.9 million over the last five years. Essentially, the corporation is having to borrow to fund part of its dividend payments to the government and to fund its capital works.

After putting in a table to show how that is effected, and the figures over the last five years, he continues:

With the implementation of the new financial ownership framework, which requires a higher gearing ratio and higher dividend payout ratio than is currently in place, the level of borrowings is likely to increase.

The minister interjected a few minutes ago to say that one of the things the Treasurer has done to deliver the AAA rating is to deliver balanced budgets. I have highlighted the fact that in his first budget he did that sleight of hand, changing the timing of the internal payments from the South Australian

Finance Authority. In that way he was able to claim that former treasurer Lucas in the Liberals' last term ended up with a deficient budget and the Treasurer had a surplus budget. That was a sleight of hand.

Again, we find that the Treasurer will claim he has a surplus budget, but, according to the Auditor-General, non-government financial institutions or agencies, such as SA Water, are borrowing to prop up the government's surplus budget. So, as he says, over the last four years, it is \$131.9 million of net borrowings in SA Water to prop up its payments to underpin the government surplus. It is a bit trite of the minister to argue that the Treasurer is delivering surplus budgets to the South Australian economy on behalf of the government and that that has contributed to the AAA rating. We all know what delivered the AAA rating—and the rating agencies were quite clear on that. They have said it is the sale of the old ETSA and the electricity assets. That was the most significant contributor. It was delivered by the former Liberal government, not this current government.

There is a stark contrast between the budget that was delivered by Peter Costello in Canberra last night and the budget that will be delivered by this government some time in September. This current Treasurer (and I am pleased to see him come in) claims that he has reduced taxes. The reality is that if you reduce taxes you will reduce your revenue. The Treasurer has failed to explain that he has reduced the rates but he is still collecting more money. Had he had more experience in local government he would understand that that is how councils set their budgets every year—they get the valuations for the district, they know how much money they want to collect, and they set the rate to collect that. So you can change the rate all over the place, but lowering the rate does not necessarily lower the tax—and that is exactly what has happened here in South Australia.

We have had some rate lowerings in some areas but the tax collection is still going up and that is exactly the case with land tax, which has been quite controversial over the last year or two. The Treasurer will claim that he has given a huge hand-back, a huge tax reduction in land tax, but this year the government expects to reap in an extra \$39 million—and yet the Treasurer will claim that he has reduced taxes! The reality is that the same number of people—and the very same people—are still paying land tax, and they are paying \$39 million more than they did the year before. It does not add up.

I see that my time is running short. That disappoints me greatly because there are many other subjects I would like to mention. However, I will end my discussion of the Supply Bill by saying that it is very disappointing. I thought the Treasurer could have brought the budget in. I would be quite happy to give him a few weeks, but to give him four months to formulate and bring his budget before the house is, I think, way over the top.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I move:

That the sitting of the house be extended beyond 6 p.m.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I move:

That the house note grievances.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I would like to continue what I was saying earlier about the urgent need to upgrade our public transport system. I used to always use public transport, particularly as a student, but I do not use it now because it is not user-friendly any more. I would like to, particularly, because of the high cost of fuel and the inconvenience of parking cars, but I think Adelaide probably has the most user-unfriendly public transport system of any capital city in Australia. That is a strong comment, but we only have to see what is happening in Perth right now with their fantastic north-south rail system, and see the system they have in Brisbane, and in Melbourne and Sydney, all of which have brilliant public transport systems. Poor old Adelaide got left out.

I think it may be too late, but we have to address it, if possible, because we really do need to have an efficient, user-friendly transport system. How often do we see trains going past with windows so scratched that you can hardly see into them, and how many passengers are sitting in them? Well, we have the transport minister here tonight. Those trains are totally empty, there is no-one in them at all, and that is an absolute shame.

We are now talking about trams. I made some comments about trams in this house a couple of days ago. Some very smart government person read a speech that I made back in 1991 and, yes, I did speak in support of trams back then.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: That was 2004.

Mr VENNING: No, it was not. It was right back then, because I have always been a tram buff. A personal friend of mine, Mr John Ratcliff, whom many would know, was the director of the department of agriculture. He was a great tram buff, and he and I shared this interest in trams, and so does the member for Morphett. I cannot believe the government can consider putting the tram lines down King William Street. This is madness. This is worse than any soccer stadium, a lot worse. This is worse than the National Wine Centre. This has the hallmark of being the tragedy of the decade.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I am just saying to the minister, who is interjecting out of his seat—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: For 12 years it was Liberal policy.

Mr VENNING: I remind the minister that the Laidlaw option, which I suggested the other day, was to have a loop line. Keep out of King William Street. It would come down Pulteney Street, across North Terrace, up Bank Street and back through to Victoria Square.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: It would cost \$100 million.

Mr VENNING: No, it would not. The minister says it would cost \$100 million. He has said that and it is now on the record. I would like him to do a little bit of work on that and tell me, via a ministerial statement, as an option, or by whatever means. If it is discounted, it is discounted, and I am happy to listen to a report on it. That is what we are here for. The minister has a department and obviously work has been done on this subject, and I would like to hear a report to the house on that matter. It sounds like commonsense to me, because you have a lot wider pick-up area, you are not blocking your main arterial road because you are on lesser roads, and you have electric overhead wires that do not blot the beautiful streetscape that is King William Street. I think there is a lot going for it as a loop line, a single line. When you have double lines together, you have double trouble. So I cannot see it being the huge cost that the minister says it would be.

I think the big problem with the current project is the turning of the trams from King William Street around the corner in front of Parliament House onto North Terrace. We know, as we said the other day, that this tram we bought will not turn sharp corners, so you have to have a very wide arc. We bought the wrong tram for turning corners, especially right-angled corners. So, you either have to have a wide turning circle or, if you do not, you will have regular derailments. We have had that trouble already with this particular tram.

This tram has been a disaster. I wish people would make decisions for the right reasons and not for political reasons. The government did not need to have this tram to win the election—in fact, it probably cost it votes. So, why did it race in and buy this tram? It bought the wrong tram purely because it was the only tram it could get on the rails before the election. The tram did not win the government any votes at all. In fact, as I said, it cost it votes. It should have bought the French tram (the Alston tram), which would have cost us more but is a brilliant tram. It is wider and full turning, with concertina hinges at the full length, and it has beautiful seats. I rode in them only a few months ago, and they are brilliant trams. In my private life I have always believed that, whatever you want, you might not be able to afford but, rather than buy the wrong one, you save your money and buy the product you want because, if you buy the wrong thing for the wrong reason, you are never going to be happy with it.

We have a tram that already has been the target of public humiliation and ridicule during the heat wave. It is jolly sad because, irrespective of who is in government, we have to put up with these decisions collectively because we are here in this place and we have to wear the decisions collectively, as does the government. As I said earlier to his worship the ex-mayor (the member for Light), these are decisions that we have to make for generations coming after us and, if we get it wrong, we have to wear the stigma of getting it wrong.

I would also like the minister to consider the option of putting these trams underground. All right, the first thought is shock and horror, but we have a city that would lend itself so easily to underground trams because we have the four squares and we have the parklands.

Ms Ciccarello: How many hundreds of millions of dollars, Ivan?

Mr VENNING: I would urge members when they set their itineraries for flying north for winter (as the media says we will) to go to India and see what it is doing. There is extremely cheap undergrounding there. All they do is dig down two walls on each side of the existing roads, cement the walls in, put the cement across the top, and then they burrow underneath. That is simplistic. But, if you go underneath an existing road corridor like that—under an existing road—at least that is an option. But, it has never been reported here, or not to my knowledge, anyway. It has never at least been put forward.

We also need to re-introduce a country rail service here in South Australia. Everyone tells me that these services will not pay. Of course they do not pay. No rail service in South Australia does pay, so why should the minister tell me that the government will not introduce a Barossa commuter service because it will not pay? Well, hang on; where is the fairness and equity? No other rail pays, so why should that one pay? The house is quiet; there is no retort. The train goes as far as Gawler, and all I am asking is why it cannot then go on to the Barossa at least once or twice a day. It is there but, no, it does not, because it does not pay. Well, the service

from Gawler to Adelaide does not pay, either. So, why does the government not shut that one down? Why does the government not shut down all the others? No; it is because it is the Barossa and because it is politics. It is because it is not a marginal seat; that is what it is all about. We can think about what has happened to this state since the one vote, one value—that is fair and all that—politics has come into every decision we make in this place.

Another problem we have is one that you would be very aware of, sir. Back in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Sir Thomas Playford and his Liberal government connected most of the farms in the state to the ETSA grid by a single wire. Well, sir, go and have a look. We have a massive problem on our hands. Here there is millions of dollars of infrastructure, and it is starting to break down and rot, particularly in the South-East. These poles are rusting out; they do not last for ever. So, what is the government going to do? Who is going to pay for the replacement of this service? Looking at this, I would say that it would probably cost \$3 billion or \$4 billion to replace this service. So, I ask the Treasurer: is that in your forward planning? Do you have any asset planning to replace all that? What are you going to do? Are you going to charge the farmers for the new poles?

The Hon. K.O. Foley: What?

Mr VENNING: You know. The poles that go across the paddocks to each farm house at the moment, with a single wire on them.

The Hon. K.O. Foley: You sold them!

Mr VENNING: I know. What is going to happen—

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Who knows? You sold them.

Mr VENNING: No; we leased it. You understand what is going to happen with that.

Another problem we have at the moment, sir—and you would be very aware of this—is that, with the equipment we have today, many farmers are over-extending the capacity of that single wire to deliver the power, particularly when integrated with air-conditioning. Most of them are over-drawing that line to supply. What are we going to do about that? You cannot just keep pushing more power down a single wire. So, we will have problems in the future, and if this state is to continue its success we will have to consider these things. All I ask of the government is to please plan its asset management and asset replacement.

Time expired.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The member for MacKillop.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Tell us how you went in Millicent South and Nangwarry.

Mr WILLIAMS: Nangwarry is not in my electorate, and I went very well in Millicent South.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Well, what is Nangwarry—Mount Gambier?

Mr WILLIAMS: It's in Mount Gambier.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I thought it was in yours.

Mr WILLIAMS: No. I am amazed. The Attorney-General has made two mistakes: he does not know which electorate Nangwarry is in and he cannot remember very much about the Crown Solicitor's Trust Account. He has a problem. He has been caught out twice. It is amazing for a man with a memory like his; he has a memory like a steel trap. He reckons that he can quote the results from every booth in the state, yet he fails to remember something as simple as the Crown Solicitor's Trust Account. I think the

Attorney-General would be best served by closing his mouth at this stage.

I want to make a few comments about remarks that the new member for Newland made on 3 May when he talked about some comments that I made about the Premier's claim that the fact that we have an upper house was impacting on our ability to attract more mining exploration activity in South Australia. Notwithstanding that the Premier claimed that that is not what he said, he did stand up in the house and say to me and to my leader, 'I will give you a copy of my speech.' I am still waiting for the copy of the speech. The point I was making is that the Premier does not mind being reported as having said something when he does not actually say it, just as the Premier does not mind it being reported that he now supports new uranium mines. He has been reported as having that opinion for 12 months, yet the Premier has never said it, and he has never refuted it.

This is exactly the same as what happened down at the minerals investment conference the other week. The Premier made some comments, and he may well have been reported out of context, but he was quite happy to be reported out of context because it served his purpose. That was the point I was trying to make to the house, and the new member for Newland took offence at that and said some fairly silly things. When you indulge in personal abuse rather than debate facts in this place, it will often come back to you. I will read from a copy of a pamphlet that the member for Newland sent around his electorate prior to the election. It was actually under the Premier's hand, he signed this, and there is a photo of the member for Newland and his family. The Premier says:

My government has started work on the expansion of mining at Roxby Downs.

Nothing could be further from the truth. If the current Premier had had his way on Roxby Downs, it would still be a mirage in the desert. This government has not started work and will never start work on the expansion of the mine at Roxby Downs. This government will stand back and welcome BHP Billiton's investment.

The Hon. K.O. Foley: You don't know what you're talking about, you goose!

Mr WILLIAMS: How much are you spending up there?

The Hon. K.O. Foley: You want to know how much we're going to end up spending?

Mr WILLIAMS: How much?

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Tens of millions, if not hundreds.

Mr WILLIAMS: What on?

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Hospitals, schools, roads. You're a goose!

Mr WILLIAMS: The Treasurer is suggesting that because people are going to live at Roxby Downs and the state will have to provide services for them, let me quote again:

My government has started work on the expansion of mining at Roxby Downs.

Good one, Treasurer. In its State Strategic Plan, and I have continued to argue that it is neither a plan nor strategic, the government claims that it wants the population of South Australia to increase to two million people by the year 2050. If we did not have an expansion at Roxby Downs and those people were somewhere else, would they not be supplied with schools, hospitals, roads, sewerage and other services? It has nothing to do with the expansion of the Roxby Downs mine. The government is not working on the expansion of mining at Roxby Downs.

One of the other things that the new member for Newland took exception to was the fact that I made the claim that the government's PACE program is a rebadging of the previous government's TEISA program. Here he comes: welcome! At least I will acknowledge, as I have in the past, that what has been done for the mining sector in South Australia goes back a long way, and I am big enough to acknowledge that Frank Blevins was probably the person who started it off when he got the Treasurer of the day to invest the money in the initial aerial magnetic surveys. He got the government to invest in the original aerial magnetic surveys. That was recognised by the Liberal Party, when it came into power in 1993, as being of benefit to the future of South Australia. That program was taken on board by the Liberal government, and it was expanded, and it grew.

I fully acknowledge that the current government has continued those programs, and has evolved the programs. There are some changes, it is not identical, but it is the same program that has been happening in South Australia now for nearly 20 years. I am big enough to acknowledge that Frank Blevins was the original architect. Unfortunately, the new member for Newland is not big enough to acknowledge that the Liberal Party not only picked up that program, but expanded it, and, indeed, set up the minerals task force in 1999, which developed and brought down the targets that have been adopted by the current government as the targets which appear in the State Strategic Plan. They were adopted by the former Liberal government under the ministry of Mr Matthew, back in early 2000.

The member for Newland suggested that the Liberal Party never had any mining platform or policies. Can I tell the new member for Newland that it was the Liberal government that actually instituted the ILUA process, which has been a huge benefit to the mining industry in South Australia. That was not started by Frank Blevins, and I do not go out every day and say, 'Look at what we did,' but it was started by the previous Liberal government. I will tell members some of the things that the Liberal government would not have done. We would not have locked up 500 000 square kilometres of wilderness area out in the Yellabinna.

I am told by the industry—and the new member for Newland tried to suggest that I do not talk to the industry—that there are some very prospective areas out there, yet the government locked it up. It did not lock it up on the basis of any science; it locked up those areas that were not already tenanted. That is what the government did. It might have smudged around the edges a little bit, but basically it looked at a map and said, 'There's an area here; it's about half a million square kilometres, we'll lock it up as a wilderness area.' No science behind it; it was purely to appease the green movement.

The Liberal government would not have had double dipping with regard to native vegetation. The mining sector is double dipped against with regard to native vegetation. It has to protect native vegetation; it has to replant, rehabilitate, and it also has to pay into the Native Vegetation Fund. That was not Liberal Party policy, and it is not helping the mining industry. The Liberal Party did not increase the royalty rate by 40 per cent. I know that the new member for Newland has worked with the current minister for mines and energy for a few years, and I know he has some feeling for the industry, but, the current government is collecting almost \$100 million in royalties. It is awash with funds, and it is putting in no more money to support the mining sector than it was getting

at the end of the last Liberal government's term. It is less than \$3 million a year.

The Hon. K.O. Foley: You're not telling the truth.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am telling the truth, minister. There is a lot of work to be done, and I agree with what the Treasurer said in the house today, that the future of this state largely depends on the mining sector.

Time expired.

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): In the last few days in my electorate, we have had the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) conference. The thought lines for CEFPI were: learn, think, connect. It was a pleasure to be part of the opening presentation on Sunday afternoon when Greg Mackie, a well-known identity, was the plenary speaker. About 200 people attended the conference. The keynote speakers were Mr Barry McGaw, who was the Director of Education for the OECD in Paris, and now works at the University of Melbourne; and Dr Julia Atkin, who is a well-known educator and world expert in learning methodologies, including Steiner, Montessori and Reggio Emilia. I look forward to finding out what Reggio Emilia is.

The third keynote speaker is Mr Adrian Welke of Troppo Architects, who is working with the Western Australian education department in building new schools, new learning centres that respond to the needs of the local community. That is what local communities are asking for: educational facilities that provide not only a great education for their children but also a great local facility. It is good to see the people from CEFPI in Adelaide discussing that. Hopefully, the local architects and those involved in the education infrastructure industry will learn a lot and come up with some even better ideas than they are producing already.

School pride: being proud of your local school is something that this government has certainly placed on tin fences and wire fences around the place—big signs saying 'School Pride'—some of them costing hundreds of dollars for the sign alone. When you look at the school itself there are some areas where perhaps that money could have been better spent. I should point out that one kindergarten in particular in my electorate, Somerton Park Kindergarten, is surrounded by a tin fence. The only place the kids could look out onto the street was through a barred fence about a metre and a half high and about three metres long, but that now has one of the biggest 'School Pride' signs I have ever seen in my life covering just about the whole of that fence, and all the kids see now is a tin fence and the sky. It is really interesting to see that one of the signs at Brighton High is a focus for graffiti as well. That is unusual for Brighton High because it is a very good high school.

The need for communities to have schools that not only serve their educational expectations but can also be used as a community resource is becoming greater and greater. We have a number of libraries now which are being used out of hours. I hope to see sporting facilities such as tennis courts and ovals being used more and more by the community. That is something that we on this side would be more than happy to support.

There is a range of communities in South Australia from the very affluent down to those on the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. Earlier today, in this place, I talked about categories of schools from 1 to 7, and I think the inference was that the category 7 schools were the best performing schools and category 1 schools were the worst performing schools. That is not quite correct. I will just place

on the record that the category 1 schools are the schools from the lower socioeconomic areas and the category 7 schools are from the highest socioeconomic areas.

According to reports that I have in my possession, investigations have shown a strong correlation between the index category—in other words, 1 to 7—and the results in the basic skills tests. I was not too far off the mark, but I do not want schools that are at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale (category 1 schools) to think that they are not doing a good job. There was no such inference intended at all. I know that every teacher in this state, every principal in this state, in Catholic, independent and particularly state schools, does work very hard.

The issue of student-free days was raised on the radio the other day and it was said that the opposition was going to oppose student-free days, implying that teachers were slacking. That was not what was put to the media. What was put to the media was that there are three or four student-free days a year and the governing council—of which I am a member at Brighton secondary—actually approved those student-free days. They are used for professional development, and there is no doubt that teachers need ongoing professional development and we support that. There may be a case, however, to ensure that those days set aside for professional development are not interfering with the lives or the private arrangements of families. I think schools are cognisant of that and that they do try to cause minimal disruption but provide maximum benefit for teaching staff.

Schools in South Australia (independent schools, state schools and Catholic schools)—I know the new member for Bright was a teacher in the Catholic system—are terrific schools. I met with the Principal of St Mary's Catholic Primary School this morning to discuss some issues. That is another good school. We must be very proud of the education system in South Australia. Certainly, as the shadow minister for education, I look forward to interacting with all the areas in the educational sphere in South Australia and to giving it all the support we possibly can. We need to ensure that we do not drive wedges between the unions, the government, the parents and school communities because that is not what it is about: it is about driving the issues to ensure that our children get the best value for money. As I said this afternoon, we need to ensure that our children receive the maximum benefit of their education to maximise their potential in life, and that is what everybody in this place wants for this state's children.

Motion carried.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

I thank members for their contributions. The Liberal opposition can rest assured that I did not think anyone could out-trump the notion of one of the most longstanding Liberal members to underground our tram system based on Indian technology and practice by simply digging a hole, dropping the tram, burrowing down and putting a bit of concrete on the walls. That will come back to haunt the members of the opposition when they try to lecture me on fiscal responsibility, not to mention occupational health and safety issues.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.22 p.m. the house adjourned until Thursday 11 May at 10.30 a.m.

