

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 21 June 2007

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.J. Snelling)** took the chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (CANNABIS OFFENCES) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill deals with the expiation of simple cannabis offences. It was moved by Family First in another place, and I am happy to move the bill here for the consideration of the house. When the expiation notice scheme was introduced by the former Labor government in about 1985 or 1986, I happened to be the state president of Apex at the time, and it was one of the few times that Apex as an organisation came out against a piece of legislation—so concerned was that organisation about the flow-on effects of the message that that particular legislation would send to the community about the soft approach to cannabis. One of their big concerns was the mental health problems that long-term use of cannabis would cause. I think history will show that those concerns were correct.

This bill is a very simple bill, which eliminates the right to expiation for growing cannabis plants. The reason I support this bill is well set out in *Hansard* in the remarks made by Dennis Hood on 31 May in relation to this legislation. The Police Commissioner is on record—chapter and verse over many years—regarding the damage that cannabis has done to society. I think we should heed his advice in terms of the message this place sends to the community about cannabis use. As regards those who may be concerned about the flow-on effects in the courts, I refer to Mr Hood's speech where he says that the flow-on effects in regard to the case-flow management in the courts will not be significant. He says that the procedure under the Summary Offences Act will continue to be available to offenders whereby they can reply to their summons and plead guilty—if they are guilty—by writing to the court registry, thereby not needing to attend the court. Therefore, in many instances these cases will not go to court, although some people—Mr Hood in particular—have the view that having to go to court as a result of growing cannabis signals to the offenders the seriousness of their behaviour.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

FAIR WORK (PROHIBITION AGAINST BARGAINING SERVICES FEE) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Fair Work Act 1994. Read a first time.

Mr WILLIAMS: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This is not the first time this matter has come before this chamber. In fact, my colleague the member for Davenport on two previous occasions has brought this matter to the

attention of the house, the first being on 4 December 2002, and I understand that the matter then lapsed when the house was subsequently prorogued. My colleague then reintroduced the measure on 24 September 2003.

The fact that I have had to bring the matter before the house a third time—and I believe that no government member has deigned to address this issue—highlights the problems for private members in getting the house to concentrate and attend to the matters brought before it; it certainly highlights the problems of an arrogant government that will not come out and talk about its policies and philosophies, and let the people of South Australia know where it stands on certain issues.

This is quite an important matter. This is about putting a line in the sand. It is about saying to the union movement, 'You are free to represent your members. You are free to go out and represent your members and work on their behalf to achieve the best result for your members.' The Liberal Party has always supported unionism and the right of people to join associations. We have always supported freedom of association. This bill enshrines the freedom of association. It would stop unions using a device to enforce compulsory unionism on those who do not wish to join a union; that is what it is about.

Members interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: A number of members opposite are heckling. I would think, if they feel strongly about this, they would take the opportunity to address this matter at the appropriate time and give a considered response on behalf of the government.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: We will!

Mr WILLIAMS: The Attorney-General says, 'We will.' I am delighted with that, because on two previous occasions (which I have mentioned already) the Attorney-General and his colleagues failed to respond. It is important that they respond, because we would like to think they are in step with their federal colleagues—and this will be a little test for state Labor. This will be a test because we have seen the federal Labor leader Kevin Rudd and his deputy Julia Gillard walk away from the notion that unions should be able to demand bargaining fees from non-union people. They have walked away from that notion, as did the Premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr, some years ago when he said that his state government would have no part of unions forcing money out of non-union people. We know that Bob Carr was against it, we know that Kevin Rudd is against it and we know that Julia Gillard is against it. We want to know what Mike Rann's Labor government thinks about the right of people to insert into awards a bargaining fee whereby unions can knock on the door of non-union people to demand a fee. It is compulsory unionism by another name—and that is what it would be.

Every time they talk about this, the unions propose to set the bargaining fee well above the annual union membership fee. I will not go into all the detail, but I draw members' attention to my colleague's contributions on 4 December 2002 and 24 September 2003. The honourable member details examples and the amounts of money involved. He clearly makes the point that this is a back-door form of compulsory unionism whereby, if a union can get a bargaining fee inserted into an award, they will knock on the door of non-union people who are paid under that award and demand a fee substantially above what the annual union subscription would be; and thereby coerce those people to join their union—and this is one of the problems for this government—

and thereby increase the flow of money into the state ALP's coffers for electioneering. That is what this is all about. I reiterate that federal Labor has recognised that less than 15 per cent—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS:—thank you, sir—of the Australian workforce outside the Public Service remains unionised. Federal Labor has realised the political implications of imposing this sort of nonsense. This government has already demonstrated once that it does not want to be a party to this, when it last negotiated pay rises with the Public Service Association. The PSA wanted to insert a bargaining fee into the award and the government sensibly withstood the pressure to have it inserted into the award. I am suggesting that the government should let us know clearly what its position is and support this measure to make it clear, once and for all.

As we all know, the industrial landscape has changed dramatically in recent times as a result of the federal government's WorkChoices legislation, notwithstanding the nonsense we hear from the union movement and, indeed, from the Minister for Industrial Relations in this state who, either yesterday or the day before in answer to a Dorothy Dixier question, tried to suggest that AWAs are lowering workers' wages. The question is, if that is the case, why is the government moving to put some 850 of its public servants on AWAs? Why is the government moving to put its own employees on AWAs, taking away the rights they have enjoyed for years?

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: What evidence is there for that?

Mr WILLIAMS: You are putting senior public servants on contracts.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Not AWAs.

Mr WILLIAMS: It is the same thing—and you know it is. The Attorney-General says it is not an AWA: it is an individual contract. A rose is a rose by any other name.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much interjecting on my right. Both the Attorney-General and the member for Torrens will have an opportunity to participate in the debate. I ask them to show the same courtesy that the member for MacKillop always shows.

Mr WILLIAMS: Thank you, sir, for highlighting the opportunity, as I did, that those two members will have the right to rise in their place and express their opinion on this particular matter. In all seriousness, the Liberal Party thinks this is an important piece of legislation. We believe this would send a positive signal to the commercial sector in South Australia and to those people in the state who want to know what the future holds so as to minimise risk when they employ people. That is why John Howard can claim—and rightfully claim—that employment levels in Australia have reached more than 30-year highs because of the surety that has now been built into the IR system. This is another small step, bearing in mind, that a significant proportion of South Australians now are insulated from any attack by the union movement to enforce bargaining fees on them because they are now under the federal WorkChoices system—and they will remain under it irrespective of the outcome of the upcoming federal election. As I have already said—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: I said 'irrespective of the outcome'. As I have already said, we know that both the federal leader, Kevin Rudd, and his deputy made the commitment not to

allow unions to enforce bargaining fees on non-union members. They have made that commitment. I am asking the South Australian government to join hands with Kevin Rudd and reinforce that commitment so that workers in South Australia will not have to pay bargaining fees when they have not asked an agent to act on their behalf. I think it is important that this state Labor government join hands with Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard and say, 'Yes, we agree.' We do know in another matter—and this government needs to come clean on a number of matters—that is, the rights of injured workers, that the government is running scared and hiding and will not put down its position until after the federal election.

We all know what the position is: it will rip rights away from injured workers in this state. We know that; everyone knows that, particularly the injured workers—talk to any of them. This government can go a little way, although I know that I will not get them over the line on the injured workers situation because the Minister for Industrial Relations (with the consent of his cabinet colleagues) has deemed that it is more expedient for the ALP—not for South Australia—that he spend another \$1.1 million of taxpayers' funds having yet another review into the mess that he has made of WorkCover just so that the people of South Australia, the working men and women of South Australia, do not get an inkling of what this Labor government thinks of them. That is what they are doing with regard to WorkCover.

I am asking the government to look at this measure and say, 'Yes, we agree with our federal colleagues and we will draw a line in the sand and say to the union movement, "Sorry, what you are proposing is just totally unfair. We would not allow it to happen in any other form of commercial enterprise. We would not allow anyone else to send a bill for a service which was never asked for. We would not allow that to happen and we will not allow it to happen with regard to bargaining fees for non-union members."' I commend the bill to the house. I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

1—Short title

This Act may be cited as the *Fair Work (Prohibition Against Bargaining Services Fee) Amendment Act 2007*.

2—Commencement

This Act will come into operation 1 month after assent.

3—Amendment provisions

In this Act, a provision under a heading referring to the amendment of a specified Act amends the Act so specified.

Part 2—Amendment of Fair Work Act 1994

4—Amendment of section 4—Interpretation

Section 4(1)—after the definition of *award* insert:

bargaining services means services provided by (or on behalf of) an association in relation to—

- (a) an industrial dispute (including representation in proceedings before the Court or the Commission); or
- (b) an industrial matter; or
- (c) an industrial instrument (including, as appropriate, the negotiation, making, approval, variation or rescission of the instrument);

bargaining services fee means a fee (however described) payable to—

- (a) an association; or
 - (b) someone else in lieu of an association,
- wholly or partly for the provision, or purported provision, of bargaining services, but does not include a membership fee;

5—Amendment of section 79—Approval of enterprise agreement

Section 79—after subsection (2) insert:

- (2a) The Commission must refuse to approve an enterprise agreement if the agreement includes a provision that requires payment of a bargaining services fee.

6—Amendment of section 115—Prohibited reason

Section 115—after paragraph (n) insert:

(o) because the other person has not paid, has not agreed to pay, or does not propose to pay, a bargaining services fee.

7—Insertion of Chapter 4 Part 4 Division 1A

Chapter 4 Part 4—after Division 1 insert:

Division 1A—Prohibition against bargaining services fee
139A—Association must not demand bargaining services fee

(1) Subject to subsection (2), an association, or an officer or member of an association, must not demand payment of a bargaining services fee from another person.

Maximum penalty: \$20 000.

(2) Subsection (1) does not prevent an association from demanding or receiving payment of a bargaining services fee that is payable to the association under a contract for the provision of bargaining services.

(3) In this section—

demand includes—

- (a) purport to demand; and
- (b) have the effect of demanding; and
- (c) purport to have the effect of demanding.

139B—Association must not coerce person to pay bargaining services fee

An association, or an officer or member of an association, must not take, or threaten to take, action against a person with intent to coerce the person, or another person, to—

- (a) pay a bargaining services fee; or
- (b) enter into a contract for the provision of bargaining services.

Maximum penalty: \$20 000.

139C—Association must not take certain action

An association, or an officer or member of an association, must not—

- (a) take, or threaten to take, action having the effect, directly or indirectly, of prejudicing a person in the person's employment or possible employment; or
- (b) advise, encourage or incite a third person to take action having the effect, directly or indirectly, of prejudicing a person in the person's employment or possible employment, for the reason that, or for reasons that include the reason that, the person has not paid, has not agreed to pay, or does not propose to pay, a bargaining services fee.

Maximum penalty: \$20 000.

139D—Certain provisions void

A provision of an industrial instrument is void to the extent that it requires payment of a bargaining services fee.

139E—False or misleading representations about bargaining services fees

A person must not make a false or misleading representation about—

- (a) another person's liability to pay a bargaining services fee; or
- (b) another person's obligation to enter into an agreement to pay a bargaining services fee; or
- (c) another person's obligation to join an industrial association.

Maximum penalty: \$20 000.

Schedule 1—Transitional provisions

1—Application of sections 4 and 5

The amendments made by sections 4 and 5 of this Act apply for the purpose of any consideration by the Commission after the commencement of this clause of an enterprise agreement, even if the application to the Commission was made before that commencement.

2—Application of section 139D as inserted

Section 139D of the *Fair Work Act 1994*, as inserted by this Act, applies to any industrial instrument whether executed before or after the commencement of this clause.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

**CONSTITUTION (NUMBER OF MINISTERS)
 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.

The proposal I bring to the parliament today is simple: that the number of ministers be cut from 15 to 13 as of the next election. The current arrangement of 15 ministers was put in place in 2002 when the Labor government wished to include an Independent member of parliament, namely, the member for Mount Gambier, in the Labor ministry, and so there was a desire to increase the number of ministers. There was something momentous about that because it was one of the few occasions up until that point where legislation was brought in by a Labor minister after having told the caucus that the bill would be doing something different. These days I am told it is *de rigeur*. At that time the Labor caucus and the parliament was told that the intention of the bill was to increase the ministry to 14 to take account of Rory McEwen, but in fact the legislation brought it up to 15.

The purpose of my amendment, therefore, is to go back to the situation that applied not only prior to 2002 with the Labor reform but prior to premier John Olsen's reform in the 1990s. Because John Olsen had so many mouths to feed in terms of paying off factional alliances and supporters he needed to expand the ministry beyond 13. However, his desire to keep control amongst his closer associates meant that he set up a system whereby there would be 10 cabinet ministers and five junior ministers. The so-called junior ministers had a lesser rate of pay. Prior to that time the ministry was 13 and the state was able to run perfectly well, perhaps if we exclude the oversight of the State Bank.

The number of ministers in other states is variable. It is true that the states larger economically than South Australia have more ministers, yet we can look at the Northern Territory and Tasmania, which have nine ministers and are able to function perfectly well. They still have schools, hospitals, environmental issues and police to consider: we have the same issues. We can run the state with 13 ministers. There are a couple of more profound implications, one being that with 69 members of parliament and the ministry formed from, generally speaking, the ruling party—the party that has won a majority in the House of Assembly—it means that you really only have 30-something MPs to choose from to select your 15 ministers, and there is a question of the talent pool. Once you get beyond 13—some would say even beyond five or 10—the talent drops off fairly rapidly and there is a law of diminishing returns. I will not name a couple of current ministers we could do without, but people can fill in the blanks. Thirteen ministers would be quite adequate.

There is another profound implication and that is the proportionality of the power of the executive compared with the parliament. It is worth reminding members occasionally that the parliament has just as vital a role to play in our democracy as has the executive. When you have 15 members of the executive out of a ruling party that will have 30-something members in the parliament, and then you consider that the ruling party is able to appoint, usually, the president of the upper house, the speaker of the lower house, government whips and parliamentary secretaries, there are enough people being paid off to ensure that the executive can do whatever it wishes. That is not healthy for our democracy. There needs to be just enough elasticity in the system for occasionally the backbenchers of the ruling party to say no to the executive. For example, when the Labor government next year brings in moves to cut benefits to injured workers, there needs to be enough play in the system to allow Labor

backbenchers to say, 'No, we will not put up with that; that is not what we stand for.'

Another factor, a more remote implication, is that if the model proposed by the member for Enfield, Mr John Rau, is ever adopted, it will be equally important not to have an excessive number of ministers. Mr Rau in 2002 suggested there be a single chamber of parliament with voters directly electing the Premier, who would then choose the ministry. The ministry would not be chosen from members of parliament. Members of parliament would, through the committee system, the operation of question time and the general running of parliament, be able to scrutinise and contain the ministers. If suitably capable people were being chosen by a premier, we would not need 15 but could do the job with 13. One illustration of this is the fragmentation of ministries. We have had a series of press release ministries created with ministers for mental health, road transport and so on. They are important issues, but they have been dealt with quite capably within larger portfolios in previous times and it seems that the government seeks kudos for addressing the issue simply by creating a ministry.

My final point is in relation to cost. If you abolish a couple of ministers you are not only saving \$200 000 a year in salary but also saving perhaps \$2 million by the time you deduct the white cars, the advisers and the bureaucracy that goes with each new department. It is a move that could save \$2 million a year for the South Australian taxpayer—very timely in light of the recent pay rises to members of parliament. I commend this move to the house and stress that it is not chopping off anyone's head at this time as the transitional provisions ensure that it would not take place until after the next election and after the next government is formed. The clauses are few, straightforward and self-explanatory.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (DELEGATE MINISTERS) BILL

Mr HANNA (Mitchell) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Administrative Arrangements Act 1994, the Oaths Act 1936 and the Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1990. Read a first time.

Mr HANNA: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This statutes amendment bill amends three acts. The amendments would be required in consequence of the passage of the bill I just introduced. In short, if my proposal to cut the number of ministers from 15 to 13 passes and becomes effective as of the formation of the next government, then these additional pieces of legislation would require amendment to delete references to 15 ministers, junior ministers, and so on. The clauses are self-explanatory and, as I have said, this measure is consequential upon the proposal to cut the number of ministers from 15 to 13.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

WATERWORKS (WATER MANAGEMENT MEASURES—USE OF RAINWATER) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I move:

That this bill be restored to the *Notice Paper* as a lapsed bill pursuant to section 57 of the Constitution Act 1934.

Motion carried.

SEWERAGE (GREYWATER) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I move:

That this bill be restored to the *Notice Paper* as a lapsed bill pursuant to section 57 of the Constitution Act 1934.

Motion carried.

SEWERAGE (WATER MANAGEMENT MEASURES—USE OF WASTE MATERIAL) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I move:

That this bill be restored to the *Notice Paper* as a lapsed bill pursuant to section 57 of the Constitution Act 1934.

Motion carried.

DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT (CATS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 7 June. Page 372.)

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): This is a bill that I thought the government would be introducing, because I know that when the Hon. John Hill was minister for the environment he sent out some discussion papers seeking consultation on the management of cats along lines similar to the changes that were made to the Dog and Cat Management Act for the management of dogs. However, I once said to John Hill that you have never seen anything as feral as a cat owner who goes feral, because cat owners are normally very passionate people. When I had my veterinary practice, I had over 7 000 cats on my patient list and, whilst some of the cats were pretty difficult to treat, if you did not give the owners full satisfaction and communicate with them well, sometimes they could be very difficult to treat out of passion for their pets, and I applaud that passion. However, I have a lot of sympathy for this bill, which has been introduced by the member for Fisher, although there are some issues with it. Certainly, local government has some issues.

At least the minister had the intestinal fortitude to actually put the bill before the house. I think that the government whimped out on this. With the government's resources, it should have been able to put through this bill and sell the idea of cat control to members of the South Australian public, because it is certainly needed. There are the zealots out there who think that any form of cat control—desexing and, heaven forbid, culling of cats—is something that should never be considered. If we cannot discuss this sort of issue in this place, it is a disgrace. It needs to be discussed. As a friend of mine said: a feral cat is any cat outside a lounge room. While that is perhaps a little extreme, it should be noted that in Australia we have between 12 million and 20 million feral cats. With the drought existing at the moment it is probably down around the 12 million mark. But, if we do get out of this drought it will go back up to about 20 million feral cats. They are all over South Australia, from the suburbs right up through the APY lands.

There is a terrific poster at Ayers Rock (at Yulara) depicting the damage that feral cats are doing in the APY lands, because cats really are desert creatures. But you do not have to go to the APY lands; look around at the damage that cats are doing in the suburbs to our gardens, to themselves

but also, more importantly, to our wildlife, consuming all the lizards and birds. But, it is a bigger issue than that. There are many communicable diseases to humans that are carried by cats, in particular, feral cats. Toxoplasmosis is probably the nastiest of the whole lot, and can cause severe foetal abnormalities in pregnant women.

The current situation is that cats need to be identified by law; they need to have a microchip, or they need to have an ID tag attached to their collar. That has to be a strong collar so that it does not come off easily. Having said that, I point out that cats have an ability to climb trees and fences, so the collars normally have an elastic piece in them to allow the collar to come off if the cat does get stuck, so it defeats the purpose of having a tag on there. I would recommend that every cat owner do what I have done with my cats and what I was doing for hundreds, if not thousands, of my former clients' cats: insert a microchip. Then, by law, you have to have an 'M' tattooed in their right ear, so that anybody who picks up that cat can see it has a microchip. The microchip can then be scanned by the council, vets, or some of the animal welfare organisations; the number comes up, identifies the owner, and the cat can be returned to the owner.

Returning them to the owner is the big question. Some people say that the cat should not be out there. There are people now taking steps to keep their cats indoors or confined within outdoor cat enclosures. I had a client who had 25 cats, but I give her credit for the effort she put in. She loved her cats, and she had small cages for them in which they were fed every night. During the day, she had an acre of vineyard that was fenced off with cat-proof fencing, and the cats were let out into that area during the day. Cats will sleep anything between 18 and 20 hours a day, and these were pretty happy cats, although I would not encourage people to have any more than two cats. I think that having any more than two cats means difficulties in managing them.

If you want to have more than two cats, you should become a registered cat breeder. That is not to say that they have to be pedigree cats. I loved looking at all the different sizes, shapes and colours of the cats that used to come through my clinic. Certainly, some of the cats that I have had that have been crossbreeds—in fact, most of my cats—have fantastic personalities and, because of that little bit of crossbreeding, they have the hybrid figure, and they tend to stay slightly more healthy. People should be a registered breeder of cats if they are going to breed them. If they are not going to breed their cats, they should get them desexed. Whether it is castration for the males or ovario-hysterectomy for the females, it can be done as young as six weeks, but it is never too late.

Certainly, the cost of desexing cats is always put out there as a huge impost on cat ownership. In defence of the veterinary profession, the cost of desexing dogs and cats is at about a 50 per cent subsidy when you compare it with the normal surgical costs for, say, a stitch-up or any other surgical procedure, including anaesthetics, blood tests and the whole surgical procedure that is going on—the theatre fees, nursing time and hospitalisation. Desexing costs about 50 per cent of what it would normally be. It is being done inexpensively—never cheaply. Vets do not do things on the cheap; we do them as inexpensively as possible.

If your cat has been desexed and identified, you lose the tag and it is not microchipped, it can be euthanased. Vets are ex officio cat control officers, and councils have cat control officers, who I think are some of their general inspectors. They can already catch cats that are causing nuisance, and

they can then euthanase them. When a cat was brought into my clinic with no ID, we would hang on to the cat for a week or so and then, if no owner was found—we would let people know around the place—we would euthanase the cat. It was never a pleasant experience but, unfortunately, because we do have so many feral cats and domesticated cats that have gone wild and been dumped out there, it is a problem that we really do need to control.

This bill is heading towards that cat control. I think that we need to make sure that no costs are passed onto local government. As I have said, cats wandering at large, which is covered by one of the clauses in the bill, is a huge issue. Cats tend to need a large area to wander around in, although nowadays people are at last taking note of the importance of keeping them inside or in outdoor enclosures. But, when they do wander at large, identifying that cat at a distance and catching it can be time consuming and, therefore, expensive. For councils to do that is something that I think has to be addressed, and I do not see it being addressed in this bill. I hope the member for Fisher has an answer. Some councillors who have approached me about this bill have asked, 'How are councils going to manage the registration of cats?' I see no difference in the responsibility between owning a cat and owning a dog as far as maintaining their health and welfare is concerned. So it is in the owner's interests to have that dog or cat registered with the council, and if it gets lost it can be returned.

Nothing is more dramatic than to have people phone you and say, 'We've lost our dog,' or, 'We've lost our cat. Can you help us?' and you cannot help them. Microchipping, identifying and registration are things that I certainly support. The cost of that registration could be kept at a minimum and then used to help return pets to their owners and recover the costs.

The Hon. R.B. Such: And a lifetime registration.

Dr McFETRIDGE: The member for Fisher said 'lifetime registration'. I would certainly applaud that sort of initiative. We need to do something about cat control in South Australia: it is an issue that will not go away. Councils are well aware of it. I know that councils try very hard: they lend out cat traps, they take the cats that are caught to the RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League and sometimes to the local vets. Unfortunately, even though they are obviously domesticated cats, many cannot be identified and are euthanased. Registration of cats and cat control is a huge issue, and it will not go away. I urge the government to look at this bill and to embrace it—and to amend it, if it needs to do so. But let us do something about cat control in South Australia, not only for cats and the whole of the ecology but also for South Australians and cat lovers generally.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

PASSENGER TRANSPORT (SAFETY OF PASSENGERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 7 June. Page 377.)

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): In concluding my remarks, I wish to make some positive and some negative remarks. I would like to commend the taxi industry for the steps it has already taken to improve technology in taxis. Since I introduced this legislation just a couple of weeks ago, the taxi

industry has announced that it will improve technology in cabs to promote safety, which is wonderful.

The other thing I have to say relates to the Minister for Transport. This legislation has its genesis in my concerns about those people who have been sexually assaulted in taxis. It is a very serious matter. The point I raise is that during debate in the House of Assembly the Minister for Transport, when jibing at the Leader of the Opposition, made play of the fact that the leader had attended a military college and implied that he had been sexually assaulted there and that that in some way accounted for his behaviour. That sort of remark might be blokey, but it might be bullying, and it is profoundly offensive and stupid. If that is the attitude of the Labor frontbench, no wonder it has taken this long to have some positive steps taken to improve safety in taxis.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (AUDITOR-GENERAL) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 31 May. Page 238.)

Mr RAU (Enfield): The issue of local government accountability is a very important one. I do not wish to pass any particular remarks about whether this bill in its present form is the best possible solution to the problems thrown up by local government; however, I can say that I agree with the sentiments that have driven the member for Fisher to put this proposal before the parliament. Local government is not, as some in local government would say, a third tier of government. As a matter of law, local government is a creature of statute, and the statute is a statute of the South Australian parliament. It is no more a tier of government than an NRM board, a hospital board, or anything else. The idea that local government has attracted to it some sort of constitutional significance entitling it to be immune from interference, as they ('they' being the protagonists of the local government case) would argue in this place, is absolutely absurd.

The question is this: why should the scope and the extent of audit of local government be any less than the scope and extent of audit of departments responsible to this parliament? I, for the life of me, cannot see why there should be any difference. After all, local government imposes taxes in the form of levies, it imposes fines, and it makes very important decisions affecting the lives of citizens, not least of which is in the planning area.

The Hon. R.B. Such: They run businesses, too.

Mr RAU: As the member for Fisher quite rightly said, they also run businesses. The issue that local government should somehow be immune from the same level of scrutiny as the state government and the federal government through the respective auditor-generals is a non-issue, as far as I am concerned.

The second point to be made is that I have had the misfortune in my years as a member of parliament to have spoken to hundreds of citizens who have been frustrated beyond measure by the fact that they cannot get any satisfaction in relation to complaints they have concerning local government and the way in which it is operating. I accept immediately that some of these citizens are wrong. Their complaints, when properly examined are not capable of being justified, and some of them simply have a communication

issue where they do not understand what is going on. But take them out and I am still left with many, many genuine complaints for which there is absolutely no remedy, no remedy at all. Because what is the good of going to the CEO of the council who is actually the one who is responsible for causing your trouble and complaining about him to him? It is manifestly absurd. Absolutely absurd. Of course, the Local Government Act now provides for a mechanism by which the Minister for Local Government can intervene in a council, but that is the legislative or administrative equivalent of breaking the glass and pressing the button to let the ICBMs go off. It is the last step, not the first step. And therefore, quite reasonably, we do not see councils being sacked very often, and nor would you expect councils to be sacked every time an individual has a complaint.

So there has to be some lower level of scrutiny that is given to local government, that does not involve the minister sacking the council and putting in an administrator, but does involve somebody independent going into the council and having a good look at what they are doing. The Auditor-General, in as much as we are dealing with fiscal or governance issues is the ideal person to be at least supervising that process. The recent report that the member for West Torrens tabled in the parliament from the Economic and Finance Committee, for which I commend him, recommends similar things. He received appropriate recognition in today's edition of *The Advertiser*, and that is a good thing.

This has got to be dealt with. The other thing is that members should ponder this: there is a committee of this parliament that reviews the NRM boards, and the justification for that, amongst other things, is that they are raising revenue and they are levying what amounts to a tax, being the NRM levy. And I ask this question, rhetorically: why is it that we are prepared to have a parliamentary committee whose core business is reviewing what NRM boards do, because they raise a levy, and we do not have any committee of this parliament which can do anything about local government, other than the ERD Committee which I understand has some oversight of planning matters in the broad.

So, there is a lot that needs to be done in this area of local government, and I have to say that in my inquiries about local government, and I have been involved in this for some time, I have found that it is very difficult to get any movement. Since I have been in this parliament I have been deeply concerned about a number of issues and I have taken the time and the effort to try and get some change. One of them was real estate. I have to tell members of parliament that I started out with an entirely hostile Real Estate Institute five years ago and yet with a bit of talking to those people and a bit of working with them it has got to the point now where I do have reasonable relationships, in the broad, with the Real Estate Institute. I can talk to them, they can talk to me, and over the past few years they have, of their own motion, improved the way in which they interact with other members of the community, without being compelled by law to do so. And they have acknowledged that in the past they have been less than perfect, without being compelled to make that acknowledgment.

I wish to goodness the Local Government Association was similarly informed, because dealing with the Local Government Association, in my observation, is a very unhappy experience. It seems to me the Local Government Association is an internally conflicted organisation, because they are effectively the mouthpiece for the CEOs and administrations of the various areas of local government and

they are not able to agree publicly on any position which is above the lowest common denominator, because to agree to any position above the lowest common denominator involves them taking a leadership role and compelling some of their own members to smarten their acts up, and they are not prepared, in my observation, to publicly do that, and that is a great shame. They should look at what the Real Estate Institute has been prepared to do. I do not hold them up as paragons of virtue, but my goodness they have been prepared to do things and say things about people in their industry who are letting them down.

What about the LGA? What are they saying and what are they doing about the people that are letting them down? What are they saying and what are they doing about some of the outrageous practices that have been going on? Their answer is to prattle on about training, and their answer is to focus their attention on the elected members of council and say it is their fault and they should fix it up. These people are basically volunteers, not the full-time, well paid CEOs and other administrative staff who are there all the time and run rings around these volunteers, and at many times humiliate and intimidate them and use legal processes paid for by the taxpayer to intimidate the volunteers who are elected by us to represent us in local government.

It is about time the torch was shone on local government, and it is about time the LGA, instead of navel gazing and apologising and making excuses, made some confessions that some of their members have not been doing the right thing some of the time and it is not acceptable to them. When they get up and do that we are going to have some progress, and the more of a debate there is about this issue the more difficult it is going to be for them to pretend there is nothing wrong.

Mr PEDERICK secured the adjournment of the debate.

ROAD SAFETY MEASURES

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I move:

That this house calls on the state government to review road safety measures at Ocean Boulevard at Seacliff; Main South Road at Darlington; Flagstaff Road at Darlington; and the end of the South-Eastern Freeway, Glen Osmond, with a view to providing arrester beds or similar devices to assist in the control of any runaway trucks at these locations.

I have been concerned about this matter for some time, and it was brought to a head on 12 April when a runaway truck—near the intersection of Main South Road and Seacombe Road at Darlington—crashed into a caravan sales centre and left 14 people with minor injuries. Lady Luck was with us on that occasion, but I am not sure that Lady Luck is going to be with us necessarily in future crashes. In fact, yesterday a bus containing school children got out of control—or was allowed to do its own thing or whatever way you want to describe it—at the Glen Osmond end of the South-Eastern Freeway. Fortunately none of those children was seriously hurt. The point I make is that one of these days at one of the intersections I have named, and possibly at others—there may be some in the northern suburb areas that I have not identified—people will be put at great risk because of the potential for a runaway truck to career into pedestrians, or cars waiting at the lights, or a school bus, and so on.

Main South Road coming down to the Seacombe Road junction is not all that steep; nevertheless, on 12 April that semitrailer caused a lot of damage and demolished at least five caravans. It was one of those ironies—I feel sorry for the

caravan sales centre owner—but the caravans, by their very design, actually took much of the energy and prevented even more damage occurring. Joe Cendak, who owns the business on the corner, has indicated that, as a result of these accidents—and he points out there have been dozens of accidents there, not only involving trucks but serious accidents—that it is very difficult for him to rent out his properties at that intersection because of a perceived risk by potential tenants.

The Darlington situation where Flagstaff Road meets Main South Road, in my view, is even more dangerous because the gradient on Flagstaff Road is more severe than on Main South Road, and we have timber trucks coming down that road bringing logs from Meadows and, I assume, Kuitpo. I know for a fact there has been one incident where a timber truck lost control on Flagstaff Road. Fortunately, virtually no-one was around at the time so there was no loss of life or serious injury. I think the government is tempting fate by not dealing with this issue. A similar problem could occur on Ocean Boulevard and, as I said earlier, at the Glen Osmond end of the South-Eastern Freeway.

In relation to the South-Eastern Freeway—as members would have observed coming down that road—there are arrester beds part way down, but there is nothing actually at the Glen Osmond end of the South-Eastern Freeway where a runaway truck can safely divert. Many years ago—probably in the order of 20 years—a truck did get away coming down from that Glen Osmond intersection. It went down Cross Road and, although I cannot recall all the detail, but it probably somehow managed to go into the Waite Institute land belonging to the University of Adelaide. However, we cannot keep hoping that someone is going to manage to steer their semitrailer into caravans or that someone is going to go into Waite Research land. We are playing with fire in terms of people's lives and possible injuries.

I wrote to the Minister for Transport, because I thought this potential or possible construction of an arrester bed would require infrastructure, and therefore that the Hon. Patrick Conlon would be the minister responsible, but he forwarded the letter to the Minister for Road Safety (Hon. Carmel Zollo). My letter—which, as I said, I sent initially to the Minister for Transport—states:

Dear Patrick

I write following yesterday's truck accident at the intersection of Seacombe Road and Main South Road, Darlington. The outcome could have been far worse, but it highlights the need for a gravel arrester bed or equally effective infrastructure on the west side of Main South Road just prior to Seacombe Road. I believe that there is room to provide one just prior to the old Darlington Police Station building.

I also draw your attention to similar potentially dangerous situations at the intersection of Flagstaff Road/Main South Road, Glen Osmond Road/Portrush Road/Cross Road, as well as the bottom of Ocean Boulevard at Seacliff. There is less scope for arrester beds at these intersections, but some alternative means of stopping an out-of-control truck should be considered. We have been lucky so far—but our luck may run out soon!

Yours sincerely,

The Hon. Carmel Zollo responded to that letter, and said in a reply dated 16 May:

The Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (DTEI) has advised that arrester beds may be provided on steep downgrades to bring runaway trucks to a controlled stop, although for an arrester bed to be effective it needs to be designed so it can be accessed safely, signed appropriately and have alarms fitted to alert DTEI's Traffic Management Centre when utilised. The cost of an arrester bed can vary, but the approximate cost is in excess of \$1 million.

DTEI is undertaking a review of all steep grades within the metropolitan area to ensure traffic signs are appropriate. As a result of this review, the steep descent traffic signs on Main South Road,

O'Halloran Hill have already been enhanced to reinforce the obligations on heavy vehicle operators to drive in accordance with road conditions. DTEI is undertaking a review of signage on Flagstaff Hill Road, Ocean Boulevard and Shepherds Hill Road. The review is expected to be completed by 30 May 2007, following which the need for additional signage will be assessed.

In relation to the incident on 12 April 2007, DTEI has been advised that SAPOL will provide further details once investigations are complete. Given the nature of the crash, it is likely to be some time before SAPOL completes its investigation. The department will determine appropriate actions then.

I was pleased to get that answer from the minister, but it does not really commit to providing arrester beds, or similar infrastructure, at any of those locations. Sure, we need better and appropriate signage, but a sign will not do much for a truck that is out of control. I urge the government to look at the possibility of putting in arrester beds, or some other similar infrastructure, at those various locations. The cost might seem a lot—\$1 million—but, apart from the human cost (which is the important cost to me), one death on our roads costs \$1 million anyway. I would like to see action taken before we have a tragedy at any one of those locations. I ask members, in particular government members, to support the intent of my motion so that we can save lives and prevent injuries, rather than be talking about a tragedy after the event. I commend the motion to the house.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

MURRAY RIVER

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I move:

That this house expresses its dismay at the lack of clarity and openness from the government with regard to strategies proposed and implemented to manage the state's water shortage.

Mr Koutsantonis: So it's our fault it's not raining!

Mr WILLIAMS: I do not think the state faces a greater challenge than that which is presented to us by the nationwide drought. It is a challenge which, if the drought continues and the worst case scenario (to use a term used by the minister for many months) does occur, the state will face a catastrophe much worse than anything it has faced before. All of us have memories long enough to recall the last catastrophe which this state faced and the time it took to recover from the collapse of the State Bank. I contend that, if the irrigators along the Murray River, right down to the Lower Lakes, are forced to allow their perennial plantings, permanent plantings, vineyards, citrus orchards and nut orchards to die, it will devastate the economy of this state for many years. It will not only have a huge impact on the state's economy but also have an incredible social impact on the people who live along the River Murray and whose livelihoods depend on those industries supported by the flow of water down that river.

In response to the inane interjection from the member for West Torrens a few moments ago—'It's our fault it's not raining!'—I suggest that the honourable member take a serious look at the history of what has occurred and the fact that his government has failed to respond in a timely manner in any way whatsoever. I heard the Minister for Water Security on radio within the last week trying to suggest that there was no warning, that the drought had just come along without warning. She tried to explain away the lack of action from this government by the fact that this had all happened very suddenly and we did not see it coming. As luck would have it, last evening the minister gave a briefing and an

update on water resources in South Australia, principally about the situation along the River Murray.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: One person turned up.

Mr WILLIAMS: Yes, that is right. I happened to be at select committee with you, minister.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: And the information has been forwarded to many members. You are right: not one person. The minister is right: not one member of the government turned up at the briefing.

The graph in the briefing notes given out by the minister last night clearly shows the inflows into the River Murray (excluding the Medindee Lakes and the Snowy hydro releases) going back to 1990. It is obvious that, since January 1997, inflows into the River Murray have been well below average. In fact, in the 10-year period from January 1997 to January this year, in only one year has the inflow into the River Murray exceeded the long-term mean average. There have been only two years where it has even approached the long-term mean average, and for at least five of those years it is significantly below one half of the long-term mean average. That is for the last 10 years.

We also had a very significant warning in the year 2002 when the levels in the Murray and the Lower Lakes below Lock 1 fell dramatically because of the lack of inflows coming across the border and we were unable to allow enough water over Lock 1 to keep up the lake levels. That impacted severely on those irrigators particularly around the Lower Lakes who had to dredge and extend channels into the lake to allow water to flow in reasonable quantities to their pumps. That was to enable those irrigators in 2002, some five years ago, to carry on their irrigation activities in an efficient manner and keep supporting the local economy—the dairy industry, the wine grape industry and other industries in that area.

We have had the warnings. We have known what has been coming, but what we have done? We have done very little, unfortunately. In the term of this government, we have seen a number of reports and reviews. Obviously that is the modus operandi of this government. It is always willing to report on something, have another review or hire some experts to do something, but what have we done? Very little. I think I am correct in saying that, in the five-year term of this government, not one extra drop of water has been found for metropolitan Adelaide. We have a lot of plans and the Waterproofing Adelaide strategy. That has been around for a long time. We have plans to extend the Virginia pipeline. That has also been around for a long time.

The federal government has signed off. Its money has been on the table. In fact, it was so disenchanted with the actions of this government, it put a deadline on it and said, 'We need this to progress.' As I understand it, that deadline passed in the fourth quarter of last year. The deadline has come and gone—still no action. We have a plan to waterproof the south—no action. Yet the South Australian Minister for Water Security, time and again when speaking to groups, on the radio, or commenting in the newspaper says that we have the greatest percentage of reuse of any state in Australia—some 20 per cent. Well, she is dead right, but not one more drop of water is being reused in the life of this government. No more pipework; no more schemes: all we have had is reviews, glossy brochures, reports and talk. That is what we get from this government. We have not had the Virginia pipeline extension and, as the member for Frome reminds me, that one has been talked about for six years.

I hark back to the information I gave to the house a few moments ago about the warnings we have had over the past 10 years about the inflows into the River Murray. We have been very comfortable sitting on this side of the Mount Lofty Ranges and ignoring what is happening in the rest of the catchment. We just turn on our tap at will and the water flows and we do not understand what has been happening upstream. Already many communities in the upstream states have suffered greatly. Many individuals have suffered both economically and socially because of the drought and, at last, it has been recognised in South Australia that we are facing the same sort of hardships and challenges, but the government has done nothing.

The opposition announced that in government it would build a desalination plant. The opposition, with incredibly limited resources, has discovered that the future for South Australia and the Adelaide water supply probably rests with desalination, and we were bold enough to make a commitment. The government came out in the first instance and tried to suggest that we had got the numbers horribly wrong. Then it became a little more lukewarm about it. More recently it said, 'We will spend \$3 million in the budget investigating the environmental impacts and where we might build a desalination plant along the coast near Adelaide.' SA Water will spend \$3 million. The government has been dragged kicking and screaming, but the motion is about the lack of coordination and the lack of clarity.

We now have two groups doing a review into desalination. We have the Ian Kowalick group, which was set up some months ago in reaction to the headlines in the local newspaper, *The Advertiser*. That was done to try to show that the government was doing something. Now we have SA Water doing a study into the environmental impacts of desalination. I do not believe that even today the government is serious about desalination. I believe that the government will do whatever it can to come out with a report saying that desalination is too expensive and we will not go there.

Earlier this week, *The Australian* reported that the Victorian government has made a major announcement to move on desalination to supply water to the city of Melbourne. Melbourne is about the third or fourth city in Australia that has recognised belatedly that this is the way forward. I will refer to the article which appeared in *The Australian*, I think two days ago. The quote is attributed to Ross Young, Chief Executive of the Water Services Association of Australia. The Water Services Association is the association of all the major water supply companies, such as SA Water. If members go to their website, they will find a lot of information about SA Water. With regard to the Victorian government's plan to build a desalination plant, the chief executive of that association said:

... the plan effectively tackled climatic uncertainty. 'It's absolutely essential that you have diversified water sources because you can no longer rely on runoff and dams for your water,' he said. 'As a prudent risk management, rainfall-independent sources such as desalination are going to be absolutely imperative for all coastal cities in the long run.'

That is a man who is at the cutting edge of water supply around this nation. That is what he thinks, but people in South Australia think differently.

The Treasurer thinks that the answer is to build a new wall at Mount Bold. Last Friday he was quoted in *The Advertiser*—so I presume he said it last Thursday—as saying:

The other option we're looking at very seriously now is: do we build the capacity of the Mount Bold reservoir to give us a signifi-

cant reserve capacity for water? That could be part-filled once and once only from the Murray and maintained from natural rainfall.

I do not know where he is coming from, or what the Deputy Premier knows about this, but I do know that he does not know very much. Mount Bold reservoir is on the Onkaparinga River, which is already overallocated and, to use the official euphemism, overdeveloped. The environmental damage being caused in the lower reaches of the Onkaparinga River is as a result of only about 18 gegalitres a year which gets past the Clarendon weir, and this government would have the people of South Australia think they were green. The Treasurer never pretends to be green and he certainly is not. However, he does pretend he knows what he is talking about. In this case there is no doubt he does not know what he is talking about—he has got it completely wrong.

I come back to the tenet of the motion a little more closely, namely, the lack of clarity for water users in South Australia. Five weeks before we introduced significant water restrictions on 1 January, the Premier and minister came out and announced what would happen. What was the consequence? Householders went out and made sure that by 1 January their gardens were absolutely saturated. They knew it would be a long, hot summer and they would have water restrictions. Further, the restrictions did not say you were obliged to use less water but simply obliged to turn off the sprinklers for most of the hours in the week. As a consequence, we used more water last season than we used the year before. Householders did not know what was going on or what was expected of them and, by and large, they continued to maintain their gardens and water them as though there was no problem.

Unfortunately, my time has almost expired but some of my colleagues will continue the argument that this government has failed to meet its obligations and to do anything positive to increase the amount of water available, particularly in metropolitan Adelaide; and, more importantly, to bring surety to householders and industry right across the state. Something like 90 per cent of South Australians today get their water from the River Murray, and a number of initiatives could and should have been taken.

Time expired.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): I refer to the reliance of this state on water from the River Murray and the fact that the government has not moved one step away from the River Murray as its main water source for this state. We do not want to make Adelaide totally reliant on the Murray as its water source, and we need to take the pressure off the Murray and look at other sources. One might ask whether this matter is more a case of considering how much of a cash cow SA Water is for the government. An amount of \$1.61 billion over six years will be sucked out of SA Water (on top of what has been sucked out already) to go into general revenue. I acknowledge that we need money for health, education and so on, but the government is having a boom time with the GST it did not want—\$3.8 billion this year and around \$3.4 billion last year. When I talk about being totally reliant on the River Murray, the proposed Mount Bold enhanced reservoir will only be here in 10 years' time—if it is built at all.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, it is a fantastic idea—I jest! Whenever they want to secure two years' water supply for Adelaide, they will have to have those pumps going flat out. I was advised last night that around 770 gegalitres was

released down to the lower reaches last year through to the Coorong. If we had had this dam we would have been able to pump that water into Mount Bold. Pumps can only carry a certain capacity. I do not have the exact figures—

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: That is right. You would have to have massive pipeline and pumping expenditure to come anywhere near pumping even a third of that need. It is wrong as an idea that that water could have been pumped into a reservoir if we had it in place. It does not add up and the government has a lot of hurdles to get over, not only with construction but also with environmental issues involved with Mount Bold. We hope that with investigations occurring there will be a lot more clarity than with the Wellington weir issue, which just came out of the blue with a great big announcement—and away we went! We have heard talk of desalination, and I endorse the comments of the member for MacKillop. The government has been dragged kicking and screaming into this matter and has politicised the whole debate on the issue.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you, minister.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: If the primary industries minister wishes to make a contribution, he can do so after I speak. We looked at the plant in Perth, which with the piping infrastructure was around \$387 million. We acknowledged that was the pricing when they got the plant up and running in November last year. We always acknowledged that it would cost more to do it here, but this state needs to go through the exercise of supplying water not only to Adelaide but also to regional areas, especially Eyre Peninsula. It is madness to keep extending pipelines into the Eyre Peninsula, reliant on the River Murray, when we have irrigators who until a few days ago were under the threat of zero allocation. I hope the minister is getting plenty of phone calls from people in her own electorate, because they are angry and it is pitting South Australian against South Australian. We have people along the upper reaches of the Murray even on our side saying, 'Build the wall; do this; why haven't we got water? Why can't we have water? Build the weir.' I have to remind those people—

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Do you support the weir?

Mr PEDERICK: No, I don't support the weir and I have never supported it.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: I am telling them that there are other people suffering in the system who are quite happy to survive the effects of drought—

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: You're sitting on the fence.

Mr PEDERICK: No, I am not. But they are not happy to endure the effects of a weir about which even the government has no knowledge because it has not done the environmental impact statements. It has no knowledge—nil, zilch—of the full environmental impacts of what a weir will do to the lakes and the Coorong. This illustrates the government's regard for the iconic sites of the Lower Lakes—Lake Alexandrina, Lake Albert and the Coorong. It just does not care. You only have to look at the pictures Peter Owens from the Wilderness Society put up at the Property Council the other day from the mid-1990s through to now of the Murray Mouth simply closing up, but no-one seems to take any notice of that at all. It is just outrageous.

The people who live around the lower lakes have all said to me, 'We can handle drought but we cannot handle the uncertainty of the weir.' The total notion of a Flintstones-

style escapade of putting 700 000 tonnes of rock into a river is folly and, by the way, we were first told that every piece of rock would be pulled out. Obviously, the minister had some advice and she was told it would be impossible because it would sink through the 100 metres-plus of silt. If you put that amount of rock in there after you have built a causeway over several kilometres, it does not sound too temporary to the people down there.

Let me talk about water reuse, sewerage mining and better use of rainwater. These bills went through the upper house last year but, because the government did not care whether or not we were running out of water, the measures were voted against. It is just outrageous. I refer to the Treasurer's comment in the lock-up regarding water supply, bearing in mind that all he is worried about is Adelaide. Somebody asked, 'What about water security for the state?' He said, 'That is all right. If it gets a bit low, we will drop the weir in at Wellington.' That is scant regard for the 30 000 residents living below the proposed weir site. As for the minister's saying that she did not see it coming, I point out that people have endured six years of drought in the Eastern States, where part of the major catchment is for the Murray-Darling Basin. Apparently, it is all right to go back over 116 years of historical figures and say that we did not see it coming. This government has a so-called State Strategic Plan which says that we will have 2 million people living here by 2050. The problem is that the government has not considered how these people will be told that they will have to import bottled water from somewhere else just to keep themselves alive.

I have already mentioned the effect on communities located below the proposed weir site. Ever since it was announced, there have been plenty of mental health issues. The government only needs to talk to health professionals in the region. There are also social issues; people have to make major decisions in respect of their programs. I know of five dairies that have sold out. People are destocking and drying off stock; in fact, there are people who have just turned their backs on what has been their—and their families'—life for well over 100 years, and it is just a terrible thing to go through. But they are gritty people. They know how to access water. They have gone far below the levels where people said they could access water. I know that one farmer has rolled a pipe one kilometre into the lake to access water. We need to remember that people in this state, including irrigators, have never faced a situation like this, and they have to ask this government what has been going on and why they have fallen asleep at the wheel. It is outrageous. We have a 1 per cent allocation, which is better than zero because plenty of irrigators were giving messages to me that, under zero allocation, they would have still turned on the taps to keep their permanent plantings alive and take the consequences, and those consequences can be large—they can have their water shut down. I commend the motion.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Frome): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the member for MacKillop. There is no doubt that what we have seen over the past two years is a total mishandling of the whole water situation. To say late last year that this has come out of nowhere ignores the warnings which were coming out of the Murray-Darling Basin Commission. On their website every week, there is a weekly report from the commission, and anyone who takes the time to go back and read those reports from about May last year will see that they were screaming warnings to South Australia all the way through. Last year in estimates, which

because of the Treasurer's inability to get a budget up until late in the year took place in about October/November, acting minister Hill told the estimates committee, when he was asked why no restrictions had been announced, that the reason was that we were not too sure that Adelaide would actually need to have restrictions last year.

That was in about late October, early November. That is totally at odds with what the irrigators had been told back in July. So, it was all right for the irrigators to have restrictions back in July, yet in the last quarter of the year we were told in this house that there was no certainty that Adelaide would need to do anything whatsoever about restricting their water usage, and that was despite many towns and cities in New South Wales having banned all outside watering at that stage, their water source being exactly the same as ours. So, the government actually got it horribly wrong with restrictions. Restrictions should have been brought in months before they actually were. When they were brought in, they were totally ineffective, in that watering was allowed on three days per week which is more time than people normally spend watering anyway. They then went with the absolute folly announcing level 3 restrictions 5½ weeks before actually bringing them in. On the SA Water website there is a chart which shows daily and weekly usage and compares it with last year.

In late November/December we actually saw the gardens of Adelaide getting watered like they had never been watered before. Ever since 1 January, when the new restrictions came in, we have been playing catch-up, and right up until today, we have used more water this water year than we used in the previous one. That is a disgrace, and it has been caused by mismanagement of the restrictions. Had the government gone out with education and tried to embrace the public rather than the Attorney-General heading down the line of dobbing in everyone for using it, with nothing done about inside use, basically we could have done a far better job.

On the issue of ignoring the peril for far too long, they really did have their fingers crossed that it would rain like it has never rained before. The member for MacKillop referred to the project up north, which has been around for a long time. The frustration out there is enormous. They were hoping that the state government would sign off on it three years ago. The feds then saw that the state government was not putting its hands in its pocket, so they put money in, still asked for a contribution from the state government, but that has just not been forthcoming. That is an absolute disgrace when you look at the record for water reuse when this government took over in 2002 when we were leading Australia well and truly. Since then nothing has happened.

There is a huge project down south. Local government, industry and federal government all signed off again. The one dragging the chain, the one making sure that it does not happen, is the state government. We have also seen an absolute mess down at Glenelg, where the waste water treatment plant is actually putting out more water to sea than it has in the past because of the failed policy of the government to try and turn that water into greater cash to drag, yet again, out of SA Water.

The member for Hammond spoke about the weir. The handling of the weir has been an absolute disgrace. The reason that we went down the track of having a weir was because the Premier pulled a figure of \$20 million from mid air when, all of a sudden, the government went from ignoring the problem to saying, 'Hang on, we've got a problem; we'll have a temporary weir.' The \$20 million was always a joke.

There has been so much documentation over so many years that shows that that was nothing more than something for a press release. That \$20 million sort of locked the government into a temporary weir solution. There are other solutions. From Lock 1 to Mannum is the area that we need to transfer the water to. I am sure that, instead of \$20 million for a temporary weir, plus whatever it blows out to, there could have been other transport mechanisms put in place to get the water from weir 1 to Mannum where it is actually required.

The other issue is that the whole government strategy—the temporary weir, the thing with Mount Bold—assumes an enormous reliance on the River Murray in the future. There is nothing about alternative water: it is all to do with the River Murray. To say that a temporary weir at Wellington is the answer basically says that we will not have this problem again. It locks this into a one-off problem. It is far from a one-off problem. Anybody who understands climate change understands that this is far from a one-off problem. The idea of the Mount Bold reservoir, again, is about virtually locking Adelaide into a total reliance on the River Murray.

We have heard much from Labor across Australia about climate change sceptics—non believers—that the Murray is in crisis. This government is well and truly leading the way as a sceptic of climate change. To say that we need temporary solutions in the river, to say that Mount Bold is the answer to Adelaide's water problems is basically saying that the rain will continue as it always has, and the River Murray will be a reliable supply. Well, neither of those are right, and the government needs to wake up to the fact that climate change is with us, and that we need to deal with it. With that, I support the motion. I find it unbelievable that the government has been able to just ignore the problems that have been occurring. The Treasurer, obviously, does not want to put any meaningful money into water infrastructure. He is the leading climate change sceptic in Australia, and South Australia will wear the consequences.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): The claim that the government was caught napping, I guess, is partly true, but it is in some ways a bit unfair. We were all caught napping. The drought did come, in a way, with a double-barrel hit. What Sir Thomas Playford did in getting the Mannum pipeline, I think, was to actually lull us into a false sense of security, in that we thought that if it does not rain much in the Adelaide Hills catchment we can always suck water out of the Murray. When the Murray supplies are reduced and we get less rain in the catchment, we get a double whammy, and I think that is what has caught us out this time. But, whether or not the government was asleep, you could argue that previous governments in recent times have been asleep as well.

I think we have all been comforted by the fact that we have this alleged fall-back of the Murray. In fact, if you look at the generation that has grown up and is now in its twenties, they have come through with a different attitude to water conservation than what was drummed into people like myself when I was at school. We were not allowed to waste one drop of water. Now, I notice, and I will obviously not name them, that I have nieces and nephews who see nothing wrong with staying in the shower for half an hour or longer. To my generation that is extraordinarily extravagant and unnecessary. I think the first thing we need is an education program and a reinvigoration of water conservation measures, in order to drum into people, from the very earliest age, that they should not waste water. For those of us who grew up in a

family where things were very tight financially, it was drummed into us to not waste food either. I think we have all become complacent, and in a sense spoilt by our affluence, in not appreciating and valuing the resources that we have, and that we should use them a bit more wisely.

The next point is very important. I believe the government should have one minister for water—one minister responsible for above ground water, and responsible for below ground water. At the moment we have a mixed bag. I am not saying that they are not doing their job, but we need to have a minister responsible for water. Without water you do not have life, you do not have a state; you do not have anything. At the moment, we have two ministers, at least (and then others on the periphery) trying to deal with this fundamental issue of water. We need one minister for water, and I would call that person the minister for water.

Previous speakers have criticised the government and the Minister for Water Security for treading cautiously in relation to a desalination plant, and whilst I can understand people's urgency in wanting to secure an additional supply, I think it is prudent and wise to hasten slowly. We do not want a knee-jerk reaction. I remind members of that old expression: 'Wait before you shoot; don't shoot until you can see the whites of their eyes.' If we go off half-cocked and respond to a situation without doing the homework or the research, I think we probably compound the problem.

Desalination plants have a place but, given that we are situated on the gulf, there is also the issue of the high saline content of the discharge fluid as well as the high use of energy required with respect to desalination plants. It is fine to talk about desalinating water, but the reverse osmosis process at high pressure uses a lot of energy. I am not sure whether, in advocating for desalination, members have taken into account the fact that we will need additional energy to drive a desalination plant. I would be more inclined to believe that we can get enough water for Adelaide, in particular, if we do other things rather than construct a desalination plant.

As I have said in this house before (and this is advice from people who know more about water than I), Adelaide (and South Australia) is blessed with an aquifer system that is ideal for recharge. For water capture and recharge in the metropolitan area, treat the water (it can be treated very cheaply, I am told, with UV techniques), recharge the aquifers and have, as it were, a water supply up our sleeve. I am not convinced that we need to necessarily go down the desalination plant path, and I am not convinced that we need to increase the height of Mount Bold, for reasons which I outlined in this chamber earlier this week.

I think that a much more vigorous effort should be put into looking at aquifer recharge, stormwater reuse and grey water reuse. A lot of opportunities are still under-utilised with respect to the use of grey water. I cite the example of Mawson Lakes, where the government intervened and, in conjunction with the Salisbury council, ensured that the development there had a double water system; a grey water system and a mains water system. To the credit of the Salisbury council, it has taken that concept even further and has basically become a water merchant, as part of its general activity, selling water and water entitlements. I think we could undertake a lot more of that sort of activity, certainly, in the metropolitan area and probably elsewhere in the state.

The beauty of capturing water in the metropolitan area is that we will help to protect and thus restore the seagrasses and reefs off the coast that have been decimated by stormwater, and also remove the unpleasant appearance and content

of sea water that has been contaminated by dirty stormwater. So, it is the best possible outcome, in terms of the environment and the availability of water.

We could look at things such as the practice in New South Wales where, as I understand it, people developing land are required to deal with stormwater on site. They are not allowed to transfer the stormwater elsewhere; they are not allowed to just run it down the road. I think we should be looking at those sorts of measures. We need to look at better provision with respect to rainwater tank usage. People in my electorate have been stymied in trying to install even a modest rainwater tank, on the grounds that they need very sophisticated engineering specifications, and so on—and we are not talking about a giant tank; we are just talking about something other than the small tanks that are generally used.

I know that the TREENET group (to which many councils and some government agencies belong), which is involved in promoting appropriate street trees and tree management, is trialing a system at Netherby whereby street trees are watered from the street by way of an inlet off the kerb and a trench. Accompanied by David Lawry from TREENET, I have had a look at that demonstration street, and the trees that are getting stormwater straight off that street are doing a lot better than the trees that are not. There are a whole lot of innovative things we could be doing, and that is just one of them. Other things we could do would be to retain water on site and to use stormwater as recharge to water trees in the parklands and elsewhere. It distresses me that we have not made greater use, for example, of the South Parklands, and probably Victoria Park as well, in regard to storing water for re-use. Water has been too cheap in South Australia—we do not value things that are too cheap—and I think we need to have realistic costings on water, whether that be in the commercial sector or in the domestic sector, so that we do not waste it.

We also need to look at people being able to access water from the aquifers for domestic and other purposes, because I think that system has been a bit too loose. We should assume that we will have droughts. We should assume that that is the norm, not the exception, and governments should make sure that their policies reflect the assumption that we will have droughts. It is not an aberration; it is a normal part of life in South Australia. There is a lot to be done, and I hope to see in future budgets more effort and more money put into dealing with what is a fundamental issue, because without water we do not have life and we do not have activity in South Australia.

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder): I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to the motion moved by the member for MacKillop, because I think it is something that is critical for the future of South Australia. The member for Fisher said that droughts had occurred far too often in Australia's history. There is an opportunity for governments of all persuasions and at all levels to ensure that they have some planning in place so that we have the greatest opportunity to live through a drought and still survive economically and socially.

The member for MacKillop talked about the fact that some of the trigger effects that occurred in 1996 have occurred again. We all know that water restrictions have been in place in South Australia since 2003. Those water restrictions have become more stringent, but we do not appear to have done enough. All we have had is a recent announcement that in July people will be able to water their gardens only by using a bucket. There is an immediate issue here, but there is also

a longer-term issue. Much of Adelaide is built on Bay of Biscay soil, and I am worried about the fact that, when the moisture content around the foundations of the homes changes and expands and contracts, enormous cracks will open up and cause significant problems. Some key groups in the metropolitan area have identified this problem, but for many people it is a sleeper issue because it has not happened yet. They have noticed the problem, but they probably hope it will be like it has been in many other years, where the foundation soil has opened up but it contracts and closes. However, this time we will probably be faced with an even worse situation and serious damage will be done to houses.

I took very keen note of the fact that in the State Strategic Plan it has been projected that the population will hopefully grow to 2 million by 2050 and that to achieve that we need, on average, to increase our population by 10 000 per year. I am pretty sure that in recent times the Premier has announced that in 2005 there was a 10 000 increase in the population, and I am confident that in the last week or so he announced that in 2006 there was something like a 15 000 increase in the population. So, it appears that we are on track. However, I have read some information about population growth that really does highlight an issue that concerns me about the future provision of water in South Australia. At the moment, we have 1.55 million people living in 600 000 homes. With the densities of people living in homes, the projection is that by 2050, with a population of 2 million, 500 000 people will require 300 000 more homes. There will be enormous opportunities for the building industry and for employment, but where is the water going to come from to support those households?

Even with a relatively small number of people living in each home, we will be faced with the dilemma that everyone will want a bit of a garden. People want to make sure they have some greenery around them because it creates a sense of serenity and has a calming effect, and it makes them feel much better when they get home after a difficult day at work. Where is the water going to come from to support the future greening needs of South Australians? We have to start planning for it now, and I am worried that we are not doing that.

The member for Morphett has given me some interesting information in recent times about the situation of treated water in Glenelg where the price has increased exponentially. This water has traditionally been used for the irrigation of golf courses, and I know that at least the Glenelg and Kooyonga courses use it. Under the arrangement involving this government and SA Water, the price of that water has actually increased by 1 600 per cent so, instead of the situation that applied six years ago where you had 11 per cent of this treated water being used for a good cause—going onto golf courses—we are now down to 6 per cent. Where does the rest of it go? It gets pumped out into the gulf. It seems crazy to me that we are going to the trouble of treating water—and it is absolutely important that it is treated before it is disposed of in any possible way—but we have such a valuable resource going to waste.

The government needs to get serious about this and ensure that every opportunity to re-use water is taken advantage of. Because of the increase in the cost of using this water, these golf courses have found it more economical to go into aquifer storage and recharge, which has been highlighted by other members in this place. To do that required a significant capital injection. Where did they get it? From the federal government, which provided \$1 million for this project. That

is where the vision is coming from. The federal government has actually put forward the \$10 billion plan for the future water needs of Australia. This government has signed off on it, but it cannot manage to convince its Victorian partners of the need to make it happen.

I want to highlight some aspects of the desalination proposal, and to mention my opportunity to visit Western Australia. A lot of figures have been bandied around about the cost of that proposal. I have a very clear recollection of the briefing that we received; that it was \$320 million to actually build the plant, with a 45-gigalitre capacity per year and an additional \$67 million to connect it to the water infrastructure servicing Perth and the area south of Perth. That uses an innovative energy source which reduces its consumption but, importantly, it is providing a future for Perth. However, the Western Australian government has not stopped there: it has allocated \$750 million in the 2007-08 financial year budget to progress it even further and to build more plants. The present area is landlocked and they cannot expand it any further, but this is a government with a vision and it is determined to make something happen. It has the advantage of a significant budget surplus—I acknowledge that—but we need to see what other states are doing and make sure that we also take up the challenge.

One key issue I want to highlight about water and how it directly affects my electorate relates to a golf course development proposed for Port Hughes. It will have 650 allotments with a 120-room convention centre, and it will eventually involve the treated effluent water from each of those allotments being used to irrigate the golf course but, as the golf course is the key marketing opportunity for the whole development, they have a licence from SA Water for the use of 1.5 million litres of water per day to irrigate the golf course. Many very concerned people in my electorate have contacted me about this proposal. They know all the issues involved in the water crisis confronting South Australia, and they are concerned that not enough is being done; but, when they hear this story about 1.5 megalitres being made available each day to irrigate a golf course, they are very worried.

My comment is: regions in South Australia deserve the opportunity to expand. The only way you can do that is by having a process that allows for developments to occur and for those developments to have some confidence that the necessary infrastructure will be there. In this case you have people who are prepared to spend hundreds of millions of dollars in a regional area, and that is the sort of investment that all of our regions are crying out for. These people intend to have 500 workers on site as soon as they receive development approval from the state through the planning review process. It is an enormous impetus for us, but how do they overcome this dilemma where local people are concerned about all this water being used?

My concern and criticism does not go to the developers. I think they are the visionaries; they are the ones who are coming into a region; they see this opportunity and want to make the development happen, but they are stymied by the fact that the basic resource—water—which they need, as does everyone else on the peninsula, the Adelaide Plains and in regional South Australia, is not there in the quantity that is required. Instead of criticising the developers, I think it is important to highlight the lack of planning that has gone into ensuring that infrastructure needs are keeping pace with the demands for the area.

Regional South Australia will grow enormously in the next few years. To do so, it needs a water supply. That is

where the government and SA Water need to ensure that they plan appropriately to make sure that the infrastructure is in place. Use the money that comes from the dividends and payments that SA Water makes to the state government and Treasury. We all know in this place that in the last six years \$1 600 million has been taken from SA Water in dividends and payments. It is about time that a portion of that is reinvested in infrastructure. It is a key issue for us. I have communities in the Yorke Peninsula and Adelaide Plains areas that have been told they cannot grow any more; SA Water does not have the capacity to provide them with more water and therefore will not approve subdivisions.

There has been some publicity about Port Clinton recently, where a chap wants to create a 14 allotment subdivision that he wants to be totally reliant upon the water he can capture from the site. However, because there is an SA Water main within about 5 metres of the development SA Water's current position (although I understand the minister is reviewing this matter) is that it cannot proceed; they will not authorise the issue of titles for this development until there is an augmentation contribution made. This developer is being innovative. He believes that, with the storage capacity that will be on site—and it relies on good roof area of a house and of the tank itself—and with the retreatment facilities they will have in that development, they will be able to have 14 allotments that will provide a very comfortable lifestyle. They will be able to shower as much as they want and water their gardens underground using the latest in modern techniques without the need to draw upon the reticulated supply that comes from the River Murray.

These are the sorts of developments that need to be pursued and this is where the government needs to recognise that there are people out there with a lot of technical expertise who have plans in place to make a difference. It is about time we were supportive of this. This chap is fighting a battle that has been fought for far too long. The council wants to support it, the developer wants it. He understands that it costs more money but people are prepared to pay more money for this innovative technology. Let's make sure that the basic rules, the legislation, that allows developments to occur is changed and that SA Water actually opens its eyes to the fact that there are other solutions.

Time expired.

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for MacKillop. I believe this is an important issue, and am greatly concerned that in this state at this time there does not seem to be an understanding of the severity of the situation by the Rann Labor government. Indeed, nowhere near enough is happening. Quite frankly, the reality is that if you do not have fresh water you do not have anything. You do not survive without water. Those of us who live with scant water resources (and who have done so for a long time) appreciate and respect the fact that you have to be extremely careful and that water harvesting is a prime area of your own responsibility.

On a more general basis, I think one of the failings in this area is the failure to educate more of the metropolitan population on just how precious water is. It is a bit like getting a carton of milk from the supermarket and thinking that's where milk comes from, out of cartons; you do not just turn on a tap and get water. I think the efforts undertaken and water restrictions put in place over the last six to eight months have come too late, and I do not think it has sunk in with a large number of people in the community. Indeed, I will take

that further: I think it is fair to say that in some of the larger regional areas of the state it has not really sunk in either. We think it is a never-ending source of supply and that we can just keep turning on the tap and water will keep coming out.

Quite frankly I am most alarmed that the desalination plant proposed by the Liberal Party was pooh-pooed by the government. That is an arrant nonsense, particularly after what has happened in Perth and the fact that they have one operating and are putting another one in. In my view, desalination down the east coast will be a significant way to go in the future. I am not saying that desalination is, by any stretch of the imagination, the only way to go because clearly it is not; however, the other areas have been covered by other members and I do not need to repeat that. They are also integral parts.

The fact is that the proposed desalination plant for Adelaide is very much on the back burner. I heard the minister on the radio the other day waffling on about the fact that this government is spending millions and is having a look at it, that 'you have to get this right'. Well, I am a bit fed up with hearing the minister waffle on about everything in creation and not actually achieving anything. That also applies to the Mount Bold reservoir. Ten years before we can even look at getting Mount Bold reservoir potentially doubled in size; it is just far too long.

The indications at the moment are that the season in South Australia is not going particularly well. I checked this morning and found that in many areas the season is not much different from last year. When crops around Port Broughton are dying through lack of rain at this time of the year I think we are in trouble. My own electorate is fortunate in that we have had reasonable rain; and in the Lower South-East in the member for MacKillop's area they are not too badly off, either. One hears on the metropolitan radio each morning, 'It's raining, good, the reservoirs will fill up.' Well, we need more than a few millimetres of rain to run water; and we do not catch anything in the metropolitan area, anyway. Mount Bold reservoir, in particular, is important. It is not only the fact that it is 10 years away but also the processes that the government of the day would have to go through to get it up and running would be alarming. Given the notorious activities of the Native Vegetation Council, it will probably find some rare and endangered species there and stuff up the whole thing. I am told by a member from that area that there is some most important endemic plant life there; and I recognise the importance of that. I do not know who the rocket scientist was who decided to put it all under water.

I believe the member for MacKillop in his motion has grabbed the thrust of what South Australians are concerned about. We just cannot continue to raise the population and we cannot continue to develop and expand willy-nilly without water; and just continuing to pump out of the poor old Murray is not the answer. We have to have other alternatives, and 10 years away from having any seemingly decent answer to the problem is a bit of no-brainer, quite frankly. I support the motion of the honourable member. Having listened in my office to contributions from other members who were on the same wavelength, I urge this government to stop running around and having pictures taken in front of cameras and smiling and saying that everything is rosy, and deal with the major issue in South Australia, namely, water—or the lack of it.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I, too, am pleased to speak in support of the motion. I spoke yesterday in the house

about water-related matters and issues concerning water security of the state. My comments today will relate to the proposed weir—although it does not look like it will eventuate—the pumping of water from the Murray at Mannum and also the proposed expansion of capacity of Mount Bold reservoir in the Adelaide Hills. Members on this side have communicated to the public and members their opposition to the proposed weir and its failure to address what is a significant issue facing the state. It was always a flawed strategy. I believe that, in terms of constructing a weir in the Lower Lakes, we ought to create a pool of water that would back up so that the pumping process at Mannum could be met efficiently.

In the early stages of the discussion concerning construction of the proposed weir, looking at the whole matter in a practical sense I raised the issue of looking at lowering the intake pipes at Mannum where the water is extracted. Lo and behold, down the track, obviously, senior government officials and the minister thought it was not a bad idea either, and now we see that that work is being done. Instead of building a wall across the river to hold the water back so that it maintains the river at a certain level so the pipes would not be exposed if the river dropped, anybody with some semblance of practical application would have (instead of spending literally millions and millions of dollars building a wall across the river) looked at the other simple solution and extended the pipes so that, if the water level dropped, the pipes are actually in the water.

I am far from being an expert on anything to do with water-related issues but, looking at it in a practical and commonsense manner, it made a lot more sense to me to solve the problem by extending the pipes. What has come to light is that the pumps have to be lowered because they do not have the capacity to push water up over the Adelaide Hills and down into the catchments and into the metropolitan area. The capacity of the pumps are limited and they are not able to draw the amount of water they need to from the river.

The pumps have to be lowered from their position in relation to the water level. That is occurring. We have gone through all this hullabaloo, all this teeth-gnashing process about building a weir and how that will be constructed. It was going to be at Wellington and then it was pushed further down right to the very end of the river channel itself, at the very head of the lakes system at Pomanda Point. That is out on a remote peninsula which makes the construction of it even more complicated.

An amount of 750 000 tonnes of rock had to be dumped into the river. The Minister for Water Security said, 'If we are looking at deconstructing the weir, all that would have to be pulled out.' Crikey! Once you dump three-quarters of a million tonnes of rock into the river, good luck in trying to fish all that out after the event. It looks like it is a very remote possibility now because we have had some rain. Unfortunately, the floods that have occurred in New South Wales are on the wrong side of the ranges and that water will flow away from the Murray-Darling system. That is unfortunate because that amount of water would have been a real boon to the Murray-Darling system. That is just the way nature works and nobody can influence nature, even if they think they can.

I now want to comment on the issue of expanding the capacity of Mount Bold. I spoke about this yesterday and I want to continue my remarks and hope it also sinks in to the Minister for Water Security, the Premier and some senior departmental people. If the minister and the government think that the natural rainfall of the Adelaide Hills area is going to

be utilised to meet the increased capacity of Mount Bold, they are wrong. There have been meetings in relation to the prescription process of the Western Mount Lofty Ranges water resources and, at those meetings, senior bureaucrats and senior departmental officers have attended and said that there is no surplus water that can come from the Adelaide Hills to meet any increased demand from metropolitan Adelaide.

They are undertaking a water allocation plan process at the moment, allocating water in that newly prescribed area to industry, farmers, orchardists, primary producers, horticulturalists, wine grape growers and the like, and any surplus over and above the water allocation plan is required for environmental flows. If you are to capture that water in a reservoir and use it for metropolitan Adelaide's requirements, I cannot see how that is meeting environmental flows. If that is the position of the government, my take on that would be: why not allow the farmers to hold that water for increased primary production and have a beneficial effect on economic activity in the region? I cannot see any logic or any rationale if the government is taking the position that the increased capacity of Mount Bold will be met by the natural rainfall in the Hills.

One of the only other two options is drawing more water from the river. As I have said previously, I thought it was a strategic position of this government that it was looking to lessen the reliance on the Murray. There is talk about desalination plants. As per the member for MacKillop's motion, there is not much clarity or openness from the government on where it is going with desalination. I know for a fact—

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, it is our policy. The Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries raises a very good point: it is our policy; we would build a desalination plant. The government has made no commitment to building a desalination plant, when it is abundantly evident that that is one of the most vital pieces of infrastructure that the state needs. There is no clarity. There is a distinct lack of clarity from the government on that issue. You do not pump water that has gone through a desalination plant (potable water) into an open catchment area because it is clean and filtered. The way in which that matter is handled is that it is pumped through the reticulated mains system.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

Mr PEDERICK: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

TAXATION, MOTOR VEHICLES

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That this house condemns the state government for the excessive and unfair tax taken from South Australian motorists and notes that—

- taxes on motorists have increased over the five years of the Rann Labor government by 21 per cent;
- the Rann Labor government receives at least \$300 million per annum of GST revenue from petrol sales;
- South Australian motorists also pay \$386 million for compulsory third party insurance; and
- Victorian motorists are paying up to \$750 less for stamp duty than their South Australian counterparts.

This motion is a matter of great concern to all South Australians, because most South Australians drive or are at least passengers in a car as they go about their normal daily

and weekly business. Taxes upon motorists, which means taxes upon families and small business, are an increasing burden on the ability of those families and businesses to survive. This concern has been highlighted by the recent budget, because it can easily be seen that taxes upon motorists are beginning to approach \$1 billion when one includes direct taxes and charges, insurance costs and the GST revenue taken from fuel; and that is why industry stakeholders and others are increasingly raising this issue.

I draw the attention of the house to an article which appeared in *The Advertiser* on 3 May under the heading 'Industry plea—cut our car tax', in which a number of industry associations, car businesses and the Motor Trade Association indicated they were keen to see in the budget reductions in taxes upon motorists. They pointed out in particular that new car buyers would save \$750 on stamp duty if they bought a new Holden Calais in Victoria rather than in South Australia. How does it feel to be the retailer of a motor vehicle in Mount Gambier in the full knowledge that customers in Mount Gambier can simply drive across the border to Nelson or Ballarat, buy a car and save \$750? It just does not make sense. It is a disincentive to do business in South Australia. Industry has raised a number of other issues. As I have mentioned, it points out that other state governments have cut taxes for motorists, while this state has increased the taxes.

Industry has also made the point that taxes of other types on motorists are becoming unbearable. A further article appeared in *The Advertiser* on 14 May under the heading 'Plea for \$100 car and rego fee cut'. Again, motor trade officials urged the Treasurer to cut car registration fees by \$100 in the budget. That did not happen: it went the other way. They pointed out, again, that the costs of registering a V6 Holden Omega sedan was \$99 more in South Australia than in Victoria. We keep hearing from the Premier that South Australia (according to him) is supposed to be the most competitive place in the universe in which to do business, so much so that, as we speak, the *Starship Enterprise* is on its way to do business here because it is so good. However, when one actually looks at the facts one finds a different story. The Motor Trade Association made some very good points when it said:

If it keeps going this way, we will become increasingly less competitive.

The fact is that it has become almost an unbearable burden for families, and I point this problem squarely at the feet of the Premier. He, as the leader of the government, has presided over the massive hikes in state taxes and charges, and motorists are feeling the pinch. They know that state taxes have increased 48 per cent; they know that revenue from motorists in direct charges is now, I think, \$490 million—just short of half a billion dollars in this budget. Those charges have skyrocketed. GST on petrol is worth noting. As I mentioned, for every one cent of GST on fuel the Treasurer receives \$26 million.

What is a litre of fuel today? It is between \$1.30 and \$1.40, depending on where you fill up the tank. So, 14¢ multiplied by \$26 million is a lot of money. Of course, this government opposed the GST; it said that it would be terrible. But do not get in between Premier Rann, Treasurer Foley and a bucket of GST money. Do not get in between them and that petrol bowser, because it is jolly good revenue and very welcome. Of course, it is not being spent very wisely but it is certainly being extracted with great alacrity from the

pockets of motor vehicle owners. The fact is that something needs to be done to restore the imbalance.

Not only are motorists feeling the pinch but, as the house heard during my budget reply speech, revenues are up on property taxes by 75 per cent. Gambling taxes are up extraordinarily. Taxes on insurance and payroll, despite the announced cuts, are forecast to rise further again. Sooner or later the government needs to listen to people and realise that this has to stop.

The double whammy in all of this is that the government is also putting up the cost of public transport. We had an 8 per cent increase in the cost of public transport in this budget on top of a 10 per cent increase announced last year. Where do motorists go? If they cannot afford to pay the increased registration costs, stamp duties, insurance costs and the GST on fuel to operate their car, do they have a cheaper more reasonable alternative? Can they catch a bus, a train or a tram? Not unless they pay the 10 per cent increase in fares posted last year, on top of the 8 per cent increase in fares to be extracted this year. It is getting more expensive to use public transport, and there was nothing in this budget for investment in the bus contracts to increase the number of buses or to improve services beyond the existing contracts' range.

There was virtually nothing in it for the bus network, which carries most of our commuters. There was nothing in it for trains, other than routine maintenance along the Belair and Noarlunga lines, which was overdue in any event. There was no announcement about electrification of rail or about significant improvements to rail, or about the Seaford line extension. There were to be no significant improvements, particularly to the rolling stock and the condition of carriages. We know that trains have been running late and that there are problems with speed restrictions along the lines. There was nothing there but maintenance dressed up as infrastructure. These matters are very relevant to the question in the motion before us, because that is the alternative if you want to sell your car and move from A to B in Adelaide. It is not an attractive alternative, because the government has not thought through in a strategic way its approach to transport across the board.

We had a transport draft plan produced early in the life of this government, but it threw it out because it was too controversial. It went into the wastepaper bin. As a result, no cogent transport plan has been presented to the house by this government. There is no transport or infrastructure plan—only an infrastructure discussion paper dressed up as a transport plan. There is no 20-year vision for transport. The opposition has called for it again and again, but it has not been provided. When you put all these things together and throw them at motorists, you simply have an unattractive environment for owning a car.

There are a growing number of cars on the roads in Adelaide. We simply need to stop seeing motorists as a cash cow and start easing the pressure. This is how mums get their kids to school, how families do the shopping, how people living in a fairly elongated city, north to south, move about and exercise their freedoms. For some people, where public transport is not efficient or accessible, this is their connection with the rest of the world. As it becomes more expensive, particularly for pensioners, students, the very young and for families on a low income, then life becomes harder and tougher. It is these people who need to be considered by this government and they are not being considered.

My motion notes the extraordinary increases over five years in taxes on motorists, including GST, compulsory third party insurance and all these other charges, and condemns the state government for the excessive and unfair nature of that burden. I appeal to the government to hear the call from industry and from families for a more reasoned and balanced approach. A smart government would now be thinking about the future growth expected in Adelaide. A smart government would now be thinking about how people will be moving around Adelaide 20 years from now, not just today.

Debate adjourned.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

VICTIMS OF CRIME (COMMISSIONER FOR VICTIMS' RIGHTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Her Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the house the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the bill.

TRAFFIC ARRESTER BED

A petition signed by 135 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to construct a gravel arrester bed or equally effective infrastructure on the west side of Main South Road, just prior to Seacombe Road, to allow trucks and other large vehicles to stop safely in the event of mechanical difficulty, was presented by the Hon. R.B. Such.

Petition received.

MURRAY-DARLING CONTINGENCY PLANNING

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The Prime Minister has announced that we, together with the Premiers of New South Wales and Victoria and the Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory, have agreed to the recommendations of the Senior Officials Third Dry Inflows Contingency Planning Report for the Murray-Darling Basin. This report has been developed by senior officials to manage the critical situation in the Murray-Darling Basin as a consequence of the worst drought that this nation has seen since records began 116 years ago. The River Murray continues to suffer the effects of record low inflows, and our communities, particularly in the regions, are suffering enormous economic and social impacts. The record low inflows have also placed the environment under extreme stress.

The commonwealth and Murray-Darling Basin jurisdictions have developed a national approach to the drought. New rules have been established to share the very limited amount of water that will be available from the Murray over the next 12 months. Last Sunday, the Minister for Water Security in South Australia announced new measures to preserve as much water as we can during the winter months to help the River Murray recover. All domestic water users will be required to turn off their sprinklers and drippers to let nature do the watering for us during July and possibly through into August.

It will still be possible to use buckets and watering cans to water pots and plants outdoors. Permits for the use of hand-held hoses are available for the aged and disabled.

There will be a restriction on the watering of lawns using mains water. Industries will need to develop water efficiency plans to demonstrate how they can save water, and our irrigators will be allocated a very small opening allocation at this stage—at least 1 per cent. This allocation is likely to improve as the extent of impact from rainfall in the upper catchment in early June becomes known and, obviously, we are very pleased about snowfalls in the Alps.

All these measures have been necessary to ensure that South Australia receives our fair share of available River Murray water and are consistent with the contingency plan released by the Prime Minister. All states and the commonwealth have worked together to develop new water-sharing arrangements to deal with the record low flows in the Murray, and further work is continuing to put in place a recovery plan to deal with water quality issues.

POLICE BARRING ORDERS

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Today the government announced that it will introduce amendments in the parliament to the Liquor Licensing Act to give the Police Commissioner the power to be able to bar people from clubs and pubs if he believes they pose a threat to the safety of other patrons. The police will not have to wait for an offence to occur; instead, they will be able to rely on their criminal intelligence when determining whether they will issue a banning notice. The amendments will reinforce a recent decision by District Court Judge Paul Rice where he determined that membership of a known outlaw bikie gang was in fact reasonable grounds for a banning order. Amendments will allow the Police Commissioner to provide information to licensees, such as photos of people who have been barred from certain premises.

South Australia Police has had considerable success in reducing serious assaults in licensed premises when barring orders have been served on outlaw motorcycle gang members and associates. Recent violent incidents at licensed premises involving bikie gang members highlight the need to amend current legislation. In addition to the Liquor Licensing Act amendments, the government will amend the Casino Act 1997 to provide the Police Commissioner with the power to issue barring orders for the Adelaide Casino. The extra powers will help to curb money laundering and other criminal activity at the venue. These proposed amendments reinforce the state government's pledge to continue working closely with the police to strengthen laws so that officers have the authority to deal with bikies. The proposed amendments are a significant step towards ensuring a safe environment, not only for the thousands of pub and nightclub patrons, but also for the staff and licensees who work at these venues. Some licensees have expressed their reluctance to issue banning orders, particularly against members of an outlaw bikie gang, for fear of retribution. The proposed amendments will help deal with that problem. Under the existing provisions of the Liquor Licensing Act 1997, a licensee can bar a person for any of the following reasons:

- the person is behaving in an offensive or disorderly manner;
- the person commits an offence;
- the licensee believes the welfare of the person or their family is seriously at risk as a result of the alcohol consumed by that person; or, very importantly,

· any other reasonable grounds.

A recent SAPOL operation saw officers serve 65 barring orders to outlaw motorcycle gang members and associates in relation to licensed premises, including Savvy, Tonic, HQ, Vodka Bar, Grand Hotel, Raptures, London Tavern, Alma Hotel and other premises. Operation Avatar is continuing to assist licensees in drawing up further barring orders for service in the near future. The government intends to continue to take the advice of the Police Commissioner on these matters.

DEATH IN CUSTODY

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I lay on the table a report on actions taken after the coronial inquiry into the death in custody of Leonard Norman Harkin by the Department for Correctional Services.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): I bring up the 270th report of the committee on the Clayton water supply.

Report received and ordered to be published.

VISITORS TO PARLIAMENT

The SPEAKER: I draw to honourable members' attention the presence in the chamber today of students from Riverton and District High School, who are guests of the member for Frome; students from Modbury Primary School, who are guests of the member for Florey; members of the Public Sector Management Group, who are guests of the member for Adelaide; and ambassadors from the Juvenile Diabetes Association, who are guests of the member for Morialta.

QUESTION TIME

SCHOOL FUNDING

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition): In accordance with standing order 96, my question is to the member for Bright. Did she at any time raise concerns with the Premier in caucus or separately about funding cuts to public schools and preschools within her electorate of Bright, including concern that, if the government did not reverse the cuts, she might lose her seat?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I know that there has been speculation about—

The SPEAKER: Order! I think I am correct that standing order 96 provides for the Speaker to rule whether questions can be asked of a member, other than a minister, on matters for which they have a responsibility to the house. I do not believe that the Leader of the Opposition's question is on a subject for which the member for Bright is responsible to the house.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I read from standing order 96 that questions concerning public business may be asked at any time, and paragraph 2 of that standing order provides:

2. questions may be put to other Members but only if such questions relate to any Bill, motion or other public business for which those Members, in the opinion of the Speaker, are responsible to the House.

I put it to you, sir, that the member for Bright's representations to the house or to the Premier on behalf of her constituents are matters for which she is responsible.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I hear what the Leader of the Opposition says: it is exactly what I said was the standing order. In the opinion of the Speaker, the member for Bright is not responsible to the house for matters she may or may not have raised in the ALP party room.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, can I just raise a point of order, having heard it once. It is not open to the Leader of the Opposition to debate your ruling with you, unless he wishes to move dissent.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do understand that.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: I am not going to enter into a debate on this. I have made my ruling. The leader is free to move dissent.

Mr VENNING: Mr Speaker, a point of order: in relation to precedent, there is precedent for this house of members asking backbench members—

The SPEAKER: Order! What I said to the Leader of the Opposition also applies to the member for Schubert. I do allow some discussion in clarification if it assists the house in moving through business, and I do allow some flexibility for that, but I have given a ruling. I cannot allow a debate between myself and another member. If any member disagrees with my ruling, they are free to move dissent in my ruling.

Mr VENNING: I am happy to give you, Mr Speaker, a copy of that.

The SPEAKER: Order! Okay. I will look forward to reading it.

Mr Venning: It was my own father who was asked the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Schubert knows better. I am happy to again call the Leader of the Opposition for a different question.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I think we have made our point. Why would you not want the member for Bright to answer questions—

The SPEAKER: Order!

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

HEALTH POLICY

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister for Health. Was the minister's predecessor, the member for Little Para, wrong when this week she told the house the following:

Any suggestion by anyone that the government had no health policy four months out from the election is simply untrue.

If not, was the minister telling the truth when he informed the AMA annual dinner on Saturday 16 June 2007 that the ALP had no policy four months out from the last election?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health): I am so pleased to have this question. Once again, it may take a little time to work through it chapter and verse, but work through it chapter and verse I intend to do. On Saturday night, I was very pleased to attend the AMA annual general—

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: You will enjoy this, Michael; just listen, relax, sit back in your chair. You will enjoy this. Last

Saturday I was pleased to attend the AMA annual general dinner. I asked the manager of the dinner if I could have an opportunity to speak, because I wanted to pay tribute to the outgoing president, Christopher Cain. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition was also there. She is on record for making absolutely appalling commentary about that man. He was not her only victim; she now has a list of people whom she has insulted in the most egregious way, but that is a different issue.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: That is exactly right. Also at that dinner, of course, was the Leader of the Opposition. He and I were sitting at the same table, and we had a friendly evening. In fact, he said to me as I was going—and I thought it was about the speech I had made—‘Well done.’ I thought it was very bipartisan of the leader to say that to me, and I appreciated it.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: He is a charitable guy. I was at the dinner, I asked to speak, and I made some valedictory comments in praise of Chris Cain. I made the point at the dinner that Chris Cain had been very helpful to me, as the new minister. I said that I had come into the ministry not knowing a lot about health.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I did not say that. I said that he was very helpful to me, and that he had given me a wide range of ideas in relation to health policy.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I cannot recall exactly which words I used, but I was praising—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Good. I am glad they did. I was praising Chris—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I was praising Chris Cain for being very helpful to me, as Minister for Health, in giving me policy ideas. I was quite clear about that. I thanked him very much. I said that, as the minister, I relied very much on his advice, and I said that he was first amongst many in terms of giving me advice. But, to infer from what I said that he was the only source of advice would be totally untrue. There was a very strong policy framework that we had in place as a government. The Generational Health Review, as you all know, was in place.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I apologise to the Minister for Health for interrupting him, but I cannot hear what he is saying. Members on my left will contain themselves.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, because I am just coming to the really good bit. I was indeed praising Christopher Cain. I make the point that there was a very good policy framework in place. There were many suggestions that we made at the election which did not come from Christopher Cain, for example, the deprivatisation of Modbury being one that I recall. The investment of \$145 million into the Flinders Medical Centre, I recall, was our own proposition. The development of the GP Plus health care centres I know is an initiative that my colleague, the member for Little Para, worked on.

Chris Cain did give me some great suggestions, one of which I drew attention to on the night was the idea of us as a state government employing nurses to work with general

practitioners to extend the range of services. Chris Cain, helpfully, came on ABC Radio on Tuesday this week and clarified his position. I want to read what he said because what he said accords with my memory. He was referring to the AMA producing a document, and he said:

That was a document which was published and it was distributed to media outlets and it was given to both Liberal and Labor at the time. We met with both the Liberal shadow minister and John Hill on a regular basis, monthly for both groups, and we had exactly the same discussions with both John Hill and also with Dean Brown and Rob Brokenshire who were the shadow ministers at the time. The difference was that from John Hill's perspective he actually listened to us and, when he came up with ideas himself or wanted to explore the proposals we had put forward in our document, he would ask our advice, get feedback and have dialogue with people who were actually delivering services. What happened when we spoke with Dean Brown was that he came to meetings with a closed manilla folder. He would ask us questions but never divulge what he was thinking about, and it wasn't until the week before the election that he actually outlined to us what his policies were going to be and we didn't support a lot of what was put forward at that time. So to say that we wrote Labor's health policy is really quite an exaggeration, although we certainly had a very good and constructive dialogue with John Hill and his advisers leading up to the election and it was unfortunate that the Liberals did not take advantage of the same resources.

HEALTH CARE

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is to the Minister for Health. What will the newly released 10-year Health Care Plan mean for South Australians in need of elective surgery in our busy public hospitals?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health): I thank the member for Florey for her question and I acknowledge her great interest in the health system. Elective surgery is an essential part of our public health system. Every year there are about 37 000 elective operations performed in our public hospitals. The time that a patient waits for a procedure depends mainly the condition of the illness, with surgeons deciding the urgency of an operation. However, there are occasions when elective surgery is deferred because of the general demands on our hospitals particularly—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the deputy leader!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: —when emergency departments are at their busiest. South Australia's Health Care Plan gives a clear role for every hospital. For example, Lyell McEwin Hospital, Flinders Medical Centre, the new Marjorie Jackson-Nelson hospital and the Women's and Children's Hospital will provide the majority of emergency care and care for the most critically ill patients. Meanwhile, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Modbury Hospital and Noarlunga Hospital will have a dedicated focus on elective surgery. These hospitals will consolidate expertise in a number of surgical specialties, including orthopaedics—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: If you wish to ask questions, deputy leader, take an opportunity to ask.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Queen Elizabeth, Modbury and Noarlunga hospitals will consolidate expertise in a number of surgical specialties, including orthopaedics, gastrointestinal, ear nose and throat, ophthalmology, urology, as well as general surgery. I am informed that these reforms will reduce the cancellation rate of surgery because of emergency admissions and result in a substantial increase.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I have tried to give the deputy leader a fair go. I warn her—even though it is her birthday. The Minister for Health.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I was saying that I am informed that these reforms will reduce the cancellation rate of surgery because of emergency admissions. People should understand that often elective surgery lists are interfered with because various specialists are taken away to perform emergency operations, and it means that, if an anaesthetist is taken away, the doctor who was there to perform the surgery cannot do the work. However, if we do as we are suggesting, the cancellation rate of surgery because of emergency admissions will come down and result in a substantial increase of about 12 per cent in the amount of elective surgery that will occur at these hospitals. The Repatriation General Hospital will also increase its orthopaedic elective surgery services, and this will result in an increase of about 7 per cent in the amount of elective surgery at the Repatriation Hospital.

The plan will deliver up to an extra 2 000 operations a year for South Australians by 2010-11, according to estimates by my department. We know that demand for elective surgery will continue to increase as our population ages. This is especially the case in the treatment of cancer and orthopaedics. That is why these reforms are so critical to the health system and to the future of South Australia.

I can also announce that the government will provide all South Australians with extra information on elective surgery so they can make the very best choices about their treatment. For the first time, waiting times for elective surgery will be collected and made public for each speciality and for each hospital. That means that a South Australian waiting, for example, for a hip operation at one hospital can check if waiting times are shorter at another hospital. That patient can then talk to his or her doctor about other options for quicker treatment. This will be an excellent tool not only for the patients but also for GPs. Already information on average waiting times is published by urgency category. This extra information, which will go live in the next month or so, will also be updated regularly and will be available on the internet. This is another important step in making sure that our health system is transparent and accountable to the people of this state.

VISITORS TO PARLIAMENT

The SPEAKER: I point out that there are students from Ridley Grove Primary School in the chamber today.

HEALTH POLICY

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): My question is again to the Minister for Health. In light of his statement to the AMA on Saturday 16 June that the government had no health policy for four months before the last election and, therefore, had drawn on Dr Chris Cain to create one, has the minister, as claimed by his colleague the former health minister Lea Stevens in the house this week, 'insulted the ALP, its convention and party structures'? Read what she said.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health): The Leader of the Opposition is really desperate if he thinks this is the best line of questioning that he can use in question time. Have a think about all the things that are happening in the health portfolio and across all the other areas of government—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: He is desperately trying to create something out of nothing. The facts are that I spoke in praise of Chris Cain, a great South Australian, who helped very much in the development of good policy in health for this state. I also acknowledged the great contribution to health performance in this state by the former minister, the member for Little Para, Lea Stevens. I read her statement in the house, and I have absolutely no problems at all with what she said.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

VANDALISM, SOUTH ROAD PROPERTIES

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson): Can the Minister for Infrastructure provide more information on the alleged vandalism to South Road properties, as detailed in recent media reports?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Infrastructure): People may have noticed in the *Sunday Mail* on the weekend an article about—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I do love Martin Hamilton-Smith on loyalty to colleagues. Is it not a wonderful thing? It is just so wonderful.

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Backed up by Vickie!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Yes, by Vickie. I wonder when she is going to pull the pin on him—maybe after the federal election. But sorry, sir, I—

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I know—

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Mr Speaker, you are quick to jump on us, you are very quick to jump on this—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition needs to take his seat when the chair rises. The minister is not answering the substance of the question. I draw him back to the substance of the question.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I apologise, sir. It is difficult not to be distracted by all the yelling. The story in the *Sunday Mail* referred to—

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: That's right. The *Sunday Mail* story—

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Dearie me; it is very difficult, sir.

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Finnis!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The *Sunday Mail* made certain claims about graffiti and vandalism on the site of the South Road works. Of course, there is always difficulty with a project of this scale. We are the only government to undertake projects of this scale for many, many years. I know that that is a great regret to the people on the other side; that is why they cannot listen in courtesy. The truth of the matter is that we do have to leave some properties vacant until we can finalise the contract for the construction. I understand that the finalisation of that contract is very close, so very soon we will be able to, in fact, demolish those buildings with a contractor. In the meantime, we have listened to some concerns expressed by local residents and, as of tomorrow night, as well as day patrols we will have a night presence. When the contractor is there knocking down these buildings, that contractor will be required to have a permanent night presence.

I must come to the story as it appeared in the *Sunday Mail*, because what occurred is that the *Sunday Mail*, without advice to us until after they had been on the site, somehow

gained access and took some photos. This is regrettable for a number of reasons, one being that it is a little discourteous. After all, I would not go into *The Advertiser* building uninvited—and I am not sure I would go in if I was invited—and I certainly would not go into the *Sunday Mail* premises uninvited. Secondly, it would have been wiser—if you are going to complain about people gaining unauthorised access—not to do it yourself, but I do not hold any grudges. Most importantly, if the *Sunday Mail* had actually contacted us, we would have been happy to show them around the site, and they may not have made the error that they did make.

The photograph in the *Sunday Mail* shows a door that has been knocked out of a building. This was the example of vandalism according to them. Can I advise the *Sunday Mail* that the door in question was not knocked out as a result of vandalism, at least not as I understand it. What happened is that, in the meantime, we have allowed the Star Force to undertake training in the empty building. The door was knocked down by the Star Force. So, can I just say to the *Sunday Mail*—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I would not accuse them of too much ballast, but we are quite happy, despite that, to help them. We would have been quite happy to go with them. We are quite happy to acknowledge that there are genuine issues in empty buildings involving graffiti and vandalism, but I do not think our Star Force are vandals. Can I just say to the *Sunday Mail* that if they are driving home tonight and they see smoke issuing from a tower in Wakefield Street, please do not make a report of arson: it is just the firefighters training.

GLENSIDE HOSPITAL

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Premier.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Will the Premier rule out the sale of all or any part of the Glenside campus? Has the matter of the sale recently been considered by cabinet, and is a final decision to sell imminent? A question was asked of the Minister for Health on 30 May 2007, and he advised the house as follows:

This is a matter for my ministerial colleague in another place, the Hon. Gail Gago, who is the Minister for Health. I will refer the honourable member's question to her for an answer.

The opposition has been advised that a contract may be signed subject to cabinet approval. The Premier told parliament on 20 February 2007 that the Glenside campus will remain the site for specialist mental health services in South Australia.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I am delighted to answer this question, because Glenside will remain absolutely fundamental as a pivotal part of the mental health system in this state. And can I say this—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN:—cabinet has yet to see a master plan for the future of Glenside, and we look forward to doing so with relish.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I have a supplementary question. Will the Premier rule out a sale of the campus site in some sort of private sector redevelopment of the site?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): Shock-horror, if the government was to do something innovative; something that clearly the last government—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I just attended an economic briefing, if I can just start, because it links very directly into my answer. Mike Smithson was the host of this function and, I might say, did an outstanding job, as always.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: Well done, guru.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: He is one of our state's truly great comperes.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Actually, Smitho, you are better at that than a journalist half the time, anyway. I am in trouble now.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: Yes. The story was looking good there for a minute.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I was only joking, Mike. You are actually a very good journalist. The essence of what Professor Dick Blandy was saying to a very large group of people is that our economy is very strong and is going to get much stronger, and that he is forecasting significant economic growth. What that allows us to do is to plan our state's redevelopment with some degree of certainty. We have fully funded Monsignor David Cappelletti's social inclusion work to ensure that we have the services in place for mental health. A key ingredient of that is what we do with Glenside. As the Premier has said, we are committed to redeveloping Glenside—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:—as a modern state-of-the-art mental health care secure facility. When we complete the master plan, clearly we will share that with the public.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: It is not about flogging anything off. It is about looking at a very large piece of land; how do you redevelop it; is there opportunity—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The deputy leader is warned a second time.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Vick, it's your birthday; not today—not on your birthday.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am trying to be polite because it is Vickie's birthday—

Ms Chapman: Give us the truth.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Sir, if I am not telling the truth, they should move a substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier is not debating.

Ms Chapman: I wish he was.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier is not debating; he is giving a straightforward answer to the question, and the fact that any member may not like the answer is not a reason for them to be shouting out. The deputy leader really must contain herself.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Sir, what we are doing is scoping the project and having a look at the options available

to government. The critical point is that it will be redeveloped—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: —as a state-of-the-art mental health facility. Whether there will be other uses combined in that project, we have not determined. There may be; there may not be. I have not seen the master plan. It may be that, if we redevelop that site and create a first-class mental health facility, there is capacity for other activities for be undertaken there. What is wrong with that? What is the big shock-horror with that?

Ms Chapman: Because we have been asking you for five months—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: So?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We have not seen anything; I have not seen the master plan. We could not consider it in the budget because the work has not been concluded. I don't know; it might show that we are going to redevelop all of it—every square inch of it; it might—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Sorry? Now, come on Iain. Come on. Don't leave—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I have answered it truthfully. We are doing a master plan to see what we can do with the site. When we have completed it, we will let you all know. It will hardly be controversial. It will be widely supported and widely accepted.

DESALINATION PROJECTS

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition):

My question is again to the Premier. Is the \$3 million feasibility study into an Adelaide desalination plant announced in the budget designed to determine when, where and how the government will implement the Liberal opposition's Adelaide desalination plant proposal, or is it to help the government decide whether or not we should have one at all? Has the government made the decision, or not?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): Over the last few weeks there has been considerable discussion, including in the budget context, about a couple of different options for ensuring future water security in this state. We all know that one of the world's greatest desalination plants will be established close to Whyalla to support the expansion of the Olympic Dam mine and, of course, that part of it will be funded by BHP Billiton. The other part of it (because it is built in a series of modules) will be co-funded by the federal government and the South Australian government to supply water to the Spencer Gulf cities and the northern Eyre Peninsula in order to relieve pressure on the River Murray.

However, we have made it patently clear, inside this parliament and outside, that we are looking at other options. One of those options is a second desalination plant. I am sure when the Liberals announced—or is it reannounced?—what the former leader said—

Mr Koutsantonis: No, future leader.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Maybe the future leader: the former and future leader. We know how loyal the Leader of the Opposition was to both his former leaders. When he gives

you the handshake and says, 'I'm right behind you, Kero' and 'I'm right behind you, Iain', we know what that means. We have said what we are doing, which is most appropriate—because you did not say what impact your desalination plant would have on water prices in this state. That was very carefully avoided, as was how you got the figures for the price of the construction of the desalination plant. So, as you would expect us to do, we are doing it properly rather than announcing something and reversing it the next day. It is go ahead one day, change policy the next, and we see you spinning in the parliament trying to justify and reconcile the irreconcilable. Then we had a situation where we saw the Leader of the Opposition during a debate on climate change totally caught out barking like a Chihuahua. I am sure that will never be written up as being in any way discourteous to the house.

I guess the point is that we are doing things properly. We are looking at two options. Option one, after the major desalination plant in the Spencer Gulf, is to have a second desalination plant to service and supplement supply in Adelaide, and we are looking at the environmental impacts and costing impacts in terms of the price of water. We are also looking at another option, which is a five-fold increase in the size of the Mount Bold reservoir.

I guess people would know that as a young boy I had an interest in hydroelectricity. In fact, I lived adjacent to the Waipapa and Maraetai dams on the Waikato River, not far from the Whakamaru and Atiamuri dams; or, indeed, the Orakei geothermal site near Lake Taupo. We were also near the Karapiro dam as well. But my point is that we will increase five-fold the size of the Mount Bold reservoir—and we remember there was a call from members opposite for a new reservoir in the Adelaide Hills, but they would not say where it was lest that somehow affected their very delicate voting arrangements in the Hills where they nearly lost seats in the last state election, but never mind.

So we are doing things properly and looking at two options. One is a five-fold increase in the size of the Mount Bold reservoir. On my calculation, and I admit it is my calculation, that would result in approximately a doubling of the size of the catchment in the Adelaide Hills—a doubling of the amount of water in reserve. So we are looking at it, and we are getting experts to look at it. We are not asking the Leader of the Opposition to come along. Just as I seek the Police Commissioner's advice in dealing with bikie gangs rather than the advice of the Leader of the Opposition—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —we are getting the experts to advise us on which is the best way forward. And that, if you ever want to be in government, is the way to do it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

WATER ALLOCATIONS

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition):

My question is again to the Premier. Does the government expect that the extraordinarily low water allocations it will impose on our food producers from 1 July will extend across the summer? Will police be used to enforce the penalty and compliance regime? How will statistics on infringement and enforcement be publicly reported? The opposition understands that the Premier has struck a deal with the premiers of New South Wales and Victoria on the sharing of 44 gigalitres

of water which would see water for our food producers given up early in the new irrigation season for extra flow from New South Wales and Victoria later in the year.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): If the Leader of the Opposition had been listening rather than preening himself during my ministerial statement, because he does this little preening episode before he asks the first question—I saw it as a sequence in the Cabaret Festival—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: clearly, the Premier has not even started to answer the question.

The SPEAKER: Yes, indeed. The Premier must answer the substance of the question.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yesterday he asked me whether various members have indicated to me certain things and, again, I say that no member had told me this. I read the bit in the paper this morning about misleading the house. Move a substantive motion. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend either the leader's address—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will take his seat.

Ms CHAPMAN: A point of order, Mr Speaker: again, the Premier has not even started to address the question.

The SPEAKER: I cannot even hear what the Premier is saying.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I had a meeting with the Police Commissioner in relation to bikie gangs.

Ms CHAPMAN: A point of order, Mr Speaker: the Premier is again back onto some publicity stunt from the last 24 hours and what is in the paper. It has nothing to do with the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The deputy leader will take her seat. I cannot hear what the Premier is saying because of the background noise but, if the Premier is not answering the substance of the question, he needs to.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: So, I left that caucus meeting to attend the meeting with the Police Commissioner and, on this question, so you do not need to ask the point of order—

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I will nonetheless ask it because the Premier is continuing to advise the house of his activities and to defy your ruling.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier must answer the substance of the question.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: If you remember the start of my reply, I pointed out the ministerial statement that I made at the start of question time on this very matter, except that the Leader of the Opposition left out one key partner in the process—namely, the Prime Minister of Australia. If you have a problem with what the Prime Minister of Australia is doing, pick up the phone, and maybe he will know who you are.

RIVERLAND DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Leader of the Opposition): I am glad that they have calmed down, sir. I have another question for the Premier. Apart from the federal government's emergency circumstances funding, can the Premier confirm what dedicated state government funds have been provisioned in the budget to assist Riverland small businesses and food producers and families in crisis, with particular regard to Family and Community Services support, employment services, education, health, and other state government services to help them through this crisis?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Would the member for Unley and the member for West Torrens like to take their quarrel outside. The Minister for Agriculture.

The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): As a consequence of the socioeconomic development study delivered through minister Maywald to me, and funded by the state government, that committee set out 21 recommendations on how we might deal with a number of competing pressures in the Riverland, some of them, of course, as a consequence of exceptional circumstances—not only lack of water flows but also the impact of frost—and others due to market failure, particularly in association with an oversupply of wine grapes.

On behalf of the state government, I have responded to all 21 of those recommendations. As I would always as a matter of courtesy, I have provided the shadow minister a copy of those 21 recommendations. If Deb Thiele should so wish, as the chair of that group, I will now meet at the appropriate time with that group in terms of going through in more detail those of the 21 responses that are within the ambit of the state government. Obviously, some will be local government, some will be producers, and some will be the Riverland Development Corporation; others, of course, will be the federal government.

In terms of the state-federal government partnership, obviously around EC (and I might add that only part of this is exceptional circumstances; the other part is market failure) we have not only responded, as you would expect, in partnership with the federal government in terms of our commitments, particularly as they relate to those interest rate subsidies for small business. Sitting underneath that, the Riverland community, like many other drought-affected communities, have been delighted at the state government's response in terms of state measures to help our farm families not only in drought but also to recover from drought.

On top of that, have we announced some other measures? Specifically in relation to the 21 recommendations, I am delighted to report that we have. We are providing the equivalent of a salary (\$80 000) to the Riverland Wine Grape Growers Association for a particular measure in terms of our wine grape growers better understanding their numbers, better benchmarking their businesses and better building relationships through the value chain, which is one of the important recommendations out of that committee. If the shadow minister wishes any further details in terms of any one of those 21 recommendations, I would be delighted to go through them. However, I think to satisfy the question at this stage, it is enough to say that the community have responded in a very positive way to our response to them. They are delighted to see that we have responded to this study in such a proactive and timely manner.

The one thing that is missing in this study, of course, is the question of whether or not significant long-term structural reform will be required as a consequence of a longer term downturn in commodity prices. That again would be a whole-of-basin; it would not be South Australia specific. In regard to that question, I told the community that if they think that I can add value to their lobbying of the federal government, I am happy to do it, although I think that sometimes we can get in the way. I think that sometimes it is better for our commodity leaders to go directly to the federal government. However, if they think that I can add some value to that, I have offered it but, again, that is their call.

In closing, there is a degree of optimism re-emerging in the Riverland on a number of fronts. They know that we cannot make it rain. We know that many things are beyond our control. We know that sometimes people in this house, for political purposes, can interfere in and damage that process. Hopefully, we can avert that in future and not do silly things like a member opposite did early in the week. It was great on Tuesday night to be down watching the loading of the *Star Stratus*, the second of eight ships that will be loaded with citrus from this state for the US market. We would never want to put that very valuable market under any threat. I was delighted not only to see the second of the eight ships being loaded, but also to see that commodity prices are strong, even with exchange rates as they are. That is just one element of optimism that is starting to reappear in a community that has been through enormous stress over recent times through both market failure and, obviously, through exceptional circumstances—lack of river flows, frost, and so on.

HAWKER BRITTON

Mr PISONI (Unley): My question is to the Premier. Given the Premier's confirmation yesterday that he provided his services for the Labor Party's PR agency, Hawker Britton, at a private briefing in Sydney for business people who had paid for the privilege, can he advise on how many occasions he has provided his services for Hawker Britton, and on how many occasions his fellow ministers have provided their services? Have public servants been asked to prepare presentations for these or any other Labor Party fundraisers?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I anticipated this question. In fact, I said to my learned colleagues here that I hoped so much that this question would be asked. Since the matter was raised in parliament yesterday, additional information has been provided to the Premier's office. Indeed, Mr Hawker has provided a copy of the invitation to the leadership dinner, which has been going on for years, with national leaders addressing prominent Sydney business leaders. It states:

Bruce Hawker and I are very pleased to invite you to join us as Hawker Britton's guest at a dinner with Mike Rann, the Premier of South Australia. This dinner is one of an occasional series of Hawker Britton leadership dinners to which we invite political leaders to join Hawker Britton's friends, clients and New South Wales government officials. It is not a fundraiser or party political event and there is no charge associated with attending.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: However, sir, can I just finish—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order from the member for Unley.

Mr PISONI: The question was specific—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PISONI: The question was specific about whether public servants were being used to prepare presentations for ALP fundraiser briefing papers. Answer that question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will take his seat. The question, as I recall it, was how many times the Premier had done that. The Premier has risen to complete his answer.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you, sir. As Premier, I try to accept invitations to address business leaders about the difference that has occurred in this state. If I am invited by

organisations, if I am invited by the boards of major companies to make presentations about investment opportunities, if I am invited by CEO forums, as I have been in both Melbourne and Sydney in the last year, I will do so.

I have attended Hawker Britton leadership dinners in the past, but the key thing is that you said it was a fundraiser, and you asked how much these people paid to attend. They paid nothing to attend. As members can see, it was not a fundraising event whatsoever. That is the difference. I was at ARIA Restaurant on one side of Sydney Harbor and, on the other side of Sydney Harbor, was Kirribilli House and there, on government property, the Prime Minister of Australia was holding different kinds of meetings where people did pay to attend—and the money went into the Liberal Party's coffers. You have just embarrassed the Prime Minister of Australia.

Yesterday it was so obvious where you were going with your questions that I was waiting for a question today about whether I had somehow misled the house in relation to questions asked by backbenchers. I knew you would ask this question and, therefore, it is very important that I read it out again. This is the invitation: it is not a fundraiser or political party event and there is no charge associated with attending. Let me explain what that means: if people are not paying to attend, then where is the money that is going to the Labor Party?

Mr PISONI: I have a point of order, sir. The Premier refuses to answer my question, which requests whether public servants are preparing notes for ALP fundraisers. That is the substance of the question and he will not answer it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet, and the members for West Torrens and Unley, and the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries will come to order. There is no point of order, but I do invite the Premier to wind up his answer.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Sir, it is interesting to see the red faces on the other side. My advice to the new member for Unley is that he should quit while he is behind. The point is that I will continue to attend—

Mr PISONI: I have a point of order, sir. The Premier will not answer my question about whether public servants are preparing ALP notes.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is time to move on.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: My point is that if any member of the Liberal Party wants me to attend a subbranch meeting to talk about economic development in this state, I am happy to do so—and they do not need to send a cheque to anyone.

SCHOOL FUNDING

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Why is the government considering a workers compensation levy on all public schools and preschools of up to 1 per cent on salaries; and how does the minister expect schools and preschools to cope with this and other new costs on schools being considered? The principal of Hamilton Secondary College, Doug Moyle, has written to his governing council as follows:

Please find attached a partial copy of an email sent to all Hamilton staff on Wednesday 30/5/07. It outlines the estimated reduced funding the Hamilton Secondary College will receive in 2008. It amounts to some \$228 000—much worse than I initially reported at the last council meeting... The only discretionary funding that schools receive from the government is the 'School

Support Grant'—all other funds are tied (legally) to other purposes. Our support grant for 2007 is around \$170 000. The cuts would wipe this out. . . We simply cannot run the college without this School Support Grant and it means that we will have to make cuts to staffing. This will increase class sizes, reduce individual attention to students and ultimately impact negatively on learning outcomes. For us \$220 000 is around three teachers or 33 semester courses we would have to shed.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): The honourable member is referring to measures that were in place in last year's budget. I remind him that up until last year's budget we had invested 38 per cent more in funding per capita, on average, for every child in our state. This year we have increased \$127 million into our school system above that of last year. We have the biggest reform agenda ever—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH:—whereby funding in our system has increased by \$3 600, on average, per child since we came into government. The thing that those opposite cannot stand is that we have a massive reform agenda, which includes across portfolio activity: every chance for every child, an agenda for early childhood, an agenda for early intervention and a whole range of preschool activities, in terms of children's centres. We have reduced class sizes; we have invested in education; we have a new SACE system; we are building trade schools; and we have a strategy of school to work reforms, which are the pride of our nation, in terms of a reform agenda.

As part of that reform agenda, I make no apology for the fact that we are redirecting some funds within our schools. However, at the end of the day, more money, more dollars, smaller class sizes and more teachers are going into education. To pretend, as the member for Davenport does, that any adjustments in school funding will affect staffing is clearly wrong. Quite simply put, that is because our staffing formula is set within our EB arrangements. The number of teachers per class is set within that agreement and, in reality, one of our agendas has been to reduce class sizes and employ more teachers and counsellors to provide more support throughout our schools. So, to pretend that there will be a reduction in teachers is just plain wrong.

The member for Davenport is suggesting that he should discuss last year's budget (and he is very welcome to do so, because he was not the opposition spokesperson at the time that was released), but the reality is that those matters are under consultation, and the suggestion with respect to funding levels is purely speculation. It was in a press release in September—breaking news. But he did not notice it. How could that be? In September 2006, it was in a press release. The reality is that the savings targets put in that budget are being redirected into education. At the end of the day, more money and more funding will go into education. Those redirections, of course, include other issues, such as water funding. Schools use a lot of water, and we have already reduced usage in 300 schools to our targets. So, less money is being spent, and those savings are being redirected into schools.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Does the Minister for Education and Children's Services support schools increasing school fees to offset the proposed extra WorkCover and industrial relations costs on schools? The Craighburn Primary School in my electorate has written to its school community, and the letter states:

The Government has instructed the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) to make a cut to their overall budget. At Craighburn the total cost of these 'savings' to be taken from our revenue will be \$50 000-\$60 000. In order to fund the estimated cuts of \$50-\$60K to our funding for next year Craighburn will either have to fund this money from our discretionary budget or raise the Materials and Services Charge for every student by \$100.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: The member for Davenport has got all of his wires crossed and quite tangled. The materials and services charges are not raised in order to pay salaries or to pay for staffing fees. It is quite clear that there is some confusion. Whilst there are—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Whatever members might think of the minister's answer, she is not debating; she is offering information. Interjections are designed purely to disrupt the house. We have a few minutes to go. I ask members to contain themselves so we can get through the next few minutes without my having to name someone.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: As I said before, more money is going into education—\$127 million more than last year. There has been a massive reform agenda with more money every year, and this year is no different. It is quite true that there are some savings tasks that relate to water usage and electricity usage, as well as changes in the way that workers compensation is administered. Many of those targets have already been met. The reality is that, whilst one might say there is clearly going to be a 25 per cent cut in funding for water usage because schools are very high users, it is in fact quite reasonable that schools, as well as all other government departments, should aim to achieve the savings in water usage that is part of our State Strategic Plan. Those targets are being met. As the targets for water usage are being met, the savings are well met, and therefore there is no effective cut in funding to schools.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I have a supplementary question. Can the materials and services charge in schools be increased to offset costs to curriculum budget because money has been taken out of curriculum budgets to fund the extra cost placed on schools like the WorkCover levy proposed by government?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: The education budget covers the cost of employing staff and their materials, and that is not part of the allowable charges through the fees and materials charge.

STATE THEATRE COMPANY

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Thirty-five years ago, on 1 July 1972, the act of parliament establishing the South Australian Theatre Company came into operation, thus beginning the illustrious history of one of our most significant arts organisations, the State Theatre Company of South Australia.

The South Australian Theatre Company Act 1972 empowered the company to present, produce and manage theatrical performances, commission new works, and provide training across all the creative disciplines of theatre, and 'do all things necessary or expedient to promote public interest

and participation in the art of the theatre'. Throughout its history, the State Theatre Company has done this with great success, presenting more than 500 productions to audiences of more than 2.5 million people.

The company has had 10 artistic directors since 1972, from George Ogilvie and Colin George in the early years, through to Jim Sharman, Keith Gallasch, John Gaden and Simon Phillips in the 1980s, and, more recently, Chris Westwood, Rodney Fisher, Rosalba Clemente and Adam Cook. All are significant Australian theatrical figures, and each has brought a unique vision to the company, which has contributed to its success and stature.

There have been too many outstanding productions to mention here, but I would like to pay tribute to the State Theatre's role in providing early opportunities and developing the careers of many of Australia's most important theatre artists, actors, directors, designers and playwrights, many of whom have gone on to international acclaim—and I mention Neil Armfield, Judy Davis, Gale Edwards, Colin Friels, John Gaden, Mel Gibson, Nigel Levings, Denis Olsen, Geoffrey Rush, Stephen Sewell and Benedict Andrews amongst many others.

In addition, the State Theatre Company was pivotal in the development of theatre for children and young people in Australia through Magpie Theatre and, more recently, Young Guns. The company provides important access to theatre for the whole South Australian community through regional touring, education programs, disability access and discounted tickets. I congratulate the State Theatre Company on its 35th anniversary and look forward to its future success.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

RICH, Mr J.

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss): Following along in the same vein of much of this afternoon—where we have heard how this government is ripping off the good citizens of South Australia in one way or another—I would like to refer to last night's dinner to celebrate the departure of John Rich, as President of the Local Government Association, and the induction of Mayor Joy Baluch as the incoming president. More to the point, I would like to turn to the concluding remarks of Councillor Rich, the President of the Local Government Association, in his speech in the presence of the minister and in the presence of two or three other members of this place, and the fact that he wanted to well and truly lay a few things on the table about how he thought things were going in relations with the government.

I would have to say that what I have been talking about in this place for some time in relation to the Environment Protection Authority and the waste management levy is going to come back and haunt this government. Last night Mr Rich, in his remarks, called this plainly dishonest, the way the government was going about raising this money from ratepayers, and it disappearing back into the government's general revenue. 'Plainly dishonest' is how he termed it, and nothing could be more true than what Councillor Rich said last night. It is an absolute disgrace what is going on. The fact that ratepayers in this state have to be double dipped by the state government going through their rates notices and raising this money is appalling. I have no doubt that the fact that the many mayors from across the state who there were last night, and many senior people from local government, and others

who were in attendance, heard loud and clear what the president of the Local Government Association had to say.

He also raised grave concerns about the way that natural resource management levies were being increased. Obviously the fact of the matter was that local government was sold a pup on this when they agreed to collect them. As I was part of that early in the piece I can well recall it, and I have spoken about it in this place. Mr Rich last night was most concerned that these natural resource levies were going up by, in some cases, 150 per cent, in an effort to prop up this natural resource board system around South Australia. He was not criticising the system. What he is saying is that the councils having to collect this levy for the natural resource boards is fine, but the amount of these levies that they are having to collect that are coming through for the boards is a straight out result of those boards being underfunded by the state government. As a consequence the ratepayer has to pick that up through the levy. They have to pick up the waste levy—and local government are absolutely stinking on the waste levy. They are absolutely stinking. That came through loud and clear last night.

The Hon. J.M. Rankine interjecting:

Mr PENGILLY: If the minister wants to have a debate, come up to her seat and I will gladly listen to her. But she sat there last night. She heard what they had to say. The other issue that is causing a good deal of concern to local government, as expressed by Mr Rich in his speech last night, has to do with aspects of planning, the complications of planning and, more importantly, just where planning is going in this state. It may be useful for members to observe that I understand the planning minister has announced that there will be some sort of further review of planning and I endorse that. It is not working properly at the moment. Even this morning at a bushfire management briefing in this building it was acknowledged that there are aspects of the planning side that need fixing up straightaway.

But going back to my remarks at the start of this contribution, I return again to the waste levies. I say to members opposite: get out, listen to your councils, listen to your elected members, your mayors and your council staff on what they are saying about this appalling imposition on the ratepayers of South Australia. What are they copping? They are copping the waste levy in their rates, they are having to prop up the natural resource management boards because there is no funding from state government, and those of them who are parents are now having to pay workers compensation levies for their children at school. Where on earth is this state going? It is an absolute disgrace, and the sooner this parliament goes to the election on 20 March 2010 and we sort a few things out the better. So I say to members opposite—listen once again: it is not on. You are just doing everything you can possibly do to drag this once proud state down to its knees, and the people that go with it are just bleeding from having to continue to contribute funds through council.

Time expired.

NORTHERN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Little Para): It was my honour recently to attend the 30th anniversary celebrations of the Northern Domestic Violence Service, and it was certainly a very great occasion, with a large number of people present, including the Minister for the Status of Women, other parliamentary colleagues and the Mayor of Playford. During that couple of hours of celebration, a clear rendition of the

history of the service was given, and I would like to highlight some of the things that came up, because this has been a very important organisation in the northern suburbs.

In 1975 a group of concerned residents formed a steering committee to look into the issue of domestic violence and ascertain whether any services could be offered to assist women and children in the northern suburbs. A management committee was set up, which included social worker Sheila Evans, who became the first president. The Para Districts Women's Shelter, as it was then called, was formally established in 1977. The Order of the Sisters of Mercy gave the services of Sister Anne Gregory to run the shelter. This she did for many months until a weekend relief worker could be employed. Sister Anne was the first administrator, and remained with the shelter until 1983. Gill Pears then became administrator until she retired in 1996.

The shelter set out to provide a safe, secure, caring and supportive refuge for women and children escaping domestic violence, and had to rely exclusively on goodwill and donations from the local community, as no public funding was available in the early days. From those humble beginnings the shelter grew to become a leader and innovator in the provision of domestic violence support services. Included in its unique achievements are:

- It was the first shelter in South Australia to acknowledge the impact on children of domestic violence by employing a dedicated children's worker.
- It was the first shelter in South Australia to initiate the development of training programs for senior police officers.
- It won an award from the Australian Institute of Criminology for the Spiral Children's Program.
- It was the first women's service to be involved in the development of the Violence Intervention Project launched on 4 April 1977.

Part of the 30th anniversary celebrations involved a particularly moving tribute to Gill Pears, administrator from 1983 until 1996. Gill, sadly, passed away last November. Her 13-year contribution was remembered with much love, laughter and admiration, and the ground work that she laid over those years is largely responsible for the service's sterling reputation. The morning official agenda items were interspersed with some very entertaining performances by the Elizabeth Grove Primary School rock-and-roll dance and choir group, and everyone had an opportunity not only to catch up with people from a long way back in the past but, primarily, to celebrate an excellent service.

Today the Northern Domestic Violence Service continues to operate from its high profile service centre, which also provides a shop front facility in Elizabeth South. In addition to the provision of supported accommodation to 22 families, they offer a comprehensive range of services through an outreach program to women and children living in the northern metropolitan region of Adelaide. So, congratulations go to all those who are responsible for providing such a fantastic service. It is 30 years old, and may it continue to go from strength to strength.

LE, Mr H.V.

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I was very pleased to hear the Premier's announcement on 3 May this year of the appointment of Mr Hieu Van Le as the Lieutenant-Governor. Subsequently, I am sure members of the house will have seen Mr Hieu Van Le at a number of

functions and expressed their personal congratulations on his appointment. His story is a very important one because he came to Australia as a Vietnamese refugee some 30 years ago. The Premier said, 'He is an example of what can be achieved in the face of huge disadvantages and obstacles.' Yet, only a month later, this government is prepared to cut funding to a program that helps Vietnamese immigrants and refugees. Why is that?

The Minister for Families and Communities, Jay Weatherill, after the disclosure of his own department's \$30 million blow-out last year, has needed to identify high and low priority programs so that they can be cut as a result of his failure to oversee his department and balance its own budget. Why has he seen fit to cut \$82 000 from the Vietnamese community's family support program? This has been a longstanding program. It is defined by the assistant for social welfare at Morella Community House Inc., Ruth Tulloch, as an essential service because it is a family grant, but it is being directed into other priorities. So, I express the despair of several members of the opposition that they have been advised of this callous cut to a very important program which has been done in the shadow of the appointment of the Lieutenant-Governor. He was given an esteemed accolade not just by members of the public but also by the Premier in this house, yet we find that within a month the government has cut a program such as this.

Instead of the minister's financial incompetence being highlighted, he is making the Vietnamese community suffer, and they are the words of that management committee member, Ms Tulloch, who went on to say, 'This will have an impact on how our community perceives the current government's commitment to addressing child protection issues.' We have the mantra of this on the one hand, yet the reality is that the government will cut the budget.

I wish to make one other comment in relation to the government's recent announcement that it will provide support for children who have been under the guardianship of the minister after they turn 18 years of age and that they need ongoing support. We agree with that and we commend the government for considering support in such circumstances because, as he rightly points out, they are often without a family support base and, as soon as they turn 18, they may still be without employment and, therefore, they clearly need that support. Some 100 or so young people leave the minister's care in South Australia each year in this category, but to provide a focus on this and then to fail to adequately deal with the children who are in his care under the age of 18, I think is shameful. We clearly will see exposed in the estimates the minister's continued failure to support the 0 to 18 year olds who do not have the support of family and who rely on us as a parliament to protect them and on the minister to ensure that is enforced. Unfortunately, I am hearing, as I am sure other members are, about the scaling of cuts to programs and the placement of funding into other programs while the department is not addressing very serious issues, and this leaves our children without protection.

Time expired.

HALLETT COVE AND MARINO CONSERVATION PARKS

Ms FOX (Bright): Before I begin, I would like to extend my warmest birthday congratulations to the member for Bragg, who is celebrating a significant event. I rise today to speak about two significant environmental areas within my

electorate: the Hallett Cove and Marino conservation parks. Both parks play a vital role in community conservation within the seat of Bright. The Hallett Cove Conservation Park was established in 1976 and protects outstanding evidence of Permian Age glaciation, a record of an ice age about 280 million years ago which is of international significance. The park also conserves native flora and fauna. Its lower portion is covered by a number of native species, which have been planted recently in an ongoing project to restore native vegetation. The Marino Conservation Park was established in 1989.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bright, despite your beautiful elocution and projection, it is not hitting the microphone. Would you move a little closer or adjust it.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Ms FOX: Member for Schubert—

Ms Chapman: Detention!

Mr Venning interjecting:

Ms FOX: Excuse me, member for Schubert, I forgot we were not in the classroom.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bright, proceed or you will run out of time.

Ms FOX: Indeed. The park most notably protects a remnant of coastal heath vegetation that has been virtually eliminated elsewhere along the metropolitan coast. Both reserves also provide valuable open space for residents of the surrounding suburbs.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bright, you are looking down to read your notes. You are missing the microphone.

Ms FOX: I see. They can hear me. Hansard, can you hear me? They can hear me.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms FOX: No, I am quite happy where it is. Management plans for both conservation parks are established under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972. These plans set out how the parks are to be managed and what improvements can be made to achieve the objectives of the act. For example, they outline objectives that include the rehabilitation of native vegetation, the control of introduced species and steps necessary to monitor and conserve the areas of geological interest. The time has come to revise the old plans and prepare a new plan to cover both conservation parks.

The Hon. Gail Gago MLC (Minister for Environment and Conservation) has asked me to chair a community reference group to assist the Department for Environment and Heritage in the preparation of the latest draft management plan. This reference group will allow for the community to have an opportunity to be involved in the planning process for these parks that provide valuable open space areas for the surrounding suburbs. Participants include the City of Marion, Friends of Marino Conservation Park, Friends of Hallett Cove Conservation Park, the National Trust of South Australia, and Planning SA. The district ranger will also be a member. I will meet with him next month and will visit the Hallett Cove Conservation Park on Monday to discuss management issues of the park. I also look forward to chairing the first meeting of that community reference group to be held in mid-July. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute, along with other committed community members, to the future direction of both these environmental areas that are important not only to the seat of Bright but also to our state. In conclusion, I apologise if certain people have not been able to hear, and I thank the member for Schubert, who helped me with the device.

MOBILE PHONE SERVICES

Mr PISONI (Unley): I would like to comment on an answer that was given to a Dorothy Dix question yesterday to the Minister for Consumer Affairs, when she made the claim that she was pleased to advise that South Australia's work (referring to the work of consumer protection for mobile phone users) will be used in developing a national campaign. I must say that that is a very nice line by the minister, and it is very pleasing to see that the minister has finally caught on, and that the South Australian government is finally trying to pull its weight in this area. But to suggest that South Australia is leading the way is very misleading. Let me explain what the federal government has been doing.

Following the federal government's direction, the Australian Communications and Media Authority registered a new scheme for mobile phone services, enforceable from October 2006. Consumers must now be informed very clearly about the costs, the terms, and the conditions of any premium service, and consumers must now be told how to stop these messages. People who have issues with premium services should call the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (a federal body) if the services have been wrongly charged or underage consumers have been charged for those services they should not have access to. The TIO has the power to direct that the money be refunded.

Mobile phones can be of benefit in many ways, but they can also produce many unwanted consequences, such as youth debt. The federal government continues to monitor the industry and acts wherever necessary in the best interests of consumers. Advertisers, advertising of ring tones, wallpaper, competitions and advice services, for example, must demonstrate social responsibility. The federal government wrote to the CEOs of every major service provider in August 2005. As a result, the industry's credit management code was revised with enhanced arrangements taking effect from April 2006. It now requires industry to inform consumers about the social risks associated with premium services, the actions customers can take to lessen the risks, how to unsubscribe from unwanted services, and what to do if the consumer experiences financial hardship paying their account.

Service providers may be directed by ACMA to comply with the code, and failure to comply may attract a substantial penalty. Telecommunication companies also remain subject to general trade practices legislation, including the Trade Practices Act and state fair trading laws. The Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association has developed a website to encourage responsible use of mobile phones amongst youth. The website is 'str8tlk.amta.org.au', and it provides a service to children in plain English on 'managing your mobile spend', bullying, mobile phone recycling, and social issues such as privacy and mobile manners. The federal government is continuing to monitor the mobile premium services market. An article in the *Sunday Age* on 25 March 2007 indicated that the majority of consumers were forgoing savings of 30 per cent by not shopping around for mobile phone deals—in total amounting to almost \$1 billion a year. This is an indication of the savings that are available for Australian consumers who take advantage of the vigorous competition that takes place.

This competitive environment has resulted in a broader range of services, greater choice and lower prices. The market for mobile phones has been one of the most highly competitive in telecommunications in recent years. The ACCC has reported that mobile phone costs have decreased by 36 per

cent since 1997. The choices can be daunting. The ACMA has developed the mobile phone tool kit to help people choose the best value mobile products and services for their needs. The tool kit is available on the ACMA website. The issue of unexpected high phone bills is of particular concern to us all. For some people, unexpectedly high phone bills can cause considerable stress and financial hardship.

The regulator, the ACMA, registered the revised Credit Management Industry Code on 22 April 2006. The code requires the industry to inform consumers about the financial risks associated with premium services, the actions customers can take to lessen these risks, and how to unsubscribe from unwanted services. It requires the industry to assist consumers experiencing financial hardship when paying their accounts. Registration of the code means that service providers may now be directed by ACMA to comply with the code rules. Failure to comply with such direction may attract a substantial penalty. If consumers receive an unexpectedly high phone bill, they should immediately contact their telecommunications carrier. They should be aware that they can request the barring of all calls to premium rate numbers. They should also be aware that the telecommunications industry Ombudsman has jurisdiction to investigate and make binding determinations in relation to billing disputes.

JUVENILE DIABETES

Mr PICCOLO (Light): I rise to speak about juvenile diabetes, and I would like to do so through a case study of a young lad in my electorate who has come to my attention. Lachlan actually wrote to me, as have a number of other young people, and I am sure that other members have received letters. Lachlan's story appears in my next newsletter to raise awareness about juvenile diabetes and, more importantly, to remove some of the misunderstanding around it. Lachlan, like other kids, when he tells his friends that he has diabetes, is told, 'You obviously eat too much sugar', and so on, not understanding that juvenile diabetes is not acquired through diet. The case study states:

Eight year old Lachlan Bradshaw of Gawler East was diagnosed with Type 1 (juvenile) diabetes at the age of four. Since then, Lachlan has faced a daily regime of two to three insulin injections as well as testing his blood glucose levels by pricking his finger around five times a day.

This young chap receives two or three injections a day. It is not a pleasant experience for an adult, let alone a child. It continues:

He will have to continue to do this every day for the rest of his life to stay alive, unless someone can find a cure for this terrible disease. Over the past four years Lachlan has already had approximately 3 000 insulin injections and tested his blood over 7 200 times!

This chap is only eight years old. It goes on:

Type 1 diabetes is not caused by sugar or overeating, it is a disease of the immune system that most commonly strikes children and teenagers.

Adults, also, can get it.

It is caused by the unpredictable and uncontrollable destruction of the cells in the body that produce insulin. Without insulin, Lockie's body cannot convert food to energy.

People with type 1 diabetes have to inject insulin daily to regulate their blood sugar, but this is NOT a cure and it doesn't prevent the development of complications, such as blindness, heart disease, kidney failure and amputations due to poor circulation caused by the effects of type 1 diabetes.

On 26 July 2007, Lachlan and a group of other young people with type 1 diabetes will be visiting Parliament House, along with their local members of parliament, for an event called Kids in the House

of SA. Organised by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Function (JDRF), this event will allow the participants to tell the politicians in this place what it is like to have type 1 diabetes and explain to them why it is important to find a cure.

That is a case study of one of the many young people in our community who suffers from that horrible disease.

The other matter I wish to bring to members' attention is that 72 000 South Australians are registered as suffering from diabetes. Diabetes SA, the leading non-profit organisation which provides support and information services to people suffering diabetes, estimates that another 72 000 people in this state have diabetes and are not aware of it. Unfortunately, those people are at the greatest risk because, if not properly treated and controlled, it can lead to significant complications for their health.

Recently, I held a community forum at Hillier Park, which is one of the residential parks in my community. It involved an older age group, and health is an issue for them. Two particular issues were raised—dental health and diabetes. For whatever reason, the area does not have a place where one can pick up the various supplies free of charge provided by the National Diabetes Service Scheme, which is supported mainly by the federal government but with support also from the state government. Because there is no depot in the Gawler region, people have to travel outside their area or get it by phone. I understand that the federal government has announced some additional funding for this scheme but only for the postcodes 5000 to 5100. Those who live outside those postcodes know that is not regional Australia, so Gawler will not be in the race for a depot. I have written to the federal health minister asking him to review the decision.

The other issue is dental health, and this group requires dental services. As members would be aware, the national government withdrew funding for the public dental scheme, and I hear of cases in my electorate where people draw out their own teeth because of pain. At least a federal Labor government would increase funding in this area.

Time expired.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEES

The Legislative Council gave leave to the Minister for Police (Hon. P. Holloway), the Minister for Emergency Services (Hon. C. Zollo) and the Minister for Environment and Conservation (Hon. G.E. Gago) to attend and give evidence before the estimates committees of the House of Assembly on the Appropriation Bill, if they think fit.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. P. CAICA (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I move:

That for the remainder of this session standing orders be so far suspended as to provide that the Clerk may deliver messages to the Legislative Council and the Speaker may receive messages from the Legislative Council when this house is not sitting, and the Clerk may deliver messages to the President of the Legislative Council when that house is not sitting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Consideration of that motion requires an absolute majority of the house to be present. I have counted the house, and it is not present. Ring the bells.

An absolute majority of the whole number of members being present:

Motion carried.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be so far suspended as to provide that government business has precedence over Private Members Business Bills and Private Members Business Other Motions on Thursday 5 July, and that any private members business set down for that day be set down for consideration on Thursday 26 July.

Motion carried.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (INVESTIGATION AND REGULATION OF GAMBLING LICENSEES) BILL

The Hon. P. CAICA (Minister for Gambling) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Authorised Betting Act 2000 and the Casino Act 1997.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill seeks to amend the Authorised Betting Operations Act 2000 and the Casino Act 1997, in line with measures announced in the 2006-07 state budget. In the 2006-07 state budget, the government made a decision to recover the costs incurred by the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner in regulating both the TAB and the casino. The Liquor and Gambling Commissioner will be required to notify the two gambling licensees in writing before the commencement of each new financial year of the amount to be recovered. These amounts are required to be approved by the minister.

The bill also clarifies probity reviews regarding the suitability of the two major gambling licensees and their close associates to continue to hold the major gambling licences. These reviews will be undertaken by the Independent Gambling Authority with the costs of these reviews to also be recovered from the TAB and the casino. The ongoing suitability reviews are necessary to enable the authority to remain confident that the relevant licensee remains suitable. I commend the bill to members. I seek leave to have the explanation of the clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Authorised Betting Operations Act 2000*

3—Amendment of section 3—Interpretation

4—Amendment of section 21—Applications

5—Amendment of section 22—Determination of applications

These clauses make technical amendments to ensure that the application process for approval of directors and executive officers of the licensee extends to persons of any other class designated by the Authority for the purpose of section 20 of the Act.

6—Amendment of section 25—Costs of investigation

Section 25 currently provides that the Independent Gambling Authority must require an applicant to meet the costs of an investigation in connection with an application under Part 2 of the Act. As a consequence of the amendment made by this clause to section 25(1), the Authority must also require the licensee to meet the costs of an investigation in connection with the continued suitability of the licensee or the licensee's close associates. (The Authority is required under section 23(2) to keep under review the continued suitability of

the licensee and the licensee's close associates, and carry out the investigations it considers necessary for that purpose.)

The Authority may require a licensee to make specific payments towards the costs of an investigation and recover any unpaid balance of the cost of an investigation from the licensee as a debt due to the State.

7—Substitution of section 26

Section 26 currently requires the Authority to notify the applicant and the Minister of the results of an investigation in connection with an application under Part 2. This clause recasts section 26 so that the Authority is also required to notify the licensee of the results of an investigation in connection with review of the continued suitability of the licensee or the licensee's close associates.

8—Insertion of Part 2 Division 10

Division 10 of Part 2 of the Act, inserted by this clause, deals with the recovery of administration costs from the licensee.

Division 10—Recovery of administration costs

33A—Commissioner to recover administration costs

Section 33A provides that the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner must, not less than 1 month before the commencement of each financial year, provide the licensee with a written notice of the amount fixed by the Minister as the recoverable administration costs for that financial year. Administration costs are the costs of administering the Act arising out of, or in connection with, the carrying out of the Commissioner's administrative and regulatory functions in respect of the licensee.

The licensee is required, in each month of the financial year, to pay to the Commissioner one-twelfth of the amount specified in the estimate.

The Minister may vary the amount fixed as the recoverable administration costs for a financial year. In that case, the Commissioner must notify the licensee in writing of the variation and the amount to be paid each month is adjusted accordingly.

If the whole or a part of an amount payable by the licensee to the Commissioner is not paid as required by section 33A, the amount unpaid may be recovered from the licensee as a debt due to the State. In proceedings for the recovery of administration costs, the Commissioner's certificate is to be regarded as conclusive evidence of those costs.

Part 3—Amendment of *Casino Act 1997*

9—Amendment of section 22—Investigations

This clause amends section 22, which requires the Authority to carry out investigations and make enquiries in relation to applications under Part 3. The amendment has the effect of imposing an additional requirement on the Authority, that is, to keep under review the continued suitability of the licensee and the licensee's close associates, and carry out the investigations it considers necessary for that purpose.

The section as amended allows the Authority to obtain from the Commissioner of Police such reports on persons as it considers necessary for the purposes of investigations. Subsection (3), which is new, retains the existing requirement in subsection (2) that for the purposes of an investigation into an application under Part 3 of the Act, the Authority must obtain from the Commissioner of Police a report on anyone whose suitability to be concerned in or associated with the management and operation of the casino is to be assessed by the Authority.

10—Amendment of section 24—Results of investigation

Section 24(1) currently requires the Authority to notify the Governor and the applicant of the results of its investigation. As recast by this clause, subsection (1) requires the Authority to notify the Minister of the results of all investigations. The Authority is also required to notify an applicant of the results of investigations in connection with the applicant's application and the licensee of the results of investigations in connection with review of the continued suitability of the licensee or the licensee's close associates.

11—Amendment of section 25—Costs of investigation

Under section 25(1), the applicant for the grant or transfer of the licence must pay to the Minister the costs of an investigation for the purposes of Part 3.

This clause amends section 25 by the insertion of a new subsection (1) that has the effect of requiring an applicant to meet the costs of an investigation in connection with an

application and the licensee to meet the costs of an investigation in connection with review of the continued suitability of the licensee or the licensee's close associates.

Under section 25(2) as amended, the Authority may require the applicant or licensee to make specified payments towards the costs of an investigation and recover any unpaid balance of the cost of an investigation from the applicant or licensee as a debt due to the State.

12—Insertion of Part 5 Division 3

Division 3 of Part 5 of the Act, inserted by this clause, deals with the recovery of administration costs from the licensee.

Division 3—Recovery of administration costs

52A—Commissioner to recover administration costs

Section 52A provides that the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner must, not less than 1 month before the commencement of each financial year, provide the licensee with a written notice of the amount fixed by the Minister as the recoverable administration costs for that financial year. Administration costs are the costs of administering the Act arising out of, or in connection with, the carrying out of the Commissioner's administrative and regulatory functions in respect of the licensee.

The licensee is required, in each month of the financial year, to pay to the Commissioner one-twelfth of the amount specified in the notice.

The Minister may vary the amount fixed as the recoverable administration costs for a financial year. In that case, the Commissioner must notify the licensee in writing of the variation and the amount to be paid each month is adjusted accordingly.

If the whole or a part of an amount payable by the licensee to the Commissioner is not paid as required by section 52A, the amount unpaid may be recovered from the licensee as a debt due to the State. In proceedings for the recovery of administration costs, the Commissioner's certificate is to be regarded as conclusive evidence of those costs.

Schedule 1—Transitional provisions

The Schedule deals with transitional arrangements for the recovery of administration costs for the 2007/2008 financial year. The provisions ensure that the legislation only operates for the period of that financial year that falls after commencement of the measure.

Ms CHAPMAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (WATER RESOURCES AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 20 June. Page 515.)

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder): I rise to confirm that the opposition will be supporting this bill, which brings the South Australian system of water licences in line with the interstate regimes so that, when obliged, South Australians can commence trading under the National Water Initiative, a document which was signed by the majority of governments in 2004, other than Tasmania (which came on board in 2005) and Western Australia (which signed on in 2006).

In this time of drought across much of Australia, the importance of the National Water Initiative cannot be understated, as it has proven to be a key component of the water reform occurring across our nation. I have reviewed a copy of *Hansard* from the other place, and the second reading explanation provided by the minister, and note that a series of amendments which were proposed by the shadow minister, the Hon. Michelle Lensink, have been supported by the government. I thank those groups who contributed to the opposition review of the bill—the South Australian Farmers Federation, a number of irrigation groups, and other organisations involved in this field.

My understanding is that these groups and individuals supported the intent of the bill and that clarification of some areas of the legislation was necessary. Suggestions for amendments were proposed which have, in turn, been supported by the opposition, proposed to the government and supported by the minister after due consideration. The opposition has recognised that there is some urgency in passing this legislation, as it is required to come into force by 1 July 2007, and confirms its support for the bill as presented to the house.

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): I support this bill, which assists the development of interstate water trade by clarifying the different ways in which water can be described and traded. It is a very positive move. My vision is, ultimately, something like a Torrens title system, whereby people in Victoria, New South Wales or South Australia can trade water and know exactly what they are dealing with. The other element of water trade that we need to look at sooner rather than later is keeping speculators out of it. In other words, there perhaps needs to be a tax on those people who hold water but do not use it.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Minister for the River Murray): By leave, I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

The Natural Resources Management (Water Resources and Other Matters) Amendment Bill provides for improved water management and meets commitments under the National Water Initiative. Separating the different elements of water licences will provide greater flexibility to water users by providing access to a broader range of tradeable components. Greater clarity will also be provided to buyers, sellers and other interested parties. In turn, this should lead to lower transaction costs and more efficient resource allocation.

Security over water entitlements is increased by establishing a water registry that is the sole record of title, and clearly prioritises interests over the water rights. This bill will address issues with interstate water trading; also referred to as tagged trading. It allows for the use of water purchased from interstate without owning a licence in South Australia. This brings the act into alignment with the Victorian and New South Wales legislation.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the officers of the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation who have assisted the government in this process. Can I thank Rohan Hamden who has been intimately involved in the preparation of this legislation, and the extensive briefings required to assist in understanding the complex arrangements. The other officers are Andrew Johnson, Linda Carruthers, Julie Cann, Andrew Emmett and Sarah Avey, plus other members of the department.

I have to say that it has been a long haul to bring forward interstate trade, and to get to this stage and have it finally addressed through the parliament is a significant sense of achievement for myself personally, and also for the government. I also thank the other agencies that are involved—the Department of Environment and Heritage and Primary Industries—for their invaluable input. I would also like to thank Richard Dennis and Mark Herbst from parliamentary counsel.

The Local Government Association, the South Australian Farmers Federation, the Conservation Council of South

Australia, the Natural Resources Management Council, members of the regional NRM boards and the community have also played significant roles in developing the legislation. Finally, I thank all members of the house for their diligent contributions to the debate, and the staff who have helped us through the process. I also thank the opposition for its co-operation.

Bill read a third time and passed.

PROTECTIVE SECURITY BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 5 June 2007. Page 323.)

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): I rise to indicate that the opposition will be supporting this bill which, indeed, has already enjoyed our prompt support in the other place. As pointed out in the second reading already given, it really all comes about from the problem of terrorism these days—and I guess a lot of that dates from 11 September 2001 and the various atrocities which have occurred since then, and that has obviously led governments all over the place to conduct reviews into security of government buildings and assets. Indeed, SAPOL in this state embarked on a major restructure of what was called—and is still called—the Police Security Services Branch.

Whereas some other states like Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and, indeed, the federal government, have already appointed security officers with legislative authority to protect key buildings and assets, in this state we have actually had Protective Security Services Branch officers who do not have any more authority than any other member of the community or the civilian security guards. Those appointed in the other states already have a set of powers which basically sit somewhere between civilian security officers and sworn police officers. As I understand it, the impact of this bill is predominantly to address the issue by bringing us into line with those other states and creating a new range of powers that, like those other states, sit somewhere between the civilian security officer and a sworn police officer.

Clearly, it would not be a productive use of the time of sworn police officers who have expertise and skills across a range of areas to spend their time devoted entirely to the security of buildings and key assets but, on the other hand, it is appropriate for people who are undertaking that protection to have some more authority in order to deal with the job they are doing. At the moment, of course, we have in our courts our sheriff's officers, and they have a little bit more authority than the average civilian officer, but we do not have sheriff's officers in the various other buildings which, no doubt, we in this building, for instance, would consider to be just as important as protecting the courts.

So, we will have this new group of people who will be under a separate piece of legislation but under the control, really, of the Commissioner of Police. I understand that there was quite a bit of toing-and-froing because the Police Association was not all that thrilled by the first proposal or, indeed, the second proposal. But, now that we have finally got to a point where they have a separate piece of legislation and, indeed, a separate disciplinary tribunal, I understand the Police Association supports the bill in its current form.

These protective security officers, which is what they will be called under this new legislation, will have authority to give reasonable directions, refuse entry or direct a person to leave a protected location. They cannot just declare an area

to be a protected location. If it is a public location, the area has to be enclosed and sign-posted. They can require a person to state their name and address—his name and address, to be grammatically correct. They can require a person to state his reason for being in a certain location, and require a person to provide identification. Under certain limited circumstances they can conduct searches of persons, vehicles or property; seize items and evidence; and detain a person for a protective security offence (and these offences relate to the failure to follow the directions or requirements I have already listed), hindering a protective security officer in the execution of his duties, or assaulting a protective security officer; or impersonating a protective security officer.

Depending on their duties, protective security officers may be armed and, essentially, because they sit between what would normally be thought of as a civilian security officer and a sworn police officer, they will have the power to detain, hold and hand over an offender to the police, and it will then be up to the police to conduct the investigation, lay the charges and proceed with any action against a person who may have committed an offence. In those circumstances, as I understand the way things will be structured, the PSO (as they are called) will have the pleasure of being a witness to the events in question.

I know that a lot of what they will be doing will be based on part of the course that is undertaken currently by our police officers. Currently, security guards undertake a four week training course, but these new protective security officers will undertake a nine week training course, and a lot of that will draw on the incident management section of the course undertaken by our police. There will also be rebadging, rebranding and re-uniforming of our protective officers. I understand that, in fact, there are only about 100 officers in the state who will form this contingent. They will also provide a whole-of-government alarm monitoring service, coordinated from the existing security control centre.

As I indicated earlier, the Police Association was not altogether happy with the original proposals in relation to this legislation, but they now support the current format and, indeed, it does seem to be a step in the right direction in giving our security officers appropriate authority for buildings that the state government has some responsibility for. On one occasion fairly recently in this building a person became quite upset and contacted me, in my capacity as shadow attorney-general, after the event to complain about the fact that the security officers had required him to give up the screwdriver he had in his pockets when he entered the building. It seemed to me to be not an unreasonable thing to have done.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Was this in Pirie Street?

Mrs REDMOND: No; this was here. They gave the screwdriver back to the gentleman as he left, but he complained that they did not refer to him as 'This gentleman' but referred to him as 'This chap'. So, I got the impression that he was perhaps a little touchy about a range of issues and did not really have a complaint. But I think it is appropriate for these people who will have the title 'protective security officer' to have the appropriate authority.

They will be under the management of—and, indeed, their appointment will be subject to—the Police Commissioner, and he is authorised under the legislation to appoint as many protective security officers as he deems appropriate. I do not recall that the legislation allows for any limited term appointments but, no doubt if the Police Commissioner considered we were going to be subject to a period in which we would

need extra officers for some time, he would be able to bring that to the attention of the government and make any necessary adjustment to the legislation. Discipline will also be by the Commissioner of Police but through the new disciplinary tribunal, and that was indeed one of the key issues of concern to the Police Association but, now that we are to have a separate protective security officer disciplinary tribunal, the Police Association is very much in favour of the legislation. With those few comments, I indicate the opposition's support for this bill, and we wish it a speedy passage so that it can come into full operation.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

**COMMISSION OF INQUIRY (CHILDREN IN
STATE CARE) (CHILDREN ON APY LANDS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Consideration in committee of the Legislative Council's amendment.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendment be agreed to.

Ms CHAPMAN: I thank the minister for his indication that the amendment as proposed by the Hon. Sandra Kanck is accepted by the government. It is proposed to impose on the inquiry terms that within three months there be a report to the minister from the commissioner and that within six months there be a full response, not only stating the recommendations that will be carried out and the manner in which they will be carried out and those recommendations that will not be carried out, but also that every five years thereafter (and this is very important) the minister must, within three months after the end of the year, make a full response stating the recommendations that have been carried out, either wholly or partly, and any decision that is not carried out and, essentially, why not. If a decision is to be carried out, or if reasons are given for the decision not being carried out, there is a reporting process for the minister having an obligation to lay that before each house of parliament within three sitting days after it is made. So, it is a very stringent regime and we are pleased that the government has acceded to this.

We supported this as an important and stringent regime because, when we had the debate on this bill in our house, I asked the minister a number of questions including how many children currently on the APY lands during the last five years of this government have been the subject of a report under mandatory reporting to his department. I further asked how many children who, in the five years of his government, were the subject of mandatory reporting of child abuse had been removed from the family. Our third question related to all the categories (and we listed them) in the child protection legislation where there is an obligation on persons who live or work on the lands to report where a child is at risk of child abuse. I think this is fairly important because, although that information has not been provided to the chamber, it is true that, if one is following this debate (and one can view the extensive debates in the other place), at least the very significant underreporting of this issue was disclosed.

The Hon. Paul Holloway, who had the responsibility of dealing with the debate in another place, made comment that there had been this significant level of underreporting. He

went on to suggest that that was why we needed to have an inquiry such as this to enable people to come forward and express their concerns about children being at risk. That in itself may be an admirable objective, but the truth of the matter is that it is the people who are social workers, nurses, teachers and police officers, and the myriad of other people who have a legal obligation to report when a child is at risk, who have not been doing so. That is what is significant here, and it is something we would hope that the minister, notwithstanding not providing that detail to this house, will address irrespective of when this commission goes on and irrespective of the progress of the inquiry as to all the background to these reasons. This is a very dangerous situation, where there is a legal obligation to report.

As I indicated, on visiting the APY lands myself recently, and as evidenced in their own health annual reports, a very important thing is going on up in the lands; that is, they have a massive and very intensive program for the immunisation of children and other people in the communities. One of the things that is evident as to why it is necessary to promote such a high level of compliance with or ready acceptance of immunisation is that there is a high level of diseases such as sexually transmitted diseases. The level of syphilis, chlamydia and other diseases in existence on the lands ought to be a matter of concern to members of this place. They are known to the health officers now. They are known to other people who are working in and on the lands, whether resident or in coming onto the lands, and to medical practitioners who fly in and fly out. They see these people who have a high level of sexually transmitted disease. Where this becomes staggering is that they have already established programs to treat children at years 5, 7 and so on as they go through school, and these are at levels that clearly acknowledge that children have these sexually transmitted diseases already. Surely, that in itself should be a reason for a notification to be lodged.

There can be all sorts of explanations as to why it has not happened. Perhaps these people have come forward and said, 'We haven't got any confidence in the Department for Families and Communities to follow it up,' or perhaps they have said, 'Well, it's just too hard. What are we going to do with these children if we ask the authorities to take possession of them and place them somewhere else? It is going to cause more trouble than it's worth.' That is not the point. The point is that each of these categories of persons has a legal obligation to report it when they have identified that risk. What is more, we can assume at this point that they have all had mandatory reporting training and that in any of these categories they have had the training to ensure that they can identify a risk.

Frankly, one of the greatest indicia of a sexual abuse case has to be that a child, especially one under five years of age, has a sexually transmitted disease. It is not acceptable to me that there has not been immediate notification of any child, particularly one under five (and there are a number of cases) who is reported to a health authority for treatment. If you are going to have an inquiry (although it is not with the protections and, we think, amendments to improve it—namely, finish the current inquiry before you start this one), make sure that you go to all the Aboriginal communities in South Australia. Do not just pluck out the APY lands. If you are going to have an inquiry, do not limit the time and certainly do not limit it to two or three of the settlements within the APY lands for all the reasons that are already recorded in the debate.

Whilst those significant improvements for an inquiry to proceed were rejected by the government, it has seen the good sense to accept the amendment put by the Hon. Sandra Kanck to provide for a very stringent reporting procedure. I think that, even though the minister has not accounted for why his department and/or persons employed by him, the Department of Health, the department covering police, or all the other people who are working on the lands, have not been following up these matters or why there have not been reports in the first place, at the very least there should be an obligation to come back with some explanation as to what they are doing ultimately with the recommendations of Commissioner Mullighan's inquiry. Of course, there is a fair chance that he will not conduct the inquiry, but whoever he deputises to carry out that task.

Another matter I raise is that I asked the minister to identify the level of consultation before introducing this inquiry. Prior to this bill being introduced to the house, the opposition had been advised, somewhat in confidence because of the sensitivity of this matter, that it would be important to keep this close to ensure, if possible, bipartisan support in relation to this difficult issue, only to find that the Hon. Paul Holloway in another place had advised that the minister or members of his staff had spoken to personnel with a relevant interest. However, he then told us on 4 June that the minister had written a number of times to Aboriginal organisations about the proposed extension of the inquiry, which has been referred to during debate on this matter.

As the Hon. Robert Lawson has pointed out, the letters were posted on the same day that the minister and the Premier made a press statement about what the government was going to do. That is not consultation, but the typical autocratic style of this government. For the minister and the Premier to make a statement about what is going to happen on the same day as they are sending out letters asking everyone what they think of the idea and expect us to believe that that is consultation is just a nonsense.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: We can make decisions.

Ms CHAPMAN: The Attorney-General interjects that they can make decisions. Well, he can say that the government can make decisions, but it should not masquerade it as consultation with the stakeholders who were the recipients of those letters. The government should come in here and be honest enough to say that, for whatever reason, it does not need to consult and that there is a need to do this.

The other matter I raised at the time was my concern and considerable disquiet about the fact that the Martin government in the Northern Territory had in its possession the Little Children Are Sacred report relating to child sexual abuse in the Northern Territory and that it had not been made public in the Northern Territory. In June 2006 a number of incidences of shocking sexual and physical abuse were reported and made very public. In fact, in one case, one woman had died and her body was dragged through the local community. I will dwell on those matters again. However, members will remember that it was a very shameful period which exposed shocking abuse.

The Northern Territory has got on with it, held its inquiry and received a report. It is a sad indictment that a year later we have not even started our inquiry. I was critical of the Martin government for not producing this report, only to find out just recently that the report was released six weeks after the Martin government had received it. I note that the Leader of the Opposition (Jodeen Carney) said in reference to the report:

A lot of the report deals with long-term matters such as housing, health and education, and while that's fine, there are some steps the government could be taking immediately to address the situation. . .

She goes on to state:

But what's going to happen this week? Nothing. What's going to happen until August? Nothing.

She makes the very valid point that, even with the report, there needs to be action. She finally goes on to say:

But what really needs to happen is the Aboriginal men need to take responsibility for their actions. If the government made a commitment that it wouldn't do business with communities where senior people were convicted of sexual abuse, that would be a step in the right direction.

The report is out. It comprehensively confirms that child sexual abuse is rampant in the communities in the Northern Territory. It is being inflicted on those children by indigenous and non-indigenous adults. There needs to be a high level of response, including a number of areas of education that they have raised and, of course, action on the criminal behaviour. I mention the disclosure of that report also because almost contemporaneously with that has been the publication of a report prepared by Noel Pearson, an indigenous leader from the Cape York Institute. People are probably familiar with Mr Pearson's background. He has, indeed, been a champion for the cause of indigenous Australians and has often expressed concern and disturbance over both the impecunious and shameful circumstances in which the indigenous community reside.

And, of course, being an indigenous person himself, and highly educated, he is not only able to have a deep understanding of what is going on in these communities, but he also has the capacity, intellect and education to articulate very well the gravity of the position. In a document entitled 'From hand-out to hand-up', which was also published in the last week or so, as I understand it, he made very clear his recommendation that the Aboriginal families ought to be stripped of welfare payments if the children are abused or, indeed, miss school. He took the view that it was important for communities to take responsibility for themselves, that there be a 'cop'—or a police officer (I think the word 'cop' has been referred to, at least out in the media arena)—established with enough powers to withhold welfare payments.

On the face of it, this seems to be a fairly draconian response, but this is a very important document from an indigenous person who is highly educated, very experienced in this area, and who has been an advocate for his people for many years now. It ought to be a template for how we advance the protection of children in these disturbing circumstances. I have no confidence that this report will do anything in respect of the plight of these children other than to identify the enormous number of unreported cases but, hopefully, it will at least bring some cases forward and the minister, with his colleagues in cabinet, including the Attorney-General, will act on this promptly, covering both the police and health aspects, and not hide the report for six weeks. We need to know about this situation as quickly as possible, as interim reports come in.

The opposition will do all it can to support initiatives which will help to resolve this issue. We accept that it is complex. We have read the very extensive report provided to this parliament (via the minister) by now Justice Robyn Layton QC and we understand the seriousness of the situation. We will do what we can to support the arresting of the problem and the arrest of perpetrators in these circum-

stances and will, as best we possibly can, ensure that it is adequately funded and resourced so that it can be advanced as soon as possible.

I thank the Hon. Sandra Kanck for her initiative in discussing what other options we could present that would be acceptable to the government to ensure that we have some reporting back and some measure of performance in terms of actually carrying out the good intentions of a bill such as this. I indicate Liberal support for the amendments and we support the third reading.

Motion carried.

**CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (MISCELLANEOUS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.33 p.m. the house adjourned until Thursday 5 July at 10.30 a.m.