

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

### Wednesday 29 September 2010

The **SPEAKER (Hon. L.R. Breuer)** took the chair at 11:00 and read prayers.

#### SCHOOL BUS SERVICES

**Mr BROCK (Frome) (11:02):** I move:

That this house establish a select committee to investigate and report on the effectiveness and cost of the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) school bus service, and in particular:

- (a) the cost and community effect of DECS running its own school bus service;
- (b) the cost and community effect of DECS contracting to local private school bus services;
- (c) the effectiveness of school bus services and contracts in South Australia compared to other states;
- (d) the management of the bus service tendering process by DECS;
- (e) the management of existing school bus service contracts by DECS; and
- (f) any other related matter.

I understand that the Education Act of 1972 has the provision in which the minister may, in such manner and to such extent as he or she thinks fit, provide or arrange for the transportation of children to and from any school, and may pay the whole or any portion of the cost of transporting these schoolchildren to and from any school.

With this in mind, I wish to investigate whether this prescribed method of transporting children is still relevant in 2010, some 38 years after the Education Act was brought into force. I bring to this house a request to form a select committee to explore other methods of transporting our students to and from school. In particular, I wish to explore the current transporting arrangements of regional and remote students.

I appreciate that the situation in metropolitan Adelaide is vastly different to that in regional areas. The current regional operation is a joint operation, that is, some 509 free buses are transporting some 16,000 students; 226 of these buses are DECS operated and owned and the others are run by private contractors.

Following the morning runs, the DECS buses are parked at the relevant schools during the school periods, then again utilised at the end of the school day to transport these schoolchildren home. The amortisation of the cost of these units is on a daily basis and, if we look at the cost per actual hours of operation, this could be extremely high given that we would allow for, in most cases, the units sitting idle for six or seven hours per day. These six or seven hours, coupled with the actual running time of the bus, together with the labour component and materials, means that the total cost could be calculated over nine or 10 hours per day.

If the private contractor was operating this facility and only charged for the time these units were being utilised, this could be approximately three or four hours per day, which could be a better utilisation and less costly than the DECS bus operation that is currently used. The private operator would be able to utilise these units during the school periods in his own business and only charge for the time that is contracted to the DECS organisation.

In a letter from the Minister for Education to me dated 13 September 2010, it was stated that the department will spend \$114 million over the next four years to improve school bus services across South Australia. This was made up of upgrading the departmental bus fleet with new seatbelts and air conditioning, totalling \$23.8 million (which included an additional funding of \$19.2 million), plus, over the next four years, there will be \$90.7 million for private operators to provide new buses and further improve safety standards.

The department has commenced its procurement process and, whilst this has commenced, I believe the tendering process could be included in the work of the select committee to analyse and ensure that the most equitable system is undertaken. I ask that this house explores the best practice of other states and use the knowledge that we have in our own state and department to ensure that our system is cost-effective, sustainable and safe.

I understand that the industry meetings being held in the regions presently will gather information from current and prospective contractors regarding their experience, concerns and thoughts on the current seven-plus-four-plus-four year contracts being offered.

I feel that a select committee could also explore the issues around viability of private and DECS-funded school buses in our state. I would also like to scrutinise the current arrangements of school bus services being held within the DECS organisation as the client department. I question: is this department best serviced to administer and supervise school buses, or could the department of transport (DTEI) manage this service more effectively? I understand that the DECS-owned fleet does not have a depot to house its vehicles, nor does it require proper accredited EPA washdown facilities, as do private operators.

In 2007, a government study was undertaken to look at the feasibility of transferring the operation of these buses from DECS to DTEI. This report (a cabinet submission only) concluded that DECS school bus services were grossly underfunded and would require substantial funding injection to bring them up to achieve viability.

We also should look at the social and economic effects that these services could have on regional locations. I request that the government permit the formation of this select committee to enable a detailed investigation and subsequent recommendations to be presented to this house. This request is made purely on the grounds of my wanting taxpayers and the government to get the best value for money, and parents and care givers getting peace of mind in that children are transported safely to and from their schools.

Yesterday, the Minister for Education provided me with a report on school bus contracts which was undertaken by the Economic and Finance Committee in June 2004. However, this was only for the 'terms of contract and the tendering process for private bus contractors'. This request was as a result of communication from a private school bus contractor asserting that the value of individual bus contracts had been eroded over the years due to an inadequate index system and also the fact that DECS officials showed no inclination to resolve or respond to any such contractor complaints about the index system.

My notice this morning goes into far more depth than this report. I am looking at not only the contracting process but also at an overall review of the whole system to ascertain if our current system is the best available for both value for money and also for the people for whom we are supposed to provide the service, that is, schoolchildren and particularly regional and remote students. If my request is looked upon favourably, I seek that the composition of the committee be two government members and two opposition members plus two independent members and that it be permitted to report back for further consideration by this house.

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (11:11):** I will be brief. I support the member for Frome and, before I get onto the specifics of his motion, I urge the government to be more accommodating in respect of requests for select committees as they are an excellent vehicle to examine issues affecting the community. I highlight some that I have been involved with: one relating to cemeteries, one relating to juvenile justice and one which started looking at DECS but which we did not complete. I ask the government not to take a narrow view and say, 'Look, we don't like select committees looking at—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH:** We are here to serve the community and the select committee process is one of the best ways of doing it because, as the member for Frome indicated in his request, you have members from both sides plus Independents, and you can call in experts and submissions from the public. It is one of the ways in which parliament can fulfil its role in serving the people and reflecting what the people of the state want.

Specifically, this motion addresses a very important issue as a lot of money is involved and the DECS bus service is critical in terms of giving country students the opportunity to participate in an education in a system (and I am not talking about DECS specifically but overall) where country children are disadvantaged in respect of many educational opportunities. It is important that the facility that helps them to access education is run in the most efficient and effective way.

I have a lot of relatives who live in the country and I go there frequently myself, and from time to time issues have come up and, while not specifically mentioned in the terms of reference (but it could come under '(f) any other related matter'), we have the question of children attending a Catholic or independent school being able to be carried on the DECS bus. I think they should be

able to. It came up a few years ago when children wanted to access, I think, the Lutheran school at Murray Bridge.

A whole range of aspects could be looked at in respect of this motion and I commend the member for Frome for introducing it. I trust that the government, in this new paradigm that is affecting Canberra, will see greater involvement of the parliament using techniques such as the select committee. I urge the government to be a little more open-minded than they have been in the last few years with respect to select committees.

**Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (11:14):** I also support the member for Frome and commend him for bringing this motion to the house. In the last three months I have had an enormous amount of contact with local bus operators in my electorate who are very concerned about delays in the retendering for or engagement of contracts for the provision of school bus services. It is fair to say that all these people are dedicated small business people who have worked for decades.

Of the three people with whom I have had regular contact, the first one (or his family) has been associated with bus services for 52 years, another chap for 50 years and another for 35 years. All these people are very concerned about the delays. They want to ensure that the quality of the service they provide is the best that it can be. There has been much concern in the past about seatbelts and air conditioning on school buses, and I note that the government has committed additional dollars to its own fleet for replacement.

It has also been indicated to me in a letter I received recently that there is \$90.4 million—and I am watching to make sure that that is further dollars, or on top of something else—over the next four years to improve the contracts that will be in place for private operators. The motion from the member for Frome is a very appropriate one, because we have some 65 contracts that will expire by the end of this calendar year and another 100 contracts that will expire at the end of 2011.

There is great concern about the fact that, because of the 25-year limit that is in place on school buses, an enormous amount of buses will have to be purchased brand-new. I am advised that, if people in Australia want to buy Australian-made buses, there is something like an 18-month lag time, even though, at a Bus and Coach Association function on Monday night, we were told that 12 would be ready for delivery by the end of this year. However, it is a very small number compared to what is needed.

I think it is important that the parliament actually engages in this process to ensure that the best system is out there. Obviously the private operators want to continue, and they have confirmed with me that South Australia is rather unique in the fact that it is the only state that has a combination of government-provided and privately-provided buses in its school bus fleet. Every other state operates with a private fleet only, and they believe that works well. Obviously, for other governments to pursue that option, it must be quite cost-effective. So, this motion from the member for Frome allows for a detailed investigation to take place to determine if what we are currently doing is indeed the best option moving forward. Let us hope that we get some support on it.

There is also concern about the future contracts that are in place and the emission standards the new buses will have to meet. I have been informed by some operators that DECS has told them to go out and purchase the buses, or engage in discussions with their financial backers—banks and that sort of thing—about the dollars they would need to buy new buses. Of course, the problem is that the banks want to see the contracts in place, so that is where the delays in negotiating contracts have had a profound effect upon those small business people.

They are spread all around South Australia, and it is of great concern to me that, as part of my investigation into this issue, I was provided with a copy of a newsletter from the DECS staff who control bus contracts which was dated August 2008 and which was supposedly forwarded to all operators around South Australia. However, none of them have received it. I got a copy of the newsletter and provided it to the Bus and Coach Association, and immediately received feedback from them and their members saying that it was the first they had ever seen of it; and this newsletter was meant to go out to operators and give them some guidance on how contracts were to be put in place. So it seems to me that there are some people who work within this section of DECS who truly need a bomb put underneath them—

**Mr Pengilly:** Several.

**Mr GRIFFITHS:** The member for Finniss says 'several'—to ensure that the process is working the way it should be. We should not have got to this situation. The member for Frome

wants to ensure that we have the best system in place in the future, and I commend him on that, because it does ensure the best use of the dollars provided by our community. It is not a political move; it is very much a bipartisan move, and that is why the opposition supports the motion for the member for Frome. We believe the investigation needs to take place.

This proposal includes the suggestion that two members from the government, two members from the opposition and two of the Independent members in this house form a select committee, and I am sure that this collection of six people interested in this very important subject would allow the detailed investigation to take place. The recommendations that come from the select committee would allow the parliament, and indeed the process, to move forward to give operators some surety, be it a recommendation for a bus fleet controlled by government or a bus fleet controlled by private operators. We need to know how we are moving forward, because at the moment it is a bit of a shambles.

That is what the small-business operators from the Bus and Coach Association, and specifically three operators in my electorate, have approached me about: their continued frustration. For them it is a history of a gradual build-up in controls placed upon them and cost implications to their businesses that now puts a lot of things in jeopardy. One of the operators in my electorate has some 15 people working for him, and he is very concerned that, because he cannot guarantee he will have contracts moving forward, he will lose good staff. The mechanic who does the maintenance on his trucks has already indicated that he intends to resign very soon—this bloke is very important to the business—and it is because of the uncertainty and the fact that DECS cannot seem to get this project right.

I do recognise that DECS is now having a series of regional meetings—one was held in my electorate at Kadina on Friday last week, and I know that there are several occurring this week—and that is a step forward, but it is still too late. That is the frustrating part of it.

I commend the member for Frome. I do hope that the government members decide to support this motion. It will allow for the provision of a very important service for our schoolchildren to be put in such a way that it is the best possible one for them.

I will then not have to have situations where I get a call from a parent at the Mallala Primary School who tells me that their governing council has now instigated a rule that, for any day of 39 degrees or over, school buses will no longer run, thereby putting the requirement upon parents to arrange, often at very late notice, pick-up and delivery opportunities for their child at school. This just throws the whole thing into confusion. We need the best possible bus fleet we can get out there, be it a mixture of government or private, or indeed, all government or all private, but let's get it right, and the best way to do that is by supporting this motion and allowing the select committee to be established.

**Mr PEGLER (Mount Gambier) (11:20):** I congratulate the member for Frome on this motion and I certainly support it. I believe that both, or all, sides of the house should attempt to address this motion with an open mind and in a bipartisan manner, because the whole motion is about addressing the way that our children are transported to schools.

We must bear in mind that this motion is not about what was covered in 2004 in addressing the private tenders. This motion is about the manner in which we transport our children to our schools, and, through this motion, if we can all work together we will be able to find the most cost-effective manner to transport our children to school in a safe and environmentally friendly manner. I certainly support the motion and I hope that all sides of the house use an open mind and approach this matter in a bipartisan way because it is extremely important to all of our children.

**Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (11:22):** I, too, rise to support the motion to establish a select committee. I congratulate the member for Frome on this initiative and I would ask that parliament give support to this motion.

There is absolutely no doubt that the provision of school bus services to country, rural and regional students is absolutely imperative. It provides educational opportunities for our students who are some distance from regional schools. In the case of my own electorate of Flinders, almost all of my schools are in regional areas and probably more than half of the students travel to school by school bus.

I agree that it is time for a review of this process. What is interesting to me is that this state is the only state that still runs a fleet of DECS buses. Every other state has moved entirely towards

private contractors providing that service, and you have to ask the question why that is and whether we are, actually, operating the service inefficiently.

The member for Fisher raised an interesting point with regard to the transport of children to private independent schools. A number of those schools exist in my electorate, and certainly the issue has been raised with me about the transport of students to those particular institutions. It has already been touched on by the member for Goyder with regard to small bus operators who are in small businesses in country towns providing a service not only of transport to school but to the broader community as well. So there is the utilisation of those buses as well as the contribution that those small businesses make to the small local economies.

What has been highlighted over the last few weeks is, I think, the poor relationship between DECS and the South Australian government. I think this has probably forced the issue of contracts with private operators. One wonders why the delay has occurred and what the problem has been. I think it is very timely that this select committee be established and I certainly support the motion.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert) (11:24):** I just want to briefly support the member for Frome and what he has done here because, as you know, I am actually his constituent.

*Mr Pengilly interjecting:*

**Mr VENNING:** No, I don't, I live somewhere nicer. I live in the Barossa Valley. I do support this because it has been an issue for many years, particularly in my area, where there has always been a dispute in relation to the people of Crystal Brook about whether they should be bused to Port Pirie or whether they should be bused to Gladstone; it has been an ongoing dispute, which has never been clarified.

Also, I take my hat off to the private operators. I believe they need protection, particularly when we change the rules in relation to seatbelts and air conditioning in buses, because to buy a new coach today that is approved is very expensive. It is a major financial outlay, and these contracts need to be such that the people can actually win the contract first and then go and buy the bus, not the other way around, because if you go and buy the bus and you lose the contract, it is almost a ruinous situation where you have a bus and you have not got a route to drive it on.

So, certainly, I do believe we have come a reasonable way in relation to addressing these issues, but I think a select committee would be a great opportunity for us to have a look at all the aspects that the member for Frome has highlighted here. I am also sure that the operators will appreciate having the opportunity to come in and give evidence to this committee. So without any further ado, I commend the motion, and I commend the member for moving it.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:26):** I commend the member for Frome for bringing this motion forward. There are many issues with transport, especially in country areas, where people do not have the benefit of the public transport subsidies that we have, especially the Metroticket service, and the way services are run causes a lot of grief in country areas. There is also a major concern with area rights or route rights, where certain owners are guaranteed a certain area. It is amazing in this day and age that where operators can operate is restricted. If other operators want to run a tandem service they are restricted, unless they can gain an exemption to run that service.

I would like to see full competition open up in the transport service. Competition would sort it out. I remember when the area rights situation was renewed by minister Conlon several years ago. I went over to the minister after that and I said, 'Why did you do that?' and he said, 'We wouldn't have enough buses.' Well, I can assure you, there would be plenty of buses come on stream. There are plenty of operators keen to put their services out there, not just for school runs, which this motion is about, but for public services across the state.

In relation to school runs, I have had many issues put to me concerning both public schools and private schools. Sometimes these runs work together, where services are coordinated between the private system and the public system, and these have come into some problems under the area rights or route rights system that is in place. There are irregularities, such as people cannot even pull up in a town because a certain bus operator owns the right for picking up people in that town, which I think is just utterly ridiculous.

Furthermore, regarding bus routes, there has been a closed system in place for many years for public school tendering, and that has been a very good way for operators who have been operating these services to put their case, regain their contract and service the community. I believe the government is going for a full open tender for these services, and this runs the very real

risk, as the member for Goyder so rightly put, of putting jobs at risk in country areas. People may own only one, two or three buses, but they provide vital income and support for regional communities. Certainly, throughout the seat of Hammond there are several operators who have maybe only one to three buses. This is vital work, not just for drivers; sometimes it supports farmers who need a bit of extra income, and it also employs mechanics and keeps good mechanical knowledge in these regional areas.

I can tell members from experience that, when local garages in country areas get to the stage where, all of a sudden, they are slowing down and no-one is there to take over the business and a mechanical service is lost in a country area, it is a real tragedy for the people of that area because they have to travel many kilometres—sometimes hundreds of kilometres—to have vehicles serviced. So, it is not just about the bus operator operating the buses; it is the community flow-on effect. I certainly believe that, if DECS is handling these contracts in the same way it runs the buses, it goes to show that it is not very efficient and not very efficient in the process of delivering new contracts into the future.

Many operators have been operating on basically a wing and a prayer since early this year when their contracts effectively ran out. They have been told, 'Just get on with life and we'll sort it out later.' Well, that is not good enough from a department which has hundreds, if not thousands, of people working there; the department should be able to sort this out. The problem is that we have people with a government-centric vision working in these departments. They have no idea how small business operates and how these people function—people who have put their house and business on the line so that they can provide these services to rural communities. I commend the member for Frome for moving this motion, and I hope it makes it through to the select committee process and that the house moves it forward.

**Mr PISONI (Unley) (11:32):** I rise as the shadow education minister to support this motion. We have been in contact with a number of bus operators, and this is an issue that has been bubbling along for quite some time in the department.

It is not a unique situation for DECS. I know that the cleaning contractors had similar difficulties in dealing with contracts that were signed before the fair work legislation was passed at the federal level. Those contracts were for five years, and some of them had been running for only 12 months or so when the new labour rates were put in place. The Fair Work Act standardised a lot of award rates, and South Australia inherited from New South Wales a lot of higher rates. The difficulty a number of cleaning contractors had because of the new labour rates and the tight margins is exactly the same situation faced by bus operators, who are running on very tight margins. It is a very competitive business, and cleaning is a competitive business.

Running bus services, whether they be charter bus services or whether they be bus services for schoolchildren, is a very competitive business, unless, of course, you are a DECS-operated bus. Then you are very inefficient and you sit for six hours a day. A public asset sits for six hours a day being unused. It drops kids off in the morning and sits in the grounds all day and then drops off the kids in the afternoon; whereas what private operators are forced to do (and rightly so) is to fully utilise their assets, which is what we do not see with DECS buses.

I am digressing a little, but I return to the fact that the lack of understanding the department had with these cleaning businesses is also being seen in the way in which the department is conducting the contract negotiations with contractors in the bus services industry. With the cleaning contractors, due to changes at a federal level, we saw increases in labour rates for cleaning staff, which meant that a number of cleaning contractors were paying out of their own pockets anything between \$25,000 and \$50,000 a year to maintain those contract because of the increase in labour costs.

The department would not budge in allowing those contracts to be adjusted simply to cover the new labour rates. Eventually, I think it came about because a number of the cleaning companies got together and said, 'Look, we're going to tear our contracts up and you'll have to re-tender and pay this anyway.' The department then agreed to increase labour rates so that they were back on the same profit margins as they were before the changes in federal labour laws.

However, I have been told about what happens within the department when a DECS bus contractor raises a concern with the department or raises concerns about the negotiation process for DECS or the rollover agreement. Remember, a lot of these bus agreements are rolled over for three, six, nine and 12-month periods and many of them are very old. Although it was announced there was to be more funding for buses (for seat belts and air conditioning) in the 2006 budget, we

heard from the education minister that we will not see that process finished until 10 years after the announcement. That is a whole generation of school kids from when the announcement was made until we see something in place.

It is important to understand that there is a disconnect (and the minister has sacked his CEO because of this) between those in the bureaucracy in the department of education and those in the real world, including teachers, students in schools and, of course, those in the private sector who are servicing the education department. It is important to have a select committee to investigate just what it is about the department that makes it so angry towards the private sector and working with contractors.

When contractors raise concerns with the department they are threatened with having their contracts torn up. The department says, 'We've got our own buses and will bring our own buses in and you won't have a contract.' This would have devastating effects for local communities because not only do they provide very cost-effective services to schoolchildren, by delivering kids to school—and it is in the charter in the Education Act that the department has a responsibility to deliver children to school in regional areas—but there is also the opportunity for local contractors to service buses, for groups and communities to charter buses, whether it be for additional school services, social projects or communities within the regional areas—they all rely on bus services being there. Of course, their core business is the school bus service but their buses are also available for community use as well. That brings in additional business and has tourism implications for the regions.

It is important that we encourage the private sector in regional South Australia and make sure that we do not lose these bus contracts to the department altogether because that would be an absolute disaster. I think it is bad enough that half of the bus services are run by a government department but if we saw all of the bus services run by a government department what a disaster that would be for value for money and for local communities in South Australia.

I would like to see this committee established so that we can examine the methods and ensure that local communities are benefiting from small businesses providing these services. Also, that we are not going to see large interstate or overseas companies consuming the businesses that have been supporting the local community for many years and where the community benefits through businesses sponsoring the local footy or netball club.

Small community businesses bring a lot of value to regional South Australia. There is no doubt that a regional community is much better off having a small business that is owned and operated by someone living in the community than a branch office and a manager who has been shipped in from the eastern states to run that business. There is much more connection with that business and the local community if it is a local member of the community who is running the business. That is a documented fact, where a lot of work has gone into the benefits of home-grown businesses in regional areas, in the Midwest of the United States, in particular, where they understand the benefits of having locally grown and incubated businesses participate in their own community.

I support this motion, and I hope the government will support it. I think that, in the spirit of the sacking of the CEO of the department of education, we owe it to regional South Australia to examine just how the bureaucracy is working in the department of education in regard to dealing with bus contracts, in particular, where this motion goes. So, I urge the government to show some courage and to support this motion. This will be a bipartisan situation. This is not about political points, this is about getting a result for small businesses and local bus operators and for communities in regional South Australia.

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (11:41):** I would also like to offer a few words of support to the member for Frome's motion. It is a fairly simple solution in the metropolitan area for children to get to school on public transport, but out in the bush school buses are absolutely critical. Over the years, while my own children regularly used school buses and I was involved in the school community, school bus routes and dealing with the bureaucrats who make the decisions on school bus routes and school bus drivers, discipline and general behaviour on buses have always been, and continue to be, the subject of a fair bit of debate. You only need one ratbag on a bus and the bus can quite often descend into chaos, quite frankly.

What the member for Frome has proposed is an infinitely commonsense approach to the matter and will put in place, as I think the member for Unley said, a cross-chamber committee to have a look at this whole issue. We really need to decide whether the department, the government

of the day, needs to be in the school bus business. They have done it very successfully for decades and decades, let us not forget that, but times have changed. The capital cost of putting these school buses in place is great, the state is rapidly going broke—we are paying \$2 million a day in interest on the debt—so it is past time that we looked at this.

The points that the member for Frome has raised about the cost and community effect of DECS running its own bus services, the cost of contracting to local private school bus services, and the other dot points that he has raised are most important. A select committee can work through this, have a look into it and go to places, get a lot of information and report back to the house on its outcomes. It may turn out, but I doubt it, that what we now have in place works well. It may turn out that in some places we have not much choice but to have in place a government-run school bus service.

However, listening to contractors last Monday night from the Bus and Coach Association, it became pretty clear to me that the services they offer are good and they are cost-effective. We, as the taxpayer, one way or another pick up part of the cost but we do not pick up the large capital cost of putting these buses on the road. The cost of new buses now is prohibitive, anywhere from \$300,000 to \$500,000, depending on whether you get a bus or a coach, of course—there is a bit of a difference in that.

The member for Frome is acting in the best interests of his rural constituents and there are many on this side of the house whose constituents' children use school bus services. So, I support it. I think it is a step in the right direction.

**The Hon. R.B. Such:** In Fisher we have them.

**Mr PENGILLY:** The member for Fisher—a blast from the past—says that he has them in his electorate.

**The Hon. R.B. Such:** We do.

**Mr PENGILLY:** Good. Excellent. So, I think it is good. Let us have a look at it. I urge the government to consider its position on this and support the member for Frome's motion. There is not much point in putting this stuff off forever and a day. We need to get it happening, if it is going to happen. We do not want to go into Christmas and the new year without having made a decision on this. So, the minister, the Premier and others on that side of the house, want to have a good look at it and support the member for Frome as, indeed, the opposition is doing on this particular motion.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mrs Geraghty.

**Mr PENGILLY:** Madam Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

*A quorum having been formed:*

#### **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: COWELL AREA SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT**

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (11:47):** I move:

That the 380<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Cowell Area School Redevelopment, be noted.

The redevelopment of the Cowell Area School is to occur at an estimated cost of \$4.646 million excluding GST. When the project is complete, the school will accommodate an enrolment of 220 students which is the long-term predicted enrolment figure. There will be two new general learning area modular buildings with one covered deck as an outdoor learning area and a veranda, a new multipurpose modular building with toilets and a veranda, and a new technology studies facility. In addition, surplus timber transportable buildings will be demolished.

A temporary fence will be erected to define the contractor's compound and deny access by both parents and staff during the course of construction works. At times when the crossover of contractor staff and students will occur, appropriate management procedures will be put in place. There will be no need to provide additional temporary classroom accommodation during the works, as there is sufficient accommodation currently available on site. Neither is it anticipated that there will be a significant impact on the school's teaching delivery during the work projects. There is no requirement for the project to be staged.

The project seeks to address significant over capacity and to provide new general learning areas, specialised teaching facilities and modern, efficient and functional areas for the delivery of education to the community of the Cowell Area School.



The key drivers for the redevelopment proposal are to improve the accommodation for the school and avoid the continuing and escalating high cost of maintenance of the aged timber buildings on the site at present. There will be no change in the recurrent cost of the school's operation as a result of the redevelopment.

Three options were considered in the development of the project. Obviously, option A was do nothing. This was discounted, primarily due to the immediate need to undertake the replacement of a number of timber transportable core buildings, in order to maintain essential services and sustain current and future service delivery levels. The construction of a completely new school is the most costly option and was discounted as a number of the existing buildings are reasonably new, of solid construction and in good condition.

The preferred option is to redevelop the site to provide: new general learning area accommodation for school students; a multipurpose building to include specialist areas for science, art, home economics, computing, soft technology and media, with a covered outdoor learning area; a new technical studies facility; and new student amenities. With those comments, I recommend the motion to the house.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite) (11:51):** The opposition signals its support for this development. This is money well spent. As the chairman of the committee has pointed out, the project involves redevelopment of the Cowell Area School at an estimated cost of \$4.646 million, including GST, and will accommodate an enrolment of 220 students, which is the long-term predicted enrolment figure.

As a result of this development, we are going to see provision for two new general learning area modular buildings, with one covered deck as an outdoor learning area and a veranda; a new multipurpose modular building with toilets and a veranda; a new technology studies facility; demolition of surplus timber transportable buildings; and some civil site and landscaping works.

The opposition was very happy to support this in the Public Works Committee. It follows extensive lobbying by the member for Flinders—both the current member for Flinders and the past member for Flinders. I am sure they will be pleased to see this school, in this important country region of South Australia, enjoy the benefits of this refurbishment.

It is a reminder that we must not forget regional South Australia. Investing in education and health infrastructure in those regional areas is so vital to country communities. Often, schools like this are the centre point for a town. They are a hub that provides services, not only for children, but often for adults, in the way of libraries, sporting activities—a whole range of things. Of course, they also generate economic activity in the town, which is of importance as well. So, the development has our full support and we look forward to the opening of the works in due course.

**Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (11:53):** I support the member for Waite and reiterate his comments regarding the opposition supporting this motion. Certainly, we are very pleased to see the Cowell Area School and its redevelopment, as it is one of the many schools in my district. In fact, I visited the Cowell Area School just some three weeks ago, and they were certainly very pleased with the redevelopment and the new buildings and new structures that are going in place there. We are pleased to report also that, it is one area school, at least, that is forecasting an increase in enrolments over the coming years. So, we are very pleased to note that, and very supportive of the redevelopment.

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (11:54):** As indicated by the members for Light and Waite, those of us on the Public Works Committee were entirely unanimous in supporting this project; there is no question about that whatsoever. Poor old Cowell is out in the middle of nowhere and does not get a lot of attention.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr PENGILLY:** Not if you live there, no—true. These country schools need—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr PENGILLY:** You have had your turn. These country schools need all the funding they can get and anything that improves the lot of country children, such as this \$4.6 million project at Cowell, is worthy of support. Like I say, there was no question about it as far as the committee was concerned, so I am pleased to support the motion.

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (11:55):** I will add that construction is expected to commence very shortly. In fact, it should start within days or weeks, and it should be completed by July 2011. This

investment in this school also demonstrates the government's commitment to rural and regional Australia, as will other motions later. Based on the evidence presented to it, pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee recommends the proposed public work to the house.

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: PORT AUGUSTA AREA SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT—  
STIRLING CAMPUS**

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (11:56):** I move:

That the 381<sup>st</sup> report of the committee, on the Port Augusta Area School Redevelopment—Stirling Campus, be noted.

It gives me great pleasure to rise on behalf of the Public Works Committee to support this motion. The redevelopment of the Port Augusta Secondary School Stirling Campus has an estimated cost of \$5.761 million, excluding GST. Redevelopment of the site, including the proposed trade training centre and the Building the Education Revolution language centre will accommodate an enrolment of 600 secondary students, which is the long-term predicted enrolment figure for the school.

The project will refurbish existing solid accommodation in building 3A to provide middle school general learning areas and serviced learning areas. It will also upgrade the theory room in home economics as a multipurpose kitchen/theory/fabrics area, consolidate administration facilities and incorporate the Aboriginal education centre, student services and special education into one building.

The whole school will be relocated to the Seaview Campus during the course of the construction period and the Stirling Campus will become a construction site. There will be no need to provide additional temporary classroom accommodation during the works as there is sufficient accommodation available at the Seaview Campus. With these plans in place, it is not anticipated there will be any impact on the school's teaching delivery during the project works.

The project aims to provide modern, efficient and functional areas for the delivery of education to the community of Port Augusta. The key drivers for the redevelopment are to:

- consolidate Port Augusta Secondary School Stirling Campus and Seaview Campus and operate on one site;
- improve the accommodation for the school and avoid continuing maintenance of existing buildings;
- improve general learning areas and serviced learning areas for the middle school students to support the school's curriculum delivery and the focus on students' increased engagement for better attendance, participation and achievement;
- improve the home economics area to provide flexible space to accommodate combined sewing, kitchen and general learning, which I think all students should learn;
- improve the Aboriginal education facilities to demonstrate a clear message to the community in relation to the curriculum, care and support the school provides for Aboriginal students;
- improve the special education facilities to support curriculum delivery to the students in a flexible space to allow group work with computer stations and wet areas;
- improve the administration facility to support the co-location and operate as one site with suitable reception, student services, offices, meeting rooms, staff room, staff preparation area and storage;
- provide sufficient student amenities by recommissioning existing amenities; and
- provide additional car parks on the Stirling Campus for staff entitlement to support the consolidation of both sites.

I am advised that there will be no change in the recurrent cost of the school's operation as a result of this redevelopment.

Three options were considered. The 'do nothing' option was discounted primarily due to the aim of being able to consolidate the two sites into one. Delaying the redevelopment of the

Port Augusta Secondary School would significantly increase future capital costs associated with the redevelopment of core services.

It is expected that the postponement of the redevelopment of the Port Augusta secondary school project will result in significant additional cost due to anticipated price escalation and associated fee and cost increases including ongoing maintenance. The construction of a completely new school would be the most costly alternative. This was discounted as a number of existing buildings are reasonably new and/or of solid construction, in good condition and able to be redeveloped in a more cost efficient manner. I seek leave to conclude my remarks.

Leave granted; debated adjourned.

### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC HEALTH BILL**

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (12:01):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to promote and to provide for the protection of the health of the public of South Australia and to reduce the incidence of preventable illness, injury and disability; to make related amendments to certain acts; to repeal the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987; and for other purposes. Read a first time.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (12:01):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

This Bill is about public health, the health of all of us. As a piece of legislation it is the latest in a long line of public health law stretching back to colonial times in South Australia.

The South Australian Public Health Bill 2010 is designed to replace the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 and provide for modernised and sustainable legislation to protect the public's health both now and well into the future.

South Australian public health law has historically drawn on the work of British public health campaigners from the Victorian era. Because of their efforts in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, our world has changed for the better. These early public health campaigners successfully fought for laws for public health which, in turn, started a new urban planning revolution that brought in cleaner water, safe waste disposal, higher standards of housing, cleaner air, safer and higher quality foods, improved maternal health, healthier babies and children, improved living conditions and safer work places. They provided the basis for modern town planning and local government as we know it.

Well before the advent of modern medical breakthroughs in treatment and the revolutions in antibiotics, modern vaccines and pharmaceuticals, public health interventions dramatically changed the way most people lived in the western world. Living conditions were improved for the population as a whole. Infant mortality plummeted, people were living longer, healthier lives, and our societies were transformed into healthier ones; ones that actually protected and promoted peoples' health. Healthier societies became stronger economies which helped produce a virtuous circle whereby improving economies led to better living conditions and better health.

This is the legacy and the foundation on which South Australia's public health system has been built. Public health law and public health practitioners can rightly lay claim to changing the world for the better. But the world keeps changing and not always for the better. And because this is so, we must be ever vigilant and must keep making sure that our public health laws and our public health powers not only keep pace with our changing world but can anticipate those changes and influence them for the better. This is the core of this new legislation; the ability to keep pace with a rapidly changing world, anticipate the unexpected and have sufficient powers to take action to protect and promote health.

A few short years ago no one had heard about Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome or SARS. The prospect of a global pandemic of unknown proportions sounded more like something out of a science fiction novel, but it was real and it was dangerous. The threat of SARS provided the world with a wake up call. As a result of SARS, many nations, states and provinces reviewed their public health laws to strengthen their capacities to deal with public health emergencies. The health impacts of terrorism and other mass casualty events as well as the direct possibility of pandemic influenza also spurred governments around the world to strengthen public health laws and public health capacity. Members will recall that this House dealt with emergency public health provisions when amending the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 in 2009. These new emergency provisions have been preserved and incorporated into this Bill.

These global reviews of public health laws identified that it was not just the clear and present danger of a pandemic or other public health emergencies which confronted societies like ours. The most profound public health challenges facing us at the start of this century have changed in character from those facing 19<sup>th</sup> Century public health campaigners and those that we subsequently faced in the mid twentieth Century. This is not to say that

problems with infectious diseases, sanitation, clean water and other traditional public health concerns have disappeared, far from it. They remain continuing concerns, always requiring vigilance but in many instances these classic challenges to our health are well controlled or effectively prevented by existing public health strategies and regulations.

There are now more far reaching and insidious public health challenges facing us this century. These threats are not produced by any external agent, bacteria or virus. These threats emerge from the way we live our lives. There has been an explosion in chronic, non-communicable diseases, so much so, that some public health experts predict that in societies like ours, children being born today may be the first generation in over 200 years to face the prospect of reduced life expectancy.

Chronic, non-communicable diseases do not occur by accident. Not so long ago many people attributed this explosion of disease to the lifestyle choices that individuals made. Whatever the correctness of this view, it was not and is not the entire picture. We now understand that people's choices are heavily influenced and constrained by the circumstances they find themselves in. This is commonly referred to as the social determinants of health.

The World Health Organization commissioned a major global inquiry into the social determinants of health in 2003. This commission was chaired by Sir Michael Marmot an acclaimed public health epidemiologist who is also the current President of the British Medical Association. One of the Commissioners assisting Sir Michael was South Australia's own Fran Baum, Professor of Public Health at Flinders University. The World Health Organization's Commission into the Social Determinants of Health reported in late 2008. It called for sustained government and community action at all levels—local, state, national, regional and global—to attack the 'causes of the causes of illness', that is, to attack the social determinants of health. This Bill in part provides for South Australia's response to this challenge.

But the work of the WHO Commission was not the only impetus for modernising South Australian public health legislation, and nor were the changes in international public health threats. The current Act, the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 has been under review for a number of years.

The Government made a commitment to review the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 in the 2005 election platform. This review commenced in 2006 and noted the previous review that was commenced under the leadership of the then Minister for Human Services, the Hon. Dean Brown in 2000. This previous review was widely supported and its results pointed towards the need for further work to modernise the legislation. The results of that review have been incorporated into the development of this Bill.

Also examined as part of the 2006 review were similar reviews and legislative reforms that had been undertaken in Australian and overseas jurisdictions. For example, we are indebted to our colleagues in Quebec whose public health legislation is regarded as an international exemplar. South Australia signed a Public Health Partnership Agreement with Quebec in 2008 and we have benefited from their expertise and advice when framing certain aspects of this Bill particularly in relation to the role of the Minister as the advisor to the Government on any public health issue.

On this basis and following extensive consultation with the key stakeholders, it was determined that rather than recommence a complete review of the Public and Environmental Health Act, the Government would develop an exposure draft of the legislation. In September 2009, the South Australian Public Health Bill 2009 was released for public comment. Fifty-nine submissions were received and the Bill has since been revised following a review of the comments received. There has also been further, close discussion with key parties on critical issues of concern. I am pleased to say that the Government believes that all principal concerns and questions have been addressed and the Bill before you is strengthened and improved because of these discussions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank publicly all of the individuals and organisations who participated in this process and who took the time to formally submit responses to the review and participate in further consultation meetings on areas requiring further improvement. I would especially like to mention that by far the greatest contribution to this review came from a source much closer to home. I am referring to the contribution of public health practitioners and in particular the local government sector.

This Bill has been developed through a process that relied heavily on the strong engagement with the Local Government Association of South Australia and its members, and Environmental Health Australia—South Australian Branch, the professional body representing environmental health officers. Local government and authorised officers within local government form the front line of the State's public health system. Their experience in administering the current Act allowed them to provide concrete feedback on what was needed to improve and strengthen this legislation and to develop public health legislation fit for the purpose of anticipating and responding to 21<sup>st</sup> century public health challenges. I acknowledge their role and the support they provided in developing this Bill.

Also streamlined and strengthened in the Bill are powers for the prevention, control and management of infectious disease that pose a serious risk to public health. The Bill continues and builds upon the proven regulatory regime which has been successful in dealing with infectious conditions. Where the Bill takes this regime further is that it allows properly authorised public health officials to take early and decisive action to prevent and control disease outbreaks. The Bill also works in the real world, and in the real world infectious diseases do not recognise state borders. The Bill allows for the recognition of other jurisdictions' public health orders and allows for the exchange of vital public health intelligence needed to manage outbreaks.

The Bill incorporates provisions that are congruent with the World Health Organization's Revised International Health Regulations (2005). It includes, for the first time, a codified statement of principles and rights for individuals who may be the subject of public health orders, orders which by necessity may impose directions or restrictions on their behaviour. Although such powers have always been a part of the toolbox that public health authorities have used to protect health, for the first time the exercise of these powers will be applied in a staged and

proportionate way commensurate with the level of risk, and they will be governed by a set of principles that guarantee respect, privacy and involvement in decision-making. If a person's liberty is to be restricted, it is to be done only as a measure of last resort and with the minimum restrictions necessary to ensure public safety.

Although the primary objective of the Bill is the protection of the public, an objective that will never be compromised, the Bill recognises that people are generally more willing to cooperate with authorities when their rights are clearly recognised and respected. The Bill therefore strikes a balance of protection of the community, the proportionate exercise of strong powers where necessary, the prevention of stigmatisation and the recognition and protection of individual rights needing protection.

I now wish to discuss and highlight the key features of the Bill.

The South Australian Public Health Bill 2010 contains a number of explicit objectives. The inclusion of objectives reflects a modern approach to legislation. Objectives help clarify the purpose of the Act and define the core values, functions and outcomes that are required to achieve that purpose. These objectives in the Bill are based on the essential functions outlined in the international public health law literature and in similar new legislation enacted in other States and Territories. They provide clarity about the functions and activities that should be undertaken to improve and protect public health.

The Bill sets out several principles similar to those incorporated in recent public health legislation in other jurisdictions. The principles aim to provide a clear framework for the process of public health decision-making under the legislation. The principles also aim to ensure the Act will be flexible and enabling. For example, the Precautionary Principle in clause 6 will permit proportionate action to be taken if circumstances warrant taking reasonable steps to protect public health from identified risks even though there may not be complete scientific certainty available at the time.

Guidelines on the application of the statutory principles contained within the legislation will be required and will be developed by the Minister in consultation with key interest groups such as the Local Government Association of South Australia and Environmental Health Australia (South Australian Branch). These guidelines will explain how the principles should be interpreted and applied such as in situations where there has been an apparent breach of the general duty to protect public health.

The Bill defines 'public health' to mean 'the health of individuals in the context of the wider health of the community'. This definition will guide the assessment of risk to public health, a key concept in the Bill. This definition of public health is consistent with the definition contained in similar contemporary public health Acts in other Australian jurisdictions.

Under the Bill, the Minister will be charged with the overall responsibility for administering the legislation and for protecting and promoting public health. Furthermore, the Bill establishes an explicit framework for the Minister to provide advice to and consult with other State Government agencies when proposals that may have significant implications for public health are being considered. This approach is congruent with the Health in All Policies approach that is being developed in South Australia and builds on European and Canadian precedents. The South Australian Health in All Policies approach is being implemented across the South Australian public sector. The Department of Health together with the Department of Premier and Cabinet have been working with a number of Government agencies on initiatives demonstrating this approach. South Australia's Health in All Policies initiatives were showcased at a recent International Meeting held in Adelaide in April this year that was co-sponsored by the State Government and the World Health Organization. This international meeting produced the Adelaide Statement on Health in All Policies which has been distributed globally and is already gaining widespread recognition as a definitive statement of this type of groundbreaking work.

The Bill requires the Minister to work collaboratively with local government in a joint effort to protect and promote public health in this State. The Minister will however retain final responsibility, as is currently the case, and as such, can intervene where a council may be failing in its duty to protect the public's health.

This Bill establishes the statutory position of Chief Public Health Officer. This position is consistent with provisions in comparable legislation interstate and overseas. The Chief Public Health Officer will provide a single point of reference and source of advice and expertise in public health matters for the Minister, the Department of Health, other Government agencies, Parliament and the public of South Australia. This statutorily recognised position ensures the continuance of vital public health activities within the South Australian community even if there is a serious pandemic that disrupts normal functions of Government. The Bill provides the Chief Public Health Officer with the power to give directions and make orders, including detention orders to persons who have a controlled notifiable disease and who present a risk to others. The exercise of these powers will be guided by the principles in the Bill that make clear that detention is a measure of absolute last resort. The District Court has jurisdiction to review any direction or order of the Chief Public Health Officer. Extension of a detention order beyond 30 days must be authorised by the Supreme Court. There is also a mandated review by the Supreme Court for an order extending beyond six months. This scheme of judicial review of detention orders protects the rights of affected individuals while preserving the primacy of the public's right to protection.

The system of public health in South Australia, and in all jurisdictions in Australia, is based on a partnership of interlocked responsibilities between local, State and Commonwealth governments. At an international level, this partnership also includes the World Health Organization (WHO).

In this context, the Bill continues to recognise the important and very significant role local government traditionally has in public health, a role which goes back to the earliest laws on public health. The Bill acknowledges this traditional role and partnership by continuing to recognise councils as local public health authorities as is currently the case under the current Act.

Local government provides an extensive range of public and environmental health services, including food safety, school and community immunisation programs, human waste and waste water control, business inspections and health risk assessments. Councils also provide a significant but often unrecognised contribution to public health by providing a range of recreational facilities and services such as playgrounds, sporting facilities, parks, good street paving and lighting. These are important public health measures ensuring an opportunity for good health for all.

The Bill provides councils with more explicit guidance regarding their public health functions and responsibilities whilst continuing the majority of functions that councils currently undertake.

This Bill continues to recognise the role of local government in supporting access to immunisation services. The original provision regarding immunisation in the consultation draft of the Bill was of concern to councils and the LGA and, as a consequence, the Bill was amended. The new provision, which is supported by the LGA, makes it clear that the Department of Health will provide ongoing support to councils in the provision of immunisation services. The Bill provides for a partnership between state and local government for immunisation services that will be the subject of a memorandum of understanding between the Minister and the LGA.

The current Act established the Public and Environmental Health Council. This body is to be replaced by the South Australian Public Health Council which will comprise members appointed by the Governor, as is currently the case.

The South Australian Public Health Council membership will be drawn from the same membership as the Public and Environmental Health Council (local government, Environmental Health Officers at the local government level and persons with qualifications and experience in public and environmental health including communicable disease control and prevention). Further members will be drawn from the fields of environmental protection, health promotion and the non-government sector with experience in activities relevant to public health. This membership more accurately reflects the scope of key stakeholders in modern public health practice.

The provisions relating to the South Australian Public Health Council provide it with clearer and more explicit terms of reference than those of the Public and Environmental Health Council. It will have responsibility to provide strategic advice and monitor the state of the public's health in South Australia. Its role aligns with that of the new position of Chief Public Health Officer since the South Australian Public Health Council will provide advice to the Chief Public Health Officer.

Under the current Act, the Public and Environmental Health Council has a power to constitute a special review committee to hear appeals relating to a notice under the Act. The local government sector supports the continuation of an alternative appeal mechanism rather than a direct recourse to the Administrative and Disciplinary Division of the District Court.

Accordingly, the Bill establishes the Public Health Review Panel (the Review Panel) to hear appeals on certain matters relating to Part 6. The Review Panel will be established as a separate entity from the South Australian Public Health Council although it will draw its membership from the Council. The Review Panel will comprise the Chief Public Health Officer, two members or deputies of the South Australian Public Health Council and any other persons considered by the Chief Public Health Officer to have relevant expertise on a matter. This change provides a more manageable mechanism for the review of decisions and for timelier and speedier reviews.

A decision of the Review Panel may be appealed to the District Court. The Review Panel may also bring any proceedings to an end that appear to be more appropriately considered in proceedings before the District Court thereby ensuring matters are referred to the appropriate jurisdiction. A person can also appeal directly to the District Court against a notice issued by the relevant authority.

Another important change in this Bill is that the operation of a notice that is being reviewed is not suspended pending the outcome of the proceedings, unless determined otherwise by the Review Panel. This will prevent the current practice of seeking a review as a means of delaying action on a notice.

The current Act provides for the Public and Environmental Health Council, after a process of consultation, to take action it considers appropriate including the removal of a local council's powers and transferring them to the Minister, where the Public and Environmental Health Council is of the opinion that a local council has failed to discharge its duty under the Act.

Whilst these provisions have never been invoked, it was considered important for this power to continue in the new legislation, although in a modified manner. Subject to certain staged, procedural requirements which aim to ensure a council is given fair opportunity by law to act on a significant matter affecting public health in its area, the Bill gives the Minister a power to take over a function of a council, should a council fail to perform a function under the Act, until the matter is resolved. The Chief Public Health Officer will undertake corrective action on the Minister's behalf. A council may also make a request to the Minister to transfer a function to the Chief Public Health Officer for a defined period.

In Part 6, the Bill establishes a general duty to protect public health. This mirrors similar general statutory duties for example, those in the Environment Protection Act 1993 for the protection of the environment, and those in the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986 for the protection of occupational health and safety. In a manner similar to the statutory duties in these Acts, the general duty to protect public health does not entail an offence nor does it establish a civil liability. It provides an educative message for the community on the importance of public health and the need for mutual responsibility in order to sustain public health. The Bill includes provisions that allow for the development of policies that may define the scope of the general duty and establish standards that are to apply to prevent or manage a public health risk.

Enforcement will occur through the mechanism of remediation notices. An offence will occur if there is a failure to comply with an order (allowing for a defence of reasonable excuse).

Part 3 of the current Act (Protection of public health) has proved to be complex and confusing in its application. This Part includes outdated approaches and certain aspects of this Part have been superseded by provisions in later legislation (for example the Environment Protection Act 1993 and section 18 of the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987—Discharge of wastes in a public place and sections 21-22 Protection of water supplies in the Act). Part 3 has been found to be deficient in providing comprehensive guidance (beyond narrow areas of insanitary conditions) for the assessment of risks to health, even to the extent of still containing outmoded, pre-germ theory models of disease transmission. This deficiency is remedied by the new Part 7, 'General public health offences' which sets out the scheme for assessing a risk to public health. This assessment will determine if the matter constitutes a material or serious risk to public health. This part of the Bill will provide guidance to authorised officers on how risk assessments should be conducted. The Bill provides for a graded approach to action and remediation depending on the immediacy and severity of the risk. This modern framework for the assessment of public health risks can be flexibly applied to any situation, thereby future-proofing the proposed legislation against unforeseen or unanticipated public health problems. This approach is consistent with that adopted in the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, Tasmanian and Victorian Acts and in the Western Australian draft Public Health Bill. This approach has been based on the scheme that was recommended in the National Public Health Partnership paper: The Application of Risk Assessment Principles to Public Health Legislation.

Penalties for causing a risk to health have been increased to reflect proper concerns for public health and provision has also been made for continuing offences and for expiations. This addresses problems with the current legislation which allows those who are willing to pay expiation fees to do so whilst continuing harmful practices with no resolution.

To assist the prosecution of offences under the Act, the Bill provides that where a court is satisfied that a local council or the Chief Public Health Officer has, in accordance with the Act, assessed a risk to public health that is the subject of proceedings before the court, the court must, in the absence of proof to the contrary, accept that assessment as evidence of the fact that a risk to public health existed or has occurred and, insofar as may be reasonably demonstrated by the assessment, the extent or significance of the risk.

The Bill provides for a scheme of public health planning at the local, regional and state-wide level under the general direction of the Minister. At the local level, planning will be undertaken by councils in collaboration with a range of identified partners. This will provide the means by which responsibilities conferred on the Minister and councils can, in part, be discharged. These provisions are consistent with schemes in the current and previous Victorian public health legislation and in the Western Australian draft Bill. The Bill also links State and regional planning since the Minister is required to determine high level state-wide public health goals and priorities which need to be taken into account in local and regional public health planning. The proposed State Public Health Plan will also incorporate planning requirements for unincorporated areas of the state, including Aboriginal lands.

The scheme in the Bill aligns public health planning with existing obligations on local councils to engage in strategic management planning under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1999. The Bill provides for a scheme under which councils can incorporate public health elements into their existing strategic planning frameworks and this means that councils do not have to undertake a separate, additional planning process.

The Bill includes a voluntary scheme for inter-sectoral planning by enabling the identification and participation of public health partners in planning processes established by councils. This provision reflects existing practice where several Government and non-government agencies are involved in aspects of public health planning at the local government level.

The public health planning requirements will be the subject of a phased implementation process to enable all parties, and especially councils, to become familiar with these provisions. The Department of Health will work with the LGA to host a workforce capacity and resource development project aimed primarily at councils to help prepare councils and other relevant agencies to undertake the public health planning roles and processes intended in the Bill.

The Bill will provide improved opportunities to better address non-communicable diseases and chronic conditions that have taken over from infectious diseases as the primary causes of morbidity and mortality and now constitute the major public health challenge for the entire population. The emergence of these conditions is related in part to lifestyle opportunities and choices and to a more significant degree, the social, physical and economic environments which characterise modern societies.

The Bill will permit the declaration of certain diseases and conditions including injuries of public health concern to be identified and will permit the development of codes of practice that address ways in which the incidence of disease can be prevented, monitored, reduced, managed and controlled. The codes of practice will specifically address the policy context and causal factors which underpin many of these conditions. It should be noted, however, that the provisions set out in Part 8 of the Bill are not to be applied for the regulation of an individual's behaviour, nor do they govern the clinical decisions of medical practitioners. Rather these provisions target the causes and underlying social and environmental factors which can lead to public health risks that result in illness or injury.

As mentioned earlier, the Bill adopts a more contemporary framework for the prevention, early detection, containment, control and management of infectious disease. Infectious disease has been greatly reduced as a major threat to health during the last century due to the success of public health interventions, better living conditions and advances in health care. However, infectious diseases continue to pose new and unanticipated risks and dangers due to the emergence of new or previously unknown diseases, the migration of diseases due to ecological

degradation and climate change, increased world travel, mutation and the development of drug resistant strains, among other causes.

The Bill retains two categories of disease, notifiable disease and controlled notifiable disease which can be declared by regulation. In emergency situations, the Minister can declare a condition or disease to be a notifiable condition or a controlled notifiable condition for a defined period without requiring a regulation to be made. This provision allows for urgent action including rapid notification and appropriate public health interventions when dealing with a serious and potentially unknown infectious threat.

The Bill introduces a new category of notifiable contaminant which will require the reporting of prescribed contaminants as well as further testing by laboratories or prescribed persons if required by the Chief Public Health Officer. The reason for including this provision is to establish a capacity to identify and monitor contaminants in food, other products, or the environment that pose a risk to public health in order to act early to prevent adverse public health outcomes by preventing the distribution of a product or initiating a product recall, or carrying out other relevant measures. This provision mirrors provisions in Victorian public health law but, like the Queensland legislation, is more advanced in that it covers a range of contaminants as well as micro-organisms. These contaminants can include prescribed chemical agents, heavy metals or other substances known to be a risk to health.

In addition to reducing the risks to public health, these provisions will also reduce the risks to industry. While the public's health will remain the primary concern, we must also make sure that our important food processing and manufacturing businesses are appropriately protected. A public health food scare is the quickest and most certain way to damage or even destroy a good food business. This new regime of notification of contaminants provides the state public health officers with capacity to monitor these reports and intervene earlier to prevent a potential outbreak. Prevention and the earliest possible intervention are the hallmarks of this provision.

Some sectors of the food processing and manufacturing industry expressed concern about this provision in the draft Bill. The Department of Health has worked closely with the Department of Primary Industries and Resources of South Australia (PIRSA) and with industry representatives to ensure that there were no unintended consequences or unnecessary requirements imposed on relevant businesses. The Bill before you has improved this section with the assistance of industry. A range of safeguards which respond to industry concerns are included. Also explicit within the Bill is a firm commitment to consult affected industries before regulations are developed under this section of the legislation. I would like to record my thanks to my fellow Minister and his department—PIRSA for their assistance and I would most particularly acknowledge the contribution of and thank the Australian Chicken Meat Federation and Australian Pork Limited for their willingness to engage in a process which has improved the Bill for all concerned.

To be clear, the intent of clauses 67 and 68 is to improve the prevention and management of risks to public health from contaminants. Where contaminants may be found in food or other products, the Bill requires the Chief Public Health Officer to design regulations in consultation with all relevant affected industries. These provisions also incorporate environmental contaminants that pose a risk to public health outside of the food chain. For example they will provide the State with a mechanism to track the prevalence of prescribed antibiotic resistant microbes, where detected, in specific locations in the community.

This Bill provides a clearer scheme for the management and control of persons with controlled notifiable disease whose behaviour may be placing others at risk. Where necessary, it provides for a compulsory scheme of clinical examination, counselling, direction, treatment orders and isolation or detention orders. These elements of the scheme can be applied in a graded way depending on the severity of the public health risk and the degree of personal cooperation or voluntary compliance. This scheme incorporates and is consistent with:

- the provisions of the World Health Organization's International Health Regulations (IHR) including requirements to participate in national reporting and incorporating a set of principles that provides for the protection of individual rights, in so far as they do not conflict with the overriding imperative of protecting the population from identified public health risks
- national and state based reviews of this area including the national report commissioned by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference that sought to establish nationally consistent guidelines for the management of people who place others at risk.

The Bill ensures better management of public health issues and infectious disease by recognising orders made under related Acts in other jurisdictions as if they were made under the equivalent area of South Australian law. In relation to confidentiality provisions, the Bill will also permit the exchange and flow of public health information for the identification and control of the spread of disease by enabling disclosure of certain information in the course of official duties for those involved in administering a related Act or any other purpose, such as the compilation of national surveillance data on disease.

Because public health issues can be complex and broad in scope, not all subsidiary legislative matters can be dealt with effectively within the constraints of a regulation making power. The Bill provides a policy making power similar to that in the Environment Protection Act 1993. It permits the Minister to prepare and maintain a policy (to be called a State Public Health Policy) that relates to any area of public health such as matters constituting risks to public health, the scope of the general duty under Part 6, or setting out standards and other measures to promote or protect public health.

The development of these policies is to be undertaken in accordance with the procedures set out in the Bill. They must be referred to the Parliament which may disallow the policy.



The Bill contains a simplified, but comprehensive regulation-making power than is currently the case. All regulations under the current Act will be transitioned into new regulations to be developed under the Bill, and any new regulations and policies will be subject to the normal processes.

In conclusion, the Government acknowledges the key role that local government has in public health and has worked very closely with the local government Association of South Australia, Environmental Health Australia (SA Branch) and members of councils, among others, to ensure that any issues arising from this Bill received full and proper consideration and that appropriate solutions have been developed to address any concerns. I acknowledge again the support, assistance and commitment given by the Local Government Association of South Australia and the Environmental Health Australia (SA Branch) in the development of this Bill.

Local government always has been the co-regulator and partner of the state government for public health. Local government has always been responsible for local public health issues in its area. This Bill acknowledges and continues this well established and robust tradition. The Bill also recognises that public health is more than a local concern. As a state we must all work together to preserve, protect and promote public health. That is what this Bill provides for—cooperative and effective action for public health throughout South Australia, and collaboration with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories beyond, including allowing South Australia to contribute to international public health effort.

Preserving, protecting and promoting health is not just a responsibility of the health care system. In fact the role of the health care system, whilst vital, is not sufficient to do this alone. The preservation, protection and promotion of health require concerted and coordinated action across government, between governments and across businesses and communities. This requires all of us to act to protect the health of the whole community.

I think C. Everett Koop, the famous Surgeon General in the United States who served between 1981 and 1989 best summed up the significance of a strong public health system. He said; 'Health care is vital to all of us some of the time, but public health is vital to all of us all of the time.'

I commend the Bill to the House.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

This clause is formal.

###### 2—Commencement

The measure will be brought into operation by proclamation.

###### 3—Interpretation

This clause sets out the terms that are to be defined for the purposes of the measure.

##### Part 2—Objects, principles and interaction with other Acts

###### 4—Objects of Act

This clause provides that the objects of the Act are—

- (a) to promote health and well being of individuals and communities and to prevent disease, medical conditions, injury and disability through a public health approach; and
- (b) to protect individuals and communities from risks to public health and to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, a healthy environment for all South Australians and particularly those who live within disadvantaged communities; and
- (c) to provide for the development of effective measures for the early detection, management and amelioration of risks to public health; and
- (d) to promote the provision of information to individuals and communities about risks to public health; and
- (e) to encourage individuals and communities to plan for, create and maintain a healthy environment; and
- (f) to provide for or support policies, strategies, programs and campaigns designed to improve the public health of communities and special or vulnerable groups (especially Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders) within communities; and
- (g) to provide for the prevention, or early detection, management and control, of diseases, medical conditions and injuries of public health significance; and
- (h) to provide for the monitoring of any disease or medical condition of public health significance in order to provide for the prevention or early detection of any such disease or medical condition and for the protection of individuals and the community from the threat of any such disease or medical condition and from public health threats more generally; and
- (i) to provide for the collection of information about incidence and prevalence of diseases and other risks to health in South Australia for research or public health purposes; and

- (j) to establish a scheme for the performance of functions relating to public health by the State and local governments.

The Minister and other persons or bodies involved in the administration of the Act will be required to have regard to, and to seek to further, the objects of the Act.

#### 5—Principles to be recognised under Act

It is intended to enact various principles that are to be applied in the administration of the Act, as set out in clauses 6 to 14.

#### 6—Precautionary principle

The 'precautionary principle' is that if there is a perceived material risk to public health, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent, control or abate that risk. In applying the principle, decision-making and action should be proportionate to the degree of public health risk and should be guided by—

- (a) a careful evaluation of what steps need to be taken to avoid, where practicable, serious harm to public health; and
- (b) an assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of options; and
- (c) an aim to ensure minimum disruption to an individual's activities, a community's functioning and commercial activity consistent with providing any necessary protection from identified public health risks.

#### 7—Proportionate regulation principle

The 'proportionate regulation principle' is that regulatory measures should take into account, and to the extent that is appropriate, minimise, adverse impacts on business and members of the community while ensuring consistency with requirements to protect the community and to promote public health.

#### 8—Sustainability principle

The 'sustainability principle' is that public health, social, economic and environmental factors should be considered in decision-making with the objective of maintaining and improving well-being and taking into account the interests of future generations.

#### 9—Principle of prevention

The 'principle of prevention' is that administrative decisions and actions should be taken after considering (insofar as is relevant) the means by which public health risks can be prevented and avoided.

#### 10—Population focus principle

The 'population focus principle' is that administrative decisions and actions should focus on the health of populations and what is necessary to protect and improve the health of the community, while considering the protection and promotion of the health of individuals.

#### 11—Participation principle

The 'participation principle' is that individuals and communities should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own health and, to that end, to participate in decisions about their own health and the health of their communities.

#### 12—Partnership principle

The 'partnership principle' recognises that the protection and promotion of public health requires collaboration and, in many cases, joint action across various sectors and levels of government and the community. The focus should be to develop and strengthen partnerships aimed at achieving identified public health goals consistent with the objects of the Act.

#### 13—Equity principle

The 'equity principle' is the decisions and actions should not, as far as is reasonably practicable, unduly or unfairly disadvantage individuals or communities and consideration should be given to health disparities between population groups and to strategies to minimise or alleviate such strategies.

#### 14—Specific principles—Parts 10 and 11

This clause sets out some additional principles that will only be relevant for the purposes of Parts 10 and 11. The overriding principle will be that people have a right to be protected from any person whose infectious state or behaviour may present a risk, or an increased risk, of the transmission of a controlled notifiable condition. A person who has a controlled notifiable condition that is capable of being transmitted must take reasonable steps to avoid placing others at risk. A person must also act to avoid contracting a controlled notifiable condition that is capable of being transmitted.

#### 15—Guidelines

The Minister will be able to prepare or adopt guidelines that relate to the application of these principles. The Minister will take steps to consult with SAPHC and the LGA in relation to the preparation or adoption of any guidelines. SAPHC will also be able to request the Minister to develop guidelines with respect to particular matters.

#### 16—Interaction with other Acts

Except as otherwise provided, the provisions of this Act will be in addition to, and will not limit, the provisions of any other law of the State.

### Part 3—Administration

#### Division 1—Minister

##### 17—Minister

This clause sets out various functions that may be performed by the Minister in connection with the administration of the Act. A key function will be to promote proper standards of public and environmental health within the State by ensuring that adequate measures are taken to give effect to the provisions of the Act and to ensure compliance with the Act. The Minister is also to be a primary source of advice to the Government about health preservation, protection and promotion.

##### 18—Power to require reports

The Minister will be able to require specified authorities to provide a report on any matter relevant to the administration or operation of the Act.

##### 19—Delegation by Minister

The Minister will be able to delegate functions and powers.

#### Division 2—Chief Public Health Officer

##### 20—Office of Chief Public Health Officer

The position of Chief Public Health Officer is to be established.

##### 21—Functions of Chief Public Health Officer

The functions of the Chief Public Health Officer will be as follows:

- (a) to develop and implement strategies to protect or promote public health;
- (b) to ensure that this Act, and any designated health legislation, are complied with;
- (c) to advise the Minister and the Chief Executive of the Department about proposed legislative or administrative changes related to public health, and about other matters relevant to public health;
- (d) to establish and maintain a network of health practitioners and agencies designed to foster collaboration and coordination to promote public health and the furtherance of the objects of this Act;
- (e) at the request of Minister or on the Chief Public Health Officer's own initiative, to investigate and report on matters of public health significance;
- (f) after advising the Minister and the Chief Executive of the Department, to make public statements on matters relevant to public health;
- (g) any other functions assigned to the Chief Public Health Officer by this Act or any other Act or by the Minister.

##### 22—Risk of avoidable mortality or morbidity

If the Chief Public Health Officer becomes aware of the existence of, or potential for the occurrence of, a situation putting a section of the community or a group of individuals at an increased risk of avoidable mortality or morbidity, the Chief Public Health Officer will be able to request a public authority to assist in identifying or producing a response to the circumstances being faced.

##### 23—Biennial reporting by Chief Public Health Officer

The Chief Public Health Officer will, on a two-yearly basis, prepare a report on public health trends, activities and indicators in South Australia, the implementation of the State Public Health Plan, and the administration of the Act. The report will be provided to the Minister and tabled in Parliament.

##### 24—Delegation

The Chief Public Health Officer will be able to delegate functions and powers.

##### 25—Appointment of Acting Chief Public Health Officer

The Chief Executive will be able to appoint an Acting Chief Public Health Officer.

#### Division 3—South Australian Public Health Council

##### 26—Establishment of SAPHC

The South Australian Public Health Council (SAPHC) is established.

27—Composition of SAPHC

SAPHC is to consist of the Chief Public Health Officer (who will be the presiding member) and 9 other members appointed by the Governor on the nomination of the Minister. Included in this membership will be 2 persons nominated by the LGA, 1 person nominated by Environmental Health Australia (South Australia) Incorporated, and 1 person nominated by the Presiding Member of the Board of the Environment Protection Authority.

28—Conditions of appointment

An appointed member of SAPHC will be appointed for a term not exceeding 3 years and will be eligible for reappointment from time to time.

29—Allowances and expenses

An appointed member of SAPHC will be entitled to fees, allowances and expenses approved by the Governor.

30—Validity of acts

An act or proceeding of SAPHC will not be invalid by reason only of a vacancy in its membership or a defect in the appointment of a member.

31—Functions of SAPHC

The functions of SAPHC will include to provide advice to the Chief Public Health Officer in relation to the protection and promotion of public health, the development of strategies to ensure that a sufficiently trained and skilled workforce is in place for the purposes of this act, and programs to promote public health research in South Australia.

32—Conduct of business

Six members will constitute a quorum of SAPHC.

33—Committees and subcommittees

SAPHC will be able to establish committees and subcommittees to advise it on any aspect of its functions or to assist in the performance of its functions.

34—Delegation by SAPHC

SAPHC will be able to delegate functions and powers.

35—Annual report

SAPHC will prepare an annual report and furnish it to the Minister. The Minister will ensure that the annual report is tabled in Parliament.

36—Use of facilities

SAPHC will be able to arrange to make use of the staff, equipment or facilities of a public authority.

Division 4—Councils

37—Functions of councils

This clause provides that a council is the local public health authority for its area. The following specific functions will be conferred on councils:

- (a) to take action to preserve, protect and promote public health within their areas;
- (b) to cooperate with other authorities in the administration of the Act;
- (c) to ensure that adequate sanitation measures are in place in their area;
- (d) to ensure that activities do not adversely affect public health;
- (e) to identify risks to public health;
- (f) to ensure that appropriate remedial action is taken to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts or risks to public health;
- (g) to respond to public health issues;
- (h) to provide educational information about public health.

38—Immunisation services

A council will be required to provide, or support the provision of, immunisation programs for the protection of public health within its area. Services associated with the provision of these programs will be provided with the support of the Department.

39—Cooperation between councils

A council will be able to act in conjunction or partnership with one or more other councils. The Chief Public Health Officer will also be able to request that a council cooperate with one or more other councils in an area of common concern.

#### 40—Power of Chief Public Health Officer to act

If the Chief Public Health Officer considers that a public health risk exists in relation to the areas of two or more councils, or if the Chief Public Health Officer considers that action should be taken under this provision in connection with the promotion of public health within the State, the Chief Public Health Officer will be able to exercise a power that is conferred on a council under the Act as if the Chief Public Health Officer were a council. Steps will be taken to consult with the council or councils for the area or areas where the action is to be taken, and with SAPHC.

#### 41—Council failing to perform a function under Act

This clause sets out a scheme for any case where the Minister considers that a council has failed to perform a function conferred on the council under the Act. The Minister will consult with the council about the matter. If necessary, and after consultation with SAPHC, the Minister will be able to direct the council to perform a function. If the council fails to comply with a direction, the Minister will be able to withdraw relevant powers of the council and transfer them to the Chief Public Health Officer. Costs and expenses reasonably incurred by the Chief Public Health Officer in exercising any such power will be recoverable from the council as a debt due to the Minister.

#### 42—Transfer of function of council at request of council

It will be possible for a council to request that a function of the council under the Act be performed by the Chief Public Health Officer. This may lead to the transfer of specified functions of the council to the Chief Public Health Officer.

#### Division 5—Authorised officers

##### 43—State authorised officers

The Minister may appoint a suitably qualified person to be a State authorised officer under the Act. A State authorised officer will be subject to direction by the Chief Public Health Officer.

##### 44—Local authorised officers

A council may appoint a suitably qualified person to be a local authorised officer. A local authorised officer is subject to direction by the council.

##### 45—Qualifications

A person will not be eligible for appointment as an authorised officer unless he or she holds qualifications that have been approved by the Minister for the purposes of the Act.

##### 46—Identity cards

Each authorised officer will be issued with an identity card in a form approved by the Chief Public Health Officer. An authorised officer will be required to produce his or her identity card on request.

##### 47—Powers of authorised officers

This clause sets out the powers of authorised officers in connection with the administration or operation of the Act.

#### Division 6—Emergency officers

##### 48—Emergency officers

The Chief Executive will be able to appoint, individually or by class, such persons to be emergency officers for the purposes of the Act as the Chief Executive thinks fit.

#### Division 7—Specific power to require information

##### 49—Specific power to require information

The Minister, the Chief Public Health Officer, a council or an authorised officer will be able to require a person to furnish any information relating to public health as may be reasonably required for the purposes of the Act.

#### Part 4—Public health plans

##### Division 1—State public health plan

##### 50—State public health plan

The Minister will be required to prepare and maintain the State Public Health Plan. This plan is to set out principles and policies for achieving the objects of the Act and implementing the principles established under this Act. The plan will also comprehensively assess the state of public health in South Australia, identify public health risks and strategies to address those risks, identify opportunities to promote public health, and include information about related plans and policies.

##### Division 2—Regional public health plans

## 51—Regional public health plans

A council or, if the Minister determines or approves, a group of councils, must prepare and maintain a regional public health plan. The plan must be consistent with the State Public Health Plan. A regional public health plan will comprehensively assess the state of public health in the region, identify public health risks and provide for strategies for addressing and eliminating or reducing those risks, identify opportunities and outline strategies for promoting public health in the region, and include other relevant information. A council will be able to develop a regional public health plan in conjunction with the preparation of its strategic management plans under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1999.

## 52—Reporting on regional public health plans

A council will be required to prepare a report on the extent to which it has been able to implement its regional public health plan on a 2 yearly basis.

## Part 5—Public health policies

## 53—Public health policies

The Minister will be able to prepare State Public Health Policies that relate to any area of public health in the State. A policy may specify matters that are to be taken to constitute risks to public health for the purposes of the Act, specify the scope of the general duty under Part 6 (including so as to specify that a breach of the policy will be taken to be a breach of the duty), set out standards associated with public health, or provide for other measures relevant to achieving an improvement to public health in the State.

## 54—Procedure for making policies

This clause sets out the procedures to be followed in relation to creating or amending a State Public Health Policy. The procedures will include a public consultation policy.

## 55—Reference of policies to Parliament

The Minister will cause a copy of each State Public Health Policy to be laid before both Houses of Parliament and the policy will be subject to disallowance by either House of Parliament.

## Part 6—General duty

## 56—General duty

This clause creates a statutory duty that will require that a person must take all reasonable steps to prevent or minimise any harm to public health caused by, or likely to be caused by, anything done or omitted to be done by the person. In determining what is to be regarded as being reasonable for the purposes of this clause, regard must be had to the objects of the Act and to—

- (a) the potential impact of a failure to comply with the duty; and
- (b) any environmental, social, economic or practicable implications; and
- (c) any degrees of risk that may be involved; and
- (d) the nature, extent and duration of any harm; and
- (e) any relevant policy under Part 5; and
- (f) any relevant code of practice under Part 8; and
- (g) any matter prescribed by the regulations.

However, a person will be taken not to be in breach of this duty if the person is acting—

- (a) in a manner or in circumstances that accord with generally accepted practices taking into account community expectations and prevailing environmental, social and economic practices and standards; or
- (b) in accordance with a policy or code of practice published by the Minister in connection with the operation of this Part; or
- (c) in circumstances prescribed by the regulations.

A person who breaches the duty will not be liable to any civil or criminal action but may be liable to civil enforcement proceedings under Part 12.

## Part 7—General public health offences

## 57—Material risk to public health

This clause creates a series of offences associated with the creation of a material risk to public health.

## 58—Serious risk to public health

This clause creates a series of offences relating to the creation of a serious risk to public health.

## 59—Defence of due diligence

It will be a defence to a prosecution under these provisions to prove that the defendant took all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of the relevant offence.

#### 60—Alternative finding

A court will be able to find a person guilty of the commission of a lesser offence to the offence that has been charged.

### Part 8—Prevention of non-communicable conditions

#### 61—Declaration of non-communicable conditions

It will be possible for the Minister to declare a disease or medical condition to be a 'non-communicable disease' for the purposes of the Act if the Minister considers that the disease or medical condition is of significance to public health.

#### 62—Minister may issue code of practice

The Minister will be able to issue a code of practice in relation to preventing or reducing the incidence of a non-communicable condition. Without limiting any other provision, a code of practice may relate to the manner in which—

- (a) specified goods, substances or services are advertised, sponsored, promoted or marketed (including through the provision of certain information to consumers of certain goods, substances, or services);
- (b) specified goods or substances are manufactured, distributed, supplied or sold (including the composition, contents, additives and design of specified goods or substances);
- (c) buildings, infrastructure or other works are designed, constructed or maintained;
- (d) the public, or certain sections of the public, are able to access specified goods, substances or services.

A code of practice may be particularly relevant to the operation of the general duty under Part 6.

### Part 9—Notifiable conditions and contaminants

#### Division 1—Notifiable conditions

#### 63—Declaration of notifiable conditions

The regulations will be able to declare a disease or medical condition to be a notifiable condition under the Act. The Minister will also be able to make emergency declarations.

#### 64—Notification

This clause sets out a scheme for the notification of occurrences of notifiable conditions. A notification is to be made to the Chief Public Health Officer.

#### 65—Report to councils

The Department—

- (a) must, on a monthly basis, provide each council with a report on the occurrence or incidence of notifiable conditions in its area and any problems or issues caused by or arising on account of such diseases or medical conditions that may exist in its area; and
- (b) must inform a council of the occurrence or incidence of any notifiable condition in its area that constitutes, or may constitute, a threat to public health.

#### 66—Action to prevent spread of infection

The Chief Public Health Officer, or an authorised officer, will be able to issue directions or impose other requirements to prevent the possible spread of a disease constituting a notifiable condition.

#### Division 2—Notifiable contaminants

#### 67—Declaration of notifiable contaminants

The regulations will be able to declare a contaminant to be a notifiable contaminant. The Minister will be able to make emergency declarations.

#### 68—Notification of contaminant

This clause sets out a scheme for the notification of occurrences of notifiable contaminants.

### Part 10—Controlled notifiable conditions

#### Division 1—Preliminary

#### 69—Principles

Certain principles set out in Part 2 are relevant to these provisions.

#### 70—Declaration of controlled notifiable conditions

The regulations will be able to declare a disease or medical condition to be a controlled notifiable condition. The Minister will be able to make emergency declarations.

#### 71—Chief Public Health Officer to be able to act in other serious cases

This clause will allow the Chief Public Health Officer to take action against a particular person who is suspected of suffering from a serious disease, or of having been exposed to a serious disease, that has not been declared to be a controlled notifiable disease, and who is presenting a serious risk to public health. In a case where this clause applies, the serious disease will be taken to be a controlled notifiable condition and the Chief Public Health Officer will be able to take action in relation to the person as if he or she had such a condition. This special scheme would apply to the person for no more than 28 days (but the person may then become subject to other provisions of this Part).

#### 72—Children

This clause clarifies the operation of this Part in relation to children. In particular, if a requirement is imposed in relation to a child, a parent or guardian of the child must take such steps as are reasonably necessary and available to achieve the requirement. It will also be possible to make modifications to the operation of this Part, insofar as it applies to children, by regulation. For the purposes of this clause, 'child' means a person under the age of 16 years.

#### Division 2—Controls

#### 73—Power to require a person to undergo an examination or test

This clause applies in 2 sets of circumstances.

The first circumstance is where the Chief Public Health Officer has reasonable grounds to believe—

- (a) that a person has a controlled notifiable condition and the person presents, has presented, or is likely to present, a risk to health through the transmission of a disease constituting that condition; or
- (b) that an incident has occurred or a circumstance has arisen in which a person could have been exposed to, or could have contracted, a controlled notifiable condition.

The second circumstance is where—

- (a) an incident has occurred or a circumstance has arisen, while a caregiver or custodian is acting in that capacity, in which, if any of those involved were infected by a disease constituting a controlled notifiable condition, the disease could be transmitted to the caregiver or custodian; and
- (b) the Chief Public Health Officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the imposition of a requirement under this clause is necessary in the interests of a rapid diagnosis and, if appropriate, treatment of any person involved in the incident or connected with the circumstance (whether or not as a caregiver or custodian).

Essentially, the Chief Public Health Officer will be able to require a person—

- (a) to present himself or herself at such place and time as may be specified in order to undergo a clinical examination or to undertake (or be the subject of) tests, or both; and
- (b) to comply with any requirement imposed by a person who may conduct the examination or carry out the tests.

The Chief Public Health Officer will be entitled to a copy of any report prepared on account of an examination or test carried out under this provision.

#### 74—Power to require counselling

This clause will apply if the Chief Public Health Officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a person has, or has been exposed to, a controlled notifiable condition. In such a case, the Chief Public Health Officer will be able to require that the person participate in counselling, education, or other activities relevant to understanding the controlled notifiable condition or relevant impacts or implications.

#### 75—Power to give directions

This clause will apply if the Chief Public Health Officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a person has, or has been exposed to, a controlled notifiable condition and the Chief Public Health Officer considers that an order under this clause is reasonably necessary in the interests of public health. In such a case, the Chief Public Health Officer may give directions to the person, including—

- (a) a direction that the person reside at a specified place and, if considered to be appropriate by the Chief Public Health Officer, that the person remain isolated;
- (b) a direction that the person refrain from carrying out specified activities (for example, without limitation, employment, use of public transport or participation in certain events), either absolutely or unless specified conditions are satisfied;



- (c) a direction that the person refrain from visiting a specified place, or a place within a specified class, either absolutely or unless specified conditions are satisfied;
- (d) a direction that the person refrain from associating with specified persons or specified classes of person;
- (e) a direction that the person take specified action to prevent or minimise any health risk that may be posed by the person;
- (f) a direction that the person attend meetings and provide such information as may be reasonably required in the circumstances;
- (g) a direction that the person place himself or herself under the supervision of a member of the staff of the Department or a medical practitioner or other health professional nominated by the Chief Public Health Officer and obey the reasonable directions of that person;
- (h) a direction that the person submit himself or herself to examination by a medical practitioner nominated by the Chief Public Health Officer at such intervals as the Chief Public Health Officer may require;
- (i) a direction that the person undergo specified medical treatment, including at a specified place and time (or times);
- (j) such other direction as to the person's conduct or supervision that the Chief Public Health Officer considers to be appropriate in the circumstances.

#### 76—Review by District Court

A person who is the subject of a requirement under a preceding clause of this Division may apply to the District Court for a review of the requirement. The District Court is to hear and determine the application as soon as is reasonably practicable.

#### 77—Power to require detention

This clause will apply if—

- (a) the Chief Public Health Officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a person has, or has been exposed to, a controlled notifiable condition; and
- (b) the person is or has been the subject of 1 or more directions under clause 75 and has contravened or failed to comply with a direction, or the Chief Public Health Officer considers that there is a material risk the person would not comply with 1 or more directions under that clause if they were to be imposed; and
- (c) the Chief Public Health Officer considers—
  - (i) that the person presents, or is likely to present, a risk to public health; and
  - (ii) that action under this clause is justified.

An order under this clause will be that the person submit to being detained at a specified place while the order is in force.

An initial order will be for a period not exceeding 30 days. The Chief Public Health Officer will then be able to extend an order for additional periods not exceeding 60 days. However, a person will not be able to be detained for a period exceeding 30 days unless the Chief Public Health Officer has applied to the Supreme Court (constituted of a single Judge) for a review of the order. (The order will be able to continue pending the outcome of the review.) It will also be necessary to obtain a further authorisation by a Supreme Court Judge if the order is to operate for a period extending beyond 6 months. In addition, a person who is being detained must be examined by a medical practitioner at intervals not exceeding 30 days, or within such shorter periods as may be determined by a Supreme Court judge.

#### 78—Review of detention orders by Supreme Court

A person who is the subject of a requirement under clause 77 may apply to the Supreme Court for a review of the relevant order.

#### 79—Warrants

The Chief Public Health Officer will be able to apply to a magistrate for the issue of a warrant for the apprehension by an authorised officer of a person who has failed to comply with an order, requirement or direction under this Division, or that a person be the subject of any examination or test or other action required under this Division, or that a person be brought before a magistrate.

If a person is brought before a magistrate, the magistrate may order the detention of the person until the person is willing to comply with an order, requirement or direction under this Division.

A warrant may include a requirement that the person may be held in a place of quarantine or isolation.

A right of appeal will lie to a judge of the Supreme Court.

#### 80—General provisions relating to orders, requirements and directions

This clause provides for various matters associated with the operation of this Division. In particular, it is confirmed that an order, requirement or direction may be given to a person on more than one occasion, that a person may be subject to a combination of orders, requirements or directions, and that the Chief Public Health Officer may vary or rescind any order, requirement or direction.

Furthermore, if the Chief Public Health Officer serves a notice or order on a person, the notice or order must be accompanied by a notice that—

- (a) sets out the grounds on which the order or notice is made; and
- (b) contains a statement of the person's rights under the Act (including a person's right to apply for a review under this Division); and
- (c) contains any other information determined by the Chief Public Health Officer to be relevant or appropriate.

#### 81—Duty to comply

It will be an offence, without reasonable excuse, to contravene or fail to comply with an order, requirement or direction under this Division.

#### Division 3—Related matters

##### 82—Advisory Panels

The Chief Public Health Officer will be able to establish an advisory panel to assist him or her with respect to the management of a person who is, or a group of persons who are, the subject of an order, requirement or direction under this Part.

##### 83—Interstate orders

This clause will allow an order under a corresponding law that provides for a matter that may be the subject of an order under this Part to have effect if the relevant person enters this State.

##### 84—Protection of information

A document held or produced by the Chief Public Health Officer, or any other person acting in the course of official duties, for the purposes of this Part that relates to a particular person is not subject to access under the Freedom of Information Act 1991.

#### Part 11—Management of significant emergencies

##### 85—Principles

##### 86—Public health incidents

##### 87—Public health emergencies

##### 88—Making and revocation of declarations

##### 89—Powers and functions of Chief Executive

##### 90—Application of Emergency Management Act

These provisions relates to the management of public health emergencies and are based on those inserted into the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 by the Statutes Amendment (Public Health Incidents and Emergencies) Act 2009.

#### Part 12—Notices and emergency situations

##### Division 1—Interpretation

##### 91—Interpretation

A relevant authority under this Part will be the Chief Public Health Officer or a council.

##### Division 2—Notices and emergencies

##### 92—Notices

A relevant authority will be able to issue a notice for the purpose of—

- (a) securing compliance with the Act (including the general duty under Part 6 or a requirement imposed by regulation or a code of practice under the Act); or
- (b) averting, eliminating minimising a risk, or a perceived risk, to public health.

A notice—

- (a) must state the purpose for which it is issued; and
- (b) may impose one or more of the following requirements:
  - (i) a requirement that the person discontinue, or not commence, a specified activity indefinitely or for a specified period or until further notice from a relevant authority;

- (ii) a requirement that the person not carry on a specified activity except at specified times or subject to specified conditions;
- (iii) a requirement that the person take specified action in a specified way, and within a specified period or at specified times or in specified circumstances;
- (iv) a requirement that the person take action to prevent, eliminate, minimise or control any specified risk to public health, or to control any specified activity.

#### 93—Action on non-compliance with notice

If the requirements of a notice are not complied with, a relevant authority will be able to take any action required by the notice and recover its reasonable costs and expenses in doing so.

#### 94—Action in emergency situations

This clause will allow an authorised officer to take emergency action to avert, control or eliminate a risk to public health.

An authorised officer will have specific power to—

- (a) enter and take possession of any premises or vehicle (taking such action as is reasonably necessary for the purpose); and
- (b) seize, retain, move or destroy or otherwise dispose of any substance or thing.

#### Division 3—Reviews and appeals

#### 95—Reviews—notices relating to general duty

A person who has been issued with a notice to secure compliance with the general duty may apply for a review of the notice.

The notice of review will be to the Public Health Review Panel. This panel, in relation to a particular review, will be constituted by—

- (a) the Chief Public Health Officer (who will be the presiding member); and
- (b) 2 members of SAPHC selected by the Chief Public Health Officer for the purposes of the particular review; and
- (c) any other person or persons selected by the Chief Public Health Officer in order to provide additional expertise on the panel.

#### 96—Appeals

A person who has been issued with a notice under this Part will be able to initiate an appeal to the District Court. This right of appeal will include an appeal against the outcome of review proceedings.

#### Part 13—Miscellaneous

#### 97—Tests on deceased persons

The Chief Public Health Officer will be able to authorise a test to be carried out on a deceased person if he or she has reasonable grounds to believe that the deceased person has had a condition of public health concern. A test or other procedure must be carried out by a medical practitioner or a person who has a qualification prescribed by the regulations. Nothing in this clause will allow the exhumation of a body.

#### 98—Delegation by Chief Executive

The Chief Executive will be able to delegate a function or power under the Act.

#### 99—Confidentiality

A person who obtains personal information in the course of official duties will be required to keep that information confidential unless the disclosure of the information is authorised under this clause.

#### 100—Confidentiality and provision of certain information

This clause will allow the Minister to authorise a person employed or engaged by the State for the purposes associated with public health to have access to personal information about a particular person. However, the further disclosure of this information will be restricted under the terms of this provision.

#### 101—Service of notices or other documents

This clause provides for the service of documents under the Act.

#### 102—Immunity

This clause makes provision with respect to the liability of persons engaged in the administration of the Act. Personal liability will not arise for an honest act or omission but liability will instead lie against the Crown or, in the case of an officer, employee, agent or contractor of a council, against the council.

Furthermore, no action will lie against a person who in good faith and with reasonable care takes a sample of blood, urine or other material, conducts a test, or provides a report, for the purposes of the Act.

## 103—Protection from liability

This clause makes express provision to exclude civil liability for any failure of a designated authority to perform a function under the Act. (This provision is based on section 12A(13) of the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987.)

## 104—False or misleading information

It will be an offence to provide false or misleading information in connection with complying with a requirement or direction under the Act.

## 105—Offences

Proceedings for an offence against the Act will only be able to be brought by designated persons (including a person acting with the written authority of the Minister).

## 106—Offences by bodies corporate

A direction of a body corporate will be guilty of an offence if the body corporate is guilty of an offence unless the direction can prove that he or she could not be the exercise of reasonable diligence have prevented the commission of the offence by the body corporate.

## 107—Continuing offences

This clause provides for a continuing offence if an offence is constituted by a continuing act or omission.

## 108—Evidentiary provision

This clause will assist with providing evidence to a court about the existence and extent of a risk to public health by allowing an assessment of such a risk by a designated entity involved in the administration of the Act to be accepted as evidence about the risk in the absence of proof to the contrary.

## 109—Regulations

This clause provides for the making of regulations for the purposes of the Act.

## Schedule 1—Related amendments, repeal and transitional provisions

Various Acts must be consequentially amended. It may be necessary to repeal the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 in stages and accordingly provisions have been included to allow this to occur.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Pederick.

**PRINCE ALFRED COLLEGE INCORPORATION (VARIATION OF CONSTITUTION)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development) (12:02):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Prince Alfred College Incorporation Act 1878. Read a first time.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development) (12:02):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Members may be aware that the Prince Alfred College Incorporation Act is a private Act and is not committed to any Minister. However on the invitation of the Chairman of the Prince Alfred College Council I am pleased to take carriage of this Bill on behalf of the College in my capacity as Minister for Education.

I propose you support the minor but necessary amendment that is the subject of this Bill.

The *Prince Alfred College Incorporation (Variation of Constitution) Amendment Bill 2010* will make a minor but necessary amendment to the legislation under which Prince Alfred College is incorporated, namely the *Prince Alfred College Incorporation Act 1878*.

The *Prince Alfred College Incorporation Act 1878* has been amended by Parliament only twice previously, in 1977 and 2007.

In 1977, the *Uniting Church in Australia Act 1977* facilitated the formation of the Uniting Church by creating a union of individual Christian churches, including the Wesleyan Methodist Church under which the College was established. This legislation also updated provisions relating to the constitution of the Prince Alfred College School Council.

In 2007, the *Prince Alfred College Incorporation (Constitution of Council) Amendment Act 2007* removed much of the Act's prescriptive detail concerning membership of the Council and authorised that these matters be instead set out in the College Council's Constitution.

The purpose of the Bill before you is straight forward—it will provide for a change to the voting procedures of the Prince Alfred College Council for effecting a variation to its Constitution.

The College Council has requested that section 19(4) of the Act be amended to reflect that a variation to the Constitution must be passed by at least three-quarters of the members of the Council.

This amendment would modify the current requirement within section 19(4) that a variation to the College Council's Constitution must be passed by twelve members of the Council present and voting at a meeting of the Council, or three-quarters of the members present and voting, whichever is the greater.

The Bill proposes to amend section 19(4) to remove the requirement for a minimum of twelve members to approve any changes to the College Council's Constitution, but retains the requirement for three-quarters of the membership of the Council to support any such amendment. This will also allow for more flexibility in the number of members of the Council, which must be a minimum of twelve in order to meet the current voting requirements in section 19(4) of the PAC Act.

This approach in relation to voting on such resolutions is consistent with similar provisions in other legislation, such as the *Associations Incorporation Act 1985*, which provides for the incorporation, administration and control of associations.

The Prince Alfred College Council has consulted with the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of South Australia on the proposed amendment. The Synod is supportive of the proposed change as it will allow for the governance arrangements of Prince Alfred College to be more efficient and similar to those of the Synod.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

This clause provides for the short title of the measure.

###### 2—Amendment provisions

This clause is formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of *Prince Alfred College Incorporation Act 1878*

###### 3—Amendment of section 19—Variation of Constitution

This amendment relates to the number of members of the Council of the College who must agree to a variation of the Constitution of the Council. Currently, a variation must be passed by 12 members of the Council, or three quarters of the members present and voting, whichever is the greater. The amendment will provide that a variation will require the support of three quarters of the members of the Council (and thus remove the reference to at least 12 members). A variation will still require the approval of the Synod under section 19(3) of the Act.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Pederick.

### APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 28 September 2010.)

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:04):** I rise today to speak about the Appropriation Bill and, at the beginning of my speech, I want to talk about the locust plague that has already gone through primary industries support in this state. We have a premier who ran up to Orroroo the other day—I am surprised he even knew where it was. He flew in to make a big announcement about what is going on with the locust plague in the northern section of this state and throughout the Murray Mallee region of the state. Well, it is the government's job to be involved in locust plagues. We managed it under Rob Kerin in the year 2000, and it was very successful under Rob, where we beat most of the hoppers on the ground and millions of dollars were invested.

When the present minister for agriculture was asked about the locust plague when he was in the Riverland in April, he said, 'What locusts?' This coming from a man who said he was the best agricultural spokesman in Australia, and he did not know what they were. So, now the Premier is taking the lead on the issue in Orroroo to make it look like the government is doing something about primary industries in this state when, in fact, what we have seen come out of this state budget is an \$80 million cut—like a plague of locusts—in the department over four years; also in that are cuts of 180 staff. I believe this comes on top of 200 staff who have recently left Primary Industries and Resources SA.

I have good friends who have been working for Primary Industries and Resources, Rural Solutions, and other sections, and the South Australian Research and Development Institute, who were told in June that they would be redeployed. A lot of these people have just been waiting

for the golden handshake. The only good thing for these people is that this government has put up the most generous exit package.

In saying that, we are losing so much talent, so much history and so much intellect from the primary industries department. What are we going to do? Who is going to be at the core of the fight against the next locust outbreak in this state? There will be virtually no-one. There will be no experience. All the experienced people are going. The extension guys and the guys who used to come and do outreach in my own agricultural bureau down at Coomandook are very good men and they have seen what is happening. They get offered a package, they see that the packages are up, and they know darn well that the next round will be worse, so it is time to jump, long before they need to. They could be putting their knowledge around the state and into research and development and extension work for farmers across the state.

We have a government that pretends to be so concerned about the \$2 billion potential crop production in this state. I do not think it will be concerned about the locusts until they start eating out the lawns in Springfield and Norwood.

**Mr Pengilly:** It won't be around the Parks Community Centre.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Yes, it will not be around the Parks Community Centre, because the D9s will get there beforehand; it will be gone. This is a crisis in South Australia. We had the agriculture minister, minister O'Brien, state recently that he wants agriculture to be up there with defence and mining as an industry in this state.

**Mr Pengilly:** They've actually got to catch agriculture.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Yes; and it will not be because of the support that the government gives it: it will be because of the resilience of the people in the bush and surrounding areas of Adelaide who put their hearts and minds, their farms and businesses on the line.

**Mr Goldsworthy:** They're sold.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Yes, they are sold, says the member for Kavel. They put everything into it. I know what it is like; I have been there. They lay it all on the line. They employ people and generate incomes for regional communities. You might be surprised about this, but farming happens outside Gepps Cross and Glen Osmond. That is where it happens. A lot of kids in high schools and primary schools, especially in the city, think milk comes in a carton. Well, a whole lot of other processes have to happen before it turns up in the carton.

**Mr Goldsworthy:** Where do their lamb chops come from?

**Mr PEDERICK:** Yes, where do their lamb chops come from? They come from Woolworths, Coles, Foodland, or somewhere else. They go to the grocery store and there is the food. Farmers would not do it, but it would be interesting to see if all the farmers in this state suddenly decided, 'We'll just cut production for a month. We won't market any grain, meat or eggs.' I was interested to note the other day that people were concerned about a shortage of eggs in this state, because so many cafes are promoting breakfast, which is a great thing. People can go out and have breakfast, mainly in the city. It is good eating produce.

**Mr Pisoni:** Good country eggs.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Good country eggs. However, we run the very real risk that all our industries will be under threat. We have seen this government just strip funding. They have closed the Streaky Bay office, Nuriootpa is under threat, the Keith office of Primary Industries is under threat, Jamestown is under threat, the Lenswood Research Centre (where is that going?), the Flaxley dairy research centre has gone, and we are fortunate in this state that Minnipa is still going. They are doing great research up there. I have been there in the last 12 to 18 months having a look at what is happening at Minnipa, and it is very vital, especially in the region on the Far West Coast and, generally, around Eyre Peninsula, which has had tough times, like the rest of the farming areas in this state, and so much production has been grown there and across the state.

We find that after nine pretty tough years generally across the board most farmers have not had a decent income since 2001; that is a long time. All of a sudden we find out that there is going to be less and less support for what is vital research and development for farmers in this state.

Farmers are expected to grow more and more per acre, or per hectare, depending on how you want to look at it, as time goes on, and they are doing it. If you go back 100 years there would have been only a few people fed from an acre of country. Now the number of people who are fed is

manyfold, and it is done in a sustainable way, in the majority of cases. They have gone to single till farming, or minimum till farming methods, where farmers go across their land in only one, or maybe two, passes; whereas, in the past, it may have been six to 12 passes to put a crop in. There is an old saying in the Mallee that if it doesn't blow it doesn't grow. Well, I do not think that is a good saying, because when you see a tractor working country—well, you cannot see the tractor because it is covered in dust—there is far too much blow.

I believe that 99 per cent (if not more) of farmers are farming in a sustainable way. Some people are still using the old methods, but they are producing more food, harvesting more water as they need to in these dry years to produce their crops. And what do they get from this city-centric government? They get nothing.

The only reason that people have developed new technologies in the bush is because of the research and development that has been carried out in this state, otherwise, we would still see archaic methods being used, and they are unsustainable—

*Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:*

**Mr PEDERICK:** Yes, absolutely; we are leaders in agricultural technology in this state. For many years, for decades, we have exported our knowledge to the Middle East, Russia, the United States and other places, and we are known throughout the world as very good farming operators. But what support do they have in this state?

We have agriculture minister O'Brien make comments, which I was not happy about, about the \$12.8 million that was being allocated for the locusts. Yes, I am happy about that, but I still believe it needs more. He also made a statement that I had asked for \$20 million. That was from an interjection that I made to the Treasurer in this place, that they may need \$20 million. The government keeps saying that there will be extra funding available. Well, I tell you, it better be available when it is needed, so that those planes can keep flying and put their ultra low volume spray out so that we can beat these hoppers, these locusts, on the ground, because once they are in the air they can be anywhere. They can move 500 kilometres in a night with a tail wind.

We have had the minister for agriculture saying, 'Oh, we won't need to worry about spraying on the West Coast; they won't get to Eyre Peninsula.' Well, I'm sorry, they won't need much of a tail wind and they will be over there, and they could come from the locusts that are coming down through the north or the ones that are coming across from New South Wales and Victoria into the Murray Mallee.

We have to be vigilant. There are teams out there. I believe there are well over 100 people and seven planes that will need to be vigilant right across the board. As I said, it will not just be agriculture that will be at risk; it will be everything in this state, the future of this state, I believe, if they do cut a swath through a potential \$2 billion plus crop. This is the assistance we get from this government—no assistance.

We are told that 180 more jobs are to go, as well as so-called targeted voluntary separation packages. As I said, I believe that people will grab these packages now, and they will run because they know that, when the next lot comes around, there will be less. Not only that, but Rural Solutions, a vital part of the extension work and supposedly the profitable arm of primary industries, is going to full cost recovery. Over four years, \$12 million will be taken out of Rural Solutions.

As I indicated, farmers have been doing it tough. How can they afford all the extra costs? Not only are we losing staff in the bush but also the government is increasing costs, so it will cost more if you do want to get any research and development or extension work done. The same thing applies to the South Australian Research and Development Institute, which will have cutbacks of \$8 million over four years. I quote from the budget as follows:

SARDI will increase cost recovery and reduce costs, resulting in a reduction in research and development activity and service delivery across the broader spectrum of primary industries research. The savings will be achieved through the cessation of some research and development activities and workforce changes.

What that simply means is that the axe is being put to SARDI and the axe is being put to staff. We have a government that has been here for eight years, it realises that it cannot govern, so now it will just sack people willy-nilly.

What will happen to the expertise that we lose from research and development in this state? Will the expertise, the innovation and the benefits that can be grown in this state be contracted to interstate and overseas companies? Will the profit focus compromise the integrity of

the research that is done in this state? What are the taxes that farmers pay used for? Farming can be profitable when you have good years. Where are these taxes going—to the city, the super schools, super hospitals, super highways and super entertainment facilities, because they are certainly not going out to the bush.

I was dismayed the other day at the Public Works Committee hearing on the Dukes Highway when we were basically told that it was not going to be dual laned to the Victorian border for another 30 years. I hope I am still here to see it; I hope that it is a lot sooner than that.

**Mr Pengilly:** In here?

**Mr PEDERICK:** Well, maybe not in here, but around. All I am saying is that, why are projects such as this not put on? We have the Northern Expressway; over \$500 million was put into that project. The recent upgrade to the Dukes Highway cost \$80 million, which would have funded at least 16 kilometres of dual lane and got it out to the other side of Cookes Plains, towards Coomandook (where my property is), and started to make it safer for everyone who travels along that road.

I want to talk about other costs, for example, commercial fishing and aquaculture: \$1.3 million will be achieved over three years by raising the current fees charged to the commercial fishing industry to fully recover the costs of providing commercial fishing regulatory and support programs; and \$1.9 million over three years by raising the fees and charges to the aquaculture industry to cover the full cost of regulatory and support programs.

This is coming from a government that now is increasing further costs on the fishing industry. We have recently had the debate both in this place and outside with the media with the fisheries minister—minister O'Brien, again—who has put out a statement talking about the alleged amount of money that southern zone rock lobster fishermen make. I think this is a terrible indictment that the minister makes against these people—the fact that they actually go out there and make some money. Well, what a pity.

These are people who are driving this economy. They are in a multimillion dollar industry. They put themselves at risk to harvest crayfish, and all the minister can do is give them a hard time about how much money they might be making.

**Mr Goldsworthy:** Criticise them.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Yes, criticise them about how much money they might be making. The big issue with the southern zone rock lobster fishermen was that, with five weeks' notice, the minister pulled the month of October out from under them. Their industry is under more pressure and jobs are at risk and have already gone, yet they have to pay more fees.

If we look at biosecurity, this has more cost recovery, and I quote from the budget. They will increase revenue by \$9 million over four years from improved cost recovery from livestock owners who benefit from existing animal health surveillance programs, and save \$1.5 million through operational efficiencies. 'Operational efficiencies', to me, reads 'sackings'. Then there will be a further \$1.3 million saved through biosecurity aquatic pest management efficiencies in aquatic pest outbreak response and surveillance activities. I also believe there will be cost recovery placed on our fruit fly inspections. This comes at a time when the people growing our fruit in the Riverland and other areas (the Adelaide Hills, for example) come under more pressure but they face more costs just to keep their industry going.

Here is the real clanger the government has put in. It may not be a lot of money but I think it is a vital support that is being knocked out by the so-called, self-proclaimed, best agriculture spokesman in the country. They will cease support to the Advisory Board of Agriculture. This is a man who lives in Springfield and his electorate is at One Tree Hill, and I know one day he said to one of our members in the other place, 'It's a long way out here to go to a meeting.' I wonder how many sets of traffic lights it is for the minister to go to his own electorate.

They will cease support for the Advisory Board of Agriculture that actually advises the government. So we have a government that thinks it does not need advice. Well, I could give it plenty. They are saying they will save \$2.1 million over four years by rationalising programs that coordinate regional primary industries, related community development, building capacities and skills policy development. As I note, it includes the cessation of government support to the Advisory Board of Agriculture.



We also see \$7 million cut from wine industry support and the cellar door subsidy. This will be reduced from something over \$500,000 to \$50,000 per producer from 1 July 2011. We note there is a further hit to the wine industry, which is suffering right across the wine producing regions. A further \$2.3 million saving over four years will be made through 'a reduction in grants and programs relating to the agriculture, food and wine sectors' and 'assistance to food industry organisations and associations would be reduced'.

To cap it all off, a payroll tax rebate for exporters is going, and that will save \$10 million; and the regional petroleum subsidy will have \$50 million cut over four years, which will be a kick in the guts for people right across the regions, and it will make produce, building materials and everything that comes out of or goes into the regions more expensive.

I condemn this government for the attitude it has taken to the bush, regional areas and the farmers of this state. They should hang their heads in shame. I think it is an absolute disgrace. If this minister thinks he can get on without advice from bodies such as the Advisory Board of Agriculture and that agriculture can be the dynamic force it has been without this support, he is wrong.

**The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (12:24):** Some people have said that what was brought down was a Labor budget. It is not a Labor budget in anything other than name because, in many ways, it represents a betrayal of people who would normally support a Labor government. In fact, I have been quite surprised to see in the budget that a lot of the measures are really targeted against what some people would call battlers. I know it is a bit of a worn-out phrase, but this is not a budget focused on social justice. It is not a budget that is socially inclusive. In fact, in many ways it is quite the opposite. It is a Labor budget in name only and does not fit with any vision that I can see enunciated by the government.

We know that budgets are annual documents, but you need to have some overall vision and plan of what you are doing for the state. In this budget I see more ad hocery. The fundamental question that arises (and I do not believe it has been properly answered), is why, when you compare us with Western Australia and Victoria—and we know Western Australia has a very big minerals industry but Victoria has not—that we have to have this budget in South Australia, which has really hit the household pocket, when those other states, which have also had adjustment in GST, do not have such a budget?

As with any budget, in this budget there are some good and some not so good things. I will go through some of the various areas. The proposed removal of moneys from small schools could affect one of my schools, Clarendon, a wonderful school with 49 students. I commend it because, as part of their total education, they involve children in horticulture and a whole lot of very useful skills. It is a great school and I am concerned that in the cut backs to small schools the Clarendon school might be one that will suffer.

I cannot understand how a government that claims to be socially inclusive can get rid of adult re-entry from DECS schools. The Treasurer said that those people can go to private tuition—which by definition is laughable, because those people will not be able to afford to go to private tuition—or they can go to TAFE, but that is not primarily set up to cater for adult re-entry. Why you would want to make it harder for people who may have left school early—deny them a second chance and make it harder for them to educate themselves or improve their educational and skills level—is beyond me.

I come back to the original point. This budget has some measures in it which I believe are socially exclusive, and I hope the government reconsiders that, along with its plan to cut and get rid of the Parks. We often hear from members opposite that their government follows the footsteps of Don Dunstan. For all his faults, I can tell you that Don Dunstan would not have allowed a budget like this. He would be turning in his grave to hear what is proposed for the Parks. I believe he went down in 1996, from memory, to protest against a potential cut back by the then Liberal government. I question the claim that the current state Labor government is upholding the legacy and vision of Don Dunstan. I have yet to see much evidence of that.

I will talk about some of the negatives of the budget before coming to the positives, as there are some good things in it. In the health portfolio some savings are required, I think of the order of \$118 million. With any of these savings I trust the focus will be on cutting out areas that are not part of the core business of those agencies, because over time the government has taken on something like 17,000 additional employees. I am not against an effective public sector as we need

one, but any cuts should be specifically targeted at areas that are not part of the core business or front line.

We see, in terms of other cuts, for country people a cut in the petrol subsidy scheme, which equates to 3¢ a litre for petrol and 2¢ a litre for diesel, which will obviously increase the cost of living for people in country areas. There are quite a few other proposed cuts. The Department for Environment and Natural Heritage is taking an across the board cut of 20 per cent. That is a massive cut when you consider that the department has already been cut. What we will have is a department that cannot effectively carry out the tasks required, and that is ironic, given the focus on things such as climate change and species loss.

The government has a policy of no species loss, but how can it possibly manage and maintain national park conservation areas if it does not have the personnel and expertise? It is a contradiction and, once again, it moves away from what has been one of the great attributes of Labor governments in this state with people such as Don Hopgood and others, who helped establish a very fine record in terms of environmental management. So, we will see cuts there.

There was a suggestion in the local *Hills and Valley Messenger* that the government had looked at selling off Wittunga, the botanic garden at Eden Hills. Fortunately common sense prevailed, because I think people would be marching not only in the street but everywhere else if the government ever entertained such a silly proposal.

There are cuts in other areas but, as I said, I do not have a problem with targeted cuts if they are directed at getting rid of excess and wasteful practices. The list of cuts is quite substantial but there are also some areas where there is increased spending, and I welcome that provision. Some of the positives include the proposal to amalgamate three TAFE campuses at Tonsley Park. I think that has merit but, before it sells off the O'Halloran Hill campus, I urge the government to consider what many locals are arguing for, that is, the creation of an additional high school in the southern area at O'Halloran Hill.

The campus there, in particular the heavy vehicle engineering workshops, cost a fortune—I remember that I was the minister shortly after they were provided—and it would be a pity to lose that educational focus. I think there is an opportunity to create what could be an advanced technology high school on that site. One of the things I argued for, which I did not quite achieve, was for TAFE to actually sponsor some technologically-oriented high schools, and I believe that would be an ideal site. Consolidating Marlestone, Panorama and O'Halloran Hill at Tonsley Park could be a very positive move if done properly.

Money for the duplication of the Southern Expressway is obviously welcome. This duplication needs to allow for greater access for people in areas adjacent to Happy Valley who want to travel south, but it is a very good proposal. I think the cuts to education amount to something like \$145.7 million over four years, and I repeat that, if they are properly targeted towards reducing excess waste and duplication, I do not have a problem with that. However, I think there is an opportunity to save quite a lot of money if the DECS system focuses more on local school governance and local school management, and I urge them to look at that as an alternative to the currently concentrated head office approach to most decision-making.

The light rail and heavy rail projects continue, and that is very good. The upgrade of South Road is also welcome, as well as the extra buses. The area I represent could do with some more direct bus services to Marion shopping centre, but I welcome the purchase of new buses. I also think the provision of \$12 million for new cycleways is a very positive initiative. The so-called 'share the road' concept has a very limited application, because if you use cycleways you find out that they suddenly end and you are left high and dry, literally pedalling your bike to nowhere. I have always argued that, wherever possible, we need decent off-road cycleways. I know it is difficult to retrofit but that is what you want—off-road cycleways. In my experience (and I have tried it a couple of times), mixing with concrete trucks when you are on your pushbike is not a good thing. A concrete truck usually wins.

I am pleased that the Minister for Transport through this budget has come good on his commitment to provide some bus shelters, both upgrades and replacement or new shelters. You cannot expect people to catch public transport if they are going to get wet in winter and scorched in summer, and so I welcome that \$5.2 million for bus shelters. I think that is an excellent initiative. It might seem small in the scale of things but, as I say, if you want to encourage people to use public transport, you cannot expect people to be suffering when they are out there waiting for a bus to come along: either there is nowhere to sit or no shelter whatsoever.

As to the disability provision, there is quite a bit of money for disability services but, as constituents tell me, we still have a way to go. One example is a lad who needs speech therapy but, I am told by the parents, that that ceases once the child is of school age and this particular child did not speak until he started school. Then the speech therapy assistance is declined and not provided. The key thing with disabilities, as with a lot of other things, is early intervention and, whilst I welcome the government's increased commitment to disability funding, as a community we still have a long way to go.

The provision of more specialist maths and science teachers is one of the chronic problems at the moment. We do not have enough focus on maths and science in our schools; we do not have enough teachers. Likewise, in the technical areas we do not have enough teachers and we are not training enough. I trust that, in the establishment of the Tonsley Park Centre, we have a purpose-built training facility for technical teachers and those who go into what used to be called home economics but is often now under the general heading of hospitality training. We used to have it at Underdale until the University of South Australia made a foolish decision and destroyed those purpose-built facilities.

The provision of a southern community justice court will be an interesting innovation. I hope it works. This budget has provided some extra money to deal with graffiti vandalism, but it will not work unless there is legislation and a policing effort that is directed at dealing with those vandals. Only the week before last, we had hooded graffiti vandals attacking the Belair line train in broad daylight while it waited for another train to pass just south of Lynton Station. During the week, in broad daylight in the afternoon, they graffitied the train while it was waiting there. These hooded, brave people, these graffiti vandals, attacked public property and damaged it, and yet we do not seem to have the resourcing or the will on the part of the government to actually really get stuck into these vandals. These particular characters, as they could best be described, were not children; they were adults who clearly have some problem that needs to be addressed.

Within this budget and issues related to it, there are some measures which, I think, in the long term are going to cost this government dearly. In fact, next time I will be surprised if they win the election unless something dramatic happens. They are the two sleeper issues of water and electricity. Normally, they do not go together but in this case they do because the desalination plant is going to push up the price of electricity. I cannot see any additional generating capacity coming on line.

Water is already going up and will go up even further, so the household budget between now and the next state election is going to take an increased hit to the point where I think the government will have a real political problem on its hands come the lead-up to next election. I cannot see how anything that is being proposed is going to deal with that issue. In a way, the government is trapped. Trying to provide more water through desalination will put the price of electricity so high that a lot of people will not be able to afford to keep themselves warm in winter or cool in summer.

Emergency services did not seem to get any additional funding. Some of the CFS units in my area, and in the Adelaide Hills generally, feel as though they are not adequately equipped to deal with bushfires, and that is an issue that needs to be addressed.

I notice the budget is focusing on an extra 300 police. I do not believe that is necessary. I think if the police that we have did the front-line duties we would not need an additional 300 police. I think that has just become a bit of a catchcry: 'More police.' What we want is more police actually doing policing duties, rather than sitting behind a desk or getting involved in a whole lot of activities. I noticed at the Show—I am a great lover of band music—that there were 11 police standing watching the police band play. I have noticed on other occasions that there seem to be more than adequate numbers of police attending various functions and other activities, and so I question the need for 300 additional police. I do not think it is necessary. It is just a political catchcry to make the public think that they are safer.

What needs to happen is to address with early intervention the issues that give rise to crime, which are often things like people not being able to get a job because they cannot read or write, and having no prospect of a job because they have a very low level of education. It is not rocket science, but I do not believe simply providing more police is the answer.

As for the court issue, I have learnt from my own experience how expensive it is. For the ordinary citizen to even get a copy of a transcript is \$6.60 a page. For a basic traffic matter like mine, you are looking at 200 pages times \$6.60. The ordinary citizen has not a hope in hell of being

able to defend themselves or be in a position to consider what happens in the courts. To that end—and I will be dealing with this issue in the forthcoming weeks—I have been very impressed with the Chief Magistrate, Elizabeth Bolton, in response to my suggestion that they need to establish a specialist traffic division within the Magistrates Court, because I understand about 40 per cent of the magistrates' work is taken up on traffic issues.

We also need to reform the expiation system, and I will be saying a lot more about that in the future. But if you had an independent panel to review expiation notices, then you would probably have fewer people wanting to go to court, and the savings to the taxpayer would be enormous. So, I do not think the answer is simply putting more money into courts, or putting more money into police. What we have to have is a smart look at how justice is administered in this state, so that we have a system that is fair and reasonable and accessible to every citizen. Currently it is not.

This budget is a mixed bag: some good things, some not so good things. I think, out of 10, I would not rate it as a pass. I think the student needs to do much more work and come back with a better budget next time.

**Mr GARDNER (Morialta) (12:43):** The 2010-11 budget was finally delivered by the Treasurer on 16 September, a long, long time after the election and some time after the beginning of the financial year this budget is dealing with. South Australia has been for some time the highest taxed state in Australia, but this budget significantly increases fees, charges and taxes. However, services are not spared. The budget slashes funding to certain local schools, the environment, country health and a range of other significant areas of public need. If you catch a bus, drive a car, consume water, pay insurance, are looking to buy a built house for your first home, or work in the public sector, you will be worse off after this budget.

The most disappointing thing, of course, is that these cuts would not have been necessary if the government had managed our finances better over the last eight years. The tax take that this government has had is significantly higher than the government that it replaced. I am going to compare figures from the 2001-02 budget with the 2010-11 budget. In the nine years since the last Liberal budget, payroll tax revenue has increased from \$601 million to \$930 million, a 55 per cent increase; property taxes have increased from \$731 million to \$1.689 billion, a 131 per cent increase; gambling taxes, up 32 per cent; insurance, up 58 per cent; motor vehicle charges, up 47 per cent. I also note that, as the state government benefits from GST revenues, South Australia's allocation of GST revenues in 2001-02 was \$2,477 million and in 2010-11, \$5,045 million. It has gone from \$2.5 billion to over \$5 billion—more than double.

Overall, government tax revenue has increased by 91 per cent. The times have not been shy of collecting taxes. It is how the government has managed its budgets over the years that has led us to the state we are in this year where the Treasurer has needed to make those cuts.

If only Labor had managed our finances during the years of extraordinary growth across the country, we would not now be seeing these brutal cuts to services and increases in fees and charges. As Liberal leader, Isobel Redmond, said:

Public debt of \$7.1 billion and a \$389 million deficit in 2010-11 means that South Australians will soon pay almost \$2 million a day in interest payments on government debt. At a time when South Australia has seen rivers of gold flow through government coffers with billions of dollars in unbudgeted revenue, the Labor government has cut deep—deep into the livelihoods of hardworking South Australians. Education and hospital services have not been spared. This budget is about South Australians who have once again been let down by the Rann Labor government.

I will now turn to some of the particular lowlights of the budget. As the member for Fisher said, there are some good things in the budget—and I am thinking of the support for sporting and active recreation groups, which will be appreciated, but that is a very small part of the story. Cuts and increased revenue measures in this budget total \$2.5 billion. Bearing in mind that the government went to the election saying that the Sustainable Budget Commission was in place to find \$750 million worth of savings, the fact that we have now needed to go to \$2.5 billion worth of savings due to the calls on state finances goes to the trust we can have in this government and the government's credibility.

Taxes are going to increase by \$1 billion over the forward estimates. The government has put up the mining royalties rate, which may well put Olympic Dam in jeopardy. There are smaller things, potentially, such as cuts of \$13 million to the arts sector by reductions to grants and programs. I saw the Premier tweet on budget day that the arts sector was really happy that it had not had the \$30 million of cuts that the Sustainable Budget Commission had identified as possible.

I hardly think the arts sector will be happy to find that \$13 million of cuts to the arts sector are apparently necessary because of this government's reckless incompetence with regard to the state's finances.

One of the meanest cuts that we have seen in this budget is putting up parking rates at hospital car parks. So, if you park your car while you visit a family member in hospital, you will have to pay more for that, too. If someone is going to be in hospital for some time, that is going to be of significant concern when you want to visit an unwell relative. It is very disappointing.

I want to focus the rest of my comments today on the cuts to the education budget. One issue about which the member for Fisher has just spoken, and I have heard the member for Norwood speak publicly a great deal about this issue since the budget, and I commend him for his work, is the cuts to adult re-entry programs, which will save \$8 million a year from 2012. They are very disappointing. In order to save this \$8.2 million, the budget states:

Adults above the age of 21 will have limited access to schools and will need to access their education needs primarily through the TAFE system or from alternative providers.

What this means in practice is that those who have not completed their high school education and are above the age of 21 will no longer be able to access Marden Secondary College and the fantastic service that that college has provided to people who often do not have the funds to access the sort of private tuition that the government has suggested they might now be able to take up.

This will really hurt the efficacy of Marden Secondary College, and it will mean that no-one over the age of 21 will any longer be able to access that facility. I commend the member for Norwood for his fight to have this decision reversed. It is very important for adult re-entry participants in South Australia that this decision is reversed.

On page 116 of Budget Paper 6 we see the forced amalgamation of all co-located schools, which will save \$8.2 million over two years (as it is listed), but I note that into the future, from 2013 onwards, this will save \$5½ million a year. In the seat of Morialta, for example, this will affect the schools at Athelstone, the junior primary school and the Athelstone Primary School, and the Stradbroke Junior Primary School and the Stradbroke Primary School.

The Stradbroke Primary School and the junior primary school have formally dealt with this matter three times over the last two decades and each time they have formally rejected the department's suggestion that they might want to amalgamate. In fact, the most recent rejection came in 2005, and the governing council has indicated to the department every year since then that the school community does not wish to amalgamate.

If this government is to be taken seriously ever again when it talks about community consultation, then this is a budget measure that it should not have introduced. The Stradbroke Primary School community clearly does not want to amalgamate with the Stradbroke Junior Primary School; that should be a decision for the school community. It is a large school, and if the schools were not co-located they would be treated more advantageously with their funding into the future.

I note that the government also plans to save \$5½ million a year through the cessation of continuous intake to its preschool and reception years. Again, its justification in the budget papers is that this brings us into line with every other state, but this is a clear example of the lowest common denominator being applied everywhere. Of course, every state has done this as a budget savings measure, but it is not done with the best interests of the children in mind. There is no educational reason why this is useful.

DECS head office efficiencies are set to save \$22.9 million over four years. The green school grants (which were \$1 million a year) have been cut. The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Learning Technologies Program has been cut \$2½ million a year, and various new arrivals support programs are going to be cut by \$7.3 million over three years, and this is very significant, particularly for schools—such as the East Torrens Primary School in the member for Hartley's electorate, for example—that have significant new arrivals programs.

It is not as if this work does not need to be done. It is not as if these new arrivals do not still need special arrangements to help them integrate into the school community. We already have significant community support for many of these programs, but they do rely on that government support as well. The cuts to this program are severe—\$7.3 million. I am not sure what the government expects these students to do if they are going to fully integrate into those schools.

Fencing and security grants have been cut by \$500,000 a year. Talk about penny-pinching! I know that one school in my electorate (Campbelltown Primary School) was very grateful for the opportunity to access this grant to build security fencing around the school. Since the fence has been up, its rate of vandalism has been cut significantly. The school community is very grateful for the support it has received from the security grants, and it is a shame that schools in the future will no longer be able to access this funding that has been cut.

Many other members have spoken about the cuts to small schools additional grants. There are a number of small schools in Morialta, and the Basket Range Primary School, Norton Summit Primary School and Thorndon Park Primary School come to mind. Those schools had their small schools grants cut some years ago and have been struggling to make do ever since. This saving of \$3½ million a year will, no doubt, create similar challenges for schools in the electorates of other members. It seems that this government is focused on super schools, rather than on small schools, leaving a lack of parental choice, which does not seem to be a concern to the government but which is of great concern to me.

I would like to turn to the final education budget measure that I have significant concerns with: the multi and dual campus structures efficiencies, in which about \$1.6 million—increasing every year with CPI—a year will be saved as additional above entitlement support that has been allocated to a number of schools that have multi and dual campuses will be reviewed and reduced, which of course we know is code for 'cutting'.

The multi-campus school in my electorate that is concerned by this cut is the Norwood Morialta High School, which has its middle campus in Rostrevor and its senior campus in Magill—again, the member for Hartley's electorate. Information provided to me, and other members of the Norwood Morialta High School community, from that school's governing council, based on information they received from the department, reads as follows:

In our school the Labor government budget cuts amount to \$622,629 per year. That amounts to 5.8 per cent of the staffing budget. The staffing budget is 88 per cent of the total school budget which means that any cut to staffing threatens all programs in the school.

In 1993 there was an enforced amalgamation of the two schools, Morialta High School and Norwood High School. In recognition that it is not possible to operate a dual campus site separated by 3.2 kilometres without additional funding, the school was given 7.9 additional staffing...

In 2006, this was reduced arbitrarily to 4.5 staffing which equates to \$622,629 in recognition that a dual campus requires additional staffing.

The document goes on:

As part of the specially funded super schools, created by the Labor government, there are additional three to five deputy principal positions in each super school. However, these schools will have a capacity less than Norwood Morialta High School and are being given preferential funding.

All of [those] schools are on one site and can share facilities such as laboratories, resource centres, art rooms, technology and associated staffing costs and sports fields, without maintaining dual campus costs, especially when the campuses are 3.2 kilometres apart.

It concludes:

The Labor government budget proposes that Norwood Morialta High School, which has more students than any of the schools identified above, is being targeted for budget cuts which will amount to \$622,629 per year. If the school is forced by the Labor government to make cuts, our highly successful local school will have to make changes jeopardising the quality of education that has served this community for over 100 years.

I was contacted immediately upon this information becoming known by dozens of concerned parents, students and, of course, teachers, who are very concerned about this. I have had dozens of calls and emails. I attended a public meeting yesterday at which representatives from the student representative council, the governing council of the school, the parents and friends group and teachers were all in attendance. To give you a taste of the sort of concerns that they brought to me I refer to one email from a parent:

I write to you as a very concerned parent, member of the Norwood Morialta High School community. I am especially concerned as a parent because I have entrusted the school with the education of my two children, who are in years 8 and 12. I hope that you too share my concerns about—

and there is some detail that I have already read out from the governing council's information—

the potentially devastating impact the proposed funding cuts will have on the Norwood Morialta High School and you will assist the school in its efforts to prevent them from occurring.

Another parent writes:

I have a son at Norwood Morialta High School and I am disturbed at what I have read concerning the budget cuts and how it affects the school as a whole. I believe the Norwood Morialta High School has a legitimate claim to an increase rather than a cut in their existing budget, since the school operates two campuses. This cost-cutting seems to be without any logic. My son is one of the happiest students and is doing well at Norwood Morialta.

I seek leave to conclude my remarks at a later time.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

*[Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00]*

### PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Gambling (Hon. A. Koutsantonis)—

Rules made under the following Act—

Gaming Machines—

Advertising Code—Alteration No.1 of 2010

Responsible Gambling Code—Alteration No.1 of 2010

### LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

**Mr SIBBONS (Mitchell) (14:01):** I bring up the ninth report of the committee.

Report received.

**Mr SIBBONS:** I bring up the 10<sup>th</sup> report of the committee.

Report received and read.

### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (14:03):** I bring up the 384<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Dukes Highway Upgrade.

Report received and ordered to be published.

**Mr PICCOLO:** I bring up the 385<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Port Augusta Prison: New Accommodation Block.

Report received and ordered to be published.

### COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:05):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** I rise today to bring to the attention of the house plans the government has to make fitness to drive guidelines far more rigorous than they are at present for commercial vehicle drivers. These guidelines are necessary to improve safety for all road users. We have a responsibility to ensure that anyone who is issued with, or who holds, an authority to drive a motor vehicle, has the ability, knowledge and fitness to drive.

The medical standards used to determine a person's fitness to drive are contained in the national guidelines *Assessing Fitness to Drive Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers 2003*. The national guidelines contain nationally agreed medical standards for the purpose of driver licensing. As the Minister for Road Safety, I authorise the use of the national guidelines in South Australia by causing the publication of a notice in the *Government Gazette*. While the vast majority of commercial vehicle drivers will be unaffected, the authorisation of the use of the guidelines will allow a tougher regime to be applied on a case-by-case basis, as the Registrar of Motor Vehicles deems appropriate.

The guidelines set standards for private vehicle drivers and a higher set of standards for commercial vehicle drivers. At present, the commercial standards apply only to drivers who hold a class MR licence and above—that is, medium to large truck—or drivers who hold a class C (car) or LR (light rigid truck) and carry passengers for hire and reward, or carry dangerous goods. Under the commercial standard, the licence holder may require an assessment and the opinion of a medical specialist.

The continuing private standard is less stringent, applies to the vast majority of day to day motorists, and requires an assessment in opinion of a general practitioner. Drivers who hold a class C or LR licence are currently assessed using only private standards. This includes drivers who are employed in occupations such as courier drivers and delivery drivers, who spend much longer driving on our roads than the average driver.

Since the details of the matter came to my attention earlier in the year, I have been concerned about potential gaps in the application of the standard. In this tragic crash, a young man was killed by a courier driver who was not subject to the more stringent commercial standards. So, I have been concerned that the current private standards for licence holders, as they apply to commercial drivers who suffer an impairment or medical condition, do not place proper emphasis on the purpose of their driving.

South Australian research conducted in 2005 into medical conditions as a contributing factor in crashes—and that investigated 298 incidents—found that a medical condition was the main causal factor in 13 per cent of the casualty crashes and accounted for 23 per cent of all hospital admissions and fatal crash outcomes. That, combined with the extended hours driven by commercial drivers like courier drivers and delivery drivers, greatly increases the risk of road crashes. It was my view that something needed to be done to address the matter.

The National Transport Commission is reviewing the national guidelines to ensure the standards reflect current medical evidence and best practice, and meet the practical needs of private and commercial vehicle drivers. As part of the review, South Australia has raised the policy concern that the current medical assessment under the private standards for licence holders who suffer an impairment or medical condition, does not place enough emphasis on the nature and purpose of the person's driving patterns.

In support of this policy change, I presented an agenda paper at last Friday's Australian Transport Council's ministerial meeting, seeking support to expand the application of the commercial standards in the national guidelines, to address the risk posed by the commercial driver, rather than the vehicle class being driven. I am pleased to say that ministers from other states and territories supported further investigation of this policy initiative.

South Australia continues to support a national approach to regulatory reform. On this matter however, we are appropriately stepping beyond the national guidelines. The national guidelines that specify that holders of class C and LR driver's licences are assessed under the private standards would not allow for occupational drivers of light vehicles to be assessed using the commercial standards unless they carry public passengers for hire and reward or carry dangerous goods. As the Minister for Road Safety, however, I have the discretion to publish whatever guidelines I deem appropriate by notice in the *Gazette*. I am pleased to inform the house that South Australia is changing and, as a result, strengthening how the guidelines are applied under our law.

A new *Gazette* notice that authorises the use of the national guidelines is to be published. The effect of the new *Gazette* notice will be that, in future, when a commercial driver, like a courier driver or delivery driver, who drives a light vehicle comes to the attention of the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, and should the registrar decide to review that person's fitness to drive, the registrar may require that commercial driver be assessed under the same commercial standards of the national guidelines rather than the private standards.

The registrar will, in the first instance, continue to rely on the fitness to drive assessment of the health professional, operating in accordance with the nationally agreed guidelines. The new option to review any commercial driver of a light vehicle under the commercial standards will only come into effect when the registrar receives further information that leads him to decide that a review is required.

Under section 80 of the Motor Vehicles Act, the registrar may refuse to issue a driver's licence or suspend a person's driver's licence until he is satisfied that the person is fit to drive. Under section 81, the registrar may place conditions on a licence that restricts the circumstances



under which the holder may drive, that is, placing conditions on the driver's licence. Any decision made by the registrar in the review of a person's fitness to drive is open to appeal under section 98Z of the Motor Vehicles Act and, subsequently, further appeal to the District Court. I expect that this new policy initiative will result in safer roads for South Australians.

### QUESTION TIME

**The SPEAKER:** I advise members today, while they are listening quietly to the answers to questions— and I repeat 'listening quietly to the answers to questions'—perhaps to read standing orders Nos 137 through to 142 and 144, the power of the Speaker. I am responsible for the orderly conduct of the proceedings of the house and for maintaining its decorum and dignity. There was very little decorum and dignity here yesterday. The people on my right were appalling in their behaviour, but they were ably assisted at times by people on my—people on my left were appalling in their behaviour. I am sorry; people on my left—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** You upset me so much yesterday that you confused me—had appalling behaviour yesterday but were ably abetted occasionally by people on my right also. I will not stand for that today. I do have the power to throw people out of this place, and it is not a good thing to be thrown out of this place, so I would ask you today to maintain some dignity. If you ask a question, please do not ask another 17 afterwards; you will listen to the answers as ministers very ably provide them.

### PARKS COMMUNITY CENTRE

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:13):** I will be interested to see if I get any answers today, because I certainly was not getting them yesterday.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Point of order.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister for Transport, point of order.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I think it is enormously disrespectful of you to ignore the standing orders, having been read the riot act. On their head be it.

**The SPEAKER:** I do not think that was a standing order, but I agree with you.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** Point of order. He accused you, Madam Speaker—you, as the Speaker, as he is addressing you—and that is insulting to the Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** I am not sure that that is a standing order also, but we will continue. I will now ask you, Leader of the Opposition—we have people waiting with bated breath to hear answers to these questions—to please ask your question.

**Mrs REDMOND:** My question is for the Premier. Why does it take the Commissioner for Social Inclusion and member of the Sustainable Budget Commission, Monsignor David Cappo, to recommend to the government that they not close the Parks Community Centre when the Premier has an Attorney-General who is the local member for Enfield and a minister for community services who are both providing advice to the cabinet?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:14):** I think it is most appropriate for discussions between members of the government and the social inclusion commissioner on issues relating to social inclusion; that is his role.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

### MINING INDUSTRY

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (14:15):** My question is also to the Premier. Can the Premier update the house on recent developments in the mining and associated industries in South Australia?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate**

**Change) (14:15):** Members will remember that I opened the state's the 12<sup>th</sup> mine in August. The Cairn Hill iron ore mine, just 55 kilometres south-east of Coober Pedy, is providing local employment with jobs for about 100 people on-site and approximately 170 indirect jobs. IMX Resources expects to ship up to 1.7 million tonnes a year of magnetite and smaller amounts of copper and gold ore to China over the next five years.

As members would know, when we came to office in 2002, South Australia only had four operating mines. Now we have 12; we hope to be having 16 by the end of the year. We have another 20 or more in various stages of application and approval. But the most recent development in the resources area is not in fact a new mine: it is a proposal for a \$1 billion mineral processing complex.

Earlier this month, Perth-based Arafura Resources announced its plans to build a rare earths processing complex on OneSteel land at Whyalla. The proposed complex will process rare earths from the company's planned Nolan's project about 135 kilometres north of Alice Springs. The development is expected to create more than 1,000 jobs during the two-year construction phase and about 200 to 300 ongoing jobs at the—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I see. Now we are badmouthing new developments for Whyalla, but what do you expect?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** The bitterness involved in yesterday's budget reply showed an anger at the opposition's inability to—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —get elected. Of course, this will provide a huge boost to Whyalla and the whole Upper Spencer Gulf region. Rare earths are in demand worldwide for use in lasers, computer and television screens, fibre-optic cables and mobile phones. They are also essential for developing green technologies such as low energy light bulbs, wind turbines, rechargeable motor vehicle batteries and high-strength magnets.

Of course, this development is in its early stages and must go through a thorough approvals process. It is a very significant project and requires the highest level of scrutiny, and that is why it has been declared a major project by this government. Major project status will allow the independent Development Assessment Commission to set the guidelines for the proponent to undertake an environmental impact study or a public and environmental report, whichever is deemed to be the most appropriate.

I welcome Arafura's decision to set up this major development in Whyalla in what is a strong endorsement of that community—of course, brilliantly represented by Madam Speaker—and South Australia.

#### **PARKS COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:18):** My question is again to the Premier. Has the member for Enfield made representations on behalf of his constituents about the closure of the Parks Community Centre, and does he agree with the cabinet decision to close it?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:18):** Yes, he has made representations on this issue; in fact, we have had a number of discussions with both the minister and, indeed, the Minister for Families and Communities.

#### **PARKS COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:18):** The second part of the question was: does he agree with the decision to close it?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate**

**Change) (14:18):** He made a public statement yesterday on that matter in which he declared his interest and position.

#### NATIONAL POLICE REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (14:19):** My question is to the Minister for Police. Can the minister inform the house of the importance of today, National Police Remembrance Day, in recognising the dangers facing the brave men and women of the South Australian police force?

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Lee—Minister for Police, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:19):** I thank the member for her question. Earlier today it was my honour to attend the National Police Remembrance Day memorial service at the Fort Largs Police Academy. The service is conducted each year in memory of police officers killed in the line of duty, paying due respect to the memory of those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice while protecting the people of South Australia. Over the past 170 years, 61 South Australian police officers have been killed in the line of duty.

I also acknowledge the presence of the shadow minister for police at this important event, showing that throughout parliament, as indeed throughout the state, we all appreciate the dangers of the vital work done by our dedicated police officers. Policing is a dangerous profession. It is a tragic reality that was recently brought to the fore by a devastating incident interstate, and I am certain the men and women of the South Australia Police have felt strongly the loss of their New South Wales colleague Constable Bill Crews.

It is greatly upsetting to see any officer make the ultimate sacrifice in protecting us all, particularly when the officer comes from a police family and his death is linked to a scourge like the drug trade. Any event such as this is a reminder of the daily dangers confronting our men and women on the force.

It is vital for the continued safety and security of all Australians that the dedicated men and women of our force are willing to put themselves in harm's way for the benefit of the rest of us. Their dedication and willingness to risk their individual safety allows us all to carry on our lives confident in the blanket of security their service provides. We are extremely fortunate to have so many men and women who put their lives on the line every day in the pursuit of helping and protecting the community; however, there is a real risk that lives can be lost.

I call on the members of this house to take the opportunity on this day, National Police Remembrance Day, to reflect on the ultimate sacrifice of the 61 South Australian police officers who have died in the service of the state. I also call on us all to reflect on the outstanding work of the more than 4,400 men and women of our police service, who every day do the memory of their fallen comrades proud.

#### PARKS COMMUNITY CENTRE

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:21):** My question is again to the Premier. Will the Premier allow the member for Enfield to breach the convention of cabinet solidarity and speak out against the closure of the Parks Community Centre as he allowed the former member for Adelaide, Jane Lomax-Smith, to speak out against Victoria Park?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! You answer questions on your feet. Premier.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:22):** This can be answered quite simply: the member for Enfield is a vigorous—

*The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the Minister for Industry and Trade!

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** —and rigorous representative of his people.

#### COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICES

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon) (14:22):** Can the Minister for Health advise the house in greater detail how medical services in country South Australia will be improved by the state budget?

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Point of order. Questions on the state budget are out order; it is a bill before the house.

*The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:*

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** No, we haven't. The question clearly referred to the state budget; the question is out of order.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Point of order. Those are my—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! How many points of order can we have at one time? We will deal first of all with—

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I would just invite my colleague on this side—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Madam Speaker. My understanding is that if a point of order has been raised it is not orderly to raise another point of order until—

**The SPEAKER:** Sit down!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Sit down!

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** Then why are you trying to do it?

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Because I'm trying—

**The SPEAKER:** Sit down!

*The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** And yours too. You can sit down, too. I have a very clear choice here: we either allow the question to go ahead and ask that the minister be very careful about his answer in relation to the debate that is going through the house currently, or we can refuse the question; however, there will be no other questions allowed this afternoon relating to the budget.

I think I will allow the minister to answer the question, but I will listen very carefully to his answer, and if I think he is breaching the rules of the place I will ask him to stop; otherwise, we stop all questions about the budget this afternoon. It is your choice. Go ahead, minister.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurua—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (14:24):** Without referring to specifics in the budget, I can talk about the government's plans in relation to country health, which is very high on my list of priorities.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** It is the government's plan to, in fact, increase expenditure in country health this year by a considerable amount—in fact, 13 per cent. The reason we are doing that is to improve services in country South Australia, for two reasons: first, it is obviously in the best interests of people who live in country South Australia to have services closer to home; but, secondly, it also, of course, means that fewer people will have to travel to the city where we know there is enormous pressure on the services in the city. So, it benefits us in a general sense but it also benefits the individuals.

I just want to go through some of those details. The geography and population distribution of South Australia, of course, means that people will always need to come to the city for some high-end complex treatments; that will always be the case, but there is no reason why a lot of things cannot be placed in country areas. A good example, Madam Speaker, of how this can work is the rollout of ECG machines across country South Australia.

I can advise the house today that this rollout is now complete, and every one of South Australia's 67 public country hospitals now has an ECG machine linked to Flinders Medical Centre's upgraded MUSE cardiology system. That means that every country hospital in South Australia now is linked to Flinders, and every single one of those hospitals has an

ECG machine. So, if members anywhere in the state happen to have a heart problem, they know that their local—

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** I am not looking at you, Ivan—hospital (including the Barossa hospitals) will be linked into Flinders with the technology that can provide the very best service. MUSE is a digital system that retains and organises ECGs, letting staff access a patient's history and detect any differences between multiple ECGs performed on a particular patient over time.

ECG machines are diagnostic tools that let medical staff measure and record electrical activity in a patient's heart, helping them diagnose and treat specific conditions ranging from minor to life-threatening. Having ECG machines at all our country hospital emergency departments means that staff can use MUSE to send an ECG to an on-call cardiology specialist in a major city hospital. The technology can quite literally save lives as country doctors can now use the skills and knowledge of city specialists in order to treat their patients.

I hope that every member would agree that this is an excellent breakthrough which we now have in South Australia. More than 240 Country Health SA staff have received training at 17 sessions held across the state on how to use these new systems—a good investment in our people, as well as in the machinery.

This government pledges to introduce country chemotherapy centres on the same sort of principle. The 2010-11 budget will provide—

*Mr Pengilly interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** I am not allowed to mention the word 'budget'. Sorry, I cannot mention the 'b' word. I want to let members know that money will be coming from a place that I cannot mention over the next four years worth \$5.9 million to meet an election commitment. An electronic oncology prescribing system will enable patients to be treated in different hospitals. This is something I commend to members on the other side who do represent rural communities.

It will mean that people in country South Australia will be able to get chemotherapy closer to where they live. For example, a country patient may see a cancer specialist in the city who would provide a treatment program, and then the patient could receive the ongoing treatment locally in the country.

We have been doing this to some degree at Port Pirie, as the member for Frome knows, but this is currently a limited service and our proposition is to have this service expanded. The electronic prescribing system will allow, in the first instance, Port Pirie, Mount Gambier, Port Lincoln, Whyalla and Berri hospitals to be established as regional chemotherapy hubs. Once these centres are established and operating safely, the service will expand to Port Augusta, Clare, Gawler, Mount Barker, Murray Bridge, Naracoorte and the Northern Yorke Peninsula Regional Health Service, as well as the South Coast District Hospital.

In all those services staff will be trained, equipment will be placed in there and connections will be made with the city so that patients from those communities can have chemotherapy in their own home towns rather than have to travel to the city. Many of us here, of course, would have friends and family who have had to go through chemotherapy. Everyone would know how distressing it is, and to have to travel with that distress makes it even worse. This will help those people enormously.

We are also, of course, upgrading facilities and biomedical equipment in the country. We will also undertake an extra 3,444 more elective surgical procedures over the next four years, and there is a whole slew of capital works as well at Berri, Ceduna, Whyalla and Port Pirie. There will be new BreastScreen country mobile units and new mental health care facilities as well. Finally, of course, the upgrade of Hamill House nursing home at Port Pirie Hospital will be completed. This government can do it: the former government could not.

#### **PARKS COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:30):** My question is again to the Premier. Given that the Premier recognised the recommendation of the Sustainable Budget Commission to close the repatriation hospital as (and I quote him) 'really dopey', why did the Premier not also recognise the decision to close the Parks Community Centre as really dopey?

*The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the Treasurer! Be quiet. The Premier.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Ramsay—Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Social Inclusion, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change) (14:30):** One day, probably many years from now, there will be Liberals in a cabinet who have to make hard decisions. Who knows who that leader will be? It may be Steven Marshall or it may be John Gardner. There is someone I think we would fear. But the fact of the matter is this: when you are in government you have to make choices, and you have to make hard choices. You also have to make choices that you endorse and you have to make choices that you reject, and then you also have to do others around which you negotiate.

### SKILLS FOR JOBS PLAN

**Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (14:31):** My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. Can the minister inform the house of the Training and Skills Commission recently released five-year plan?

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:31):** I can tell the house that the state's peak advisory body on skills and workforce development (the Training and Skills Commission) today released the annual update of its Skills for Jobs five-year plan. The updated report reflects the changing priorities of industry in South Australia and identifies what needs to be done to meet those priorities over the next five years. I am glad to tell the house just a few of the findings of the commission's report.

The report confirms South Australia's economy is set for solid economic growth at potentially a higher rate than that of the nation. South Australia's economic prospects will be driven by new growth areas such as major mining, defence and infrastructure projects, and opportunities in the tourism and renewable energy sectors. This will have flow-on effects to the services sector, creating many job opportunities in business and financial services; wholesale, retail and personal services; as well as community services and health. The combined impact of economic growth, plus the need to replace workers leaving the workforce or changing occupations, will result in estimated total job openings of around 162,000 over the five years to 2013-14.

The commission has identified that, owing to the state government's \$194 million election pledge investment to create an additional 100,000 training places, the alignment of the supply for training places will come very close to the huge demand for training places of 293,000 over the next five years. The plan outlines priorities to improve language, literacy and numeracy skills, develop a more responsive tertiary system, prepare workers for the new economy so that they can adapt to new demands, improve the use of skills in the workplace, and develop a workforce development strategy for the tertiary education workforce.

I am pleased, then, that the commission has commended the government's approach to reform of the VET system, singling out the Skills for All proposals released in July this year. The Skills for All reform proposals outline a 10-point plan aimed at creating a fairer, more flexible and modern VET system that more closely aligns the supply of training places with the demand of both industry and, ultimately, students.

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** It is interesting hearing the interjections of the member for Norwood. Perhaps he might want to speak to his leader, whose vision for education infrastructure is: she thinks she can get a good education (according to her speech yesterday) sitting under a gum tree. Her vision for education in South Australia is receiving it under a gum tree. Here we are spending \$125 million on a new TAFE—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** —and the Leader of the Opposition thinks you can get a good education sitting under a gum tree.

**Mr PENGILLY:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order—125.

**The SPEAKER:** No, I do not uphold that point of order. I do not think it is particularly offensive.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** I am only pleased that the Treasurer does not share the Leader of the Opposition's view that education is best provided sitting under a gum tree.

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The minister is misrepresenting the Leader of the Opposition. What she said—

**The SPEAKER:** I direct the minister back to answering his question and stop provoking the other side. They have been well behaved up until now; please don't you, as former speaker, be the one who upsets them.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** I am terribly sorry, Madam Speaker. I would be happy to quote the Leader of the Opposition in full, but I merely make the point—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** —that before the member for Norwood—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition will be quiet.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** —jumps up and down throwing accusations at the government, perhaps he needs to speak to his own leader about her visions for education infrastructure in South Australia. Such a system will allow—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members on my left will be quiet and listen to the minister.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** Why do they tattle so?

**The SPEAKER:** On with your answer, please, minister.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING:** Such a system will allow individuals and employers to choose the skill development opportunities best suited to their needs and offer South Australians a government supported entitlement to undertake vocational training. Copies of the 2010 plan are available on the Training and Skills Commission website [www.tasc.sa.gov.au](http://www.tasc.sa.gov.au).

#### ADELAIDE OVAL

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:37):** My question is to the Treasurer. Has the government now converted the \$30 million SACA guarantee to a \$30 million loan that has already been paid to SACA; and are the interest payments to government being taken out of the \$535 million budget for the Adelaide Oval project or are they being paid separately by SACA?

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Elder—Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Energy) (14:37):** It is interesting that the opposition has turned on the oval yet again.

**Mr Williams:** Why don't you answer the question?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The deputy leader will be quiet.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** The details of the funding for the oval have been made very clear and there has been a staged process where the participants do what they do and we do what we do.

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Norwood.

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Davenport. The member for Davenport and the member for Norwood, you are both warned. You will get one more warning. Minister.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I am struggling with the question of the member.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** One tries so hard to be courteous and I sometimes feel that I am a victim of my own good nature. The question of the member for Davenport was: did the \$30 million turn into a loan and are we paying the interest payments out of the \$535 million? For the explanation for the member for Davenport, they did not lend us \$30 million, so we do not have to pay interest payments. They borrowed the \$30 million and they—

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The minister has obviously misheard the question because the question clearly says 'and are the interest payments to government being taken out of the \$535 million budget for the Adelaide Oval project or being paid separately by SACA'?

**Mr Williams:** It's very clear.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** 'Very clear.' There was a period where there was an extension and I will bring the details back.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** There was a period where we extended the date for the conversion to a loan. There was an interest payment in that period. It is a small amount and how it is dealt with, I will come back to the house on.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** That doesn't—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I'm actually just trying to be courteous to you people.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Finniss! I warn the member for Finniss.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** There was a delay, I think from memory, of one month from the conversion of that into a loan and there was an interest payment and the treatment of that will be dealt with. I don't believe it will come out from that sum of money. It is a modest sum of money in the overall picture—I think from memory, some \$90,000.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Madam Speaker, I really would like to simply talk about this in a sensible fashion.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** The truth is this—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! You will listen to the minister. He is being very calm about this.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** There is \$450 million plus 85 available—\$535 million. That is the full extent of the taxpayers' contribution on this project. This project, with that contribution, has now been welcomed by football, by cricket, by football interstate—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I have just said that there was one small amount to cover that interest payment and we will deal with it. Madam Speaker, I would love to answer the question if these people would stop interjecting. The truth is that the entire obligation of the taxpayer is the \$535 million. That has not changed. There is a campaign by the opposition to find some new—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! This should be a very simple question to ask, and answer, and it is taking up half of question time.



**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Madam Speaker, can I point out that the opposition is guaranteed 10 questions per question time.

**Mr PENGILLY:** I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker. I refer to standing order 128—relevance: what's the number of questions got to do with the answer to a question that he has been told twice and still can't answer?

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I will try to explain again. There is no ongoing obligation to cover interest payments because there aren't any to cover. There was one. I have explained that. I don't know what it is. I will bring the actual number back to the house. I don't think it will need to come out of the \$535 million because the \$535 million itself is a very large sum of money that may well be earning interest at some point somewhere. When we are talking about \$90,000 against \$535 million, you really are pursuing the rats and mice.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** The point I make is this: the opposition has made claim after claim about this project that are completely untrue. They have tried to promote fear about this project; they have tried to promote the proposition that the taxpayer is exposed for more than \$535 million, and it is simply not true. What I would say is that—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** —we are working extremely hard to deliver—

*Mr Pisoni interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Unley will be quiet.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** We are working extremely hard to deliver a project that will give a world-class stadium to the precinct and, at the same time, deliver some \$700 million worth of other investment to the Riverbank precinct. What we are talking about is an investment north of \$1.1 billion, in a riverbank precinct that runs some 500 metres on the river. Can I say to the opposition, if they think that some—

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, deputy leader!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** —\$90,000, or whatever it was (and I will bring that information back to the house) out of \$1.1 billion is a significant amount of money in this—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Madam Speaker, this is nearly impossible.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, it is. It is getting ridiculous. Can you get your answer to a conclusion, and they will be quiet.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** What I was trying to point out, before the member for Finniss took his point of order, was that if they are going to behave like this, I am not going to guarantee them 10 questions anymore because this is ridiculous behaviour. It is absolutely ridiculous behaviour.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** The simple truth is this: there was a delay in the conversion of that money into a loan, and there was one interest payment that I understand had to be covered. All I can say is that, if you are really worried about that amount of money out of a \$1.1 billion project on the precinct, it simply proves what rats and mice people they really are.

Can I say this: please, for God's sake, bring back Martin Hamilton-Smith. For, while I did not agree with everything he said, he had a vision for this precinct, and I applaud him for it.

**The SPEAKER:** Point of order.

**Mr PENGILLY:** Once again, 128: relevance.

**The SPEAKER:** Relevance: I uphold that point of order. Have you finished your answer, minister?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, I didn't ask you!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I simply make the point that it is peculiar for an opposition to take a point of order every few minutes on an answer when they behave in such a disorderly—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** —fashion themselves. I am quite happy to invite the member for Davenport into my office this afternoon, and we will—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** A very nice office. A little bigger than his, but that's the way it goes in this business—3½ more years, Iain. I am quite happy to go through that in detail with the officers from SAFA—they do not work for me, they work for the Treasurer—and be completely transparent.

I will say this in the most statesmanlike fashion I can: I invite the member for Davenport to my office, with the representatives of SAFA, to go through all of the details of what that loan treatment is. For me, I have to tell you, Madam Speaker, it has not been a big issue in my mind. It is a \$1.1 billion investment in 500 metres, and I think—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** —the opposition would be well paid—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** —to get on board this, because I do know that the former Liberal premier has been to see the opposition on this and suggested they need to change tack on it.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! We will give the member for Light the courtesy of listening to his question. Treasurer, be quiet.

### SCHOOL APPRENTICESHIPS

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (14:49):** My question is to the Minister for Education. Can the minister update the house on progress being made to give high school students opportunities to begin apprenticeships while at school?

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development) (14:49):** I thank the honourable member for his question and acknowledge his keen interest in these post schooling options for young people. We thought, for the hell of it, we would actually conduct ours in trade training centres rather than under gum trees.

**An honourable member:** For something different!

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** Yes, for something different. The consequences for dropping out of school without clear pathways to work are, of course, damaging for not only individuals but also for the broader community. It is no surprise that the evidence points to higher levels of unemployment and social alienation for those people who do not effectively transition from school to the post school world. To help young people manage their school-to-work transition, the government has embarked on a number of very significant reforms, one of the most significant of which is the Trade Schools for the Future program, which has seen \$29.5 million invested to establish 10 trade school clusters in our public high schools.

Students who might normally have been expected to leave school early can continue their schooling while undertaking training in industries where skilled people are in demand. Not only are they gathering skills that can connect them to the world of work afterwards, the truth is that a number of these young people, but for the fact that they can get out of school and be in a non-school setting for a while, even if it is on the school grounds but maybe out in a shed doing something, that is the thing that keeps them at school. It keeps that connection with the school and enables them to finish.

Another key feature of the program, and it is a particular South Australian feature, is the apprenticeship brokers initiative. We introduced that because we know you need much more than just the skills; you need to connect the young people and the school with industry. Employers need to be invited in to schools and to mentor young people, and it is crucial you make those relationships early. Those apprenticeship brokers are working incredibly well.

I have recently had the great privilege of attending a number of city and country areas where our investments, as well as the commonwealth's initiatives in its trade training facilities, have been spread around about 91 high schools across the state. It is my great pleasure to advise the house today that, since the inception of the state government's trade schools initiative, school-based apprenticeship starts have recently reached 2,000.

I am sorry that the member for Finniss is not here, because apprenticeship No. 2,000 is Zachary Vogelsang, a year 10 student at Victor Harbor High School, who is working towards a career as an automotive mechanic. Zachary combines his regular school work with study towards a Certificate III in Automotive and Workplace Training at D&D Mechanical and 4WD in Goolwa. Zachary says he gets great support from his parents and from Dean and Danny at D&D Mechanical, and one of the most enjoyable things he is doing is building up his own toolbox, which he says is 'awesome'—which is a year 10 word.

Zachary is just one of the hundreds of young people that the government's trade schools program is helping to approach their future with purpose and enthusiasm in a whole range of industries: automotive, business administration, community services and primary industries. He might make a good future member for Finniss.

**Ms Chapman:** He might.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** He might, and we might be having a chat to him about that. To have reached the milestone of 2,000 apprenticeship starts is a major achievement, made even more significant by the fact that it has been achieved despite the effects of the global financial crisis, where a number of organisations were obviously not looking outward in terms of recruiting new staff.

In fact, in a recent letter to the government, Business SA advised that over the period June 2008, the year Trade Schools for the Future was launched, through to June 2010, the proportion of school-based apprenticeships signed up through Business SA's Australian Apprenticeship Centre has almost doubled for the metropolitan area and more than doubled for country South Australia. This is a great achievement of that very important program.

In this regard, we must give credit to not only our schools but also the businesses that have made the decision to sign a contract to help train our young people and to those who have helped promote school-based apprenticeships, such as Business SA. It is clear the changes that we are making here have been valued by businesses and young people themselves, and I congratulate the principals, teachers, apprenticeship brokers and employers who have all helped to reach this important milestone of 2,000 school-based apprenticeships.

#### ADELAIDE OVAL

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:54):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure. As there is now no deadline for the Adelaide Oval project, has the government agreed to approve further funding, above the \$10 million already approved for the Stadium Management Authority to operate until 31 December, so that the Stadium Management Authority can continue its work past 31 December? If so, how much money has been approved, for what time period, and is that money coming out of the \$535 million government contribution?

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Elder—Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Energy) (14:55):** I tried to be polite, that didn't work, so I am not going to do that this time.

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Go and find a friend and leave me alone, will you? Go and find a friend, mate. The truth is, firstly, let's make this clear: \$535 million, that's it from us.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Actually I was losing my sleep. I was worrying whether the member for Unley would believe me, but he believes in lots of things. He is a very easy person to get to believe in things; we remember those documents. He picked them up. They were full of Seventh-day Adventists and shady deals; he said, 'This has got to be true.'

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr PENGILLY:** Point of order, Madam Speaker. I think you know what it is: 128 on relevance. It has nothing to do with the question.

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold that. Could the minister get back to the substance of the question?

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** Thank you, but the interjections have been so constant it is hard not to respond.

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The deputy leader will be quiet.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** And the power of three remembers the \$450 million. The truth is there is \$535 million out there. This is a marvellous contribution from the government and, yes, we have approved funding because we are rolling it out because it is a project that is going to go ahead. Of course, the money we are rolling out is part of the \$535 million. There is no other pot of money. I cannot believe anyone would think otherwise. But the truth of the matter is this: we want to have football at Adelaide Oval, played at Adelaide Oval by 2014. That is an ambitious deadline. Of course, the one thing you always get in trouble for in this business is being ambitious, but we have a—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** And they snigger and laugh, and that is why they have been in opposition for this long and that is why they are going to be in opposition for another eight years. The truth is we are rolling out money to deliver football at Adelaide Oval in 2014. That is what football supporters want, that is what the Crows want, that is what Port Adelaide want, it is what the SANFL want, it is what the league commissioners want, it is what the league directors want, it is what the former premier Rob Kerin wants—

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Point of order, Madam Speaker. It is question time, and the opposition wants an answer. That is what the opposition wants.

**The SPEAKER:** That is no point of order. He is answering the question.

**The Hon. P.F. CONLON:** I point out: yes, we are rolling out the money. Yes, we are rolling out the money because we want to meet that time line. We want to do what football wants and what cricket wants and what 700,000 football supporters want. We want to put football at Adelaide Oval. Yes, it has caused us some pain but, yes, it is worthwhile. What will happen with it is a redevelopment of that river precinct for the first time in South Australia, and we will transform the face of Adelaide doing it. If you mealy-mouthed naysayers want us to apologise for that, you are barking up the wrong tree.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**OUTPATIENT REFERRALS**

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (14:58):** My question is to the Minister for Health. In light of the government's recent policy decision to privatise 10 per cent of outpatient referrals in South Australia, how will—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I will start again, if you like.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I can't hear the member.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I will wait for the health minister to listen—it is a very important question. In light of the government's recent policy decision to privatise 10 per cent of outpatient referrals in South Australia, how will the thousands of South Australians affected by this decision afford medical assistance in the private health sector, and will the government provide assistance to help them with their new medical costs?

The government recently announced it would conduct an outpatient service review with the aim of redirecting 10 per cent of outpatient appointments to private specialists. The government aims to save \$22 million per annum. To achieve this, they will have to privatise over 150,000 outpatient appointments per year.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (15:00):** I seek clarification, Madam Speaker. I would have taken this to be a question about the budget that was announced just last week, but I am happy to answer it. I wouldn't want to trample on the finer feelings of those on the other side. Shall I continue with my answer?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I think you'll continue.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** The member for Morphett asked a question about the outpatient services provided through South Australian hospitals. What we are doing is trying to make sure our system works well so that people can get services—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the Leader of the Opposition will be quiet!

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** We want to make sure that our system works well so that people can get access to services as quickly as possible. There are a number of pressure points in the public health system which we have been working on. We have been working on elective surgery, and I am pleased to say that at the end of last financial year there was just a handful of people who had waited longer than the recommended waiting times to get elective surgery. That is no mean achievement, because only—

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Norwood will be quiet! He has a very loud voice.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** That is no mean achievement, because several years ago there were thousands of people who were waiting longer than the recommended time. So we have invested a lot of money, changed strategies, invested in good organisation as much as anything else to get that part of the system to work.

We are also working on the emergency department to ensure that we can cover the increasing demand for emergency care in our state. We are investing millions of dollars in new emergency departments right across the metropolitan area, and we are also embarking on a system to make sure that people can be treated and dealt with within four hours, whether they are admitted or sent back home, if that is the appropriate clinical outcome; so we are working on that part of the system.

The area that is most problematic for us, once those two areas are addressed, is the outpatient service, in particular the part of the outpatient service where GPs refer their private patients to an outpatient clinic to be assessed to see whether or not they need surgery or some other intervention. That is a part of the system which is not measured. We do not keep waiting

times, we do not keep waiting lists, and so on. Individual doctors in individual hospitals do, but there is no coordination. So when I make a public claim, as I do from time to time, to I point out how well the system is working, individuals will say to me, 'Well I've been waiting so long to get to see a doctor in hospital,' and what they are really talking about is that they have been waiting so long to get to see an outpatient clinic. The reality—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** I'm happy to answer the question, but I won't be interrupted while answering it. It is your choice. The outpatient service has not been working as well as we would like it to work. We have looked at how we can make that system work in a way that patients can be assessed as quickly as possible once they have seen a GP to determine whether or not they need some other procedure. It makes no sense to have somebody waiting for a year or so to see an orthopaedic surgeon, for example, to be told, 'No you don't need surgery. What you should have is physiotherapy,' when they could have been having that for the previous 12 months. That part of the system we want to reform, so that it can get access to that kind of assessment early on.

I am not talking generally about the provision of therapy to patients who go to outpatients. We would still imagine that most of that will be done in our public hospitals. There might be some of those clinics that are done in things like GP Plus centres or elsewhere, but the focus in particular will be of that early assessment.

What happens is this: a patient goes to see a private GP, the GP will give them a Medicare-based assessment, and they will say, 'You need to see a specialist.' They will ask, 'Are you a public patient or a private patient?' If they are a private patient they will refer them to a private specialist, who will see them and then work out what should happen. If they are a public patient, often they will go to see an outpatient clinic in a public hospital, and that brings in the delay.

So what we are looking to do is what other states have done. New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT all have these kinds of outpatient clinics within the private sector, so that the GP refers the patient to a doctor in their private rooms; they can get to see them quickly. They will be seen by the senior doctor rather than by a junior doctor, so the assessment will be done quickly without multiple referrals. Then the patient is in the terrific position of knowing what needs to happen next, and we will cut out a lot of waiting time.

The practice in the other states has been, as I understand it, that generally specialists in their rooms will bulk bill those patients, so there should not be any burden for those who are on a pension card or some sort of assistance, and generally the cost for patients is \$30 or \$40, or of that order.

Can I say that, in South Australia, we have a number of public hospitals now that already have most of the outpatient assessments done in the private sector. For example, I understand that most of that work at Modbury is already done by doctors in their private rooms. There is little inpatient activity done there in terms of that assessment.

What we are doing is reforming the system. The goal of the reform is to make sure that patients who need help get that help faster and can then move into the hospital system if they need to so that they can be assessed. I absolutely endorse this reform whether or not it was to save money (which it will do), but even if it were not to save money I would still want to see it happen because it will produce a better service.

#### **KEITH AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL**

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:05):** My question also is to the Minister for Health. Before taking the decision to cut public funding to the Keith and District community hospital, did the minister seek and receive any advice—

*The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:** —as to the impact upon the viability of the other services provided from that hospital? The board of the Keith and District community hospital, in addition to providing acute hospital care to private and public patients and accident emergency services, manages an 18-bed nursing home and provides GP services from Padthaway to Coonalpyn (a distance of some 140 kilometres), as well as providing essential emergency cover for a considerable length of the Dukes Highway.

The board has told me that the removal of any portion of this suite of services will jeopardise all the others.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister for Health, is that a specific budget question?

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts) (15:06):** I cannot help but say that is yet another budget question, which raises—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** I see—when they ask it is not a budget question, but when we do it is. The hypocrisy is just palpable, and it just shows the way they play politics. They want to play both sides of the street all the time, but I am happy to answer this question.

As the member would know, because he brought to see me a delegation from the Keith hospital some time ago—it was the second delegation he has brought to me over the years—they came to see me, and he has raised this so I am happy to go through the conversation that we had.

They said to me, 'Our hospital will be facing closure unless you give us even more money than you're currently giving us.' I pointed out to them that we gave them money for the emergency department, which we valued and which we want to see continue, but that we were giving the money, I think, to run three beds and, in fact, the equivalent, from memory, of about 900 patients a year, and in fact they were delivering about a third of that.

So, they were not delivering on what we were giving them money to deliver; and in fact it was just a subsidy to their bottom line. If they could not make a go of it as a private hospital without that subsidy, that was a question really for their board. I said, 'The government is in no position to give you additional money. What you should think through is your business case. You've got a nursing home which makes money, and you've got an emergency department which is necessary and which we are prepared to subsidise. Have a think about it.'

They said, 'We can't do that.' I think that a representative was there from local government, and I said, 'Well, if it's so important, why doesn't the local government think about taking on some of this subsidy if it thinks it's important to its community?' They said, 'No, that's not the role of local government.' Well, I said to them, 'Subsidising country hospitals that are privately run—

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The deputy leader will be quiet. We have five minutes left and we have not finished our questions.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am happy to answer questions the deputy leader might like to ask, but I cannot hear him when he interjects upon me, anyway. He does rather disturb my very eloquent train of thought, but I will get back to it. I was making the point, I think, that I discussed the issue with representatives of that particular hospital; so the answer to his question in the general sense was yes.

#### KEITH AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:08):** I happen to have another question for the Minister for Health. Prior to taking the decision to withdraw public funding equivalent to three beds at the Keith and District community hospital, what advice did the minister take—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WILLIAMS:** —as to the impact on the public health system and on the people who use that hospital if the hospital is forced to close? Of the 1,959 occupied acute bed days in the year 2009-10, 1,551 were funded privately. These services will all fall to the public system with the demise of the Keith and District Hospital.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Minister Assisting the Premier in the**

**Arts) (15:09):** The question is really going to the viability of that hospital. The representatives of the board of the hospital and the delegation (led by the deputy leader) said to me, 'You need to give us even more money to make our hospital viable or we will face closure.' I said, 'We are not in a position to do that. We are going through a difficult budget process.' I cannot remember my exact words but I think I made it pretty plain that I was not in a position to give them additional money.

Our priority has to be the public hospitals that we run, and I have just gone through some of the highlights of future funding arrangements in relation to country hospitals. We are putting 13 per cent more money into our public hospitals in the country. That has to be the government's priority. We cannot subsidise empty beds in a private hospital. We just cannot do that.

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** The deputy leader interjects on me. What I say is: we were subsidising three beds and, on average, only one of those beds was occupied and two of the beds, on average, were unoccupied. So we were providing a subsidy to their bottom line as a private hospital. I said to them that Health is prepared to work with them to try to get their cost structures sorted out, but their costs have blown out. They have made decisions as a private hospital that are putting them in a state of jeopardy. That is not my responsibility: that is something a private hospital board did. It is not our job to prop up private entities that are having problems.

I said to them, 'Have a look at your business model. You know your nursing home is working well. The emergency department will work. Look at those two aspects and let's take it from there.' They chose to do something else. That is their choice.

#### **PRISONER HOME DETENTION**

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (15:11):** The Minister for Correctional Services gets so excited every time we ask a question that I cannot let the day pass without asking him a question. So my question is to the Minister for Correctional Services. Are Department for Correctional Services prisoners being placed on home detention before the end of their nonparole period? The opposition has been informed that during the last parliamentary term the Rann Labor government overturned the longstanding practice that prisoners should not be placed on home detention until after the end of their nonparole period.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Small Business, Minister for Correctional Services, Minister for Gambling) (15:12):** When it comes to parole, there are two very different ways that we handle it. There is the revolving door practice of the opposition—

**Mrs REDMOND:** Madam Speaker, I have a point of order—relevance of the answer. The question was quite specific. It was about whether prisoners are being placed on home detention before their nonparole period has expired.

**The SPEAKER:** I understand your point of order, leader, but the minister has only spoken about two sentences. I will wait and see. Minister.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. There is a fundamental difference in the way we approach parole compared with that of the opposition.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** The opposition does not believe at any stage—

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I have a point of order, Madam Speaker. The minister is debating an answer, which is contrary to standing order 98, and whatever the opposition thinks or does is not relevant to the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Sit down, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. You are waffling, too. You are debating the question, which is your point of order. Question time is finished so I am sure the minister will be very succinct in his answer.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will get a detailed response.



## GRIEVANCE DEBATE

### ROAD SAFETY

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:14):** This grievance speech is directed to the Minister for Road Safety. I commend the government for its efforts to improve road safety in this state and for expanding the MFS road awareness and accident prevention program. Also, today, the minister announced the fitness program for commercial vehicle drivers.

Education is more effective than penalties, restrictions, or even greater police presence. There is a need for practical training in all conditions, especially on our country roads. Training in regional areas should be tailored for regional areas in dealing with the poorer conditions of our roads, the longer trips that the country people take, the more freight traffic, the higher speed limits and the ever increasing amount of B-double traffic on our highways.

Recently, I attended a Road Safety Advisory Council meeting and the figures on the Murray Mallee 2000-09 were alarming. The Murray Mallee has 4 per cent of South Australia's population, but 11 per cent of the fatalities and 9 per cent of the serious injuries. Although the fatalities and serious injuries are down since 2003, more than 1,200 fatalities and serious injuries in a 10-year period happen on our Murray and Mallee roads: 65 per cent were local residents, and while 66 per cent of the accidents on the roads were at speeds of 100 kilometres or higher, 61 per cent were involved in the run-off of road crashes.

As these traffic infringement fines increase, they should be directed to driver education facilities in schools and driving awareness programs. A facility like the Riverland Motor Sport and Driver Training Complex and the Rider Safe program should be supported by the minister to deal with the ever increasing road incidents on the Murray and Mallee roads.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:16):** Local government is in a very important sphere of government. Local government—

*Mr Odenwalder interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Yes, I do reckon and that is because—

*Mr Griffiths interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Yes, they do.

*Mr Odenwalder interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** That is right.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Kenyon):** Order!

**Mr PICCOLO:** Mr Acting Speaker, could I have my five minutes without interruption? Is that possible?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You should, member for Light.

**Mr PICCOLO:** As I said, local government is important. It is a sphere of government that has the most direct daily impact on people's lives. Local government is also the sphere of government which is closest to the people and, as a result, we need to ensure we have a very effective local government at all times. The paradox though is that, at times, it is also the sphere of government which is least accountable, and that is why I believe there is need for ongoing reform.

Yesterday in this place, the member for Finnis raised his concerns about the accountability of the Burnside council and, in particular, councillor Jim Jacobsen. I have no difficulty with the way that the member for Finnis portrayed councillor Jim Jacobsen; I would concur with him.

**The Hon. M.J. Atkinson:** Absolutely spot on.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Thank you, member for Croydon. I would concur with him. The sad thing is if councillor Jim Jacobsen should be elected mayor of the City of Burnside, in my opinion, both the council and the community will continue to suffer. Based on councillor Jim Jacobsen's performance over the years and, in particular, more recently, he will continue to be a negative influence on that council and community. I agree with the view of the member for Finnis of councillor Jacobsen. Where I strongly disagree with the member for Finnis is in his criticism of the minister (Hon. Gail

Gago). His criticism is both wrong and, more importantly, inappropriate. In relation to the inquiry, the member for Finnis said:

Minister Gago has dismally failed—or been manipulated—in a pathetically inadequate response to the Burnside council issues, resulting in a mess.

He goes on to say:

What has minister Gago done? Absolutely nothing...What has minister Gago done? Nothing.

More worrying though is when he talks about councillor Jacobsen. He says:

If minister Gago was worth a pinch of salt, she should be able to remove such puerile people from councils under her jurisdiction. Minister Gago has failed absolutely dismally to ensure local government in Burnside has been able to run [effectively].

The comment that the minister 'should be able to remove such puerile people from councils under her jurisdiction' is completely inappropriate and undemocratic.

The Local Government Act sets out the procedure to deal with the concerns about the capacity and functionality of a local council. In my opinion, and as far as I can tell, the minister has followed due process as established under the act and to suggest that she has done nothing is wrong and misleading. The minister has done all that is permitted by law and one would hope that the minister would act according to law—and she has.

More concerning is the member's assertion that the minister should have the power to remove people she believes are puerile. That is of greater concern. As I said, Mr Jacobsen is a disruptive ego-driven local council member who has never quite recovered from the rejection by his community when he was mayor. That is sad for him, sad for the council and sad for the community.

The current process at the disposal of the minister enables light to be shone on that council. This light enables the community to obtain an insight into the operation of the Burnside council. This is the proper role for the minister, which in my opinion she has followed.

Barring allegations of corrupt or any other unlawful behaviour, the decision as to who should sit on the Burnside council should be made by the people of Burnside. If they wish to elect a person who has been shown to be a wrecker, they are entitled to do so. I respect the right of the people of Burnside to elect a member who will continue to make the Burnside council ungovernable for another four years.

That is their choice. It is not for the minister to act. If the people of Burnside wish to re-elect councillor Jacobsen and allow their council to be wrecked for the next four years, that is their entitlement. It is not for the minister or for the government to actually intervene. I think it is quite inappropriate for a member from the other side to suggest that somehow a minister should, in a very undemocratic way, remove an elected member. I wonder if that is Liberal Party policy.

**Ms Chapman:** Show us the report!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

#### **SARGENT, MR A.V.**

**Mr VENNING (Schubert) (15:21):** This house from time to time expresses condolences to its past members and notable citizens of the state. Angas Victor Sargent, a gentleman of the community and a high achiever in many areas of South Australia, died on the 28 August 2010 at Crystal Brook.

Angas Victor Sargent was born at the old Crystal Brook hospital on 4 October 1923 to Henry Victor Sargent (known as Vic) and Linda Agnes Davidson. Angas married Una Roberts in 1951 at the Church of England, Clare. Angas grew up on the family farm, Brook Park, our neighbour at Crystal Brook, just west of the town, and resided there for almost 80 years.

After leaving school, he went home to work on the farm and in 1942, after being rejected from the aircrew because of colour blindness, Angas joined the Royal Australian Air Force as ground crew and was posted to Darwin and Laverton to work on aircraft engines. In that time, he had his first experience with militant unionism—they would only work on one engine per shift when he could manage one and a half engines per shift. He said it made him cross when blokes were risking their lives at the war every day up north.

Angas joined the Beetaloo Valley Agriculture Bureau (later to become the Crystal Brook Bureau), becoming secretary and president and organiser of field days—two on our farm,

Montrose, and one on his own. This was a forerunner to today's very successful Paskeville field days. He was later awarded life membership of the agricultural bureau in 1965.

During his time as president with the North-Western Agricultural Show Society, the old grandstand was burnt down. Besides fundraising for the project, the architect became insolvent necessitating building supervision. This caused Angas considerable angst. In 2003 he was awarded life membership, recognising his efforts. The grandstand will forever be testament to his considerable efforts.

He was secretary of the Liberal and Country League for 13 years. He had many a night-time conversation with my late father, Howard Venning, the local MP, the 'cocky from the rocky'. They were very good friends. Over time he became the Worshipful Master of the Crystal Brook Lodge and Port Pirie Chapter Lodge and joined Grand Lodge. He was a member for almost 60 years.

Some of Angas's other high achievements include 18 years as chairman of the Crystal Brook Hospital Board, with a total service of 24 years; and 14 years (including nine years as chairman) of the State Council of the South Australian Hospital Association—not bad for a country lad. He served on the Nurses Registration Board for seven years. The South Australian Hospitals Board awarded him life membership. He was a foundation member of the Crystal Brook St John Ambulance for 37 years, president for 20 years and received a Priory Vote of Thanks in 1980, and he was appointed a serving brother of St John in 1992 and a life member of St John in 2001—again, not bad for a country lad.

For 49 years he served as a Justice of the Peace going on to be president of the Royal Association of Justices of South Australia and president of the National Council of Justices in Australia. He became a life member of the State Council of the Royal Association of Justices—amazing achievement. For four years, he was the president of the South Australian Wheat and Wool Growers Association of Crystal Brook. Angas also served for two years as president of the Crystal Brook RSL, and he was a member of that for many, many years.

In October 1982, Angas Sargent was awarded the British Empire Medal, for service to the community—what recognition and duly deserved. Later, on Australia Day 1996, he was awarded the Crystal Brook Citizen of the Year—an award he really valued.

Angas gave a lot to the community, but so did many of his generation. Maybe it was the war, but whatever it was, they all got into it and did it. From collecting mallee stumps at Cowell for the hospital heating, because they wanted to reduce the power bills, or building the halls, swimming pools or bowling greens, they were all very generous in their communities.

Angas Sargent was my neighbour, my father's first cousin and a loyal friend. We were all very fond of him and proud of his achievements. I will certainly miss him and memories so very graphic. I will always ensure that the flag flies on the grandstand, Angas.

Crystal Brook, and South Australia generally has a lot to thank Angas Sargent for and that is why I make note of it here. To his wife Una, daughter Meredith, and sons Malcolm and Brian, and families, our sincere condolences.

#### **WHITE RIBBON AMBASSADORS**

**Mr BIGNELL (Mawson) (15:26):** I rise today as a White Ribbon ambassador to remind the house that 25 November marks the day when we come together and have functions to promote the fact that everyone should speak out and act against violence against women. Today, I have my police ribbon on, to signify that it is Australia's Police Memorial Day, but also the white ribbon.

I tend to wear the white ribbon more often than just on 25 November, because it is one of those issues that is with us 365 days of the year. It is very important indeed, and I am glad to see that there are functions happening throughout the year too, that it is not just being reserved for 25 November.

Last month, a couple of other White Ribbon ambassadors—John Gazzola and Ian Hunter, in another place, along with Steve Georganas, the federal member for Hindmarsh—held a function in Old Parliament House. The Premier and the Governor attended that, as did a couple of other White Ribbon ambassadors, who spoke very well that night—Gavin Wanganeen and Sam Ciccarello, the CEO of Adelaide United Football Club.

White Ribbon, as I said, aims to change the attitudes and behaviours which allow violence against women to occur. It is all about actually getting men to speak up against the violence. I

know, when I wear the white ribbon into schools, it actually provokes a bit of discussion. We can never start too young when it comes to changing people's attitudes towards violence against women.

I was really heartened to see the other night, when I was watching the Brownlow Medal, that many of those involved in the telecast, and a lot of the footballers, were also wearing white ribbons. Footballers can often get a bad rap—and some of it is brought upon themselves—in all forms of the game, but there are a lot of footballers out there setting a fine example, not only for their peers but for those younger footballers who look up to them as role models.

In the local football league where I come from, the Southern Football League, there was an outstanding initiative on 14 August, where Tod Stokes, one of the players down at the Port Noarlunga Football Club, came up with the idea, through his discussions and involvement through Club Connect, where club members are learning about depression, men's health, violence and other issues.

Tod is a trainer down there, and he and the players have sort of been involved in all these discussions, and it prompted him to get involved and actually initiate a White Ribbon event. His idea was that on this day, 14 August, his club, Port Noarlunga, would wear white armbands. Instead of the black armbands the players wear to signify death in the family, the players would all wear white armbands.

They contacted Aldinga, who they were playing that day, and they agreed to also wear white armbands. They took it to the Southern Football League. The Southern Football League thought it was a fantastic idea, so they actually got the message out to all of the clubs. So, on that day, every player in every grade in that league wore white armbands for the day, which I think is a fantastic thing to do for all of those young men—in some cases boys, in some cases older men—to go out there, put on the white armbands, to think about what it is that they are out there supporting and spread the message to the community. There is no better place to spread a community message than at grassroots football.

The member for Kingston, Amanda Rishworth, was there and read a message from the Prime Minister. It is great to see the federal government joining the South Australian government in putting money into combatting violence against women. The member for Reynell was also there as one of the local members of parliament. It is good for us to be out there showing support to people like Tod who have come up with this idea, as well as the President of the Southern Football League, who was also there.

One of the interesting things that happened that day was that all the officials—the field umpires, boundary umpires and goal umpires for the A grade match—were women. That is the first time that has ever happened at any football match in South Australia. Not only did they officiate, but one of the boundary umpires, who is a pretty handy athlete, also sang the national anthem.

We have some great talent down in the south, and we also really care about the issues that are important in our community, and the fight against domestic violence should always be at the forefront when we think about how we can make our community better.

### **MINDARIE-HALIDON RACES**

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:31):** I want to speak about a community event, the Mindarie-Halidon races, which was held recently. The small farming town of Halidon comes to life once a year when cup day comes around and the Melbourne Cup of the Mallee, the Mindarie-Halidon Cup, is run. The club is supported by many of the farmers and businesspeople in the district, and this year it was ably supported by Regional Development Australia. Cup day is a picnic day, with buses coming from Adelaide, Goolwa, Hahndorf, Loxton, Murray Bridge, Strathalbyn, Mannum, Swan Reach and many other areas.

The first race meeting held by the Mindarie-Halidon Racing Club was on 3 September 1921. The club has come a long way since that meeting with good facilities. The vision of the club is to ensure long-term racing in the Murray Mallee district, with the support of the committee and volunteers from the district, and to ensure the growth of the cup meeting and the club.

The club aims to create a friendly and relaxed environment for all race-day patrons and to promote thoroughbred racing in the Murray Mallee district, with the best thoroughbred racing that can be presented, with a view to increasing prize money for owners and increased patron numbers with promotions in the coming years.

The annual event is by far the major event in the community with a sparse population. It is the only race meeting of the year, and around 1,400 people attended the event on 19 September this year, the 90<sup>th</sup> in its long history. It is a vital fundraiser for the local community. At 8.30am on the Saturday directly before the day of the race meeting I had a call from Krystina Durdin, the secretary of the club, to say the phones were down and that the area around Halidon had been experiencing telephone problems in the district on and off for several weeks previous to this.

They were told the issue had been resolved and that the phone lines should be good. The Halidon exchange has had ongoing problems over the years that have caused regular outages of the phones in the area, and the people were nervous about whether the phones would work for the race meeting. I am informed that they have at least six lines into the meeting.

The secretary got a call at 8am from the President, who was in a panic that the phones were not working and that their biggest nightmare had been realised, especially since it was a Saturday, and they doubted whether they could be repaired for the Sunday meet. The implication of the phones being down was that no results could be sent out; therefore, no off-course betting revenue would be raised, the TAB would not work and therefore no betting for off-course races could happen, and the bookmakers would not be able to receive off-course clients for betting and results from off-course races could not be received.

Mindarie-Halidon races are accountable to Thoroughbred Racing South Australia and they are expected to be able to run a race meeting to their standards. This includes the facilities, the track conditions, client satisfaction, communication facilities and occupational health and safety, and not having the phones working on the day certainly does not reach the standards; therefore, they ran the threat of being moved to Murray Bridge or being closed altogether, which would be the end for them.

The race has been going for 90 years, and they want to reach 100 years and go further. It is run by a small group of local volunteers and, even though the race meeting involves gambling, they see the event as much more. It is a sign of survival for a small district in the Mallee where all communities are struggling. This also takes into account that the phones have been down at times when the local school, the East Murray Area School, which has students with epipens who are allergic to bees, has not been able to get contact out for health advice.

After Ms Durdin contacted me, I got in touch with Telstra and I am pleased to say that with the efforts of Nigel Johns, Lyndon Stoll and the technician, who travelled four hours to the job, they got the phones up and running by about five o'clock that night. I take my hat off to the technicians, Lyndon and Nigel for getting that accomplished. But the question I must ask is why was it an emergency? Why can't the people of Halidon have an upgraded phone system? They need the phones for every day of the year, not just for race meetings, but I certainly acknowledge the effort that Telstra and their technicians put in to make sure that, on the 19<sup>th</sup>, the show went on.

I certainly expressed to the people in Telstra that this would be a disastrous day for the Mallee if this race meeting did not go ahead because so much work had been put in by so many volunteers who live in tough conditions, who have had tough years, and they do a great job with the Mindarie-Halidon Cup.

### **LILYDALE CHICKEN PROCESSING PLANT**

**Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (15:36):** I rise to speak today about Lilydale Chicken workers. I rise on behalf of the workers at that plant at Wingfield to discuss a rally that took place last Friday to support them and their rights. This particular chicken processing plant at Wingfield produces some of the chickens marketed under the Lilydale free-range chicken brand that go out to supermarkets and hot chicken shops across our state.

I speak on this issue as many of my electors in Taylor work in factories and warehouses in Adelaide's north-west and deserve to have their legal rights adhered to regardless of their spoken language, nationality or newness to our great Australian nation.

This support rally was organised by the National Union of Workers' State Lead Organiser, David Garland, and his team. Also supporting and present at the rally were numerous other unions including SA Unions; the member for Hindmarsh, Steve Georganas; and Dr Joseph Masika, President of the African Communities Council of South Australia.

The list of stories coming out of this site is more concerning each day. The factory employs approximately 300 workers, and nearly all of the production workers are from a

non-English-speaking background. Many of these new Australians or migrant workers speak Sudanese and Mandarin.

Allegedly in each of the sections of the factory you will find almost exclusively one ethnic grouping. Allegedly work allocation, pay rates and hours of work differentiation depend on your ethnicity. Race, allegedly, is a tool used by management to control and intimidate the workforce. Currently, alleged breaches of industrial instruments being investigated by this union include that workers report being paid less than the minimum wage in breach of clause 16 of the award.

Workers receive casual loadings of as little as 11 per cent in breach of clause 13 of the award. Workers report working up to 15 hours a day, with any overtime being paid at the base pay rate or rates below that which they should be entitled to in breach of clause 26 of the award. That is just a short list representing many other breaches that I could go on with—up to 10 to 15 points, in fact.

The stories from workers' personal experiences that are being investigated include a 43-year-old woman collapsing on the production line after an extended shift in December 2009. Allegedly management took 10 to 15 minutes to attend to her. It is also alleged by workers that she was clocked off by her manager before the ambulance arrived or possibly before it was called.

Other workers have been reported being seriously injured at work and taken to someone who is called the 'company doctor'. This doctor treats their wounds and sends them back to work without tests, X-rays or scans. The worker is then told that they are not to apply for workers compensation because they will never work in Australia again if they go to WorkCover.

Upon visiting their own doctor, against the company's direction, they are found to have serious injuries warranting further medical investigation. Workers regularly report violent verbal outbursts, often of a racist and offensive nature. It is allegedly not uncommon for workers to be poked in the back and ribs and shaken by the collar or their clothing by management, being pressured to work faster.

A very concerning story relates to a section called the 'termination site'. This area is where chickens are anaesthetised using a gas. Working in this area makes people feel ill within 15 to 20 minutes reportedly. Employees believe the company allocates workers to this area as a form of punishment for up to 1½ hours to the point that they become physically ill.

I will now outline the story of a recently sacked activist. Anyuon, who is a young Sudanese gentleman of strong character and goodwill, claims he observed a racist communication on a computer between two supervisors. He asked a manager to investigate it and presented her with evidence. She later claimed that she lost the evidence and did not recall the nature of it.

Anyuon took the matter to the state manager, who instructed him either to produce the evidence or let it go. Anyuon found the evidence and, after presenting it to management, Anyuon was brought back into a room with three senior managers, without representation, and made to sign an attendance statement, which turned out to be a blank back page of a management-constructed written statement. Oddly enough, the managers decided that the statement they had asked Anyuon to sign was not enough to fulfil their purposes, so they typed up a new draft and invited him back to another meeting.

Anyuon brought a witness to this meeting, and the whole statement (first and second draft) was disputed by him in the presence of that witness. Management determined that Anyuon did not trust the company, and they deemed it to be grounds for summary dismissal. When a union organiser became involved, they increased the charge to serious and wilful misconduct for using a computer he was not allocated to access for evidence, which they now claim was fabricated.

Staff have told union representatives that management has gathered together all work supervisors and leading hands and instructed them to make it clear to workers that there will be consequences if workers are seen talking to union officials. Since Anyuon's dismissal, the National Union of Workers has increased its presence outside the factory to pass information to workers and hold conversations about their rights at work, which every Australian is entitled to.

Time expired.

#### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

**Mr GARDNER (Morialta) (15:42):** I continue my remarks from prior to the luncheon break and question time. I was in the middle of quoting from an email that I was sent by one of the parents at Norwood Morialta High School, who said:

My son is one of the happiest students and is doing very well at Norwood Morialta High School, and I would not like to see the standard of education drop as a result of this.

Local media have already reported the following, through the *East Torrens Messenger*:

Governing Council chairman Jeff Eglinton told the *East Torrens Messenger* that parents were both 'devastated' and 'concerned' by the news.

The local community and the Norwood Morialta High School community are indeed outraged.

I was very pleased to meet this week Gia-Yen Luong, who is the President of the Student Representative Council, a very articulate and intelligent year 11 student, who I wish very well in her studies. She is also very passionate, along with her fellow SRC members and her friends, about stopping the government, or convincing the government to change their mind about these budget cuts.

She noted in an email to me this morning that her group has set up the 'Save Norwood Morialta High School' Facebook page. I indicate that all members who are interested can find it by going to Facebook and looking up 'Save NMHS', which by this morning had already generated about 300 members, which I am sure will assist the community in the petition that is currently circulating to encourage the government to change their mind on these budget cuts.

I wrote to the minister at the beginning of this week. For the record, I want to put into context the correspondence that I sent to minister Weatherill. My letter states:

I write on behalf of many of my constituents who are part of the Norwood Morialta High School community, as students, parents, teachers and administrators.

The school community has been devastated by the news that your government's budget will cut 'additional above entitlement support that has been allocated to a number of schools that have multi and dual campuses'...Specifically I understand that the savings measure will see Norwood Morialta High Schools staffing budget cut by 5.8 per cent—or \$622,629 per year. I note that this amounts to well over a third of the statewide savings expected by this measure, which signifies extraordinary way that Norwood Morialta High School appears to have been singled out by the government.

Norwood Morialta has been a dual campus school since its forced amalgamation in 1993, and such extra funding as it has received reflects the greater costs and complexity of running two campuses. For example, each of the two campuses maintains a school library and therefore a staffing allocation for the same. If this were not the case then year 8 students at the middle school campus would need to conduct a 6½ kilometre round trip to and from the high school campus just to borrow a book for their class work. This extra support was guaranteed to the school community in 1993 at the time of amalgamation and still represents a long-term cost saving to the government compared to if the Norwood High School and the Morialta High School had continued as separate entities.

In practical terms I am informed that in 2006 your government agreed to a five-year guarantee that the school's over-entitlement adjustment would specifically include an additional deputy principal, an additional assistant principal (level 2), 1½ additional coordinators, one extra teacher salary, 78 extra SSO hours and 18 extra GSC hours. I am extremely concerned that these cuts will compromise the quality of learning that is achievable, and I am further disturbed that these cuts appear to directly contravene the 2006 agreement that the agreed over-entitlement adjustment would continue until the end of 2011, with the expectation that the allocation would be considered again at the end of that period. I urge you to revisit this funding decision that will clearly hurt the school community at Norwood Morialta High School.

I note that the minister was on radio this morning talking about this issue. He told Matt and Dave on the ABC that he thinks that there are ways that dual campuses can work more effectively. He said that he will work through it with the school without sacrificing the quality of education and that he was not trying to disadvantage Norwood Morialta High School, and that, in fact, they have only just started discussions. I can tell the house that this comes as news to the school governing council, which has been told which positions will be removed.

Nevertheless, minister Weatherill also said that any scaring that was being done was being done by the Liberal Party, which says that there will be cuts to deputy principals, cuts to teachers, cuts to SSOs, etc. He does not accept that. He believes that they can make efficiencies. Well, I hope that I am proved wrong. I hope that the minister is as good as his word on this, but the information that the governing council has received is that those positions are gone: a deputy principal, an assistant principal, the coordinators, the full-time teacher (including library staff) and the SSO time and the GSC time.

Given that the Norwood Morialta High School has only one principal, it is essential that the school has a deputy principal on each site to deputise in the principal's absence. It is not practical for one person to deputise on two sites 3.2 kilometres apart. Travelling teachers are also at this school. This year 16 teachers travelled between the two campuses every day; and, with the new SACE being introduced next year, it is expected that there will be 22 teachers next year.

The costs and complexities of two campuses mean that they need this extra funding. I hope that the minister is as good as his word on radio this morning and that, despite all the information so far to the contrary, Norwood Morialta will not lose out, but I am not holding my breath, nor is the school community. They are out collecting signatures on their petition.

They are very disappointed. They are upset that the government has shown a complete breach of faith and that they were not told about these cuts before the election when they elected the member for Hartley, for example, the senior campus of which is in her constituency. I think that the government has again shown here the fact that it cannot be trusted when it comes to these sorts of issues at election time. This budget is a betrayal of this community, and I urge the minister to reverse this decision.

**Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (15:48):** I rise today to speak to this bill and to echo the sentiments of my colleagues on this side of the house, especially with respect to the extraordinary and bizarre circumstances surrounding the budget. As members would know, South Australia went to the polls on 20 March this year, as did Tasmania. However, the Tasmanian Labor government handed down its budget on 17 June this year; and, indeed, the recently-elected conservative government in Great Britain, led by David Cameron, handed down its budget within 50 days of being elected.

Unfortunately, here, in the great state of South Australia, we have a situation where the Treasurer, the Hon. Kevin Foley, is the lucky last state Treasurer to hand down a long-awaited and, unfortunately, disappointing budget—in fact, it took six months. As a new member of this place, I would really like to know why there has been this delay, because I can tell members that a lot of people do not understand why it has been so long in coming.

It really does say a lot about the way in which the government has managed the state's economy in terms of lagging behind the rest of the country in so many critical areas, not least of which is jobs growth and economic activity generally. The Premier likes to spruik this government's credentials on creating jobs, but he neglects to mention that small businesses and the regional economies of this state are the real creators of jobs for South Australians. Governments provide the framework but private enterprise is the real driver of the regional economy and, in turn, is responsible for generating much of the state's wealth.

To paraphrase what other members have already said in regard to this bill, this is a quintessential Labor budget. This is a Labor budget with a deficit of \$389 million forecast in 2010-11. This is a Labor budget which will mean South Australia will carry a debt of \$7.1 billion. This means that South Australians will soon be paying almost \$2 million a day in interest payments on government debt.

Along with this, as the member for Fisher quite rightly pointed out in this house earlier today, with this budget the government has managed to disenfranchise almost all of its traditional support base. Put simply, this is a Labor budget that highlights its financial mismanagement over eight years. It highlights this state's ballooning debt and ultimately shows Labor's record for what it truly is—abysmal.

How did we end up in this mess? How did South Australia go from a strong financial position under the previous Liberal government to a position where Labor has made us a debt-laden state once more? I note the Premier likes to cast his memory back quite a while. If we cast our memory back, the 2010-11 budget and the accompanying debt certainly harks back to the dark days of the State Bank collapse when, in fact, the current Premier was then a minister.

The answer to how they have trashed the state's finances can be found in this budget—record unbudgeted revenues, massive GST windfalls, basically a doubling of the state's coffers since they came to office, yet they are so inept in managing a budget that they now have to make these cuts and increased revenue measures of \$2.5 billion. This is as a result of squibbing on making the necessary budgetary decisions over the last eight years.

I give the example of the gratuitous waste of taxpayer-funded government advertising, which has been a hallmark of the Rann government media PR machine. I note that, at last, there



has been a cut to this blatant waste of taxpayers' funds in this year's budget of \$18 million over the four years. However, the fact that they were spending so much in the first place is disgraceful.

With all this in mind, we now know why the government has had to slash and burn the Public Service and revisit its no forced redundancy policy. This is despite the PSA producing a letter from the Premier that he sent prior to the election that states there would be no forced redundancies. This demonstrates the mentality of Labor—that it will do and say anything to cling to power, whatever it takes. This budget characterises a Labor government that cannot manage the state's finances, with escalating debt and deficit compounded by the enormous tax burden on South Australians.

As has been highlighted by my leader and other members on this side of the house, South Australia has become the highest taxed state in the nation under the Rann Labor government. Since coming to office in 2002, tax revenue has increased by a staggering 76 per cent. South Australian employees and South Australian businesses are, quite rightly, outraged by this shameless tax grab.

An unnecessarily high tax regime for business stifles the growth of businesses and jobs, puts pressure on employment and makes creating employment opportunities so much more difficult, but that is what we have come to expect from this Labor government—tax, tax and more tax, without any regard for the real funding priorities of this state's employees and businesses. Where is the vision and foresight to make South Australia a competitive place to do business on the national and even international stage? It has not been there. They have squandered the opportunity to leave this state in a better financial position than when they came to office. If only they were less concerned about their own jobs and ambitions and more concerned about the jobs of South Australians (to borrow a phrase from the Premier).

I now turn to how this government has neglected the regions once again. I will go into further detail in my Appropriation Bill grievance on a number of savage cuts which will affect regional areas, but I would like to take this opportunity to touch briefly on the cuts to education which will impact on the regions and my electorate of Flinders. Cuts of \$12 million over four years to the small school grants is surely one of the most callous and mean-spirited saving measures that this government has ever made.

How can the government justify slashing funding to the schools that need it most? This will severely affect funding streams and I fear will place a vast number of schools in my electorate and elsewhere in danger of closing. At the very least, it will force governing councils to make some very difficult decisions in the years ahead. As a matter of interest, of the 23 public schools in the electorate of Flinders, 12 are classified as small schools, so more than half the schools in my electorate have fewer than 100 students enrolled. They will feel the pinch from this funding cut.

Further to the small school grants, there are also a number of probable school closures which are described as 'amalgamations'. This is classic spin—and one thing they do well is classic spin. Amalgamation is a flowery word for closure and school closures are bad for rural and regional students, rural and regional teachers and rural and regional communities, as well as city-based educational communities.

**Mr Marshall:** Like Norwood Morialta.

**Mr TRELOAR:** Like Norwood Morialta, as the member for Norwood has just suggested. Also cuts to the Public Service, specifically \$80 million in cuts and the loss of 180 positions from PIRSA. It will have a severe impact on the extension of research out in the field. It is that extension and resulting adoption of best practice that has allowed primary producers in this state to remain efficient and competitive in a global market. So, with a loss of 180 positions from that department, I am very concerned that the extension will be severely hampered. Primary producers will feel the impact and, ultimately, the state's economy.

The withdrawal of the state funding into Regional Development Australia from 2013 will also impact on the regions. Why on earth this government would consider not supporting a model that provides return on investment and value to the state is beyond me. Increased fees and charges such as increases in expiation notice fines and the victims of crime levy, and increased charges to Housing Trust rents and water charges are all cynical moves from an increasingly desperate and financially incompetent government.

As I said, I will dedicate more time to specific issues in my electorate when the house notes grievances later today, but in my closing remarks I will reiterate that this has been a typical Labor

budget which will hurt many different areas of our community and, sadly, it is what we have come to expect from a divided and arrogant Rann government that continues to demonstrate how out of touch and city centric they are.

**Mr MARSHALL (Norwood) (15:58):** On 16 September 2010, the Treasurer finally delivered his much anticipated ninth budget. This budget was a major production. He would have us believe that this was something that was under construction between the time they were elected on 20 March and the time he finally delivered it 180 days later. In fact, this was a budget which was more than 15 months in the making. It dealt a huge blow to virtually every South Australian. I say 'virtually' because the increasing number of public servants in the cabinet offices seem to have escaped the Treasurer's razor.

My speech today will address three key issues. Firstly, how did we get into this mess; secondly, why has it taken so long for the South Australian government to respond; and thirdly, who has informed their new priorities? Looking first at how we got into this mess, it is difficult to comprehend how we have arrived in this situation. It is difficult to understand why the people of South Australia are being asked to endure such pain at the moment.

The Rann government came to power in 2002 and the past eight years have been extremely good years if you look historically at Australia. The federal Liberal government managed to pay off all the government debt during that same period, and simultaneously push ahead with major reform agenda including tax reform, but not this government. They had a backdrop of economic abundance but there was no reform agenda in South Australia. All taxation reforms introduced were actually forced upon them by the federal government introduction of its tax reforms.

So, after eight years in office, why do we need a horror budget? The Treasurer suggested that it was the sharpest and deepest global recession since the Great Depression. So, our Treasurer, 'not the sharpest tool', has suggested that this was the sharpest and deepest global recession since the Great Depression, and yet his federal counterpart and factional ally, the federal Treasurer, said that Australia had avoided the effects of the global crisis. In fact Australia is currently growing; we are actually in an inflationary period. The Reserve Bank board actually keeps putting up the official interest rate because it wants to counter the excessive growth in the country at the moment, but the Treasurer ploughs on.

The Treasurer says that we have lost \$1.4 billion from the forward estimates, but is this real? In June last year, he predicted a dire situation for revenue in the financial year just ended. In fact, he predicted that we were going to run a \$304 million deficit. Well, we have finished the financial year, and what happened? Did we run a \$304 million deficit? No; we actually had a surplus. We ran a \$167 million surplus. So, what was this hyperbole that the Treasurer put forward all about? Far from being down on the original forecast, it was actually up.

In the first eight years of this government, South Australia has received in excess of \$5 billion in unbudgeted revenue. This is revenue that has come into the state over and above what was ever anticipated, what was ever budgeted for or what was ever forecast: this is money over and above that. Most of this has of course come through unbudgeted GST revenue and property taxes. We know that the Treasurer and his government opposed the concept of the GST when it was first introduced but they have been the very happy recipients of this incredibly large amount of money which has flowed into our state's coffers over the last few years.

We have had \$5 billion of unbudgeted revenue. Where is it? This cuts to the heart of the issue. The reason we need this horror budget is Labor's addiction to spending—not because we do not have enough money but just to fuel this incredible appetite, this incredible addiction, to spending money. In every single year since this government has come to power, it has massively overspent on its budget: not every third year, not every fifth year, but every single year it has massively overspent on its budget. It has spent up big on public servants, spent up big on consultants, spent up big on government advertising, on extra ministers, ministerial staff, cabinet staff, government boards and many, many overseas trips for the Treasurer and the Premier.

Far from being the prudent economic managers that it has been projecting itself to be in the media, this government has been able to hide its massive inability to manage its own expenditure, its own budget, behind these massive windfall gains. Thank goodness for those gains otherwise the government would have been shown up for the economic mismanagers that it has been long before this horror budget came to pass. This should never ever have been allowed to occur.

The second point I would like to address is: why has it taken so long for the South Australian government to respond? It was in June 2009 that the Treasurer announced the formation of the Sustainable Budget Commission. This was, of course, in response to the global financial crisis, which I referred to earlier.

This was set up to deliver some savings that were necessary because of the global financial crisis. In fact, in the forward estimates it had already clocked up, in June 2009, savings to South Australia (this is before it had even met, by the way) of \$750 million. Interestingly, none of these cuts, none of these savings were actually budgeted for the first year.

You could be cynical and say, 'Well, that is because that was an election year,' but no, none of those were for the first year, but in the second year, there were going to be savings of \$150 million; in the third year, savings of \$250 million; and, in the final year of the forward estimates, \$350 million, making up a total of \$750 million over the forward estimates' four years. Of course, all of these budget savings were completely undisclosed.

Again, I reiterate that this was announced in June 2009. So when was this Sustainable Budget Commission going to give us what these cuts were all about? Was it going to deliver the result within three months? Was it going to deliver the result within six months, nine months or 12 months? No, conveniently, the scope which was set by the Treasurer and the government was for the Sustainable Budget Commission to actually report on these savings after the election—how transparent—in fact, not only after the state budget: the Treasurer decided to push it a little bit longer, to get it after the federal budget. Can you imagine, Madam Deputy Speaker?

Far from swift and decisive action, the recommendations were delayed until after the state election and after the federal election. The delays are undeniably part of a plan, I believe, to deliberately deceive the people of South Australia. Mr Foley, the Treasurer of South Australia, went to the people of South Australia at the 20 March election promising to make cuts and identifying cuts of \$750 million in the forward estimates.

What did we actually find when he finally delivered the budget? We found cuts to the forward estimates of \$1.5 billion and, in addition to that, another \$1 billion worth of revenue raising activity. So, far from \$750 million worth of pain, which we were led to believe before the election, we are now, each and every one of us, asked to endure \$2.5 billion worth of tax increases and spending cuts over the forward estimates. This is gross deception. It is a highly orchestrated delay in giving the people of South Australia the requisite information before making their decision on who to support at the last state election.

The third issue I would like to raise as part of this budget reply is: who has informed the new priorities of this government? The government gets an opportunity every year to come to this parliament and to restate its priorities, and it does this during the budget process. Every government has the opportunity to say, 'Well, I am going to increase the taxes to these people, or I am going to reduce the taxes to these people. I am going to increase services to these people. I am going to reduce services to these people.' It is completely and utterly within the scope of what the government does, and it gets to do it every single year during the budget period.

This budget unequivocally makes clear what this government's priorities indeed are. I can tell you where its priorities do not lie: its priorities do not lie with public servants and their entitlements. In fact, this budget delivers a cruel blow to almost 4,000 public servants to be cut over the period of this budget.

Before the election they committed to no forced redundancies, and we had more than 1,000 people on the steps of parliament yesterday protesting on this precise point. Before the election they committed to no forced redundancies. After the election—and you are starting to see the theme developing here—"We can't rule that out. If we haven't got rid of enough of them within the 12 months we are going to have to be shifting them along." In addition, there has been a massive reduction in long service leave entitlements and the abolition of leave loading to these people. Again, none of these issues were made clear to the people of South Australia before the election; unfortunately for them, it was made all too clear after the election.

So, the priority is not with public servants. Who are they looking after? Are they looking after pensioners? No, they are not looking after pensioners. In fact, the pensioners in South Australia will be receiving rent increases during the life of this budget. Again, not disclosed before the election. What about our regional cousins? How did they fare? Not very well. The petroleum subsidy of 3.3¢ per litre has been completely removed. Again, not flagged before the election but implemented after the election.

Did new home owners fare any better? Unfortunately—as you can see, there is a theme developing here—no, they did not. If our young people, whom we are trying to encourage to live affordably here in South Australia, want to buy a house that already exists, unfortunately, they will not be able to do so with any form of subsidy from this state government. What about our arts community? No; \$13 million worth of cuts. What about our fishing industry? No. What about our wine industry? No. What about hotels and farming? No. They have all had cuts to the extension services provided by this government and had fees, taxes and charges put in place to try and recover costs that this government has been spending on those industries in the past.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**Mr MARSHALL:** The Film Corporation, of course, did get some money, so the Premier should be able to star in his own new production as quickly as we can get that money to them. As to hospital car parks, if you are visiting your loved ones, forget it; you are going to be paying through the nose. Driver's licence, Metroticket and vehicle registration costs are all up. Is it CPI, maybe with a little bit of a discount because we are suffering a global financial crisis? No; it is over and above the size of the CPI. Mining royalties are up. We have had massive cuts, of course, to small schools, and there have been many more.

Who has actually set the priorities? Who have been the great beneficiaries of this budget? One thing I do know is that cabinet officers have escaped any form of cut in this budget and, in fact, they have actually had an increase. So the Premier and the Treasurer and many of the ministers have increased services out of this budget and, of course, they would be very happy with those changes.

I would like to reflect back now on the 2010 election result. As disappointing as the overall result was, the 2010 election result did deliver a massive backlash to this government. In fact, the Liberal Party received far more votes at the election—they won the two-party preferred vote, but unfortunately they did lose the race for the most number of seats and so they have been unable to form government. However, the people of South Australia went to the election resting and relying on the information that was provided to them by this Treasurer and by this government leading up to the election. As we can see now by these results, there were a lot of things left out. There were a lot of holes in the information that was provided to the people of South Australia.

Nevertheless, the Premier said, 'I am going to take that lesson.' It was a kick in the pants for Labor and he said that they were going to go out and reconnect with the people of South Australia. He said that they were going to be focused on reconnecting. They were going to connect better, they were going to listen more and they were going to act accordingly. We have seen precisely how they have chosen to act with this budget. We have had to wait 180 days for this budget, so one would have thought there was going to be this massive period—180 days, to be precise—of reconnection and listening to the people of South Australia in order to come up with this budget that was going to optimise the effects for the South Australian economy moving forward.

Unfortunately, what we have received is a horror budget but, nevertheless, perfectly timed in the electoral cycle. It has been perfectly timed to deliver a harsh blow immediately after an election, undisclosed to the people before the election, but in enough time for them to be able to recover in the future years leading up to the 2014 election.

It was a budget which could have been completely and utterly avoided through more prudential management over the last eight years. Unfortunately, for this government, despite the huge amount of unbudgeted revenue they received, they have been on a spending spree for eight long years. If they had spent properly, we would never have been in this situation. In fact, they have been on such a spending spree that our state debt at the moment has blown out during this budget to \$7.5 billion and, as has been more than amply pointed out by our leader on this side and also by many of the members, that equates to an interest bill approaching \$2 million each day. We all know that \$2 million a day is a large amount of money to spend on important community projects.

It was a budget which could have been avoided through proper prudential management. The people of South Australia have been deceived. They will not forget this absolute betrayal.

**Ms SANDERSON (Adelaide) (16:16):** I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill. Given this is the Treasurer's ninth budget, it is a shame that the budget has been delivered so late and that so many of the measures were not disclosed prior to the March election. This budget has delivered

more debt, over \$1 billion of increased taxes, public sector job losses and fewer services, while South Australia still remains the highest taxed state in the country.

Public debt of \$7.1 billion and a \$389 million deficit for 2010-11 means South Australians will soon pay almost \$2 million a day in interest on government debt, similar to the State Bank disaster. This is a gross waste of money. What could we do with this extra \$730 million per year? As they say, 'It is not what you earn, it is what you spend.'

With every increase in income, Labor has continued to overspend. Income has doubled since Labor came into government, yet what do we have to show for it? A tram to the Entertainment Centre, a place already serviced by eight buses and two train lines, and this led to the removal of the 99B bus that ran every five minutes in both directions in a full loop of the city. This was already for free. The tram extension has caused traffic hassles throughout the city with no right-hand turns until Victoria Square and has turned North Terrace into a dog's breakfast.

For eight years my business was on North Terrace until the tram came along and there were changes in traffic conditions. The removal of car parking along North Terrace led to the isolation of my business to the point where I had to move to survive. I suspect the Station Arcade post office, which is now closing after three years of constant decrease in turnover, is in part due to the negative effect on businesses in the area caused by the tram.

As expected, the Labor government has shown its inability to prioritise. Instead of reducing its ministers by three, giving calculated savings of approximately \$7.5 million in projected savings of \$30 million over this term of government, which was a Liberal Party policy at the last election and a recommendation of the Sustainable Budget Commission, the Treasurer in his wisdom decided to increase the already corpulent budget of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

This government would rather close down the Parks Community Centre, which is visited by 20,000 people per month and used by 50 sporting clubs and groups. This facility is used widely. I myself have done a WEA rollerblading course at the Parks. The Parks is located in one of our most financially and socially disadvantaged areas. Perhaps the government figured that it was in the Labor heartland so it does not matter what they do to the site. It all appears to have a *deja vu* feeling of the St Clair Reserve development at Cheltenham.

We have a government that is cutting the essential things: services, police job entitlements, public sector employee entitlements and public sector employee jobs. Of course, had the government not employed an unbudgeted extra 12,000 workers in the Public Service over and above the already unbudgeted police, nurses and firefighters, they would now not be in a position of having to cut 3,750 jobs. The cut alone will cost \$354 million for 3,000 voluntary reductions at an average of \$118,000 each. This is a shocking state of affairs.

I am extremely disappointed that this budget ignores the request by families in Prospect, Walkerville, Fitzroy and Medindie for access to a city high school. It was implied at the state election that the Adelaide High School zone would be extended to include them. Instead, you have allowed for one extra building over the next four years that will only just cover the overcapacity they are already experiencing. This will not even allow the people in the zone to gain entry to Adelaide High School. This is not good enough. More must be done.

In my electorate I have families that are going without heating, their grocery bills are slashed, and families are living in small rental accommodation so they can send their children to a private school in the city. The decision to send their children to a nearby private school is not by choice, but by force. People are taking second jobs and seeing their families less just to meet this cost. They feel forced in this financial predicament, as they are unable to send their children to the nearest high school to them: Adelaide High School. Their needs are being ignored by this state government, and this is a shameful situation.

The state government's 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide anticipates population growth to 1.85 million people by 2036. The City of Adelaide's Strategic Plan anticipates an increase in the CBD residential population by 1,300 persons per year until 2012. Where will they go to school? Gilles Street Primary and Sturt Street Primary School are both bursting at the seams, and we do not have a city public high school solution to carry these children through their education. The Bowden Urban Village would be a perfect and logical site and would be an excellent investment.

Examining the capital investment statement, this government is only committing \$500,000 for high school capital investment in 2010-11. This is to be divided between four high schools, including for extra capacity of 250 students at Adelaide High School. So how much of this

is for Adelaide High, and when will the building commence? This is ridiculous, when the government knows that Adelaide High School is already over capacity by more than 250 students. Hundreds of children are on the waiting list, and the school could not even fulfil its in-zone commitments.

The lack of spending on education in my electorate demonstrates that the educational needs of children in the Adelaide electorate are not worthy of this government's attention. Their needs are being ignored. This government would rather give money to support the already wealthy AFL and SACA and turn North Adelaide and the northern Parklands into a car park and destroy Adelaide Oval, at a cost of \$535 million.

To overcome the very popular Liberal idea of a city stadium, the Labor government announced a \$450 million—not a penny more—patch up of Adelaide Oval. This included \$150 million from the commonwealth government and \$300 million from the state government. Of course, there was no notification of the blowout prior to the election, and soon after an \$85 million allocation after the blowout was remembered. After a bit of creative accounting and transferring a few of the costs, the new total from the original \$300 million is now \$535 million, for far less. There is no bridge and no car park, not to mention the third extension of the deadline in a desperate attempt to force through a very disastrous plan that will destroy Adelaide Oval forever and turn North Adelaide into a car park. And this is not mentioning the adding to our debt figures and therefore our growing interest payable.

First homebuyers lose the government grant if they choose to purchase an existing home. This effectively takes away their choice to live where they want. This will banish the majority of new home buyers to the outer suburban greenfield developments, which will place greater pressure on the carve up of prime farmland for new housing. This will increase our carbon footprint, as homeowners are reliant on personal vehicle transport rather than more green commuter choices of public transport or cycling. This plan will not encourage private ownership in our inner metropolitan areas.

We are losing people from our state. Today's ABS figures show 3,012 people left South Australia for interstate in the last 12 months. We are losing businesses from our state, we are losing investment from our state. Why? Because we are the highest taxing state in Australia. We need to make urgent changes to become more competitive. Land taxes are crippling this state. We need to do all we can to attract investment and business to this state, and we cannot do this while we continue to be the highest taxing state in the country.

Land tax affects everyone and is detrimental to the state's prosperity and its people. Mum-and-dad investors who have a couple of rental properties are now charged as part of a grouping, therefore, either, first, the rent goes up to cover adding to our affordable housing crisis; secondly, they sell their house, thus removing more housing from the rental market; or, thirdly, they take their money and invest interstate.

For commercial property owners the cost of land tax is passed onto the lessee, thus making it harder for people to start a business, to afford to lease a property or even to afford extra staff. Melbourne Street for the past two years has had commercial leased properties available—at least 10 throughout that time. Many people I have spoken to in my electorate have told me that they are taking their money out of South Australia and moving it interstate.

Several business owners were not only moving their money, their property ownership, but their head offices and the jobs that go with them. This is devastating for our state and must be reversed immediately. Whilst I acknowledge the changes recently made to increase the base from \$110,000 to \$300,000 due to the pressure from the Liberal Party and the community, more must be done to change this very destructive tax, particularly when affordable housing is defined as up to \$330,000 and the median house price is \$410,000.

Payroll tax in our state is uncompetitive and is making businesses go elsewhere. It is a crazy scenario, with 9,500 businesses in South Australia in the 2007-08 year liable for payroll tax, up from 7,200 in 2001-02, and it is guaranteed to be more this year. What incentives does this give to business to expand or to stay in Adelaide? Perhaps members opposite would prefer the cost of more unemployed people.

Who are the losers in this budget? In short, everyone loses. First homebuyers lose the grant and the ability to choose where they live by removal of the grant on existing homes, and car owners and drivers are hit with \$12.546 million in extra licensing fees, the loss of registration

stickers to remind them when their registration is due and less choice over the time period in which they can pay.

Visitors to hospitals lose by having to pay commercial rates on car parking. Again, this is a fundraising exercise which targets the sick, our vulnerable and their carers. Tourism budgets have been cut by \$12.5 million. Tourism is a very important industry that has a flow-on effect to many other industries, thus affecting jobs.

I recently introduced a bill to support the tourism industry by allowing shops in the Rundle Mall precinct to open on selected public holidays. Perhaps this will help to counteract the losses. In closing, this is a very short-sighted and mean plan. This budget is not visionary. It does not create extra jobs. It does not encourage investment or growth. It is merely the proof that we have a tired and ineffectual government that is limping along, watching the other states in this nation forge ahead.

**Mr PEGLER (Mount Gambier) (16:27):** Given the extra time it took to formulate this budget, and the involvement of the Sustainable Budget Commission and the Social Inclusion Board, I thought that it would be an exciting budget that addressed the unsustainable level of state debt but at the same time addressed the needs of the most vulnerable in our society; and, in particular, the inequity of levels of service delivery to the needy within the regions.

It should also have been a budget which encouraged growth within our private sector, but I am sorry to say that I feel that this budget fails to deliver what it should, especially to the regions. On a brighter note, I congratulate the government on retaining its AAA rating, as this is extremely important when a government has to borrow so much money on the open market, and probably means a saving of one half of 1 per cent in interest each year.

The people of the electorate of Mount Gambier are justifiably quite upset with this budget in that it seems to be all about taking from the regions and giving little back. Our petrol prices are to go up by 3¢ and diesel by 2¢ per litre. We also see massive increases in SA Water prices in our electorate to fund the desal plant in Adelaide, and also a reduction in the base amount of water from 136 kilolitres per annum to 30 kilolitres per quarter. Our motor vehicle registration and licence fees are also being increased. Whilst these increases may seem to be minimal, they are a great impost on families that are finding it hard to make ends meet.

Our small schools are under threat with the removal of the \$30,000 they presently receive and, whilst the minister assures us that there will be other funding opportunities available, it puts our small schools in a state of flux. It must be remembered that these schools are often the core of these small communities that they serve and, without them, we will see the death of many of these small communities.

Our primary producers and fishermen also feel threatened, with massive reductions in research and development funds, moves for full cost recovery for biosecurity, large reductions in the number of people working for both SARDI and PIRSA, and a reduction in the ceiling for wine tax from \$521,000 to a mere \$50,000. We were once the clever state in a clever country when it comes to primary industry research and development, and these backward steps will make it very hard for our producers to compete on the world stage.

I note that an extra \$518 million over four years has been allocated for roads, but it is an absolute insult that only \$12.4 million of these funds will go to regional roads.

I find it quite ironic that the government is planning the phasing out of funding of Regional Development Australia boards. It has been a monumental effort in South Australia to bring the three levels of government together to fund these boards, and there could have been great opportunities to leverage more funding from both federal and local governments to enhance these boards so that real regional development could occur in both a social and economic manner. But none of these things will happen if the state government reduces its commitment.

I applaud the government on the extra funds it has made available for mental health services, early childhood protection and the funding of school buses. I also thank the government for the initiatives that have been shown with country health. We have a long way to go, but at least some steps are being taken in the right direction.

The greatest economic threat to the South-East is the threat of forward selling of ForestrySA pine plantations for anything up to three rotations, or 105 years. There are over 5,000 people employed in the South-East in the forestry industry and many of these jobs will be put at risk if the forward sale goes ahead. It must be remembered that the government receives over

\$40 million each year in profits from forests in the South-East. Yesterday we heard the Premier criticising the former Liberal government for selling ETSA and he went on to say how his government had kept its promise of no privatisation of government assets. I would have thought that the sale of up to 105 years of profit is nothing but privatisation.

We are also getting mixed messages from his ministers, with the Treasurer merely saying, 'We are investigating it,' and the forestry minister saying, 'Government has made a decision. We will be putting on the market either one, two or three forward rotations.' If this proposal goes ahead, we will see the same result as has happened in Victoria and New Zealand, with the closure of timber mills and the export of these jobs, along with the raw logs, to countries such as China and India.

Bill read a second time.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (16:34):** I move:

That this bill be referred to estimates committees.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (16:35):** I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council requesting that the Minister for Urban Development and Planning and the Minister for State/Local Government Relations, members of the Legislative Council, be permitted to attend and give evidence before the estimates committees of the House of Assembly on the Appropriation Bill.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (16:35):** I move:

That the house note grievances.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (16:35):** I indicate that I am the lead speaker in the grievance debate on the Appropriation Bill. This is extraordinary. We have just completed the debate on the Labor government's budget, treasurer Kevin Foley's ninth budget, and not one Labor member spoke. Not one of them stood up to support the Treasurer on the budget that was going to reconnect. This was the budget to reconnect the Labor Party with the community and not one Labor member bothered to stand up to support treasurer Foley. Not one—

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me, member for Davenport, a point of order from the member for Torrens.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** While the member may be correct about members on this side not speaking at this particular moment, he is misleading the house in terms of our not supporting the Treasurer. It is quite incorrect.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** That is an extraordinary point of order. As we all know, there was no point of order; it was simply a point to be made. What the member for Torrens—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Davenport! I have not had an opportunity to say whether or not I thought that was a point of order so enthusiastic were you. I do not think there is a point of order. However, I can see where the member for Torrens is coming from.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I agree with you, there was no point of order. Congratulations, Madam Deputy Speaker, on that ruling. What the member for Torrens is saying is the Labor Party is supporting the Treasurer by its silence. All of them had the chance to come in and put 20 minutes of support on the table for treasurer Foley and his budget. Each member had 20 minutes to speak and not one had the decency to come in and back Kevin Foley, the Deputy Premier, the man who wants to be king. Not one person came in and said, 'Kev, we think you've got your mojo back, we're going to come and support you as well.' Absolute silence from Labor members.



This week we have had question after question about the Parks Community Centre and all the members of the Labor Party over there crying crocodile tears and saying to the electorate, 'Well, we don't agree with that one; we don't agree with that,' but have you heard any of them stand up and defend the Parks Community Centre? Not one. Not one of them has stood up and backed the Premier and the Treasurer in relation to this budget.

This is unprecedented. You would have thought that, after eight years in government, some of the Labor backbenchers would have something to say. You would think they would have something to say. You would think there would be something good in the budget, just one good thing that they could come in and say to their electorate, 'This is a good Labor budget for this reason.' But what do we get from Labor members? We get the sound of silence.

What the member for Torrens wants us to believe is that they are standing up for the Treasurer by saying nothing and they are standing up for their electorate by saying nothing. That was the point of order. The member for Torrens said, 'The member for Davenport is quite right, no-one has spoken, but we are supporting the Treasurer because we have said nothing. We have said absolutely nothing.'

This is a huge embarrassment for treasurer Foley. They have delayed the budget for six months. The Labor members have had six months to get their notes ready, their arguments ready and their speeches ready, yet, after six months, all you have is silence. We have silence. This is just extraordinary. No-one is speaking about the cuts in education, no-one is speaking about the efficiency dividends in health, no one is speaking about the wineries getting cut through the cellar door subsidies, no-one is speaking about taxes going up by \$1 billion over the four years, no-one is in there talking about the cost of household water prices doubling, and no-one is talking about the car registration fees going up, driver's licence fees going up or compulsory third-party insurance premiums going up.

What we get from the Labor Party is silence. What a gutless mob! The Treasurer sits there during question time and calls us soft. He yells across the chamber, 'You guys are soft! You guys are soft!' Well, I tell you what: we have had our say on the budget. We are prepared to stand up for our electorates, but where are you? Where is the Labor Party? Not one. We had the Treasurer give his budget speech on Tuesday and not one has spoken. What we get is silence.

They are not prepared to back the Treasurer in. This is the Treasurer who after the budget was running around South Australia saying, 'Look at Big Kev; I've got my mojo back.' He might think he has his mojo back but he has no-one in here saying that. He has no-one in the chamber saying he has his mojo back. What we get in the chamber is silence.

There has been more discussion this week about who might be treasurer and who might be premier than there has been about the budget from the Labor side. There has been more discussion about who might be the next deputy premier or treasurer and who might be the next premier. Not one Labor member bothered to come into this chamber and support the Treasurer. Well, that is extraordinary. It is a shame.

I think it is a shame on the Labor Party, each and every one of them, that they did not have the decency or the courtesy on behalf of their electorates to come in and express a view. They are going to go out to their electorates and they are going to be asked about the budget. They should refer them to the *Hansard*: 'Go and see what the member for Light said about the budget. Go and see what the member for Mawson said about the budget. Go and see what the other members said about the budget,' and the answer is: they said nothing.

So, after nine years, the ninth budget was delayed for six months so that the Labor Party could get prepared, so that the Treasurer could get the figures right. Of course, the Treasurer gets the figures wrong but only by \$333 million, but what do we get from this government, the backbench, the people who are trying to support the Treasurer? We get silence. It is extraordinary, I think, that we get silence from this government on its own budget. It is unprecedented, and I think the Labor Party's silence on this budget speaks volumes for what they really think about the budget.

Do not forget that this was the Labor party room that applauded the Treasurer in private. 'They did,' said the Treasurer. They applauded the Treasurer in silence, but why will they not say anything in public? If they are applauding the Treasurer in silence, why will they not say something in public? This is a sad day for the South Australian Labor Party. It is a sad day for treasurer Foley, and shame on the Labor Party for not having the decency to put up one speaker—just one speaker—in defence of its own budget.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am advised that, should the Treasurer wish to speak, he has every right to do so and does not close the debate, as this—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I don't want to be interrupted anymore, and as for the member for Schubert, with the wild pointing and the dancing—stop that. Treasurer, please speak.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Federal/State Relations, Minister for Defence Industries) (16:45):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for your wise counsel, as always. I noted the reprimand to the member for Florey—she has been here long enough too.

What a performance by the shadow treasurer! What feigned anger and excitement! I have been in this place for a very, very long time. I have delivered nine budgets and sat in here through eight Liberal budgets. It is not the moment for governments: it is the moment for oppositions to attack government. Yes, I did receive a round of applause from my caucus colleagues when I brought the budget down, which was a most unusual feat.

**Ms Chapman:** Because you're going.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** No, I am going nowhere. I have delivered, yet again, a budget that has reconfirmed the state's AAA credit rating. I am absolutely confident that the Moody's rating agency will also reconfirm our state's AAA credit rating in the not too distant future, as we have provided financial excellence as a government.

Members opposite are soft, that is a proven fact. We only have to have a look at the pathetic attempt by the Leader of the Opposition to put forward an alternative strategy. I think she put forward things like, 'We will cut the Thinkers in Residence program. We will get rid of three ministers.'

**The Hon. P.F. Conlon:** Only \$999 million to go!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Well, no; \$2.439 billion to go. I mean, they put forward a couple of very small programs to indicate how tough they would be.

*The Hon. J.J. Snelling interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Oh, the gum tree, although, there might have been something in that—but, you know, the gum tree approach to education from the Leader of the Opposition. The opposition says, 'Well, we wouldn't build the Adelaide Hospital. We would cancel the project. We could do it for a billion dollars down at the old site.' What a load of nonsense. Even the shadow Treasurer, on the day before the election—and could I yet again, Madam Deputy Speaker, please be allowed to put on record our party's gratitude to the contribution of not just the shadow treasurer on the eve of the state election, when he said that their election costings were all spin. We managed to get that out into the electorate on the day before the election. I should also commend, as I often want to do when I am in here, the fine efforts of the member for Bragg, for her excellent contribution in the last week, where she failed to rule out a leadership challenge.

**Ms Chapman:** So did you.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Yes, but we won. What must really stick in the craw of members opposite, what must distress the leadership of the Liberal Party, is the ill-disciplined, ill-timed and quite inflammatory reaction of the member for Bragg in that press conference, where she completely failed—and I understand, even when there was a phone call from *The Advertiser*—to rule out a leadership challenge. I can tell you—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Treasurer, could you please sit down for one moment. I have this to say: we sat through a very enthusiastic and impassioned speech by the member for Davenport, as was his right. He was heard in absolute silence; not one person interjected. I would ask that you offer the Treasurer exactly the same courtesy that you were given.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I was in our campaign team, and I can assure you that, by polling and reaction, those two quite significant contributions from the member for Bragg and the then shadow treasurer were a major element in the Labor Party holding onto office.

Why was that? Because it reinforced the two great weaknesses of the Liberal Party that have bedevilled them for 20, 30, 40 years in this state: the first was the issue of disunity and instability; the second was their financial incompetence, their inability to be able to convince the public that they could manage the finances.

Again, I thank the member for Bragg for ensuring the longevity of this Labor government, and her efforts in doing that over a number of years in this parliament are well and truly recognised, not only by members on this side but also by a number of members on her side.

**The Hon. J.J. Snelling:** We should give her a life membership of the Labor Party.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** We should give her a life membership of the Labor Party, as the minister suggests. Can I say, firstly, about the \$333 million headline today—most unfortunate—that errors occur by public servants compiling what would be the most complicated and detailed dataset that the state produces in any given year.

**Ms Chapman:** You signed it.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Pardon?

**Ms Chapman:** You signed the budget.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Right, okay. These mistakes happen. In fact, I think in the year 1999-2000 treasurer Rob Lucas also put forward a corrigendum for errors in his budget, and there have been some examples of that through the course of my tenure. The reality is that the dataset was inaccurate, but the bottom line numbers were unaffected. It was a presentational issue in some tables, and that was appropriately corrected yesterday. What I can say is this—and I have said this repeatedly and it has to be said again—

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have said this once and I will say it again, and this will be the last time and the next time will be a warning. It is very tedious to have to repeat myself. We listened to the member for Davenport and the members on my right did not interject once. You will offer the same courtesy to the Treasurer during this time. If you cannot do that—if it is so frustrating to you, member for Bragg—then I advise you to leave the chamber for a little while. Thank you.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** I take a point of order then, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Indeed.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** The Treasurer, in his presentation, presented to the house that he had appropriately acknowledged his error, which is entirely incorrect. He came in here and dumped onto the table his addendum—his stuff-up acknowledgement—with no explanation whatsoever, misleading all of us as to whether or not that is appropriate. It was a disgrace.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I do not think that that is a point of order, so the Treasurer can carry on giving the speech he was giving.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I will take a point of order and ask the member for Bragg to apologise immediately or move a substantive motion. She said I had 'mised all of us'. That can only be dealt with as a matter of a substantive motion. I ask that she apologise and unreservedly withdraw.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** And I ruled that there was no point of order and I did not accept what she was saying. It is best, if we wish to continue usefully with this process, that the members on my left control themselves and that you carry on.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The funny thing was that, if the members opposite were so concerned about the details of the corrigendum, they had 10 questions in question time. They could have asked one or 10 questions about the corrigendum and I would have given an explanation. It is a presentation error and it was an error not by me as Treasurer but by my agency and, of course, I take responsibility. It was not as reported. It was not of significance, and it had no effect on the budget bottom line or the outcomes that are forecast in the budget at all.

But if the member was suggesting I was hiding this, I tabled it before question time and I was open to questions; and I did. When I heard the shadow treasurer was distressed at my lack of explanation, I dropped everything and came down to the house because I am that kind of guy—a

decent bloke who will be more than prepared to do all I can to assist the house in understanding what is a very complex document in the state budget.

But I want to make the point again—and it is not done in a partisan way or political way, but rather as a statement of fact—that the growing pressures on state government to deliver increased and improved services, be it either through unavoidable demand such as our hospitals or be it through a desire and a need to continually improve certain deliveries, the state's financial capability to meet those needs is not only limited but seriously threatened by our inability to meet a lot of these expectations and demands.

It will not matter who the next treasurer is in the term after next but whoever is treasurer in this place, me or my successors, the problem will only get more substantial. If there are members opposite who will one day sit on the front bench and around the cabinet table, you will be confronted with a problem larger than what we are confronted with.

**Mr Pisoni:** Your mess.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Our mess.

**Mr Williams:** You've done it once.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** You've done it once. Yes, right. Madam Deputy Speaker, I am trying to have an intelligent debate.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, and member for MacKillop—excuse me, I am sorry to have to keep on interrupting but it is inevitable with this kind of behaviour—I am not quite sure if you heard me the first two times.

**Mr Williams:** No, I didn't.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No. Good, excellent. We have established that you didn't. What I was actually asking, in fact stating, was this: we listened to the member for Davenport, the lead speaker for your side, in total silence. The members on my right did not interject. We will listen to the Treasurer in total silence, and you will not interject either. Should you choose to interject, there will be warnings.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The challenge for governments into the future will only increase as health, in particular, continues to swamp the available finances that we have. Put together with the general ageing of the community and the impact that has on a whole series of government service delivery, we will with limited income and with no desire that I can read out there in the community to pay more taxes—in fact, the community is always wanting, and understandably so, to pay less tax—we will as a state and as a parliament in the years and the decade or two to come will have a horrendous job of trying to balance the budget and meet those expectations.

Health costs, as I have said often in this place, are growing and compounding somewhere between 9 and 11 per cent per year (activity growth). We have had a 5 per cent overspend in the budget this year in health, which does not sound a lot, but 5 per cent of \$430 million is around \$200 million. That is the magnitude of an overspend. We cannot do much about that because that is people coming into our hospitals.

What state budgeting has become in each budget I have done is a gruelling exercise in having to make trade-offs. I have delivered savings in just about each and every one of our budgets—from memory, \$1.7 billion in our first four-year budget cycle. I think it was about another \$850 million the following four-year budget cycle. We are doing this so we can continue to find the money to meet those health pressures, to meet the pressures on families and communities, and to meet community's expectations to have more police officers, to have better education standards, to have more public infrastructure. Public infrastructure alone, when we came to office, was less than the notional depreciation of the government's asset base. We took that from \$500 million to over \$2 billion—I think closer to \$2½ billion.

We are electrifying the city's rail network, and we are rebuilding and updating all of our state's hospitals. We are building the most significant tribute, I think, to this government, in terms of a legacy, the most sophisticated and the best quality hospital probably anywhere in the world when the new Royal Adelaide opens. We are putting light rail into our city to try to lift the amenity and the quality and the attractiveness of our CBD.

We will develop Adelaide Oval, and with that will come the Convention Centre, an upgrade from the private sector of the Casino site, we hope, and I am sure there will be further investment in years to come in the Festival Centre complex. The whole amenity of the River Torrens will be such that we will have a world-class attraction point for people to come into our city and be entertained and to bring their families to enjoy what the city has to offer, just like people in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney in terms of their respective South Bank, Darling Harbour and Circular Quay. However, all of this comes with a trade-off. When we make decisions to cut, we make decisions to cut—is the member on a mobile phone?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There would appear to be a member with something clamped to his ear. I think we should look at this in a wholistic manner: it has been known that members on my right have had things clamped to their ears. Of course, the great thing is that if the member for Unley does have something clamped to his ear it means that he is not interjecting upon you, Treasurer, which is a bonus.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I would rather that he not speak on a mobile phone, but never mind. The pressures of the government will only increase; they will never decrease. Members opposite can make a mockery of this budget, they can be critical of this budget, they can make things up, such as we are incompetent and we have done this and done that. That is all the theatre and rhetoric of this place. The reality is that we have done a very good job in balancing all of those pressures that I mentioned before.

It does not come without serious pain. It does not come without serious challenges to the way we have done things in government before. However, all of our cabinet were rock solid in the challenge that we had. There was no internal dissent because our cabinet, an experienced cabinet, a talented cabinet, a quality cabinet, knew exactly—

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** A what cabinet?

**Mr Williams:** Get on with it!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Well, member for MacKillop, who loves the sound of his own voice, I am allowed to make a contribution.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Yes, get on with it!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** God, you think you're really good, don't you?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Fellows, chaps—

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** You think you're some sort of—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** —guru, the old member for MacKillop.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Can I suggest that people do not interject?

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for MacKillop, using a mobile phone in the chamber is completely inadmissible, as well you know. I have tried to be—

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Do not speak while I am speaking. I have tried to be relaxed about this. You have come in here, you are doing all the chatting, and you are interjecting—just stop it. Just let him continue. He has a right to speak. Sorry, Treasurer.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The budget has been a difficult process, and it has proven to me, and I think to the government, that we have a cabinet capable of not only making the hard decisions but making the right decisions. After nine budgets and after an incredibly tough budget losing \$1.4 billion in revenue from the GFC and the \$200 million alone over four years (\$800 million) of health cost increases, as well as in excess of \$100 million required for Families and Communities for children in care, we have met those pressures. We have been able to deliver a surplus budget position in the out years, and we have had reconfirmed by Standard and Poor's our state's AAA credit rating; and I expect that, in the very near future, Moody's will reconfirm our AAA credit rating.

Where the opposition does not have a leg to stand on, where it has no credibility, is trying to suggest, as the leader did yesterday, that we are back to State Bank levels of debt; that we have a mess that they have to come into government to clean up. The rating agencies are the independent judge of these things.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** \$400,000? Well, if that is the case, the member for Bragg, your treasurer Lucas was spending a similar amount of money every year. He could not get a AAA credit rating but he was giving them \$300,000 a year. So, wake up, Charlie. This is what you do.

**Ms Chapman:** \$400,000.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** And you paid it when you were in government.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I beg your pardon?

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for Bragg has just accused Standard and Poor's and Moody's rating agencies of not being independent.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** You are a pathetic person, a pathetic member of parliament, an incompetent shadow minister—

**Ms CHAPMAN:** Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I understand that the Treasurer is under some pressure, poor darling, you know, but what is important is that, if you were listening attentively to his speech—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** As I am.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** —as pathetic as it was, I was expressing a view to my colleague sitting to my right, and the Treasurer interrupted and started involving himself in our conversation. If he has something useful to say to the parliament he can continue his debate, otherwise he may as well not waste the next nine minutes.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In relation to your point of order, there is no point of order, member for Bragg, and I would like to have the opportunity to explain why. If you say that you were speaking casually to the colleague on your right, I have to say that I could hear it very clearly. So, perhaps, the member for Norwood has some sort of hearing problem, because we could hear every single word that you said. I have to say that, from a very impartial point of view, member for Bragg, it did appear to be an interjection. There are standing orders relating to interjecting. I do not accept your standing order because you in turn were breaking quite a few of them. Let us carry on.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** Madam Deputy Speaker, repetition in debate is also an offence to standing orders. Three times now in his contribution he has claimed that he was preserving a AAA credit rating in reference to Standard and Poor's. That offends standing order 128 for repetition in debate, and I ask you to bring the Treasurer to order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Bragg. Unfortunately, again, I am not going to be able to uphold that particular standing order, because, during the eight minute speech given by the member for Davenport, he broke that particular standing order on, probably, about 30 occasions. And, as the honourable member knows, because this place is a place where we try not to be too pedantic and mad, I let it go. Now, I think that 30 repetitions compared with three is as nothing. Carry on, Treasurer.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The failed political career of the member for Bragg is quite amusing from our side of the benches. The suggestion that Standard and Poor's or Moody's are not independent and that they are somehow bought off by a \$400,000 pay-off is nonsense. When Rob Lucas and Stephen Baker were treasurers the same process was undertaken. You will not get them to rate you if you do not pay them. They do not do these things for nothing.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** The member for Bragg would not even understand the process. Moody's will be in Adelaide next week as will Standard and Poor's. They will put in a solid day's work with my Treasury officials. I have been to meet them both and they come to visit us on a regular basis. They analyse our data and put a lot of work into it. It is a fact of life that, whether you are a public corporation or a bank getting rated, you pay for that service. So, that was absolute stupidity and naivety in her comments. But, I guess if she has managed to go from putative leader all the way to the middle benches, way down the totem pole and lose any portfolio of significance that she has wanted in her career, I guess I would be sitting there interjecting nonstop to ease the pain.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I have had a very successful political career—somewhat more successful than yours—and I am proud of that. Anyway, I am sure your pain is such that interjecting somehow relieves that pain and tension.

However, to conclude in terms of the budget, we have yet again shown that we have what it takes to govern this state through good times and difficult times. With regard to the reference by the Leader of the Opposition that we are back to the State Bank debt of \$2 million a day (the mantra that we used to hear from Olsen and Brown), I think the rough figures when the State Bank collapsed were that the debt to state GSP was something in the high 20s; and state debt to GSP today is around 4 per cent. The nation is at 5.6 per cent.

So, if you are going to compare like with like, be honest. We have a very low level of debt, wisely invested in public infrastructure. Moody's, who take a much more focused look at overall debt levels in their methodology of rating a state, have said to me as early as this morning that they are quite comfortable with our budget settings and do not see a problem with the level of debt that we have incurred.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Look at them.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** You are such a pathetic member of parliament, member for Bragg. What I find extraordinary about the member for Bragg is that she has been a repeated failure at everything she has attempted in politics. She has nothing to brag about, yet she still comes up chirping at every opportunity. If I were you, member for Bragg, I would actually be a little quiet and a little bit reflective on how you have managed to sabotage your own career. But what is incredible is not only did you sabotage your own career but also you sabotaged the careers of all of your colleagues, because there is no doubt—

**Mr PISONI:** I have a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I refer to standing order 127. The Treasurer got up to defend his budget but has spent most of his time attacking the member for Bragg. I do not know what the attraction is or what the motivation is—

**Dr McFetridge:** Fatal attraction!

**Mr PISONI:** Perhaps it is a fatal attraction. I point to standing order 127, making personal reflections on other members. I would have thought, if the Treasurer was so proud of his budget, he would not have time, in the half hour he is allocated, to spend so much of that time attacking the member for Bragg.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am not quite sure for whom that relationship is fatal.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I did not ask for the opinions of the members on my left. I think that, given that the Treasurer has responded to a fairly feisty attack from the member for Davenport, that the Treasurer's speech has constantly—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me, order! The Treasurer has been constantly interjected upon. There is no point of order, and we will continue with his speech.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. You are right, I have just been defending myself from the onslaught that the member for Bragg continually throws our way. In conclusion I say this. We know that we have upset people. We know that we have upset the accepted normality of government, but the choices were limited. The choices are incredibly limited because what I did not want to do was to raise taxes on the family household. I did not want to raise taxes like the emergency services levy. So, if you do not want to raise taxes and put a burden on the household, you have to cut your cloth, and when you come to cutting your services you look for services and ways to cut that have the minimal impact on the general population.

We make no apology for the fact that, in the modern workforce of today, the vast majority of South Australians do not receive 17½ per cent leave loading, unless they are working shiftwork—and we not touching the shiftworkers of our state, nor are we touching it for teachers. You can no longer justify, in this modern economy, with the pressures and the demands we face, a 17½ per cent leave loading. What we are doing is trading it off. We are providing two extra days a year for a public servant. They may not like it, but it is a fair substitute and the vast majority of South Australians work under similar conditions.

When it comes to the controversy over long service leave, I say this. When you hit the 15-year mark of service in the public sector, you get 15 work days (three weeks) for every extra year of service. That means, over a further 15 years, you can take almost a whole year off courtesy of the taxpayer. You can retire a year earlier on full pay. If members opposite think that that is reasonable, well then vote against our measures. It is at the benchmark, the highest in the nation (on advice I have) and it is so out of whack with other jurisdictions—the commonwealth and, in particular, the private sector workforce—it can no longer be justified. Because who pays? The taxpayer pays.

How can we in all good conscience allow a system to continue where, after 30 years of service—and that is not uncommon in the public sector—a person can take about 45 weeks leave? That is a fair, appropriate and balanced measure. It is not taking away long service leave, but bringing it back to a midpoint in the nation for state and federal governments and at a benchmark consistent with what the average worker would have in the private sector. These are not radical; these are fair.

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:18):** As is normal, the Treasurer comes in here and hurls himself into personal abuse across the chamber and thinks that he is a good parliamentarian and a good debater. What he should have been doing is trying to justify his budget. Only moments ago, the Treasurer said, 'I think we have made savings in every one of my budgets.' What the Treasurer does in his budgets is not make savings, he reprioritises. He corrects the stuff-ups that he made the year before, the year before and the year before. That is what the Treasurer is doing: he is continually having to change his priorities because his budget is out of control.

I also reiterate the point that I made only yesterday about this claim that the Treasurer makes and continues to make that the global financial crisis has caused a \$1.4 billion hole in his budget. I reiterate: in the financial year 2008-09, when the global financial crisis hit, the Treasurer's budget underestimated the revenues by \$276 million. In the following year, the financial year just completed (2009-10), the Treasurer's budget underestimated revenues by \$1,087 million.

If you add those two numbers together, in the two years where the Treasurer claims that there was a \$1.4 billion black hole created by the global financial crisis, indeed his budgets underestimated the revenues by \$1.363 billion. By my arithmetic, at the very best, the Treasurer could claim that there was a \$37 million shortfall created by the global financial crisis. The reality is that the rivers of gold to his Treasury have continued to flow notwithstanding the global financial crisis in other parts of the world.

This budget is another fudge, and it continues the fudge by a Treasurer who for nine times in a row has come in here, given us a set of figures that are the wrong priorities and tried to con us with spin and deceit. Only yesterday, when I spoke on the Appropriation Bill, I noted that I was the third speaker for the opposition and, at that point, nobody from the government had stood up to argue the case for this budget.

It is my best information that every member of the opposition has spoken on this budget. Not one member of the government other than the Treasurer has stood up to defend this budget. How on earth can the Treasurer claim that this is a good budget when not one member of his team



has the gall to stand up and endeavour to defend this budget? Not one of them wants to be associated with this budget back in their electorates.

**Dr McFetridge:** Can you blame them?

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I don't blame them, because I wouldn't want to be associated with it and obviously not one member of the Treasurer's team wants to be associated with it. It is an outrageous document. It is full of lies and deceit. The claim that the global financial crisis has caused challenges for this Treasurer is simply wrong: revenues have continued to go up.

The reality, as I said yesterday, is that expenses are the problem of this budget and this Treasurer. The expenses of the government of South Australia as a percentage of the gross state product have grown from 15.9 per cent in financial year 2001-02 and 15.4 per cent in 2002-03 to 18.9 per cent and 18 per cent in the last two financial years. Therein lies the problem that the Treasurer has with his budgets: his expenses have grown by a factor of 3 per cent of the state's gross product. That is just not sustainable. I do not want to harp on that but it does need to be repeated and we need to be absolutely certain what the problem is here. It is the Treasurer: it is not the global financial crisis.

I am delighted that the Minister for Health is in the room and I would like to take a few minutes just talking the Minister for Health through some issues at Keith District Hospital. The minister is obviously in denial about what goes on at that particular hospital. He claims that state funding for the equivalent of three public beds is not delivering value for money for the state. What I need to say to the Minister for Health is that the state funding for the equivalent of three beds in that hospital has underpinned the viability of that hospital and that enables that hospital to deliver in total 1,959 bed days in the last financial year.

That is a lot more than three public hospital beds or their equivalent. It is probably the equivalent of six or seven public hospital beds, so it is very good value for money but as well as that, that hospital provides general practice services to a large, isolated community. It provides accident and emergency services to a large and isolated community, and it provides vital emergency services covering the Dukes Highway, probably one of the most dangerous stretches of road in the state.

It is the last of the points east of the Royal Adelaide that we can fly to without refuelling the emergency helicopter. That provides a vital service to the travelling public using that highway and the Riddoch Highway, which branches off at Keith and runs south down to Mount Gambier, the second biggest city in the state.

The Keith hospital will fail. It will not continue to operate without at least the support that it has been getting from the taxpayer of South Australia and probably a bit more support—as the minister acknowledged when I brought a deputation to meet him back on 27 June to argue that point.

The minister has acknowledged that he wants to retain accident and emergency services at that hospital. I have to tell him that there will not be a hospital there without adequate support. If he thinks he can cherrypick and just put in a few dollars to maintain accident and emergency services, that will not happen because the whole hospital is unviable. The doors will close. There will be no hospital from which accident and emergency services can be provided.

There will be no GPs in that local region. There will be no volunteer ambulance services along the length of the Dukes Highway, probably from Coonalpyn until you get to Bordertown. Bordertown is outside the reach of the rescue helicopter, and it is a long, long way from those parts of the Dukes Highway on which we regularly see bad motor accidents.

The minister has to accept that there will be no service on that part of the Dukes Highway, and there will be no service delivering any health cover to those communities if the Keith hospital is allowed to close. He is getting a very, very cheap health service for that region and for that isolated series of communities all the way from Padthaway to Coonalpyn.

The minister has to accept that, if the Keith and District Hospital closes, he will have to pick up all of those patients. All of those bed days that I mentioned a minute ago will turn up in a public hospital somewhere in the state, probably in Adelaide. The people of Keith probably will not go south and east for their medical service; they will probably come north to Adelaide. They will be public patients, as they are retaining their private health cover and turning up at the Keith Hospital as private patients only because it is a private hospital. The minister has to understand that these

patients will come back into his public system, and he will find that the cost will be a lot more than he is currently paying to keep that hospital open.

Time expired.

**Mr PISONI (Unley) (17:28):** What I have picked up from the budget debate goes back to something I was taught by my mother at a very young age; that is, if you cannot say something nice about somebody, do not say anything at all. So, maybe that is why there is silence from the government benches—because they cannot find anything nice to say about treasurer Kevin Foley's budget and that is why we are deafened by the silence.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Unley, I apologise; there is a point of order over here. Could you take your seat while we are doing that, thank you.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** I would quite like to listen to what he is saying and act accordingly, but I just point out that the process has not finished and that we are still running up until probably 10 o'clock tonight, so there is plenty of opportunity for people to speak.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, there does seem to be some misapprehension.

**Mrs GERAGHTY:** If you cannot say things about people that are nice, do not say anything at all—I just remind you of your own words.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Right, that would have been 126.

**Mr PISONI:** Was it really?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It was 126, yes. The member objected to the words that were used, but do carry on.

**Mr PISONI:** I will remind the member for Torrens that that is what my mother said: it is not what I said. My mother said, 'If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.' She did bring me up. Then the Treasurer, of course, says that it is the opposition's time and that is why everybody is quiet on the Labor side, but he spent half an hour defending his own budget because nobody else would. We have moved into the 10-minute grievance debate. All the Labor members had 20 minutes in which they could have expressed their love for the budget and spent that time doing something about it.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr PISONI:** I think my mother gave us a very balanced life. She brought up a Liberal MP and a CEPU union official, so she has a very balanced life. I must say, when Simon and I talk about politics we do not have a lot to say, because we go back to that reference to our mother, 'If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.'

I would like to take this opportunity to raise some concerns in my electorate of Unley in regard to a full range of issues that are loosely connected to the budget. I came across a very interesting situation just a few weeks ago of a constituent who lives on the back of one of the many creeks that runs through Unley. If you remember, we had flooding before the 2006 election and I think there was some television footage that was arranged of premier Mike Rann going out to a constituent, I think, of the member for Waite and promising to do something about stormwater, but he was thrown off the property because she understood you could not believe what the Premier said in an election climate.

I think what happened was that, in response to that, we saw the Stormwater Management Authority set up to manage stormwater in the council districts of Burnside, Unley, West Torrens and Mitcham. Here we are four years after that legislation has come to the parliament and, guess what, they have only spent money on board fees—that is all.

I had a situation where Mr Brown from Wayville called me and said, 'Look, I'm really concerned, David, because there are shopping trolleys in the river behind me and somebody has built something illegally. I am concerned that the drought has broken and we are going to be getting some rain. Whose responsibility is it to deal with this? The council told me it's not their responsibility because this part of Greenhill Creek is privately owned,' and so the council could not take responsibility.

I wrote to the Stormwater Management Authority asking for advice and six weeks later I got a letter back from the Chairman of the Stormwater Management Authority saying, 'Look up the act.' The advice was, 'Look it up in the act.' I only got that letter back after I rang the office and said, 'Did

you get my letter?' 'Yes, we got it.' 'Were you going to respond?' 'Yes, eventually.' This was in the lead-up to the wet weather.

I obviously expressed that I did not think that was a very satisfactory situation, that a member of parliament has contacted an authority and the letter has been ignored, and the advice was quite sloppy, I must say. So I called him and spoke to him, and he did take my call, which I appreciate, and he advised me, 'Yes, it is a problem. We haven't really worked out how to deal with that and we will raise that in the review.' So, for four years they have had the money and have not spent it on anything other than board fees, and now they are having a review. I hope they do not spend too much money on a review because I could tell them, 'Look, you haven't done anything. You can't even solve a simple question of a creek being blocked in a suburb.' No wonder we have so much trouble working out how we can manage the Murray over three states.

Then, of course, a very big concern in Unley, which is also a concern for people who have become aware of the government's 30-year plan, is that 70 per cent of the growth in South Australia is to come from existing suburbs. Urban infill is a very big concern, and I know that the member for Morphett has some beautiful heritage areas in his electorate as well, and it is one of those distinctive features of South Australia. When people come from Sydney and Melbourne, they know they have the trams in Melbourne and the Opera House in Sydney, but they always comment on our beautiful stone homes, our beautiful character suburbs.

A concern that my constituents have is that that will all be lost by the government's 30-year plan and its plan to infill and to get its growth in population in South Australia by infilling 70 per cent of the established urban area in Adelaide. All of us represent electorates of the same number of people roughly, within 10 per cent or so, but geographically the seat of Unley is the smallest at 12.2 kilometres. I say to my good friend, the member for Hammond, that it took me nearly eight minutes to drive from one end of my electorate to the other the other day in peak hour traffic. Outrageous!

**Ms Bedford:** What speed were you doing?

**Mr PISONI:** Forty kilometres an hour in Unley; unless you go along Fisher Street, then you can go 50 km/h.

**Mr Pederick:** Did you take a packed lunch?

**Mr PISONI:** I didn't need a packed lunch. It does enable you to appreciate the commitment that our country members have to servicing their electorates and their constituents. Of course, we do not have a lot of public open space in Unley. We are slowly losing our private open space as well when a house gets knocked down and two or three replace it on the same block.

The new tree regulations are concerning for many in Unley because we have lovely tree-lined streets. We did lose the beautiful elms on Greenhill Road. That is an interesting story in itself. The department of transport used to pay the Unley council about \$60,000 a year to water those trees because they did not want to be bothered with it. The council was right next door, they were watering their own trees, but then the water restrictions came in and they said, 'Water restrictions, we are not going to give you that \$60,000 any more to maintain those trees.' Guess what? They are all dead. They are 80-year-old elm trees. I think Australia is one of the only places in the world where we do not have Dutch Elm disease on elm trees, yet we have dozens and dozens of them that have died because of the mismanagement of the department of transport.

I imagine that the order came from the Minister for Transport who has just recently moved in to the lovely tree-lined streets of Unley. So it is confusing. He told this house he only moved in to vote against me, and I am quite flattered by that; however, it did not work. I am here and enjoying the contribution that I am making to the South Australian parliament as the member for Unley.

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (17:39):** Budgets are indeed complex, both to compile and examine, and I look forward to taking part in the estimates procedures in the next two weeks to observe what I know will be the forensic examination by members of the opposition of the budget lines, rather than the carping that has comprised their contributions on supply to date.

The member for Davenport spent a great deal of time this afternoon questioning why no member of the government had risen to speak to supply. In my experience in this place, it has always been the opposition who have gone hardest on supply and members of the government have usually spoken in grievance debate, which is what I am doing. So I am sorry to have disappointed the member for Davenport, but there are many reasons for the opposition to have free rein on supply, and I have enjoyed listening to your contributions.

Government members wait, as I said, for the debate in what has become normal practice—so we are talking about precedence in this chamber—not because we have nothing to say. Time for parliament is precious, and the budget document, I feel, does speak for itself. It is announced on budget day, and it is impossible for us to take in all the measures of the budget, which I am sure you all understand, because you take it away and read it as well. We have certain announcements given to us, as you do, so it takes some time to work through these things.

The papers are prepared by a team of experts; we would agree with that, I am sure. Our public servants do their very best to prepare a document, which I am sure you will agree is not aimed at doing anything but making South Australia a better place to live for as many people as possible. It is crafted according to the times, and we face unprecedented times. Whether or not you believe the global financial crisis has had no impact on South Australia, I am sure it will not take long for us to find ways that the budget has had to suffer because of the lack of income.

I take it on trust that budget documents are prepared to the best ability of public servants, and I am sure you do as well. No government, I would say to you, ever makes decisions to cause angst or consternation among the public. Rather, they do their best to balance the competing priorities, and even previous Liberal budgets we know were prepared to do as much as possible to look after South Australia. It all comes down to what is considered to be core responsibilities or promises.

For my part, and for the part of the constituents I represent, health services, in particular the Modbury Hospital, continue to be the centrepiece of focus for a good budget, and it is a concern in every electorate, as far as I know. The Minister for Health has told us many times about the enormous pressures that the budget for hospitals and health services is placing on South Australia's finances.

I think it is agreed that we had to do something that was completely different. In order to maintain the high level of services that are now expected by people in South Australia, the number of services that the ageing population need, we have to make some changes to what has been the norm in the past. However, I am really pleased to say that Modbury Hospital, that has suffered greatly at the creative hands of Liberal budgets in the past, has managed to see an increase in its infrastructure and services. I look forward to seeing the GP Plus clinic come into operation. The people of Modbury are beginning to again have the sort of trust in the service that had been eroded over many years as a result of cuts, unfortunately made by the Liberal government at the time.

History shows and *Hansard* shows that the reversal of fortune came for Modbury Hospital from continual work on this side of the house. I am indebted to our government for taking over the Modbury Hospital at the time it did to bring back the staff that we needed. It is also important to put into the whole overall look of the budget the health plan that the minister has brought in, which has seen three major hospitals now provide all the services necessary throughout the Adelaide region.

It has taken some time for people to understand, I think, the importance of that shift of service delivery. I think that the Royal Adelaide Hospital, which will be starting shortly and will be finished, I know, in the years to come, as minister has told us, is going to make a great difference to service delivery for health in South Australia.

Over the period of time between the election and now, my constituents have accepted, and are very happy to accept and wait for, the new Royal Adelaide Hospital, because they know it is going to be a much better outcome for them. The city expansion that is going to be a result of not only the new Royal Adelaide Hospital but also the oval I think will completely revitalise the city centre, and there is nothing wrong with that. I think every business in South Australia is going to benefit from the number of people who come to South Australia more readily now to take part in the revitalisation of that section of the city and the wonderful public buildings we have along North Terrace.

Another thing that heavily affects our people in the Modbury area is the O-Bahn bus service. It has been a remarkable public transport service for some time, and we are looking forward to enhancements. Only yesterday the member for Newland and I spoke with the Minister for Transport about improvements we are hoping to see very soon in the Tea Tree Plaza interchange and parking services around the O-Bahn. Public transport, I think, is a vitally important part of South Australia's future, particularly in the city region, obviously. Cutting down on the numbers of cars on our roads will make a real difference to sustainability in the future and the air quality in the city.

Employment is something I think that everyone understands. The Premier has placed a great emphasis on it in his entire time as Premier. He has worked tirelessly to make sure that we have jobs throughout South Australia. It is very easy to look only at the cuts to the public sector. There is natural attrition. No-one is happy seeing jobs moved backwards and forwards, but it makes a great deal of sense to look at how we provide the public services that we all need and rely on here in South Australia.

Public sector employees make very good decisions, and there has been a lot of criticism of how these decisions have been taken in this house. I think that it is insulting to members of our Public Service to be under constant attack by the opposition for what they are producing. With respect to the education budget, schools in my electorate have done well. We have seen enormous amounts of infrastructure go in, not only the BER buildings.

Education is the most important thing that we can give to our children. It is the only way they will get jobs in the workforce. I am heartened to see what is going on in education. Obviously, things are changing in education in terms of the way in which the services are delivered, but I think that the changing world demands that sort of change.

Everyone has grappled with water restrictions. People have learnt to live with them, and I do not think that is a bad thing. I think that South Australia has shown itself to be quite thrifty with its water use; and, now that we have had so much rain, I am looking forward to much better times. People in the garden industry in particular approached me in the past, and they were very concerned, but that industry has adapted and changed. I think that good times are coming for the garden industry because everyone in South Australia will change the sorts of plants they have in their garden, anyway, and that will not be a bad thing, either.

In terms of services for the ageing, disabled and any disadvantaged member of our community, obviously we want to do as much as we can to support people. Again, the demands are enormous, and we have to be very careful that we make sure that we make every dollar spent on disability go as far as it possibly can.

It is not enough for members of the opposition to say that things are not as they would like them to be. It is about making sure that we get behind the budget. If there is something that members see in the budget they do not like, let us work constructively to make sure it does as much as it possibly can for their constituents. We can represent only our own areas. I cannot look at what will affect the constituents of members opposite and speak for them. That is not what I am here for.

We live in volatile times. Circumstances force governments to change and make decisions on a regular basis. There are competing priorities in the budget, and that is never going to change. I think that one of the things I would like to pick up on, just before I finish my remarks, is the State Strategic Plan. One of the items in the plan the Premier has pointed out is halving the informal rate at elections.

As we come into the local government elections (where, as we know, voting is not compulsory), I guess we will all be looking at how many people do take part in that vote. I think that it is a very important thing, particularly when you look at what has happened in the federal election—and around the hung parliament—that we all do as much as we can to engage with our communities to explain to them how parliament does work.

I think that the more people who are interested in parliament and what goes on in here the better it will be for all of us as we come to represent our people in here. The fact that people have been allowed to think that parliament is not relevant to them or not as relevant to them as it should be is a real tragedy. I know that I will be doing my very best to get people involved in the democratic process, understanding how it works and understanding how they can become activists in the area that concerns them.

As we come towards the celebrations of the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our parliament, which I know we will be marking here in parliament, I hope that is something all members will keep in mind.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (17:49):** In this budget there is absolutely nothing for the electors of Morphett other than pain. The electorate of Morphett is a compact electorate. It is one of the tourist zones of South Australia. It has hotels, high-rise, investment properties and a lot of commercial properties. The government must be taking millions of dollars both in stamp duty and land tax out of my electorate every year, but what do they get back in return—very little, other than they are very sensible to keep electing a Liberal member of parliament there, and with an

11.2 per cent margin they are not getting it in the foreseeable future. I will be doing my damndest to make sure that this government is exposed for what it is doing, and that is looking after those who look after them.

We see that this budget has put a lot of money into advertising, again, with \$320,000 going into public communications for the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. I did not think this government was going to advertise again.

The bit that really hurts in the health budget and concerns my electors in Morphett is the withdrawal of the supposed subsidy to the Glenelg Community Hospital. I use the word 'community' deliberately. It may be a privately owned hospital inasmuch as it is not owned by the government, but it is not owned by the Catholic Church or Healthscope or one of those big boys. It is owned by the Glenelg community. It is a not-for-profit hospital and has been there for a long time. My son Lachlan was born there on a dark and windy night on 15 March 1975.

The hospital was going strongly then and had lots of obstetrics. You cannot have a baby there now, unfortunately, but you can have excellent care for day surgery and overnight surgery, and also a program called Recovery at the Bay. That is a program that linked Flinders Medical Centre and the Repatriation General Hospital with the Glenelg Community Hospital. Patients waiting or recovering from surgery or recuperating from some other procedures or illness can come to the Bay and Recovery at the Bay.

My understanding is this is not charged out at the acute bed rate. This was carefully negotiated. It was a good thing that the Department of Health did. It negotiated extremely good overnight prices for people who are stepping down to Recovery at the Bay. This actually saves the Department of Health hundreds of dollars per night per patient. So why would you abandon it? Don't ask me. At the same time, there are other hospitals that have larger subsidies.

The Glenelg Community Hospital board was so concerned that it issued a press release. Mr Peter Moloney, the chairperson of the Glenelg Community Hospital, put out a press release on 21 September which said:

...the Glenelg Community Hospital expressed surprise and disappointment at the press report which appeared in the Saturday September 18...*Advertiser*. He said: 'I wish to set the record straight as regards public funding and the Glenelg Community Hospital.'

He said that there had been considerable angst unnecessarily caused by the article—

We know where that came from—it came straight out of the budget papers. Mr Moloney said:

'GCH has been operating successfully for 60 years and has no plans to close any time soon irrespective of any funding issues arising from the recent state budget.' Mr Moloney went on to explain that, 'The core business of our hospital is the provision of overnight and day surgery and the care of medical patients, which is 100 per cent funded via private health insurance providers.'

Mr Moloney explained that [Glenelg Community Hospital] has 'for some years now had an agreement with the Flinders Medical Centre, the Repatriation General Hospital and the Noarlunga Hospital to take patients from those facilities who are waiting for surgery, recovering from surgery or who need care prior to being transferred from hospital to home and this amounted to a very small fraction of the hospital's income. He further said that, 'It was a valuable community service which we have been pleased to be able to provide.' He went on to say that, 'It would be a great pity if this program was lost to the community because it helps these public hospitals operate more efficiently by freeing up beds for more acute patients,' and that 'GCH has been happy to assist in this process.'

Mr Moloney went on to say that if the program is to close it 'will not affect the viability of the Glenelg Community Hospital. It will simply mean that we will continue to serve the community in other ways not involving collaboration with the public hospital system.'

It is not a subsidy. It is a service that is being provided by the hospital. So, when the minister can review that decision, I think it will be good not only for his bottom line but also, more importantly, for the patients who are benefiting from Recovery at the Bay.

The member for Unley talked a bit about the Stormwater Management Authority. I have vivid memories of the floods in Glenelg North when millions of litres of stormwater came running down Brownhill Creek, Sturt Creek and the Patawalonga Creek to the Barcoo Outlet. The gate system was not working properly and the whole area flooded. That may not have happened had there been better retention and detention upstream, and it pains me to hear that the Stormwater Management Authority is not doing a whole lot to move things forward with stormwater management in South Australia, particularly retention and detention.

This week I was delighted to receive a letter from the Adelaide Airport outlining their new aquifer storage and recovery project that is going to be put next to the airport. This will save

millions of litres of stormwater from rushing out to sea through the Barcoo Outlet. It will be detained; it will be retained. It will be cleaned up in the wetlands and a lot of it will be stored in the aquifers underneath, and as has been demonstrated so well by Mr Pitman and Salisbury council, it will be reused for on-site non-potable use. Volumes of stormwater rush out to sea all along the coast. I live on the coast at Somerton Park, and even when it has not been raining at Somerton Park but in hills, massive volumes of water rush out to sea. The sooner we do something about stormwater recovery, detention, retention and treatment, the better. I know the Liberal plan was an excellent plan.

The 22 kilometres of sand pipeline that was going to be put along the coast is now back to nine kilometres. However, the price has not gone down, it has gone up. I do confess that I live at Somerton Park, so I am rather pleased that it is not my end that has been cut; that is, the pipeline will go from West Beach to Kingston Park. However, the poor beggars at Henley, Grange and Semaphore, the people living in those presently safe Labor seats, will be suffering the inconvenience of large trucks trucking sand along their streets each time there is a need to move sand up and down the coast. The sand pipeline should have gone ahead. It should not be short-changed and it should not be shortened in length.

The other big issue I have in my electorate is the state of the roads. Anzac Highway between Brighton Road and Marion Road—it is not in my electorate—is an absolute disgrace. Bitumen has failed, bitumen has lifted off and bitumen has peeled off. There are corrugations and ruts. It is almost like a four-wheel drive track coming up to Adelaide now, along with the thousands of cars. I know the Minister for Transport does not live down there anymore, but he needs to drive along Anzac Highway and to look at the state of Anzac Highway. I am getting continual complaints from constituents. I have written to the minister about it, but so far nothing.

The state of Morphett Road is atrocious. One thing I have asked about in estimates before is the tram crossing at Morphett Road. The congestion goes back to Bray Street, and now, because they put these extra sets of traffic lights at the tram crossing, you have congestion at Anzac Highway, Morphett Road and also going north through to Immanuel College. The traffic lights do not add to the safety of the road. In fact, you can still get caught on the tram crossing, with a green light there and a red light at Anzac Highway. They spent \$400,000 on that crossing. The then CE of transport described it to me—and I will not use the exact expletive—as a complete 'f'er'. That is what he said. That was a few years ago. Nothing has happened. It has got worse, in fact.

Oaklands crossing, at the other end of my electorate, is another area of complete congestion. We have seen patch-ups and the station moved. At last the State Aquatic Centre is being constructed at Marion, but considering the volumes of traffic going through that area now, that is another area this government needs to pay attention to. It is going to take millions of dollars to fix it, but you cannot keep postponing, because the moment you postpone it, up goes the price. The danger to people, the cost in time, the cost in delays; it is just getting worse and worse. Those two particular traffic areas are something that the Minister for Transport really needs to pay a lot of attention to.

The good people of Morphett deserve more than this. They are putting a lot of money back into this state through their businesses and their endeavours, the taxes they are paying and in supporting the economy. Let us not forget, three million visitors per year visit the Bay and spend money, and that money is going back into state coffers. Morphett deserves better from this government.

*[Sitting suspended from 18:00 to 19:30]*

**Mr BROCK (Frome) (19:30):** We all understand that any government and, in any case, any responsible person or company needs to adjust their budget according to the opportunity for their income to offset their expenditure. This state has been promoting the many opportunities for resource commodities and the great additional opportunities with the rewarded and awarded projects that we have achieved with defence and renewable energy.

The state has been very fortunate with the opportunities that we have been successful in but, as the Treasurer states, we have had the global financial crisis and the loss of expected revenue from the GST share from the commonwealth government. As we are all aware, Australia and indeed South Australia escaped the worst of the crisis and, whilst our state received a great

share of the commonwealth stimulus package moneys, I believe that we have missed the boat with long-term planning.

We have, with the pause that was created in the activities as a result of the global financial crisis, had the opportunity to look at getting people ready for work when the resumption occurs; that is, when the GFC has been overcome and mining activities re-establish themselves in the north of South Australia. However, I think we have not grasped the opportunity for funding to look at that training. This government seems not to have grasped the opportunity, with funding to adult education being slashed.

Also the reduction of TAFE activities in regional locations is not the right direction that we should be going as a state and/or as a government. We have people looking to be upskilled or retrained in lots of areas, and here we have this opportunity now being squandered. How can these people get the required training to be able to apply for positions with mining opportunities, renewable energy opportunities or anything else that may eventuate in the future?

We have not sent a very positive message for business opportunities within the regional areas by eliminating the funding for Regional Development Australia after 2013. We should be increasing the activities of these sectors to encourage activities in regional South Australia.

Last year, I had the opportunity to visit potential businesspeople in China, and I have now introduced some of those people I visited to the relevant ministers. I understand that there are now opportunities in the pipeline to gain from these companies' involvement in this state. One of those is in the area of renewable energy, and if that is all that was achieved as a result of my visit to China last year I am very happy with that. This trip was assisted by our trade people in Shanghai, and I must congratulate them for the great work they did.

However, with this budget, these areas for establishing and promoting trade are being dramatically reduced or, in some cases, eliminated. How are we to promote if we do not have representation in these regions, particularly in the Asian and Chinese regions? This move, together with proposed cuts to PIRSA, which means savings of \$80 million plus a loss of 180 jobs, certainly will not assist the welfare and the growth opportunities for activities in regional South Australia, nor will it assist with export potentials.

The electorate of Frome, along with other electorates in this state, has a proud wine industry which not only provides great export earnings for the state but also is very active in promoting tourism activities for people not only within the state of South Australia but also interstate and overseas. The \$7 million cut to the cellar door subsidy will diminish the opportunity and the ability of our winemakers, especially the smaller ones, to showcase our famous wine produce to the Australian domestic market. It will also be a hindrance and a restriction to the export market all over the world.

While there was no mention in the budget regarding the closure of any schools in regional South Australia, or across South Australia, it appears that the funding criteria for smaller schools may create more issues than opportunities. These schools, even though they may have smaller numbers than metropolitan schools, still deserve to have the same opportunities as their counterparts in Adelaide.

The main area of concern is the removal of the small schools grant, being up to \$30,000 per school, which is for small schools in regional areas. If we take this amount of grant money away from some of these smaller regional schools—and there are numerous ones across regional South Australia—we may, as a result, lose the school. If that eventuates, the community shrinks.

I have today requested a select committee be established to investigate the best opportunities for regional and outback school bus services, which could be more effective and better value for money than the current system. However, going forward we must ensure that schools and relative transport for schoolchildren in regional and outback South Australia is not affected, and is improved.

As we are all very well aware, or we should be, our communities are already facing great challenges and are under great pressure. If we lose a school, or start taking students away from one of these smaller schools, the communities that they are in will suffer the loss of shopping and associated activities, which will result in a further loss of confidence and also retail and employment opportunities.



Also, there is no indication in this budget that funding for country hospitals is to be reduced, but we must remember that we have to ensure that as many services are available as possible for our people to be able to get the required attention and the medical facilitation. I have asked the Minister for Health for a review of the PAT system, and I await a reply with a copy of this review.

The reimbursement costs for these services, with regard to travel and accommodation, has not been reviewed or increased since 2001—this has been going on for 10 years. It is an issue that this government, and the previous government, should not be proud of. Again, the sick and the less fortunate have to bear the brunt of the required cuts to balance a budget. Again, regional South Australians have been asked to pay for the services that are readily available, for less cost, in metropolitan Adelaide.

Another area of concern is the land tax payments. I know that the threshold and the various brackets were adjusted at the last state election, however this state is still the most expensively taxed state in this regard. It certainly does not encourage the establishment of business opportunities in South Australia, and in particular, regional locations. I understand that this state's land tax liability is 70 per cent above the national average and over 500 per cent above the land tax liabilities in Western Australia.

However, on a positive note, I am thankful to the Minister for Health, who has recently approved the four renal dialysis machines for the Port Pirie Regional Health Service—a service that is gratefully appreciated by the patients that now do not have to travel three times per week to Port Augusta to receive this service.

As said earlier, budgets are very difficult to balance and it is no different with our own personal budgets. If we have to reduce expenditure, for whatever reason, then we must ensure that the must have items are maintained. The like to have items may have to be deferred or reduced, to ensure that the items required for our day-to-day existence are maintained and improved.

We can increase areas for income, such as increasing taxes and the like, which has happened in this budget. This move certainly does not encourage confidence or increased activities by business and/or the general community. I understand the need to balance our budgets, however we need to ensure that we do it in a responsible manner and, whilst people may elect to state that this is a responsible way to achieve the savings, it is again the less fortunate that are bearing the cuts.

The Treasurer may be saying that this is a responsible budget, and that this state has retained its AAA credit rating. However, the people who have contributed to this AAA credit rating retention, have again being the people who can least afford to contribute.

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (19:39):** I gave what I thought was a fairly comprehensive speech yesterday on the impact of this budget on regional South Australia and the people of Stuart most specifically. I shared a few positives, and I shared many disappointments yesterday. I am not going to go over all of that again. What I am going to do, though, is delve into one particular part of the budget—one of the most disappointing parts for me—and that is the removal of the small schools grant.

I would like to put some things into perspective. The reality is that taking this money away from these schools, if you look at it purely in dollar terms, is quite a small thing. If you look at this from the perspective of what it means to the schools, the towns and the communities in regional South Australia, it is an enormous thing—it is a really enormous thing. In 2006, the previous education minister, Jane Lomax-Smith said:

Small schools are an important part of their communities and will continue to share in the benefits of increased funding for education, provided under the Rann Government. The way we fund our schools has historically given greater levels of funding and staffing support to smaller schools and that will continue in the future.

When talking about regional schools, she said that they 'suffer the tyranny of distance, isolation or levels of disadvantage' and that those schools will continue to receive the grant. Clearly, that is not continuing. The 2010 Resource Entitlement Statement and Supporting Information document of the Department of Education and Children's Services states:

Students from rural and isolated areas are disadvantaged in comparison to metropolitan students due to their access to services, the higher costs of running services and the size of the school population. Initiatives that have been adopted to address these inequities include—

and one of the issues listed is:

Small Schools Grant—allocated to rural and isolated schools, special schools or disadvantaged metropolitan schools...

Clearly, things have changed because here we are in September 2010 and that small schools grant has been removed. That grant that gave \$30,000 to schools 80 kilometres or more away from Adelaide (small schools being those with 85 students or less), and they have lost that support.

Taking away that support from those schools saves the budget \$3.5 million every year, and that \$3.5 million every year is nothing to snivel at; that is a lot of money. In the scope of the budget, though, getting back to perspective, it is very little. However, let me tell you, from the perspective of regional South Australia, that is enormous. In the electorate of Stuart alone, Blanchetown, Booborowie, Cadell, Farrell Flat, Marree, Melrose, Morgan, one of the primary schools in Port Augusta, Port Germein, Robertstown, Spalding, Truro, Wilmington, Wirrabara and Yunta will all be affected by this. Every single one of those 15 towns will be affected by this. It is very important stuff.

I cannot stress enough, going back to perspective, how important it would be to any one of those towns to lose their school. If you lose your school, you lose the heart of your town—children, education. Those schools are not just about teaching. Teaching is incredibly important, but those schools are about developing students, about developing teenagers, about developing young adults and, hopefully, developing middle-aged and older adults who will live in the town or in the community; they are about families, and they are also about economic sustainability. If you do not do those last few things I have talked about, you do not have economic sustainability.

If you lose your school, you lose your butcher, your grocer, your take-away shop, your service station, your workshop, your netball club, your football club, your cricket club and your church. You lose all of these things because you are not developing young people in your area, in your town. You are not allowing families to stay in your town. You are not encouraging grandparents to stay in your town. You are not encouraging people to stay, let alone for those towns to grow and develop.

Taking the schools away takes away the critical mass of the town; it takes away employment; it takes away apprenticeships—it takes away all these things. It is not an exaggeration. There are 15 schools involved although, in fairness, I have to say 14 because one of the schools is in Port Augusta, but if you take away the school in those towns you will take away the heart of the town, and the town will die.

I am not scaremongering because I am not exaggerating. I am also not scaremongering because I know it will not happen in every single one of those towns. The \$30,000, though, is very important. There are schools that have 20 or 30 kids in them and sometimes fewer. I called in to the Yunta school a few months ago and there were two kids studying there at the time. There are more kids than that at the school but they were away on a field trip. However, the people at Yunta were keeping that school open for two kids who were there that day to learn. That is dedication; that is support; and that is employment creating future opportunities. That is devotion to those kids and to the town.

If you take the money away from schools, I point out that they are already on tight budgets; schools with the small schools grant are already under threat and are concerned about being closed. They are already concerned about losing all those other flow-on benefits to their towns. If they are already concerned when they have the grant, how serious does this issue become if the grant is taken away? This is a dreadfully important issue for regional South Australia.

The sum of \$3.5 million per year is being taken out of the budget—in Stuart alone affecting 15 schools; over regional South Australia, that might possibly be 50 small schools. At the same time, however, expenses and office funding for ministers are going up. This does not involve all of them: there was a claim made by the Premier that there would be a 15 per cent cut across all ministerial funding allocations (which was subsequently proven to be incorrect).

However, the cost for the Premier's own staff and the running of his offices will go up. The Treasurer's will go up and minister Caica, minister Weatherill and minister Snelling's costs will go up. So, at the same time as the salaries and the money allocated to run those offices is going up, that \$3.5 million (probably affecting roughly 50 schools in towns all around South Australia) is going down.

Under the Liberal opposition's policy of cutting three ministries, we would have saved \$9 million a year, yet in this budget the government has chosen to take out \$3.5 million to affect all

those towns. Those 15 towns I mentioned are terribly important to the electorate of Stuart and there are other really important towns in other parts of the state as well. I know that other members of parliament are incredibly disappointed. The member for Frome mentioned this in his contribution a few minutes ago.

A little while ago the member for Florey talked about competing priorities, and I agree with her: she is right in saying that there will always be competing priorities in a budget. However, \$3.5 million, in terms of a dollar sense over the whole budget, is absolutely nothing. Nobody will convince me that that would have blown out the budget, broken the state or affected the AAA credit rating. However, I can assure you that the decision on that \$3.5 million per year to every one of those towns may well make or break them.

When it comes to competing priorities, I am sure that my fellow MPs on this side and even on the other side who represent city electorates would all agree that that is a very high priority. Imagine if this was happening to a whole suburb in Adelaide and it was going to die because it lost its school. That is what may well happen to some of these country towns. I genuinely fear that it will happen to some of these country towns, and I think it is really disgraceful. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (19:50):** I commend the member for Stuart on his contribution. It truly does demonstrate, as much as any on person's speech in this place can, that he is a man who cares for the community he serves and which elected him to this place. So, well done, Dan, you will serve your community with pride for a long time.

Before I start talking about the budget, I just wish to correct some statements which the Treasurer made earlier this evening, which he has perpetuated a few times, and which are directed to me and I do not like very much. This relates to comments attributed to me on the last day before the election, 19 March, as reported in the *Australian Financial Review*. For the benefit of the record, I want to run through what actually occurred.

On the Thursday before the election, I had done a 40-minute press conference about the Liberal's finances, as we approached the election, and what we intended to do over the next four years. I then had a telephone interview with a journalist from the *Australian Financial Review*, and we spoke at length about what I had put on paper and what I had presented to the media. He asked me about our Royal Adelaide Hospital proposal compared with the government's. He specifically asked the question about the saving of \$1 billion that the Leader of the Opposition had specifically mentioned quite a few times during the election campaign.

A decision had been made that our RAH rebuild was to be a public-private partnership also; so, the same principle that the government supports for its new hospital. On that basis, I was questioned about whether the \$1 billion of savings that we had continually talked about could be delivered. I explained my situation by talking about the initiative of the \$174 million extra that we were proposing to put in health and the fact that, because it was a PPP, savings of the lower construction costs were to be realised over a 30-year period.

On some estimates that we had done on the cost of the RAH build compared with the cost of an RAH rebuild, it was in the vicinity of \$115 million per year; that was the difference in the PPP payments. I told the journalist this, and I said that our commitment was that every dollar saved between the government's proposal and the opposition's proposal would go into regional and suburban hospitals, and I stood by that. I said that if you perpetuate that over the 30-year period of a PPP, there is actually \$3.45 billion plus the \$174 million extra that we were putting into health.

Regrettably, that journalist chose to report my comments, specifically the question he posed to me about spin versus substance, in a way that completely misled the people of South Australia. It certainly gave the Labor Party an opportunity to put an attack upon us. My great regret will be that I did not get the opportunity afforded to me on that day before the election to put my case, but others made the decision on that. However, I stand by my words, and I stand by the honesty and integrity that I brought to the role of shadow treasurer and deputy leader at that time, and I will never resile from that. I ask the Treasurer whether he can stand up and say that he speaks the truth at all times, because there are many people in the community who would seriously doubt that.

Now that I have got that little bit off my chest, I want to get back to the budget and reflect upon some things that frustrate me also. Having a reasonably wide portfolio area in the shadow ministry, there are a lot of things that really concern me. Any person who is from regional South Australia, as all those who have spoken about it, has expressed a complete frustration. I want to

take a few minutes to talk specifically about some targeted areas. The first one is Regional Development Australia.

I stand here having served as a board member on three different regional development boards in the past: Yorke, Port Pirie and the Northern board based in Port Augusta. I have seen so many examples where regional development structures can assist communities, small business, start-up enterprises and a region to grow economically and give the people who live there a far greater future financially because there is job growth, business development and a real chance to turn an economy around that has for far too long been reliant entirely upon agriculture—to supplement agriculture, of course, because agriculture will still be the prime focus, but to make sure there is a diversity.

I have to express my real frustration to the minister for allowing the situation with the current funding agreement for Regional Development Australia, which has gone through enough hurdles over the last two years with the amalgamation of boards from regional development boards into Regional Development Australia and an agreement with federal government, and where local government had also commit to their funding agreement and where there has been an enormous upheaval.

No doubt they have lost some good members of staff who have had tremendous relationships with the communities they served from an economic development perspective; but now to be told that from 30 June 2013 they are expected to be entirely self-sufficient I just think is another kick in the guts for the regions. Those of us on this side are sick of it.

We are so sick of the seemingly constant attack that is placed on regional South Australia (this being an example of it) that the people of this state have to rise as one and recognise that you cannot continually kick the people who live outside metropolitan Adelaide and expect us to take it. We will talk about it. We are going to encourage our communities to continually talk about it in so many different areas because it is something that needs to happen.

I looked at a recent edition of the *Stock Journal* and the editorial comment. I know that the editor is Deanna Lush, a former press secretary for the government. Previously, she worked for the *Stock Journal*, then went to work for former minister Maywald, I understand (the former member for Chaffey), and is now back working for the *Stock Journal*. I just want to take out a few of the comments in her editorial from last week. It is entitled 'Bovver boy kicks rural SA', and it states:

If South Australian Premier Mike Rann believes depriving the most vulnerable in the community of regional areas will improve the state's terms of trade and ensure a more prosperous future in the long term, he is extremely deluded...Treasurer Kevin Foley, however, has a myopic view more to do with political survival than promoting regional development through investment and infrastructure with all the inherent implications for sustainable growth into the future. The Premier's bovver boy, instead, has been content to hammer the lifeblood of rural communities and the last vestige of the Public Service left to support them.

We are told that 186 jobs will go at PIRSA, and the member for Hammond has certainly spoken at length about this already and how that will gut agricultural development in South Australia, including 100 from Rural Solutions, which has to be self-funding by 2013-14. Again, that word 'self-funding'. It is the same situation with the Regional Development Australia—self-sufficient.

The only way they can provide services is by charging more, which comes at a greater cost to businesses and, indeed, can those businesses afford it—no, in many cases; so, they are going to suffer from a lack of expertise and advice. RDA, PIRSA and Rural Solutions, exactly the same thing. Her final comments, I think, are quite interesting:

On top of this, farmers will be expected to finance their own biosecurity and animal health while meeting strict compliance laws. The withdrawal of the small schools grants—

as the member for Stuart and many others have spoken about—

and the slash and burn at every level of the Public Service that serve regional areas will compound the pain.

Her final comment is:

The credibility of state government's commitment to regional South Australia has just hit a new low.

That is a sad case. We are a proud state of 1.6 million people, and about 300,000 of those live in the regions. The State Strategic Plan talks about ensuring that at least 18 per cent of our population—even with the 30-year growth envisaged—continue to live in the regions. Unless there is a commitment now—which is a critical time coming out of a drought and a critical time for the future of our regional economies—to ensure that they will be well placed to have a future, we are going to suffer.

All of us in this chamber, no matter what side we come from, need to open our eyes, take a bit of a look, appreciate every person who lives in the state and ensure that the priorities on expenditure of funds are done for the best of the people. At the moment that is the exact opposite of it.

**Mr VENNING (Schubert) (19:57):** Grievance debates are just that, and tonight I want to raise three grievances on behalf of three of my constituents. Before I do that, I want to commend the member for Davenport on a fine speech as the first grievance speaker in this bracket of grievance tonight. I think that it is one of the finest speeches I have heard in this place, and I commend him for that. It is easy to make a good speech when you have got passion, and the member for Davenport has got plenty of that, and I commend him very much.

Following the death of an employee and friend on a piece of earthmoving machinery, a Caterpillar scraper, my constituent Mr Malcolm Coleman, proprietor of SA Earthmovers Pty Ltd, had his scraper taken by the SafeWork SA for investigation. This, of course, is absolutely necessary when a fatal accident has occurred. However, SafeWork SA held onto this machine for nearly five years. SafeWork took him to court, the case was dropped and he had no case to answer.

The machine, costing well in excess of \$100,000, was taken away from him and he did not have it for five years. Mr Coleman was without this scraper. He had to pay for it and he had no income. It was a very large, expensive piece of machinery. If you calculate how much revenue was lost it would be approximately \$2 million. He has been offered no compensation whatsoever, not even an apology.

I repeatedly tried to assist Mr Coleman to have this investigation completed as soon as possible, but to no avail. He tried every avenue to have the investigation expedited, getting my assistance to make inquiries and going to the Ombudsman. He repeatedly contacted SafeWork SA directly. However, the SafeWork SA executive director—and I will not name her but I have her name here—never once responded to his queries.

**Mr Bignell:** Gunny would have named him.

**Mr VENNING:** I may, if I have to. Twelve months following the accident, Mr Coleman spoke with (the name, again, is included) a legal representative of SafeWork SA to find out how long this investigation would take, and he responded to Mr Coleman, 'There was a fatal accident. Your livelihood and business doesn't come into it.' Mr Coleman apparently also inquired with a SafeWork SA staff member (name again supplied here, and I have deliberately left out these names) as to when he would get his scraper back. The response was, 'You will get your machine back after we have prosecuted you.'

I firmly believe that the reason SafeWork SA held onto the machine for so long was they had already decided that Mr Coleman was culpable for his employee's death and it could not just have been what it was, a tragic accident. There is even a strong feeling that the man had a heart attack, but that did not matter. He did not get the scraper back.

Finally, after nearly four years of the investigation dragging on, Mr Coleman went to the media with his story, an act that caused him to receive a letter from the Crown Solicitor saying, 'I consider it inappropriate for Mr Coleman to be contacting the media and giving interviews in relation to this matter while it is currently before the court.' It is probably also inappropriate for me to be quoting that here, but I have done that because I am incensed by what they have done to Mr Coleman. Good heavens above! Five years it has taken, and they have brought it back. I would like to know what else he was supposed to do.

By this stage he had tried everything and the investigation was still ongoing four years after the accident occurred. I would have thought an investigation such as this could have been completed within a year, at the most. If the loss of his long-term employee and friend, coupled with nearly five years' investigation and loss of revenue was not enough to deal with, when the scraper was finally returned to Mr Coleman (the day following the last hearing in court, a few weeks ago), it was returned in pieces. It had no brakes, some pieces were missing and some had actually been cut off. The officer from SafeWork SA who returned the machine drove it off the truck onto a public roadway while it was unregistered, uninsured and without brakes. The officer then had the cheek to serve Mr Coleman with a notice to say that he had to fix the brakes and lights before he could use it.

Madam Speaker, tell me this is not true. Minister, tell me Mr Coleman has got this wrong. I cannot understand the treatment my constituent has received. It is absolutely deplorable. Is it appropriate for SafeWork SA to confiscate this machine for so long and the court then to find that he had no case to answer? If so, shame on our legal system. I hope Mr Coleman receives some compensation for his loss of income and emotional stress this mess has caused him. I have raised this matter privately with the relevant people in this place only as late as last night. I hope Mr Coleman receives an apology and some financial consideration. I will join him in his fight for justice.

The second issue I wish to raise impacts upon some Barossa Valley grape growers who, along with vigneron across the state, continue to experience tough times, as they have during the past few years, as a result of oversupply, coupled with low prices and a lack of available contracts. This has led to many vigneron leaving on a day-to-day basis. Of course, the dollar being at the level it is today is causing even greater hurt and anxiety.

Water prices, availability and allocations have been at the forefront of most irrigators' minds over the past seven or so years as a result of the drought, but now I have been alerted to a different problem relating to the water supply that threatens to place even further stress on vigneron, that is, because of SA Water charges, irrigators are paying to have their water transported to them. With SA Water transportation agreements, the grower must source their own water on the open market and then pay SA Water a fee to transport it.

Growers understand that they cannot just access and use SA Water's infrastructure for free; that is a given. However, surely whatever they are required to pay should be reasonable. One grower purchased 82 megalitres of water this irrigation season and the bill he was hit with from SA Water for transporting it was ten times the cost of the water itself! SA Water increased its peak transportation costs to irrigators in the Barossa Valley by a whopping 28 per cent from the 2008-09 financial year to the 2009-10 financial year, without any explanation being given for such an increase. Has such a large increase been introduced to pay for the desal plant or the lavish fit-out of the Victoria Square SA Water offices? We all know that the average householder's water bill has also increased recently.

I have written to the minister seeking an explanation about these exorbitant costs. He confirmed that, for the 2010-11 season, a peak transport charge of \$2,430 per megalitre will apply. This is ridiculous and outrageous, and I am seeking further information on how these rates are calculated and on what basis. I hope that this matter can be addressed because, if it cannot, it will devastate some of the grape growers of the Barossa Valley. Will the government just keep ramping up the cost until many growers are driven out of the business, or even more of them?

The third issue I want to speak about briefly is what I believe to be another cash grab exercise by the government and it relates to vintage car numberplates, an area in which I have to declare an interest. Car enthusiasts have the ability to enter into a restricted rights agreement with the registrar, which means they can have a particular numberplate regardless of whether or not the vehicle is registered. However, an issue arises if the vehicle changes ownership or if a new numberplate is allocated to the vehicle.

If a person wishes to purchase a plate that has been in the family for years but on another car, a class specific rights agreement can be acquired. However, the registrar's policy is only to offer such rights for numberplates at public auction. Currently, there is no provision for a restricted rights agreement to be converted into a class specific rights agreement. In a letter from the minister on this issue he stated:

At the last numeric numberplate auction held in May 2010, numberplates sold for between \$3,000 and \$15,800 each.

This is absolutely ludicrous. This issue was brought to my attention by a friend who could no longer continue driving and wanted the numberplate from his historic vehicle, which had been in the family all his life and which had a lot of sentimental value, transferred to his daughter. He was told that he would have to buy back the plate at auction—and who knows what exorbitant price it might go for. In correspondence to me, the Chief Executive of DTEI, Mr Jim Hallion, stated that plates go through public auction 'to ensure a fair and efficient process is given to the sale of historic numberplates'. I think it is ridiculous. These plates, if they have been with a vehicle for many, many years, ought to be able to stay with the vehicles.

**Mr BIGNELL (Mawson) (20:08):** I would like to add my contribution to this discussion. I reiterate the fact that every promise made by the Labor Party at the March election was delivered

in this budget and its centrepiece was the delivery of the \$445 million to fund the duplication of the Southern Expressway so that it goes both ways, something that should have been done properly in the first place, but I am sure you all know that over there. I think you have all conceded that it was a dopey idea in the first place and it should have been done properly—a government that had no vision at the time and certainly just one way in its outlook.

An overpass is also to be built at the intersection of Victor Harbor Road and McLaren Vale, which is one of the most dangerous parts of the Victor Harbor Road. We hear a lot about that road. The government has recently opened the new intersection at Victor Harbor Road and South Road which has made things a lot easier for people. However, that was not the deadly intersection. The deadly intersection is the one at Main Road McLaren Vale and Victor Harbor Road. An overpass will now take traffic out of McLaren Vale, up and over and onto the Victor Harbor Road so, hopefully, we will no longer see the horrific crashes that we have seen along that stretch of road in the past.

We also have \$110 million in the budget for additional police and high-tech crime-fighting equipment. When I make my way around the Neighbourhood Watch groups in the area, it is very heartening to hear and see the statistics showing a continual drop in crime. That is something that has happened since we came into government in 2002, and I commend everyone involved in Neighbourhood Watch because they play their role as well.

It is all very well for us to be putting millions of dollars in for high-tech equipment and putting extra police on the beat, but I really would like to commend the people in the Neighbourhood Watch who do a fantastic job of keeping the community involved and letting the police know.

Community policing was a trial introduced in the southern suburbs around Hackham and it went very well and I am glad to see that under this government the trial is now to be expanded into more community policing throughout the state with good old-fashioned policing values. I grew up terrified of Sergeant Rufus at Kalangadoo, even though I never met him as a young fellow, we always knew Sergeant Rufus might be out to get us.

*Mr Pengilly interjecting:*

**Mr BIGNELL:** Yes, we would hide under a yacca down on Yacca Road at Kalangadoo: that's it. I think that is a really good thing because people feel a little bit reticent to talk to police officers who they do not necessarily know, but if you can build up a relationship then they can pass on information and that police officer can then talk to several people in the community and actually build up a picture of what is happening in the area.

So, I commend the government for the extra spending on police. I think we have never lost sight of the importance of the continual funding, and I must congratulate the police association on an excellent job that they have done over the last few years talking to both sides of the parliament and I think they have done exceptionally well for their members.

There are almost \$21 million for new expanded bus services in this budget to suburbs that include Reynella, Noarlunga, Sellicks Beach, Willunga, Aldinga and several other areas in the southern suburbs. That is going to make a huge difference as we are trying to attract more and more people to public transport. Of course, the Seaford rail extension project will begin soon and that is really going to help people from the south to get to work.

I am sure that people from as far south as Victor Harbor are going to drive to Seaford, park their cars there and can be in on an express train in about 35 or 40 minutes, so it is really going to change the way people get into the city from down south. It will hopefully take a lot of cars off the road, particularly once you get to the Darlington interchange which we are looking at as a subject for future budgets to try to improve the flow of traffic past Flinders University and the Flinders Medical Centre.

I would also like to commend the government for its spending on school buses. Willunga High School has more school buses than any other school in the state with 17 and they come from far and wide and some of the fleet is quite old. It is going to be good to see some renewal there and some safer conditions there for the students. I know that is something that will not just affect Willunga High School obviously but also schools right throughout the length and breadth of this great state.

There is \$4.2 million in the budget for food and wine industry development. That is an area very dear to my heart and as the member for Schubert (a very good member representing the

Barossa Valley) has already said, the wine industry is in dire straits at the moment and as local members and as a government, we are there to make sure that we do everything we can to promote the wine industry and also to protect the wine industry.

I am looking forward not only to continuing my relationship with the McLaren Vale Grape Wine and Tourism Association but also developing the relationship I am forming with the people up in the Barossa as well. When we work together, we have a lot more power and a lot more say.

I would also like to commend the government for the \$12.8 million for plague locust control. This is a huge threat to our rural sector and, after so many poor years, to actually get a great crop, the fear of these locusts swarming down on us is quite an unbelievable thing to see as nature plays its role. We need to do everything we can possibly do as a government to intervene in that and try to reduce the damage.

Some of the new operating initiatives in the budget include \$10.9 million for ten new children's centres. There are already two of these children's centres in the electorate of Mawson. We have one at Woodcroft that the education minister and I opened earlier this year and then there is another one at Hackham West which opened about two years ago.

They are fantastic and they really give not just the children but also their parents a great deal of support. It is a great part of our community now both at Woodcroft and Hackham West. For those areas that do not have children's centres, I urge you to get in and fight for one for your local area because they provide not just education but all sorts of social and health advantages as well.

While on education, I must congratulate the education minister, minister Weatherill, for his approach to his new portfolio and the way that he has gone out to schools right throughout the state. He has sat down with students, teachers, principals and parents, to hear feedback first-hand; rather than listen to what the people in the department are telling him, he is actually out there asking for people's feedback first-hand. I think he is really moulding a new-look education department in South Australia.

I heard the member for Stuart speak passionately before about the closure of small schools. It is my understanding that no schools will be forced to do that; it will be up to the communities to do it. However, I am someone who came out of a very small school which was merged when I was only in grade 1. I think there were about 30 kids in Glencoe West Primary School when I started there.

We had one or two terms before they closed the school and merged it with Glencoe East Primary School, to become Glencoe Central Primary. It was a fantastic move that gave us more resources, more social interaction and more opportunities for sport because we did not have 30 kids, we had 70 kids. At that stage, I thought it was the biggest school in the state, until I moved to Adelaide at the age of 10 and was quite surprised when thrown into the mix at Pennington Primary.

It may be a little bit harder, particularly in the seat of Stuart where you have greater distances between towns than we have in the south-east, and it may well cause some of those problems that he mentions. However, I must say that it is not all about scaremongering; there are some positives when you merge schools.

One of the other commitments we have made in the education section of the budget is \$9.7 million for Better Behaviour centres and truancy officers in schools. I think that is a very important move, which will be widely applauded by parents throughout the state and certainly in the area I represent.

There is \$70 million for Disability SA funding and \$70 million for concession increases for pensioners for water, sewerage, energy costs, etc. It is very important that we help those people who are pretty much on fixed incomes. They have paid their taxes all their lives and it is time for us to give back. I think increasing concessions is something this government has done very well since coming to government in 2002.

There is \$4.2 million in the budget for children with autism—a very important area. I am sure all members in here would have been contacted by parents. It just seems that autism is increasing at a fairly alarming rate, right throughout the state; whether that is through better diagnosis or for some other reason, it is something that we need to put money into to help not only the children but their parents and the wider families to cope.



There is \$3.1 million in the budget for home visits for the elderly, which is also commendable and shows that we are looking after the most vulnerable people in our community. When you look at the alternative care funding for child protection, there is an extra \$137 million. These are very tough economic times right around the world, and this is a budget that looks after all South Australians.

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (20:18):** We have heard a lot about this state budget over the last couple of days. I guess, one of the major issues that is going to affect my electorate, and one which concerns me greatly and which regularly seems to be the whipping boy, is the tourism budget. I am somewhat appalled that just over \$12 million is to be cut out of the tourism market at a time when, if we need to create opportunities for employment—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Finniss, we have a problem.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you, we have organised the clock. You had an unlimited time, and we know how you can talk, so we did not want to do that.

**Mr PENGILLY:** Well, it is good to get lucky every now and then, isn't it?

**The SPEAKER:** You now have 10 minutes—you had a 30-second bonus.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Finniss, continue your remarks.

**Mr PENGILLY:** I need the protection of the chair, Madam Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** I think you need more than that, member for Finniss.

**Mr PENGILLY:** I am feeling nervous. I am like the former member for Stuart. If we ever needed marketing in tourism it is now, given the global situation over the last couple of years and indeed, the domestic situation. We can kid ourselves into thinking that Australia is bubbling along pretty well, but it would not take much of a hiccup in China to sort us out somewhat, I might add.

The fact is that in an electorate like mine, with the hustle and bustle of tourism that takes place on the Fleurieu Peninsula and the tourism industry on Kangaroo Island, we need every single marketing dollar that we can get. There are hundreds of thousands of people who come down to the Fleurieu and Victor Harbor, Port Elliot, Middleton, Goolwa, Yankalilla and all points in between. They are absolutely critical to the economy of that area, and this cut in marketing worries me.

Operators have spoken to me in the last day or two and expressed their concerns over just what is going to happen. They are nervous. They have had a fairly lean winter on both sides of the water. Tourism in South Australia is always lean in winter, but it seems to be more lean than usual. A lot of the bottle shops, for example, are saying their sales are down 12 to 15 per cent across the board over the last two or three months of winter, which indicates quite clearly that there are not as many visitors coming down and, indeed, local people are not spending as much on leisure activities such as going out and buying a bottle of wine and whatnot. That in itself is a concern.

I heard what the member for Mawson had to say about the amount of money that is to be expended on the Southern Expressway, the McLaren Vale Main South Road turnoff and a couple of other bits and pieces in between. The save Mawson campaign was significant. It was quite clear to us that the polling in Mawson must have been absolutely horrendous, because we had money being spent like a drunken sailor to save Biggles. It was the save Biggles campaign.

**Ms Chapman:** Family First campaign—his family!

**Mr PENGILLY:** And the Family First campaign, yes, on election day. The member for Mawson may need a bit of a history lesson on why the Southern Expressway is only one way. He seems to forget the State Bank debacle and the fact that when the Liberal Party came into government there was nothing left in the coffers and they bent over backwards to build that road. The Southern Expressway works pretty well. You do not hear a lot of complaints about it. Obviously we would all like it to be duplicated; it would be terrific. It would have been done in the first place.

You also need to remember that the government of the day actually bought the land so it could be duplicated when things got a bit better. Unlike John Bannon with the MATS plan, when he

sold off all the land they had to duplicate Main South Road, the land has not been sold off for the Southern Expressway. It is still there, so we have a bit of a head start.

I look forward to seeing that project come to the Public Works Committee of the parliament, I look forward to that project commencing and I look even more forward to that project being completed in the near future, because no doubt all the residents of the south and the Fleurieu Peninsula will be able to get here and there a lot more quickly. The member for Mawson needs to remember that it would have been duplicated from the outset if his mob had not broken the state. You can put out all the spin you like, but that is the reality of it.

My view is that the first part of the duplication of the Victor Harbor-Adelaide Road that needs to be done is the Cut Hill section nearest to Victor Harbor. The work that has been done on the road has certainly made it safer than it was; there is no argument about that, but that Cut Hill section is an extremely dangerous section, and we hear nothing about that, despite the RAA regularly putting forward the Victor Harbor-Adelaide Road as a major priority for them. That needs to happen. Perhaps we will see what transpires over the next two or three years on that.

Another subject that needs some clarification is the subject of police. The government and the government members like to wax lyrical about the number of extra police that are on the beat. I am a great defender of the police. I have very good relations with them, I have good contact with them and they are very helpful, and they go about everything to the best of their ability with the resources that they have. However, it is worth noting that the so-called five extra police who are going to be based at Victor Harbor are going to be out on traffic. They are not going to be running around the electorate doing this, that and everything else.

They desperately need another police officer at Normanville to bring that station up to three. They also need another police officer on Kangaroo Island to bring that up to four. There is always someone on leave or having days off and sometimes there is only one police officer on duty for a considerable period of time which causes great stress for the police force and that police officer's family. In small country towns, as most members will know, you simply cannot get away from work—you cannot get away from it. I stress to the government that those extra police resources in places like Normanville and Kangaroo Island are absolutely paramount. SAPOL is aware of that and, indeed, information comes to me on a fairly regular basis.

I also want to talk about public infrastructure. Whilst we have been talking about the roads and whatnot, we may also forget that, once upon a time, governments delivered strongly on infrastructure, not only on roads and things like that but also on marine infrastructure such as jetties. A few years ago, the government went about the process of selling many of the jetties to local councils, conning them into taking them, I would suggest, after they had done them up.

These jetties are key points in the community. With thousands of kilometres of coastline in South Australia, a lot of these jetties were built 80, 90 and over 100 years ago and they are deteriorating and they should not be allowed to deteriorate further to my mind. The jetty at Rapid Bay was built as part of the grand plan in the 2006 election campaign and it was highly successful for the angling sector, but I know that the Yankalilla council, for example, would have far preferred to have had the jetty at Normanville done. However, that is another story.

Finally, in the very short time left to me, I will talk about the ongoing issues of freight between Kangaroo Island and the mainland, the lack of government accountability and the government not coming up with an answer as to how to deal with this problem, the lack of support for the Kangaroo Island community, and the failure by the state government to adequately address this through its federal counterparts. The federal government is possibly there for another three years. It is time to hit the federal transport minister fair between the eyes again.

I support the council to the best of my ability but we need to sort this issue out. Only today we had a Japanese delegation at Parliament House who want to buy grain and goods from Kangaroo Island. It is just adding to the costs, while the government procrastinates and will not make a decision on assisting the residents of Kangaroo Island on the freight issue.

**Mr PICCOLO (Light) (20:28):** I would like to make a few comments about the budget discussions and I would like to—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Madam Speaker, on this side we actually go for quality rather than quantity. That is why we do not have to speak twice on the same matter.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Madam Speaker, I sat here listening to them and gave them the courtesy of listening to them. I wish I had the same courtesy.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, Member for Bragg!

**Mr PICCOLO:** I have not started yet, member for Bragg. I would like to make a few comments and a few observations about the budget and the ongoing funding by this government for a number of programs and services in my electorate of Light. There are a couple of things I would like to say to provide a more holistic and balanced side to this debate so that the community can understand that this government actually does support the state.

There are a couple of things that I would like to bring to the house's attention. For example, one of the new programs supporting regional and rural South Australia provides cancer treatment chairs to the Gawler Health Service, so that people who live in my electorate do not have to travel far to get treatment. When people are sick their families also become patients by virtue of the fact they often have to travel to other locations. That is a welcome improvement that the minister spoke about today.

The government has announced a major increase in funding for GP Inc., which provides the accident and emergency service in Gawler. Despite the scare campaign by the Liberals, saying that that facility would close down, and so on, the government has announced a major increase in funding to secure that service for the growing Gawler community. There is also the ongoing redevelopment of the Lyell McEwin Hospital, which serves the southern part of my electorate. They are some of the things in the health budget which indicate this government's commitment to the welfare of our community.

In the area of public transport I am happy to say that as close as possible to 1 July there will be a brand-new bus service for the town of Gawler and also the area of Hewett. That is a commitment to improving public transport and infrastructure for this community, but it is also a government commitment to the growth in Gawler, and the infrastructure will be there when the community needs it. This is part of the plan not only to grow but to support Gawler. So there will be enough buses around for the Gawler and Hewett communities. However, public transport investment in this community does not stop there. There is also—

**Mr Marshall:** There's more.

**Mr PICCOLO:** There is more—there is a lot more. There is a \$2 million government program to revitalise rail; the electrification of the Gawler line is happening. Apart from having a faster, quicker, cleaner and a much more comfortable train service, we are also going to upgrade a number of train stations in the electorate, and the Munno Para and Gawler stations will be upgraded in conjunction with the federal Labor government's proposals.

But, there is more, as the member for Norwood said; there is more my electorate. There is also an extension of bus services to Munno Para West and the Peachey Belt, again to support growth and the new schools in that area. There is more in the public transport area, and very shortly—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** I will. There is a lot to be said. There is also the introduction of a dial-a-ride service for Angle Vale, which will be the first time a sustainable public transport system will be introduced in that town after the failure of the Liberal government plan in the late 1990s, when a service started and was then cancelled after six months. Rather than the gimmicky things that the Liberals have done, I have worked with the community there and also my new colleague the member for Taylor, and shortly we are going to have a new service for the Angle Vale community. That is public transport.

Let's go to education, where the story is even better. We have completely redeveloped the Roseworthy Primary School, spending another \$4 million. It is, incidentally, a booth that I won, and I also won Wasleys—two country booths which the Liberals lost. In addition to supporting those rural communities with brand new schools, we have made a major investment in the northern suburbs, the southern part of my electorate, with an investment in the John Hartley B-7 school, and also the Mark Oliphant B-12 school, which will rejuvenate the whole education system both in those southern parts of my electorate and in the northern suburbs, supporting the young people there.

There is more in terms of education. Over \$14 million will be spent on redeveloping the Gawler High School site to combine the Evanston primary, high and preschools, and it is supported by the community.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Well, all I can say is that I'm here. You can't change that fact: I'm here.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I have got no idea what is going on because I cannot hear a thing.

**Mr PICCOLO:** Madam Speaker, while this government is investing millions of dollars in education in my electorate, I will just tell members what the Liberal Party would have done had it got elected. I quote from their leader today:

Education is about teachers and students. It is not about having flash new buildings. My view is you can actually have a good education sitting under a gum tree provided you have good teachers.

All these new schools, had the Liberal Party been elected, would not have been built.

*Mr Treloar interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** The Cowell Area School, the member for Flinders, would not have been built, either, because your leader thinks that you can just do education under a gum tree. That is the Liberal Party policy on education. You have actually outsourced education to Trees for Life. You will have all your kids under these trees.

But there is more. In the case of road transport, we have the Northern Expressway. In southern Gawler, the major new investment is part of that growth area. We have urban regeneration in Playford North; more than \$1 billion over 10 years to rejuvenate a major area.

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Norwood, you are very loud tonight. Can you be quiet, please?

**Mr PICCOLO:** I am glad to see that the opposition has come alive tonight. In the area of environment, this government supports the \$40 million Waterproofing Gawler project, which, hopefully, will get federal funding and work with the community. We support that. When it comes to policing, I am happy to say that the police will provide an additional patrol in my area to improve community safety.

The good news for my electorate does not stop there. In the area of jobs, the government has announced additional apprenticeships and traineeships. The area of economic development, I must say, is really a good story. I spoke to a developer from interstate who has invested to build a commercial and industrial zone in my electorate because of the investment we have made in public transport and the investment we have made in the road transport area.

He is investing in the future, and this will be part of the key employment zone for this locality. He was quite happy to have a Labor government. He knows that a Labor government will provide the infrastructure which business requires and which ends up with jobs for our young people. But the good news does not stop there.

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**Mr PICCOLO:** Sorry?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr PICCOLO:** I am glad to see that the opposition is so excited about my electorate. It is really great to see. This area will become a major mining services precinct. It will provide a lot of services and support for the mining and mineral industry. While the mining is up north, a lot of the support services will occur in my electorate, and there will be jobs for young people as a result of the investment this government and the federal Labor governments have made in road transport.

In terms of emergency services, this government is supporting the redevelopment of the Gawler River CFS, which will occur. In terms of rec and sport, the minister for sport recently announced major funding for sporting organisations, especially for sporting hubs, which will not only support health but also support our volunteers through those programs.

Last but not least—and I could go on and on—are the early intervention programs through our children's centre. We are supporting our families by providing support services in that regard. To try to find some balance, this is some good news in my electorate.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Can we have some order, please, and some decorum. It is Wednesday night. Someone was using a mobile phone earlier, and I would ask them to be very careful about that or I will confiscate it like a school principal. The member for Bragg.

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (20:38):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. May I first say that, whilst I am a proud member for the electorate of Bragg, an electorate which covers Rose Park to Uraidla, I could not help but listen attentively to the member for Light's contribution. I recall during the election campaign visiting his electorate to hear the rather sad story of a lady who had been ripped off by treasurer Foley. She was charged stamp duty for the transfer of an interest of access to occupancy within a residential facility, which requested the funding to be given back.

I am pleased to say that we have in the gallery today the Liberal candidate for Light, Mr Cosie Costa, who fought valiantly with us to get her money back, and members will recall reading in recent media articles the return of that money. There was no apology from the Treasurer and no interest paid on her money. There was no apology from the Premier. They just tried to get away with it. But we got the money back, and wasn't that a fantastic thing for her? She fought the fight to make sure that this does not happen again to others in those circumstances. So I acknowledge our candidate on that occasion.

Let me get back to the seat of Bragg, covering from Rose Park out to Uraidla. Some is rural and some is residential, with retail and, of course, primary industries across the board. It is a very good electorate. We have never had much from this government and I do not expect much from this government. I know I will get nothing from this government. At the moment we do not have any police or public hospitals. We have got some public schools, let me say, and they are very good ones, but when we need some help for Linden Park or Rose Park primary schools we get nothing in the way of support from this government. The parents get trodden on. We even get dodgy documents given to us in a report prepared by the government. I am pleased to see that the minister has at least sacked the CEO, Chris Robinson. We have had nothing but absolute contempt given to our schools in my electorate.

We have a CFS, which is a number of different agencies, that have got no extra money in this budget. We do not expect any, of course. We have got no extra equipment. We have all these extra rules that we have to comply with but no extra funding. A classic example is that the Uraidla oval was recently given advice that it was to provide a facility in the event of an emergency or bushfire. It has no independent water supply or generator if the power goes off. How on earth are they supposed to be meet those obligations and provide those facilities?

We have got no funding for the Britannia Roundabout—an RAA hot spot, and has been for decades. There is no funding to fix that facility. On average, 2½ accidents a week occur at that intersection. It is a dangerous intersection in this state. There has been not a dollar provided. There is no funding, not one dollar, to contribute to the Victoria Park redevelopment. I acknowledge and thank the Adelaide City Council for its contribution in the work it is doing in restoring the main auditorium and playing fields. It is a great effort on its part. There is not a dollar, not a dime—nothing—from the state government.

I come to the MFS. There is a Metropolitan Fire Service within my electorate. It services the major accidents and spills on the South Eastern Freeway. It is an important service. It has had on the books for a number of years the development of a replacement of its facility. The budget comes and there is not a dollar, not a dime—nothing—for them, of course.

In Bragg we are quite used to getting stuff all, and this year is no exception. Let me tell members what we do get. We get funding for a pipeline and a pump infrastructure at Wattle Park that we do not want. They want to spend \$403 million. Part of that project is to go through our area, rip up the roads and trees between Beaumont and Stonyfell. They do not give a tinker's curse about what the people in the electorate say or want to have happened, or even whether they are informed about it. That, of course, has been publicly scrutinised and exposed.

The government's idea of consultation is to make a decision, do not give a stuff about what the people say, and, when they retaliate, pay them off with something and then proceed anyway.

That is the policy of the government. It is typical and has been repeated over and over again in projects around the state and is a regular feature in Bragg.

Let me give one other example. Finally, after years of protest and submissions to minister Gago, as the minister for local government, she announces that she is going to have an inquiry into concerns that are raised about the Burnside Council and its administration. Some \$850,000 later, and God knows how much has been spent on the cost internally in departments and Mr MacPherson's report, we still do not have it. This is a report which is so important to the integrity of local government but, after a year's investigation and nearly \$1 million worth of direct cost in this investigation, we still do not have it. I think that is a disgrace. They think that we will pay to have these investigations and then they will keep it a secret.

I remind members of the importance of what we are talking about here, because just a year ago, when this inquiry and investigation by the government was proposed, it reminded me of J.F. Kennedy's statement nearly 50 years ago when he said, 'Secrecy is repugnant to a free and open society.' Yet, almost contemporaneously on the Premier's dancing in here to tell us about how open and transparent he was going to be to ensure that cabinet documents over 10 years old would be open and available, minister Gago is in the chamber saying, 'We are going to shutdown freedom of information applications for all the departments that have anything to do with the MacPherson inquiry.' You were not even allowed to apply for a document.

Essentially, the current rules allow you to apply for a document, and if there is a particular reason for exemption, part or all of that document can be withheld—cabinet confidentiality, commercial sensitivity, personal embarrassment and so on. She introduced a regulation, which we challenged at that time (but of course parliament got up and we did not sit forever), that any agency assisting in the investigation—the Department of Primary Industries and Resources, the Office for State/Local Government Relations, the Department of Planning and Local Government—were all declared by her hand to be exempt. I say that it is absolutely imperative that we have the answers from minister Gago and that we receive the report which we have paid for and which we are entitled to have.

We are about to have a council election at Burnside, along with all other local councils across the state. This report has not been delivered. We have not had any indication from her about when she is going to table it. We have paid the money, we are entitled to have a look at it and we demand that she table it and be fair not only to South Australians but also to ensure that if there has been any inappropriate behaviour or improper conduct we know about it for the purposes of amending the Local Government Act or any other legislation. We are entitled to it, we want it and we have paid for it. We are about to go to elections and we deserve to have that transparency.

I also ask the minister, after she has tabled it and put forward her recommendations for our consideration, to release us from this stranglehold of a regulation which is just a disgrace. This is a total epitome though of what the government has done; that is, announce and beg forgiveness to cover everything as best it can, with the protection of secrecy to ensure that we do not get access to it. It is absolutely critical not only for my electorate of Bragg but all South Australians that, in future, we have some transparency in the way the government operates.

We are used to having no money spent in our electorate. We are used to looking after our own. We are happy to keep providing for our own. Volunteers, pensioners and retired people particularly work very hard in our electorate to provide for our own and others, but we will not put up with having a blanket of secrecy placed on information which we are entitled to have access to and we damn well demand and expect it to be delivered.

**Mr GARDNER (Morialta) (20:48):** In the main debate on the Appropriation Bill earlier today, I spoke at length about some of my concerns with the serious budget cuts to education measures in this state budget. In that contribution I made the point that there were some positive measures in the budget, and so I thought it would only be fair if I turned to something that I thought was a positive measure in the budget tonight, although I should say it is a qualified tick at best. I am talking about the better behaviour centres and truancy officer support: \$15 million over four years and ongoing of about \$3.5 million per year. Of course, these were promised in November last year and then again during the election campaign, and now in the budget in the last couple of weeks we have had them announced again, but perhaps it is a good story so it is worth announcing three times.

It is six new better behaviour centres—two in the country, four in metropolitan Adelaide—to provide early intervention behavioural programs and intensive support for up to 1,000 students

each year and employ an additional 12 truancy officers to more than double the number of truancy officers from 10 to 22. As I say, it is a qualified tick. There is not enough really for this program to make it as effective as it could be. It is not just about the resources but the approach that should be taken to combat systemic truancy issues, and I am concerned that not enough is being done.

I will be interested during the estimates hearings commencing next Thursday to discover more about exactly how these centres will function and what relationship truancy officers will have with schools, the department and, in fact, other parts of government as well. I am particularly thinking of the police force. When the Liberal Party was in government, the police force had an important role to play in dealing with the issue of truancy. I do not believe that has been the case under this government.

Of course, this is an issue that in recent days has generated some troubling publicity and I note the *Sunday Mail* article of 26 September titled 'Why isn't my son at school?' by David Nankervis. It was about a father demanding that the state government tell him why his 13 year old son had been allowed to skip 100 days of school this year.

In that story we were advised that the minister said that there was an issue with the boy caring for his mother who had some disability-related concerns, which was apparently news to the father, but there is no need to go into that detail to deal with the systemic issue. The father alleges that the lad was skipping classes to go to skate parks and shopping centres with other boys instead of attending classes. The article stated:

Although parents can be fined \$500 for failing to ensure their child attends school, none have been prosecuted in the past decade...

Not one parent of a truant child in South Australia has been prosecuted in the last 10 years under the watch of this government. This brings me to the case of one of my constituents, who I hope will be assisted by this new budget measure, although up to now the government's lack of gumption on this issue of truancy leaves me with concerns.

My constituent has requested that I keep his name anonymous, and that is fair enough. He has a relative who is a 14 year old student who has been chronically truant over a period of at least the last seven months. During this period my constituent has striven to bring this issue to the attention of the appropriate authorities, but to no avail.

Everyone in this house knows the importance of education to a young child's life, particularly in attending school. Education is the best equaliser we have in society; it is the best and most reliable way of providing equality to individuals. Ideally we start from a position of some relative equality. Everyone has the right to an education but, to have the opportunity to better themselves and create opportunities for the future, children must be compelled to attend school.

If we fail to educate our children in their youth, we are reducing our future potential as a state and we start widening the disparity that already exists in society between individuals which becomes much harder to bridge in later years. Of course, after this budget which has emaciated funding to adult re-entry programs and will destroy the Marden Secondary College's adult re-entry programs for high school, we will see a situation where, if a child does not get that education in their school years, it will be almost impossible for them to ever get that back.

Early intervention is crucial because the chances are that if the problem is not rectified early, it is less likely to be rectified later on. We all know that the life prospects of youths who have been chronically truant do not paint a very positive picture. Every day there are thousands of children who do not attend school in South Australia. A number, of course, have genuine reasons; they can be ill or have family matters that prevent them from attending school.

However, there is also a component of serial truants who represent a serious waste of potential both in their own lives and also in our state, and they store up serious problems for the future of our state. According to the figure quoted—and I do not believe it has been rejected at the moment—there are some 5,000 students identified as potentially being serial truants in South Australia. Not only do these individuals and those around them suffer, but the future economic potential of the state as a whole is squandered and the talent of the state is not utilised the way it should be.

The constituent who contacted me knows all this and that is why he is so determined to turn around the life chances of his relative. Unfortunately, he has been thwarted in his efforts and given short shrift by the government agencies from which he has sought assistance. The student in

question has been enrolled in four different schools this year, none of which has put in a referral to DECS to report the child's non-attendance which they are obliged to do under the Education Act.

It appears that the student—or non-student might be the more appropriate tag—has slipped through the cracks and not been followed up by the appropriate school attendance officer. They have never been in attendance at any of these four schools for so much as a day, apart from enrolling so as to form a relationship with the school that might have alerted the school to the student's truancy.

If the case is not being dealt with by an appropriate authority, then of course any prosecution of the parent would be unlikely, but we know that that would be the case, anyway, because in 10 years we have not had a prosecution. By the same token, under the current act it is permissible for police officers and student attendance counsellors to obtain a child's name and address and the reason for non-attendance, if the child is observed in a public place in school time. However, police officers and counsellors are advised to use the act sparingly, occasionally or in special circumstances only.

You can rest assured that that act is used very sparingly indeed. So much so that if you walk down Rundle Mall in the afternoon on any day during school time you will observe plenty of young people in school uniform in a public place, in that school time, and in any of the major shopping districts and plenty of other places where you really would not ideally want young people to be when they should be at school.

Of course, this is partly a question of the availability of resources. So, this small amount of extra resources is helpful—which is why I am commending the government again—but I am not sure that we are putting in enough effort and pressure to have these youngsters stay at school.

I first wrote to the minister about this case several months ago, and at the beginning of this month my office again followed up with the minister's office, who confirmed that the matter was receiving attention and that a response would be forthcoming. It was on somebody's desk; hopefully, we will get there eventually. While I would love a response to the correspondence, that is not the issue. The highest priority is that action must be taken to get this young student attending classes again.

One thing we could do is start removing the advice provided by the act that schools and DECS officers are discouraged from labelling any student as a truant. The preferred term is 'non-attender'—more political correctness. I think we should call a spade a spade. We are not going to do them any favours by shielding them from the consequences of truancy. If we are focusing on the idea of what we should be calling these people—truants, non-attenders, anything else—then clearly the priorities are wrong. I suspect that the student is probably not going to get offended at being called a truant because, if they are not attending school enough, maybe they do not even know what the word means. They should attend school more often to find out.

I conclude my comments tonight by urging the minister to once again look promptly at my constituent's case. If we act promptly, we may be in a position to do something for this young student before things get any worse.

However, more to the point on the systemic issue, I hope this new program and this new funding is a useful tool in the fight against truancy, but while the government tends to talk tough about young delinquents in all sorts of areas—beating their hairy chests on gaols, young offenders and bikies—it is actions that we need to look at. We can see in their actions on truancy—10 years without a prosecution—that they are soft at heart. It is nice to be nice sometimes, but nice does nothing like as much to help these young people get a future as would some improved discipline and getting them to attend school.

**Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel) (20:57):** I would like to commence my remarks by making an observation in the house this evening. It is interesting that the government has decided to rustle up a couple of speakers in relation to the budget bill.

Clearly, the shadow treasurer, the member for Davenport, had hit a fairly raw nerve when he highlighted the fact that not one government member has spoken in the first part of the second reading stage of the Appropriation Bill. Not one government member spoke in support of the budget, so I wonder what that is telling the South Australian community at large. Perhaps a percentage, at least, of the Labor caucus has some real concerns with the budget that the Treasurer has brought down.



I concluded my remarks in relation to the second reading stage by highlighting an issue of, basically, the forced amalgamation of the Birdwood High School and the Birdwood Primary School. I highlighted the fact that it was obviously an 'announce and defend' scenario by the Minister for Education—something that he had publicly decried in an article in *The Advertiser* several weeks ago.

I just want to make the point again that Birdwood High School is about to launch a groundbreaking learning initiative—a groundbreaking learning program. It is called the Academy of Middle Schooling: a Community of Thinking. As I said yesterday, that new learning initiative will stagnate as a consequence of the time, effort and commitment that the school communities will have to put in to see the amalgamation through.

I want the minister and all the departmental people—the head of the department, even though he is going and there is going to be a replacement, no doubt, appointed in the next months or years or whenever the minister gets around to it—to be acutely aware of the fact that these forced amalgamations are going to cause those school communities a great deal of concern and take a great deal of their time and effort in implementing the amalgamations. We are going to have a lot more to say about those issues as the weeks roll on.

I also want to highlight another aspect of educational needs, particularly in the township of Mount Barker. I note in the budget that there has been some funding allocation for new special school projects. That is a welcome announcement that the government has made; however, I want to also stress to the minister and the departmental people of the real need for a special school to be established at Mount Barker, particularly for children who suffer with autism and those types of concerns, because at the moment there are taxis that are ferrying autistic children from Mount Barker to the special school at Murray Bridge and back, a round trip of at least 100 kilometres.

I have an understanding of autistic children, and they do not deal with new sets of circumstances and new environments particularly well. I have had at least three women come to see me extremely concerned about the educational needs of their pre-primary schoolchildren that suffer from autism. They do not want to be faced with the prospect of having to put those children—well, they will not do it. They simply refuse to put their children in taxis to ferry them to Murray Bridge and back.

I know that there has been strong representation from the district office and a strong proposition put to the Department of Education and Children's Services in support of the establishment of a special school facility within the current school site at Mount Barker Primary School—what we call the Dumas Street school. There are two primary schools in Mount Barker, Mount Barker South and Mount Barker. There is a strong case that has been put forward to establish a special school at the Dumas Street site. So I urge, I ask and I plead with the minister for education to allocate some of that funding that we see in the budget for the establishment of a special school within the site of the Mount Barker Primary School.

These mothers are at their wits' end in what they are going to do with their children as they leave the kindergarten and preschool environment and what they are going to do with them to meet their primary school needs. It is a responsibility of any government to provide a satisfactory level of education for our children, whether they suffer from some form of disability or they have special needs—whatever their requirements are. It is a fundamental responsibility of the government to provide satisfactory levels of education for our children. As I said, I implore the minister that that special school be established at Mount Barker Primary School to meet the needs of these children with special needs.

Another aspect I want to talk about in relation to education is the cuts to small school grants. Some of us experienced this previously in about 2006, just after the election before last. The then minister for education, the member for Adelaide, announced that there would be cuts to small school grants within an 80-kilometre radius of Adelaide. That encompassed small schools in my electorate and in the electorates of the members for Schubert, Heysen, Finniss—all those peri-urban electorates that border the metropolitan area. I can tell you that we believe that it was the intention of the government and the intention of the then minister—and she has been seen out of this place as a result of the outstanding victory by the newly-elected member for Adelaide—that if you starve those schools of money, you will eventually close them.

Well, I can tell you, the exact opposite happened. The heart and soul of those communities stood up for their rights and they fought the government and the minister tooth and nail, and not one of those schools has closed. If anything, the school communities and the schools themselves

have actually flourished as a consequence of the government's action. They were not going to close. We had an enormously large and successful rally on the front steps of Parliament House where the organisers handed out these little yellow ducks. I still have one of them in my office in Parliament House as a reminder of the tenacity and the strength of community spirit that those people showed.

I actually went to one of those schools. I went to a small primary school in the hills and I know the direct benefit that that educational environment has. It was a benefit to me. My children also attended the local primary school, which is regarded as a small school, and I know the benefit that it has provided them.

We will see the same action taken by these other small schools around the state where these cuts to small school grants will be perpetrated. They will rise up; they will fight the government and it is my strong opinion that those school communities will not falter, they will not fail, they will not close. They will go on to bigger and better things. We know what this government is about. This government is about rationalisation, consolidating and centralising. It is about big government, big bureaucracies and central control.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon) (21:07):** Hendrik Gout of *The Independent Weekly* was the principal writer on a small circulation publication issued on Fridays in Adelaide and owned by a company called Solstice Media. He styled himself 'editor' of the publication and is a former staffer to defeated Democrats MLC Kate Reynolds. Mr Gout is scathing of the Rann government's policies—

**Mr PISONI:** Point of order. The member for Croydon has been a stickler for pointing out when members are reading their speeches and saying that they are, in fact, in breach of Erskine May. I ask you to rule on that in this instance.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Piccolo):** I am sorry, I was not wearing my glasses. I could not see the member actually reading his notes.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** —especially its criminal justice policies, although this did not stop his applying for a full-time job as a Rann government media adviser, what he would now call 'a spin doctor'. Mr Gout disclosed to me by email that he had applied to be the media adviser to the Deputy Premier and this is the first I and the Deputy Premier had heard of this, although I had heard on the grapevine at least two years ago that he had applied to be a spin doctor generally. Mr Gout has now regularised his position and joined the staff of Michinite Liberal MLC, David Ridgway.

Mr Gout publishes the opinions of Adelaide defence lawyers Dave Edwardson and George Mancini. In the months leading up to the High Court's decision in a South Australia liquor licensing case—

**Mr MARSHALL:** Point of order.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Point of order, the member for Croydon will resume his seat.

**Mr MARSHALL:** It is my understanding that we are actually speaking tonight on the budget and so far—

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** It is grievance. Member for Norwood, it is actually a grievance debate.

**Mr MARSHALL:** It is a grievance on the budget.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** No, it is general grievance.

**Mr MARSHALL:** I apologise.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Yes, wrong again.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** We will forgive the member for Norwood; he is new to the place.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** In the months leading up to the High Court's decision in a South Australian liquor licensing case, K-Generation, Mr Gout had promoted the view that the state government would lose the case and all our legislation that protected criminal intelligence from full disclosure to defendants would fall like a house of cards.

Our laws define criminal intelligence as information relating to actual or suspected criminal activity, the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to prejudice criminal investigations,

or to enable the discovery of the existence or identity of a confidential source of information relevant to law enforcement. The obvious example of this is information about, say, the Gypsy Jokers motorcycle gang which could come only from a police informer planted in the gang. Should that information be disclosed to a defence lawyer for the Gypsy Jokers and then passed to the Jokers themselves, that informer and his family could be murdered.

The ability of police to keep criminal intelligence out of the hands of defendants and their lawyers is vital in liquor licensing cases, crowd control licensing cases and cases under the Serious and Organised Crime Act. After the High Court unanimously upheld the validity of the state's criminal intelligence provisions in *K-Generation*, the *Independent Weekly* did not cover the case but, after I challenged Mr Gout to report it, a report appeared the next week. In this report Mr Gout wrote:

But there is a special twist to this law. Even though you can't see the secret allegations which stop you getting your gun licence, a job as a bouncer or a liquor licence, a politician is allowed to read your secret file.

I will return to test the validity of this claim but first I must set out a representative sample of the claims Mr Gout makes in his newspaper—some claims by him, some from his defence lawyer contacts and others from 'a highly-placed source' or 'operative'. Mr Gout writes:

How many ministers do you trust to hold secret dossiers on you, your family or your commercial and in-confidence business affairs? Do you trust Attorney-General Michael Atkinson?

Mr Gout continues—and here he quotes correctly:

Justice French says it is up to a court to determine whether the information has been correctly classified as criminal intelligence and, if so, what weight should be given to it.

I offered the *Independent Weekly* a 600-word opinion piece on the *K-Generation* case in the hope that the government's position might be available to readers. This was sent by email. In less than a minute, Mr Gout replied, making it clear that nothing from me or the government would be published in the *Independent Weekly*. Mr Gout has, more than once, made it plain to my then media secretaries (Jayne Stinson and Rik Morris) that he has no duty to offer me the opportunity to comment on stories of his that will be critical of me, nor does he have any duty to carry any response from me if I offer it unsolicited in anticipation of a scathing story, and nor should I have the right of reply the next week in the letters column which, by the way, Mr Gout edits.

On those occasions that Mr Gout does allow a letter of mine to be published, he will sometimes accompany it by a commentary from himself that is as long as the letter and attacks me from a direction unrelated to the original story or letter.

*Mr Pisoni interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** There the matter rested for a week—

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is warned.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** —until Mr Gout published a front page splash headed 'Secret Files'. This time Mr Gout wrote:

The government acknowledges it has been gathering files on the basis of collecting criminal intelligence but has never admitted the extent of its covert operation. According to the operative, the Attorney-General has access to files under the existing SA legislation.

On page 2, Mr Gout continues:

Many files are believed to be on religious South Australians.

Mr Gout then quotes his highly-placed source and operative about me and states:

'I can tell you, he gets it. He sees it.' He can also ask the Police Commissioner to get a file on somebody.

According to Mr Mancini, the gathering of information by police about a South Australian on request from the Attorney-General is legal under state legislation.

The legislation does not seem to preclude the Attorney-General himself passing on or distributing the contents of the secret files.

If the Attorney-General allows a colleague, an MP, factional associates or anyone else to see the file in, for example, Mr Atkinson's own office, the file would not be legal definition have been passed on. No charge could then arise against the Attorney-General even though secret information has been exchanged.

One does not have to have much experience in the black arts of propaganda, innuendo and insinuation to know what Mr Gout wants his readers to take from this. Let me be plain. Mr Gout

wishes his left-liberal readers, concentrated in the inner suburbs of Adelaide and romantic about the ideological battles of the 1960s and 1970s, to believe that the Rann government is keeping secret files on them; that these are available to all ministers but they are controlled by Attorney-General Atkinson, who supplements what the police supply him with special requests to the police to dig up dirt on individuals Michael Atkinson does not like—requests that the police cheerfully fulfil; that this information is used to deny readers of the *Independent Weekly* jobs and promotions in the public sector and to deny them vocational licences; and that Atkinson corruptly and criminally shares these files with his right wing mates at nefarious gatherings in his office.

Michael Atkinson is Harold Salisbury, only worse, and does this with the knowledge and consent of the Premier, Mike Rann, and the others who denied Hendrik Gout a media adviser's job. Like Gletkin in Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, Hendrik Gout believes that all the players in politics should be brightly coloured like gingerbread men at a fair, and if some, like me, lack colour, he will splash it on liberally.

The truth is so dull. The only criminal intelligence I ever received in about eight years in office was about the Finks motorcycle gang in connection with the Serious and Organised Crime Act. I have never asked police for a file or information on anybody. I have, of course, as the member for Croydon, sent letters to the local police superintendent on behalf of constituents, making complaints about allegedly criminal behaviour, and I have made complaints to the police attendance line on 131444 about incidents of alleged criminal behaviour that I have seen, usually on the road.

Since I have not, until December 2008, received any criminal intelligence, I have not, therefore, been able to share it with anyone and, as far as criminal intelligence on the Finks, it is kept safe and the only people with whom I have discussed it are the Solicitor-General, the Crown Solicitor and my chief of staff and acting chief of staff for the purposes of adjudicating the police's application to declare the Finks under the Serious and Organised Crime Act. So, to be clear, apart from the Finks' application, neither the Attorney-General's office nor the Crown Solicitor's Office maintain any criminal intelligence files.

It is true that SA Police has a criminal intelligence gathering function, and it would be useless if it did not. Hendrik Gout tries to give this shock value by deleting the word 'police' and inserting the word 'government'. It is a calculated and deliberately misleading sexing up of the story. Mr Gout will reply 'Well, SAPOL is part of the state government, isn't it?'

Well, the police's gathering information concerning suspected criminal activities and the individuals suspected to be involved is a stock standard approach of every police force in a rule-of-law country. It is done for the purposes of uncovering crime generally and supporting investigations of particular matters. It is a normal, continuing incident of the usual police function and as such it is universally accepted.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Excuse me, gentlemen. I hate to interrupt the conversation across the floor, but could we return to business?

**Mr MARSHALL (Norwood) (21:18):** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr MARSHALL:** Thank you very much. It has been very interesting today to actually hear our response to the budget and the lack of support for the budget from those members opposite. In fact, this was actually brought up in an edition today of the [www.adelaidenow.com.au](http://www.adelaidenow.com.au), and I note that since this time the government has wheeled in the big guns to talk in support of the government budget.

In fact, we have heard the member for Light and the member for Mawson speak about the virtues of this state government budget. We have not heard a minister actually speak in support of the budget. We have just had two people who fought marginal seat campaigns and with plenty of money being poured in to prop up this government going into the March 2010 election.

We have, of course, heard from the former attorney-general, who has basically delivered a fairly therapeutic presentation that has got a lot of stuff off his chest, and I think he is going to sleep a lot more soundly this evening. We wish him all the very best.

I would like to refer to member for Mawson's speech, because he jumped to his feet to defend his Treasurer and talked about all the things that this budget delivers. In particular, he made

the point that this government delivered on all of its election promises. So all of the things which it promised in the March 2010 election, and the lead up to the campaign for that, have been delivered by this government. Well, he was wrong—he was completely and utterly wrong.

Firstly, nothing has been delivered; they have only put it in the budget. And let's face it: this government has made an art form of announcing things in budgets only to pull them back the following budget, or possibly even to postpone them, or just to remove them completely. Do I need to remind the house about the Mount Bold reservoir? We could have saved ourselves \$2 billion from this botched desalination plant if the government had delivered on its budget promise of doubling the size of Mount Bold reservoir.

Do I need to talk about the prisons' PPP, which cost South Australia plenty of dollars compensating those people who were successfully selected as bidders for that program. This government has announced plenty and delivered precious little. This government simply cannot be trusted to deliver on projects just because they have been announced, and often, as the member for Morialta quite rightly points out, they not only announce projects, they often re-announce them several times just in case anybody was not listening the first time.

Nevertheless, this government has attempted to keep, and indeed has kept, a lot of the commitments that it made at the time of the election right through to the point of this budget. So, they have kept their promise so far for 180 days, but I am certainly not holding my breath.

*Mr Gardner interjecting:*

**Mr MARSHALL:** Correct. They haven't kept them or they haven't broken them—just yet. Most importantly, this budget contains many items which were never promised. In fact, they were never even hinted at prior to the election. The government went to the election promising to reduce government expenditure by \$750 million over the forward estimates. That is what they promised going into the election, but they have delivered much more than that. In fact, just before the state election we had the Mid-Year Review.

The Mid-Year Review was literally a couple of weeks before the election. This provided the Treasurer and the government with the opportunity to update their \$750 million cuts they promised to take to the budget. Did they use that opportunity in the Mid-Year Review, just weeks before we moved into the caretaker mode, to foreshadow that there were going to be \$2.5 billion worth of cuts or revenue measures in the budget? No, they did not. They kept that completely and utterly hidden.

As I have already said, there were many cuts and many new revenue items mentioned by this state government which were never taken to the people prior to the election. Tonight I would like to comment in-depth on just two of these. Firstly, the removal of funding for adult re-entry to SACE level and, secondly, the significant reduction in funding to the Norwood Morialta High School.

On the first issue, the removal of funding for re-entry to achieve SACE levels, this state government has decided that, as of 1 January 2010, students over the age of 21 will no longer be funded at any one of the six adult re-entry campuses in South Australia. In the electorate of Norwood I have a very fine example of one of these colleges: the Marden Senior College. This currently has 900 full-time equivalent students studying on that campus, and it is a very fine college.

There are 900 full-time equivalent students. There are over 2,000 people using the site, and it is estimated by the school that half of those people will need to go. Half of those people are over the age of 21 and will no longer qualify to go to that college. This will not only affect some of the most vulnerable people trying to re-enter the education framework in South Australia, but it will also affect every other student on that site because it will undermine the economies of scale.

The second item I would like to deal with is Norwood Morialta High School. Norwood High School, which incidentally celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, is a great school. So what does the government do to recognise this fine institution, which has provided education to the people of Norwood for more than 100 years? It decides to cut its spending—and that is an absolute disgrace.

The government has broken the promise it entered into and the commitment it made to the school in 2006, when it committed to a funding cycle between 2007 and 2011 to provide additional money to this site, recognising that it is more complex and more costly to operate on two campuses than on one. The effect of this on the budget of the school is in excess of \$625,000 per year, and that is an absolute travesty.

With only one principal and two campuses, it is essential that the school has a deputy principal on each site. Sorry, that will not be able to occur. One of the difficulties of the two campuses is providing curriculum leadership across both campuses is that you cannot have a head of English on two campuses and you cannot have a head of mathematics and science on two campuses. So, the government had provided, in its commitment to this school, additional funding, which would support some of these additional costs and the additional complexity of operating on two separate sites. This commitment was completely obliterated.

Was it done with any form of consultation with the parents, the governing council or the school? No; it was just announced. That is typical of this government, which, as the member for Cheltenham pointed out in that very informative article in the *SA Weekend* recently, this is a government that loves to announce and defend, rather than consult and decide. It is a pity the government did not listen to the member for Cheltenham—a fine member I am sure he is and great future leader he would make. It is a pity that the people in the Labor Party did not listen to the member for Cheltenham a little more before they came out and made—

**Mr Williams:** He's on the wrong side.

**Mr MARSHALL:** It is pointed out by our deputy leader that he is on the wrong side. Tonight, I have given just two examples of cuts to critical services in my electorate—there are many, many more—and neither of them were flagged before the election.

Our Treasurer announced to the people of South Australia a range of projects to the dollar value of \$750 million over the four year estimates. Instead, we got much more: we got \$2.5 billion worth of cuts and revenue measures over the forward estimates. Make no mistake, this was a deliberate and despicable act, designed to deceive and trick the people of South Australia leading up to the state election. It was one last trick to get the government one last pitiful term in office before it is consigned to a very long period in opposition.

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (21:29):** Being a new member in the house, I am amazed by the lack of response by the Labor MPs on the opposite side in this place. What would their constituents be thinking after the announcement of this budget? South Australia has been made to pay for this government's mismanagement of the state's finances—

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Point of order, member for Croydon.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** I just wish to raise a point of order made earlier by the member for Unley, and that is that the practice of the house is not to read speeches. Clearly, the member for Chaffey is reading his speech. I am just wondering what your ruling is on that, Madam Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** Traditionally, the house has allowed the use of copious notes, so I think we will allow the member for Chaffey to continue. I did see a couple of pieces of paper in the member for Croydon's hand when I walked in. I am sure he was using copious notes also. Member for Chaffey, continue.

**Mr WHETSTONE:** Members on this side must be wondering whether there is a full moon tonight after the member for Croydon's outrageous speech.

South Australia is being made to pay for this government's mismanagement of the state's finances. Water charges are up by 32 per cent from 10 July. Average households will pay \$84 more for their water next year. Average water bills have more than doubled under Labor to pay for the desal plant. That is not reducing the reliance on the Murray.

Land tax has more than tripled under Labor, despite the fact that the number of people paying land tax has almost doubled. Driver's licences are up and vehicle registrations are up, as well as increased stamp duty. It has all been said before today, but I will say it again: this budget was delayed to deal with the mismanagement of this Labor government.

South Australia is the highest-taxed state in Australia. It was 16 per cent above the national average in 2008-09. Public debt is \$7.1 billion, and South Australia is soon to pay \$2 million per day in interest. Unfunded super liability is \$9.5 billion, and the workers compensation unfunded liability is \$1.4 billion. Record revenue is flowing into this state, with \$5 billion unbudgeted from 2002-03 to 2009-10, but huge cuts have been made.

Spending blowouts have occurred amounting to \$616 million in 2009-10 and \$1.2 billion in the 2010-11 budget. The budget is now in deficit despite the revenue. Where are the government's priorities? It is just out-of-control spending. We see \$70 million per annum spent on government advertising. The health budget has overspent by \$210 million in 2009-10. The RAH cost has blown out—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WHETSTONE:** —to \$3 billion. The Liberal's plan to redevelop the existing RAH would have saved \$1 billion.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Please give the member for Chaffey the courtesy of being able to be heard. The member for Croydon will be quiet, as will the member for Kavel.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I did not say anything.

**The SPEAKER:** No, but you did before. I have a long memory. The member for Chaffey will continue.

**Mr WHETSTONE:** The Adelaide Oval cost blowout was \$300 million; it is now \$535 million. We see an increase in spending within cabinet. Job cuts total 3,750, and \$354 million will be spent on targeted voluntary separation packages. From 2001-02 to 2009-10 public sector employment increased by over 18,000, but only 2,554 were budgeted for. What was the Treasurer thinking?

I turn to SA Water and the desal plant. The desal plant's present cost blowout is \$2.2 billion, which is not reducing the reliance on the Murray. We have \$2.4 billion going from SA Water into general revenue from 2001-02 to 2009-10. My goodness, what was the water minister thinking? There are also the vanishing infrastructure projects: the Mount Bold Reservoir expansion in 2007-08; the desal plant in the Upper Spencer Gulf; and the South Road underpass beneath Port Road and Grange Road. My goodness, what was the Minister for Infrastructure thinking?

There is a poor state of infrastructure in South Australia, according to Engineers Australia. Roads have been rated poor, rail is barely adequate and stormwater drainage is poor. Again, what does the minister think? In terms of the impact of the 2010-11 budget on regional South Australia, 400 Public Service jobs are to go across tourism, education and primary industries. We have an \$80 million cut from PIRSA's budget and 180 jobs are to go.

It is a major impact on services to the rural industries. SARDI has an \$8 million cut to its research funding. SARDI makes an important contribution to agricultural and horticultural research, and research and development keeps South Australia's rural industries competitive.

South Australia has been a global pioneer in agricultural and horticultural research—a necessity for the difficult conditions that we face. The conditions are becoming more difficult with climate change, so this government now cuts more funding. What were the ministers thinking?

Then to payroll tax rebate for the exporters by 2013. Regional fuel subsidies have been cut by \$50 million over four years, to raise the cost of fuel by 3.3 cents a litre. What does the minister for agriculture think? The cellar door subsidy has been cut by \$7 million; what does the member for Mawson think? The member is not here.

The small schools grants program has been cut by \$12 million. In Chaffey, I have 28 schools, 21 of which are small schools. Where is their future? Again, regional South Australia is paying a heavy price for the Labor government's mismanagement. What do all of the ministers think?

**Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (21:35):** Could I just say that, in my short time here, this is the first opportunity we have had to come back to the house after dinner. There is a whole different tone in the place and it has been most enjoyable. I have enjoyed the interchange and the contributions. It has been a lot of fun and it continues—most enjoyable.

**The SPEAKER:** You won't say that after about four or five years, member for Flinders.

**Mr TRELOAR:** After five years would be good. It would mean I would be in my second term. My congratulations to the previous speakers from this side of the house, in particular to the

member for Chaffey who has just completed an excellent grievance debate, and also the few contributions that have come from the government's side, particularly since dinner.

The budget was roughly \$8 billion when Labor came to office in 2002 and, over those eight years, it has roughly doubled to about \$16 billion. The question is, how on earth have they got us to this point, where the taxpayers of this state will pay \$2 million per day in interest payments on government debt?

I can think of many things to do with \$2 million a day. One that I have spoken about in this house previously, is the patient assisted transport scheme, which is vital in assisting country patients to visit specialists in the city, often in very serious cases of illness or sickness.

The reduction in the small school funding scheme has been spoken about by a number of members already. Now, this is due to be cut by \$12 million over the next four years. It amounts to a \$30,000 per school funding stream to these schools. In the seat of Flinders, we have 23 state public schools. Of those 23, 12—so, in other words, a little over half—are classified as small schools, that is, schools with less than 100 students.

Now, another definition of a remote school is a school that is 80 kilometres or more from the CBD of Adelaide. Well, I can tell you that many of the small schools in Flinders are more than 80 kilometres from the next town. So in fact, the disadvantage will be keenly felt. It will have a severe impact on the funding streams available to these schools and, without actually officially closing educational institutions, it will mean that the governing councils will need to make some very considered and serious decisions about the future of their schools, and the education that they can offer.

As we all know, education is so very, very important. It is the opportunity we give our children, and country students are just as entitled to those educational opportunities as everyone else. Also with regard to education, we have the term 'school amalgamations' coming through in the budget. Now my belief is that, this is simply government spin, disclosing school closures. This would cut at the very heart of regional communities.

Funding is also due to be cut after 2013 to Regional Development Australia from the state government. There are three funding streams to Regional Development Australia at the moment: one from federal government, one from state government and one from local government. And my feeling is that, when the funding is withdrawn from the state government, once again it will severely impact on the funding streams and the capabilities of these boards to operate as they have been.

I think these regional development boards have been one of the success stories of the regions. They have been vital in assisting small businesses to start, to establish relationships between exporters and importers and generally provide support to business in rural and regional areas.

Water charges are due to go up. Cuts to the Public Service are forecast—3,749, if my memory serves me correctly. Unfortunately, from my perspective, 180 of these will be from PIRSA. PIRSA has been vital in providing extension to primary producers throughout South Australia. By 'extension' I mean the conveyance of opportunity and research to producers who adopt the latest technology and techniques and capitalise on those opportunities. Once again, the cuts to the Public Service and PIRSA will be keenly felt.

I turn to road funding. Unfortunately, there has been a longstanding \$200 million backlog in road funding from the state government. There has been no attempt to address this in this state government budget, as far as I can see. The backlog continues to grow, and I will talk about a couple of roads in particular in my electorate, one being the Tod Highway between Karkoo and Kyancutta.

**Mr Marshall:** The two metropolises.

**Mr TRELOAR:** The two metropolises, as the member for Norwood rightly calls them. In fact, the Tod Highway would rival the Parade on a busy Saturday night, member for Norwood.

**An honourable member:** You could shoot ducks from it.

**Mr TRELOAR:** You could certainly shoot ducks this year: there is plenty of water around and plenty of rain. The crops are good. Quite seriously, the Tod Highway carries a large amount of traffic, much of it B-doubles or road trains, and the road is not much wider than the seat you and I sit on, member for Norwood. Quite seriously, it has deteriorated to a position where it could be regarded as highly dangerous. So the backlog is significant. Another road is the Wirrulla to



Kingoonya road which, in talking to a constituent of mine just recently, is in as poor a condition as it has ever been.

Funding to tourism has been cut. My belief is that Eyre Peninsula offers one of the really great opportunities for tourism in this state, probably along with Kangaroo Island, the Riverland—

**Mr van Holst Pellekaan:** The Flinders Ranges.

**Mr TRELOAR:** —and the Flinders Ranges. The list goes on and on, in fact, member for Stuart. It is disappointing to see that the government is not prepared to support the opportunities that are there with regard to tourism. We have pristine coastline, a majestic landscape and isolation that is appealing, not just to intrastate visitors but also interstate and even international visitors. It is disappointing to see that.

I mention the fuel subsidy scheme. Unfortunately, the 3.3¢ a litre rebate will disappear. This will have an adverse effect, once again, on regional constituents. It will impact on their ability to travel to work cost-effectively, to send children to school cost-effectively and, in fact, to do business cost-effectively.

The last thing I would like to touch on is the Adelaide Oval, and we have seen the funding for that continue to blow out. I have a comment in closing. I quite seriously believe that most of my constituents have never attended Adelaide Oval, nor are likely to. The extraordinary amount of funding going into this development is really lost as far as the regions go, I am afraid.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (21:44):** I wish to progress my earlier comments in regard to the Appropriation Bill and talk about what this government is proposing and, I believe, is well on the way to doing, that is, selling off two to three rotations of forestry. I will quote from sections of the budget:

The Department of Treasury and Finance market projects unit was established to progress initiatives aimed at realising the value of some of the state's assets. Measures included: to investigate selling harvest rights of ForestrySA plantations.

I further quote:

A significant improvement in net lending is forecast in 2011-12, reflecting the proposed sale of ForestrySA assets. Proceeds from the sale of Forestry SA's harvests have not been disclosed so as to avoid prejudicing the sales process.

I note recommendation 39 in the government response to the Sustainable Budget Commission's second report, page 20, which states, 'The commission recommends the government should sell Forestry South Australia' outright. While not supporting that recommendation the government 'reaffirms its public position of supporting the possible sale of two or three harvesting rotations'. In the original Sustainable Budget Commission report there was reference to more consultation. What is this: turn up and tell people; announce and defend? Have they decided to sell or not, is the question?

Recently on radio, treasurer Kevin Foley said that the government was still deliberating on the proposal to forward-sell up to three rotations of forest. Shortly after, his forestry minister, the nationally known expert—in his own mind anyway—said, 'The government has made a decision, we will be putting on the market two or three forward rotations.' I ask the question: is the Treasurer afraid to speak the truth about the proposal or is the minister simply wrong? Either way it is pretty unimpressive.

The issue we have with forward-selling of three rotations of forest, as indicated today by the member for Mount Gambier, is that this will be over 100 years of timber. It is essentially a privatisation. The Minister for Forests tried to indicate on radio the other day that it had worked in Victoria. The information provided to me is that it is not working, that logs are having to be imported in hundreds of thousands of tonnes for mills in Victoria because they are not being supplied by the private operator of the forests.

For the life of me, I cannot see how you can make an overseas investor, who will be the only ones who will have the money for a sale of this magnitude, because it will at least be in the many hundreds of millions of dollars—will they be worried about the mills in the South-East? Will they be worried about the upgrades that have to happen to these mills for more efficiencies? No.

So, it puts a whole range of issues in the South-East, where 25 per cent of local jobs are derived directly from forestry, and it affects 30 per cent of the economy. A sale like this will destroy the economy around the Green Triangle, especially in Mount Gambier; I am absolutely certain of

that. This city-centric government, I am sure, will go down this path—this socialist government—selling off the future of people who live in this state, of not only their kids but their grandkids and their great-grandkids.

I also want to make mention of the cuts to the small schools grants and the savings of \$12 million and the amalgamation saving of \$8.2 million in regard to co-located schools. The cuts to the small schools grants will just mean that smaller schools will disappear. I recently had a letter from the Morgan family at Geranium, concerned that their small school will disappear under this because it will lose its funding. Many members on this side have made the same point about small schools in their areas. I believe it will also happen under the co-located schools program.

It is interesting to note that the value of South Australian overseas exports fell by 15 per cent to \$8.1 billion in 2009-10, similar to the national fall of 13 per cent. This is another issue where the government has taken away the rebate for exporters in this state, which will cost \$10 million. The cost of living increased by stealth by the cuts imposed on agriculture and regional services will increase the costs for producers, and an increase in higher prices of produce from regional areas. This will result in a higher cost of living across the board for all South Australians.

I want to reflect on some comments made earlier today by the member for Light about comments made by our leader about getting an education under a gum tree. I tell you what: there is a school I went in to bat for—it was my home school. I declare my interest; it is where my kids (Mackenzie and Angus) go. That community has fought for eight years and honestly, the rooms those kids were in, especially year 4 and under—mice, rats and snakes could get in there. It was not until a major deputation by myself and the school community that those rooms have now disappeared because they were a great risk to students. Perhaps they would have been better off being educated under a gum tree.

I look in the budget and I see cuts to regional development funding by 2013. Here we go again with this government: no thoughts of the regions; no thoughts of what is happening outside of anywhere between Gepps Cross and Glen Osmond. How do they think we are going to make this place grow? As I mentioned earlier, the agriculture minister wants agriculture to be a powerhouse like defence and mining in this state, yet all this government does is defund the regions across the board, not just in agriculture but in regional development funding as well.

I note that the new Royal Adelaide Hospital is not in the budget. Has that gone the way of Mobilong Prison (which the government threatened to build with virtually no consultation with our side of the house and especially with me as the local member) or the Mount Bold Reservoir expansion? When I met with the former minister for water and the River Murray, probably two years ago or more, I said to the former minister, 'You're going to need 95 per cent of water pumped into that reservoir to fill it from the River Murray,' and she said, 'No, you won't, Adrian; I'll get you a briefing.' Well, I am still waiting for that briefing and I do not think it is likely to come.

**Mr Goldsworthy:** She's gone.

**Mr PEDERICK:** She's gone; I won't get it from her. Maybe I'll get it from the new water spokesman.

*The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:*

**Mr PEDERICK:** It is not even in your budget anymore. It's long gone.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr PEDERICK:** I note the Adelaide Oval debacle where this government cannot work out how much money it is going to spend. First it is \$300 million; then it is \$450 million and not a penny more. All of a sudden it is \$535 million and it will be more. It will turn into \$700 or \$800 million and they will have a project that will be 30 years out of date before the first sod is turned. It will be an absolute disgrace to the Adelaide Oval, and they will ruin it.

I note that the Minister for the River Murray and Minister for Water is in here tonight, and in my closing remarks I want to reflect on the river and just say that we are very fortunate that we have had rains in the northern basin and the southern basin. The southern basin is wetted up and I believe that that is the only real reason that we have water in the river. The dams have been filled in the northern basin and the southern basin and it is wetted up.

I would just like to complete my remarks by saying how much this government has disenfranchised the communities in the Riverland and the Mallee. There was a public meeting where people were programmed to talk on the levee bank proposals, on how the government was hopefully going to do something with the levee banks that are leaking and will continue leaking, but they did not send their spokesman along because they thought they might come to harm. How bad is that? The government has disenfranchised the people of this state that much—and that is true. That is exactly what happened.

*The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:*

**Mr PEDERICK:** I'm not gutless. I know exactly how it happened. They have disenfranchised the people of the state that much. This is exactly how this government runs and how this government runs everything in the regions whether it is to do with agriculture, regional development or the River Murray.

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

Motion carried.

**The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (21:54):** On the behalf of the Deputy Premier, I move:

That the proposed payments for the departments and services contained in the Appropriation Bill be referred to Estimates Committees A and B for examination and report by Thursday, 14 October 2010 in accordance with the following timetables:

APPROPRIATION BILL  
TIMETABLE FOR ESTIMATES COMMITTEES  
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A  
7-13 October 2010  
THURSDAY 7 OCTOBER 2010 AT 9.00 AM

Premier  
Minister for Social Inclusion  
Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change  
Minister for Economic Development  
Minister for Arts  
Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts  
Minister Assisting the Premier in Cabinet Business and Public Sector Management  
Legislative Council  
Joint Parliamentary Services  
House of Assembly  
State Governor's Establishment  
Department of the Premier and Cabinet (part)  
Administered Items for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (part)  
Department of Trade and Economic Development (part)  
Arts SA  
Auditor-General's Department  
Treasurer  
Minister for Defence Industries  
Department of Treasury and Finance (part)  
Administered Items for the Department of Treasury and Finance (part)  
Defence SA

FRIDAY 8 OCTOBER 2010 AT 9.00 AM

Minister for Families and Communities  
Minister for Housing

Minister for Disability

Minister for Ageing

Department for Families and Communities

Administered Items for the Department for Families and Communities

Minister for Consumer Affairs

Minister for the Status of Women

Minister for Government Enterprises

Minister for State / Local Government Relations

Attorney-General's Department (part)

Administered Items for the Attorney-General's Department (part)

Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (part)

Administered Items for the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (part)

Department for Planning and Local Government (part)

Administered Items for the Department for Planning and Local Government (part)

MONDAY 11 OCTOBER 2010 AT 10.15 AM

Minister for Health

Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Minister for the Southern Suburbs

Department of Health

Department for Planning and Local Government (part)

Administered Items for the Department for Planning and Local Government (part)

TUESDAY 12 OCTOBER 2010 AT 9.00 AM

Minister for Volunteers

Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Minister for Youth

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation

Attorney-General's Department (part)

Administered Items for the Attorney-General's Department (part)

Department of the Premier and Cabinet (part)

Administered Items for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (part)

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Mineral Resources Development

Minister for Urban Development and Planning

Department of the Premier and Cabinet (part)

Administered Items for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (part)

Department of Primary Industries and Resources (part)

Administered Items for the Department of Primary Industries and Resources (part)

Department for Planning and Local Government (part)

Administered Items for the Department for Planning and Local Government (part)

WEDNESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2010 AT 10.00 AM

Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Minister for Forests

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Northern Suburbs

Department of Primary Industries and Resources (part)

Administered Items for the Department of Primary Industries and Resources (part)  
Department of Trade and Economic Development (part)  
Department for Planning and Local Government (part)  
Administered Items for the Department for Planning and Local Government (part)

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

7-13 October 2010

THURSDAY 7 OCTOBER 2010 AT 9.00 AM

Minister for Education  
Minister for Early Childhood Development  
Department of Education and Children's Services  
Administered Items for the Department of Education and Children's Services  
Minister for Infrastructure  
Minister for Energy  
Minister for Transport  
Administered Items for the Department of Treasury and Finance (part)  
Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (part)  
Administered Items for Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (part)  
TransAdelaide

FRIDAY 8 OCTOBER 2010 AT 9.00 AM

Minister for Small Business  
Minister for Gambling  
Minister for Industry and Trade  
Minister for Correctional Services  
Department of Trade and Economic Development (part)  
Independent Gambling Authority  
Attorney-General's Department (part)  
Administered Items for the Attorney-General's Department (part)  
Department for Correctional Services  
Minister for Tourism  
Attorney-General  
Minister for Justice  
South Australian Tourism Commission  
Minister for Tourism  
Attorney-General's Department (part)  
Administered Items for the Attorney-General's Department (part)  
Electoral Commission SA  
Courts Administration Authority

MONDAY 11 OCTOBER 2010 AT 10.00 AM

Minister for Environment and Conservation  
Minister for Water  
Minister for the River Murray  
Department for Environment and Natural Resources  
Administered Items for the Department for Environment and Natural Resources  
Environment Protection Authority  
Department of Water

Administered Items for the Department of Water

TUESDAY 12 OCTOBER 2010 AT 10.00 AM

Minister for Police

Minister for Recreation, Racing and Sport

Minister for Emergency Services

South Australia Police (part)

Administered Items for South Australia Police (part)

Attorney-General's Department (part)

Administered Items for the Attorney-General's Department (part)

WEDNESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2010 AT 10.00 AM

Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education

Minister for Road Safety

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Minister for Science and Information Economy

Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology

Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (part)

Administered Items for Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (part)

South Australia Police (part)

Administered Items for South Australia Police (part)

Attorney-General's Department (part)

Administered Items for the Attorney-General's Department (part)

Motion carried.

**The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (21:55):** On behalf of the Deputy Premier, I move:

That Estimates Committee A be appointed, consisting of Ms Fox, Messrs Griffiths, Odenwalder and Pederick, Mrs Redmond, Ms Thompson and Mrs Vlahos.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (21:55):** I move:

That Estimates Committee B be appointed, consisting of Ms Bedford, Messrs Gardner, Kenyon, Piccolo and Pisoni, Ms Sanderson and Mr Sibbons.

Motion carried.

At 21:56 the house adjourned until Thursday 30 September 2010 at 10:30.