

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 12 July 2012

The **SPEAKER (Hon. L.R. Breuer)** took the chair at 10:31 and read prayers.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES (NATURAL DISASTERS COMMITTEE) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 15 March 2012.)

Mr SIBBONS (Mitchell) (10:32): This bill seeks to amend the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991 and the Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1990 to establish a standing committee for natural disasters. Pursuant to the bill, the committee's function would be to inquire into, consider and report on such matters concerned with natural disasters as are referred to it and to perform such other functions as are imposed on the committee under this or any other act or by resolution of both houses.

On face value, this bill appears meritorious. I appreciate the importance of this issue and the member for Davenport's ongoing efforts regarding bushfire safety in the state. However, the bill will add very little to the established framework of disaster management in South Australia. According to the bill, the committee is to conduct inquiries when matters are referred to it. This can be distinguished from the functions of other committees which are more proactive such as the Natural Resources Committee which are required to take an interest and keep under review the protection and improvements of natural resources.

The bill does not acknowledge the existing comprehensive arrangements in place for the management of natural disasters. It is, therefore, ambiguous how the committee would contribute to the already comprehensive framework of emergency management in South Australia. The preparation for, and response to, natural disasters and emergencies in this state is governed by the Emergency Management Act 2004. The act was introduced in 2004, replacing the State Disaster Act 1980 subsequent to a review of the State Disaster Act which was undertaken in response to the major bushfires and floods that occurred interstate, in addition to the terrorist attacks of September 11 and the Bali, Madrid and London bombings.

The act establishes an exhaustive framework for the management of emergencies caused by terrorist attacks, storage of hazardous goods, human disease (including pandemic or epidemic), transport infrastructure failure, and natural disasters, including earthquakes, tsunamis, bushfires and floods. It establishes a State Emergency Management Committee which, among other functions, oversees the development and preparation of a State Emergency Management Plan and keeps this plan under review.

The plan is comprehensive, outlining guidelines, procedures, processes, arrangements and organisational structures that come into play in preventing, and responding to, state emergencies. Section 11 of the act provides a mechanism in which the Emergency Management Committee can establish advisory groups to advise the committee on all manner of things, such as:

- State Mitigation Advisory Group (Chair, SAFECOM);
- State Response Advisory Group (Chair, SA Police);
- State Recovery Committee (Chair, Department for Families and Communities);
- State Protective Security Advisory Group (Chair, SA Police); and
- State Pandemic Influenza Working Group (Chair, Department of Health).

These advisory groups have developed the practice of establishing working groups or task groups to investigate and/or inquire into particular matters.

For example, the State Mitigation Advisory Group established a working group in 2011 to review the Queensland and Victorian flood disasters in the context of South Australia's flood management prevention and response plans. The findings were then reported to the State Mitigation Advisory Group and fed through the structure and out to the relevant agencies, where policies were modified accordingly.

There are also local zone emergency management committees; that is, each identified zone in South Australia has an emergency management committee. These committees are responsible for assessing risks and hazards local to the particular region and establishing an emergency plan to deal with the possible risks. These committees involve local people, local governments, aware of local issues in addition to state agencies, so we are seeing a system of comprehensive review and reporting which feeds in through these working groups and committees, up through the structure and out again into the relevant response agencies.

The plan also identifies hazard leaders. Hazard leaders work with the advisory groups to ensure that aspects of the state's approach are coordinated. They have overall responsibility for the preparation and planning for emergencies, and control agencies have the responsibility when action is required. Hazard leaders are usually the relevant control agency: for example, the hazard leader for floods in SA is the Department for Water and the hazard leader for bushfires is the CFS. This is not a vague, disconnected structure. It is a detailed and integrated arrangement involving local participation and the involvement of experts.

Built-in review mechanisms ensure that all plans and policies are regularly reviewed, ensuring consistency and efficiency. There is an annual whole of government exercise in which emergency plans are executed. I am advised that this exercise can consist of either a discussion or an actual practical training run, involving deployment of operational resources. Each year the focus changes. There have been years where the exercise relates to a simulated bushfire emergency. I understand that in other years it has been a simulated response to an earthquake or flood emergency. The Emergency Management Committee reports all matters to the Emergency Management Council, a cabinet committee, chaired by the Premier and comprising the Attorney-General, the Minister for Police, the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Health, the Minister for Emergency Services and the Minister for State/Local Government Relations.

Emergency management is no doubt an important matter, and I have considered the seriousness with a view to determining how best to facilitate and add value to the existing framework. We do not believe the creation of a parliamentary committee will accomplish this, and we cannot justify the use of public resources to establish a committee that is not proactive, which would likely address issues only after the event, or consider issues that have already been addressed by task groups, advisory groups and/or local leaders.

Support must be provided to the structures that are already in place. The government is committed to improving disaster and emergency management in this state by providing support to these structures. We supported the COAG recommendations, which facilitated a fundamental shift in the management of emergencies beyond response and reaction to anticipation and mitigation. We adopted the national principles of the disaster recovery that identified recovery as integral to emergency preparation and mitigation. We secured \$2.8 million from the federal government to boost natural disaster resilience.

This scheme delivers funding to state government agencies, government-owned corporations and local governments for projects which help to minimise the risk and impact of natural disasters and which support the recruitment, training and retention of emergency management volunteers. This funding was provided in 2010 and 2011 and renewed for 2012-13. We have also demonstrated our commitment to bushfire safety, allocating \$23 million in funding in the state budget in 2011 to help protect South Australia against the ongoing risk of bushfire readiness and response capabilities of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

This specifically included employing more firefighters, purchasing new equipment and providing additional resources and accreditation courses to CFS and State Emergency Service volunteers. This year's budget saw an extra \$8.3 million allocated to the state's emergency service providers over the next four years to help maintain services and equipment; \$1.7 million of which is to be invested in developing an emergency alert network to advise residents of dangers in specific areas.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mitchell, I am sorry: your time has actually expired. I know that the clock says 15 minutes, but you actually had only 10—can you quickly wind up?

Mr SIBBONS: The government does not support this bill.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (10:43): I will be brief because others want to speak. I commend the member for Davenport for bringing forward this matter. The member for Mitchell mentioned the cost. The cost of this would be infinitesimal compared with the cost of a natural

disaster, whether you talk about a bushfire, a flood, an earthquake or whatever. I see the role of this committee as a watchdog, not just to look at the past but at trying to reduce not so much the risk of a natural disaster (you cannot prevent some of them) but ensuring that the state and the community is adequately prepared and resourced.

I see it not as a negative thing but as a positive proposal because, if that committee, through its deliberations, activities and hearing from experts and other people in the community, can help avert a natural disaster, help minimise the impact on the community and its infrastructure, and so on, then that is a good thing.

I think it is unfortunate that too often people in the bureaucracy see the role of parliament as a threat. We are not here to undermine the good work that is done by the agencies. This motion would help strengthen the role of the agencies in dealing with emergencies, and I cannot see any sound reason why the government would not want to support it.

The argument is that we already have some committees; we do, but they cannot do every single task. That was an issue that arose yesterday in relation to why I was not putting a proposal to the Social Development Committee in relation to crime. The Social Development Committee cannot look at the current issue of migrants, the issue of hygiene in restaurants and a number of other things as well as look at, say, the issue of crime prevention and crime reduction.

It looks like the government has cast its vote and will vote against it, and I think that is unfortunate because I think a parliamentary committee focused on natural disasters could save the community a lot of pain and a lot of expense.

The SPEAKER: I just remind members that the clock says 15 minutes but you actually only have 10. I am sorry; it is a technical problem in here—they need a lot more time to talk in the other house. So, just be reminded that you do not actually have 15: you only have 10. I am sorry about that, but we cannot do anything about it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Pengilly: That's discrimination.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Finniss, behave yourself!

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (10:46): I stand to commend the member for Davenport for putting this motion forward and certainly appreciate the support of the member for Fisher. I cannot for the life of me figure out why the member for Mitchell, and the government more broadly, would not support this.

This is actually the third time in the last two years that the member for Davenport has put this or a very similar motion forward. He started out focusing on bushfires but now, quite sensibly, he is concentrating on natural disasters more broadly. In the interests of time, I refer the house to the comments I have made on the member for Davenport's motions on 28 October 2010 and 24 November 2011, and I will be brief with the extra things I have to add today.

I suppose one of the most important things I would like to say is that, while the government does not support this motion, the natural resources standing committee of the parliament certainly does support it in principle. I refer the house to recommendation 2 from the Bushfire Inquiry report of 6 July 2011. Recommendation 2 from that report is:

The Committee recommends that Parliament establish a standing committee for natural disasters. The purpose of this committee would be to ensure that Government agencies and emergency services are fully prepared to deal with natural disasters and to provide an opportunity for Members of Parliament, as opposed to Cabinet, to have input into disaster management.

Our committee—and I unashamedly say this as a member of it—is a very responsible, bipartisan committee. I suspect it reflects more accurately than any other standing committee the bipartisan will of this parliament. I think that recommendation is a sound one, so it is very disappointing to have the government not supporting the member for Davenport in this instance.

It is important to point out that this is not just about bushfires: this is about all natural disasters which, of course, would include floods, earthquakes, tidal surges and many others. For people who accept that climate change is having an impact, I think it is likely that, on that logic, we would expect to see more natural disasters and probably more natural disasters that we are not prepared for, so that is all the more reason to accept this motion from the member for Davenport.

It is important to say, too, that nobody expects that we will be able to stop all natural disasters; the formation of a parliamentary committee is not going to stop all of them. I would like to think we might stop some, but it will certainly mean that we are far better prepared for natural disasters.

That is not to say that the people already working in government agencies and a range of other agencies are not doing good work in this area, but I think to get the government, opposition and other members of parliament involved in a standing committee to deal with this will make us better prepared in advance, during and after all natural disasters. Natural disasters can affect metro, peri-urban, country and outback areas. All our state, unfortunately, is at risk from some sort of natural disaster; and, as the member for Fisher said a few minutes ago, the cost of establishing this committee would be nothing compared to the cost of avoiding one disaster, or dealing with whichever comes along, more effectively.

I highlight the fact that floods are the greatest cost of any natural disaster that take place in Australia. I would also like to point out the fact that one of the very important pieces of work that this committee—if it is ever established—could work on is prescribed burns and burning off. Unfortunately, I have to highlight the fact that the most recent natural disaster that we have had in our state was an out-of-control bushfire in the Wirrabara Forest in the electorate of Stuart, which was actually started by a government department.

It was a prescribed burn jointly put together by DENR and Forestry. We will have more opportunity to talk about this on another occasion, but all the information I have is that they were advised by people on the ground not to progress—they did progress, and within minutes of the prescribed burn being started it was out of control. We have a government department which started our most recent out-of-control bushfire in this state, and you cannot tell me that a standing committee looking into natural disasters could not have contributed to making sure that that did not happen.

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (10:51): Can I just say that, as the shadow minister for emergency services, this is a very important issue for me, as it should be for everyone in this place. I note that in the gallery today we have Mrs Wendy Shirley from the CFS Volunteers Association and other members of the executive. I congratulate them on the work they are doing in supporting our CFS volunteers and protecting South Australians through the good work they do.

This motion that has been put up by the Hon. Iain Evans is one that this government should take note of. I know that it is opposing the motion. How ridiculous! How many committees do we have in this place that do absolutely three parts of stuff all most of the time? The productivity of many committees is very low yet they are considered vital parts of the democratic process, vital parts of the parliamentary process, and we have a proposal here for a committee that is going to be looking at issues that are definitely going to be on the agenda.

It is not 'if': it is 'when' we are going to have our next natural disaster, and to have a committee of the parliament looking at the ways of heading off these disasters, mitigating these disasters, is something that we need to consider very carefully. As the member for Fisher has said, the cost of this committee is minimal when you consider the potential billions of dollars—not just millions but billions of dollars—in damage that can be brought about by an uncontrolled natural disaster.

If you can mitigate that disaster, if you can prevent that disaster happening by flood preparations and fire prevention preparations, fine, but there are many disasters that you cannot predict. You can build earthquake-proof buildings but there are things that will happen that you are going to have to be prepared to handle. You are going to have to have the resources to handle them, you are going to have to have the protocols in place to handle them, and a committee like this would be an overseeing body for that preparation and the amalgamation of government departments in making sure that, if we do get a disaster, it is going to be at least minimised, because it is not just the floods.

We had floods down at Glenelg North in my electorate in 2003 when about 200 homes were severely affected. Many people's lives were destroyed by those floods. There was one suicide and several divorces in that relatively small affected section of the metro area. It is important that we do make sure that we are looking after even small areas where there can be a natural disaster, and we can put procedures in place to make sure that those disasters are mitigated.

Earthquakes, floods and fire are not the only ones. The big ones—and we are seeing this government wanting to put in place a biosecurity levy—are if we get exotic diseases. If we get exotic diseases in animals—foot-and-mouth disease—it would cost billions of dollars. We would have the CFS, we would have the SES, we would have SAPOL all out there, manning the road blocks, cleaning up and doing the preparation for the disposal of animals and enforcing quarantine. We are using our volunteers to the utmost and we need to make sure we give them every bit of support we can. A committee like this would be doing that.

If pandemics such as those that threatened through bird flu and SARS come here, we will have everybody needing to be on their utmost guard. We will have to make sure we have protocols in place. A committee like this will make sure that those protocols are in place and that we can mitigate the disasters. It is not just the ones we think about all the time—fires, floods and earthquakes. There are far more insidious natural disasters that can affect us that we cannot see coming. They will arrive on an aeroplane and, before you know it, they will affect hundreds and hundreds, if not millions, of Australians. We need to be able to mitigate the effects of those disasters and have procedures in place; and we need to make sure that this parliament has a role in that and this committee is one way of doing that.

I ask those people who are opposing the formation of this committee for the sake of a few dollars to think again, because they will be the ones who will have blood on their hands. They will have the deaths of people on their hands if a natural disaster does hit and it could have been mitigated by more active intervention, more proactive planning, and a parliamentary committee such as this is the way to do it.

Mr VENNING (Schubert) (10:56): Briefly, I want to add my few comments to this. We know Australia is a land of contrast and great extremes and, also, we have had more than our fair share of natural disasters, already—fire, floods, storms, cyclones, even earthquakes. Thank goodness we do not have too many of those but, certainly, we have in the past and, no doubt, we will in the future. So it will always happen and we do not know when, so we have to be prepared. A committee like this I think would be very appropriate and very relevant, and I congratulate the member for Davenport for bringing it forward.

A committee that meets regularly can regularly monitor our state of preparedness to promote effective consultation, communication and awareness programs in the community to ensure that we are not caught asleep at the wheel. In the past, we have sometimes been caught out and been ill-equipped, without the right information, and the public has been totally unaware.

Finally, I pay tribute to the bodies that do it at this point in time, particularly the CFS, members of which are here with us today. It is great to see you: you should come more often. Also, I acknowledge the old EFS, which I was involved in many years ago, that looked after, particularly, our country communities very well for generations and we appreciate that very much. I was saying in this house only yesterday when talking about the emergency services levy that I believe it would be an opportunity for us to give some dispensation to those people who are putting in all the efforts to work to be our volunteers: there should be some assistance when they come to pay their levy. I think that would be a very good gesture.

Also to the SES, the police and the ambulance. We are all involved in this. It is an area of great liaison and I think a committee like this could be the watchdog and make sure they get together at least once a year and go through the processes that an overarching committee could do. Again, I congratulate the member for Davenport. He has been here almost as long as I have, and he is a man of great skill and ability and he is a man of the world. I am a bit concerned that the government has not sought fit to support this. I do not think there is too much politics in it.

Mr PEGLER (Mount Gambier) (10:58): I would also like to indicate my support for the formation of a natural disasters committee of parliament. I believe that there are some disasters that we can reduce (particularly fires and floods) by having proper things in place. Of course, there are others that we cannot have any control over but we can prevent a lot of the effects of these disasters by being well resourced and very well organised.

I believe we should have a committee that is overarching what is happening throughout the rest of the state. I might indicate that I have been on some of these disaster committees within my own region for quite some time and they are often well prepared but I do not know that we know how well prepared we are right throughout this state and a disaster committee such as this could ensure that we are prepared right throughout this state for dealing with disasters. If we are well prepared we can certainly reduce the effects. We can make sure that all the resources and all the

protocols as to who deals with what are in place, so that, hopefully, we can reduce the effects of these disasters. Without further ado, I indicate my support for the bill.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (11:00): I thank those members who have offered their support. I will certainly not argue with the member for the Barossa's comments. In my heart of hearts I know that this particular measure is right for the parliament and right for the state. I know the member for Mitchell would have been given a speech by the minister's office and asked to read it. In future years, I would suggest that the member for Mitchell will reflect on that speech and regret it.

The government's position, to me, is unsustainable. It is unsustainable for two reasons. First, if the member for Mitchell and the government actually read the bill, then to say that the bill introduces a non-proactive committee, a committee that cannot be proactive, is simply a false premise. Whoever told the Labor caucus that, in reaching its position, misled the caucus because under 15O(a) of the bill the functions of the committee are:

to inquire into, consider and report on such matters concerned with natural disasters as are referred to it under this Act;

In other words, as defined under the act. So, the committee can conduct inquiries, if it wants. The government, for its own political purposes, has taken a totally different position on that bill. The government's position is this: 'Don't worry about it. We have a process in place. It's called the Emergency Managing Council,' or whatever the committee was the member for Mitchell referred to. That is the speech Anna Bligh would have given prior to the Queensland floods. That is the speech the Victorian government, of any colour, would have given prior to the Victorian fires. It is the speech the New Zealand government would have given prior to the New Zealand earthquakes.

Every single government in the Western democracy has a process to deal with natural disasters. What I am trying to achieve is parliamentary oversight of that process because I am not convinced that the parliament has a grip on the dangers facing South Australia through its natural disasters and the change in demographics and development. I will go back to my own electorate for an example. My electorate, in the Mitcham Hills, is one of the worst bushfire districts in Australia, if not the world, according to my own CFS branches. There has been a significant population growth in that area over the past 30 years. There has not been a bad fire through that district since the 1950s, thanks to the grace of God, a bit of luck and the high skill of the CFS when the fires did occur.

If anyone thinks that the Adelaide Hills and other areas of the state are prepared for a bushfire they are kidding themselves. There is complacency throughout the community with regard to fire. I think there is a great advantage to the state in having parliamentary oversight of all natural disasters so that we can focus the parliament's mind on the dangers that are in front of us and how well we are prepared. Have a look at any natural disaster around the world and here is the pattern: the natural disaster occurs, the government of the day comes out and expresses great grief about the natural disaster, the government sets up an inquiry about the natural disaster, the inquiry reports about the natural disaster, some time down the track the government will respond to that report and then the whole process repeats itself.

My view is that there should be parliamentary oversight of that process so that we can proactively plan for a natural disaster. The parliament should be involved in proactive questioning of the planning for a natural disaster so that we are best prepared. I take the member for Mount Gambier's comment, I think he is absolutely spot on: it is about restricting the damage. It is about better controlling. It is about trying to limit the impact of natural disasters through this committee oversight. I have tried on three separate occasions, as the local representative, to get the parliament to do something.

I thank the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee for bringing the committee to the Mitcham hills in my electorate to look at the issue firsthand. I thank the parliament's committee for recommending that this committee be established; I thank the committee for that. It is unfortunate that this government has poked the eye of its own members on that committee to say, even though you unanimously supported it, even though I changed the bill to reflect the government's position, for their own base reasons they have now decided that they are not going to establish this committee. I think South Australia is underprepared for it, and I just hope that we do not live to regret not establishing this committee.

The house divided on the second reading:

AYES (16)

Brock, G.G.	Evans, I.F. (teller)	Gardner, J.A.W.
Goldsworthy, M.R.	Griffiths, S.P.	McFetridge, D.
Pegler, D.W.	Pengilly, M.	Pisoni, D.G.
Sanderson, R.	Such, R.B.	Treloar, P.A.
van Holst Pellekaan, D.C.	Venning, I.H.	Whetstone, T.J.
Williams, M.R.		

NOES (20)

Atkinson, M.J.	Bedford, F.E.	Caica, P.
Close, S.E.	Conlon, P.F.	Fox, C.C.
Geraghty, R.K.	Hill, J.D.	Kenyon, T.R.
Key, S.W.	Koutsantonis, A.	O'Brien, M.F.
Odenwalder, L.K.	Piccolo, T.	Portolesi, G.
Sibbons, A.J. (teller)	Snelling, J.J.	Thompson, M.G.
Vlahos, L.A.	Wright, M.J.	

PAIRS (10)

Pederick, A.S.	Weatherill, J.W.
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.	Bettison, Z.L.
Marshall, S.S.	Bignell, L.W.
Chapman, V.A.	Rankine, J.M.
Redmond, I.M.	Rau, J.R.

Majority of 4 for the noes.

Second reading thus negatived.

CITY OF ADELAIDE (CAPITAL CITY COMMITTEE) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 17 May 2012.)

Ms SANDERSON (Adelaide) (11:10): I move:

That this order of the day be discharged.

Motion carried; order of the day discharged.

CITY OF ADELAIDE (CAPITAL CITY COMMITTEE) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

Ms SANDERSON (Adelaide) (11:11): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I refer to my previous speech of 3 May 2012.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mrs Geraghty.

ELECTORAL (VOTING AGE) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 14 July 2012.)

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (11:15): I think I spoke for a few minutes on this matter previously.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You do not wish to speak any further? Is that what you are saying?

Ms CHAPMAN: Does a duck have lips? Is the pope Catholic?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have nine minutes left.

Ms CHAPMAN: What I proposed to raise on this matter was that one of the most recent constitutions in the world under our democratic countries has been Mongolia. In 1992, Mongolia passed its constitution, which this year celebrates its 20th anniversary. It sets out a number of duties, rights and entitlements of the citizens of Mongolia. What is important is that embraced in that constitution are age provisions for the purposes of voting and also for the purposes of standing for parliament.

In short, the Mongolians decided, in one of the most recent democratic constitutions in the world, that 18 years of age was the appropriate age for their citizens to have the right to vote and that at 21 years of age they would have the right to stand for parliament.

In Australia, and here in South Australia, 18 is the age. We had the debate about whether the age should be reduced from 21 to 18 years, at which time I was, of course, far too young to participate. However, when they did do that, I was a beneficiary of it. It meant that we could have a taste of beer legitimately a few years earlier than 21 years of age. However, with it came a number of aspects of responsibility, including the right to be able to marry without parental consent, the right to vote, and so on.

The member for Fisher has raised a number of aspects which are meritorious in the sense of galvanising and accommodating those in the community between the age of 16 and 18 who have a desire to participate in the political process, including the right to vote. The Mongolians have in recent times assessed that situation. I think it is always important that, when we look at any constitutional reform, we look at what democracies around the world have started with afresh.

I, for example, have frequently referred to the constitution that applies in the Republic of Germany, which is also a federation. When one looks at the involvement and entitlements at various levels of government in federations, I think Germany's constitution is a great example for us to consider. They took some four years after World War II (from 1945 to 1949) to carefully consider the advances all around the world at that time, pick out the best and create a structure, which I think today still has some meritorious aspects that we in Australia would benefit from if we were to embrace it.

The reason I look at new constitutions in evolving and developing democracies around the world is that I think it also helps us to look afresh at what opportunities we have. In Mongolia, they decided that the appropriate age would be 18.

There are some other very interesting aspects of the Mongolian constitution which do not necessarily relate to us, but I will just quickly mention one of them, and that is the right to be able to travel outside the country. That is not something we in Australia have been burdened with in terms of any kind of restriction or impediment. Historically, over the last couple of hundred years, we have had the right to come and go as we please, but there are other countries in the world that have not enjoyed the same privilege. I think it is always helpful for us to look at those other jurisdictions and learn from them.

Perhaps the most persuasive aspect of my opposing this bill and, in fact, I think the opposition's embracing ultimately that position is that we will create a separate system from the federal arena, and this does raise a number of complexities. If there is an argument in relation to bringing a level of responsibility to those in the 16 to 18 age group who want to participate—and I appreciate that it would be voluntary registration under this proposal; it is not to be imposed on some 16 year olds who may be unwilling, uninterested or unable to participate in political debate in this way, including voting rights—it is the fact that it would create an inconsistency. Other speakers have covered that aspect, but I think that it does need to be taken into account.

I commend the member for Fisher for bringing forward this initiative. I think it is always important to listen to the younger people in our community. Just this week, this parliament has welcomed and hosted a number of leading students from South Australian schools in parliamentary debate. It is an opportunity for them to see the environment in which we work and to have a practice run in the context of what we do.

I note from the few instances when I have observed the students during the week that they are conducting themselves with a level of civility and competence which I think would make their tutors and parents proud. I think they formally conclude today or tomorrow—

Mr Pengilly: They will be in here tomorrow.

Ms CHAPMAN: —tomorrow—and members should take the opportunity to come in and recognise the students' presence in this place and to thank them for their interest and participation. The motivation of the member for Fisher to introduce this bill is quite meritorious. I think we should take every opportunity to encourage our younger people to embrace and take up the opportunity to contribute to the public debate.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (11:23): I thank members who have contributed. I understand the point about a nexus with the federal voting age, but I point out to members that South Australia lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 in 1971, and the federal parliament followed in 1973. So, South Australia set the lead back in 1971 and, as far as I know, the world has not ended by our lowering the age from 21 to 18.

We often hear politicians and others say, 'Give young people a voice.' I believe it is the biggest con of all time, because they might be listened to but nothing is done constructively as a result of their views. The only way in our society where you can really have any input and be listened to in a real sense and have what you are say acted upon is if you have a vote. With anything else—you can have youth parliaments, which I started in this state, and I think they are a great thing—we are kidding ourselves and we are trying to fool young people by saying, 'Let's have a gathering and we will listen to what you have to say,' because we will listen but we will not do anything about it.

There was a summit held in Canberra in 2008, called Australia 2020 Youth Summit, and representatives of young people from around Australia issued a communiqué saying 'To build a more participatory 2020, the age at which people are eligible to vote must be lowered to 16.' That is what young people are saying. At 16 you are old enough to drive, have sex, become a parent, work, pay tax, but you are not allowed to vote. You can join the military under some circumstances at that age or 17. People say, 'You don't deserve a vote because you are not in a position where you are going to fight for your country.' Well, you can actually join the military.

The arguments against giving young people a vote can be summarised in four areas: lack of maturity, not enough life experience on which to base decisions, lack of interest, and ignorance. They are exactly the same arguments that were used against women and people who did not have a white skin, and they are the same arguments now used against young people.

If you want to know where people under the age of 18 can vote: Nicaragua, Brazil, Estonia, the Isle of Man (which I visited in 2005), Austria, the islands of Guernsey and Jersey, Ecuador, and I understand Germany in its provincial elections allows voting by people under the age of 18. The issue about the nexus is the only compelling point at the moment, I think, but it is something that suggests we should be working with the commonwealth to try to bring about a sensible congruence of voting eligibility. I can read the wind in here, and this is—

Mr Pengilly: Tea leaves.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I read those as well, but it is hard if you drink coffee. I understand that this is not going to be supported, so there is no point deliberating further. I think members in years to come will feel that they have missed an opportunity not to progress for the sake of it but to bring in a useful reform which could be linked in with the commonwealth, as happened back in the 1970s.

Second reading negatived.

ELECTORAL (OPTIONAL PREFERENTIAL VOTING) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 5 April 2012.)

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (11:27): I oppose the bill. This bill would replace the current preferential voting system, effectively for full or compulsory preferential voting, with a form of optional preferential voting. The bill would replace section 76(1)(a) and (2) of the Electoral Act with new provisions. The existing provisions require an elector when voting below the line in an election for the other place or when voting in the House of Assembly to indicate on the ballot papers his or her order of preference for all candidates.

The proposed provisions provide that the elector need not indicate his or her order of preference for all candidates, rather the elector must indicate his or her preferences by (as now) placing the number one next to the candidate's name in the relevant square on the ballot paper. The elector may, in elections for the House of Assembly, then indicate his or her preference for all

or some of the other candidates by placing the number two and consecutive numbers in the squares opposite their names but need not do so. It would be optional for the elector to indicate his or her preferences for some or all of the other candidates. In elections for another place, the voter need only place the number of candidates required to be elected.

The government supports the retention of the present compulsory preferential system for both the House of Assembly and the other place as it has its advantages over the optional preferential model that is proposed. First, the introduction of the optional preferential voting would apply only to state elections. Compulsory preferential voting would continue to apply to federal polls and electors would have to vote under two different systems in federal and state elections. This would only add to voter confusion and increase the informal vote, which is indeed high in my electorate.

This question was examined by the Electoral Matters Committee in Victoria as part of its Inquiry into Voter Participation and Informal Voting in Victoria in 2009. After considering submissions, the committee did not recommend the introduction of optional preferential voting in Victorian lower house elections due to concerns that it would lead to voter confusion at Victorian federal and local government elections and an increase in informal voting in all areas and rates.

There is no likelihood of an introduction of optional preferential voting at a federal election in any foreseeable future. Optional preferential voting was considered in the federal arena by the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters in the commonwealth parliament in its 2004 report into the 2004 federal election. The committee identified both benefits and detriments of optional preferential voting and, after considering all submissions, recommended that compulsory preferential voting be retained in both houses of federal parliament.

Secondly, for house elections, compulsory preferential voting ensures that only the candidate preferred by the majority of electors (either on primary votes or after the distribution of preferences) can be elected. The same cannot be said about optional preferential voting. The current system requires a candidate to obtain a majority of 50 per cent plus one of the valid votes cast to win a seat. If, at the first count, no candidate has gained more than 50 per cent of the vote, the candidate with the lowest number of preferences is eliminated, as we all know.

The second preferences indicated on the ballot paper are then distributed. This process of excluding the candidate with the least number of votes, then distributing his or her preferences, continues until one candidate obtains 50 per cent plus one of the votes. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (11:31): I move:

That this house:

- (a) notes the very important work of Regional Development Australia (RDA) in South Australia; and
- (b) condemns the Labor government for the withdrawal of core funding to the RDA entities beyond 30 June 2013 and its failure to fulfil its promise in the 2010-11 budget to assist RDA boards to find alternative funding.

I point out that this applies to the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island RDA, and the Barossa, Far North, Limestone Coast, Murraylands and Riverland, Whyalla and Eyre, and Yorke and Mid North RDAs.

I would like to start, in line with my motion, by highlighting the very valuable work that these RDAs do. They do a great deal of work, primarily with regard to economic and business development and, probably equally as important, they do social and community work. Of course, those two broad areas combined help generate what is one of the most important contributions any organisation can make, which is helping to grow employment.

In regional and outback South Australia, we need jobs, and at this point in time I certainly highlight the fact that, along with the government, I see mining as our greatest growth area for economic and employment opportunity, but it will be many decades until mining overtakes agriculture and primary industries in general as our greatest wealth contributor and our greatest driver of economic wealth in our state. It is very important to point those two things out. There are others, of course, but, while mining is a great growth opportunity, it is nowhere near agriculture when it comes to its contribution to our state.

As well as economic and business development and social community aspects, a very important function that RDAs perform throughout regional South Australia is actually draw together many other government agencies. They take an integrated approach to regional development in their patch and they work with NRM boards, for example; they work with local government and many state and federal agencies.

The way they go about that work, of course, will be slightly different in different regions. They are different regions with different threats and different opportunities, but that integrated approach is fundamental to what they do. Without that sort of attitude, they would not be successful. They would not have had the success that they have had and will not be able to find as many opportunities for future development as they would if they did not undertake that task.

I would like to recognise the good work of regional development boards, which were the precursors for Regional Development Australia organisations, because they have both tried to do that. I would also like to recognise that in that transition from RDBs to RDAs, which was actually put forward by state and federal Labor governments to create the three-tiered funding model we have under RDAs, that was a very positive move, and I congratulate state and federal Labor governments for having done that. That three-tiered model, which combines local, state and federal governments in the work of RDAs, so all three tiers of government work collaboratively on their particular patch, is a tremendous development and should live on, whether there are Liberal or Labor state or federal governments in control. That is a very positive thing.

That transition was made over 2008-09 and was a very difficult transition for many boards. It was a very difficult transition for many of them; not all of them but some, like Limestone Coast, for example, had essentially the same patch but just had to rework their funding and their partnership agreements, but did not change the world too much for them. If you look at Whyalla and Eyre Peninsula, at Yorke and Mid North, they had a much tougher time because they were trying to combine boards, change their geographic footprint significantly, but they managed.

They went through all that work and came out the other end better and stronger, only to find that the state government withdrew its core funding to that. That was a really disgraceful kick in the guts for those groups; to be told all the way along that if you can do this, if you can transition and turn yourselves inside out and move towards that really good, three-tiered core funding model, the world will be better. It would have been, except for the fact that the state government has withdrawn its funding.

The state government has and does currently contribute \$4.1 million of core funding to the seven RDAs, and that is an average of \$585,000 per board—some get a bit more, some get a bit less. The government in the 2010-11 budget removed that \$4.1 million funding with effect at the end of June 2013, this financial year. At the time, back in the 2010-11 budget, the government said that it will work with RDAs to identify alternative funding sources.

Disgrace No.1 was to remove the core funding that they promised; disgrace No.2 for the fact that they actually have not done that—they have not replaced core funding. The core funding at the end of this financial year will be gone. The 2012-13 budget, which we have just had handed to us, confirms that. The government will change an existing \$3 million program, the Regional Development Infrastructure Fund, and use that \$3 million for a new regional development fund, but the reality is that right now we have \$3 million in the RDIF, plus \$4.1 million in core funding, and at the end of this financial year we will be left with only \$3 million of funding, and it is not core funding.

There is a very big difference between core funding and non-core funding. The new regional development fund, the \$3 million, will be competitive funding broken up into two streams—\$1.4 million in stream 1, which is only available for RDAs to apply for (and they can apply for a maximum of \$200,000 each) and \$1.6 million, which any organisation doing regional development work can apply for. That is also competitive funding, but the most any organisation can receive under that fund is also \$200,000.

So, if RDAs apply for both stream 1 and stream 2, and if they are as successful as they possibly can be under both those streams, they will receive \$400,000 in any given year under this competitive funding model. Right now, they get on average \$585,000 of core funding, of guaranteed funding, towards them. Not only are they having their funding significantly reduced from an average per RDA of \$585,000 to a maximum of \$400,000 but they are also losing the guarantee that they have. The people doing good work in regions now have to plan their projects based on competitive one-year funding models.

You cannot retain good people in regions to do really important regional development work and you cannot attract good people to regions to do really important regional development work if you cannot offer them secure employment. You certainly cannot offer them secure employment if your funding has to be sought competitively for one year at a time.

When asked about this in estimates, minister Gago, the Minister for Regional Development, said that it is just the same, it does not really matter and, right now, they typically offer three to five-year contracts. I say to the house that the difference between a one-year contract versus a three to five-year contract is very significant. I am sure that, if minister Gago's eight-year employment term was reduced by the same sort of percentage, she would understand that it is actually significantly different. It makes a big difference. You will not get good-quality people to do this very important work if you cannot offer them secure employment for their wages and that is a great shame.

It does not matter what the government says. I am sure the government will have a very carefully worded response to this motion and I am sure that they will tell us all what a fantastic job they are trying to do. I do not say for a second that they are doing nothing. They do contribute money towards regional development, but the key here is that the \$4.1 million of core funding is being withdrawn and not being replaced. The key issue is that not only is it a significant decrease in the amount of money that is available to the RDAs to do the work but the core funding—and this is the bit that I think minister Gago really just does not get—is disappearing and being replaced with competitive funding.

Competitive funding is perfectly good for projects. I support competitive funding for projects because there will always be more projects out there than money to actually fund and finance them. So, there is no trouble at all with regard to projects, but you cannot use competitive funding models for wages. You cannot use competitive funding models to be paying the rent. You cannot use competitive funding models to be supplying vehicles or offices and other equipment that people need to do their work.

The bottom line here is, right now, we have \$7.1 million devoted to regional development—\$3 million through the RDIF plus \$4.1 million through the core funding—and we are going to be left at the end of this financial year with just \$3 million of non-core funding, competitive funding. It will be very difficult for the RDAs to continue to do the very good and very important work that they have done over many years, both as RDBs and now as RDAs, without that core funding.

I also have a very grave fear that what the government may be trying to do here is to set them up for failure. They might be just trying to trim and to set them up for a sort of attrition, with less and less funding—not killing them straight off but just keep them swimming and trying to stay afloat; setting them up so that they will find it almost impossible to exist.

I think that it is very possible that the government would like to bring in RDAs under another government department, just as they have done with natural resource management boards. We have seen natural resource management boards which were stand-alone organisations with their own boards, their own staff, their own employment contracts and funding that came from a range of organisations, including the government, all brought back in within the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources so that they are essentially just a branch of DEWNR these days.

With RDAs, we have a very similar situation to what we used to have with NRMs—their own boards, their own employment contracts, their own officers, their own stand-alone situation to do their own work. I believe that that is going to be deliberately undermined by the government to bring RDAs back in under a government department.

One of the many reasons I think that is not only because of the funding but if you look at the targets, goals and highlights that have been given to us in the last budget, it is all about the RDAs contributing to the government's seven key priorities for this state. I am not undermining those seven key priorities. There is no problem there at all. If that is what the government has decided it wants to focus on, that is acceptable, but then to use these meant to be independent stand-alone organisations in regions—and it says it in black and white in the budget—to implement the government's priorities in its regions, that is backwards. It should be all about the government supporting the RDAs in their regions to implement the priorities that the independent RDAs have identified as important for their area.

It does not matter whether it is the far northern outback or the far South-East or Eyre Peninsula, these organisations are set up to work with government on the issues that need to be

done in their part of the state. It should be the government supporting them to do that work, not the government taking their core funding away and pretending that it can give less money under a competitive model and that that will be the same; and it should not be government telling them what the government wants the RDAs to do, that is, to implement the government's own priorities out into their regions.

For those reasons, I am extremely concerned because I think the government is really just trying to slowly suffocate, slowly strangle, these organisations into submission so that these organisations will just do the work that the government wants them to do in the regions, rather than getting on and harnessing the knowledge, the experience and the energy of all sorts of people—successful businesspeople, young people, Aboriginal people, small business and big business, including mining—out in the regions.

There is agriculture and horticulture. We have an extraordinary wealth of knowledge in the regions of South Australia, which is actually contributing to creating our state's wealth. The people in the regions of South Australia create our state's wealth. They know what they are doing. They do a very good job, and the government should be listening to them and their priorities and not trying to use them to implement the government's own priorities.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (11:46): I move to amend the motion as follows:

Delete all the words after 'notes' and substitute the following words:

the very important work of

After '(RDA)' insert 'associations'

After 'South Australia' insert 'do perform important work; and'

Delete all words after '(b)' and substitute the following words:

acknowledges that the state Labor government is providing ongoing support to regional communities through Regional Development Australia (RDA) associations.

Just in case anyone got a little lost during that, I will read the motion as it would read:

That this house:

- (a) notes that Regional Development South Australia (RDA) associations in South Australia do perform important work; and
- (b) acknowledges that the state Labor government is providing ongoing support to regional communities through Regional Development Australia (RDA) associations.

I want to point out that the state government is committed to regional South Australia and growing the capacity and sustainability of regional—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Can we vote on whether the house accepts that amendment?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, she actually gets a chance to speak to it. The member for Reynell.

Ms THOMPSON: While we are driving key economic goals, we must also consider the needs of families in these areas to ensure that we achieve sound social as well as economic outcomes. Good regional planning, driven by good regional leadership, is essential to clearly articulate goals and to identify key milestones along the journey.

State budgets over recent years have delivered investment projects in our regions that come to just under \$330 million over the next four years. RDAs serve a number of economic development purposes in communities for the commonwealth, including consultation with local communities and development of the regional plans (or road maps) that outline the challenges and opportunities identified by the local community.

The Sustainable Budget Commission in 2010 recommended that state funding to RDAs cease on 30 June 2013 at the conclusion of the current five-year grant funding agreement. However, this year's state budget included an overhaul of regional development funding to keep growing South Australia's sustainable regions. From 1 July 2013, a new regional development fund will provide \$3 million per year for programs that support regional economic development, employment and the attraction of new investment. Existing funding arrangements will remain in place until 30 June 2013, with the regional development fund coming into effect after that.

The new regional development fund will provide opportunities for a broader range of projects to be considered and will replace the existing state government funding for RDA committees, as well as the Regional Development Infrastructure Fund. Stream 1 of the Regional Development Fund is open to the Regional Development Australia committees for programs which will further the key regional priorities of realising the benefits of the mining boom for all South Australians, premium food and wine from our clean environment, and advanced manufacturing.

This funding will mean that the state government will be contributing to the programs of RDAs to about the same level as the commonwealth and local government. Ensuring that a pool of funds is available and known to the RDAs well in advance should assist these regional organisations to retain staff and plan for the future.

The second stream of the RDA fund is available to organisations, councils and RDAs to continue the work of facilitating investment and jobs in regional areas. These funds replace the previous RDIF. This fund's eligibility criteria were seen by many as being too limited and restrictive, as eligible projects were confined to the infrastructure elements only. The new fund, which is much more flexible, will enable committees in regional areas to leverage funding from a range of sources, including the federal government's billion dollar Regional Development Australia Fund.

It is important that the support the government provides to the regions continues to strategically target programs that result in investment and jobs. It is money wisely spent because a great deal of South Australia's future hangs on how we develop our regions and build communities in developing mining areas. Our mining industries and the potential for renewable energy are key opportunities for South Australia and most of that activity will take place in regional South Australia. The Minister for Regional Development is a strong advocate for local communities and for the businesses and industries that provide job and investment opportunities to grow sustainable and competitive regions.

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (11:52): I have some level of respect for the member for Reynell. I like my discussions I have with her, and all that sort of stuff, but that was poppycock. I have to tell you, I find it very difficult to accept that. I am trying to be polite here, but I have heard a lot of things said in the other chamber and in this chamber in my time in the parliament, but I just cannot accept that the decision has been made as part of the budget process over two years ago about withdrawing the funding from the RDA, so I do commend the member for Stuart in bringing this motion before the chamber for debate.

I declare that I have been a board member on at least two RDA structures, when they were as regional development boards in the past. With my local government previous experience, I worked with RDAs, even when I was not a board member, and focused on trying to improve business, community and social development opportunities within the regions. It is very clear to me, and has always been very clear to me, that some security when it comes to funding arrangements being in place is an absolute priority.

It was exemplified more than anything to me when the Hon. Michael O'Brien was the minister for regional development and in an estimates hearing at the time I was asking him questions, because it was straight after the decision had been made to withdraw funding as at 1 July 2013. We asked a series of questions and the minister acknowledged it. I think in his heart he wanted to do something else—he did truly want to do something else—but he was being forced by pressure from above to try to create savings, balance budgets and reduce deficits, and all that sort of stuff. I had to stop asking questions because I just said, 'If I don't stop now my brain is going to explode out of frustration.' That is the stage it got to for me.

It is a relatively small amount of money but I can assure members in this chamber that the significance of it is enormous. The good people who work in all the RDA structures are focused on their communities. They have great contacts, they have a lot of historical knowledge about projects, they know where the opportunities are to grow, they are there to support and mentor small businesses, family businesses, all scopes of businesses in regional South Australia, and they are there to try to attract bigger development opportunities and infrastructure investment. They need some security of funding to ensure they have those good staff available to them.

To now be in a situation where a motion, which was quite appropriate given the budget decisions made over the past two years, has been amended so significantly as to turn around the message, and to expect this side of the chamber to support it, is craziness. The member for Stuart, in his time in the parliament over the past two years, has a very good grasp of it. He knows how

Regional Development Australia structures work and he knows the difference they can make. The fact that he has brought it to us means that we need to consider it quite seriously.

I will stand up and acknowledge a good decision that has been made only in the last month or so where, from the Regional Development Australia federal fund that the member for Reynell referred to, of the \$1 billion that is available \$200 million of that has been allocated provisionally, as I understand it, and \$10 million of that is coming to a project within the Goyder electorate, and neighbouring Stuart?

Mr van Holst Pellekaan interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: No; with the Auburn to Port Wakefield water pipe. That is not you. It is a great project that is going to allow for chicken farm expansion to occur and growth in townships to happen. It is a very important project that state and federal Labor has supported, and I commend them for that, but by withdrawing the core funding necessary for RDA to have the structure in place to ensure it can secure and keep its good people on some term of contract—be it two, three, four or five years, instead of the one year option that is available to them now—is a disgrace and I can never support the amended motion put by the member for Reynell.

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (11:56): I also wish to make a contribution in light of the amendment. I think the amendment is an absolute nonsense, and I will refrain from using stronger language in this place. The reality is that—

The Hon. R.B. Such: This is the upper house. You have to tone it down.

Mr PENGILLY: Yes, that is right. The reality is that regional development boards, or RDA boards as they are now known, are absolutely critical to regional Australia, and in this particular case South Australia. I, for one, was not all that happy about the change to the new board structure and the putting together of larger regional boards, which took away some of the local impetus for development. However, happily, the RDA board in my electorate is working pretty well. It has particularly competent staff and I know that I can pick up the phone and ring a couple of those staff at any time and receive a great deal of support.

However, financially, the state government has neutered the RDA boards with their commitment, if not worse, quite frankly. It has left them in a position of struggling to fulfil what they should be doing and it is a great disappointment. What the boards need to come up with, and what they are being criticised for, is lack of outcomes. There are a multitude of reasons for that, but for them to reach their maximum fulfilment they have to be funded adequately. I think it is an absolute sham for the South Australian state government to stand up in this place and amend the member for Stuart's very good motion by suggesting that the state government is making some sort of magnificent contribution to RDA, because it is not.

It is like everything else, it is all spin, spin and no substance, and a lot of rubbish. I am sure other members in this place use their RDA boards in a similar manner as I do. Indeed, we need to use them to make them work, but they have to be funded. This state government is an absolute disaster. With the level of debt it has run this state out to, it should be embarrassed to even be in this place making any comment on anything, quite frankly. It is an absolute disaster. It goes on and on and on and on and on. You only have to look at what has happened in the last week or so with various projects to see that all they are on about is getting themselves re-elected in 2014.

I can tell you that in regional South Australia, and increasingly in metropolitan South Australia, you are on the nose, you are on the nose big time, and you only make yourself further on the nose with activities such as this, in trying to put up the scenario that you are great supporters of RDA because you are not. So, with those few words, I totally and absolutely oppose the amendment. It is rubbish.

Mr PEGLER (Mount Gambier) (12:00): I would first of all like to say something about the process of this amendment. My understanding has always been that an amendment to a motion was to build on a motion, not to completely negate a motion. So I will certainly be voting against the amendment because it is the complete reverse of the original motion. As far as the original motion is concerned, I supported very strongly the new structure for RDAs in South Australia. The South-East region was amongst the first in Australia to bring the three levels of government together—the federal government, state government and local government—to fund and manage RDAs. I think it is a tremendous system we now have in place, where all those bodies are together.

They were agreements on funding, but no sooner had the ink dried on those agreements than the state government started to pull the funding on the RDAs, so I was quite disappointed in

that fact. I know that with our own local RDA I have many businesspeople come to see me on different issues, and I always refer them to the RDA, or often sit down with our local RDA to work ways forward. Also, the RDAs work exceptionally well with some of the social issues that we have within our regions, so they do a tremendous job in the state. It is not a lot of money that we are talking about as far as the whole budget of the state goes. I think that the state government should continue to fund the RDAs to the extent that they used to because of the great work they do within our regions.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Point of order: I am sorry, because we are out of sorts here and I have not got my book, but I believe that there is a standing order that says you cannot put forward an amendment if it substantially alters the intent of the motion. I think that to change the relevant part of the motion that states 'condemns the Labor government for the withdrawal of core funding' and turn that into 'acknowledges the state Labor government is providing ongoing support' completely alters the intent of the motion and so makes the amendment unacceptable in the house.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon M.J. Wright): The advice I have received is that the amendment is relevant to the motion and as such is in order. You have right of reply for five minutes.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (12:03): Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for the five minutes, not for your decision on the amendment. I noticed a few points that the member for Reynell, on behalf of the government, has made. In her speech she said that the state budget has provided an overhaul of regional development funding. Well, certainly, that is very true. That is a nice way of saying 'gutted it'. The bottom line is that it has been reduced significantly not only in the quantum of the funding but also in the way the funding is provided. We no longer have core funding, but we have competitive funding. As I said before, I am not opposed to competitive funding at all for projects, but you cannot use competitive funding for ongoing wages, offices, key work, and attracting and retaining good staff.

The fact that the RDF is a new fund was mentioned. Certainly that is very true: it is a new fund, but it is not new money. It is not new money at all: it is just a new fund in name, but there is no new money coming into the system whatsoever. I also noticed that the member for Reynell said that this new funding is funding to the same level as local and federal governments fund. That may well be very true, but I am not sure why the government wants to necessarily come down to the lowest common denominator on this issue. That is inappropriate, but the most important issue is that it is reducing the funding. The core funding that the state government is going to contribute will be zero. It is taking it from \$4.1 million down to zero.

Local and federal governments contribute approximately the same as the state government will, but they contribute about \$3 million in core funding. So if you replace the core funding with a competitive model, it means that that statement is just completely misleading, that is, that funding will be to the same level as local and federal governments. They will retain, presumably, their core funding and the state government will reduce their core funding down to zero; so I think that is an inappropriate comment.

In terms of the level, the fact is that now under the new RDF the most that any RDA can receive, if they are as successful as they possibly can be in both streams (stream 1 and stream 2), is \$400,000. They currently get on average \$585,000 each, which in effect is a 68 per cent reduction. Not only has core funding gone from \$585,000 on average per RDA down to zero but the actual total they can achieve under the competitive model has been reduced by 68 per cent as well. I do disagree strongly with some of the comments that have been put forward by the member for Reynell on behalf of the government. I state again that I think the amendment is completely inappropriate and that will not escape the judgement of people outside this house.

The house divided on the amendment:

AYES (19)

Atkinson, M.J.
Close, S.E.
Hill, J.D.
Koutsantonis, A.
Piccolo, T.
Snelling, J.J.

Bedford, F.E.
Conlon, P.F.
Kenyon, T.R.
O'Brien, M.F.
Portolesi, G.
Thompson, M.G. (teller)

Caica, P.
Geraghty, R.K.
Key, S.W.
Odenwalder, L.K.
Sibbons, A.J.
Vlahos, L.A.

AYES (19)

Wright, M.J.

NOES (15)

Brock, G.G.
Griffiths, S.P.
Pengilly, M.
Such, R.B.

Gardner, J.A.W.
McFetridge, D.
Pisoni, D.G.
Treloar, P.A.

Goldsworthy, M.R.
Pegler, D.W.
Sanderson, R.
van Holst Pellekaan, D.C.
(teller)
Williams, M.R.

Venning, I.H.

Whetstone, T.J.

PAIRS (12)

Weatherill, J.W.
Bettison, Z.L.
Bignell, L.W.
Rankine, J.M.
Fox, C.C.
Rau, J.R.

Redmond, I.M.
Evans, I.F.
Pederick, A.S.
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.
Marshall, S.S.
Chapman, V.A.

Majority of 4 for the ayes.

Amendment thus carried.

The house divided on the motion as amended:

AYES (20)

Atkinson, M.J.
Close, S.E.
Hill, J.D.
Koutsantonis, A.
Pegler, D.W.
Sibbons, A.J.
Vlahos, L.A.

Bedford, F.E.
Conlon, P.F.
Kenyon, T.R.
O'Brien, M.F.
Piccolo, T.
Snelling, J.J.
Wright, M.J.

Caica, P.
Geraghty, R.K.
Key, S.W.
Odenwalder, L.K.
Portolesi, G.
Thompson, M.G. (teller)

NOES (14)

Brock, G.G.
Griffiths, S.P.
Pisoni, D.G.
Treloar, P.A.

Gardner, J.A.W.
McFetridge, D.
Sanderson, R.
van Holst Pellekaan, D.C.
(teller)
Williams, M.R.

Goldsworthy, M.R.
Pengilly, M.
Such, R.B.
Venning, I.H.

Whetstone, T.J.

PAIRS (12)

Weatherill, J.W.
Bettison, Z.L.
Bignell, L.W.
Rankine, J.M.
Fox, C.C.
Rau, J.R.

Redmond, I.M.
Evans, I.F.
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.
Pederick, A.S.
Chapman, V.A.
Marshall, S.S.

Majority of 6 for the ayes.

Motion as amended thus carried.

SPEEDING OFFENCE PENALTIES

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (12:17): I move:

That this house commends the Minister for Police for changing speeding fines and the demerit points scheme to more adequately penalise reckless speedsters, and urges the government to continue the reform process.

My approach has always been that if a minister, a government or an MP does the right thing—what I think is correct—then I will say so. Likewise, if I do not think they are doing the right thing, I will put an alternative view.

Unfortunately the minister is not here at the moment; I think she might have the flu. I commend the Hon. Jennifer Rankine for her announcement with the Treasurer on Tuesday 29 May on changing the penalty for a speeding infringement less than 10km/h over the limit, reducing it from \$260 to \$150. Of course, you need to add to that the victims of crime levy, so, in effect, it is a \$210 penalty.

Whilst commending the minister for what she has done, I am urging the government to go further and look at a whole range of measures to deal with road traffic behaviour, and that encompasses not simply changing the fine schedule. If you compare us with the other states, even adjusting for this latest change, at the lower end of the infringements we have significantly higher penalties than the other states. A fortnight ago, New South Wales increased their basic levels, but they are still, with the exception of the most serious offence, more significant fines than we have here in South Australia.

What I think can and should happen is a range of measures. Victoria Police has the discretion, upon review, to withdraw an infringement notice and issue an official warning in its place because Victoria Police recognises that often people who commit a speeding or traffic offence at the lower level are not hardened criminals or repeat offenders and that often an official warning is sufficient to remind them of their obligations and to deter them from speeding.

I have argued for a long time in this place that in South Australia we should have an independent review panel to look at initially contested expiations. The government has not accepted that; the Liberal opposition, I believe, has a policy that it will do that if it is elected to government.

The Victorian scheme is not a blanket withdrawal of the infringement notice. They have eligibility criteria: you have to be caught doing less than 10 km/h; you must hold a current driver's licence, including a probationary or current learner's permit; you must have not been issued with a speeding or other traffic fine or official warning within the previous two years; you must accept that you were offending; and you must also have a good driving record. They take into account the circumstances of the infringement, and the time of the offence, weather conditions, traffic density, type of road, and land abutting are amongst the circumstances that are considered.

There is no official warning given for red light offences, mobile phone offences, seatbelt or any serious road safety offence. So, it is quite limited in its application, and it is designed, I guess, to give a second chance, if you like, to people who inadvertently have gone over the limit by less than 10 km/h. In essence, it would apply essentially to an expiation issued by an officer using a portable speed recording device.

I think we should follow that practice in South Australia. I think it needs to be regularised. The police will say that their traffic officers have discretion, and that is true, but the trouble is that the discretion varies from one officer to another. How do I know that? I have a close relative who was pulled over and the officer said, 'What is your occupation?'—fortunately, it was not an MP—and she said that she was a nurse, and he said, 'On your way.' Other people have told me of similar experiences. The problem with the open-ended discretion is that it can vary enormously. If you are going to have a system to waive minor infringements, it needs to be regularised so that it is not abused and misused.

The Victorians do some other things. They deduct 2 km/h or 3 km/h from the speed reading displayed by the prescribed speed measuring device, and it varies depending on the calibration tolerance required by legislation for the device. Their policy direction (their general order) is that 2 km/h is deducted from a speed reading before expiating the motorist for the speed reading, minus the 2 km/h tolerance. The Victorian law does not require a deduction to be made; it requires only that the speed detection device is accurate within a certain tolerance (for example, plus or

minus 2 km/h). In South Australia we do not have that. New South Wales, I believe, also have that tolerance factor built in.

I believe we should because the manufacturers of some of the equipment clearly state that their equipment is not guaranteed to be 100 per cent accurate and, therefore, they recommend a tolerance of plus or minus 2 km/h, as in the case of most of these lasers. I think a motorist should be given the benefit of that there and then by the reporting officer. I think that is fair and reasonable.

There are some other changes that need to be made in terms of tolerances. I do not think the allowance for speedometers is quite as it should be. The Australian Design Rules (ADR) only required new vehicles manufactured prior to 1 July 2006 to have speedometers which indicated speed to an accuracy of plus or minus 10 per cent of the vehicle's true speed for all speeds in excess of 40 km/h. From July 1988 to 2006, the tolerance for exceeding the posted speed limit was 10 per cent, which was in line with the permitted accuracy of plus or minus 10 per cent, which was in accordance with the allowance for the speedometers of vehicles made in that time.

Under the current ADR—that is, Rule 18/03—for new vehicles sold after 1 July 2006, a newly manufactured vehicle sold after 1 July 2007, the speedometers must not indicate a speed less than the vehicle's true speed or a speed greater than the vehicle's true speed by an amount more than 10 per cent plus 4 km/h. We know that—and Les Felix, who is one of the reputed experts on this in Adelaide, has pointed this out—the accuracy of a speedometer will vary according to the year of manufacture, the relevant design rule, vehicle load, weight distribution, tyre type, tyre pressure, tyre wear, temperature of the tyres, and there are a whole lot of other aspects.

The point I am making is that, in having traffic rules, allowance has to be made for the fact that motorists may be abiding by the speedometer in their car and that can vary in its reading according to when that vehicle was manufactured.

One of the things that has improved a little bit here but needs to go a lot further is regarding speed limit warning signs. Victoria have a much more comprehensive speed warning system via roadside signs. New South Wales certainly does, and New South Wales has painted road signs as well. I think we should be going down that path. The argument—and I have spoken to the people in the Road Traffic Authority in New South Wales—that it is dangerous for cyclists or motorcyclists is unsubstantiated; it is nonsense.

In Victoria and New South Wales, what they do more than we do is indicate, for example, that there is a lower speed limit ahead. I think that is fair and reasonable. If someone is travelling at 80 km/h, there would be warning signs saying '60 km/h ahead' or '40 km/h ahead' or whatever it is. In New South Wales they do the same thing. We do not in South Australia have anywhere near that sort of coverage in terms of advance warning signs. Surely the purpose of the signs is to get people to obey the limit, to slow down, not to trap them for the purposes of making money.

In South Australia—and I urge the minister to put attention to this matter—we need more comprehensive and better signposting of limits. When I wrote recently the answer that came back from the bureaucracy was that they would wait for police to indicate whether there should be a change in the sign or more signs. That is not the job of the police force. SAPOL's job is not to be traffic engineers: their job is to enforce the law. It is unreasonable and inappropriate to expect them to be recommending that there be another traffic sign here or somewhere else. They may do it but it is not their principal responsibility or obligation.

Likewise, with fixed speed cameras, there should be warning signs. We have some. We have a new one on Chandlers Hill Road at Happy Valley. There is a sign for one direction only; it should be for both directions because I understand the camera will catch people in both directions; likewise for mobile speed camera detection. The PSA had an issue about the safety of the operators and I acknowledge that, but I think there could be a sign that says 'Mobile speed cameras are active in this area'.

You do not have to put it next to or close to the vehicle, but I think it is a very good educational tool to have a sign in the area where the cars are operating for that day (or that week or whatever) that indicates that speed cameras are active in this area. Once again, it comes down to reminding people of their obligations and trying to make sure they obey the law, rather than trying to catch them out and trap them.

I think, too, there should be more focus on the positives. The Victorian formal warning system is not quite a positive—it is a sort of halfway house—but a lot of people who do the right

thing say they never get any recognition for it. I think our system should highlight and recognise people who do the right thing on the road, and there are various ways that could be done, but a lot of people feel as though the system now is just negative and hostile to motorists.

The minister's change in increasing the demerit points is good, because the people who are serial offenders will lose their licence and hopefully be off the road. I think that is the way to go, because the current fines for traffic infringements are very heavy in South Australia—as I said, much higher than in most other states. For people like pensioners, it wipes out their whole weekly income and I do not think that is necessary. You can sting people but you do not have to sting them to the extent of \$400 or \$500 fines, often for not life-threatening types of situations.

All in all, I think the minister has shown promise as being a minister who has very good portfolios together—Minister for Police and Minister for Road Safety. I think it is a fantastic combination where the minister can really set the pace in road safety reform and developing a system which is fair and transparent and which deals with the deliberate reckless speedsters.

You will never stop idiots totally on the road. I read in the local Messenger paper that someone was doing, I think, 190 down on one of the southern roads last weekend. Those sorts of people, apart from needing a brain transplant, should be hit hard, but, when a grandmother goes over the limit by, say, 7 km/h, hitting her with a fine of hundreds and hundreds of dollars, and the victims of crime levy, I think is excessive. You do not need to hit people that hard to make the point that what they did was inappropriate.

So, the minister has made a good start. I commend her for what she announced back in May and look forward to some other reforms. I know we have a road safety advisory committee, but I think it needs to be more rigorous and vigorous in looking at options that could make our system more effective, more transparent and fairer for all road users and still have a clear focus on road safety and saving lives. I commend this motion to the house. As I say, I put it forward in a positive way—encouraging reform, not just negative criticism.

Mr ODENWALDER (Little Para) (12:33): I want to thank the member for Fisher for his comments. I am very pleased to be able to stand up and support a motion of the member for Fisher. It makes a nice change.

The Hon. R.B. Such: That's a first.

Mr ODENWALDER: It's refreshing; I will shake your hand later on. I am really happy to support this on behalf of the government as well. I do want to add my voice to the member for Fisher's in congratulating the minister on her leadership on this issue, and I also agree with him that combining the portfolios of police and road safety is an excellent initiative. I also want to thank the previous road safety minister (minister Kenyon) for getting the ball rolling on this.

The government also recognises that there is more to do in making our roads safer. As outlined as part of the state budget, the Weatherill government will be changing speeding offence penalties to make our roads safer. From 1 September, the expiation fee for speeding less than 10 km/h will fall from \$260 to \$150 but demerit points will double from one to two. Expiation fees and demerits for higher level offences will increase, targeting offenders who display a blatant disregard for the law. Excessive speeding of more than 45 kilometres an hour will see the expiation fee increase from \$671 to \$900 with demerit points increasing from six to nine points.

We believe that increasing demerit points will encourage more drivers to stick within the speed limit because of the risk of losing your licence from accumulation of demerits. So, the message should be clear. Speed has long been recognised as being a major factor in the cause and severity of road casualties. Speeding, even by a few kilometres over the speed limit, is unacceptable.

Speeding penalty reform is just one of the initiatives of 'Toward Zero Together, South Australia's Road Safety Strategy'. We believe no death is inevitable or acceptable, and this is our map to achieving less than 80 fatalities and 800 serious injuries a year on our roads by 2020. The effects of road trauma cost our community over \$1.2 billion each year. Had we stayed at the road toll of around 150 fatalities, as when we came to office, this would now be around \$1.6 billion per year.

In South Australia speeding was identified as a contributing factor in an estimated 36 per cent of fatal crashes between 2009 and 2011. I am sure we all agree that that is unacceptable. The number of speeding offenders has reduced in recent years, with a declining road toll. Unfortunately, almost a quarter of motorists still exceed the speed limit. Infringement data

from SAPOL shows that 38 per cent of expiation notices issued in 2011 were for speeding by less than 10 km/h over, while about 79 per cent were for speeding by less than 15 km/h over the limit.

We know there is a lot more to do; that is why work is currently underway on reforms to the graduated licensing scheme. From 2007-11 young drivers aged between 16 and 19 had a rate of 14 deaths or serious injuries for every 10,000 licences held. This is more than twice the rate for drivers aged 25 and above, who had a rate of six fatalities or serious injuries per 10,000 licences held.

Young drivers aged between 16 and 19 years, in rural South Australia particularly, were also 2½ times more likely to die or be injured in a crash than were young metropolitan drivers. Research shows that crashes are most likely to happen during the first six to 12 months of holding a provisional licence, when the driver is least experienced and driving unsupervised. These stats are alarming, and we know more can be done to make a difference.

Consultation on a range of proposals has concluded, and a legislative package will be brought to the parliament later this year. Savings can also be made with reforms to motorcycle licensing. On average, motorcycles in South Australia account for approximately 3 per cent of all registered vehicles but are involved in approximately 14 per cent of all road fatalities. Last year alone there were 21 motorcycle-related deaths out of a road toll of 103 people. The risk of a motorcyclist being killed in a crash is almost 30 times higher than for a car driver.

Consultation will start soon on a range of proposals to bring down this number. I want to reiterate that the government's position is that no death is acceptable or inevitable. That is why we will continue to make significant reforms in this area. Collectively as a parliament, rather than just a government, I call on all members to work together with the shared goal of achieving this, and I thank the member for Fisher for his motion highlighting the government's efforts in reinforcing the need to drive safety on our roads.

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (12:38): I show my support for this motion as a government member and as a local member, as the decisions that relate to it are very important to my community. The decisions to alter speeding penalties were first met with widespread support by my constituents when I was out in the community. These changes were announced as part of the 2012-13 budget and will come into effect on 1 September this year. As a result a new bracket of speeding by less than 10 km/h will be created, and the fines in the lowest bracket will decrease by over \$100 from \$260 to \$150, with demerit points rising from one to two points.

With the exception of travelling by 45 km/h or more over the speed limit, penalties will increase by 10 km/h increments as speeds over the limit increase. Higher fines and greater losses will be in place to reflect the rising risk. The penalty for exceeding the speed limit by 45 km/h or more will increase from \$671 to \$900, and demerit points will increase from six to nine. Immediate loss of licence continues to apply.

By introducing 10 km/h speed increments, these new penalties better reflect the relationship between increasing speed and crash risk. Steep increases for demerit point losses are deliberate, and the government makes no apologies for doing everything in its power to get dangerous drivers off the roads sooner.

It is important to note that the crash risk doubles with each 5 km/h increase over the speed limit on a 60 km/h road and each 10 km/h increase in speed limit over a 110 km/h road. I am horrified to learn—and see it in my electorate often—that, if somebody is travelling over 50 km/h over the speed limit in a 60 km/h zone, they would be 512 times more likely to be involved in a crash. There are many instances of unsealed roads which contribute to this in my area that councils control.

The simple reality of driving over the speed limit is increasing the chance to be involved in a crash. This means there will be less time to react to avoid a crash and it also means it will take longer to stop the vehicle, which increases the severity of the crash and the injuries to the occupants. I am advised these changes are likely to be revenue neutral. Having said that, the amount of money collected does depend on driver behaviour and driver responsibility. With statistics showing the number of first-issue speeding tickets falling every year since 2007, the government is optimistic that the message is getting through.

If extra funds are collected, these would be spent on road safety projects through the Community Road Safety Fund. With the exception of the \$60 victims of crime levy, this is the case for all funds collected from speeding detection devices—something the community does not always

appreciate and understand. The fund has been in place since July 2003 and has returned over \$602 million to lifesaving projects such as infrastructure upgrades and education programs. With road trauma costing our community over \$1.2 billion a year, the revenue collected over these 10 years amounts to about half of what would be needed to cover the community's total cost over a 12-month period.

Speed detection devices save lives. This was reinforced by a study released last month by South Australia's very own Centre for Automotive Safety Research (CASR). The work evaluated 21 fixed safety camera sites which have red-light and/or speed cameras. In just over a year, the number of drivers exceeding the speed limit by 10 km/h or more fell from a little under 1,600 a week to within around 500.

I am aware that there are some in our community who believe speed cameras exist to raise revenue for the government; this could not be further from the truth. Last year, South Australia achieved its second-lowest road toll on record with 103 fatalities. For the first time ever, serious injuries became less than 1,000, with 931 people experiencing this tragedy.

There is still more work to do and this is just one measure that is being taken to make sure we change driver behaviour, saving lives as a result. Whilst financial penalties for the lowest levels of speeding have dropped, the emphasis is more on demerit points, and the potential loss of licence has been shown to be a powerful tool in changing dangerous driving behaviour. I thank the house for its time.

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide) (12:42): I also rise to support the member for Fisher's motion, which places an emphasis on continuing our commitment to improving road safety. In this context, I feel it is also appropriate to highlight the achievements already made.

Since coming to government, a total of \$3.9 billion has been spent between the state and commonwealth governments on road construction, maintenance and safety programs. Part of this investment was made from more than \$110 million in arterial road improvements across South Australia in the past five years. This includes the installation of safety barriers and shoulder sealings with various safety programs.

In addition to the investment in new infrastructure, approximately \$371 million has been spent on road maintenance over the same period in rural South Australia using a combination of state and federal government funding. This has also included a roadside rest area strategy for South Australia which, through a combination of state and commonwealth funding since 2007-08, has seen a total of 34 new rest areas and 31 rest area upgrades. A further five new rest areas and six upgrades are scheduled for completion by June 2012. These works have been on a number of different rural highways, including Adelaide to Port Augusta, and the Sturt, Dukes, Flinders, Lincoln, Barrier, Mallee and Riddoch highways.

Before Labor came to government, there were only 67 overtaking lanes in South Australia. Since then, a further 83 have been built, and this takes the total investment in overtaking lanes to around \$100 million. While infrastructure improvements are important, they form just part of the government's road safety mix. South Australia's road safety strategy was developed to deliver a plan to achieve the government's target of reducing serious casualties by at least 30 per cent by 2020. This was done in consultation with groups such as the RAA and SAPOL and aligns itself with the National Road Safety Strategy. It includes work on safer roads and vehicles and looks at ways in which driver behaviour can be made safer, such as lowering speed limits and changes to licensing standards.

A 30 per cent reduction in fatalities will see our road toll at 80 deaths a year. Last year they stood at 103 casualties and 931 serious injuries. Whilst each and every one of these is a tragedy, this was the second lowest on record and the first time in our history that serious injuries were below a thousand. In 2002 the road toll was 154 along with 1,538 serious injuries. Since this time a number of reforms have been made. This includes the reduction of the default urban speed limit to 50 km/h in 2003 and a broader application of the default 110 km/h rural speed limit.

We have also committed annual funding to the now world-recognised Centre for Automotive Safety Research in partnership with the University of Adelaide and with \$1.3 million each year until 2017. The Motor Accident Commission also has a number of campaigns seeking to improve attitudes and behaviours that cause avoidable crashes. The state government is represented on national boards and committees that focus on the development and creation of Australian Design Rules which are standards for vehicle safety, antitheft and emissions and which are administered by the commonwealth.

All road vehicles—newly manufactured or second-hand—which have either been purchased locally or imported must comply with the relevant standards at the time of the manufacture and/or supply to the Australian market. In addition, the Australasian New Car Assessment Program is supported by the commonwealth, the New Zealand government and all Australian states. This is through a financial contribution and/or the use of state-based consumer awareness campaigns like South Australia's Stars on Cars program in new vehicle dealerships, or through a national online promotion of the campaign.

In recognising that a lot has been achieved, our commitment to road safety means that there is no room for complacency. Whilst the government supports the member for Fisher's motion, we are mindful of the many families who are suffering grief associated with their own personal tragedies caused by the carnage on our roads. We know that road safety is everyone's responsibility and, as a responsible government, we will continue to play our role.

Debate adjourned on motion of Dr McFetridge.

FLAGSTAFF ROAD

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (12:47): I move:

That this house calls on the state government to improve road safety on Flagstaff Road at Flagstaff Hill.

Before I get onto the road safety aspect, I do not know whether members are aware that it was on the edge of that road—about halfway up—where Colonel Light did some of his surveying for the City of Adelaide. That is why it is called Flagstaff Road, and there is actually a memorial cairn on the western side of Flagstaff Road with a little flag on it. That is a digression; just a little bit history.

Flagstaff Road is a three-lane, reversible road. The lanes reverse, not the road. It was introduced, I think, around about 1988. In the mornings there are two lanes travelling to the city and in the afternoons there are two lanes travelling away from the city, or that is the logic. It would not be so bad if all motorists recognised that. There are overhead lights to indicate to drivers which lanes to use.

Residents in the southern area have frequently reported that the road is dangerous. The main problem is that drivers travelling up and down the road often use the centre lane when they should not because the light is red. There have been a lot of near misses, and I have experienced that myself. There is a bend in the road which makes it difficult to see a motorist who may be using the wrong lane until it is almost too late.

Buses and trucks use the road and, if they are trapped behind one going uphill, a motorist can look forward to travelling up the hill at a snail's pace as overtaking poses a huge risk. That was highlighted by a constituent who pointed out that an ambulance trying to go up the hill had to wait for a bus to basically exit before they could get past that bus further up. Many motorists have taken risks to overtake these slow-moving vehicles, which is incredibly dangerous because once they commit to overtake there is a likelihood of a head-on collision, and there have been several of those.

Residents want the road to be made a four-lane road with two lanes in each direction. Many have signed a petition; in fact, I presented one here recently. The most recent one was signed by 238 residents and a previous one by 369 residents. I have written to the Minister for Transport on many occasions but, to this date, I have not had any success in terms of a commitment about improving the road.

The department of transport has installed very sophisticated cat's eyes at the bottom, which are good, and I have encouraged the department to use them elsewhere—on the Gepps Cross junction and at other main intersections. They are particularly useful when the weather is wet because motorists can see where the lanes go. For some reason—I am not sure whether it is the cost of these special cat's eyes—the department seems reluctant to install them anywhere else, but I think it should because motorists in other key junctions where there are multiple lanes could make sure they stay in the correct lane.

I will quote what various constituents have said, so this is not an issue I am making up. I will use their names because they do not object. Mr Allen of Aberfoyle Park is concerned about non-functioning traffic lights on Flagstaff Road. I quote:

I had a vehicle approaching me head-on and in the incorrect lane. Fortunately we avoided a collision.

There is a comment from Murray Fopp of Aberfoyle Park. He said:

I narrowly avoided a head-on collision at the southern end of the reversible lane. A southbound vehicle entered the centre lane—open to northbound traffic—a short distance before the end of the three lane section. I avoided a collision only because I was able to swerve into the (fortunately) empty left-handed lane.

These next comments are some others that go back over time. Rob Paterson of Flagstaff Hill said:

The overhead signage is completely inadequate compared to the highly visible in-road red lights which indicate when to merge.

Those are the cat's eyes. He goes on:

I have personally witnessed 3 near miss head-on collisions on this top section of the road in the last 6 months. I have never seen any problems at the bottom end since the inroad red lights—

that is the cat's eyes—

were installed. I am aware there was a very serious head-on collision on this section of the road.

Martin Penny of Aberfoyle Park said:

Came face to face with a 4 wheel drive in the middle lane. Lights on the road should be continued all the way up to delineate lanes or place signs at the top and bottom of the road which indicate whether there are 1 or 2 lanes available.

He is talking about overhead lights, I guess, as well as cat's eyes. Dennis Quantrill of Aberfoyle Park said:

Drivers are constantly ignoring speed limits on Flagstaff Road—need to be policed.

It is not an easy road for the police to monitor because, in effect, there is no footpath area so the traffic police would be putting their lives at risk. Rae Hornsey of Aberfoyle Park said:

Has had two near misses—narrowly missed having a head-on collision.

Brenton Mitchell of Flagstaff Hill said:

An ambulance trying to get past a bus going up the road and was unable to do so.

Gayle Purdy from Flagstaff Hill had begun to merge into the outer lane when she saw a large semi-trailer coming down the same lane in the opposite direction. Peter Leader of Flagstaff Hill said:

The road is a disgrace. Concerned that there is no footpath/access way by side of road for pedestrians. What happens if someone breaks down on the steep section of the road?

Finally, D. Griffin of Aberfoyle Park said:

Bottom of Flagstaff Road at Darlington intersection. This is very good and a safety feature. I am wondering whether this same thing could be done in the roadway at the top where the road divides.

He (or she) would be talking about the cat's eyes.

There is another issue with Flagstaff Road which is not as serious a problem as coming down at Glen Osmond on the freeway, but timber trucks and others use that road. A couple of trucks have got away and, fortunately, there was no-one at the bottom at the time. If ever a truck loaded with timber logs gets out of control going down that road, I am not sure where they will end up because there is no arrester bed there (and it would not be easy to put one in). I am not quite sure where they would go in an emergency.

So, my plea to the government—and I understand there is land that has become available on the east side that may be surplus to requirements of SA Water—I would urge the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure and the minister to have a look at planning to create two lanes each way on that road. I know it cannot happen overnight and it will cost a lot of money, but in the interim at least secure the land from SA Water, if that land is available on the east side, to make sure the option is retained to create another lane and turn it into a four-lane road in the future.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mrs Geraghty.

[Sitting suspended from 12:56 to 14:00]

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Deputy Premier (Hon. J.R. Rau) on behalf of the Premier (Hon. J.W. Weatherill)—

Ministerial Contract Staff—Report 30 June 2012

By the Minister for Health and Ageing (Hon. J.D. Hill)—

Gene Technology Activities 2009-2011—Report by the South Australian Government

QUESTION TIME

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:01): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs REDMOND: Given that the minister said earlier today that 'the economy underneath it all is relatively strong', how does he explain the collapse of The Dunes golf course and residential development at Port Hughes, announced today?

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:02): If the Leader of the Opposition would like an answer to that she is probably best off asking the administrators of that business.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Light.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS FORUM

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (14:02): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Light.

Mr PICCOLO: My question is to the Minister for Business Services and Consumers. Can the minister inform the house about the outcomes of the recent Legislative and Governance Forum on Consumer Affairs?

The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:03): I thank the honourable member for his question. The second meeting of the Legislative and Governance Forum on Consumer Affairs, the Consumer Affairs Forum, was held on Friday 6 July 2012, in Adelaide. The Consumer Affairs Forum, which involves the commonwealth, state, territory and New Zealand ministers responsible for fair trade and consumer protection laws, is a very important meeting and a very important forum. Many of the important issues discussed are set out in the joint communiqué for the meeting, available at www.consumerlaw.gov.au.

One of the important matters that I raised at that meeting was the question of food labelling, in particular accuracy in country of origin food labelling. I am delighted to report that other jurisdictions, in particular New South Wales, were also very enthusiastic about having this matter raised higher up the national agenda. As a result of that, there have been a number of determinations made, which I would like to briefly outline to the parliament.

The first is that the state and territory consumer affairs bodies—and we are talking here in conjunction with the national body, the ACCC—will be looking at prosecution where they find that the current regime relating to food labelling is being flouted by either manufacturers or retailers. That is going to be a matter of some focus.

The second thing is that I believe that all Australians have a right to know exactly what they are buying and, in particular, country of origin information. I am very keen to see this progressed. As a result of that, there is now to be some work done in the next six months, led by South Australia and New South Wales in conjunction with the commonwealth, to see whether we can

improve the national regime relating to food labelling with particular reference to country of origin information.

I can also advise the parliament that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission will, as a result of direction from the federal minister, communicate with the retail sector with a view to warning them of the consequences of prosecution for breach of the Australian Consumer Law. Labelling is an important issue, and ministers agreed to keep food labelling laws under review and, in particular, any legal issues that might arise from prosecutions including, of course, whether these prosecutions are difficult to secure for technical reasons. The Consumer Affairs Forum will be receiving a report on this issue in detail at the December meeting of the consumer affairs ministers in Sydney.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:06): My question is again to the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills. Why should South Australians believe this Labor government's promise that they will create 100,000 jobs by 2016 when the number of people unemployed in South Australia jumped by 10,700 in the month of June to record the highest number of unemployed people in 11 years?

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:07): One should take this month's numbers with a dose of caution.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: This is only the second time—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Minister, can you sit down until we have some quiet from this side. They have asked you a question; they should give you the dignity of being able to answer it in silence.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Minister.

Mr Pisoni: No dignity in being unemployed.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: All people have dignity; it doesn't matter whether they've got a job or not, they have dignity. One should take a strong dose of caution with this figure. This 1.2 per cent jump in a statistic is only the second time such a number has been recorded since 1978. It is an unusually large jump. Month-to-month—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: —variations in unemployment numbers—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: There is a lot of volatility in monthly variations. It is particularly true for South Australia; it has a small sample size. We have seen that time and time again, and I have said that before in the house. Numbers bounce around from month to month, and we have seen an unusually large jump this month, so it needs to be taken with a great deal of caution. I would say also that it is still better, even if you take it at face value, than the best they ever achieved at 6.9 per cent. It is still better than the best unemployment rate that that government ever achieved—ever. Up until last month we had 92 months in a row below 6 per cent.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Torrens.

URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens) (14:08): My question is to the Minister for Housing and Urban Development. Can the minister update the house on the operations of the Urban Renewal Authority?

The SPEAKER: Member for Torrens, I think you'd better go and take a Bex and have a lie down. Minister for Transport.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Elder—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Minister for Housing and Urban Development) (14:08): Thank you—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I just managed to hear that—brave effort. On 13 February this year cabinet approved and announced the creation of an Urban Renewal Authority. This is a body that seeks to become the development and facilitative arm—

Ms Chapman: The Premier announced it in December.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Yes, quite rightly, it was announced in December by the Premier; a very relevant piece of information as we proceed. Regulations—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Regulations to create the Urban Renewal Authority and dissolve the Land Management Corporation came into effect on 1 March. The assets of the former LMC and land assets of Defence SA, which were together valued at approximately \$750 million, will transfer to the URA. On 26 April 2012, pursuant to the South Australian Housing Trust Act, a number of non-tenanted properties, valued at \$54 million, were transferred from the South Australian Housing Trust to the Urban Renewal Authority.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Please, wait. They are very interested. The member for Bragg went up and down all sides of this during estimates, and I note she still has an interest. A temporary board has been appointed. Since that time, Mr Fred Hansen—an excellent appointment—has been made chief executive of that organisation, largely welcomed—well, as far as I can tell, it was universally welcomed—by industry; criticised, of course, by the Hon. Rob Lucas in what used to be the other place.

The SPEAKER: Which is now this place.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Which is now this place, which is filling me with existential doubt.

The SPEAKER: Until next week when it is that place.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Since that time, Mr Fred Hansen has been appointed internally to oversee the entire precinct between the Bowden Village on the west through to Gilberton on the east, and the entire Riverbank Precinct, which is of such importance to us and the future of South Australia. It has done things like purchase the Caroma site for strategic use in the future, and it has assigned four contracts for companies to develop the first allotments at Bowden. It is proceeding as we would have hoped and as we have planned. It has been recognised by the commonwealth as an outstanding organisation and the way forward.

It was talked about at a speech by the Premier of South Australia, attended by the Leader of the Opposition, and by Fred Hansen in a speech, attended by the Hon. David Ridgway. That is why I was very surprised to get an FOI from the Leader of the Opposition dated 6 July under her signature—not me personally, but the government—requesting a list of all capital works projects and the government's capital works program held by the Land Management Corporation. 'For each project the list should include the project name, proposed annual government expenditure,' etc., etc.

The difficulty we have is that, in that information you will find—and it was drawn out by the member for Bragg at estimates—that we actually wound up the Land Management Corporation as

of 1 March. Therefore, can I say, to save any further FOIs from the Leader of the Opposition, who seems to have quite missed this—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The dates I read out to the member for Bragg were 2012-13—that is 2012-13. That is the financial year starting on 1 July 2012 through to 2013. Can I point out that it is impossible for us to provide that information because it does not exist anymore. What I would say to the Leader of the Opposition, in short answer—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: —is that the capital program for 2012-13—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: —strangely enough, is exactly equal to the capital program of John Martin's, SAGASCO and TransAdelaide, which we wound up a few years ago too.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The next person who bellows across the chamber will leave.

Ms Chapman: So where is the board? 'Imminent' you said at estimates.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bragg, you will leave the chamber for 10 minutes.

The honourable member for Bragg having withdrawn from the chamber:

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: When will you learn? Order!

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:13): My question is again to the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills. Why has the government's economic plan delivered a fall of 11,400 full-time jobs in the month of June alone and, importantly, 8,900 fewer full-time jobs than when Labor promised 100,000 new jobs in the lead-up to the 2010 election?

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:14): It is no secret that the economy has been struggling for the last 12 months or so. It has been a difficult—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: It has been a rough time.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am not sure if you have answered the question or not, minister; I cannot hear you.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: I am struggling to hear myself.

The SPEAKER: Actually, can ministers please move a little bit closer to their microphones. It is very hard; it is a different system, obviously. Thank you.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: It is no secret that the economy has been going through a difficult 12 months. No-one has hidden that from anybody. I have said it repeatedly here in this chamber. It is easy to compare records. Since we have been in government—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: —64,000 full-time jobs. From their nine years—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: —in government, 9,100 full-time jobs. So, if you are looking for a government that creates jobs, it is not them, it is us.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide) (14:15): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills. Can the minister inform the house about the government programs to assist South Australians to enter apprenticeships?

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Norwood, order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:15): I am pleased to advise this place that more than 200 young South Australians will gain skills that could lead to an apprenticeship through the \$1 million Kickstart training program. Funding to the Kickstart training program will support the delivery of 15 pre-apprenticeship training courses across South Australia. This program aims to increase the number of young people taking up trade apprenticeships in areas of demand, including plumbing, electro-technology, engineering, carpentry and commercial cookery.

This program provides a great opportunity for school leavers to get some skills in a trade area as a kickstart towards an apprenticeship and a career in one of these key trades. This program will provide participants with more than 300 hours of accredited training that is aligned with targeted apprenticeships, along with case management support and mentoring, career information and guidance, as well as literacy and numeracy assistance, when required.

Training will be provided by the following registered training organisations: the Adelaide Training and Employment Centre at Ottoway and Lonsdale, providing three engineering courses; Hospitality Group Training in the Adelaide CBD, providing three hospitality pathways courses; Peer Veet at Albert Park, providing two plumbing courses and four electrical courses; and the North East Vocational College at St Agnes and Port Lincoln, providing three construction pathways courses. The initiative complements the state government's Skills for All reform which aims to raise the overall skill levels of South Australians and get more people into training and jobs.

Under Skills for All from July, certificate I and II level courses, prevocational courses and accredited foundation courses to improve reading, writing, numeracy and computer skills will be fee-free, with no course fees. In addition, courses determined by the state government to be in a critical priority skills area in South Australia will also be fee-free, also with no course fees.

If South Australians want more information about the pre-apprentice Kickstart program or apprenticeships, they should contact the trainee and apprenticeships hotline on 1800 637 097. We know that South Australians in apprenticeships have good employment prospects, with the skills needed for high-demand jobs now and into the future.

APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:17): Supplementary question, Madam Speaker. Can the minister confirm that, when the students complete the pre-apprentice training programs that the minister has just referred to, they cannot get funded by the Construction Industry Training Board to do an apprenticeship because the minister has not signed the funding training plan? So, they can do a pre-apprenticeship program; they just cannot get funded to do an apprenticeship?

The SPEAKER: I will consider that as another question. Minister.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:18): We are still obviously negotiating with the CITB. I will be meeting with them tomorrow—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: —but the CITB is not the only source of funding for apprenticeships. It is not the only source of apprenticeships. There are apprenticeships right across the economy by either individual employers or group training organisations—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: —who, if they are not in the construction industry, do not receive funding from the CITB, because that is what it is for. So, there are plenty of apprenticeships out there and, if they are in the construction industry, they do not necessarily release funding. They do not necessarily release funding from the CITB either. So, there are plenty of opportunities for apprenticeships, and I will negotiate very smoothly, or maybe not smoothly but certainly quickly and expeditiously, with the CITB to reach an outcome. I will be meeting with them tomorrow.

PRIORITY BUS LANES

Mr SIBBONS (Mitchell) (14:19): My question is to the Minister for Transport Services. Can the minister update the house on the introduction of bus priority lanes on Currie and Grenfell streets and East Terrace and the 1 July timetable changes?

The Hon. C.C. FOX (Bright—Minister for Transport Services) (14:19): Thank you, member for Mitchell, for this entirely unexpected question. The bus lanes that have been introduced—

The Hon. I.F. Evans: That's not true.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. C.C. FOX: In this case, it is.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise going on. If you are going to have conversations, please go outside the chamber to have them.

The Hon. C.C. FOX: Since we introduced the priority bus lanes at the beginning of this week, the response has been very, very good. I am pleased to announce that we have had very few complaints at all about those bus lanes. In fact, if anybody has taken the opportunity to drive down the bus lanes either way during rush-hour traffic, I think most private motorists would be pleasantly surprised to see that they no longer have to deal with buses on those roads. No longer is there a case of dodgem cars going on on those particular streets. The cost of introducing these bus lanes has been in the area of \$250,000—that is, of course, mirroring the amount we fined the bus companies during the last quarter of proceedings.

I must say that, at this point in time, we have had very smooth running. We all know that the school holidays are about to come to an end and, when the school holidays come to an end, things may be slightly different as people adjust to those bus lanes. We know anecdotally that it takes some two weeks for people to change their traffic behaviour, so we do expect that there will be a certain period of time when people have to readjust their driving patterns. On the whole, I have been extremely pleased not only with the implementation of the bus lanes but also with the way in which the people of Adelaide have really, without much fuss at all, taken to them.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:21): My question is to the Treasurer. Why did the government estimate in the budget only six weeks ago that jobs growth for the last 12 months to the end of June would be 0.5 per cent when today's jobs figures show that the jobs growth over that 12-month period was in fact minus 1.3 per cent, equal to 15,000 fewer jobs than forecast, and does the Treasurer believe that the state will achieve the 0.75 per cent jobs growth budgeted for the next 12 months?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:22): I certainly do believe in the accuracy and the robustness of the forecast contained in the budget figures. As the—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: As the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills has already pointed out, this appears to be a statistical aberration in that you would have a situation where, within four weeks, the unemployment rate would rise by 1.2 per cent when the national unemployment rate had changed by only 0.1 per cent.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Point of order, Madam Speaker. The minister is confused. I was talking about a 12-month figure of 0.5 per cent and minus 1 per cent.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. Treasurer, you can answer as you choose.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I will answer as I choose. The simple fact is that—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Marshall: What about answering the question?

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Norwood, order! The Treasurer.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The simple fact is that for the unemployment rate in South Australia to rise by 1.2 per cent in contrast with the national seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rising by only 0.1 per cent, as the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills has pointed out, it would appear to be an aberration, and one would need to view that figure very cautiously. So, my answer to the question is that, yes, I have complete confidence in the forecasts that are contained within the budget papers.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Florey.

POSITIVE AGEING

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (14:24): Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Health and Ageing. Can the minister tell the house how the government is supporting senior South Australians to be involved with and connected to their community?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Arts) (14:24): Members may or may not be aware that the government is offering \$390,000 worth of grants to sponsor projects by community groups and organisations which will help senior South Australians to participate in their community. I would encourage members to find out about these grants and to advocate on behalf of their communities and to encourage their communities to take advantage of these grants.

The funding rounds for Grants for Seniors and the Positive Ageing Development Grants opened on 7 July (last Saturday). These grants are about supporting senior South Australians to stay active, maintain and build independence and foster connections with their communities. They are provided to a whole range of organisations in the community that promote choices and opportunities for senior people to take part in their communities. They include cultural activities; education, training and arts bodies; as well as volunteer, self-help, recreational and sporting organisations—so it is right across the board.

Grants for Seniors provides funding of up to \$5,000 per grant and these are targeted at helping community organisations purchase exercise and recreational equipment, and craft materials and other such items. These grants make huge differences to the ability of small community organisations to engage with older South Australians and to encourage their active participation. I understand that in past years Grants for Seniors has supported a whole range of things, including IT for Seniors at the Mount Barker Family House Incorporated and Senior Muscles, a project by the Booleroo Centre Community Development and Tourism Association; and the Rotary Club of Largs Bay received a grant for a wheelchair and walking frame restoration project.

Through the Positive Ageing Development Grants, South Australian community organisations can access grants up to \$25,000 over a one-year period for projects reflecting the following themes: enabling choice and independence; participation and learning; and positive perceptions. All these themes are aligned to the priority actions in the Improving with Age—Our

Ageing Plan for South Australia. I encourage members to find out about these grants and encourage the organisations in their electorates to apply for some of them.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (14:26): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills. How does the minister's failure to sign an approved training plan for the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) for this year, which has resulted in the stop to funding for construction industry training, help grow employment? Because the Construction Industry Training Board has stopped funding for construction industry training, the opposition are advised that the extra cost to the employer of employing an apprentice will rise by an average of \$3,500 a year. Post-trade training will not be funded, and the schools program Doorways to Construction involving 1,000 students will not be funded—a cut to a tune of \$400,000 to that program.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:27): Obviously that is not a permanent—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: —situation. I am meeting the CITB tomorrow.

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: I am meeting the CITB tomorrow. We are going to have a discussion about how their training plan looks and what I would like it to incorporate and what they would like it to incorporate, and then once we have agreed on plan I will sign it off as quickly and as expeditiously as I can, and funding will flow. It is not going to be here; this is not going to be the situation for the whole year. I am anxious to approve their training plan—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: —but their training plan did not meet with my approval.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Norwood, leave the chamber for 10 minutes.

The member for Norwood having withdrawn from the chamber:

POST CARE SERVICES

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (14:28): My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development. Minister, can you inform the house about what the state government is doing to support care leavers through the Post Care Services?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:28): Yes, I am very pleased to report on this initiative, on this unexpected question. I announced very recently, in follow-up to one of the Mullighan recommendations, that we had outsourced the care that government provides for people leaving care and who have left care. That has now been outsourced to Relationships Australia (RASA). This is a very important commitment that we make and that we certainly made in the context of the Mullighan recommendations. I wish RASA and their clients all the very best.

APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:29): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills. Does the minister agree with the Premier that skills are 'the most important thing' when under his management the Construction Industry Training Board has now suspended all funding for training? Nationally accredited local training providers have been refused Skills for All funding, and payroll tax exemptions for apprentices and trainees have been cut off.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:29): Absolutely I agree with the Premier, and why wouldn't I?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: It is precisely the reason why the government is spending \$194 million over the next six years for extra training places. It is precisely why we are introducing the Skills for All reforms. It is precisely why the government is spending more money on training than it ever has before, especially in conjunction with the federal government which is driving the reforms across the country for vocational education and training. It is not us who doubt the importance of skills. It is not us: it is the Leader of the Opposition.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Mr ODENWALDER (Little Para) (14:29): My question is to the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy.

Members interjecting:

Mr ODENWALDER: I'm confident he will be able to answer this. Can the minister inform the house what the government is doing to use energy resources more responsibly throughout government departments?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Manufacturing, Innovation and Trade, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy, Minister for Small Business) (14:30): I thank the member for his question and his keen interest in energy efficiency. It is important for the government to play a key role in utilising energy more efficiently in South Australia. Over the past decade, this government has had a particular focus on ensuring that government buildings have made the transition to being more energy efficient.

I am pleased to inform the house that government buildings are overall 17.3 per cent more energy efficient in 2010-11 than they were in 2000-01. This is on track for the target of 30 per cent improvement by 2020. The improvement can be attributed to the government's policy of moving to more energy-efficient buildings, upgrades and refurbishments using more efficient equipment and behavioural changes within the workplace.

A range of energy management achievements have been implemented across each portfolio. Measures used most frequently include lighting upgrades, consolidation of equipment such as printers and utilising timers for energy intensive equipment such as boilers. New government buildings, such as the Royal Adelaide Hospital, are being constructed to higher efficiency standards, which will help lift that average even further.

The government also recently approved a new framework for energy efficiency in government buildings. This includes guidelines which will assist government agencies to assess potential energy efficiency investments on a sound business case basis to inform budget decisions. A review of the current systems to increase the efficiency and accuracy of the compilation of energy efficiency data is being undertaken as part of a continuous improvement to reduce the resources required for gathering and reporting this information.

The government believes that the best way to encourage others is by taking a proactive approach. This government is encouraging businesses and households to be more energy conscious and efficient with the use of power, and we are leading by example. I encourage any household or business looking to become more energy efficient to visit the free Energy Advisory Service online at www.sa.gov.au/energy or by calling 8204 1888.

SKILLS FOR ALL

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:32): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills. On what basis are private training organisations which are nationally accredited and compliant being rejected as Skills for All providers without being told why they are being rejected, when the government has not even contacted their referees in assessing their applications?

The SPEAKER: There is a lot of supposition in that question, but I will ask the minister to answer it.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:32): I have answered a number of questions about Skills for All over the last few months. One of the things I have mentioned repeatedly has been the government's focus on the quality of training, because I believe that, if the quality of training is not maintained and improved upon over the next few years, the whole credibility of the VET system will disintegrate.

To combat some of the circumstances that occurred in Victoria, where there were significant problems with their equivalent—and they have been reported particularly in the *Financial Review* but also in other papers—one of the quality assurance levels we introduced was a vetting process for Skills for All. Before you could receive the state government Skills for All money, you had to go through this vetting process with the state government.

I do not apologise for that. I do not apologise for assuring ourselves of the quality of providers. I do not think it is a bad thing for us to review the quality of the education that is being provided and the quality of those providers that are providing it. If I did anything different, there would be howls of outrage. If RTOs do not meet the criteria set out very clearly in the application process, they are not approved. It would be ridiculous to approve companies or RTOs that did not meet the criteria. It would just be crazy. There would be no point having criteria if you did that so, if companies do not meet the criteria, we do not approve them.

SKILLS FOR ALL

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:34): As a supplementary, why are Skills for All applicants who are rejected not entitled to feedback after that rejection?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: On a point of order, that is actually part of the question he asked a moment ago.

The SPEAKER: Yes. Does the minister wish to respond?

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:35): I apologise to the member for Unley: I should have said that I am very happy to organise that. If he will pass me the details of those companies, I am happy to arrange for them to talk to the department. Obviously we have to be careful to not give away too much detail so that they do not just simply go and write up what we want to hear; it needs to be an objective process as far as possible. If we can help companies through that process, I am more than pleased for my department to meet with these companies and RTOs, and if the member for Unley would like to pass me some of the names of the RTOs, I am happy to make sure that it is followed up.

Mr Pisoni: You know who they are—I've been writing to you.

The SPEAKER: Order!

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (14:35): My question is to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation. How is South Australia linking in with the rest of the world to share knowledge and learn about climate change?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:35): I thank the member for Reynell for her question and highlight the manner by which she communicates with her constituents on a variety of environmental matters. There is no doubt that the climate—

Mr Pisoni: 10,000 people looking for green jobs today.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: —is changing, the evidence is clear. This is a critical decade. Decisions we make now will determine the severity of climate change that our children and grandchildren experience. This is why the South Australian government is committed to taking action on climate change, and this is why we need to work with other countries and subnational governments to share our knowledge.

In light of this I was pleased to announce on 19 June at the World Summit of States and Regions in Rio de Janeiro that Greenhouse 2013 will be held in Adelaide from 8 to 11 October 2013. Greenhouse 2013 is Australia's leading scientific climate change conference and has been held since 1987. This conference presents a fantastic opportunity for our decision-makers, community groups and individuals to build their knowledge about climate change so we can ensure a more resilient and prosperous future. Each Greenhouse Conference attracts key thinkers in the scientific community to showcase the latest knowledge on climate change. It is through collaboration that we can truly tackle climate change.

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: I am proud to live in a country where our federal government has implemented a plan that will reduce our projected greenhouse gas emissions and drive investment—

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I'm not sure whose voice that is—I think it is the member for Schubert.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Madam Speaker, far be it from me to correct anything you say, but it was the member for Finniss.

The SPEAKER: Member for Finniss.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I reiterate that I am proud to live in a country where our federal government has implemented a plan that will reduce our projected greenhouse gas emissions and drive investment in clean energy technologies to secure a sustainable future. This is not the be-all and end-all. We as a state need to facilitate the implementation of this plan. We as a state need to work with other states nationally and internationally to ensure that we are all taking action.

Events such as the World Summit of States and Regions, at which I announced Greenhouse 2013, voluntary international alliances, such as the States and Regions Alliance and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, show how national and subnational governments have a role in the pursuit of a smarter, better and more prosperous world. I was inspired by the leadership of national and regional governments around the world and by the readiness to champion wider action and the commitment to work together—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: —to encourage further initiatives. As a result of participating in these events South Australia has forged excellent relationships and learnt of many—

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Are you going on an overseas junket?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: —ask me some questions—common barriers encountered by other regions in tackling climate change. I trust that these relationships and lessons can be further developed through having regional governments attend the Greenhouse 2013 Conference in Adelaide next year.

SKILLS FOR ALL

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:39): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills. Why are nationally accredited training organisations that have been rejected for Skills for All funding being told that they must wait three months before reapplying, and why has the minister waived this three-month period only in certain cases?

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:39): Very simply, there have been 300 applications to be a Skills for All provider in the last few months. It obviously takes time to work our way and assess our way through all of those providers. If someone is rejected, they have not met the criteria. If someone has not met the criteria, then we need to just make sure we get through the remaining applications as quickly as possible and then

get back to those that were rejected and work with them. There was one instance where I waived that—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: —the requirement for that provider because they had been operating as a provider in South Australia for 16 years. If that is not the right amount of time, I will get back to the house on that but, from memory, it is about 16 years—a substantial amount of time—in South Australia. They were well known. I suspect they relied in their—well, I will not make suppositions about what they expected but they are known to us. I am happy to work with them and I will waive the three months for them, but I need time or the department needs time to get through the other applications and then we will get back onto those that were rejected.

SKILLS FOR ALL

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:40): Supplementary: why is national accreditation not satisfactory for Skills for All? Don't you trust the system?

The SPEAKER: Order! I'll consider that a question. There was a lot of accusation in that.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:40): I explained that in one of my previous answers—a real flurry today. In one of my previous answers, I explained that quality is very, very important. One of the experiences—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: One of the experiences in Victoria was that the only qualification for Victorian funding—

Mr Pisoni: They didn't have national accreditation.

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Unley!

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: The only requirement was that you had national accreditation—that was it. As long as you were an accredited RTO, there was no overview, there was no quality control, there was no going back and auditing those providers. Now, I have said on numerous occasions, publicly and in the house, that quality is important and we are prepared to have a higher level of scrutiny. I said in the debate on the TAFE bill that there was a higher level of scrutiny on Skills for All providers to help us maintain quality.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Reynell.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

DOOLEY, MR A.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (14:42): My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development. Can the minister inform the house about the significant contribution made by Allan Dooley, the outgoing presiding member of the SACE Board, to the South Australian education system?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:42): I am very happy to answer this question and I thank the member for Reynell for the question, because I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the significant contribution made by Mr Allan Dooley, the outgoing presiding member of the SACE Board of South Australia. His service not only to the development of the SACE but to education in South Australia and nationally has been of enormous value. I think everyone in this place would agree that the hallmark of Mr Dooley's service has always been a commitment to policies and practices that support excellence and equity across all of our sectors.

In addition to his work at the SACE Board and throughout his working life, Allan has been a very vocal advocate on behalf of, in particular, children who are particularly vulnerable. He worked

with the office of the then minister for education—I believe that was Dr Jane Lomax-Smith—to ensure the 2004 amendments to the Children's Protection Act 1993 met the needs of the schooling sectors.

He also jointly convened the first intersectoral education directors' briefing on suicide prevention and, in 2007, established the South Australian Youth Welfare Advisory Committee—an interagency group that includes representatives from mental health, police and education. He was and no doubt continues to be a distinguished, compassionate and effective leader of Catholic education here in South Australia, and he has consistently been held in the highest regard and respected by educators and others in the sector.

Of course, he has been pivotal in helping to navigate the SACE through a time of significant change and reform. He was a member of the original SACE review reference group which led to the new SACE and he was a founding member of the SACE Review Implementation Steering Committee. He has been presiding member of the SACE Board since July 2009. Mr Dooley is stepping down as presiding member of the SACE Board for very personal reasons, and I wish him all the very best in meeting those particular challenges.

The Deputy Presiding Member, Ms Jane Danvers (the principal of Wilderness School) has agreed to take on the role of Presiding Member of the SACE Board until a permanent appointment is made. I thank her and all members of the SACE Board for the support they have given Mr Dooley during his period of leadership. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of everyone in this place to acknowledge his contribution to the Catholic sector, as well as his time as Chair of the SACE Board and, in particular, for his work supporting our most vulnerable children. I wish him all the very, very best with his future.

The SPEAKER: The member for Norwood.

ADELAIDE ZOO

Mr MARSHALL (Norwood) (14:45): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: You don't deserve a question.

Mr MARSHALL: My question is to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation. What crown land is the government selling to fund the Zoo as part of the 2012-13 budget and will he rule out selling land that is environmentally sensitive? The minister told the estimates committee:

The budget provides for DENR to achieve crown land sales of \$2.6 million as a financial contribution to the Royal Zoological Society. We will go about targeting those particular areas to reach the figure that we have been allocated to find.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:46): I think that the member for Norwood answered the question himself with respect to the response I gave during the estimates period. I recall, too, during our estimates that I provided an undertaking to give to you information as it became available with respect to the parcels of land that would be targeted. However, what I can rule out, in response to the specifics of the question: we are not going to sell national parks. Anything that has significant conservation values will remain quite rightly with DEWNR. We have not targeted those parcels of land as yet and—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: We are selling land, which we tend to do every year, and on occasions we sell land to then buy more land—

The Hon. J.J. Snelling interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: That's right. We sell land to buy land.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: I have answered this question during estimates. I gave an undertaking to the member for Norwood during the estimates period to keep him up to speed with

respect to those parcels of land that will be targeted and, indeed, the communication that needs to happen with other people with respect to parcels of land before they are sold.

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: Well, I have given you the answer before and I gave it to you just now. Madam Speaker, I cannot help it if they do not like the answer to the questions. I am giving it in the same way that I did previously.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: I promised today not to respond to interjections. It is very difficult in this chamber, but I do hear the interjections of the deputy leader, the next best—I will correct that. He is not the next best thing; he is the next, next best thing—the third in line. I am behaving myself and I will continue to do so.

AIR WARFARE DESTROYER

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Lee) (14:48): My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer tell the house about the recently announced—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: —contract on the—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I can't hear a word you are saying, member for Lee.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: Can the Treasurer tell the house about the recently announced contract on the air warfare destroyer project that has been awarded to a Port Adelaide based company?

Dr McFetridge interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:48): Madam Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr McFetridge interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Morphett!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: There is a bit of difference between an air warfare destroyer and a police boat, Madam Speaker—a bit of difference. It might be—

Dr McFetridge interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Morphett!

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: It would be a pretty impressive police boat to have an air warfare destroyer—a pretty expensive police boat, as well. It would be a pretty well-armed police boat—an AWD. I would like to thank the member for Lee for the question and for his interest in the defence industries. Defence is a critical industry for this state, forming the foundation of our advanced manufacturing future, which members will be aware the government has identified as a major priority. Indeed, defence industries are now central to our state's economic development plan.

That is why I was delighted last week when the Minister for Defence Materiel (Hon. Jason Clare MP) announced the awarding of a \$3.25 million contract to construct the three masts for the air warfare destroyers to Port Adelaide-based company MG Engineering. This will involve the construction of three 22-metre long masts, each weighing roughly 25 tonnes. Once constructed, they will be transported by barge down to Techport where the AWDs are being assembled.

This contract will result in MG Engineering taking on an additional 10 staff to do the work over the next two years. This is a magnificent local success story of a company that commenced as a father and son operation in 1995 and now employs a total of 70 employees, ranging from qualified engineers, project managers and draftsmen through to highly skilled tradespeople.

MG Engineering has become a highly respected provider in diversified advanced manufacturing disciplines to defence industry clients that include ASC Shipbuilding, BAE Systems, Defence Maritime Services and the Royal Australian Navy. Having won this important contract for a critical part of the AWD project, MG Engineering is now well placed to bid for and win further defence work.

The \$8 billion AWD project is the single largest and most complex defence project in the nation and is providing enormous opportunities for local industry and long-term jobs for South Australians. The AWD project is in its peak years and is making an average annual contribution of about \$292 million and 1,783 jobs to South Australia's economy.

This reinforces that securing work on major projects like the AWD project and the future submarine project is critical to the long-term growth and sustainability of our local defence industry. These are enormous opportunities for local industry and will provide advanced manufacturing jobs for many South Australians.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition—who has been reasonably well behaved this afternoon.

SA WATER

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:52): Thank you, Madam Speaker. If I can say so myself, I thought my behaviour has been exemplary; but I am delighted, Madam Speaker, that you have noticed. However, my question is to the Minister for Water and the River Murray. Why did the government force SA Water to pay funds from water price increases committed to the desalination plant into Treasury when works were delayed, rather than carry the funds into the next year to pay for those works? The budget papers say that SA Water's payments to Treasury in 2011-12:

...are above budget by \$125 million, mainly due to decreased operating expenses and operating costs associated with the delay of the delivery of first water for the desalination plant.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:52): I thank the honourable member for his question and, again, I think in the explanation that he provided that was contained within the budget papers; it is self-explanatory.

The Hon. J.J. Snelling: That is normally what would happen.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, that is normally what would happen. I cannot add anything to what the honourable member has said—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: —with respect to his explanation which is contained within the budget papers.

SA WATER

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:53): My question again is to the Minister for Water and the River Murray. Will the minister explain to the house why the Victorian government was able to carry forward water consumers' funds paid towards their desalination plant when works were delayed and, indeed, deferred planned Victorian water price rises but, in South Australia, Treasury took \$125 million from SA Water, money which would have been paid to the contractors but for the delays in the construction, forcing SA Water to once again raise this money from long-suffering water consumers?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:54): Comparisons made with the way Victorians do things and what occurs here in South Australia do not provide an accurate comparison.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: What I do know is that, built into the prices this year in Victoria, as I understand it, was a component for the desalination plant. That was then withdrawn. Of course, their contractual arrangements are different from ours and they had prematurely introduced those increases outside of the arrangements. What I can say about the Victorian situation is that, whilst they returned that money to consumers for the inappropriate way by which they secured that money from the Victorian public, they kept what was the component of the dividend and never bothered to return that. In essence, we have entirely different arrangements. Theirs is a PPP. It is not a fair comparison. I would place our contractual arrangements and the work we have done in South Australia against what the Victorians have done any time of the day as being a much better deal for our state.

DESALINATION PLANT

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:55): I have a supplementary question. Given that the minister has just said that we have much better contractual arrangements in South Australia than the Victorians have over their desal plant construction, why did SA Water not invoke penalty clauses due to delays in construction in South Australia, notwithstanding that last December, John Ringham, the CE of SA Water, told the public of South Australia that there were financial penalty clauses and they would be invoked?

The SPEAKER: I think that was another question, but regardless. Minister.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:56): Madam Speaker, I am with you. I cannot see how that is a supplementary. Notwithstanding that, quite simply—and I think I have answered this before but in another place (our place)—the penalty clauses that existed there did in fact exist. There was a dispute that arose. That dispute has been resolved through discussions and negotiations between SA Water and the proponents. It has been resolved in such a way that I can—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: —inform the house that the advice I have is that the completion of the desalination plant is still scheduled to be on track for December 2012.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: The full 100-gigalitre capacity desalination plant will be completed at that time and will come in on, or slightly under, the budget that was provisioned for this very important piece of infrastructure. I answered this question previously.

Mr Williams: No, you haven't.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: I am happy to have it asked again and I will answer it again in the same way.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Deputy Leader, order! I will give you a question.

Mr WILLIAMS: Are you calling me for another question?

The SPEAKER: Yes, but you behave yourself.

DESALINATION PLANT

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:57): Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is again to the Minister for Water and the River Murray. How can South Australian water consumers be assured that this year's 25 per cent water price rise will go to paying for the desalination plant, which is the reason you have given for the price rises over recent years, and not be syphoned off to Treasury like it was last year?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:58): The simple fact is that SA Water, at the moment, particularly with the desal plant, if you take into account the effect of the horizontal fiscal equalisation impact of the grant to expand the desal plant from the commonwealth, all in all costs us more money. More money comes out of Treasury to SA Water than we get back. There is actually a net loss to Treasury. You have to remember that there are significant CSOs that are paid to SA Water to provide for uniform statewide pricing. So, when you take into account the effect of the grant and the effect that has had on our GST payments, there is a net loss to Treasury from SA Water. The dividends aren't as much as goes out.

DESALINATION PLANT

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:58): Supplementary to that answer, can the Treasurer explain why the budget papers say that there has been a \$212 million turnaround in the net transfer of funds from SA Water to the government—\$212 million net turnaround in favour of the government—and in fact there is a positive payment in this most recent year of \$172 million from SA Water to the government net of CSOs and all those things?

The SPEAKER: Member for MacKillop, I think you need to learn the difference between supplementaries and questions. Again, that was a question, but it does not matter. Ask as many as you like. Minister.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:59): I will have to check exactly what the deputy leader is referring to, but it is true that as water prices increase and the gap between the statewide water price and the metropolitan water price narrows, then that CSO reduces. The simple fact is that at the moment the CSOs we pay to SA Water to provide statewide uniform pricing are significant, and substantially offset the dividends that the government receives from SA Water. The second point is, as I say, if you take into account what has happened to our GST grants, and because of the grant from the commonwealth to expand the size of the desalination plant, in fact the total return to government is probably negative.

Mr Williams: That was a great decision.

The SPEAKER: Order! Deputy leader, do you have another question?

Mr WILLIAMS: I have heaps more, Madam Speaker.

MURRAY FUTURES

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:00): My question is again to the Minister for Water and the River Murray. Has any of the \$80 million, the component of the \$610 million federal Murray Futures program money earmarked for purchasing water, been applied to that purpose? If so, how much has been spent and how much water has been purchased?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (15:01): We have only 30 seconds left in question time to deconstruct—

Mr Williams: No, we've got all day.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: Well—

Mr Williams: I tell you what, Paul: if you can give me an answer I'll sit here and listen to you.

The SPEAKER: Order! No, you won't, because I will send you out if you keep shouting out.

The Hon. P. CAICA: It would be nice, Madam Speaker, if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition fessed up to what he actually said instead of denying what it is he said. You know what I am talking about, Mitch.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: It goes to integrity, amongst other things.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: With respect to the \$600 million allocation that has been made to South Australia, I will get back with the details, to make sure that I am—unlike the opposition deputy leader—factual in what I say. I will get back with a specific answer for that question.

CHAMBER MATTERS

The SPEAKER (15:02): Members, before we leave I just want to take the opportunity, while everyone is still here, to thank the Hon. Bob Sneath, the Clerk (Ms Jan Davis), Black Rod and all those in the other place for allowing us to be in their place this week. We have had a very smooth transition and it has worked very well, so thank you to them. It has been much appreciated. Also, a special thanks to our clerks Mr Lehman and Mr Crump, to Hansard, particularly, who did a great job, and to all our attendants, but especially John Moylan, who has taken so much care of the mace for us this week.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (15:03): In my grievance I want to touch on the state of the economy and the government's position on the economy, given today's question time and today's employment figures. The poor old minister for employment, you have to feel sorry for him. To give you an illustration of how bad this government's economic message is, you only have to look at the minister for employment. According to the minister, the economy went from being relatively strong at 11 o'clock this morning, when he was speaking to the media, to struggling by quarter past 2 this afternoon, when he said that the economy had been 'struggling for the last 12 months'. 'I have been saying that repeatedly,' the minister said.

So, within three hours, he has gone from saying that the economy has been strong to saying that the economy has been struggling for the last 12 months. I must say that, out of those two positions, I accept the second position of the minister for employment. You only have to look at this month's employment figures to see how badly the economy is going in South Australia. There are 11,400 fewer full-time jobs; full-time jobs have dropped by 11,400 in the last month. Unemployment has increased by 10,700 people in the last month.

The reality is that this government's economic program is simply not working in South Australia. Why would the employment figures be going in the wrong direction if their economic strategy was working? This was the government, of course, who had the brainwave to cut the payroll tax exemption for apprentices and trainees in the state budget, a clear message about employment and unemployment within the state.

Madam Speaker, you only have to look at the figures over the last 12 months. The government is going to run around saying, 'Oh, the \$10,000 figure and the 12,000 figure, that's just a blip,' but what the poor old Treasurer would not answer was the question about the 12-month figures, and the 12-month figure is no blip. The Treasurer said, 'I'll answer it how I want.' Then he went and answered the monthly figures. He would not address the 12-month figures. Well, let us look at the 12-month figures.

The 12-month figures, only six weeks ago the Treasurer said in his budget, they expected the last 12 months to come out at 0.5 per cent employment growth, 0.5 per cent positive. In actual fact, it has come out minus 1.3 per cent; that is a 15,000 job difference. How did the Treasurer get it so wrong? He would have access, through his agency, to up-to-date figures on a regular basis. So how did the Treasurer get it so wrong just six weeks ago that employment was going to be 0.5 per cent growth? In actual fact, it has gone backwards 1.3 per cent.

Then he has got the gall to stand up in the house and say, even though we have gone backwards by 1.3 per cent over the last 12 months, he is absolutely confident that even though we could not achieve 0.5 per cent last year, we are going to achieve 0.75 per cent next year after the introduction of the employment-killing carbon tax, after the introduction of the carbon tax. This must be the only Treasurer in Australia who is suggesting that you will have higher employment after the carbon tax than before the carbon tax. The budget figure on employment you now have to seriously question, and if you are going to seriously question the employment figure in the budget, logically

you have to go to the question of payroll tax receipts, because if employment is not growing then payroll tax will not grow to the same level as expected by definition.

This government is simply out of touch. Look at the last four or five days and the announcements that have come out from all the independent commentators. The Minister for employment is quite right when he says the economy is struggling. The reality is that housing finance commitments to the six months to May show a drop of 0.9 per cent, the worst performance in Australia by South Australia. The building approvals figure is the lowest for 11 years, a drop of 23.6 per cent. Engineering construction work, worst of all mainland states, shows a 2.2 per cent drop, and retail figures show the worst performance with a 0.63 per cent drop.

The employment and economic situation in South Australia is going backwards, and you only have to look at the two tragic announcements today: the Dunes golf course development going through and the ADCIV engineering company being put into voluntary administration. That is a clear sign that what this government is doing through its high tax agenda simply is not working in South Australia and is crippling businesses in South Australia and hurting people through higher unemployment.

EVANSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:09): Today I wish to bring to the house's attention some details about Evanston Primary School, which is my old primary school. Evanston Primary School is searching for all of its old scholars in preparation for its celebrations to mark the school's 50th birthday this year, having opened in February 1962. Celebrations will also mark the closure of the school later this year when it merges with Gawler High School and Evanston Preschool to form the new Gawler and Districts College on the Gawler High School site.

Of course, over those 50 years a number of students and teachers have gone through the school, and there is a committee, comprising current teachers, parents and old scholars, to organise a range of activities to celebrate the success of the many students who have passed through the school gates over those 50 years. Some of the alumni of the school would be known to members in this place, and they include Lisa Ondieki, who was Lisa O'Dea at the time. Darren Lehmann is also an old scholar of Evanston Primary School, as was successful businessman and former lord mayor Michael Harbison—another successful story from that school.

The school and organising committee are very keen to hear from people who have attended the school to ensure that every old scholar has an opportunity to attend the celebratory events and farewell their old school. An open day is scheduled for Sunday 30 September, which is the long weekend, and this will be the first of many events to mark the school's 50th birthday. It will be a walk down memory lane for many students who may not have actually visited the school since their graduation. The open day is not just for old scholars, since family and teachers are more than welcome. The organising committee, which I am part of, is hoping that many former teachers and other staff will attend, as they have all played an important part in the lives of students who have attended the school.

Talking about walking down memory lane, I advise the house that Olympic medallist Lisa Ondieki returned to the school last week. She now resides in Phoenix, Arizona, in America—

Mr Whetstone: What about Tony Riggs? Isn't he a champion from that school?

Mr PICCOLO: From Evanston school? I don't know every person who has gone to the school in the 50 years.

Mr Odenwalder: Every champion.

Mr PICCOLO: Every champion. I am more than happy to have names and we would like to get in touch with them. Lisa Ondieki went to the school last week, basically where her running career began, to celebrate the 50th anniversary and also to farewell the school. While Lisa was there, she had an opportunity to catch up with the new generation of Olympians at the school; these are the students who are part of the SAPSASA running team. She took time out to talk to the students at the school, particularly those who had been medal winners at the recent SAPSASA events, and provided them with some information on how they could be successful, how to go about it and what it is important to do.

Lisa also made the point that it took her quite a few years to be a success and that it was not a case of achieving it in one year; in fact, I think it took about 12 years from the time she started racing seriously for her to win a medal. She also spoke about the importance of diet, balance in life

and making sure you get a good education because you can only run for so long before you need something else to do in life. That said, she is a special education teacher in the system in America at the moment. Lisa is one of the successful people from Gawler, and I wish her well.

In the time I have remaining, I would also like to mention the group of students who are running. A group of cross-country runners from Evanston Primary School recently ran in the SAPSASA event at Oakbank, I believe. There were some medal winners amongst them, so the young students there did very well. However, like everything in life, you need the tools and the right support, and it is no secret that the school requires some financial support. The team at the school is looking for some sponsors so that the kids can have the right shoes and get the right training so that they can have a fair go and compete.

Almost all the students at the school finished higher than 100th place in the South Australian Primary Schools Amateur Sports Association cross-country race on 30 May; many of the students were in the top 10 and a couple won their races. I would like to pay my respects to those students who did very well.

MORGAN SAWMILL

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (15:14): I rise today to talk about the Morgan Sawmill at Jamestown. This is a family business based at Jamestown, but previously based at Wirrabara. It is a multigenerational family business and they employ 30 full-time people in three locations. They have their sawmill at Jamestown, which is their main business. They have a treated pine business based in Loxton and they also have a sawmill direct business at Wingfield. However, as I said, the sawmill at Jamestown is their primary place and that is where they employ most of their people.

The Morgans have based that business at Jamestown based on the wood that is supplied from the Bundaleer and Wirrabara forests. As you might know, Madam Speaker, they are the only two forests in that part of the state. They serve many purposes. Their charter actually includes community and heritage responsibilities, but they do certainly still produce commercial grade.

The Morgans have customers throughout South Australia; in fact, interstate as well. I congratulate them on the growth of their business, which has been based on hard work and planning. The planning to develop their business includes the fact that they have set themselves up at Jamestown so that they can process what is produced locally. They are the only local sawmill, and both the Bundaleer and Wirrabara forests combined have the capacity to produce about 25,000 cubic metres of wood per year. That is exactly what the Morgan Sawmill can process as well, and they have a contract in place with ForestrySA for that much wood. So, everything is very well-balanced in that part of the world, and that is certainly not by accident.

As one would understand and expect, forests produce high-quality wood, medium-quality wood and low-quality wood, and it all comes out together. You manage a forest so that ideally it produces as much high-quality wood as possible, but you get the lot. That is how the Morgans have established their business. They can actually process the high, the medium and the low-quality wood.

Any sawmiller would prefer to have more high-quality wood because it goes into higher quality output and produces more profit; lower quality wood, of course, makes less money. However, the Morgans have set themselves up so that they can process the lot, everything that comes their way. They can do the complete mix. That is an important part of their business. Of course, their contract includes the fact that they can have access to all of that wood, not just the good stuff and not just the poor stuff. However, at the moment they are encountering a problem, and that is that a large part of the good wood coming out of those two forests is actually being sent to Adelaide and all of the poor-quality wood is being sent to them to be processed. Not only is that unfair on them and on their profitability, but it is also causing some production problems, potentially some downtime and also some impact on their future capacity for the employment of locals.

The Morgans were told by ForestrySA that that is due to price, that it is getting better prices in Adelaide for the higher quality wood than the Morgans are offering. Without going into the details, for obvious reasons, the Morgans have spoken to various people throughout the industry and they have established that that is actually not the case when you include freight.

It certainly seems that the price being paid for the wood alone in Adelaide is slightly higher, but when you add the cost of the freight on to the price that ForestrySA incurs, the net return to ForestrySA is actually not higher when the wood is sent down to Adelaide. So, the Morgans are a

bit perplexed about this. I will look into this matter with the shadow minister for forests, the member for Hammond, Adrian Pederick, and we will discuss it with the minister.

This is a really concerning development because these people have put a great deal of effort into making sure their business is set up to process, both with regard to volume and also with regard to the various qualities of wood that come out of the forests. They are doing everything that they can to set up a sustainable business and to support a sustainable forest, and they have a contract with ForestrySA that supports that.

Given that they have that contract, if ForestrySA sends wood to Adelaide, it is going to have to send wood from other forests up to Morgans. That would not be efficient because you would have freight going backwards and forwards. So, I appreciate the opportunity to put this issue on the record in the house, and I will certainly pursue it further.

PORT PIRIE MAKE A WISH VOLUNTEER GROUP

Mr BROCK (Frome) (15:20): Today, I would like to talk about the Port Pirie 'Make a Wish' volunteer group, which has been in existence at Port Pirie since 1996. This group of very dedicated people started out with a very small group of 14 people who wanted to assist with the granting of a wish to children with a life-threatening medical condition and to be able to enrich the human experience with hope and joy. This small group has raised in excess of \$468,000 over the 16 years, averaging nearly \$30,000 per year, which in anyone's view is a great achievement.

They raise their funds by holding quiz nights, an annual fun or run walk and other functions throughout the year. The age of the current volunteers ranges from 25 to 70 years of age, the oldest member being Mrs Maria Pisani, who has been with the group for many years. It is testament to this lady's dedication that she is still doing this voluntary work. There is still one current foundation member serving the organisation, and that is Tracey Sjostrom, who is the public speaker.

Another member is Rosa-Lee Pisani, who joined the organisation four months after the inception of the group. Both of these ladies are very passionate, as are the other members. However, special mention is being made of these two members because of their tremendous dedication—in the case of Rosa-Lee Pisani, to the degree that she has given up working full time and is not working at all in order to devote her full attention to this great organisation. Tracey is the public speaker for the group. She has the amazing natural gift of turning words into amazing speeches that touch the heart, inspiring and motivating people into supporting Make a Wish.

In the past 16 years, 29 children have been granted a wish. Some of the wishes granted for the locals include Kate, who wanted to meet the Crows football club players; Kieran, who wanted to have a large TV so that he could watch *Sesame Street's* 'Elmo'; Jacob, who wanted to go to Disneyland; Andrew, who wanted to have his own computer; and Tiarra, who wanted to pat a dolphin.

According to the volunteers, the greatest joy is seeing the child's face light up when they receive their wish, and another thing is seeing the joy both the child and the family experience from the wish being granted. It makes you realise that anything is possible. The original thought of the volunteers was that a wish presentation would be very sad, but it is the exact opposite because of the pure joy and happiness it brings the child and also the parents, something which cannot be put into words. The volunteers have said that having helped a 'wish' child receive their most cherished wish gives the volunteer a sense of pride and achievement, which you can get only if you are a volunteer.

Although the volunteers get very emotional when granting a wish, especially to a child, it is a very bittersweet experience. It is also very rewarding to know that for just a moment the child and the family can have a break from the illness and the effect it has on the whole family. In my previous role as mayor of Port Pirie, I was personally involved by holding family fun days at my residence, where nearly 500 people attended on each occasion to enjoy music, pony rides, merry-go-round rides and other activities. These people made a donation at the point of entry, and on each occasion approximately \$1,500 was raised for the charity.

I would like to say on behalf of the people of Port Pirie a huge thank you to this very dedicated Port Pirie volunteer group. I would also like to thank tremendously the people of Port Pirie and the business houses that have supported the fundraising activities over the many years. This generosity exemplifies the fact that the people of Port Pirie are very supportive and very resilient.

NAIDOC WEEK

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:24): I rise today to speak about the NAIDOC Week celebrations in the Riverland. Before I do that, I want to acknowledge and pay respect to the Kaurna people, the traditional owners of the land. Across the week of celebration up in the Riverland, there were many celebrations. It really did bring the Indigenous community together, and it gave them a sense of worth about what they are achieving up in the Riverland but, more importantly, what they are achieving for themselves.

NAIDOC was initiated back in 1938, and it was really a national day of mourning. It was a protest in Sydney, but it was not just a protest: it really was a day of celebration. Obviously we have been celebrating the 40th anniversary of that Tent Embassy, and bringing those celebrations to the Riverland during NAIDOC Week really showed all of the Riverland communities that the Indigenous community have taken a huge step forward. It really shows their worth, not only in the Riverland but in general.

I acknowledge the chair of the NAIDOC committee and their efforts. Suzanne Stennett is the chair and she did some amazing work to bring the groups together, with the support of the councils and the police. Another partner they have embraced is Country Arts SA. In doing that, it also embraced all the small community support groups and charities. I will name a few of them around the region. They had a large church service at the Gerard community and the Longriders Christian Motorcycle Club came along for the day and gave all the local people, particularly the Indigenous children, rides on their Harleys. There was a stream of Harleys with Indigenous passengers on them which was quite a sight to see.

Also, they had the annual Gerard fishing competition and the elders' lunch at Gerard. Some of you might not know in this house, but since we have had our high river we have significant amounts of fish being caught up in the Riverland, particularly catfish which are a protected species. To complement the catfish that are thrown back, many callop which are a very good table fish are being caught, and of course the dreaded diseased carp.

I attended an official opening in Berri on the Monday where more than 100 people attended the march. I also visited the Naltaruwe exhibition in Berri at the Berri Art Gallery, featuring work by local Indigenous artists. It seems to be that the local community are exploring their talents; their talents were put on display and were well worth a visit to the gallery.

Some of the other events during the week were the Black Screen event at the Chaffey Theatre in Renmark, featuring many Indigenous short films. There was also the children's event at the Renmark Community Centre. Also, we had the men's activity at Kungun Centre at Glossop which is a very renowned Indigenous gathering centre and also a native food-growing centre. That was a great day. Also, we had the community day at the Kungun Centre and the young women's leadership program. It is great to see these programs where young Indigenous women explore what is on offer and understand exactly what they can achieve. I attended the Cafe Conversations event at the Berri Resort Hotel, exploring new pathways for Indigenous youth in the Riverland.

I would like to announce the NAIDOC Week award winners from the Riverland. The Elders of the Year are Rex Wilson and Yvonne Koolmatrice; Community Members of the Year are Sheryl Giles and Mark Upkett; and Youth of the Year are Andrew Summer and Kimberley Turner. They are very much deserved awards. All in all, I commend the Riverland NAIDOC Committee for a great week of celebration.

RE-ENGAGE YOUTH SERVICES

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (15:29): It is with pleasure this afternoon that I rise to congratulate Re-Engage Youth Services from Christies Beach on being nominated as one of the top workplaces in Australia. In the *Business Review Weekly* recent awards, Re-Engage Youth Services was No. 43. It was one of only two South Australian workplaces to be so nominated and the only charity out of the top 50 to be recognised in this way. I wish to point out that the member for Kaurna (Minister for Health and Ageing) joins me in congratulating Re-Engage Youth Services and I will be so bold as to speak on behalf of the member for Mawson who is absent, but if only he knew, he would also be congratulating Re-Engage because they are a service that works across the electorates of all three of us.

Re-Engage points out that they strongly believe that they are a better place to deliver quality outcomes for young people and the community by creating a supportive and engaging work culture. With this in mind, they wanted to put their culture to the test by an independent, rigorous

study, and to be placed within the top 50 best places to work out of 291 companies Australia-wide is extremely encouraging for everyone in the community sector.

Re-Engage is quite a young organisation. It developed out of the Community Partnerships at Work in the south and Community Partnerships itself is a successor organisation to Southern Futures and FEVER. Many of us in the community have been involved in those organisations over the last 15 or so years. They have 36 employees and provide a range of services to young people in the south. These include managing the Flexible Learning Options programs for several schools, and they have 224 young people for whom they are providing case management support under FLO.

They run a number of courses themselves—about 20—ranging from hair and beauty to introduction to trades to fitness instructor. One of their important programs is Coaching Young People For Success. It is a life, career and performance coaching system and provides resources to schools and youth agencies, so that these organisations themselves can deliver modules that assist young people to design an inspiring life, career and school performance pathway plan from the inside out.

Their clients and stakeholders are schools in the region, training providers, higher education providers, local businesses, industry groups, business associations, all levels of government, young people and their parents, community groups and agencies, volunteers, youth connections providers, youth workers and youth support services. They also provide youth work services to schools that are eligible for support under the federal government's school chaplaincy and youth work program. They are providing such services, I know, to Wirreanda High School and these services are greatly appreciated by the school and are seen as very relevant and very substantial.

There is a long way to go in the south in terms of engaging young people in education. Onkaparinga falls below South Australia and Australia and indeed southern Adelaide in terms of attainment of higher education. Of course, higher education attainment builds on year 12 attainment, so it is extremely important that innovative ways are found to engage young people in school and in successful vocational pathways.

In meeting some of the young people who have been engaged in alternative programs, I find that many of them are indeed very clever young people who are simply not engaged by the delivery mechanisms in schools but that they can go on to be leaders in the community and to develop incredibly successful careers when they are engaged by organisations such as Re-Engage Youth Services.

STATUTES AMENDMENT AND REPEAL (TAFE SA CONSEQUENTIAL PROVISIONS) BILL

Consideration in committee of the Legislative Council's amendments.

(Continued from 10 July 2012.)

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: With this bill there are a number of amendments that have come from the upper house, which we wish to oppose. Therefore, I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be disagreed to.

Briefly—I will not hold the house long—we oppose these amendments for a number of reasons; we oppose them philosophically. The opposition is seeking just to strike out the AEU from any involvement in the process. There is a strong argument for AEU involvement in the process. As the representative body of the employees, it is entirely legitimate that it be involved. Secondly, I do not believe they give the effect that the member for Unley and members in the other place intended them to give, and I will go through some of those amendments quickly.

The first amendment relates to the Teachers Appeal Board. The government opposes this, and I will give some background. The Teachers Appeal Board hears appeal matters from TAFE SA lecturers, lecturers' assistants and educational managers, as well as schoolteachers. These matters include decisions regarding termination, retrenchment, transfer, retirement or disciplinary actions, such as reprimands, imposition of fines, reductions of classification and suspension of duties.

Under the current provisions of the Education Act 1972, the appeal board is made up of three members in hearing any appeal matter: one is a member of the Industrial Court (nominated by the President of the Industrial Court), and they are the presiding member of the appeal board; the second member is selected by the chief executive of the relevant department (either the

Department for Education and Child Development or the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology), and they are selected from a panel of staff nominated by the minister; and, the third member of the appeal board is a member selected by the appellant from a panel of staff nominated by the AEU.

It is important to note that the Teachers Appeal Board is not a representative board. The members are nominated by the minister, through recommendation by the chief executive of the relevant department, and provide a management perspective to the appeal board, while members nominated by the AEU provide a staff perspective.

To condense it a little, if this amendment is agreed to it will mean that all references to the AEU and the Institute of Teachers will be removed from the Education Act. My view is that the original intention, when we made consequential changes, was to make updates to language and terms used in the Education Act so that reference to the AEU is consistent throughout the bill. I was not intending to change the bill in any substantial way. The government was not intending to change the operations of TAFE in any substantial way, much less the department for education.

Removing the reference to the AEU will have a significant impact on the constitution of a number of boards, particularly the Teachers Appeal Board but also the review panel for reclassification of schoolteachers under section 29, the Teachers Appeal Board under section 45 (which we have talked about), the committee to recommend promotional level appointments under section 53, and the review committee for the closure or amalgamation of government schools under section 14C.

If we go to amendment No. 2, which we are talking about now, we oppose that because, again, we come back to this deletion of the Australian Education Union. We have had a whole bill come through about the structure of TAFE, what TAFE's role is, the way TAFE works and how it should be set up for the next few years as we deliver the Skills for All reforms that we are making.

All the opposition could do was have a big whack at the union. Its only contribution in any meaningful way, by way of amendment, was to have a whack at the Australian Education Union—a union minding its own business and trying to represent its members. It was a consequential amendment to the bill and the only change they have sought to make about the operations of TAFE is to whack the union.

At least the Greens had some sort of thought about what TAFE should look like and what TAFE should be doing, but we have not seen that. All we saw was the opposition, at the first opportunity, have a whack at the union and that is all. I think it gives union members a taste of what is to come which is that, if they were ever to get into government, at every opportunity they will have a whack at the union. It does not matter which union it is—

Mr Pisoni: They don't vote for us.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: The member for Unley says, 'They don't vote for us,' and maybe he is right. Maybe some do, maybe some do not, but that is no basis for making a decision. Unions have a very proud history in this state. They have delivered wage outcomes that are good for working people, they have delivered security, they have delivered lower working hours, long service leave, superannuation, holiday pay, sick leave—all of these things were delivered by union action over 100 years.

An honourable member: Safe work.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: Safe work, of course—WorkCover and related things like that—safer workplaces. All of these things were delivered by unions but, at the first opportunity, the member for Unley comes in here and the Liberal Party comes in here in another place—but this place at the same time—and has a whack. All they want to do is just belt the union—that is it. They made no contribution by way of amendment to the way TAFE is set up and no contribution to the purposes of TAFE by way of amendment. All they can do, by way of amendment, is belt the union.

I mentioned before that the effect of the amendments proposed initially by the member for Unley, and later by members of the Liberal Party in another place but the same place, is important because I do not think they do what the member for Unley intended them to do. My reading of what he intended was simply, as I said, to remove the union from all consideration about who represents employees on that panel.

The effect of his amendments has been to essentially remove the ability of the minister—and, in effect, it is the chief executive of the department—to nominate a management

representative, as it were, or their own representative on the board rather than an employee representative. I do not think that is what the member for Unley intended and I think it is certainly not a practical way of going about that sort of thing.

There should be an independent chair. As well as that, a union representative or at least an employee representative is a reasonable thing. The union is probably best placed to provide that representative, but it is also important that there is a representative of management who can argue with or perhaps at least appreciate an alternate view that might be important in those proceedings.

The amendments that have come down basically replace these two groups—the chief executive's nominated group and the AEU's nominated group—with a single group, selected and elected by staff in accordance with the regulations. These regulations would need to be urgently developed and consulted on prior to being made and it is unclear if that is the best way to go about it.

In fact, I do not think it is unclear: I think it is very clear that this is not an appropriate way to set up the board—particularly the Teachers Appeal Board but also other boards there. There should be a representative of management, effectively, but of the department on these committees and boards. So, with those comments, I commend the motion to reject these amendments to the house.

Mr PISONI: It is interesting that the minister is running the same lie as the AEU is running and telling its members through a vast email chain. It is very effective, I have to say. The Leader of the Opposition's office received about 500 emails from AEU members all saying how outrageous it is that the Liberals are stopping the AEU from representing their interests. The facts are that that is not what the amendments do. The amendments do not stop the AEU from representing members' interests. What the amendments do is to enable any member of a teaching staff to put up their hand to be considered for the merit selection panels, the teacher's appeal panels, the classification review panels and the school amalgamation review panels.

Currently the act is written to exclude non-union members. Teachers who work just as hard as union members work and teachers who have just as much interest in educational outcomes as union members have, just like any other member of the Australian Education Union, through an act of parliament are positively discriminated against from putting up their hand or voting for someone to represent their interests unless they join the union.

This is 2011. This is not Australia of the 1950s and 1960s where compulsory unionism was part of the culture here in South Australia. If you look at the difference between now and 10 years ago, 10 years ago 43 per cent of the workforce was unionised in Australia. That figure is now 13 per cent. It is 13 per cent in the private sector and 18 per cent overall. Unions have become less relevant. It is this very legislation that has made them lazy and less relevant, and now they want to be protected by legislation because they have not done the work to engage their membership, to engage people in their profession to be active and to be members of the union.

Let us not forget that 0.88 per cent of a teacher's salary is what they are charged to be a member of the union. In other words, if they want to be considered to be selected for a merit selection panel under the existing act they have to fork out between \$800 and \$1,200 in union fees, otherwise they are not considered. They cannot vote for someone to represent their interests and they cannot put up their hand to represent their interests, and we all know how union elections operate.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: How do they operate?

Mr PISONI: They operate by factions making deals. That is what happens. There are no elections for these positions, member for Croydon.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: How do elections work in the Liberal Party?

Mr PISONI: We are very democratic. Any member of the Liberal party can have a vote—any voting member. It is extraordinary that the minister would stand up here in 2012 and say that these amendments are wrong because they remove the exclusive rights that the union movement has over everyone else in the teaching profession. It is an outrage!

It was not me who opened up the Education Act. It was not the Liberal Party that opened up the Education Act as part of the TAFE reforms. It was the government that opened up the Education Act, and why did it open it up? It opened it up so that it could change the terminology of

the teachers institute to the Australian Education Union. That is why it opened it up. It opened it up to further protect the Australian Education Union.

I took that opportunity, as a member of the Liberal Party, to correct that wrong that has been there for 40 years in the Education Act, that is, locking out a particular group of teachers who, for whatever reason, do not wish to be union members from participating in a democratic process, that is, putting themselves forward as representatives in key selection panels, appeal panels and review panels within the Education Department.

It is absolutely extraordinary that this minister and this government would focus on the interests of the Australian Education Union—not unions as a whole but one particular union, because do not forget that this locks out any other union as well from participating in representing members of the teaching profession. This gives the AEU an exclusive right through legislation.

The AEU is simply a business. It is a business that offers advocacy services. Name any other businesses that have protection through legislation to knock out the opposition. That is what we have in the Education Act. We have a private business, the education union, written into legislation, and everybody else is excluded from participating in key areas in the education system here in South Australia unless those other participants capitulate and pay 0.88 per cent of their salary to the Australian Education Union and become union members. Even then, unless they are in with the 'in' crowd, they will not be selected to sit on these panels.

The Hon. M.J. Wright interjecting:

Mr PISONI: Don't take my word about the way the Australian Education Union operates. Kevin Foley said they are a dinosaur, holding back education here in South Australia. That is what Kevin Foley said in his *Sunday Mail* article back in March. Read it, member for Lee. I will be looking forward to your columns when you retire. It is just a pity that for 10 years he let the Australian Education Union run the Labor Party education policies. I thought he was a stronger person than that.

We are very disappointed that the government has not seen that it is important, through its own plans, to improve local management of schools and it should include all members of staff in decisions and have opportunities for all members of staff, unconditional of union membership. That is all these amendments do. They are simply encouraging a wider group of employees within the education department to participate in the democratic process, to participate in review and appeal panels.

We want to see more participation, more democracy, more involvement and more ownership of our schools and our education system by our teaching service here in South Australia. It is for that reason, and that reason only, that I put forward these amendments, first in the lower house and then the Hon. Mr Lucas on the Liberal Party's behalf in the upper house.

These Liberal amendments have had overwhelming support from fair-minded members of the upper house, understanding the importance of democracy and the importance of inclusion, and saying no to discriminating against people who choose not to be members of a union. That is all this legislation is about. These amendments that we are debating here from the upper house are simply about opening up the process beyond the exclusivity of the union movement.

I challenge the minister to give me one or two other examples where a union has exclusive rights to select members over and above non-union members in a government institution—or a private institution, for that matter. I think you would find it would be illegal in the private sector to exclude non-union members from participating in the same sorts of programs that union members could participate in that were not controlled by the union. Maybe the government's defence is that the education department is controlled by the union. If that is their defence, after 10 years, that is shocking.

Mrs Geraghty: That's not fair.

Mr PISONI: The member for Torrens says that is not fair. Let's examine that a bit further, shall we? The *Personnel Advisory Committee Handbook* was developed after the 2010 enterprise bargaining agreement. The government panicked because they had not dealt with it for two years and capitulated to the union in almost every single area, including how schools should be run and how principals should manage their schools.

If we look at the handbook—and for *Hansard*—the education department logo is shared with the Australian Education Union logo on the front cover. For the benefit of members opposite, it

is a joint document with the Australian Education Union and the education department. It runs through what a Personnel Advisory Committee is. I will try to keep this simple and as quick as possible. Basically, it states:

Each school will establish a Personnel Advisory Committee comprising of the following membership:

- the Principal

Here is the person who manages the school, who runs the school. The principal is the person who this government says it wants to give autonomy to. So, put that in your pocket and pull it out a bit later. It continues:

- a representative elected by AEU members at the school

AEU members only are placed on that advisory committee. It continues:

- an equal opportunity representative elected by all staff at the school

So, what the government is saying is that it is all right to have an equal opportunity representative elected from all members of staff but we cannot have people elected to selection panels, the Teachers Appeal Board or review panels elected from all members of staff, they have to be Australian Education Union members.

Then, when the principal wants to do something even as simple as move a teacher from one classroom to another, he must establish a meeting of the Personnel Advisory Committee and take advice from that committee. He is paid and given the responsibility to run that school and yet without the approval of an Australian Education Union member and a staff representative he cannot act. If there is a disagreement between a principal and the Personnel Advisory Committee then there is another process the principal has to go through, simply to move a teacher from one classroom to another because the principal believes that is a better educational outcome for the students at his school.

How do we know how these Personnel Advisory Committees work? Do not worry about that, the government has training in place for the Personnel Advisory Committees. Who conducts the training? The Australian Education Union conducts the training for the Personnel Advisory Committees. Where is the training for the Personnel Advisory Committees? It is at the Australian Education Union house on Greenhill Road. Not only that, the education department pays rent for the rooms where the training is conducted. It is an extraordinary situation.

Then, when the principal comes up with a situation where he has some issues with an employee (a teacher) who might need some performance management, there is a 48-step process (over three pages) that the principal must follow through. One of those stages is that the teacher, about who the principal is writing a report to the CE for that teacher to be considered for their performance, has to agree with the comments written by the principal. Guess who signed off on that 48-step process, member for Mount Gambier? I will give you one guess. The AEU. They were involved the development of that process the principal has to work to.

So, you can see what has happened. The member for Little Para is laughing. I can understand that. It is like a comedy. It is like Monty Python, it really is. The Personnel Advisory Committee is just one part of the 38-page document. We also have to remember that appendix C of the *Personnel Advisory Committee Handbook* tells us that there is a release time for sub-branch secretaries:

It is appropriate for the duties of AEU sub-branch secretaries to be recognised and where necessary programmed into the school's programme.

What that is saying is that taxpayers and parents—because in South Australia parents pay the highest school fees in the nation—are paying for the Australian Education Union to conduct its business in school hours. That is part of the agreement that is put together and instructed in the 2011 edition of the *Personnel Advisory Committee Handbook*.

So you can understand why we got support from the vast majority of the crossbenchers—every member of the crossbenches other than the Greens, I must say—for the democratisation of the Education Act here in South Australia. They could see that it is crook in Crystal Brook when it comes to the Education Act here in South Australia.

They were pleased to see that someone was taking up the fight and opening up processes for all teachers to participate in in South Australia, not just those in the club of the Education Union. It is for that reason, and that reason alone. There is no ideology here, minister, in my motivation for

these amendments to this bill. It is all about the federal government's agenda, the state Liberal governments' agenda, and what this government claims to be an agenda: local school management and schools being more inclusive of their communities. At the moment, the way the Education Act stands, if you are not a union member you are excluded.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: I think I have largely said everything; but, again, no concerns about the structure of the bill, no concerns about how TAFE might operate, no concerns about the purpose of TAFE or anything like that: it is just, 'There's the union. Hit it.' That is it, basically. I am unsure where it comes from with the member for Unley; he has a particular set against all unions in general, perhaps. Obviously, I cannot speak for him, but—

Mr Pisoni: I was a member of Actors Equity back around 1980.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: I apologise, sir, but it is quite funny to think of the member for Unley as an actor—not that he would not be good at it, it is just that I cannot picture it. You would not expect to see him in a soap opera or something like that, maybe not on Ramsay Street or—

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: I have to admit I can see that. Sorry, I digress. The member certainly gives the impression that his main purpose in this place is to belt unions at every opportunity; if he sees a union head pop up, smack it. That is his attitude, and I have to say to all employees out there that, if they are a member of the union and the Liberal Party, particularly the member for Unley, has any say in the matter, they will belt you. They are not interested in your concerns or in your representative body.

Let us not beat around the bush here. The Teachers Appeal Board deals directly with the employment outcomes of employees, so their future, in some small way—or in a large way in some cases—rests with the outcome of the appeal board. A union (in this case the AEU) is unambiguously on the side of the employee and can be guaranteed to represent the interests of the employee in the considerations of the appeal board.

That is not a bad thing, rather than have an election, perhaps, of someone who has a mild interest or an interest in being elected but does not have the background or that vociferous adherence to the interests of the employee—as a union does, as the AEU does, as every other union in this country does. It is no bad thing that the employee representative—in this case the AEU—is on this appeal board. That is one argument.

The second argument is that they just do not work; these amendments do not work as the member for Unley intended. What they do is create of pool of employees, elected by all employees, and there is no room for a nominee of the CEO or the management to be on that committee. That is not a good outcome because as there should be an advocate of the employee, equally there should be an advocate of the employer. These amendments make sure that there is no advocate for the employer. I do not think that is the outcome that the member for Unley intended and it is certainly not an outcome that I agree with. I urge members to oppose these amendments.

The committee divided on the motion:

AYES (20)

Atkinson, M.J.
Caica, P.
Fox, C.C.
Kenyon, T.R. (teller)
O'Brien, M.F.
Sibbons, A.J.
Vlahos, L.A.

Bedford, F.E.
Close, S.E.
Geraghty, R.K.
Key, S.W.
Odenwalder, L.K.
Snelling, J.J.
Wright, M.J.

Breuer, L.R.
Conlon, P.F.
Hill, J.D.
Koutsantonis, A.
Portolesi, G.
Thompson, M.G.

NOES (12)

Chapman, V.A.
Goldsworthy, M.R.
McFetridge, D.
Sanderson, R.

Evans, I.F.
Griffiths, S.P.
Pegler, D.W.
Treloar, P.A.

Gardner, J.A.W.
Marshall, S.S.
Pisoni, D.G. (teller)
Venning, I.H.

PAIRS (10)

Weatherill, J.W.
 Bettison, Z.L.
 Bignell, L.W.
 Rau, J.R.
 Rankine, J.M.

Redmond, I.M.
 Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.
 Pengilly, M.
 Williams, M.R.
 Pederick, A.S.

Majority of 8 for the ayes.

Motion thus carried.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (NATIONAL ENERGY RETAIL LAW IMPLEMENTATION) BILL

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (16:11): I move:

That the sitting of the house be continued during the conference with the Legislative Council on the bill.

Motion carried.

TAFE SA BILL

Consideration in committee of the Legislative Council's amendment.

(Continued from 10 July 2012.)

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendment be agreed to.

This is an entirely reasonable amendment which clarifies the functions of TAFE and makes them very plain. I am happy to accept this amendment.

Mr PISONI: The opposition also accepts the amendment.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE**BARTON ROAD, NORTH ADELAIDE**

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon) (16:13): Former Liberal MLC and Liberal Party treasurer Legh Davis rang into this morning's ABC 891 discussion on Barton Road and told listeners—

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order: this is the subject of legislation which is under consideration now between the houses. The bill has passed the House of Assembly and is now progressing to the Legislative Council.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: It is not about the merits.

Ms CHAPMAN: The issue of the opening and closing of Barton Terrace is the entire subject matter of the bill in question. Mr Davis has made statements, as the member has just outlined, publicly today about that matter. I would suggest that it is not appropriate that the member for Croydon start to get into some debate in this house while it is still before us as a parliament. Obviously others can—indeed, he can, outside of the parliament—make public statements, but while this is still the business of the house then I would ask that you rule that he not be able to proceed to the commentary on this bill.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): I will listen carefully to the member. The member has hardly started his remarks at this stage, so we will listen to what he has to say.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Legh Davis told listeners, and I quote:

I should declare an interest. I was a member of parliament for the Liberal Party when Michael Atkinson introduced this.

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): Is it the same point of order?

Ms CHAPMAN: Barton Terrace.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): There is no point of order.

Ms CHAPMAN: Barton Terrace is referred to, and he has made this statement about the allegations in respect of conflict of interest, which was the subject matter of the debate when we discussed this matter in the house.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): There is no point of order. The member may continue.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Mr Davis told ABC listeners:

I should declare an interest. I was a member of parliament for the Liberal Party when Michael Atkinson introduced this. He's had an obsession with this for years. It was interesting, when he first introduced the legislation in the early 2000s he did not declare an interest that he used to take his children to St Dominic's—

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): There is another point of order from the member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: This is now clearly debating the issue which is the substance of this bill: the allegation, which was the subject of the debate on this bill in this very house. That was an issue in the course of that debate, namely, the alleged conflict of interest of the member for Croydon in relation to the bona fides of the introduction of his—as he has described himself—obsession about this matter. That was clearly the basis of discussion and debate on this bill.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Why are you so embarrassed, Vickie?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): There is no point of order. The member may continue.

Ms CHAPMAN: You can go on FIVEaa, you can go on ABC, you can do all of those things.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): The member for Croydon may continue.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Thank you. I will go back to the start of Legh Davis' quote:

I should declare an interest. I was a member of parliament for the Liberal Party when Michael Atkinson introduced this. He's had an obsession with this for years. It was interesting, when he first introduced the legislation in the early 2000s he did not declare an interest that he used to take his children—

children, plural—

to St Dominic's and had to spend an extra three minutes getting them—

them—

there which obviously annoyed him. Didn't declare that.

By way of explanation, Legh Davis' reference to St Dominic's is a reference to St Dominic's Priory school, a girls school in Hill Street, North Adelaide.

I was campaigning for the reopening of Barton Road before my only daughter was born. When I first introduced legislation to reopen Barton Road, my daughter was at St Joseph's Primary School, West Hindmarsh. St Dominic's Priory school was a girls school, and I am the father of only one daughter, so Legh Davis' reference to children (plural) and them (plural) is false.

I have never driven a motor vehicle. I never took my daughter to St Dominic's Priory school, unless we both went on the bus, nor did I take her in anyone else's vehicle, unless it was the bus driver's vehicle. The bus has always been able to move to and fro through the Barton Road bus lane. Even if Legh Davis' allegation were true, which it is not, it would not be a relevant conflict of interest for the purpose of parliamentary votes because it is an interest I would have shared with thousands of western suburbs constituents.

My daughter left St Dominic's Priory school eight years ago. The member for Adelaide's and the member for Bragg's—

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order. I raise a further point of order. We have not only gone from the issue of an explanation as to the alleged conflict of interest, on which you have ruled, but we

have now gone on to commentary by the member for Croydon about the voting obligations or entitlements in respect of that very specific bill. Now, if that is not a breach of the content of the debate on this matter, I do not know what is.

In my submission to you, Mr Acting Speaker, that is a direct conflict of the rules and the reason why we abstain from entering into discussion about a bill when it is to be debated in the house in its proper form. As I have said, the member for Croydon can have all sorts of arguments with other people out there in the general community and in the media and the like: he is perfectly entitled to do that, but we have rules in here to protect the sanctity and integrity of the debates in relation to the business before the house. To now start traversing his justification for being privy to the vote is a direct and flagrant breach of that.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: It has nothing to do with the merits of the bill.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): If the member was reflecting on the vote, he would be out of order. He is not doing that; he has not done that. I said that I would listen carefully, and I will continue to do so. I do not think that the member for Croydon has done anything to breach any standing order.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: My daughter left St Dominic's Priory school eight years ago. The member for Adelaide's and the member for Bragg's agitating of this issue is unnecessarily personal and, as it happens—

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. Now we have a direct reflection on the two speakers against the bill, who spoke in the parliament this week, and their contributions to this debate. Now we have a direct and deliberate reflection, adversely of course, against me and the member for Adelaide, who has been the lead speaker on behalf of the opposition, and the contribution we have made in that debate.

It is not only offensive but also reflecting on the motive of the speakers in relation to the debate, which still remains before the house. On both of those counts, I ask you, Mr Acting Speaker, to silence the member for Croydon, if that is possible, on this issue. He can use his time to discuss any other important thing in his electorate, or any other thing for that matter, unless it is before the house.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): The member for Croydon may continue. I do not agree with that point of order.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: So, the member for Bragg's agitating of this issue is unnecessarily personal and, as it happens, not soundly based. Legh Davis did not disclose—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Wright): Order! The member will be heard in silence.

Ms Sanderson interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: One disgraceful lie, member for Adelaide—and you repeated the offence yesterday. Legh Davis did not disclose to ABC 891 listeners that he is enrolled on the electoral roll at No. 240 Childers Street, North Adelaide, metres from the disputed closure, and therefore is a beneficiary of any improvement to residential amenity, and anything else, effected by the road closure. That would be a relevant conflict of interest if Legh Davis had voted on a bill about the closure of Barton Road, which he did by dint of being paired for the noes during a vote in 2001.

THE DUNES, PORT HUGHES

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (16:23): I want to talk about The Dunes development and the announcement today, which was part of question time. The Copper Coast is a great region of South Australia. Indeed, its population projection is something like 2.5 per cent in forward years. Its rate of growth has been wonderful compared with many parts of South Australia, and its future is also a very bright one.

The news today, though, that The Dunes development, which in its concept was contemplated to be some 2,000 allotments and a golf course of championship-style 18 holes, has gone into receivership is of great concern to me and, indeed, anyone else who is involved in the Yorke region or has developments and interests in that place. The development was officially declared to the public in about mid-2007 with great fanfare, with a special event being held. Greg

Norman, the designer of the course, was in attendance, and the former member for Port Adelaide was also there, with his economic development focus at that time.

The development is truly the vision of Mr Peter Butterly, who has been involved in a lot of other subdivisions in the Copper Coast area which have created opportunities for many thousands of people who live in the region. He is an Irishman who has come to love the region in the last 10 years or so that he has been there. He has invested significant capital from his own funds, and he has done many subdivisions. He had this grand vision of an absolutely top quality development to be developed there, and he has done all that he can to ensure that it happens.

As has occurred with many other civil construction projects and land divisions, the dilemma is the difficulty of selling allotments. Of the eventual vision of 2,000 allotments for the property, according to reports in the online edition of *The Advertiser* at the moment, some 185 blocks have been developed so far. One hundred of those blocks have been sold and some 60 homes either have been built or are in the process of being built.

The Leader of the Opposition was with me on the site in February of last year. Even two months ago, the Economic and Finance Committee (of which you, Mr Acting Speaker, are chair) heard from the people involved in the project about the relatively poor level of sales in recent times. We gathered from them the commitment to still proceed with the development and make it the absolute best that it can be.

I am concerned about the people who may be exposed in this project in any way. There are many local builders who are involved in the project. I have spoken to a civil contractor who has done a lot of work in that area in the past who has a level of exposure of frightening proportions. I am hopeful that the development will not be stopped, because it is important. The number of people who work on the site provide a great economic impetus to the area. It is declared as having some \$13 million in debt at the moment. In reading the reports from Ferrier Hodgson who have been appointed as receivers, they are quoted as saying that it is 'business as usual' with 'exciting opportunities to purchase land in the future'.

This news has come as a shock to the people in the region that I have spoken to. Immediately upon being advised about this I contacted Mayor Paul Thomas, who has done wonderful things on the Copper Coast during the time that he has been mayor. Mayor Paul was not aware of this development even though he, like I, had some concerns given the slow sales figures.

Mayor Paul has been around long enough to have seen the Wallaroo marina also go through some challenging times, even though in a very different way it was on-sold by two previous developers until the final person came on board and has fully developed it and sold the absolute majority of that, and that is wonderful development for the area, too.

Collectively, I am very hopeful that this receivership appointment will not be to the detriment of the development. I want it to happen. It is a wonderful golf course for those who are interested in it. An enormous amount of money has been spent. There are grand visions for what is going to occur there; there is a restaurant already there. You are able to play with professionals. They have events there quite often.

They have a lot of community open days to encourage the local residents to go there and play golf, too, and to see what the facility is like. Anyone is able to enter it at any time. I hope that in the coming days we are able to ascertain a bit more information about the financial difficulties there, and I offer my best wishes to Mr Butterly in the hope that he is able to get some returns out of this, that the people who have invested money in it do not lose any funds and that the full return will come back to those who have shown vision, courage and commitment to the Copper Coast region and invested in The Dunes so far.

WINE VINTAGE 2012

Mr VENNING (Schubert) (16:27): I want to reflect on the remarks of the member for Goyder and how we are all shocked. I personally know people who are involved with investments in The Dunes and I feel for them. I share the member for Goyder's hope that this can be turned around, because it is a great idea, a very good concept, and we all wish it success.

As the last speaker for this session in this place, I want to give the house a wine grape report for the 2012 vintage. Overall, the 2012 wine grape crush is estimated to be 1.53 million tonnes—the lowest production since the 1.41 million tonnes produced in 2006-07, as reported in the recent ABARE report.

However, oversupply is still an issue causing difficulties for the industry. Increased outbreaks of disease such as botrytis and downy mildew affected the wine grape production in 2010-11, lowering yields and affecting the quality of the grapes. Despite these lower than average yields, oversupply is still an issue. The recent ABARE report states on page 6:

The abundant supply of wine on the world market, the global economic slowdown and a strong Australian dollar relative to the currencies of Australia's major wine export destinations will continue to put downward pressure on the demand for Australian wine.

Projections included in the report are for wine grape production to increase by 5 per cent to 1.61 million tonnes in 2012-13 and a further 1 per cent to 1.63 million tonnes in 2013-14. The situation appears that it will get much worse. There are no easy answers and I really do feel for those long-time vignerons who are suffering.

They cannot sell their vineyards, so year after year they keep borrowing more money to try to recoup their losses. All that results is that they get further into debt. It is heartbreaking that you can still see more vineyards being planted when the current supply of wine grapes is a lot more than is required for our industry to remain viable.

There are some good stories emerging every day from the industry, though. Grant Burge recently took out the regional trophy for the best in the show at the Decanter World Wine Awards in London with his 20-year-old tawny port for the fifth time in the award's history. This is an absolutely fantastic achievement not only personally for Grant and his wife, Helen, but having a Barossa fortified gain such prominence in these awards is a fantastic advertisement for the region on the world stage.

Yes, we can match it with the best in the world with fortified wines as well as our marvellous reds—our shiraz and our cabernets. We can and do match the famed Rutherglen but I must admit their liqueur muscats are magnificent. The Decanter World Wine Awards received more than 10,000 entries from 50 wine-producing countries, so that is a real feat, a real feather in the cap.

Grant's 20-year-old tawny has previously received many awards at the Decanter World Wine Awards—gold medals in 2006 and 2009 and an international trophy in 2004, 2007 and 2010. Many members have knowingly or unknowingly tasted this wonderful old tawny because I have it in my Parliament House office. Many members have tasted it and I will be having some with my colleagues tonight.

Another Barossa victory is Kellermeister which also recently received world acclaim with their shiraz—the Wild Witch shiraz—named the best in the world at the International Wine Challenge in London, the largest wine competition in the world. The Kellermeister wine took out three awards in total: best Barossa, best Australian and best international shiraz. Wow! What an accolade is that! I think I will be buying up this weekend.

More than 12,000 wines were entered, with 400 judges assessing wines via the blind tasting method. It is an absolutely fantastic accolade and, like Grant's achievements in fortifieds, one that cements the Barossa region's reputation on the world stage. Given that the industry is experiencing difficult times, it is good to hear these good news stories. The Barossa truly is one of the world's great wine regions and I am extremely lucky to represent it.

I finish by offering assurance to all our grape growers and winemakers. We can and are turning this around—we must. Premium wines do and always will sell and we just happen to have the best reputation for producing the super premium shiraz and cabernets here in our region, particularly in the Barossa. Likewise, Coonawarra does as well. The legendary Grange speaks for itself as do other premium labels—the Hill of Grace, the RWT, the 707, the Bin 42 (I only have one bottle) and now the Wild Witch.

If you are not part of this, I say to the growers, you should strive to be, because there are options especially in relation to soil conditions. Yes, we can and should do more for our marketing and I am pleased to inform the house that, in a few days' time, the unique Barossa bottle will be launched—a bottle that is uniquely different and unmistakably Barossian. I look forward in a few days to attending the launch of this bottle.

Also, I want to recognise 10 years of the BIL scheme in a couple of days' time and the chairman, Mr David Klingberg, who we all know is retiring. I pay him a huge tribute for the legacy he has given because the BIL has certainly given our growers something to smile about. With that, can I say to the house that the 2012 vintage is going to be absolutely fantastic. They are the best

grapes we have seen for many years and can I suggest to members, when they get the chance, they had better buy up.

At 16:33 the house adjourned until Wednesday 18 July 2012 at 11:00.