

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 1 November 2012

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT (NATIONAL ENERGY RETAIL LAW IMPLEMENTATION) BILL

The Hon. C.C. FOX (Bright—Minister for Transport Services) (10:32): I move:

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

Motion carried.

STATUTES AMENDMENT AND REPEAL (TAFE SA CONSEQUENTIAL PROVISIONS) BILL

The Hon. C.C. FOX (Bright—Minister for Transport Services) (10:32): I move:

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

Motion carried.

GRAFFITI CONTROL (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. C.C. FOX (Bright—Minister for Transport Services) (10:32): I move:

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

Motion carried.

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Members, we have in the gallery a group of students from the South Australian College of English, who are guests of the member for Adelaide. Welcome; it is lovely to see you here and we hope you enjoy your time this morning.

ANIMAL WELFARE (COMMERCIAL BREEDING OF COMPANION ANIMALS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (10:33): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Animal Welfare Act 1985. Read a first time.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (10:33): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Several years ago I introduced a bill relating to what is euphemistically called 'puppy farming'. We know that there are a lot of good animal breeders out there. My colleague the member for Mount Gambier knows a little bit about breeding; I do not know whether he breeds dogs, but he certainly breeds sheep.

What I am trying to do with this bill is focus on the people who are not doing the right thing. I don't know about other members' electorates but I know, in my electorate, there are a lot of people who are very concerned about the treatment of animals, and if anyone has not realised that animal welfare is a political issue then I think they have been out of circulation for some time.

This bill, which is very simple, says that a person must not breed a dog or other prescribed companion animal for a commercial purpose, except in accordance with an authorisation of the minister under this section, and they must not sell a dog or other prescribed companion animal that has been bred in contravention of subsection (1), which I just quoted. It is designed to target people who are not legitimate breeders.

Members may have seen from time to time on television reports of people who are breeding dogs in terrible conditions, and I guess cats would come under this as well. I will not comment on a case that involves someone in my electorate at the moment as it is before the court, but members would have seen photos and moving images of the ill treatment of dogs who have been bred in appalling conditions in so-called puppy farms.

This has nothing to do with farm animals in general: this is purely and specifically focused on dogs and other companion animals. I know that a sizeable number of people in my electorate want something done about it, and that is the reason I am introducing it, because they have asked me to something about it.

The bill is very simple; as usual, members always have the option of trying to improve it. The bill does contain defences, for example, if the alleged offence was not committed intentionally, so it is targeting people who are quite deliberate in what they are doing and knowing what they are doing. We have had people selling dogs from the back of cars in car parks, and the origins of those dogs are very questionable.

It is a simple measure and I do not need to speak at length on it. It defines a prescribed companion animal, and I think sometimes simple provisions are the best ones. It has nothing to do with farming or animal husbandry in the proper context of what farmers do. With those few words, I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.F. Evans.

ELECTRICITY (EARLY TERMINATION) AMENDMENT BILL

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (10:38): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Electricity Act 1996. Read a first time.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (10:38): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

There has been a lot of public discussion of late about electricity prices, and the debate has canvassed a wide range of issues. The one this bill seeks to address is what we call 'exit fees' or 'termination fees', where small electricity consumers (and 'small electricity consumers' are defined in the Electricity Act, that is, basically householders) wish to transfer their market contract from one electricity retailer to another.

The way the market has operated in recent years, since we have had full contestability or competition in the retail market, means we now have something like 10 retailers operating in the South Australian electricity market. They are quite aggressive in signing up new households and new clients to their business as an electricity retailer. They are offering quite generous discounts. One of the headaches that customers are finding is that the discount that they have been offered is not actually related to anything. They are approached generally by door-to-door salespeople and they are promised maybe a 10, 12, even up to 15 per cent discount, but they are never really informed about what the discount is against.

They are told they are going to get electricity cheaper than what they are getting it from their current retailer. Quite often if they contacted their current retailer they may, again, be able to get a discount on the price that they are currently paying for electricity. So the marketplace is quite dynamic and it is quite volatile.

A host of things is impacting on the electricity market at this time but one thing that customers are complaining about is, first of all, the way that the salespeople operate, and I understand that the industry has done a lot of work to try to tidy that up. They are also complaining that they are being encouraged to sign up to a market contract believing that they are going to get a significant discount, and some time later they find that the price they are paying has been increased quite substantially.

Under those circumstances, when they attempt to move to a different retailer, they are being told by their existing retailer that they will be subject to an exit fee to get out of their contract. The contracts quite often run to two and three years, and I have a list of some of the exit fees: AGL charges \$75 if you wish to break your contract in the first 12 months, and a \$50 exit fee if a customer wishes to break their contract within the second 12 months of the contract; TRUenergy charges \$90 in the first 12 months, and \$70 in the second, and \$50 in the third 12 months; Origin Energy charges a flat \$70 exit fee for anybody who wishes to break the contract anytime after a cooling-off period; Simple Energy charges a \$95 exit fee within the first 12 months of a contract and \$75 within the second 12 months of the contract; and Lumo Energy charges a flat \$75 exit fee.

The way in which people get caught is that they sign up to one of these market-based contracts, the retailer increases the price after having promised a 12 or a 15 per cent discount, the customer shops around to other retailers and then decides to change again to get another discount, and their existing market contract retailer informs them of these exit fees, and I am sure the exit fees are designed to offset any benefit that the customer might get in changing.

This flies in the face of what we expected out of true competition when the then government divested the state of the electricity assets, brought the private sector into the various segments of the electricity industry and, particularly, pushed for competition within the retail market sector. It

was always the belief of this parliament, I believe, that we would have full, open and fair competition. Customers, particularly householders, do not see signing electricity market contracts as a major business transaction, and one thing that is causing disquiet is that it is now running into a substantial amount of money.

People have traditionally bought electricity relatively cheaply and it fitted easily into their household budget, but because of increasing electricity prices from a range of causes, not the least being things like carbon taxes and green schemes which are impacting on costs, people are becoming very sensitive to what they pay for electricity, and they are learning to shop around. The exit fees, in my opinion, and that of the opposition, are working against a free market in the electricity retail sector.

The bill I bring to the house today would, basically, outlaw exit fees—if a retailer signed up a market-based contract with a customer and then increased the charges at a rate greater than the regulator determines the rate of the standing fee would increase. The regulator, from time to time, sets a standing contract fee, which is the default contract price. This bill would allow any market contract rate to be increased in line with the increases set by the regulator, currently the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA). That would be fair game, but any fee or charge increase over and above that would free the customer from paying an exit fee if they so chose to change their retailer.

The bill I present to the house today sets out how this would work. It obliges the retailer, if they do increase their charges by a rate greater than the standing contract increase, to notify their customers and then the customers would have a set period in which they could change retailers without paying the exit fee. So, it is not open-ended. It gives them, I think, a 20 day period in which they can make that decision to change their retailer and the retailer concerned would not be able to charge an exit fee.

I have spoken publicly about this move for some time now. I first raised it publicly in a press release I put out on 7 August. This came to my attention because something not dissimilar to this has been instituted in Queensland. I have to say the Queensland market is somewhat different to that in South Australia. It is not as competitive, at this stage. The new Queensland government is trying to protect consumers and has introduced similar measures up there. That is where it first came to my attention.

I have consulted with a significant number of people in the industry and have spoken publicly about this for some months now. As I say, I put out a press release on 7 August. The government, I hope, will support this measure. I know the government, certainly in public statements from the minister, has supported the principle of this. The minister, I think, is loathe to do anything, but he has been, as is his wont, saying publicly that he is looking at it, he has his agency looking at how it might be approached. He has talked about doing something with the code of practice. This has been going on for a fair while, many months. We have not seen anything concrete from the government. The impact of the bill would be to make this a condition of the electricity retailer's licence.

All electricity retailers in South Australia have to be licensed. This would become a condition of their licence, that they abide by the new rules the bill would promulgate, and it would, indeed, protect customers from being, in the first instance, encouraged to change to a new retailer with the promise of a significant saving in electricity costs, then to find that their retailer is increasing the price of electricity once they have been signed up and keeping them locked into those contracts because of the exit fees. All we are doing is saying: if the retailer is going to practise in that sort of way then we would prevent them from charging exit fees, and this will simply increase competition in the marketplace.

I think this is a very sensible measure. As I say, it is one that the government has spoken at length about the principle and agreed that it supports the principle. I present the bill to the house in the hope that the government will come on board very quickly and support it and we can have it operational before the end of the year and present the benefits of this to every householder across Australia. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mrs Geraghty.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ELECTIONS) (VOTING AGE) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 18 October 2012.)

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Croydon) (10:51): The member for Fisher has called for the Local Government (Elections) Act to be amended to allow those aged 16 and 17 to vote in local government elections.

The Hon. R.B. Such: If they wish.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Well, the member interjects, 'If they wish,' so of course it would be voluntary, as voting for local government currently is in South Australia. I commend the honourable member for his interest in the local government system in South Australia. This is not the first time that the honourable member has called for an amendment to the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 to allow voluntary voting for 16 and 17 year olds. He has put a similar motion to the house in 2008.

The Hon. R.B. Such interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Yes, it was the Australian Labor Party that amended the commonwealth Electoral Act to allow 17 year olds to enrol to vote.

The Hon. R.B. Such interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: That is when I was a ministerial staffer to a cabinet minister.

An honourable member: Was that before or after *The Advertiser*?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: After. The purpose of that was to enable 17 year olds to be in a position to vote on their 18th birthday if that were the federal election day; they could provisionally enrol. I think very few 17 year olds avail themselves of that, but it is something that was made available to them owing to changes made by the then special minister of state, Mick Young.

I think the struggle in local government is not really to persuade 16 and 17 year olds to vote. I think the struggle is to persuade anyone under the age of 65 to vote. My experience of local government is that two kinds of people vote in local government: one is people aged 65 and above, people who are retired and vote and who take an interest in civic affairs; and people living in the countryside, who, judging by turnout rates, are far keener to vote in local government than people living in metropolitan Adelaide.

The government does not support the honourable member's bill. The amendment will serve to leave our local government elections out of step with federal and state election voting age requirements which, we believe, will cause confusions. Indeed, it will necessitate the construction of a separate electoral roll in order to enrol these 16 and 17 year olds, and has the member for Fisher turned his mind to whether enrolment would be compulsory?

We now have quite a struggle to get people aged under 30 to enrol to vote for state and federal elections. When I was Attorney-General we had to invest quite a lot of taxpayers' money in campaigns and various devices to try to get 18 and 19 year olds and people in their 20s to enrol to vote for the first time, so I do not think the member for Fisher will be bowled over in a rush of teenagers wanting to avail themselves of the right he proposes to give them.

The Hon. R.B. Such: The ones that are pushing, a lot of them are young Labor people.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: That may be so. I was a political geek.

Mr Williams: Nothing has changed.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Indeed, nothing has changed.

Mr Williams: Why are you speaking in the past tense?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I was waiting for that.

The Hon. S.W. Key: You were a political geek before geeks were invented.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Thank you. I was keen—

The Hon. R.B. Such: That was when Barton Road was just a dirt track.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Barton Road was on Colonel Light's original street plan for Adelaide, and you can see it if you look on the map in the Queen Adelaide room, as I did last week. I can recall I was so keen to exercise my right to vote as soon as I could that on a rainy Adelaide winter's night coming home from the football, in my uncle's wartime RAAF jacket with the number of my favourite player on the back, I got off the train and went to the polling booth to vote in a local

government election. The returning officer gave me a ballot paper with two names on it and said, 'That candidate has withdrawn.' That was my introduction to voting.

The 2010 local government elections were the first to be held since this parliament passed changes to the Local Government (Elections) Act, changes that were designed to improve both the processes of local government elections and voter turnout. I am not sure that those changes we made—and I was in cabinet at the time—were necessarily for the better, because it had the effect of reducing the number of people on the supplementary voting roll for local government to a very small percentage of the former numbers that were on the voting roll, the supplementary roll.

The idea was to make it more democratic by giving proportionally more power to people on the House of Assembly roll and then reducing the number of landlords and business people on the local government roll. I will admit that the supplementary roll was often hopelessly out of date and the people who were enrolled to vote on behalf of businesses had often left the employ of the business or indeed had died since they were enrolled.

Fortunately I was able to argue for maintaining the supplementary roll for the Adelaide City Council electorate, because, of course, the people on the supplementary roll for the Adelaide City Council elections are the only people who have an interest in making the city and North Adelaide attractive for people who live outside the city and North Adelaide, making it attractive for them to come and spend money in the city. If people like councillor Anne Moran got their way, every obstacle possible would be placed in front of people who live in the suburbs accessing the City of Adelaide and North Adelaide for the purposes of employment, study and entertainment; but that is another story altogether.

The Hon. R.B. Such interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Indeed, I think councillor Moran was angry that some of the new Royal Adelaide Hospital was going to be built on the rail yards, because she had a long-term plan for the railway lines to be returned to parkland, in which case I do not know how we were supposed to get from Keswick, Bowden or Ovingham stations into the Adelaide Railway Station—perhaps by flying fox.

Mr Pengilly: She was never game to stand for Lord Mayor, was she?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: She wasn't game to stand for Lord Mayor and she wasn't game to take the Liberal preselection for the state district of Adelaide when it was available and at a time when, unbeknown to us all, the Liberal candidate was going to be successful. So, congratulations to the current member for taking the preselection at a time when councillor Moran of Mills Terrace did not have the guts to take it.

The review of local government elections that preceded the legislative change was based on extensive consultation with the local government sector and South Australians more broadly. This review considered many aspects of the 2010 local government elections and, most notably, voter age was not a matter considered at this time.

I think the reason it was not considered is that very few of the submissions to the review of local government elections actually advocated 16 and 17 year olds voting. I think only three submissions out of several hundred received were in favour of lowering the voting age. Indeed, the Local Government Association considered this motion of lowering the voting age at its annual general meeting on 26 October 2012 and the motion was overwhelmingly defeated.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel) (11:01): I indicate that the opposition does not support this piece of legislation that the member for Fisher has brought to the house. We oppose the bill. I have listened to the member for Croydon's comments and some of the reasons he provided the house on behalf of the government are not dissimilar to the reasons for the opposition's opposition to the bill.

I do note that the member for Croydon did not mention the fact that the City of Prospect moved a motion. The Mayor of the City of Prospect, who I understand is a friend of the ALP, moved a motion at the Local Government Association's annual general meeting last week calling on the LGA to investigate whether there is sufficient evidence across local government to call on the South Australian government to reduce the age to enrol and nominate local government elections to 16 years of age. I understand that that motion was voted down from the floor of the LGA AGM on Friday.

It is pretty clear that the local government sector, that sphere of government, also does not support the member for Fisher's proposal. I may be corrected on this but I understand that the member for Fisher has on five previous attempts, in one form or another, looked to amend the age of voting in either local and/or state elections and each one of those attempts has been opposed and voted down here in parliament.

It is well recognised that the age of majority is 18 and, with that, comes certain rights and responsibilities. One of those rights and responsibilities is to enrol to vote and at every state and every federal election it is compulsory to attend a polling booth and have your name crossed off the roll and, once that has taken place, an individual person can choose what they do with the ballot papers and so on.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You knew something wonderful happened to you when you got elected, but you didn't know how it happened.

Members interjecting:

Mr Pederick: That's nasty; don't even respond.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I'm not going to. As I indicated, in relation to the member for Croydon's comments, some of the arguments he put forward on behalf of the government are similar to our reasons for opposing it. We think it would be confusing to have different ages for individuals to be entitled to vote across the spheres of government. Something that the member also alluded to that the member for Fisher may not have considered was the mechanism in terms of creating a database.

That was something that I also put my mind to, but my thinking went to the actual cost involved of establishing and maintaining a separate roll for 16 and 17 year olds around South Australia. As a consequence, who would bear that cost? Would the state government be expected to bear that cost, or would the local government sector be expected to bear that cost? I am not sure whether the member for Fisher has turned his mind to that aspect as well. I think I have outlined a number of reasons why the opposition does not support the bill, and we look forward to a vote on it today.

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (11:06): I wish to make a brief contribution on this. I must admit that there are many challenges in being a parliamentarian, but one of the great things is actually Wednesday mornings, and particularly Thursday mornings; the retorts that occur across the chamber enlighten my day and make me a lot happier.

I can respect the intent behind the member for Fisher's bill, and as a person who worked in local government and sought to engage young people I understand that that is what it is all about: to try to encourage our young people to become involved in community affairs, to be better informed and to have that voting opportunity. There are problems with that, and that is why the member for Kavel was outlining the opposition's intention not to support the bill.

I do indeed hope that one day it is an opportunity that will be provided to our young people because I am a believer in the quality of our youth. I see so many examples of wonderful young people out there who will be truly great leaders in our communities, and I know they are engaged early, they want to be involved, and they want to have an opportunity to influence decisions.

It is obvious that voting is one of those great ways to do that because every vote is important. Personally, I hope there is an opportunity for change in the future, but I acknowledge that at this stage it is not right time. Again, I regret that we cannot support it.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (11:07): My approach is always that if something is not going to get support, let's get it off the *Notice Paper*. The reason for bringing this measure to the house is that I am passionate about our young people and I think a lot of them have much to offer, and there is a lot of lip service paid by politicians and people in councils about listening to young people. I think, most of the time, that is a hoax. The only time people are listened to is when the people have some power, and the only power in our system, basically, for everyone, is the vote.

Many countries around the world already have this, so the argument that it is not possible or practical is just silly—Austria is one, as is Brazil, and the Isle of Man, which I had the pleasure of visiting recently. There are very smart people on that island. They have a tricameral system of parliament, which works—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: What was the reason for the visit?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: It was CPA, and I met members of the royal family there. The Isle of Man has a very smart system—a modified parliamentary system, a tricameral system. We have a 'try anything' system. They are very smart people, and they allow 16 years olds to vote and, as far as I know, the Isle of Man has not disappeared into the Atlantic.

One of the problems facing local government is relevance. I think that unless we have significant and major reforms in local government that very important sector—and it is an important sector—is going to be come increasingly irrelevant. It is also facing serious financial issues, but that is another matter.

If we look at who the elected members on councils are, we have to be honest and say that most of them are in the mature-age category. There is nothing wrong with that, but there are not too many people on councils who are under the age of 25. Generally speaking, councils are run by retirees or people who are close to retirement, so they do not reflect the community at large. This place does not fully either, but local government, I believe, has an issue. I think anything we can do to encourage young people to get into local government is worth doing.

What prompted me to take up this issue was a very young Labor person I met at a conference of talented and gifted students. I will not mention his name because I do not think it is appropriate. This young lad knew a lot more about politics than most people in the community. He is not able to participate by way of a vote in local government, yet someone who is senile with dementia in a retirement village or a nursing home can vote. How do I know? Because my late mother-in-law was close to that point.

Under our current voting arrangements, it is a farce that someone who is senile with dementia can vote. If you do not think that that is important, look at some of the inner suburban areas with nursing homes and look at how the voting is conducted there. What we saying to young people who are smart and want to participate is, 'You can't participate. You can get your driver's licence, you can join the military, but you cannot exercise a vote in local government.' I do not think that is a very sound argument.

The LGA conference last week rejected this. A motion was put by the Mayor of Prospect, David O'Loughlin, and then we had silly comments from some of the people who attended. One person made fun of it, with the heading reported in *InDaily*, 'Councils not true "Beliebers"', with a play on words with 'Justin Bieber'. Most mayors who were on the wrong side of 16 or 17 put the argument that we have to be careful about what young people might do or say. Once again, what we see is a lack of confidence in the ability of our young people.

We have a lot of adults who cannot participate effectively because they do not really know what is going on. So why deny the opportunity to a 16 or 17 year old who is with it, who does know and who wants to participate? I think it is time for local government to embrace young people and stop ignoring them.

Second reading negatived.

ELECTORAL (OPTIONAL PREFERENTIAL VOTING) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 18 October 2012.)

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg) (11:13): I commend the member for Fisher for never, ever giving up. I cannot think how many times, even in the short time that I have been here (11 years), this topic has come back like a little penny. The member for Fisher should be commended for his tenacity in fighting for something he believes in.

In Australia we have compulsory voting, as it is often described. In fact, we do not have compulsory voting: we have compulsory attendance for the purpose of being identified as having turned up. We can take the ballot paper, we can not take the ballot paper, we can scribble on it, we can properly complete it, we can throw it in the bin if we like, we can eat it, we can do anything we like with it, but we have an obligation by law to turn up and have our name crossed off. If we do vote, though, we have a system of rules which apply. We have a system which has been identified over a very long period of time, and it has changed over the life of our state—which is now nearly 176 years—to determine what is the best way to get the most democratic outcome. That system which currently prevails has been through a long gestation period, and now, for the election of each of us in our 47 electorates, the system that has been determined as being the most democratic is a preferential system.

Many people, probably in our own constituencies, and members will have had this put to them, say, 'Why don't we just have a first past the post?' The person who gets the most number of votes out of myriad candidates who stand, even if they get only 10 per cent of the total vote with 20 other candidates all getting two or three votes each, that person should be the person who represents that district.

Of course, we have boundaries now and we have a system that goes with it, and this is one of the difficulties when you start to unravel bits of it. We have a system also where our 47 seats, as much as practicable under our constitution, have to aspire to have, with the electoral boundary changes after each election, as near as possible a similar number of people. It fits in with the one-vote-one-value principle.

In any event, the preferential system, as distinct from the first past the post, says that it would be more democratic for the whole of the electorate to be able to have an opportunity to identify and have recorded and have it endorsed as to what their most preferential choice would be, and that then works on the system where, if you do vote and your candidate gets less than the aggregate of the bottom two, your first preference falls away but you do not get ignored. You as a voter have the opportunity to say, 'I will have this other person as my next preference, and if he or she doesn't get up then I'll have the next person.'

The idea is pretty simple. It means that, at the end of the day, unless your candidate dies between the time of voting and the time of the final determination of who wins the ballot you will have had a say in who your local member will be; and I think that, on balance, that is a good system, a preferential system, because ultimately the most preferred candidate who achieves the majority vote of the total of the electorate is the person who represents them here in this place. That is the purpose of the preferential system.

What has happened, I think, in recent years—well, I should not say just recent years because I can recall for a long time that, for those advocates who are strong on voluntary voting, for example (and my own party has expressed a strong view in respect of voluntary voting), and consistent with that, there ought to be an optional preferential voting system so that you are not obliged to go down the list.

This optional preferential voting system is a bit of a hybrid. It is a bit like saying, 'You don't have to pick all the others.' You can just say, 'I just want Bob Such as the member for Fisher and I don't want any other donkey'—and I am not suggesting that he is a donkey—'or any other person coming along and saying that I will accept them. I don't want any of these others. They don't stand up to the standard of the member for Fisher, and so I only want Bob Such. I'm only going to vote for him and I am not under any obligation to identify any other preference.' Well, that is a hybrid. It does not work. It does not, in my view, fit with all the other rules that are there in place to identify, on balance, the most democratic outcome, and therefore the opposition will not be supporting this.

I will say that we have healthy debate on our side of the house on these things because some of our own have expressed the view that perhaps this is meritorious, perhaps we have been a little hasty in rejecting this as the optimal outcome for choice in voting. However, the observation has been made that the optional preferential voting, allowing voters to decline to preferential candidates, may reduce the informality rate by making it simpler for voters to complete a valid ballot—and that is the other argument that is presented, that you minimise the risk of people stuffing up their vote and inadvertently casting an informal vote. So, we have to try to make it simpler for them so that they do not muck it up.

I am always amazed at how many people we have reported back to us after elections of all types who lodge informal votes or write mischievous statements, sometimes quite defamatory statements, on ballot papers. I must say in the last couple of elections in the scrutineering I have done I have not seen anything that is even vaguely funny on the ballot paper, but certainly for those who are a bit older we can remember some rather curious descriptions of candidates or the opinion of the voter who, of course, has defaced their ballot paper with some obscene or colourful statement and whose vote is then declared to be invalid.

In any event, should we be trying to find a system that makes it good for the people who simply cannot do it properly? I am concerned at the number of informal votes. I am concerned when people turn up once every four years for this place and once every three years for the federal elections and just cast their vote with scant indifference to the outcome. It concerns me because I respect those in our community who are committed to ensuring that their representative is a good representative who do consider the policies and the proposals that they are espousing or fighting

for, and the calibre of candidate who is to represent them, and they give it some considered determination before they cast their ballot. I respect those people, even those who do not vote for my side of politics.

I think it is important that we have a civic duty to make sure that we take advantage of this opportunity we have for democracy to be able to vote for our elected representatives, a right which many people around the world fight for and which, frankly, too often we take for granted. So I am not into having an electoral system just to make it easy or to cover for those who are just too ill informed or will not deal with the fact of what the rules are in relation to voting. It is not that difficult.

If there is an identified problem by the Electoral Commissioner with voters not understanding the form, then frankly that is an education program that needs to be outlined. To be honest, I do not know about other members here, but I would have to say that generally there is a very low threshold of knowledge about how the voting system works for the parliament and generally people in the public just want to know that they have a vote and that whatever the rules are they will follow them, and they will then identify the candidate of their choice and they will follow those rules. They are not looking into the whole constitutionality of the processes here. For those reasons, the opposition will be opposing this proposal.

Mr PEGLER (Mount Gambier) (11:24): I will be very brief. I indicate that I will be voting against this motion. I believe that the system we have in place now works exceptionally well and, when we say there is some informal voting, I think that in a country where we have compulsory voting, the number of informal votes is fairly minimal and does not really have an effect. I believe that under the preferential system we give the people the opportunity to vote for the person they would most prefer to have represent them rather than a situation where you could have an election where, say, 20 per cent of the people determined who was going to represent them in that seat and 80 per cent of the people in that seat were completely against that person, so I just say that it is not broken so let's not try to fix it.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (11:25): I will close the debate. I thank members for their contributions. As I have said before, I think it is important that we canvass all sorts of issues in here, particularly ones that are very germane to the concept of a democracy. We do not have a pure democracy; anyone who thinks we do is kidding themselves. We have a system which is essentially dominated by the two major parties, and I think it will continue to be so. I think independents come and go because the system generally does not favour people becoming an independent and remaining one in our parliaments.

This bill is trying to create an optional preferential system. It does not get rid of preferential voting; it is optional because a lot of people object to having to cast a vote for someone they detest. Whether it be the Communist Party, the DLP, one of the fringe parties or whatever, people object to having to cast a vote for someone whose policies they strongly dislike, and so it does not get rid of the preferential aspect, it just says that that is not mandatory.

Members who have been involved in organising elections, apart from just standing, know that we have a whole lot of variations. We can have a registered ticket so that the vote of people who did not quite indicate what they wanted can still be counted. We have the situation of above-the-line voting which many people, if not most, go for in upper houses because they do not understand the system and they just go for the simple way out. They do what they are told by the party and they vote above the line.

That is not really a good indicator of a commitment and an understanding of what our system is about. It is one thing to cast a vote every four years at state and local level, and three years at federal level, but the other big issue is that people have no real say in between elections. I am not a fan of citizen-initiated referenda because I think they can lock in some silly notions fuelled by a media campaign based on hysteria and a posse. But what we do not have at the moment is a system where people can have an ongoing input that is meaningful and listened to.

People say 'Politicians listen all the time.' They listen and then they act on what they want, not necessarily on what the electors want, and there is no easy way of knowing what electors want between elections anyhow. I think the evolution of our electoral system overall is a pretty good system, but it is not perfect, and it can be modified and improved over time. I think all members and everyone involved in the political process and the wider community should keep an open mind and actively consider and discuss ways of improving our system to make it function even better as a democratic system.

I understand that this bill will not get up. I thank the members who have contributed. I think it does enlighten us to hear different views and I come back to the point that this bill does not discard preferences, it does not require them to be mandated in the sense of every single candidate getting an indication of support or otherwise from the voter. I understand what the fate of this bill will be, but, as I said at the start, it is worth discussing these things because the worst thing in a democracy is for elected representatives to be complacent and think, 'Yes, we've got the answers to everything; we've got the perfect system.'

That is what people have said in past times when they have operated pretty hideous systems, so I think people need to keep an open mind, and I think we should have an ongoing reform process to look at the way in which elections are conducted, the processes and all aspects of them as we have done to some extent in terms of electoral boundaries. I think we need an ongoing process to make sure that we have the very best system that is genuinely democratic and gives people a meaningful say.

Second reading negatived.

AFFORDABLE PUBLIC HOUSING

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (11:30): I move:

That this house calls on the state government and federal government to fund more affordable public housing.

There is an irony in the fact that this motion is calling on both the state Labor government and the federal Labor government to support more affordable housing. There is an irony in that because one would normally expect Labor governments would be strongly committed to affordable housing. I am sure someone from the government will say that they are and they are doing a lot, but if you look at the history of affordable housing in South Australia it is the Liberal Party, going back to Sir Thomas Playford and, I think, Sir Robert Nicholls—I might have the wrong person, but I think it was someone of the same vintage—who set up what became the South Australia Housing Trust. It is one of the reasons why South Australia was able to develop an industrial base because there was cheap affordable housing, not just in Adelaide but in places like Whyalla, Port Pirie and so on.

There were some mistakes made in terms of congregating people together, and I think that lesson has been learned, that you need to have a mix of people in any sort of housing development so that you do not have a mono approach to things. That is a slightly different issue to the provision of affordable housing, which I define in these terms: affordable housing is housing which is reasonably adequate in standard and location for a lower or middle income household and does not cost so much that such a household is unlikely to be able to meet other basic living costs on a sustainable basis. Some of the specific measures would be that housing costs would be less than 30 per cent of household income and the occupants would be in the bottom 40 per cent of household income.

Throughout Australia housing affordability has deteriorated in the past 25 years. I do not think there is any doubt about that. I have some statistics from a research paper written by Julian Disney from the social justice unit of the University of New South Wales. He says that average house prices relative to income have almost doubled, average monthly payments on new loans have risen more than 50 per cent, the proportion of low rental homes has fallen by at least 15 per cent (that is in the last 10 years), opportunities to rent public housing have fallen by at least 30 per cent and at least three-quarters of a million lower income households now have housing costs above the common affordability benchmark of 30 per cent of income (the majority of those are private renters, many of whom pay more than 50 per cent of their income on housing).

What we have throughout Australia is a deterioration in housing affordability. I am not being overly critical of some of the more recent attempts to improve the quality of affordable housing and re-energise some of those suburbs which were built by the Housing Trust in the early days, they are in need of renovation and re-energising. According to figures published in *The Advertiser* in October 2012, there are 20,000 people on Housing SA's waiting list. I do not have any easy way of verifying that.

Mr Gardner: Twenty-two thousand.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: Twenty-two thousand. When statistics are given they are nearly always rounded off. You will never hear someone say that there are 21,946 people on a waiting list: it is 20,000 or, as the member for Morialta tells me, 22,000. It is claimed in the same report that

54 people died waiting for Housing Trust accommodation. I do not know what that statistic really tells you, except that people get old and eventually die.

In the last financial year, Housing SA allocated properties to over 2,500 new households; 94 per cent were allocated to people in the highest categories, categories 1 and 2, and 66 per cent of category 1 applicants were housed within the first six months. That is the good news. According to the claim here, the people who are down the pecking order a bit, that is, in category 3, do not have a chance of getting a house in the near future.

If you look at the other states, there is a similar issue: New South Wales has close to 60,000 on the waiting list; Victoria, 41,000; Queensland, 30,000; Western Australia, 50,000; and in the Northern Territory the waiting period for a typical three-bedroom house is somewhere between 43 months and 112 months. In Darwin, it is about a seven-year wait.

What I am trying to do with this motion is not the blame game. I am not interested in that; it is a waste of time. What I want is to see greater commitment, and that would apply to the opposition if it comes into government. I think there needs to be greater effort put into affordable housing. There are a whole lot of issues involved there, including availability of land for development and height restrictions on housing. It is not simply a question of whacking up a dwelling somewhere. There are a lot of related issues of transport, infrastructure and also the social cohesion of those areas that have to be addressed.

As I indicated at the start, some significant errors were made when a lot of people of a similar background were lumped together in the northern and southern areas of Adelaide. I think it has led to some serious social issues which need to be avoided in any future provision of affordable housing.

Statistics are given about people who are homeless. I am a little sceptical of some of those figures because some of the people who are sleeping rough may have a choice of having a roof over their heads but for a whole range of reasons choose not to. We know that many of those people have psychological and mental health issues and other problems, but I know for a fact that some young people (I do not know the exact quantum) do not want to live according to the rules of their household.

We know that some people flee because of domestic violence and so on. The welfare agencies bring out a lot of figures relating to homelessness. I am not sure whether they are all homeless because they literally do not have a roof over their heads, or whether they do not want to live according to rules and so on in a particular household. That in a way it is a side issue, but it is an important one.

The main thing is ensuring that families who are on the lower scale of income can actually have a place where they can live. If you look at the bigger picture, if you want to attract people to South Australia in a broader context you need to have housing that is affordable in an overall sense. In one of our parliamentary committees, we are currently hearing the experiences of migrants, and housing is a key factor for people who come, for example, as humanitarian arrivals.

If you are going to have people coming here on a humanitarian basis, whether they are processed onshore, offshore or wherever, you need to ensure as far as possible that there is housing which is appropriate and relevant to their needs. I conclude my introduction of this motion by restating that I am not in the business of trying to initiate a blame game. I pointed out at the start that the Liberal Party—it was the LCL then—through Sir Thomas Playford and Sir Richard Butler got the Housing Trust underway.

There is the challenge, I think, for the state and federal government: look at the track record going back to those early days in South Australia. Whilst it will be done differently, and needs to be done differently in this day and age, I think there is an example of how governments can do something to make housing affordable for people on the lower or middle income level.

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide) (11:40): I move to amend the motions as follows:

Delete all words after 'that this house' and insert:

congratulates the state and commonwealth governments for their work in promoting affordable housing through the following initiatives:

- Since 2009 Housing SA has been funded by both commonwealth and state governments at \$133 million per annum, with approximately \$95 million provided by the commonwealth and \$38 million by the state.

- This funding provides the finance needed to build houses, run assistance programs, conduct maintenance on Trust houses and partner with NGOs in providing affordable housing to the many South Australians needing help with their housing needs.
- The Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan which has seen more than 1,400 new homes built.
- Remote Indigenous Housing (providing \$291 million between 2008-09 and 2017-18) to build new properties and upgrade existing properties. In 2011-12 there were 58 new properties built and 39 refurbished. The previous year, 2010-11 there were 28 new properties and 58 refurbished.
- Homelessness Strategy, (\$73 million between 2007-08 and 2012-13) to help fund homelessness related services and programs such as Melrose Park Aged Housing Program, Ladder St Vincent Street at Port Adelaide, UNO Apartments and the Youth Crisis Service and Common Ground at Light Square and Franklin Street Adelaide and at Pt Augusta.
- Ongoing support and promotion of HomeStart with 1,371 households purchasing their properties in 2011-12.
- The Affordable Homes Program which has seen 891 households purchase houses, including 217 in the past financial year.
- Provision of bond assistance by Housing SA, assisting around 20,000 households in 2011-12.
- Subsidised private rental through the National Affordability Scheme to encourage businesses, community organisations and mum and dad private investors to build houses and rent them to low and middle income households at 20 per cent below the market rent of the property.
- The transferring of more than 600 Nation Building Stimulus properties to the community housing sector in the past 18 months.

This house calls upon the state and federal governments to continue their investment in affordable and public housing.

I commend the mover for his interest in this matter but thought it appropriate to put on record the state's success in affordable housing. As a state and a government, a collective focus on keeping home ownership and rental costs within reach is required to ensure that all South Australians can achieve the security and comfort associated with having a roof over our heads. Adelaide is considered one of the world's most liveable cities and we believe that a major contributing factor is that it is a relatively affordable place to live. While we are extremely proud of this, we understand that there are many South Australians who are unable to balance the competing financial pressures of a mortgage or rent, school fees and utilities bills and the rising cost of essentials such as food and clothing—and I am acutely aware of the reality of that in my electorate of Port Adelaide.

We believe that well-considered planning of our neighbourhoods and careful design of our homes can reduce the cost of living and improve our general wellbeing. The vision of this government for the future of affordable housing is an achievable one. In our vision, South Australia has a wide range of affordable homes for purchase and rental catering to different types of families and income levels. Industries supplying housing, food and utilities are efficient and supply at competitive prices. Homes and neighbourhoods are designed to conserve energy and water to help reduce demand and costs. The state's not-for-profit sector has become a major supplier of affordable housing to those on lower incomes, and South Australians are in greater control of their own finances. Those in financial hardship receive the support they need to manage essential cost of living pressures better.

So, what are we doing to achieve this vision? Since the inception of the South Australian Housing Trust in 1936, South Australia has been a leader in housing affordability. Its operations are currently partly funded by the commonwealth government and state government, provided for under the National Affordable Housing Agreement, which commenced in 2009 and is subject to periodic review. The funding is currently in the order of \$130 million per annum, with approximately \$95 million provided by the commonwealth government, and \$38 million by the state government.

In addition, there is a series of national partnership agreements that have provided further grant funding to the South Australian Housing Trust for the achievement of specific outcomes required by their respective agreements. In partnership with the commonwealth government, the not-for-profit sector, industry and individuals, the state government is ensuring that all South Australians have access to affordable housing, recognising that 'affordable' has different meanings for different people.

For some in South Australia, home ownership is a reality, or at least a realistic goal. For others, the state government is assisting the finance industry to develop innovative mortgage

products for low and moderate income households to achieve these aspirations. HomeStart Finance provides home loans that offer solutions to the challenges people face when buying a home of their own. HomeStart loans create a foundation for sustainable, affordable home ownership. They offer the option of lower deposit requirements and repayment safeguard, as well as flexible repayment arrangements.

The Affordable Homes program aims to increase the supply of affordable housing for low to moderate-income households meeting eligibility criteria. The properties are advertised on the Affordable Homes locator for a limited period of time, during which interested and eligible parties can purchase on a first come, first served basis. This allows eligible low to moderate-income households to purchase homes under \$300,000 without the pressures of competing with higher income earners or investors. Some 891 households have been able to achieve home ownership through the Affordable Homes program, including 217 in 2011-12.

Housing SA runs the highly successful Private Rental Liaison Program, under which clients who face barriers in the private rental market have access to a free service to assist them to find affordable private rental property. In addition, Housing SA can offer bonds and rent in advance or arrears to assist South Australians to overcome some of the financial barriers in renting privately.

This offers low income earners and those with minimal savings to enter the private rental market. I have had several people who have been helped through my office to connect with Housing SA and have access to this scheme. Private rental liaison officers can also assist their customers to maintain a successful tenancy in the private rental market.

In the 2011-12 financial year, Housing SA provided 20,000 bonds to assist South Australians to gain affordable private rental accommodation. Using resources in this way eases the pressure on the social housing system, and also allows people to develop independence and the skills to maintain a successful private rental tenancy. For those South Australians for whom home ownership and the private rental market are simply not options, Housing SA may also offer public housing.

Housing SA tenants pay a maximum of 25 per cent of their income as rent, up to a capped market rent. This ensures that all public housing tenants are accommodated in affordable housing. As of 31 August this year, Housing SA provided affordable housing to nearly 41,000 South Australian households. Community housing organisations accommodate almost a further 4,500 households in affordable housing. These figures provide a brief snapshot of just how many South Australians are already assisted in finding and maintaining affordable housing.

Housing SA also works with Renewal SA, local government and the residential building industry to deliver affordable housing opportunities to the community. Strategies currently include: the continued construction of public housing; actively working on urban renewal opportunities; working with the community housing sector; and pursuing opportunities in the affordable home ownership area, including working with developers.

The South Australian government has a policy that affordable housing comprise at least 15 per cent of new housing and significant developments. Since 2008-09, 3,640 new homes have been built under this policy. Affordable housing in such developments may be social housing rental properties, affordable rental properties, or purchased via the Affordable Homes program. This policy ensures that affordable rental and home ownership opportunities are available to give increased housing choice to low and moderate income households.

Despite the South Australian government's considerable efforts towards affordable housing, an injection of commonwealth funds can make a positive impact. Two prominent examples of these are the National Rental Affordability Scheme and the Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan. It is vital that these partnerships are maintained and strengthened in order for us to create a vibrant city that is an affordable place to live and to have safe communities and healthy neighbourhoods.

Mr GARDNER (Morialta) (11:50): Given that it took about two minutes for the member to read the amendment to the house, I suggest that the debate be adjourned so that all members may consider it. I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion carried; debate adjourned.

INTEGRATED MUSEUM

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (11:50): I move:

That this house urges the state government, in conjunction with the Adelaide City Council, to create an integrated museum that will showcase the social, political and economic history of South Australia and the many achievements of its people.

The member for Bragg said that I am persistent; that is probably a nice way of saying stubborn. I have tried for many years to get a commitment from the state government and the Adelaide City Council by way of a representation letter to create a comprehensive history museum in South Australia.

We are one of the few places that I know of that does not have a social, political, economic history museum. We have a good Migration Museum, but it is limited in its focus. We have Tandanya, but we do not have a facility that showcases what people have done and achieved in this state, including Aboriginal people and people who have come here in more recent times, notwithstanding what the Migration Museum does, as I said earlier. It should all be in one place where locals and tourists can share in acknowledging what has been achieved over time in this state.

I am not an orphan in seeking this. The former premier Dr John Bannon, who is very keen on history, Professor Dean Jaensch and many others have actively sought to have a history museum created in this state. The history trust is supportive and I know that Margaret Anderson, the chief executive, has been very supportive over time.

I will just highlight some of the achievements, and there is quite a list. South Australians should be proud of what was done here, even when settlement began with Europeans. It was meant to be a special place. South Australia had a very progressive social commitment towards Aboriginal people and so on. Some of those things were lacking in other states, so South Australia has a different history to the other states.

Just to mention a few, we had Australia's first police force in 1838 and adult male suffrage was granted in 1856, and that included Aboriginal men. In 1856 Aboriginal men were able to vote in South Australia. It did not last beyond Federation in 1901 because the other states would not accept any Aboriginal person having a vote. So Aboriginal men lost the vote when we had Federation, as did Aboriginal women, who got the vote here in 1892.

Ms Chapman: 1894.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: Sorry, 1894, as the member for Bragg corrects me. We have in our chamber showcased the achievement of women's suffrage here, and that included Aboriginal women, many of whom were actually quite active in voting subsequent to that 1894 decision. Once again, taken off them in Federation, because the other states, which were more racist than we were, would not agree with Aboriginal people having the vote. So shame on them. We should be proud of the fact that we pioneered votes for Aboriginal men and women back in the 1800s.

Trade unions were legalised here in 1876. You would think that the government, being basically responsible, would be supportive of having that acknowledged and showcased and displayed. The first juvenile court, 1890. I have mentioned adult women being given the right to vote. The first public housing authority, 1936, which we were talking about earlier. The first female judge in Australia, 1965. The list goes on and it includes development of the photocopier which I have mentioned here before, developed at Woodville; the stump-jump plough; and a whole lot of innovation in agriculture and technology. All sorts of things have been achieved here but we do not showcase to locals and tourists what has been achieved. We used to have a constitutional museum next door in what is Old Parliament House. That got axed. We do not showcase any of that now.

We only partly showcase some of the Aboriginal culture that we have in storage. I personally would like to see an extensive living art centre with Aboriginal people directly involved, similar to what is done in New Zealand with the Maoris. As I understand it, our natural history museum has the biggest collection of Aboriginal artefacts in Australia but we do not showcase most of those. If you want to do the Aboriginal culture justice, you would have to spend \$100 million or more to create a fantastic centre, but more people would come from overseas to see that than they would to see the refurbished Adelaide Oval, I guarantee that.

Professor Dean Jaensch has made some points in support of the social history museum. He said in an article in *The Advertiser* several years ago that we are behind the other states, and

that is true, in recognising our history. Western Australia has its own constitution and political museum; New South Wales has a long history of publishing their story. Most state governments have funded the production of excellent histories of their parliaments, but, according to Dean Jaensch, in South Australia we show little interest.

I think it is a shame on successive governments and, indeed, this parliament, that we have not really gone to any great effort. We do not make much effort even in relation to this parliament. We bring in students, but there is nowhere that they can gather to be informed about the history of the parliament other than the chambers themselves. It is about time we took a bit of pride in what we have done here and what we do and stop selling ourselves short.

There has been little recognition of our contribution to Federation. We did very little in terms of the Centenary of Federation. The sesquicentenary of the first opening of parliament was only barely celebrated here. These are some of the points by Professor Dean Jaensch, and I agree with him.

If you look at other places around the world which are a bit more civilised than we are, in Wellington, New Zealand, they have the national museum, of course, which is an excellent museum, Te Papa, but they also have the Museum of Wellington called City & Sea, and that is the museum that I believe we should try to emulate here. It is managed by the museum trust and it gets most of its funding from the city council, and that is why I am trying to get the city council on board with this motion. Even though the museum would be focussing on South Australia as a whole, it would be located in the city.

In the Museum of Wellington City & Sea they feature their social history. They have over 100 photographs of Wellington at the beginning of the 20th century. They showcase aspects of Maori culture, which I think we should do in our comprehensive museum. I do not intend it to be a European only museum, it should highlight Aboriginal culture. Sadly, many Aboriginal people know little of their own culture—certainly a lot of the young ones going astray know little about their own culture; and I would say that most South Australians know next to nothing about traditional Aboriginal culture and some of the values and fantastic elements of it.

The City of Christchurch, Adelaide's sister city, has a museum. Sadly, as we know, Christchurch has suffered recently from the earthquake, but it has a museum. Like Wellington, it does not have anywhere near the population of Adelaide, yet it seems to be able to showcase its achievements. Indeed, Christchurch has a population of about 400,000 and Wellington 300,000. Adelaide has over a million people, yet we cannot seem to get the energy and resources to showcase what we have achieved.

I have visited quite a few museums around the world; there are a lot of different ones. Singapore, apart from the Changi, it has got a philatelic museum. It has all sorts of other museums there. Canada has got a shoe museum in Toronto and a textile museum. Throughout Australia there are a lot of other museums. There is the Hyde Park Barracks Museum in Sydney. Of course, we have the National Museum in Canberra, and Melbourne has a museum—it is not a big one, but it has got a museum.

When you go around the world you will find that other people are proud of their history and are prepared to showcase it, and tourists want to see and learn about the people who live in a place like this. Even this week I had an opportunity to look at Canberra's little museum. It is not a big museum, but even little old Canberra can have a museum, and they have it integrated with an art display. At the moment it is featuring some of Sidney Nolan's work.

Canberra can showcase its history, showing the drawings and whatever of the planning of Canberra, but in Adelaide we do very little. Occasionally the City of Adelaide does some displays and has an archive section but nothing of the scale of what is done in most other places around the world.

Hopefully, one day—and hopefully it is not too far off—we will get a comprehensive museum in South Australia. We have got a fantastic natural history one, but I want to see one that showcases Aboriginal culture, European settlement (recent and old) and one which tells people about the achievements here and the inventions. The list of inventions and innovations in South Australia is quite amazing and ranges from the first crematorium in Australia right through to equal pay for female police going back to about 1920.

We have pioneered in a lot of areas but we are not prepared to showcase it to our locals. All our children should understand and know our history and what has been achieved here, and

that would help inspire them into all sorts of fields and medical endeavours. We have had some fantastic developments from scientists from Adelaide University in the medical sphere over time, yet the average citizen in South Australia would know little or nothing about what has been achieved.

I commend this motion and I hope that, in the not too distant future, we actually get to a point where we do have a comprehensive social history museum. As I said earlier, it will certainly attract tourists and locals alike, and the sooner we get on and do one (that is, the government and the city council) the better.

Mr ODENWALDER (Little Para) (12:04): I move to amend the motion as follows:

Delete the word 'urges' and substitute 'notes the calls for'; and delete the word 'create' and substitute 'investigate the possibility of creating'

The new motion would thus read:

That this house notes the calls for the state government, in conjunction with the Adelaide City Council, to investigate the possibility of creating an integrated museum that will showcase the political and economic history of South Australia and the many achievements of its people.

I want to thank the member for Fisher for bringing the original motion. I think it has a lot of merit, particularly in relation to Aboriginal history, local Aboriginal history, the suffragette movement and the struggles for equal pay and that sort of thing. I think he is right in pointing out that we were pioneers and we should be celebrating that. I know that other members in this place would agree.

It is true that History SA currently exhibits and interprets South Australia's social history collection material through its sites, and the member for Fisher mentioned some—the National Motor Museum, the South Australian Maritime Museum and the Migration Museum. However, it is acknowledged that an integrated museum that showcases the social, political and economic history of South Australia could be of benefit to the state. So, this museum of South Australian history is a proposal that in principle warrants further investigation.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Griffiths.

WESTERN FRONT SCHOOL STUDY TOURS

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (12:08): I move:

That this house commends Aberfoyle Park High School and other secondary schools for organising and supporting Western Front study tours.

I apologise to members that it has become 'Bob Such Day'; that is through circumstances outside my control. That is my excuse.

Earlier this year I had the privilege of travelling with students from Aberfoyle Park High School to the cemeteries and battlefields of World War I in France and Belgium. They were a great group of students. The tour was accompanied by a teacher from Reynella East college and also by a teacher from Aberfoyle Park High School. My wife came along as well. I paid for the cost of her tour, except for the airfare because, in effect, she was acting as a parent in case anything happened to any of the children.

As part of that tour we visited numerous World War I cemeteries, and one comes to the conclusion that World War I was a colossal slaughter, a war that achieved nothing except it killed a lot of young men, in particular. In visiting those war cemeteries, some of those killed in action were 15 years of age. I do not think people here ever appreciated fully what our soldiers went through. Likewise the soldiers from Canada, United Kingdom and, indeed, the German soldiers fighting on the other side. It was just a shocking waste of life that achieved absolutely nothing.

The conditions in which these soldiers fought were horrendous and almost beyond description. We focus a lot on Gallipoli and it is appropriate that we acknowledge those who fought and died and were injured at Gallipoli. Australia lost approximately 8,000 men at Gallipoli; on the Western Front, Australia lost close to 40,000. So in highlighting particular conflicts one should not forget that there are a lot of other conflicts where even more young men were cut down and their lives ended.

The high school group visited Menin Gate, near the city of Ypres, I think the Aussies called it 'leper'—

Mr Pengilly: 'Wipers'.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: Yes, 'Wipers'. We attended the ceremony on three nights. If members ever get a chance, at 6 o'clock every night of the year they have a ceremony in memory of the fallen soldiers, particularly Australians who died around that area. The Hon. Brendan Nelson, who was the ambassador to Belgium and the European Union, the federal Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Warren Snowdon, and the Air Vice Marshal of the RAAF were all there on one of the nights. One of the students from Aberfoyle High School, who is in the Air Force cadets, was asked by the Air Vice Marshal to accompany him for the wreath laying ceremony, and I think young Lachlan thought that all his birthdays had come at once to be granted that honour.

The students who went all had to research a fallen soldier and they all had to give an address at the gravesite of that fallen soldier. Whilst some days it was bleak and wet and so on, that did not deter the students or the rest of the group from having a ceremony for each of those fallen soldiers. I could guarantee that none of those young people, who were aged 15 or 16, will look at life in the same way following their visit and experiences there.

We visited German war cemeteries as well. The German cemeteries are different in their character. With the Australian war cemeteries, which are beautifully maintained by the War Graves Commission, the Australian practice is to allow relatives to have an inscription on the tombstone—and I think we are the only nation that does that. Each memorial stone had a personal inscription which had been nominated by the family of the fallen soldier. As well as the Australian ones, we also visited the British cemeteries. At Tyne Cot there are 16,000 British buried; and there are more who are not buried there as they were never found.

We visited the Passchendaele Memorial Museum, the Polygon Wood/New Buttes Cemetery, the trenches at Hill 62, Hill 60 and Messines Ridge. I had heard about Hill 60, but had never seen where it took place. It was the largest man-made explosion prior to Hiroshima or Nagasaki. The explosion was so significant that it was felt across the Channel in Dublin. There were many Australian diggers who participated in tunnelling under German lines and blowing up the Germans. For someone like myself, who is claustrophobic, the thought of these guys crawling on their hands and knees with explosives for not just a few metres but for a long distance to get under enemy lines and then blow up the enemy is enough to make me feel off. We visited sites which have only recently been discovered and where the remains of entombed soldiers have only just been discovered.

I compliment Claire Forsyth, a teacher from Aberfoyle Park High School, for brilliantly organising this trip, and her husband Martin, who teaches at Reynella East College. This tour had the strong support of the principal of Aberfoyle Park High School, Liz Mead.

I conclude by saying that Aberfoyle Park High School is not the only school to participate in these tours. I believe Willunga has participated in one, or is going to, and Reynella East College is scheduled to participate in one next year or the year after. There were also students from other schools and colleges from around Australia. It is a fantastic experience. It cost the students, or their parents, \$7,000. We had some fundraisers to help the students out with their costs, selling sausages on the weekends.

It is a great experience. When I say it is a wonderful experience, it is wonderful in the sense that it opens the eyes of these young people to the sacrifice of many fine young men, in particular, and some women (not many), who lost their lives in what turned out to be a futile and wasted exercise carried out on behalf of, basically, the royalty and manufacturers of Europe, who were contesting empire as well as a place in terms of opportunities to sell things around the world. It opened the eyes of those students. It would be great if all young Australians could visit these places because I think they would appreciate more the sacrifice of those fine young men who gave their lives in horrific situations.

In my own area of Coromandel Valley, nearly every family lost at least one lad in World War I. When it came to building a memorial in Coromandel Valley, each family, and they were not wealthy, gave the equivalent of a year's wage towards that memorial. Whilst the immediate relatives of the people who were involved are no longer with us, I was able to place a poppy on behalf of some of my constituents, which was a very emotional time. I commend this motion and I commend the schools that participate and the Department for Education and Child Development for its support. I think the more young people who can undertake one of these enlightening tours, the better.

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (12:19): I rise to indicate the opposition's support for the member for Fisher's motion. We do so out of respect for the efforts that are made by a lot of people

across our community, and schools, to ensure that our future generations have an awareness of the sacrifices that have been made in the past. One of my great personal dreams in life is the hope that I can actually visit the Western Front one day to absorb some of the sadness and the tragedy of it all. World War I went for four years. It was called the Great War. It was meant to be the war that ended all wars. Sadly, we know that in 1939 a second world war started.

From Australia's perspective, many of our finest young men lost their lives, and it is an important statistic to understand that, from memory, 69,000 Australians died in World War I. A total of 400,000 volunteered to serve, and in a nation that only had a population of about four million at that stage, to think that one in every 10 of our nation actually served in World War I is remarkable. It is even more impressive when you respect the fact that, of men aged between the age of 18 and 40, 40 per cent volunteered to serve. They were brave souls; sadly, 69,000 of them did not return home.

I think this motion from the member for Fisher acknowledges the efforts being made in our current generations to respect those sacrifices and to educate ourselves. Those kids who came back from that trip will remember for the rest of their lives what they have seen and heard. They will tell their friends and they will tell their own children, and there will be a continued respect for the sacrifices made now nearly 100 years ago, but sacrifices that are still very close to us. On behalf of the opposition, I confirm our support for the motion.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell) (12:21): I see that I am supposed to speak about this, although I do not remember seeing notes. Never mind, I am sure I did. However, having read the motion of the honourable member, I want to draw attention to the fact that visiting battlefields is indeed an excellent way to get more understanding of our history and the history of service in our nation, but it is not the only way. The people in the south annually hold the ANZAC Youth Vigil. This involves all the youth service groups in the area, supported by many of the adult service organisations. It is auspiced by the Morphett Vale RSL, but I am very proud to say that it is one of the legacies of my term as a member of parliament, because I initiated it and was honoured by the way a number of key people came together immediately to assist in establishing a committee.

Brian Holecek produced such an excellent book of guidelines that they have now been co-opted by a number of other areas, and it has led to a broader distribution of ANZAC youth vigils. This in turn has led our young people to a broader understanding of the Western Front and other aspects of military service. One part of the vigil is that we have a guest speaker a couple of weeks before the event. These speakers talk about their experiences. We have been extremely honoured to have Bill Smith, who is a well-known prisoner of war from Changi, come and talk about his experience, and also remarkably honoured to have Jan Ruff O'Hearn talk about her experience as a prisoner of war, so that our young people get to see people who have lived through this. They get to hear what it was that they lived through.

I would also make the point that in my area it would be very difficult for people to find the money to go to the Western Front. The education department already has opportunities for young people to be involved in learning about the Western Front, in particular. I think the member for Fisher is correct in saying that the focus has not been on the Western Front until fairly recently but there is now a far greater focus on the Western Front and the tragedy of seeing rows and rows of graves, some named but so many not named.

Having been assisted by the notes, I can now add some comments from the minister. There is a tribute to the students who took part, that they did considerable research as part of this visit to the World War I sites on the Western Front in France and Belgium, and it is a tribute to the students that they not only demonstrated a passionate interest in this field of Australia's history but also showed leadership, commitment and discipline as ambassadors of their school and our state during their study tour.

I can add that the young people involved in the youth vigil show exactly the same thing. One of the things that has really impressed me is that there is a voluntary session of practice marching the weekend before the vigil. Nearly every child comes out to practise marching. I have to tell members that over the 10 years of the vigil, the marching has improved considerably, but the fact that the young people recognise that this is important and that they want to do the right thing by even being able to march properly is a real tribute to the young people of today who, in their own way, do the sort of tributes that the students from Aberfoyle Park did.

Many schools offer the opportunity for young people to participate in educational study tours and they provide students with a real and practical opportunity to gain a firsthand appreciation

of cultural diversity, of different languages and customs and of what it means to be a global citizen. Student excursions such as these also make real connections with language and history curricula and offer students the opportunity to put what they learn in the classroom into real and lived experience. Study tours such as this to the Western Front add a particular dimension to learning and understanding of our past and, in particular, the spirit of the ANZACs. As members will be aware, many young people from all school sectors have participated in the Premier's ANZAC Spirit School Prize over the years.

This initiative has enabled student groups to visit memorial sites, battlefields and museums in France and Belgium. Aberfoyle Park High School teachers, parents and students were inspired to organise this trip to the Western Front because of the positive feedback from the students and teachers of the school who had previously taken part in the Premier's ANZAC Spirit School Prize. We can be particularly proud that young people at this great school each spent considerable time and effort to examine the life and times of individual soldiers who sacrificed their lives at the Western Front during this terrible war.

I take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge each of the young people who did their research and then prepared a heartfelt remembrance to the passing of these soldiers and a commemoration of their life and sacrifice at their grave sites. I have no doubt that this experience is one that each of the students will carry with them for the rest of their life. I also acknowledge the support of the member for Fisher for the initiative and particularly commend the teachers, students and parents at Aberfoyle Park High School who honoured our ANZACs in this way.

While we are talking about teachers, parents and students honouring ANZAC, I would also like to thank the many parents, teachers and students who participate in the youth vigil, not only through youth organisations, but as representatives of their school, where they come and lay a tribute on the memorial as part of the ceremony of the ANZAC Youth Vigil in the south.

One year, it was raining, like cats and dogs, raining. As a VIP, I was under the tent, but the poor students who were making these tributes were all sitting out in the rain. I spoke to one of them afterwards and said, 'Oh gee, you're pretty wet, you'd better go home and get a warm shower soon,' and he said to me, 'I sat in the rain for a couple of hours; those soldiers lived in wet trenches for months on end.' I figured that our young people get it, and I thank the member for Fisher for his motion.

Mr VENNING (Schubert) (12:30): Just very briefly, I want to commend the member for Fisher for this motion, and I noted his words. It is very gratifying to know that young people are rising to the occasion and taking initiatives such as this. I think the member for Fisher mentioned *Beneath Hill 60*, a movie recently released which certainly highlighted some of the shocking conditions that our soldiers went through. They specifically chose Australians for this special mining operation, to mine under a key German position, and it was probably the largest explosion of the First World War.

I commend the students of Aberfoyle Park High School, and all the other secondary schools across the state. In particular, I commend Nuriootpa High School in the Barossa Valley, where they had a special ceremony last ANZAC Day to recognise all those soldiers in the local area who served in the First World War, and made a special presentation. In fact, some of the students went on these tours to the front.

My own son, as you would know if you know my son, is not exactly an emotional person, and is very matter-of-fact. Last year, he was in Villers-Bretonneux for ANZAC Day. It is great for young people to be paying tribute like this. For my son, of all people, to be there and to get emotional about it really does say that young people do appreciate what was done for them. This was a sacrifice worth fighting for, and I do not think we will ever forget. I commend the motion.

Mr BROCK (Frome) (12:32): I also, along with the other speakers today, commend the member for Fisher for bringing this up. It just goes to show, as the member for Schubert has just indicated, that the young people of our community today are taking far more interest in what has happened over many years. I do not think that anyone understands or appreciates the hardships that these people went through unless they have actually been there.

By the member for Fisher bringing this up and commending the Aberfoyle Park High School and other secondary schools for organising and supporting Western Front study tours, it gives those young people an opportunity to not only see and experience first-hand some of the areas and emotions that people went through, but it also gives them the opportunity to be able to

talk to people who were on the other side at those conflicts. It gives a perception of reality and how they actually felt.

It has also been mentioned that there are other ways of remembering what our forefathers have done for us to protect our communities and democracy. There are a lot of ways in which we can do that—not only by going over there and having a look at these things but also we have the local RSLs across our state. In particular, there are a couple of RSLs in my electorate that do a fantastic job of obtaining memorabilia and having it displayed in museums in these communities. Whilst it is not the same feeling, it does give the younger members of our communities and new immigrants coming into our communities an idea of what this country has done throughout the wars. In Port Pirie in particular, the Port Pirie RSL has an absolutely fantastic museum. It has just been awarded an Iroquois helicopter, which it will get in the New Year. We are very proud of getting an Iroquois helicopter to be able to commemorate and show the difference in styles of aircraft from the fifties and sixties up until today.

I also want to commend the young people of our communities because they are taking a much bigger interest in what happened over the many years. They will be disciples and they will talk about the issues and, hopefully, we will not have wars in the future. We will not have to go out and fight. This is a big world, and we should be able to live very comfortably. We should be able to communicate and live happily with each other, but that certainly has not been the case over many years. I commend the member for Fisher for bringing this motion and I congratulate Aberfoyle Park High School and other high schools for doing these study tours.

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (12:35): I would like to speak on this briefly on behalf of some of the schools that I speak to in the northern plains. It is not just the First World War forces but also the ANZAC forces from the Second World War that need this sort of remembrance as well. I urge people to remember that the ANZAC tradition was forged in the First World War, but visiting the gravesites of people who fell in Greece fighting for the freedom of that country is equally important. In fact, many other states include that in their ANZAC remembrances because they were part of an ANZAC corps, and people may not be aware of that.

In 2011 I had the good fortune to represent the then premier in the Battle for Greece and Crete commemorations. In fact, the Western Australian government sent students from high schools to do very similar things to what the member for Fisher is indicating took place. It was deeply moving to see students write up the history of a person from a photo. It was also moving to see how they were profoundly affected by that and also by visiting all the commonwealth war graves around the Mediterranean area, some not so well documented but all under the custodial care of commonwealth war grave units around the world.

Let us remember that there were ANZAC forces in many battles and not just in the First World War, and I would like to see the program include the ANZACs who fell in the Second World War as well.

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (12:37): I also support the member for Fisher's motion, as I am sure everybody in this place does, without question. It has been very interesting over the last few years to watch the increasing interest levels of younger people. I believe we have an immense future with our young people in Australia and the interest they are taking in the military history of the nation. It has been quite remarkable.

My own children, who are adults now, had it drummed into them from an early age by my mother. They always attend services and they always take an intense interest. In the next few years we are going to have the Centenary of Gallipoli, which will certainly increase the awareness once again, if it has not already. I would like to go to Gallipoli, but I would actually like to go there when no-one else is around. I have no desire whatsoever to be there on ANZAC Day, but I would like to potter around there for several days. The awareness is amazing.

The member for Reynell talked about Bill Schmitt. I note that Mr Schmitt is about to go here, there and everywhere. Indeed, he is going to Japan. He was a prisoner of the Japanese in Changi, as the member for Reynell mentioned. He is actually going to Japan in the near future, if he is not on his way already. I had the pleasure of meeting Bill several times when I was shadow minister for veterans in another life, and I take a great deal of interest in the veterans in my electorate. I have some 700 on the Fleurieu alone: World War II diggers, Korean, those from the latest conflicts and those from all the other conflicts that have taken place as well. However, the point is that on ANZAC Day and, indeed, on Remembrance Day—and I talk about the service that I am able to attend at Victor Harbor—the President of the Victor Harbor RSL, Dave Miller (a returned

man from Vietnam, a returned nasho), organises (he is a former school teacher, so he has got that ability) quite a big group of Victor Harbor High School students and other students from other schools to attend and they are heavily involved in ANZAC Day. I think it is a great thing.

I know that at the ANZAC Day services that I can get to on Kangaroo Island the children attend as well. Particularly with respect to Vietnam Veterans (and I am pretty sure that Dave Miller has done it), I know that David Manser, a mate of mine who won the Military Medal in Vietnam, speaks regularly to school students and enhances their knowledge of what the nation has done and what men mainly, but nowadays women as well, are doing in defence of their nation in their service overseas.

Of course, that really hit home last year when Jamie Larcombe was killed in Afghanistan. That really hit home. His youngest daughter is still at school, but that brought it out even stronger; and, of course, over there with the 170 farmers who came as a result of the war service scheme after World War II, it is something that will never go away. I think that the member for Fisher mentioned—I cannot remember now; someone did—that the subject of Gallipoli comes up all the time. However, in terms of the Western Front, you can go to the Second World War and the battles that took place in Syria and the vast numbers of Australians who died in Bomber Command flying over Europe; and just recently some of our old boys have gone over there in remembrance of that. Also, there were the battles in Gona, Kokoda, Milne Bay, and the list goes on.

I was driving and listening the other day to that Fidler fellow on the ABC at 11 o'clock and he had the author of a book on the Sandakan Death March. I was fascinated to listen to it, and that is something about which we have to keep reminding our children. Indeed, once again there is a connection there because one of the Thomas family from American River died on that march. His last surviving brother died just recently.

It is inherent on us to remind children and generations as they come through because they will be the custodians. It will not be that long—it may be less than 20 years—until all the World War II diggers are gone. We look after something like 10,000 war widows in South Australia at the moment through the Legacy organisation of which I am a member. The younger people coming through have to take up the baton on this.

I think that the member for Fisher has certainly got it at the core of his thinking, and his motion is a good one. There is absolutely no doubt that we must never ever forget the service that our men and women have given to Australia in the past and will do so in the future. It is absolutely at the core of my principles, and whatever else happens that will remain at the core of my principles to remember them. Our family has had a long history of service, as have others in this place, there is no doubt about that whatsoever. We must keep the memory alive, and to put this motion through the parliament is most appropriate. I will always, always defend those who have served Australia—always.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher) (12:43): I will conclude, first, by thanking members for their positive comments and support. I will just make a few points. Whilst this motion mentions Aberfoyle Park High, I make clear that there are other high schools doing similar things, and I commend them also. I make members aware, if they are not already aware, that the Premier does support scholarships or travel support for students who wish to attend, and I think that they have to indicate by writing why they want to visit the Western Front.

This year by coincidence we had a student from Aberfoyle Park High who got one of the Premier's travel awards to go to the Western Front and one from Reynella East College, as well; so, in my electorate the two high schools each got one of these student awards. The students who went on the trip with me, none of them are wealthy. Many of them had one or two part-time jobs. They ran chocolate drives and raffles, anything to raise the money. I was very impressed with them—they are passionate about acknowledging the service of people who went before them, serving their country on the Western Front.

I will make a couple of other concluding remarks. No-one wins in wars and, whilst we are focusing on Australians who lost their lives, I am sure the German families and different nationalities—a lot of Indians fought in World War I on the Western Front—and I am sure their mothers cried just as much.

If members have not had the opportunity to read about Sir John Monash, the Australian general was fantastic. He not only was a good general in many respects, he was also a successful one and he made a commitment. He said, 'I am not going to sacrifice the lives of my men on a willy-nilly basis.' He lost a lot fewer than people like Haig who was the British general who did not

like getting his boots muddy. I urge members to read about Sir John Monash. Ironically, he was of a Jewish background. His relatives were Prussian, so he was probably fighting distant relatives in his battles and he was very successful at the Battle of Dernancourt and Le Hamel. He introduced a whole lot of innovative military techniques which were very successful and culminated in the success of Dernancourt and Le Hamel.

My late grandfather served with the Royal Engineers. He was in the Somme for two years. How he survived that long, I do not know. It is probably why there is a bit of toughness in our family. Most people did not last two weeks, and anyone who had noticeable officer rank was shot by snipers quick smart.

One of the interesting things is that more than 300 British soldiers were executed by the British for not turning up on time. It was claimed they were deserters. We would now classify a lot of that as post-traumatic stress—young men running off, calling out for their mother and so on. Australia did not allow any discipline like that on our troops, and that followed the experience of Breaker Morant in South Africa. The Australian government would not allow the British to discipline our troops and we certainly did not have people being executed like the British did. One of the cases we looked at was of a young lad who had spent an extra night with his girlfriend, which is understandable when you are young and frisky, and he was one day late getting to his unit, they said that it was desertion and he got executed. During that time of World War I, more than 300 were executed. The Germans did the same, as did the French and the Belgians. They executed anyone who they thought was running off or late, not appearing for service.

It is a different era. There are no winners in war. I do not praise wars. Sometimes you have to defend yourself, and I accept that, but everyone is a loser when it comes to wars. A lot of families here lost wonderful young men in the World War I scenario, as we have in subsequent wars. I read a lot of military history, and we don't ever seem to learn from it and we seem to be repeating some of our mistakes, even in Afghanistan today. I commend this motion and, once again, congratulate Aberfoyle Park High School and the other many high schools that support this program.

Motion carried.

COUNTRY DIALYSIS SERVICES

Mr VENNING (Schubert) (12:49): I move:

That this house urges the state government to provide more dialysis services in country areas.

There are many people residing in rural and regional South Australia who have to travel great distances to receive dialysis treatment. Some have the option of home dialysis; however, for many this is not an option due to medical complications or lack of support at home. I know most members in this house would know of circumstances just like this. Patients can currently access dialysis at Berri, Ceduna, Clare, Mount Gambier, Murray Bridge, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Port Pirie, Maitland, South Coast and Whyalla, as stated in the Country Health SA annual report. The report also states:

The top five services/reasons for all admissions in country hospitals were: renal dialysis, general medicine, orthopaedics, cardiology and obstetrics.

So dialysis is a highly utilised service in country areas. Last year I conducted a survey of constituents in the Schubert electorate requesting people who had to travel to receive dialysis treatment to contact my office. Eight people from across the electorate who regularly had to travel great distances to receive treatment either to the Lyell McEwin or Royal Adelaide hospitals contacted me, as did many others who administer dialysis at home. I know that there are many people who did not respond to my survey, who we knew were actually receiving dialysis within the area. I also note, member for Frome, that you have two dialysis chairs—

Mr Brock: Four.

Mr VENNING: —four—in Port Pirie, and we did not expect that within the last 12 to 18 months and I am very pleased that they are there because they are doing a great service. Some of these stories are quite heartbreaking—families who have had to move away to be closer to where they could receive the treatment, aged and frail people who have to travel great distances several times a week. It is an umbilical cord: unless you can get to the machine, you cannot live.

One case that was brought to my attention was of a couple in their 70s residing in the Barossa, one of whom was about to commence dialysis treatment. They were informed that there

was a waiting list at the Lyell McEwin and that it could be some time until a place was made available for them. So, in the meantime, the patient would have to travel to Adelaide to receive treatment three times a week, a big impost on an elderly couple, especially when one is very unwell. The specialist advised the patient that they could receive treatment immediately at the Berri Hospital where there was space, so this couple were seriously considering moving to Berri to live as they did want to put family and friends out by asking for assistance to travel to Adelaide three times a week until a space was made available at the Lyell McEwin.

Another case that was brought to my attention was a lady in her 70s who had to travel three times per week from Keyneton to the Royal Adelaide Hospital so her husband could receive dialysis treatment. Keyneton is 80 kilometres from Adelaide so the constituent is not eligible to receive assistance with transport costs through the Patients Assistance Transport Scheme, because patients, as we know, must travel over 100 kilometres for treatment to be eligible for that. These cases are just a couple that have been brought to my attention and there are many more. I raised the lack of dialysis facilities with the Minister for Health last year and he provided the following response:

Planning work is being undertaken which recommends the establishment of two satellite dialysis sites in the inner rural region (Barossa and Mount Lofty Ranges). The highest priority recommended site is Gawler. The site was chosen as it was the most effective way of addressing the distances travelled by patients living not just in the Barossa areas but also around Gawler, Two Wells, Virginia and Kapunda. SA Health is pursuing funding opportunities to facilitate the establishment of a renal dialysis service in Gawler. (24 December 2011).

I question this. The people in the Barossa would be pleased to have one at Gawler, because it certainly would be a lot closer to them. I would suggest that, because the Gawler facility is only 12 minutes from the Lyell McEwin, it would serve a lot more people in the right area if it was in the Barossa because the people in Gawler only have to drive down the road those few minutes to be at the Lyell McEwin.

I have recently written to the minister again seeking an update as to how this work is progressing but to date have not received a response. The Barossa needs to have its own dialysis service, although a Gawler service would reduce travelling time for those from the Barossa region who need to access dialysis treatment. It is an interim stopgap measure. The Barossa needs its own service. The business case into a new Barossa health facility recommends that dialysis service be part of a new hospital facility in the Barossa. The need has been demonstrated but we know that that hospital is a little way off yet—I still hope we get something before I retire—and so, therefore, is the dialysis.

Way back in 2005, the Barossa Lions Club raised \$23,000 to put towards the provision of two dialysis chairs in the Barossa. I made strong representations, seven years ago, but to no avail. I am not sure if the money is still available. I hope it is. I am sure it could be reconstituted if we got the green light on that. It is clear that there needs to be increased services at existing dialysis locations and dialysis offered in new locations across country South Australia to meet demand.

I have a constituent in Angaston who has his own facility at home, a wonderful spouse to support him and he is quite comfortable with that. He is extremely lucky because he is able to access that type of service, but not all people can. Most of us would take the freedom we have to move about and live our lives for granted, but if you had to front up three days a week for dialysis and travel two or three hours to get there, I do not think I could cope with that and I do not know how other members would.

It is clear, from the response to my survey, that the renal dialysis service available to residents in the Barossa region is not adequate and is resulting in patients and their carers having to travel long distances for treatment, and I am certain this situation is replicated in other country areas. There is one particular well known person from the Barossa. He is a South Australian and Australian icon who now has to access dialysis three times a week. I will not name him but you would all know him, he is extremely well known, his face is on most wine bottles. I feel for his family, particularly his wife who has had her life turned upside down, and she is an extremely busy person anyway. She has now had her week reduced by three days because he has to have access to dialysis in Adelaide for three days a week.

It is shocking to expect people who are so very ill to travel such long distances on a regular basis to receive treatment. I hope the house will not only support this motion but that the government will hear the plea and help the community. The community are very much into self-help. If the government said yes I am sure the community would rally and support it, with not only verbal support but also financial support. I urge the house to support the motion.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Piccolo.

[Sitting suspended from 12:57 to 14:00]

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Members, I draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of a group of members of the Rural and Regional Committee of the Victorian parliament. They are Paul Weller MP, Geoff Howard MP, Ian Trezise MP, Andrew Katos MP, and two of their staff. Welcome to our parliament. I hope members will be on their best behaviour for you here today. Welcome. It is nice to see you here.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

House of Assembly—Chamber Remediation Report October 2012

By the Minister for Business Services and Consumers (Hon. J.R. Rau)—

Barring Orders pursuant to the Liquor Licensing Act—Report 2011-12

Club One (SA)—Annual Report 2011-12

Gaming Machines Act 1992—Annual Report 2011-12

Independent Gambling Authority—Annual Report 2011-12

By the Treasurer (Hon. J.J. Snelling)—

Senior Judge of the Industrial Relations Court and President of the Industrial Relations Commission—Annual Report 2011-12

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

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency—Annual Report 2011-12

Food Act—Annual Report 2011-12

By the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse (Hon. J.D. Hill)—

Principal Community Visitor—Annual Report 2011-12

By the Minister for Police (Hon. J.M. Rankine)—

Hydroponics Industry Control Act 2009—Annual Report 2011-12

Protective Security Act 2007—Annual Report 2011-12

Witness Protection Act 1996—Annual Report 2011-12

By the Minister for Correctional Services (Hon. J.M. Rankine)—

Correctional Services Advisory Council—Annual Report 2011-12

By the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation (Hon. P. Caica)—

Premier's Climate Change Council—Response to the Advice Provided

River Murray Act 2003—

Annual Report 2011-12

Supporting Documents Annual Report 2011-12

By the Minister for Education and Child Development (Hon. G. Portolesi)—

Guardian for Children and Young People—Annual Report 2011-12

CHILD PROTECTION

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development)
(14:04): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Clearly, members are aware that I advised the house yesterday of my intention to establish an independent review into a serious matter concerning child abuse and the protection of children. The matter has rightly attracted community concern, and I again make it quite clear that, as Minister for Education and Child Development, my primary concern is the protection and wellbeing of children. I have also made it clear that I acknowledge the importance of the community's right to know, and for parents to be supported in the care and wellbeing of their children.

I reiterate today that we must strike this balance for the community to be assured that allegations are properly investigated in a way that allows the best possible chance of successful prosecution, and that, first and foremost, we protect children. I wish to advise the house today that I have commissioned an eminent former Justice of the Supreme Court of South Australia, the honourable Justice Bruce DeBelle AO QC, to undertake this review.

I have requested that Justice DeBelle carry out this review to specifically examine the events and circumstances surrounding the nondisclosure to the school community of allegations of sexual assault committed by the then director of the out of school hours care service at this Adelaide metropolitan school against a child in his care in 2010.

The review will consider the actions of all relevant agencies and make recommendations relating to the actions of the parties involved, and the procedures and processes that should be in place in these circumstances.

I have requested that this independent review commence as soon as possible, with a view to it being completed by the start of 2013. As a community, our shared objective must be to ensure that we do everything we can to support parents and families in caring for and protecting their children, and I expect the outcomes of this review will further that aim.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr ODENWALDER (Little Para) (14:07): I bring up the 462nd report of the committee, entitled Rail Revitalisation—Electrification of the Seaford and Tonsley Lines.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Mr ODENWALDER: I bring up the 463rd report of the committee, entitled Goodwood Junction Rail Grade Separation.

Report received and ordered to be published.

QUESTION TIME

CHILD PROTECTION

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:08): My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development. Will the minister's review, announced today, include an examination of all actions of all relevant ministers and ministerial staff, as well as all relevant agencies, as stated in her ministerial statement and, if not, why not?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:08): Of course it will.

EMIRATES AIRLINES

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (14:08): Can the Premier inform the house of any progress in the government's efforts to attract new airlines to South Australia?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Can we have some quiet, please; I can hardly hear.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Premier, Minister for State Development) (14:09): I thank the honourable member for this question, and I am delighted to inform the house of a new era for South Australia which will begin in a few hours' time. I understand that the first flight, Emirates EK440 departing Dubai, is currently in the air and, at last check, is going to arrive in Adelaide at 9pm. For the next three months, there will be an Emirates connection—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: For the next three months, there will be an Emirates connection between Adelaide and the world four times a week. From February, it will be daily.

Emirates is the world's fastest-growing airline. It already has 130 destinations worldwide. Its choice to connect Adelaide directly to its network is a decisive recognition of our outstanding and expanding connections with the world. Emirates is not doing it by halves. Not only is it moving to daily connections in three months' time but it is also using the Boeing 777-300ER aircraft for its flight here, and I am advised that these will be the biggest aircraft to service Adelaide.

What is more, the recent code-sharing agreement between Emirates and Qantas will mean that Adelaide will be directly linked by international flights to all of the destinations of both airlines from 1 April, regardless of whether the booking is with Emirates or Qantas. It will make Adelaide and South Australia much more accessible for business people from the Middle East and Europe, with Emirates' global network adding a number of cities you can fly to with only one stop.

This is something we have been working towards for some time. It is a vindication of the directions this government has set for creating the best possible future for South Australia. Emirates has choices, and it has made the positive choice to make Adelaide one of its destinations. Apart from improving our connection to the world—and I know the leader is very keen to talk South Australia down; that is all we hear her do—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Can members stop talking across the chamber, please?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Apart from improving our connection to the world, this decision will also bring great benefit to South Australians here at home. The South Australian Tourism Commission estimates that daily Emirates flights will bring \$40 million a year into the state's economy in direct spending and it is expected to generate in the order of 200 new jobs. I am looking forward to spending some time with the senior representatives of Emirates tomorrow.

The fact that they have taken the trouble to mark this new beginning by coming here on the first Emirates flight to Adelaide confirms the significance of their decision and their commitment to Adelaide. It is a vote of confidence in South Australia and a vote of confidence in the directions that we have set for the state. This is a very exciting day for South Australia.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:12): My question is again to the Minister for Education and Child Development. For how long and at how many other locations in the South Australian education system did convicted sex offender Mark Christopher Harvey work prior to his arrest, and have parents at those locations been notified and, if not, why not?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:12): I am very happy, if it is appropriate, bearing in mind the things I have outlined in this place before—the desire not to prejudice any ongoing investigation or prosecution, the desire to protect children at the heart of these investigations and the desire for parents and communities to know—to come back to the leader having taken advice in relation to that matter.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Unley, order!

GUN AMNESTY

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (14:13): Can the Attorney-General provide the house with a summary of the recent gun amnesty which ended yesterday?

The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:13): I thank the honourable member for his question. Members might recall that on 1 August this year we announced a three-month gun amnesty period. That amnesty period coincided with the introduction of new firearms legislation in South Australia, which will mean that people involved in firearms offences, particularly those involved in violent offences involving firearms that are illegal or unregistered, will face very stiff penalties, almost invariably involving a term of imprisonment.

Those two things—that is, the offences and the amnesty—were announced simultaneously, and I am delighted to report that this year's amnesty was the most successful amnesty ever conducted in South Australia. In fact, as of 30 October, in excess of 2,783 firearms

were surrendered to South Australia Police. Indeed, the count as of today put it almost at the 3,000 mark. This is more than 1,000 above the numbers recovered from any previous amnesty. This means that that number of nearly 3,000 firearms are now off our streets. It also means that those 3,000 firearms, which might have been lying around someone's home not properly secured and therefore available to be stolen and used by people in criminal activities, are no longer there to be stolen or used for those purposes.

This group included 146 handguns; it included 2,193 class A or B firearms—and, before you ask me, the answer is, air rifles, single or double-barrelled shotguns, revolving-chamber rifles and centre-fire rifles; and 93 class C or D firearms, which includes such things as self-loading shotguns, pump-action shotguns and self-loading rim-fire rifles. As mentioned, this total of nearly 3,000 firearms have been delivered to various police stations across the state. These firearms will now be destroyed by SAPOL.

The government thanks the owners of these unregistered firearms for doing the right thing and taking advantage of this three-month amnesty period. As I said before, this amnesty goes on top of recently introduced laws to combat firearm-related violence here in South Australia. Just to reiterate some of the consequences of those changes, we now have penalties for possessing an unregistered or illegal firearm of up to \$50,000 or imprisonment for up to 10 years.

The laws also address community concern that police officers' lives have been endangered by people who are willing to fire guns at them. We now have a specific offence concerning shooting a firearm at a police officer. A person who harms a police officer with a firearm, whether intentionally or recklessly, is looking at a maximum penalty of up to 25 years' imprisonment.

Additionally, in cases where the harm is particularly serious, the court can exceed the maximum penalty, and there is no need to establish that the defendant actually intended to cause serious injury or harm to the police officer. If the shot does not hit a police officer, firing a shot at an officer, whether intentionally or recklessly, now attracts a maximum penalty of up to 10 years. I would like to acknowledge the great work of SAPOL in conducting this firearms amnesty for 2012 and their commitment to reducing crime here in South Australia.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:17): My question is, again, to the Minister for Education and Child Development. Is there a protocol in her department that the minister's office is automatically notified of any incident of sexual assault at a public school site?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:17): I am advised that the answer to that question is no. We have a critical incident reporting policy, and so critical incidents are reported. That is very different to the incident that occurred in 2010—very, very different.

We have a number of policies and practices in place. For instance, we have a memorandum between DECD and SAPOL that provides a framework within which both organisations can work; we have a Child Protection in Schools; Early Childhood Education and Care Services policy; we have protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people; responding to problem sexual behaviour in children and young people; suicide prevention guidelines; Keeping Them Safe; and responding to abuse and neglect.

There are arrangements between my advisers and the department about the nature of communications that they have. I am happy to come back to this place—

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Well, if you would like a responsible answer, I will come back to you with precisely the nature of the information that is exchanged. Media queries, for instance, are commonplace. The situation in 2010 is a very, very specific example.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:19): I have a supplementary question, Madam Speaker. Can the minister advise whether there is a protocol that any incident that may attract media attention is automatically notified to the minister's office?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:19): There are lots and lots of communications between my office, between the media unit of

the department and people in my office and I will report back to you on the practices that are in place between them.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson.

MCLAREN VALE AND DISTRICTS WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson) (14:19): My question is to the Minister for Health and Ageing. Can the minister update the house on the funding arrangements for the McLaren Vale hospital?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Arts) (14:20): I thank the member for Mawson for his question and I acknowledge his strong advocacy work in his electorate on behalf of the McLaren Vale & Districts War Memorial Hospital. Indeed, he and I attended a meeting with the board of the hospital on Friday of last week where we discussed the issues with the hospital.

As members would know, the recent reports done into the health budget recommended some changes to the arrangements we have in place with the McLaren Vale hospital. We currently fund the McLaren Vale hospital about \$1.5 million a year. That is effectively to have open 10 public beds and pay for some surgical procedures, as I understand it. The recommendation to us was that we should review whether or not we should continue to fund those functions and whether or not we could do them within our own services.

At the time the report came down I said I would ask the department to look at other options rather than de-funding and to see whether or not we could get better value for money from the hospital. The member for Mawson, I have to say, has been tireless in his efforts to make sure that the views of the McLaren Vale community, in relation to this, have been heard and he has also advised his constituents—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: He is a good member and I agree with the members on the other side who have said that. This included advising constituents of their opportunities to provide feedback through the consultation process that health was undertaking in relation to the reviews. He, of course, liaised with the McLaren Vale hospital board and met with me on a number of occasions to raise his and their concerns.

I met with the board, as I said, last week, and I was able to advise them—and I advise the house—that we would continue funding at the same level in relation to the funds that we give to the hospital but I said we would want to get better value for money from the funds that we were providing. In fact, I said we would work with the hospital and make sure that we have a greater use of the available beds.

The principal way that we would want to do this is to help transfer patients from Flinders and Noarlunga, but perhaps other beds as well in RAH and other hospitals—depending where the people live—who have finished with their acute level care but need some subacute care or rehabilitation which might be provided at the McLaren Vale hospital. I said to them that they should view their relationship with us as a customer rather than as a government funder and the relationship should really be on that kind of basis. I said if we could do this properly, there is no reason, in fact, in future, why we couldn't expand the amount of provision that is there. So this funding could, in fact, be expanded over time.

I think the board was very happy with that arrangement. It will mean some changes; they will need to gear up in a different way for the kind of patients that we would want to have transferred there so it will mean some operational changes but they seem to be very much up for that. Of course, we are very pleased to maintain that sort of arrangement.

McLaren Vale hospital will play a role in the changes to improve the efficiencies of the overall budget for the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: There is a smattering of comments, Madam Speaker. I can assure members on the other side, I can't hear a word they are saying; I can just hear that they are speaking. I would say to them, if they could rest their own voices, or, alternatively, they can ask me a question in an orderly fashion and I would be delighted to answer them.

As I was saying, McLaren Vale hospital will be part of the process of ensuring that we make budget savings in the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network by providing services to that network in a cost-effective way and I look forward to continuing to work with the hospital. Just in relation to the types of patients we would envisage—

The SPEAKER: Minister, I am sorry, your time has expired.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (14:25): My question is to the Premier. Following the Premier's comments yesterday in relation to the incident of child sex abuse at the western suburbs primary school, and I quote, 'I don't recall it at all,' has the Premier since sought further advice on this matter and can he inform the house whether he was advised of this case of child sexual abuse when he was the education minister?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Premier, Minister for State Development) (14:25): Yes, I have and, no, I have not.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide) (14:25): My question is to the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy. Can the minister inform the house about the benefits of renewable energy to our economy and identify any threats to these benefits?

Mr Venning: Soft question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Manufacturing, Innovation and Trade, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy, Minister for Small Business) (14:25): Thank you, Ivan. I thank the member for Schubert for his support for this area, and I thank the member for her question and her support for renewable energy. I think it is fair to say that renewable energy is a vital part of South Australia's future prosperity both environmentally and economically. There are currently 15 fully operational wind farms in South Australia, with a total installed capacity of more than 1,200 megawatts. This accounts for almost 50 per cent of Australia's entire operating wind farm capacity.

The Australian Energy Market Operator has noted a further 2,600 megawatts of wind projects in South Australia are under development, which will bring more investment and growth to our state. This includes a \$439 million 270-megawatt Snowtown stage 2 wind farm, which commenced construction just last week. This project will create 150 to 200 jobs during construction and a further 15 to operate the wind farm. In fact, over the past decade the wind industry has created approximately 840 direct jobs. This government is overseeing capital expenditure on wind projects totalling almost \$3 billion. During 2010-11 renewable energy accounted for 22 per cent of this state's power generation.

The honourable member asked about threats to this vital industry. A clear and present danger exists in this industry through the unconcealed division within the Liberal Party and not just on leadership but on renewable energy policy.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Come in, Brutus.

The SPEAKER: Order! Point of order.

Mr MARSHALL: Debate, Madam Speaker. He is straying from the substance of the question.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. No, I do not uphold that yet because I am not quite sure what he is going to say, but I will refer him back to the question. Minister.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MARSHALL: I mean, the Liberal Party; how can that be anything other than debate?

The SPEAKER: Order! Thank you. Sit down. Minister, I refer you back to the question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: At the end of the previous sitting week the member for Stuart moved a motion in this house for a select committee to be set up to investigate the viability of a concentrated solar thermal power plant to be built in Port Augusta, and I commend him again. I

commend him for this and reiterate the government's support for the committee. I especially commend him when he says, 'The renewable energy technology—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! That's silly. Minister.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Don't worry, Brutus, I'll get to you in a minute. It's coming, don't worry, I haven't ignored you. I especially commend him when he says that—

Mr MARSHALL: Point of order: debate—again, very obvious debate.

The SPEAKER: No, he was responding to interjections. There is no point of order. Minister.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It's coming, don't worry. This is what he says:

It is an important opportunity for a new manufacturing industry in our state and all members of both sides of the chamber would certainly welcome that.

I commend him for those remarks. I like his optimism, but the reality is he is probably alone with those opinions. In a newspaper article on 6 January this year, the Leader of the Opposition said in respect of wind power, and I quote:

Wind is probably the least efficient and most unreliable of all green energy sources.

She is then reported in the article as saying that she would not be fazed if the Liberal Party policy on wind caused a drop in turbine investment. The opposition is not fazed about a decline in regional jobs, not fazed about a decline in manufacturing jobs. While members opposite might not be fazed about the development of this industry, the government is. We are the renewable energy state—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —led by a government united in leadership, united in its policy, and proud of its achievements to date.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, Brutus?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MARSHALL: The minister's time for this question has expired.

The SPEAKER: No, he's still got 27 seconds left.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Oh well, never mind, Brutus; can't count and can't tell the time.

The SPEAKER: Order, minister!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We will continue to welcome investment in renewable technology and support ideas that seek to build our existing renewables platform. I call on the opposition to unite behind the member for Stuart. At least he is an honourable man, joined by other honourable men on the backbench, unlike the unhonourable man on the front bench.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PEDERICK: Point of order: you are not allowed impugn another member in this place and I ask that he withdraw.

The SPEAKER: I would ask the minister to withdraw that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: If I offended Brutus, I withdraw.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GARDNER: Point of order: the minister continually defies your rulings and he has just done so again.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! No, he has withdrawn that statement. I am not sure about the 'Brutus' bit but—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I also point out to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that when there are interjections or a point of order the clock is stopped in front of me here, so that is why your time and my time are different.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:30): My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development. Does the minister agree with the police commissioner's view, as expressed on radio this morning, that, had parents been notified of the incident of child sex abuse at the western suburbs primary school, this may have assisted the ongoing police investigation?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:31): The issues, as highlighted by the member for Unley, are the issues that I expect Justice DeBelle to get to the very heart of.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: And I have to say—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Listen to the minister's response.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I have to say that I am the first one in this place to praise the work that is led by the commissioner and to praise the work of our teachers and our child protection people in undertaking this very complex work.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:31): Supplementary question: does the minister then accept that, by not notifying parents of the incident of child sex abuse at a western suburbs primary school, this may have impeded the police investigation?

The SPEAKER: That is actually another question; however, minister.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:32): I am very happy to answer that question. It is full of speculation on what might have happened and what might not have happened, because the events have now transpired, and the main thing that we must be guided by in this place is the care and protection of children. And can I tell you—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Minister.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: And we must be motivated by this. We must also remember that a successful prosecution did occur, and that is very, very important.

VEHICLE SAFETY TECHNOLOGY

Mr SIBBONS (Mitchell) (14:32): My question is to the Minister for Road Safety. Can the minister inform the house about the government's efforts to promote the latest in vehicle safety technology on our roads?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Police, Minister for Correctional Services, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (14:33): I thank the member for Mitchell for this question. In an Australian-first event today, South Australian private and public fleet buyers of vehicles are seeing and testing the latest in vehicle safety technology from world-renowned companies on the Clipsal 500 circuit.

Everything on display is designed to prevent crashes, reduce injuries and save lives. The adoption of this technology will help achieve the government's target of less than 80 road fatalities each year by the end of the decade.

It is hard to believe that seatbelts have only been compulsory since the 1970s, yet our annual road toll has already dropped by around 75 per cent since 1974. Improvements in vehicle technology, road infrastructure, police enforcement, licensing, speed limits and other road safety policies are all making our roads safer.

It is vital to encourage fleet buyers to buy into road safety. Annual fleet sales in Australia represent around 50 per cent of all new vehicle registrations and 75 per cent of all Australian manufactured passenger vehicles produced each year. Encouraging fleet buyers to adopt this safer technology not only means motorists will enjoy the benefit of safer second-hand vehicles when a fleet car is sold but it also encourages manufacturers to include this as standard features for non-fleet buyers.

The event is also being attended by representatives of the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP), the Centre for Automotive Safety Research, manufacturers and technology suppliers. Some of the new systems being demonstrated today include systems that automatically prevent vehicles from reversing over people and objects, and systems that monitor road conditions and link information to braking and detect when a driver is drowsy.

Providing all South Australians with the best safety information available when buying a vehicle is a critical part of this government's Towards ZERO Together strategy. In 2010, 41 per cent of new cars sold in South Australia received a five-star ANCAP safety rating. The latest figures in 2012 indicate this figure now exceeds 60 per cent—well ahead of the national average.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:36): My question is for the Minister for Police. Does the minister agree with the police commissioner's view that the parents at the western suburbs primary school should have been told of the incident of sex abuse that occurred at the western suburbs primary school?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Police, Minister for Correctional Services, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (14:36): I certainly agree with the views of the Minister for Education that parents have the right to know about situations in which their children may be in danger.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: She said that yesterday.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, you don't listen.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am not sure how many questions this minister is meant to be answering, but there was a question, which she is answering.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I agree with the Minister for Education, I agree with the Premier and I agree with the police commissioner.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Transport, order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ashford.

GOVERNMENT POSTAL SERVICES CONTRACT

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (14:37): My question is directed to the Minister for the Public Sector. Minister, can you inform the house about the benefits and discounts that can be accessed by customers through the establishment of an across-government postal services contract?

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Finance, Minister for the Public Sector) (14:37): I am pleased to inform the house that, for the first time, a whole of government contract has been negotiated with Australia Post for the delivery of postal services, as distinct from each agency and department negotiating its own agreement. This contract will give an estimated saving to the government of \$573,000 over its three-year term—

An honourable member: How much was that?

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN: —\$573,000 over its three-year term with a total expenditure estimated at \$44.1 million, which is a very large amount. As part of the new contract, agencies will have access to the maximum available discount for Australia Post's optional services.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much background noise. If members want to chat, please go outside of the chamber. Minister.

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN: The services include parcel and courier deliveries, international mail and print post for publications. The new arrangements mean that, for the first time, all 600-plus South Australian government account holders will have access to the best possible rates available from Australia Post, no matter how small their individual expenditures may be. In addition, agency customers will have improved access to Australia Post's publicly available bulk mail discounts. The contract also secures improvements to existing payment procedures imposed by Australia Post, and most members in the house would be aware of those and the issues that they were causing for electorate offices; we have dealt with those. This will ultimately assist agencies to maximise value for money in the settlement of accounts.

This new arrangement proves the value of Shared Services and the centralised model for contract negotiation. As I earlier noted, agencies previously negotiated their own service contracts with Australia Post and lacked combined buying power to secure the best possible deal. This is just one of a number of contracts which have been negotiated by Shared Services. Recently I know they have brought substantial cost savings to government.

The house may recall the recent travel expenditure reduction which achieved \$891,000 in savings for airfares, accommodation and car hire over the six-month period from January to June 2012, compared with the same period last year. In the most recent three-month period, the savings are in excess of \$500,000 from June to September (the figures have just come through to me) compared with the previous period last year, so we have achieved a 10.1 per cent savings in travel expenses in the last three months.

In addition, the new across-government stationery contract will deliver an estimated saving to the government of \$5.36 million over the initial three-year term of that particular contract. I informed the house of the new across-government stationery contract on 5 September so it was surprising to hear the mock surprise and feigned outrage from the member for Unley this week—a contract that saves taxpayers' money and prevents fraud. I might add that the new contract was the outcome of a rigorous and—

The SPEAKER: Order! Point of order.

Mr MARSHALL: Point of order: he has not broken stride in this—

The SPEAKER: I do not know what clock you are using but I have 59 seconds left on the clock. I know time flies for you but he still has 59 seconds. Minister.

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN: I might add—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN: —the new contract to which I referred—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN: The new contract to which I referred was the outcome of a rigorous and prudentially certified tender process contested by eight South Australian located bidders. The contract for postal services highlights another example of the government's continued efforts to identify opportunities to maximise value for money and improve operational processes.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The SPEAKER: You can take it from the internet if you want to, deputy leader, but according to that there, he had 26 seconds left.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:43): My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development. Will the minister guarantee that no action will be taken by the government regarding any member of the school council community who releases details of the school council discussions in relation to the incident of sex abuse at the western suburbs primary school? The opposition has been advised that the school council members have been threatened by members of the department with the withdrawal of the indemnity if they release details of the incident to the school community.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:43): I take those allegations as made by the member for Unley very seriously, and these are the very questions I expect Justice DeBelle to get to the bottom of because, as you would well appreciate, Madam Speaker, I do not think the cause or the project of advancing child protection and advancing the safety of children in our community is helped by a he-said she-said argument that we are having at the moment. I have gone to a very serious member of our community, someone who has very good credentials and he is tasked with a very specific purpose to provide me with advice on what actually transpired in relation to this very specific matter, and I am confident that he will do that.

Mr PISONI: Madam Speaker, the question was whether she would guarantee indemnity for the members of governing council.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I cannot direct—

Mr PISONI: There was no answer. She is obviously complicit—

The SPEAKER: Thank you. You will sit down.

Mr PISONI: —as the Minister for Education—

The SPEAKER: Sit down!

Mr PISONI: —in shutting down the school council.

The SPEAKER: You will sit down or leave the chamber. The minister has answered the question in the manner she chooses and I cannot direct her to answer it in any other way.

The Hon. C.C. FOX: Madam Speaker, hello.

The SPEAKER: Is this a point of order?

The Hon. C.C. FOX: It is, yes. I have a point of order. The member for Unley keeps referring to other people as 'she'. I understand if he is using the word 'she' as a pronoun after the initial person, but the member for Unley must refer to the minister either by her title or by her electorate.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, minister.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. C.C. FOX: Well, I am going to hold myself back there.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. The minister will now sit down. I am sure the member is aware that he must refer to people by their title. The member for Ramsay.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right, order!

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: And the member for Unley will behave! Member for Ramsay.

STEM SKILLS

Ms BETTISON (Ramsay) (14:46): My question is to the Minister for Science and Information Economy. Can the minister inform the house about what the state government is doing to make the disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics more appealing as a career path for young Australians?

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for Recreation and Sport) (14:47): I thank the member for Ramsay for her question. I have spent quite a bit of time with her going over ways in which we can improve the levels of education in her electorate and I thank her for her involvement in those matters.

Our state's future prosperity will rely on nurturing a culture of innovation, and this means investing in skills which lead to jobs in the science, technology, engineering and maths fields. That is why the Weatherill Labor government has in place a strategy to do just that. Our science, technology, engineering and maths strategy (STEM strategy) aims to increase the number of people taking up STEM occupations to meet the needs of our local industries, including resources and defence.

Members would already be aware that under the state government's Skills for All initiative, STEM vocational education courses identified as priorities for the state are now fee free. We know that training people in these fields for future jobs is an investment in the future of South Australia, but equally important is encouraging interest in these fields at an early age. That is why the work of our teachers is so important.

I am delighted to be able to tell the house that one of our South Australian teachers has won the Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in Secondary Schools. Mrs Anita Trenwith, a teacher at Salisbury High School, was presented with the prize in Canberra last night. It includes a silver medallion, a lapel pin and a cash prize of \$50,000.

The Hon. C.C. Fox: Fifty thousand?

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: Quite a good prize. Mrs Trenwith has been teaching science for 15 years and changed teaching practices at her school to give students hands-on experience and valuable life skills. She has taken understanding science to a whole new level by rewriting the special education curriculum for science and agriculture at her school to incorporate real-life skills and experiences.

Educators like Mrs Trenwith are vitally important, as they are the people who make science interesting, innovative and exciting for the next generation. Teachers who go that extra mile and are genuinely passionate about their subject area make science come alive. They make a huge difference in inspiring our future scientists and researchers. I would like to place on record my congratulations to Mrs Trenwith as well as my appreciation for her hard work and dedication in encouraging interest among young people in the sciences as a career path. In doing so, she is helping to create the skilled workforce for a future that will deliver benefits for our state and for future generations.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:49): My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development. Will the minister guarantee that every document that in any way relates to the incident of child sex abuse at the western suburbs primary school has been forwarded to the Ombudsman, who is conducting an inquiry into this matter?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (14:49): I am not responsible, Madam Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am not responsible, Madam Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! You will listen to the answer. Order!

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: —for the conduct of the Ombudsman's inquiry; my department is. But, I have to say, I expect my department will comply with every single request that the Ombudsman makes of it. I seek to take this opportunity to reiterate that I am—and I said this yesterday over and over again in many different forums—in favour of full disclosure. In favour of full disclosure. And we are dealing with events that occurred nearly two years ago. So, it is important—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It is important that Justice DeBelle and the Ombudsman, who is undertaking an inquiry of his own kind, have every opportunity to do their work, and they will have that opportunity.

ELECTRONIC WASTE

Mr ODENWALDER (Little Para) (14:50): My question is to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation. What initiatives are underway to improve the management of electronic waste in South Australia?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: You asked this eight weeks ago!

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:50): I don't believe so.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: No, I don't believe so.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: I thank very much the honourable member for Little Para for his question. The responsible management of electronic waste is a high priority for—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: That still remains; it might be a different answer and a different question, but is a high priority for the South Australian government and is quite simply an issue of national and international concern. Old televisions, computers and other unwanted electronic items known as e-waste contain valuable resources such as tin, nickel, zinc, aluminium and copper. However, they can also contain material such as lead and mercury, which are potentially very harmful to the environment if not managed and disposed of appropriately.

Households often generate e-waste when they replace or upgrade old and unwanted equipment such as analogue televisions with newer digital televisions—

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: I find it very interesting that the newly elected deputy leader hasn't asked a question in his role for three days, and the reason he hasn't asked—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: The reason he has not asked a question, Madam Speaker, is that he believes he is the answer.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Point of order: standing order 98, Madam Speaker. The minister is now referring to the newly elected deputy leader and not to electronic waste, which the question was about.

The SPEAKER: Thank you; I will uphold that point of order.

The Hon. P. CAICA: He will be waste at some time, just not electronic waste. Recognising these products as a potential source of contamination, the government has introduced a landfill ban—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: —well, you are aware of the landfill ban; I know that, Iain; I am glad that you listen to things—on computer monitors and televisions, including components,

subassemblies and consumables that are part of the equipment when discarded, which took effect in metropolitan areas in September this year. A statewide ban will occur in 1 September 2013.

Under the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme—and I suppose it is interesting that we talk about recycling in the context of the opposition as well—but, Madam Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: They are interjecting, Madam Speaker, and I wish they would—

Ms Chapman: No, we're not; we're going to sleep over here. We have heard it all before.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, so have we. 'Ho-hum ho-hum,' that's right, from all of you. That's right. Under the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme, producers will be required to take responsibility for the management and recycling of end-of-life televisions and computers. This scheme, set for implementation by the end of 2013, is being regulated by the Australian government under the Product Stewardship Act and the Product Stewardship (Televisions and Computers) Regulations.

The organised collection and recycling of these products has already started in South Australia, with six sites established at North Plympton, Wingfield, Pooraka, Beverley, Trinity Gardens and Heathfield. Madam Speaker, services—

The Hon. I.F. Evans: That's five; Heathfield's a dump.

The Hon. P. CAICA: —will expand to the rest of the state by the end of 2013. At the state level, I have committed to supporting our communities with opportunities to recycle e-waste responsibly—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: It's six.

The Hon. P. CAICA: They do have trouble counting; that's right. The government, through Zero Waste SA, has provided funding to local councils for e-waste collection events to help recover unwanted e-waste and these programs have been highly successful. The state government's free e-waste drop-off program, held during May this year, in partnership with 13 inner regional councils, was an outstanding success, with a total of 1,039 tonnes of e-waste collected from 13 drop-off points, which included 16,583 TVs and 6,196 computers.

In September 2012, I announced \$200,000 in funding for infrastructure projects to support the safe collection, storage and handling, and recovery of e-waste. In addition, we are planning for an increase in the disposal of unwanted televisions in the lead-up to the digital television switchover in April next year and immediately afterwards. I have written to the commonwealth in regard to the need to have adequate collection sites available under the national recycling scheme for e-waste and also to seek its assistance to ensure that we can appropriately cater for the expected influx of e-waste.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! You went two seconds over, minister.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

HANDSHIN, MS M.

Mr MARSHALL (Norwood—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:55): Seeing as the government has invited me, I would like to ask a question. I am always happy to oblige this government. My question is to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation. Will the minister outline to the house full details of the selection which led to the appointment of Ms Mia Handshin as the presiding member of the EPA? Was the position advertised, how many people were considered or interviewed for this position and did the department recommend Mia Handshin for this role to cabinet or did they make any other recommendations?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

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): On this side, we actually do that. We talk to each other, we help each other, we are unified, we support each other.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! That is enough. You have had your fun.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Madam Speaker, they are very sensitive. Have a look around: you have seven former deputy leaders, more than they have women.

Mr MARSHALL: Point of order, Madam Speaker: the question was about the presiding member of the EPA, and I hope the minister will be able to answer and give full details.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I am sure your point of order was about debate. Minister, I refer you back to the question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Norwood, order!

The Hon. P. CAICA: The member for Norwood has a long way to go and I know he is pretty keen to get there. You know—

Mr PISONI: Point of order, Madam Speaker: he is deliberately defying your order. You asked him to answer the question and he is having a go.

The SPEAKER: For heaven's sake, sit down. There is no point of order.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! You will sit down or leave the chamber. There is no point of order. He has only started his comments. I refer the minister back to the question.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. When I say that he has got a long way to go—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs REDMOND: Point of order, Madam Speaker: how can a comment about any one on this side of the house possibly be relevant to the question that was asked of the minister about a failed Labor candidate being appointed to a senior role in this state?

The SPEAKER: Minister, I ask you to go back to the question now. You have made your point.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. What I was insinuating about the member for Norwood was that the process is—

Mrs REDMOND: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Listen to what he is saying now.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Cabinet made a decision—it is not unprecedented—very similar, as I understand it, to the process by which they appointed Jennifer Cashmore to the position of EPA chair, no different than other processes we have put in place. What I was alluding to was that he has got a long way to go because he does not understand the cabinet processes. What I will say is that Mia Handshin will be an outstanding chair of the EPA, I am sure even better than Jennifer Cashmore—

Mr MARSHALL: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! What is your point of order?

Mr MARSHALL: My point of order is relevance and the substance of the question. I specifically asked not about the merits of the candidate but about whether or not they were interviewed, whether other people were considered and whether or not there were other recommendations to cabinet—not the merits of the candidate.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. There is no point of order. Minister.

The Hon. P. CAICA: The process was in accordance with the act and the processes of cabinet and, indeed, no different than what had occurred before, not just on this appointment but previous appointments for the EPA. They had no problem when I appointed Rob Kerin to head up the transition of the regional development boards to Regional Development Australia. That was alright. She will be an outstanding chair.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, or I will call this question time to a close!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The member for Norwood persistently and repeatedly interjects and it is contrary to standing orders. It sits ill in his mouth to ask for standing orders to be observed.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Have you finished your answer? The member for Florey.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right, also!

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Croydon, order!

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, order!

HOUSTON, AIR CHIEF MARSHAL

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (14:59): I think it's time that rule 73 was brought in, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Defence Industries.

Members interjecting:

Ms BEDFORD: 73!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms BEDFORD: Can the minister inform the house about the recent appointment of Air Chief Marshal Houston AC, AFC to the Defence SA Advisory Board?

The SPEAKER: I think that was to the Treasurer.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:00): They didn't advertise.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: You didn't advertise.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: No. I would like to thank the member for Florey for the question. I was delighted to welcome Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston AC, AFC to the Defence SA Advisory Board last week. The appointment is for an initial term of two years. As many members will be aware, Air Chief Marshal Houston enjoyed a distinguished 41-year military career, culminating in his appointment as chief of Defence Force from 2005 to 2011 following four years as chief of Air Force.

This is a crucial time for the defence sector. Mid next year Defence is planning to release a Defence white paper, which will be a critical strategic document. Despite budget constraints shaping the future of the defence industry, there remain significant opportunities for South Australia to participate in multibillion dollar projects over the medium term. These include the Future

submarines and a range of other naval ship replacement programs, plus Army's major vehicle fleet replacements.

Air Chief Marshal Houston's experience and expertise will be a valuable asset to the state as we continue to grow South Australia's defence presence and build a sustainable defence industry. Defence is a key sector for South Australia, currently employing 27,000 people (both direct and indirect). It is a core element of this state's economic development plan. It is clear that the defence industry is the foundation of our advanced manufacturing future, and that is why we are totally committed to driving sustainable defence industry growth and attracting additional defence activity to South Australia.

The Defence SA Advisory Board, chaired by another former chief of Defence Force, General Peter Cosgrove, AC, MC plays an important role in counselling the state on realistic targets and goals for Defence personnel growth and sustainable defence industries. Air Chief Marshal Houston's offer of service is very much appreciated. This government values the skills and experience of all our servicemen and women, and we believe that they make a valuable contribution to our community both during and following their time in uniform.

FIRE DANGER SEASON

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (15:02): My question is to the Minister for Emergency Services. With the fire danger season approaching, has the minister finalised a memorandum of understanding with local government regarding the availability of heavy machinery to assist in firefighting activities, and will council staff who are not members of CFS or SES be covered for accident or injury while undertaking these duties?

At present, any local government employee other than a registered CFS or SES volunteer who attends an emergency situation is legally deemed to be working under the care and control of council while actually under the direction of the emergency service incident controller. This leaves local government employers exposed to workplace responsibilities without the ability to control them, yet the use of local government employees and equipment is commonly relied upon in many emergency situations, particularly fires.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE (Wright—Minister for Police, Minister for Correctional Services, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (15:03): I thank the member for Stuart for his question. I have had numerous letters from the Local Government Association seeking clarification on the status of council workers operating equipment during an emergency. I have sought crown law advice. I have conveyed that crown law advice to the Local Government Association, I think, on two occasions now, and that is that those people working under direction of the regional commander are covered, as are other volunteers.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr GARDNER (Morialta) (15:04): My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development with responsibility for child protection. Did Families SA refer the 2010 child sex abuse case at the western suburbs primary school to the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee? This morning on radio the police commissioner confirmed that SAPOL officers complied with mandatory notification obligations and reported the events to the then department families and communities in December 2010.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley—Minister for Education and Child Development) (15:05): I am sure that the member for Morialta would appreciate that this is a question that I would need to take on notice. A mandatory notification—

Mr Pisoni: You had a full briefing yesterday.

The SPEAKER: Member for Unley, order!

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: —is made to the Child Abuse Report Line. The Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee is a different body altogether.

Ms Chapman: Yes, that's what the question was. Did you refer to them or not?

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister has said she will take it on notice. The member for Davenport.

SA WATER

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport) (15:05): My question is to the Treasurer. Following SA Water's CEO's comments that future water prices are to be kept to inflation, how does this reconcile with SA Water's submission to ESCOSA seeking approval to increase their spend on water infrastructure by some \$194 million, or 21 per cent, above the government's 2012-13 water pricing submission to ESCOSA?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:06): There will always be argy-bargy between the regulator and SA Water over the amount of capital spend that SA Water want to do and the amount that ESCOSA thinks reasonable; so SA Water have put forward a submission. ESCOSA will make a determination about what is a reasonable amount of capital expenditure. However, as the government has consistently said, our expectation from next year on, with water prices, is for them to go up roughly in line with inflation. We should not see any of the significant water increases that we have seen over the last number of years.

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (15:06): My question is to the Minister for Health and Ageing. Can the minister advise the house what disciplinary measures have been undertaken in relation to the death last year of Ben Witham at the Women's and Children's Hospital on 24 May 2011? Ben Witham died tragically last year at the Women's and Children's Hospital after being left for 17 hours without proper diagnosis of the cause, which was a perforated stomach. Last month, the Coroner stated that the care provided was inadequate for the acute and severe nature of his condition.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Arts) (15:07): I thank the member for his question. On 29 October the Northern Territory Coroner handed down his finding into the death of Ben Witham. I would like to extend my sincerest sympathies to his family. The facts are, as I understand it, that on 26 April 2011 Mr Witham was transferred from the Royal Darwin Hospital by CareFlight to the Women's and Children's Hospital and admitted to the paediatric care unit in a critically unwell condition.

The Northern Territory Coroner found that Mr Witham was wrongly diagnosed and did not receive the further investigations or surgical review the symptoms demanded. However, the Coroner considered that this does not appear to have arisen from any systemic failing, and he did not make any recommendations to SA Health. The hospital has received the Coroner's findings and is considering them in the ongoing review of the events surrounding Ben's death and his treatment.

SA Health is finalising a new strategy, which includes policy directive guidelines and an education framework to better recognise and manage acute patient deterioration. Six new observation charts have been developed, specifically tailored to meet the needs of different patient groups; of these, four refer to different child age groups. This strategy will be launched next month, December 2012.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (15:08): Sorry, I did not know that I was getting another question right now; that's good.

The SPEAKER: You're lucky; you got it by two seconds.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs REDMOND: My question is also to the Minister for Health and Ageing. Can the minister confirm that the Royal Adelaide Hospital has advised that they may need to commence ambulance ramping and associated industrial action due to emergency department overcrowding?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister for the Arts) (15:09): I understand the nature of this question; it follows on from a message—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: It follows on from a message that was circulated by the ambulance union about a busy period at, as I understand it, the Flinders Medical Centre last Tuesday.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Unley, do you want to leave the chamber? Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: This was a serious question; I am trying to answer it and not in any particular way to play politics with it. The ambulance union put out a circular to its members I think this morning where it raised some issues about Flinders Medical Centre from last Tuesday. I have sought advice from my department about that. It is speculated that other places may have issues in the future. I have not been given advice that the member asked me about concerning the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

It is not the policy of the department or the government to cause patients to be kept in ambulances while issues are worked on in the emergency department, but from time to time people spend longer in the ambulances than the recommended time frame. Generally, the vast majority of patients are transferred from the ambulance into the emergency department within the recommended time frames. There are always some outliers, and of course we do everything we can to ensure that they are as few in number as possible.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr PISONI (Unley) (15:11): I will use this opportunity to read into *Hansard* a letter I received today from a former governing council member at the western suburbs school that has been the subject of media and parliamentary debate this week. It says:

As a governing council member at the school in question during 'that' period (2009-11), I am well aware of the 'pressure' placed upon council by the Education Dept. (DECD) and the school's leadership. We were first told that we couldn't say anything in order to protect the victim or influence court proceedings. I was later made aware that the victim's family had also had 'pressure' placed on them from the department to stay quiet.

As a governing council I believe we were undertrained and unaware of what we could do and couldn't do in this situation. Furthermore, individually, we were not a wealthy group and could not pay any legal costs if it came to that, so we largely and begrudgingly took the advice of the Dept. and school's leadership. I believe that the school's leadership were also inadequately prepared to deal with this obvious conflict of interest and thus, chose to conform to the advice it was given from DECD.

There was a strong possibility that there was more than one victim. Once the perpetrator was found guilty in this initial case, several GC members again pushed to make the parents of children who attended OSHC while the perpetrator was director,

- aware of what had happened,
- how to approach their children about the topic or set up interviews with professionals in the field, and
- provide counselling and support for any families affected.

Again GC came up against a brick wall. That attitude has continued to this point. I also believe that the officers of the Department, had mentioned that any disclosure could damage the school's reputation and make it very difficult to find a good principal (the school has yet to appoint a principal for next year...). I was told DECD had suggested that any disclosure against the direction of DECD could influence the indemnity afforded to the GC placing every member under the threat of possible litigation.

In my opinion DECD (and in the end, the school's leadership) were (misguidedly) more interested in protecting the government's, the departments' (DECD), the schools'...and personal reputations, and exposure to litigation rather than the welfare of the school community and in particular, those victims of the perpetrator.

There is no published policy on how DECD schools should deal with such a situation so I would suspect that this response was instigated by certain individuals in the DECD, backed up by the heavily funded Risk Management section of the DECD/Government. The irony is that government (and public) are justifiably appalled at the lack of transparency involved in similar incidents occurring within the Catholic Church and its educational institutions.

At the end of the last school term (term 3), the school decided to run an 'in-school' 'Paedophile Recognition' program with all students (without parent pre-approval or prior knowledge). I am aware of new victims coming forward as a consequence of this program. Almost 2 years after the perpetrator was charged! Who knows what kind of 'demons' these kids have been grappling with alone, all this time? Who knows how much anguish parents have gone through not understanding or knowing how to deal with behaviour changes within their children in this time. How long was the school and DECD and the individuals involved, prepared to let this go on for?

Other questions must also be asked and answered, and the answers published. For example,

- how was it that this individual was not identified as an inappropriate candidate for such a position?...
- are there checks and balances in place to lessen the threats posed by a possible abuser in such a position?...
- why didn't those checks and balances work if they are indeed present,
- are governing councillors (i.e. community members) and school leaders adequately equipped knowledge-wise and aptitude-wise to govern all aspects of a school including..[out of ours school care], Canteen, Budget, Human resources etc.?
- is there a DECD policy pertaining to incidents of 'sexual abusive' by staff members and students?
- is the governance model for public schools working to the satisfaction of the all interested parties but particularly the community without which a school would not exist?

There are many other questions that need to be asked and answered and I am not sure that anything but an independent inquiry is required as the findings could compromise the Government's, or DECD's positions. Without independence, it is more than likely to end in a DECD's officer or employee being made the 'fall guy'...

(Name withheld)

former Governing Councillor of school in question.

WATSON, MR J.F.

The Hon. L.R. BREUER (Giles) (15:16): Today I am speaking of John Francis Watson, who passed away peacefully on 18 October 2012 in Whyalla, and I thank Father Jim Monaghan from the Whyalla Catholic parish for many of my words today. John was a man of deep faith and community service in the city of Whyalla—a wise, kind and generous union man who made a great difference to the lives of many people in Whyalla.

He was born on 27 December 1924 and was the son of Thomas and Beatrice Watson, nee Cummings. He attended the Iron Knob Public School, graduating as dux of the school. The family moved to Whyalla in 1941 and lived only three houses from me.

John took up an apprenticeship as an electrician. Not long after gaining his trade, he became the organiser for the Electrical Trades Union; however, a request was made that he transfer and take over as the organiser for the Federated Ironworkers Association. John recalled that this caused some resentment in the electricians' union. It was an unusual move to make—what some might have seen as a downward move—from a skilled workers' union to the union representing the labourers but it was in character for John Watson, who seemed throughout life to have a calling to serve, not to be served.

In the great post-war migrations, the FIA represented many migrant workers, especially from the then Yugoslavia. John befriended many new arrivals from Yugoslavia. John's care for and love of the Croatian workers and their families has left a permanent mark on their hearts. John had an office in the front of his bedroom in the family home where he could see people after hours.

The union movement faced difficult times in the era of a very strong BHP and abundant supply of labour throughout the 1950s. John remembers one union campaign where he sought to get BHP to provide a toilet for the men who worked adjacent to the wharf area. It was a campaign, as John would have said, 'crowned with success', with the installation of a new toilet for the workers, but it illustrates the real difficulties of ordinary working people in a less humane era.

John is remembered for his diligence in encouraging workers to join the union. He displayed a metal sign urging his fellow workers to 'Be Okay Today' by paying their union subscription. The tense politics of the 1950s within the labour movement in Australia, reflecting events around the world, led to the Industrial Groups—dedicated groups of unionists intent on maintaining democratic processes within the union movement against a perceived threat from communist ideology. John was a member of the Industrial Groups in Whyalla for a number of years.

John's service to his fellow workers extended to service for many years as secretary of the Combined Unions Council. He had many years of dedicated committee work in the Iron Triangle Industrial Planning Council, the Eyre Peninsula Cultural Trust, the Whyalla Economic Development Board, the Whyalla Hospital Board and St Teresa's Parish Pastoral Council, to name but a few of his committees.

Throughout his life, John found strength and inspiration in his Catholic faith and in the teachings of the popes concerning the dignity and rights of working people. As the late Pope John Paul II taught, 'The specific role of unions is to secure the just rights of workers within the framework of the common good of the whole of society.'

Upon retirement, John found a new vocation as a volunteer in the community, particularly in the Whyalla Hospital and in the residences of Whyalla Aged Care. He is remembered as bringing the *Whyalla News*, *The Advertiser* and the *Sunday Mail* to thousands of hospital patients, all at his own expense.

In the aged care homes he was often found feeding residents who might have missed out on lunch, with staff sometimes stretched thin. John also supported scores of charitable institutions. Having a first cousin named J.B. Cummings may have had something to do with John's interest in the racetrack. He followed Bart's horses diligently and enjoyed visits to the Melbourne Cup; and no doubt there will be some who will see a Bart Cummings horse as a sure thing this Spring Carnival if John has anything to do with it.

John won many awards in recognition of his community service and kindness but he never spoke about any of these things. Among his awards were the Order of Australia medal, a papal honour, and Whyalla Citizen of the Year. John will be sadly missed by the people of Whyalla. He was a great citizen of Whyalla, he was a great member of the union movement, and a great friend of the working class. Thank you, John. May you rest in peace.

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (15:20): A few minutes ago I asked a question of the Minister for Health in this place regarding the death of Ben Witham, on 24 May 2011. Last year, less than three months after Ben died, my wife and I stayed at Mount Bundy Station, the home of Ben and his parents, completely unaware of what had occurred and completely unaware that they had lost their son in circumstances which later came to light. We discovered fairly quickly that there was something wrong and we did not know what it was until we went out with Mr Witham on a tour of the property. Mount Bundy is a property at Adelaide River. It is station country but it has accommodation on it, and we were staying in the backpacker accommodation.

I have sat on this for over a year but on Tuesday when Megan Dillon wrote an article in *The Advertiser* about the death of Ben Witham and then I saw Scott and Sue on television that night, I was horrified. I am absolutely horrified and I do not think the minister has answered the question appropriately. Ben Witham actually had acute lymphoblastic leukaemia but that was not the cause of his death. The cause of his death was the incompetent treatment that he received at the Women's and Children's Hospital and the fact that he was left for 17 hours after having been flown down from Darwin.

If he had been left a couple of hours one could understand it, but to have been left 17 hours, and not treated—and I note Greg Cavanagh, the Northern Territory Coroner, said that Ben's treatment was like that in 'a Third World country'. It is inexcusable. I further ask in this place, what action has been taken against the senior doctor, Tames Revesz, over this matter? Has it been dealt with? Have the people involved been pulled into gear, because he was left for this period of time and he was not diagnosed for 17 hours and died of a perforated stomach ulcer. How on earth can our health system hold its head up on this matter?

It was a horrendous time for the family which they will never recover from and our state health system has failed dismally on this. It is all very well for the minister to get up and say that they are looking into this and they are looking into that but that will not bring back Ben Witham to his parents Scott and Sue, and his sisters. It is inexcusable in these days—in the year 2011 when this occurred—it should never have happened. I intend to follow through on this and get more information, but I think we have a duty to both Mr and Mrs Witham and their daughters that we pick up on this matter and follow it through.

The minister has to come back and give a proper explanation as to why someone was left for 17 hours in our absolute principal children's hospital—the Women's and Children's Hospital—and not be attended to and not diagnosed properly. In my view, it is almost with criminal intent that someone has been left for that time. I am not a lawyer but I am a parent and I can tell you that if it happened to one of my children there would be fur flying, and I am sure that Scott and Sue feel the same way. I am going to send them the question, I am going to send them this speech, and they would already have the article. It is simply not good enough for the minister to trot out the

bureaucratic answer which he already had prepared this afternoon, which obviously he would have prepared after the Coroner's report came out on Tuesday.

I feel ashamed to be a South Australian. I feel ashamed that a 17-year-old boy died of a perforated stomach because doctors in this state at our principal Women's and Children's Hospital failed to deal with him for 17 hours and he passed away in such tragic circumstances. The family will never get over it, and I can tell you that because I lost a 17-year-old cousin who drowned and his family has never got over it. I feel intensely sorry for Scott and Sue and the family. They are still up there, 3,000 kilometres away from Adelaide. The least they could have expected was for their son to be decently treated and diagnosed when he was flown to Adelaide and perhaps he would still be with us now, despite the fact that he had leukaemia. He did not die of the leukaemia. He died of the perforated stomach. That is the sad part about this.

It is absolutely unbelievably criminal and I think it is an outrageous disgrace and a total slur on the South Australian health system where, incidentally, we have so many good people that do so many good things—I will never dispute that, I have been involved in it—but in this particular case, it never should have happened.

NAVY WEEK

Mrs VLAHOS (Taylor) (15:25): I would like to speak today on Navy Week which occurred between 9 and 14 October. The week involved many activities designed to broaden the community's understanding of the Royal Australian Navy and the diverse roles they perform locally and abroad for our nation and our allies.

Some of the activities in this particular week included an interactive display at Hindmarsh Square, performances by the Navy band, a Navy Week church service and an open day with the Navy for the general public with a visit from HMAS *Parramatta* at Techport Australia on the Sunday. Over 7,000 people visited the Techport facility on the Sunday, which includes the ASC shipyard where the Air Warfare Destroyer is currently being constructed. It was a beautiful day and more than 2,400 people boarded and toured the HMAS *Parramatta* on the day.

The open day was supported by 723 Squadron, the defence recruiting section, the Royal Australian Navy Band SA Detachment, the Australian Navy Cadets, and a Navy surf boat, a dive tank, a rigid base inflatable Sea Otter boat—which I had the pleasure of boarding on my trip out to visit the HMAS *Parramatta* on the Friday morning—the defence community organisations and the Naval Association of Australia.

The HMAS *Parramatta* has a motto of 'Strike Deep' and it is an Anzac class helicopter frigate built by Tenix Defence Systems and was commissioned in 2003. The 118-metre long vessel, with a berth of around 14.8 metres across its beam, has a maximum speed of 27 knots and a range of almost 6,000 nautical miles. It has an impressive range of firepower options of torpedoes, missiles, guns, electronic countermeasures and radars in addition to a Seahawk helicopter, and the HMAS *Parramatta* has been on active service in recent times in the Middle East.

The Parramatta is actually the oldest ship name in the Australian Navy and is the fourth RAN ship to bear this name. *Parramatta (I)* was the first ship commissioned by the Commonwealth Naval Forces—later to become known as the Royal Australian Navy—in 1910. The *Parramatta (II)* served in World War II and was sunk by a German submarine in 1941 with the loss of 138 lives. *Parramatta (III)* served between 1961 and 1991 and was a river class destroyer escort.

I would like to personally thank the crew for their assistance and welcome on the voyage as they were exceedingly generous in sharing their knowledge of their life in the Navy. I had the opportunity to observe our progress down the coast to Techport from the bridge of the HMAS *Parramatta* and it was a remarkable privilege to witness the professionalism and seamless communication that takes place on the bridge of the frigate as they entered the channel near Techport and berthed the warship. The average age of the crew is currently 23—very young—but these are very professional and outstanding men and women that our Navy and our nation should be proud of.

I would also like to place on the record my sincere thanks to the Commanding Officer of Navy Headquarters SA, Commander Alan Williams ADC, the Commanding Officer of the HMAS *Parramatta*, Commander Simon Cannell, and particularly Mrs Campbell, the Warrant Officer on board, for their time, guidance and opportunity to join the HMAS *Parramatta* crew of this Anzac frigate class as it travelled down the coast on that Friday morning from Glenelg to berth at

Techport. Also joining me were several Navy Cadets, Defence Reserve Support employers and advocates. It was a truly remarkable day and I thank them.

WATER CHARGES

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:29): I rise today to talk about what happened in this last week when Prime Minister Julia Gillard ventured into my electorate of Hammond to announce the government's new Murray-Darling Basin plans. It was mentioned that \$1.7 billion would be allocated to get water back into use for the environment with infrastructure upgrades. But I wonder what happened to the \$5.8 billion that was pledged by former prime minister John Howard way back in early 2007 for infrastructure maintenance?

I introduce that as the start of my gripe in regard to South Australian irrigators and what they have done to be at the forefront of water saving techniques. This includes many of my constituents, but several have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars as an emergency measure on personal infrastructure that had to be put in during the drought so they could have water for their farming systems.

These constituents include people like Mr Terry McAnaney and Mr David Hender, farmers from Langhorne Creek who farm in the Angas-Bremer region, which is one of the best monitored irrigation areas in Australia thanks to farmers in the area who have implemented significant environmental management measures—such as Mr McAnaney and Mr Hender who installed desalination plants at their own considerable expense to provide insurance against the threat of drought. At the time, it was greatly needed.

Mr McAnaney invested \$250,000 in his desalination operations, while Mr Hender outlaid over \$120,000. The cost of Mr McAnaney's desalination plant is the same cost as buying water. Since the end of the drought, the plants have been in a maintenance mode with the two farmers only operating the plants occasionally to preserve the membranes and maintain the health of the plants.

For those concerned about the environmental impacts of desalination plants, the risk of environmental harm is very low due to the size and capacity of these plants, the frequency of use and the total amount of water under licence able to be used through these desalination plants. Desalination in these low-scale plants is seen as good for the environment by removing salt from the system, thereby enabling better quality water to be used for irrigation whilst also reducing the quantity of water that needs to be used. On Mr Hender's property alone, salinity in the soil has been reduced from 7,000 EC units to 450 EC units. The use of desalinated water for irrigation has also reduced salinity of water that percolates into the aquifer. Desalination, therefore, provides many environmental benefits and does not have too many threats.

However, the government plans to impose fees on these farmers for the use of their desalination plants. Even though the two farmers have now limited the use of their plants and are seen as low risk, they will attract a licensing fee and environment management fees under the Environment Protection Act 1993, which says:

Whether or not a desalination plant is considered to be low risk has been determined on the basis of the intended licensing threshold which is a production capacity of greater than 200 kL per day. The environmental risks associated with plants that have a production capacity of greater than 200 kL and do not discharge waste into an EPA licensed wastewater treatment facility is considered to be sufficient to justify licensing.

As we see with all fees, the fees will only increase, for little or no return to users or the environment. Those desalination plants that require licensing will be required to have appropriate metering and monitoring, potentially leading to thousands of dollars for a low-risk operation.

I find this extremely disappointing and I am very concerned at what the government has put in place. These farmers were told during the drought that they would not receive any help and, as a result, they invested in desalination to protect their livelihood. This is a situation where farmers are being penalised for trying to do the right thing.

The government should be supporting these innovators and water savers, and I call on the government to negate these fees and reassess its policy. The government should be supporting these innovators and water savers, who have indicated they will look to sell their desalination plants if the proposed licence fee structure does not change. This will be a considerable loss to all involved, including the environment, and I would hate to think what would happen if another drought were to come along.

This shows the sheer arrogance of this government in regard to people who have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to protect their livelihoods, and now we see the environment department come along and want to tax these farmers out of existence when they have already invested many hundreds of thousands of dollars, not only in their plants but also in associated infrastructure, and the government needs to have another rethink on this.

CHILDREN'S WEEK

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:34): Today I would like to talk about Children's Week, which is an annual event celebrated in Australia during the fourth week in October. Children's Week celebrates the right of children to enjoy childhood. It is also a time for children to demonstrate their talents, skills and abilities.

Designated by the nations of the world, Universal Children's Day calls society to a greater response to the plight of many millions of children around the world who are denied the basic necessities of a happy childhood, and the education to develop their capacities. It also calls on us in Australia to consider those conditions in our society which affect the lives and future of our children.

I would also like to draw to the house's attention the activities within the Light electorate relating to children, where considerable attention has been given to make a better place for our children. Not only have people in our electorate been active in providing comment on the new child development legislation but also in putting plans in place that are highly cognisant of contemporary research. I am also pleased to inform the house that there was, during Children's Week, an impressive community display in my office window which celebrated the week. I would like to thank the Elsie Ey and Gawler Children's Centres in Gawler for the display.

Furthermore, the Gawler community, through the Child and Youth Friendly Gawler project, will soon launch its bid to become a Child Friendly Community. I believe this is the first such community bid in this state. It is gratifying to see community groups, such as the Child Friendly Gawler Steering Committee, respond to the leadership and encouragement shown by this state government in putting children at the forefront of the community.

This community group has the potential to assist local and state government policy-makers and planners in understanding the importance of good child-friendly policy and in understanding how the physical, social and economic dimensions of the urban environment will contribute to the shaping of children's ability to form positive social relationships.

I would also like to mention an event held by the Dyslexia Action Group, Barossa and Gawler Surrounds (DAGBAGS). This group, which is run by Dr Sandra Marshall, seeks to make the region a dyslexic-friendly region by encouraging schools in the region to be dyslexia-friendly. The group recently hosted Mr Neil Mackay, who is an expert, and also the person who initiated the Dyslexia Friendly Schools concept in the UK. They asked him to address a workshop to help increase awareness and understanding of dyslexia, and particularly the impact on children and their learning.

The workshops held in the Gawler region attracted over 70 principals and school leaders, 35 schools, 270 teachers and 80 families. Mr Mackay provided practical classroom tips that were cost neutral and allowed underachieving students to reach their full potential. He also raised awareness of what it feels like to have dyslexia, and the importance of asking students for their feedback about the way they prefer to be taught and to learn.

A number of schools were involved on the committee, including Immanuel Primary School, St Brigids Primary School, Two Wells Primary School, Evanston Primary School and Angaston Primary School. DAGBAGS is acting on behalf of children with difficulties and does not represent the Catholic Education Office, independent schools or DECS, and is an independent committee working for our region. The concept of dyslexic-friendly schools advocates for all dyslexic children, regardless of which school they attend, and I commend the group for their work.

Last week I also had the opportunity to visit the UniHealth Playford North site, which is a federally-funded health practice run by the universities. The site in Munno Para West is located on the corner of Curtis and Peachey roads, and is under the clinical directorship of Dr Lorenzo Ponte. The practice manager is Mrs Shirley Giles, and, in addition to providing a practice manager, one of the things I saw last week was a mothers' group run by the Save the Children Fund.

Through the Save the Children Fund, this group seeks to bring in mums and make sure that they are aware of a whole range of access to education and other learning programs, and also

health. By bringing mums together, it actually encourages mums to ensure that their children get a proper diet, it gives them a chance to talk about any problems with various workers at the centre and, more importantly, it is an early intervention program which seeks to support our young people.

CHARACTER PRESERVATION (MCLAREN VALE) BILL

The Legislative Council agreed not to insist on its amendments Nos 11 and 20 to which the House of Assembly had disagreed.

CHARACTER PRESERVATION (BAROSSA VALLEY) BILL

The Legislative Council agreed not to insist on its amendment No. 12 to which the House of Assembly had disagreed.

STATUTES AMENDMENT AND REPEAL (BUDGET 2012) (NO. 2) BILL

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:41): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Education Act 1972; the Electricity Corporations Act 1994; the Electricity Corporations (Restructuring and Disposal) Act 1999; the Highways Act 1926; the Local Government Act 1999; the Parliament (Joint Services) Act 1985; the Payroll Tax Act 2009; the Public Finance and Audit Act 1987; the Public Sector Act 2009; the Residential Tenancies Act 1995; the Stamp Duties Act 1923; and the Summary Procedure Act 1921; and to repeal the State Bank of South Australia Act 1983. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:42): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill introduces legislative amendments required to implement budget measures that have been announced as part of the 2012-13 budget. I seek leave to have the remainder of the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

This Bill amends the *Education Act 1972*, *Electricity Corporations Act 1994*, *Electricity Corporations (Restructuring and Disposal) Act 1999*, *Highways Act 1926*, *Local Government Act 1999*, *Parliament (Joint Services) Act 1985*, *Payroll Tax Act 2009*, *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987*, *Public Sector Act 2009*, *Residential Tenancies Act 1995*, *Stamp Duties Act 1923*, *Summary Procedure Act 1921* and repeals the *State Bank of South Australia Act 1983*.

To support the government's objective of creating a vibrant city for people to live and work in and to encourage higher density inner metropolitan, living in line with the government's 30 Year Plan, this Bill amends the *Stamp Duties Act 1923* to introduce a stamp duty concession that will apply for the next four years for purchases of off-the-plan apartments in the Adelaide City Council area, Bowden Village and at 45 Park Terrace, Gilberton.

The concession will provide a full stamp duty concession for the first two years (capped at stamp duty payable on a \$500,000 apartment) and a partial concession for the second two years.

A full stamp duty exemption will be available for all apartments purchased off-the-plan with a market value of \$500,000 or less, where the contract is entered into between 31 May 2012 and 30 June 2014 inclusive, saving eligible purchasers up to \$21,330. Where an eligible apartment has a market value greater than \$500,000, the purchaser will be entitled to a stamp duty concession of \$21,330.

For eligible off-the-plan apartment purchase contracts with a market value of \$500,000 or less entered into from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016, stamp duty will be payable only on the deemed unimproved value of the apartment and the value of any construction already undertaken and not the full market value of the apartment. Purchasers of eligible apartments where no construction has commenced will therefore pay a level of duty broadly in line with duty paid by purchasers of house and land packages. This concession will save purchasers of eligible off-the-plan apartments up to \$15,500.

The Bill sets the deemed unimproved value of an apartment at 35 per cent of the market value of the apartment (at contract signing), and the value of construction will reflect the nature of works already performed. The Bill provides for 6 stages of construction of a multi-storey residential development or substantial refurbishment and the Commissioner of State Taxation will liaise with industry representatives to provide appropriate information about those stages in a Gazetted notice prior to 1 July 2014.

Where a contract is entered into from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016 to purchase an off-the-plan apartment with a market value greater than \$500,000, the purchaser will be entitled to a stamp duty concession of up to \$15,500 (adjusted for construction works completed prior to the date the contract is signed). In effect, a purchaser of an eligible apartment with a market value over \$500,000 will receive the same concession in dollar terms as a purchaser of a \$500,000 apartment at the same stage of construction of the apartment building.

The off-the-plan stamp duty concession will replace the existing inner city rebate administrative scheme which provides a \$1,500 rebate to purchasers of new apartments in the city centre.

The Bill also provides an exemption from stamp duty for a conveyance of a carbon right created under an Act of the Commonwealth or a conveyance of a renewable energy certificate created under the *Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000* of the Commonwealth. The Government has previously given an undertaking to the Commonwealth Government that carbon rights would not be dutiable under the *Stamp Duties Act 1923*. With the deferral of the abolition of stamp duty on non-real property transfers until budget circumstances allow, and to avoid any uncertainty in relation to the duty implications arising upon the transfer of these instruments, it is considered appropriate that a specific exemption be included in the *Stamp Duties Act 1923* for these rights.

This Bill amends the *Electricity Corporations Act 1994* and the *Electricity Corporations (Restructuring and Disposal) Act 1999* to allow RESI Corporation (RESI) to finish its operations and to put in place a scheme to enable the dissolution of RESI in an orderly fashion.

ETSA Corporation, established under the *Electricity Corporations Act 1994*, changed its name to RESI Corporation (RESI) in January 2000 under section 8 of the *Statutes Amendment (Electricity) Act 1999*.

RESI's principal activity is the litigation of a number of matters initiated by former employees of ETSA or contractors who worked at ETSA sites. The plaintiffs' claims are usually for compensation for 'breach of duty and care' going as far back as the early 1950's. The litigation process is complex and it is funded from RESI's own resources originally allocated when it was established in 2000 and supplemented when required through the budgetary process.

Due to the falling numbers in asbestos claims and the reduction in volume in the remainder of RESI's operations, including placement requests from employees returning to the public sector from the private sector, it has become inefficient to continue to run RESI as a separate entity.

SAFA and an administrative unit of the Public Service that is primarily responsible for assisting the Treasurer in the performance of his Ministerial functions and responsibilities are to take on the residual activities of RESI following its dissolution.

RESI will stop its operations at the earliest opportunity but, in order to be in a position to transfer assets and liabilities at an appropriate time and to manage reporting requirements, the start and operation of the various provisions will be controlled by one or more proclamations until financial statements and reporting has been completed by the RESI Board and so as to ensure that RESI has zero balances when it is dissolved.

This Bill introduces a public sector skills and experience retention entitlement to apply to public sector employees who have completed 15 or more years of effective service and who are employed under the *Education Act 1972*, *Public Sector Act 2009* or *Parliament (Joint Services) Act 1985*, or who are subject to the long service leave entitlements under the *Public Sector Act 2009*.

The new public sector skills and experience retention entitlement is based on completed months of service and will be phased in with up to two working days entitlement in 2012-13, up to three working days entitlement in 2013-14, and then fixed at a maximum of four working days entitlement from 2014-15 onwards.

There is a transitional entitlement of up to two working days in relation to 2011-12 provided the person was employed as at 1 July 2012. The entitlement will accrue on a monthly basis and will be pro-rata for part-time employees.

A public sector skills and experience retention entitlement may be taken, depending on the amount accrued, as one or more whole working days of leave and must be taken within 5 years from the end of the financial year in which it accrued, otherwise it will lapse.

An entitlement accrued during a particular financial year may, at the end of that financial year, be converted at the election of an employee to a monetary amount to be fixed by the regulations in accordance with a scheme prescribed by the regulations.

The annual cash payment will be fixed at \$180 per full day of leave accrued during the 2012-13 financial year. The per day cash payment will be indexed in accordance with the consumer price index for each subsequent financial year.

The public sector skills and experience retention entitlement will apply to about 26,000 public sector employees with 15 or more years of effective service. An employee can only be entitled to one form of retention leave and this leave will not apply to SAPOL employees who benefit from the Retaining Police Knowledge and Experience entitlement established in the *South Australian Police Enterprise Agreement 2011*.

Administrative arrangements to implement this entitlement will need to be put in place during 2012-13. While this will limit employees being able to take this entitlement as leave during 2012-13, employees will not be disadvantaged. At the end of 2012-13, employees will be able to elect to convert their accrued entitlement for both 2011-12 and 2012-13 to a cash payment and any entitlement retained as leave will not expire before 1 July 2018.

Regulations will extend the public sector skills and experience retention entitlement to prescribed employees under the *TAFE SA Act 2012*, which is currently before the Parliament.

This Bill repeals the *State Bank of South Australia Act 1983* and makes related amendments to the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987*, to allow South Australian Asset Management Corporation (SAAMC) to wind up its operations and to provide for other matters relevant to the final dissolution process.

Since its establishment in 1994, SAAMC has:

- Sold all its assets at no less than their value as recorded in SAAMC's balance sheet
- Extinguished all its outstanding liabilities except for \$2.5 million of unclaimed customer deposits, some of them dating back to the late 1800's
- Completed all the outstanding SAAMC litigation
- Recovered and repaid the State about a third of the indemnity paid to the State Bank of South Australia
- Wound up all of its subsidiaries
- Except for two part time employees who will resign when SAAMC is wound up, retrenched or offered retirement packages to all of its employees with all their entitlements paid.

SAAMC has now met all the objectives of its Act and the dissolution will close down the operations of SAAMC with any contingencies in either assets or liabilities being transferred to the Treasurer or, if appropriate, another State entity.

This Bill amends the *Highways Act 1926* and *Local Government Act 1999* to allow for commercial activities on specified roads.

The *Highways Act 1926* gives the Commissioner of Highways general powers, subject to the approval of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, to purchase or acquire land for road works, or obtain land for any purpose under the Act associated with road works. When road works are finished, the land acquired by the Commissioner becomes a public road and the ownership of the road transfers from the Commissioner to the relevant Council.

Although the Commissioner is permitted to generate income from land that has been acquired for the purposes of section 20 of the Act until the land is required for road works, for example, rental income from existing properties on the land, he does not have the ability to put in place opportunities of a longer term nature, because land that is no longer required for road works must be disposed of (usually by sale).

The amendments will vest certain existing and future roads in the Commissioner of Highways rather than allowing them to vest in the relevant Council upon the completion of the roadworks. They will also enable the Commissioner, subject to the approval of the Minister, to retain land that is no longer required for roadwork, for purposes related to roads or transport needs. This will give the Commissioner similar powers to those that Councils already have.

Existing roads that will vest in the Commissioner are the South Eastern Freeway, and the Port River, Southern and Northern Expressways. Future roads, to be identified by regulation, will also be major controlled access arterial roads like these expressways. In these cases, the land that will vest in the Commissioner will be land that has been acquired for the purpose of making the road, land that was already road (and was therefore vested in the relevant Council) or land that was already Crown land. These are roads where the Commissioner has, or is intended to have, responsibility for maintenance of all of the road corridor.

This will enable the Commissioner, with the approval of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, to enter into commercial contracts for activities on the roads vested in the Commissioner, and to lease land that is no longer required for roadworks to enable facilities such as service centres for motorists to be built alongside the road.

The revenue from any commercial activities will be paid into the Highways Fund and it is intended that it be used to fund additional road maintenance. Other States already have such powers, including New South Wales and Victoria.

Freeways and expressways experience high volumes of traffic and are therefore suited to commercial activities such as service centres and advertising. It is anticipated that commercial activities will be placed strategically at high exposure sites and planned to ensure that road safety is not compromised. It is initially proposed to raise revenue from leasing land for service centres and selling advertising space. Future revenue opportunities could include mobile phone towers and underground fibre optic services (in conduits alongside the road). Any developments that are made possible by these amendments will require development approval.

An amendment to the definition of roadwork will clarify that the Commissioner has the power to construct parking facilities for the benefit of commuters, and other amendments ensure that the land that vests in the Commissioner can be used for these purposes.

The Bill amends the *Payroll Tax Act 2009* to remove the current payroll tax exemption for apprentices and trainees. From 1 July 2012, the existing payroll tax exemption for the wages of eligible trainees and apprentices will be abolished and replaced with a grant scheme administered by the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST). These grants are intended to ensure that the government's assistance is targeted to training areas most in need.

Registered training organisations will be assisted through grants to support the training of apprentices and trainees. This approach recognises the higher completion rates that group training organisations achieve and the key support they provide to small and medium enterprises, to which they hire apprentices and trainees. Other organisations that employ apprentices and trainees who complete their training in a priority skill area, will receive a completion bonus.

With effect from 1 January 2013, there will be a one-off Water Security Rebate provided to SA Water's residential drinking water customers, in recognition of the water price increases for 2012-13. This Bill amends the *Residential Tenancies Act 1995*, to require a landlord to pass on the Water Security Rebate to a tenant, where the landlord recovers all or some of the SA Water bill for drinking water from a tenant.

This Bill amends the *Summary Procedure Act 1921* so that in proceedings for an offence prosecuted by a police officer that are dismissed or withdrawn, costs may only be awarded if it is proper to do so. The amendment sets out the circumstances relevant to the making of a costs order, including whether the prosecution of the offence was conducted in good faith and whether the investigation into the offence was conducted in an appropriate way. The costs are not to exceed \$2,000 (including GST) indexed annually by CPI.

I commend the Bill to Members.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

This clause is formal.

2—Commencement

This clause provides for commencement of the measure. The provisions will commence on a day or days to be fixed by proclamation apart from Parts 2, 7, 8 and 10 and clause 36 (which will be taken to have commenced on 1 July 2012) and clause 35 (which will be taken to have commenced on 31 May 2012).

3—Amendment provisions

This clause is formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Education Act 1972*

4—Amendment of section 19—Long service leave and retention entitlement

These amendments will provide for a form of leave to be known as *skills and experience retention leave*. The leave will accrue as follows:

- (a) for each month of effective service completed during the 2012/2013 financial year— $\frac{1}{6}$ working days leave;
- (b) for each month of effective service completed during the 2013/2014 financial year— $\frac{1}{4}$ working days leave;
- (c) for each month of effective service completed on or after 1 July 2014— $\frac{1}{3}$ working days leave.

It will be possible to convert skills and experience retention leave accrued over the course of a financial year to a monetary amount fixed by the regulations in accordance with a scheme prescribed by the regulations.

This form of leave will be required to be taken as 1 or more whole working days. Leave not taken within 5 years after the end of the financial year in which it accrues will be lost (and no monetary equivalent will be payable).

5—Amendment of section 20—Taking of leave

This is a consequential amendment.

6—Transitional provisions

An officer who has, or attains, at least 15 years of effective service during the 2011/2012 financial year and who is an officer on 1 July 2012 will qualify for an additional entitlement equal to $\frac{1}{6}$ working days for each month of effective service completed during that financial year (for the period for which the officer is a long-term employee). It will be possible for the Governor to make other transitional or ancillary provisions that may be necessary or expedient in connection with the provision of an entitlement to skills and experience retention leave.

Part 3—Amendment of *Electricity Corporations Act 1994*

Division 1—Amendment of Act

7—Amendment of section 4—Interpretation

These are consequential amendments.

8—Repeal of Part 2

The Part of the Act providing for the continuation and activities of RESI Corporation is to be repealed.

9—Amendment of section 34—Establishment of corporation

This is a consequential amendment.

Division 2—Transitional provisions

10—Interpretation

This clause sets out the definitions that are to be used for the purposes of the transitional provisions that are required in order to wind up the activities of RESI. It is important to note that the concept of a claim for workers compensation is to include any claim or action relating to personal injury, disease, other medical condition or death arising out of or in the course of the performance of work, or resulting in any other way from exposure to any material, substance, disease or conditions at a workplace.

11—Assets and liabilities of RESI

This clause will provide a mechanism for dealing with the assets and liabilities of RESI.

12—Redeployees

The Department will be required to assume responsibility for arranging for the redeployment of any person who, under the scheme established under the *Electricity Corporations (Restructuring and Disposal) Act 1999*, is to be employed in the public sector.

13—Related provisions

This clause sets out various provisions that are relevant to the transfer or vesting of assets or liabilities of RESI under this Bill.

Part 4—Amendment of *Electricity Corporations (Restructuring and Disposal) Act 1999*

14—Amendment of section 3—Interpretation

These are consequential amendments.

Part 5—Amendment of *Highways Act 1926*

15—Amendment of section 7—Interpretation

This clause makes a consequential amendment to the definition of *controlled access road* and amends the definition of *roadwork* to include the construction of buildings or facilities relating to public transport or parking for users of public transport.

16—Amendment of section 20—General powers of Commissioner

This clause makes a consequential amendment to section 20 to ensure that the *Development Act 1993* exemption that exists in relation to land acquired under the section doesn't extend to land to be used for the purposes of a lease or licence granted in respect of a road that vests, or land that remains vested, in the Commissioner under proposed section 21A.

17—Insertion of section 21A

This clause inserts a new section as follows:

21A—Certain roads and land vest in Commissioner

Proposed section 21A allows for the vesting of roads, or parts of roads, in the Commissioner by regulation (where the Commissioner has, after commencement, carried out roadworks on a road) and the vesting of the whole or parts of the South Eastern Freeway, the Port River Expressway and Salisbury Highway, the Southern Expressway and the Northern Expressway and Sturt Highway by proclamation. A regulation or proclamation may define the extent to which land or structures on land vest in the Commissioner (and may do so by reference to a plan deposited or filed in the Lands Titles Registration Office or by any other method of description).

The provision further provides that where the Commissioner has, after commencement, determined that land vested in the Commissioner is not required for the purposes of present or future roadwork or any other purposes connected with this Act, the Commissioner may, subject to the approval of the Minister, determine not to dispose of the land if the Commissioner is satisfied that the land may be required in the future for purposes related to roads or transport needs.

18—Amendment of section 26—Powers of Commissioner to carry out roadwork etc

19—Amendment of section 26A—Powers of Commissioner in relation to trees etc on roads

20—Amendment of section 26B—Total or partial closure of roads to ensure safety or prevent damage

21—Amendment of section 26C—Certain road openings etc require Commissioner's concurrence

22—Amendment of section 27CA—Vesting of roads outside districts

These clauses make minor consequential amendments.

23—Insertion of section 30AC

This clause inserts a new section as follows:

30AC—Certain roads taken to be controlled-access roads

This proposed section allows the regulations to specify that a road that is vested in the Commissioner by regulation under section 21A is a controlled-access road.

24—Amendment of section 30B—Provision for compensation

This clause is consequential (and ensures that the compensation provision applies in relation to roads that become controlled-access roads by virtue of section 30AC).

25—Insertion of section 42B

This clause inserts a new section as follows:

42B—Registrar-General to issue certificate of title

This proposed section provides for the issuing of certificates of title in respect of land that vests in the Commissioner.

Part 6—Amendment of *Local Government Act 1999*

26—Insertion of section 240A

This clause inserts a new section as follows (consequentially to the amendments proposed to the *Highways Act 1926*):

240A—Roads vested in Commissioner of Highways

A by-law made under the *Local Government Act 1999* does not apply to any act or omission specifically authorised under a lease or licence granted by the Commissioner in relation to a road vested in the Commissioner under the proposed amendments to the *Highways Act 1926*.

Part 7—Amendment of *Parliament (Joint Services) Act 1985*

27—Amendment of section 20—Long service leave and retention entitlement

These amendments will provide for the long service retention leave entitlement to apply to an officer under the Act. The scheme will be the same as that applying to other categories of employees under other related Acts to be amended by this measure.

28—Insertion of section 36

This is a consequential amendment.

29—Transitional provisions

This clause will provide for transitional and other provisions relating to the skills and experience retention leave entitlements of officers.

Part 8—Amendment of *Payroll Tax Act 2009*

30—Amendment of Schedule 2—South Australia specific provisions

This clause repeals Schedule 2 clause 10A, abolishing the exemption for wages paid to apprentices and trainees (as defined by that clause).

Part 9—Amendment of *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987*

31—Amendment of section 18—Financial arrangements

This is a consequential amendment.

Part 10—Amendment of *Public Sector Act 2009*

32—Amendment of Schedule 1—Leave and working arrangements

These amendments will provide for the skills and experience retention leave entitlement to apply to employees under the *Public Sector Act 2009*.

33—Transitional provisions

This clause will provide for transitional and other provisions relating to skills and experience retention leave entitlements.

Part 11—Amendment of *Residential Tenancies Act 1995*

34—Amendment of section 73—Rates, taxes and charges

This section is amended to require a landlord who receives the benefit of the water security rebate amount to ensure that the rebate is credited to any amount for rates and charges for water supply to be borne by tenants under an agreement under subsection (2) or under subsection (3)(b).

Part 12—Amendment of *Stamp Duties Act 1923*

35—Insertion of section 71DB

This clause establishes a scheme to provide for concessions with respect to stamp duty payable on conveyances that give effect to the purchase under off-the-plan contracts of apartments (being apartments that are to be situated in multi-storey residential developments) within the City of Adelaide and certain areas close to the City.

The scheme will apply to contracts entered into between 31 May 2012 and 30 June 2016 (both dates inclusive). However, the amount of the concession will vary according to whether the contract is entered into by

30 June 2014 or between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016. The rate of the concession will also vary according to whether the market value of the apartment does not exceed \$500,000, or exceeds \$500,000. For the purposes of determining the market value of an apartment for the calculation and imposition of stamp duty on the conveyance, the date of the sale of the relevant property will be taken to be the date on which the relevant qualifying off-the-plan contract was entered into.

36—Amendment of Schedule 2—Stamp duties and exemptions

The following instruments are to be exempt from stamp duty:

- (a) a conveyance of any carbon right created under an Act of the Commonwealth;
- (b) a conveyance of a renewable energy certificate under the *Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000* of the Commonwealth.

Part 13—Amendment of *Summary Procedure Act 1921*

37—Amendment of section 189—Costs generally

This amendment is consequential.

38—Insertion of section 189AA

This clause inserts a new section 189AA as follows:

189AA—Costs payable by Crown in certain criminal proceedings

New section 189AA provides that, in proceedings for an offence prosecuted by a police officer that are dismissed or withdrawn, costs may only be awarded if it is proper to do so. Subsection (2) sets out a list of circumstances relevant to the making of a costs order. Subsection (3) provides that costs must not exceed \$2,000 (indexed to CPI).

Part 14—Repeal of *State Bank of South Australia Act 1983*

Division 1—Repeal of Act

39—Repeal of *State Bank of South Australia Act 1983*

The *State Bank of South Australia Act 1983* is to be repealed.

Division 2—Transitional provisions

40—Interpretation

This clause sets out the definitions required for the purposes of the Division.

41—Vesting of assets and liabilities

This clause provides a specific power for assets or liabilities of the South Australian Asset Management Corporation to be vested in the Treasurer or another State entity.

42—Additional provisions

This clause provides that, on the repeal of the *State Bank of South Australia Act 1983*, any remaining assets or liabilities of SAAMC will vest in the Treasurer. The Governor will also be able to address any outstanding transitional or saving matters by proclamation.

43—Related provisions

This clause provides for some ancillary matters associated with the operation of the measure.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Pederick.

NULLARBOR NATIONAL PARK

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (15:43): I move:

That this house requests His Excellency the Governor to make a proclamation under section 28(2) of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 excluding section 496, Out of Hundreds (Nullarbor) from the Nullarbor National Park.

Whilst some things are being sorted out, I would like to get agreement from the opposition. I thought we had some agreement. The purpose of the motion is to excise this parcel and infrastructure located on the land from the Nullarbor National Park. Under section 28(3) of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 an alteration to the boundaries of a national park requires a resolution of both houses of parliament and a subsequent proclamation by the Governor.

The Nullarbor National Park is located in the far west of South Australia, stretching approximately 300 kilometres east from the Western Australian border. Section 496 is located on

the extreme eastern boundary of the Nullarbor National Park, and at 589 hectares is 1 per cent of the national park's total area of 578,000 hectares.

This section contains an airstrip and dump which is currently licensed under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 to support the operations of the adjoining Nullarbor Roadhouse, which is located on freehold land. Section 496 also contains large areas of borrowed pits operated by the Commissioner of Highways for the maintenance of roads in the area, in particular the adjoining Eyre Highway.

Section 496 also does not contain any biodiversity values that are not replicated elsewhere in the vast expanse of the Nullarbor National Park and the adjoining Nullarbor Regional Reserve, which together can serve 2.86 million hectares of land. These two reserves are visually arresting as the famous treeless plain that is the Nullarbor; Their vegetation is predominantly a low chenopod understorey of bluebush, saltbush and other species, and I can confirm that it is a fantastic area.

In particular, the reserves are part of the world's largest arid karst region that stretches from South Australia into Western Australia. They make a significant contribution to conservation in this state as core protected areas in the East Meets West NatureLinks corridor, a biological corridor connecting extensive intact areas from the Upper Eyre Peninsula to the Western Australian border.

This area proposed to be abolished from the national park will be resumed as unalienated crown land under the Crown Land Management Act 2009, a more appropriate tenure regime for the uses of the land. The land will continue to be managed by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources under the provisions of the Crown Land Management Act 2009. The owners of the Nullarbor Roadhouse will be issued a licence under that act allowing them to continue to use the infrastructure on section 496 under the same terms and conditions that they currently enjoy.

As members would be aware, the government is proposing to proclaim the 900,000 hectare Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area under the Wilderness Protection Act 1992. This followed public consultation on the proposal by our Premier (Hon. Jay Weatherill MP) during which 19 submissions provided supported for the proposal. This will be the largest proclaimed wilderness area in Australia, and I look forward to the Governor proclaiming the area in the near future following parliament's consideration of the Wilderness Protection (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2012, which contains within it some amendments that are a necessary precursor to the proclamation.

I thank opposition members very much for the support they have indicated for this motion to date. I thank them for their involvement and, of course, the involvement and the subsequent bills that will be put here. I also acknowledge the Wilderness Advisory Committee, which provides advice to the government under the Wilderness Protection Act, the Far West Coast native title claimants and the directors of the Nullarbor Roadhouse. I thank them for their consideration and support for this motion.

In short, with the national park largely being replaced by the Wilderness Protection Area, the tenure of section 496 could not reasonably remain as a residual national park and its resumption as crown land will be both a tidy-up exercise and a more appropriate ongoing tenure for that land. I commend this motion to the house; and, again, I thank the opposition for its indication of support.

Mr MARSHALL (Norwood—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:48): I indicate that the Liberal Party is not in a position to support this at the moment. We are still waiting on some consultation from the owners of the roadhouse. We do thank the minister's staff for their excellent briefing. We think that this is non-controversial and we think that it will be passed very quickly. As I said, we thank the minister for his indulgence, but we just need one last person to come back and confirm that. The minister's office has actually supplied all the contact details for that and we are still waiting on a reply.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. J.J. Snelling.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In committee.

(Continued from 30 October 2012.)

The CHAIR: We will now proceed to the examination of the Auditor-General's Report in relation to the Treasurer, Minister for Workers Rehabilitation, Minister for Defence Industries,

Minister for Veterans' Affairs for 30 minutes. I remind members that the committee is in normal session, so any questions have to be asked by members on their feet and all questions must be directly referenced to the Auditor-General's Report. The member for Davenport.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Treasurer, I am referring to Part C: State Finances and Related Matters, page 77 under 9.4.2: Non-financial sector liabilities. The Auditor-General reports that borrowings have decreased due mainly to a change in presentations of borrowings in 2011-12, which are now presented net of the Treasurer's deposits with SAFA, which is an entity outside of the NFPS. Can the Treasurer explain why there has been a change of presentation, and what impact that has on the presentation of the net debt?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I am advised that this has no impact on net debt. External users were misunderstanding the nature of our borrowings. I am advised that this gives a more accurate representation of our borrowings detail net of the deposits that we hold. Those deposits are held on behalf of various agencies. As I said, it has no impact on our net debt.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I am assuming that this change in presentation is reflected in the 2012-13 Budget Statement, because it occurred in 2011-12, so I am assuming this year's Budget Statement reflects the change. Can you confirm that, when you are calculating the interest paid for purposes of credit rating, the figure that is used is the borrowing figure and not the net debt figure?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I am advised for gross expenses, that is, the interest component of that is the interest on our entire borrowings. For net expenses, our interest expenses are netted off. I am not sure if the member for Davenport is getting at the discussions we have been having about the effect of the change in the credit rating on the interest we pay on our borrowings. I am not sure if that is what he is getting at. If he is, the figures I have been talking about on the effect on our borrowings would be on that gross expenses part of the ledger.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: In Budget Paper 3, the borrowings decrease from \$10 billion to around \$8.9 billion from the 2011 to 2012 year. That is the year of the change. So the borrowings are reflected as reducing even though our net debt is increasing. What I am trying to find out is whether the new way of presenting the borrowings, which reflects a reduction in the borrowings, impacts on the calculation of the interest that we pay on our credit rating.

In other words, has Treasury changed the presentation so that, when the opposition asks the question, 'What is the cost of the downgrade of the credit rating?', the calculation is done on a lower borrowing figure rather than a higher borrowing figure? Or is the Treasurer telling me that, when he answers the questions about the impact on the credit rating, the figure is calculated on the total whole-of-government debt figure?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The change in the presentation has not impacted on the net interest that is represented in the papers. When the member for Davenport has asked me questions in the past about the impact of the change in the credit rating and I have given some rough idea about what the impact is likely to be, I am talking about the interest that we pay on our total borrowings not netted off.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: This is my point: you just advised the house that the previous answer was based on the total borrowings not netted off. The Auditor-General now advises us that the borrowings have decreased because, due to a change in presentation, borrowings from 2011-12 are now presented net. So, they are netted off. Therefore, the calculation will be on a lower figure. Is that not now true, Treasurer? If I ask you the question today, 'What is the impact of the reduction in credit rating?', you will be getting advice from Treasury and they will be using a lower borrowing figure because of the change in presentation. If nothing else had changed, you would be using a lower borrowing figure because of the change in presentation. You have just said that one was not net of deposits and the Auditor-General says it is net of deposits.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: No, that is not correct.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: What did the Treasurer mean? The previous answer he gave was 'not net of deposits'. What did the Treasurer mean by that? Was it borrowings not net of deposits?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The member for Davenport in the past has asked me questions about the impact of the credit downgrade on our interest payments. When I have given him the answers to that, I have talked about the impact of the credit downgrade on our interest payments, independent of any change in net borrowings. So, I have confined what I have given in my answers entirely to the impact on our interest payments, as a result of the move from AAA to AA+—those are the answers I have given him.

I think the member for Davenport is trying to suggest that the government has been a bit tricky when talking about interest payments and that the interest payments have not increased by as much because of a change in the presentation in the budget papers. I think that is what he is getting at and that is just not correct. The answers I have given to him about the expected impact on our borrowings are entirely just from the change in the credit rating, not because of any other factors.

The simple fact is that our interest payments have decreased substantially. The yields on our bonds are less with the AA and AA+ credit ratings that we have today than they were as recently as 12 months ago with a AAA credit rating. They have declined because of other factors, but it is not correct to suggest that the government is somehow being tricky in any way in trying to present the impact on our interest from the credit downgrade because of other factors.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Is there any reason why the change in presentation was not noted in the budget papers? Under the chart, there is a series of footnotes that talk about structural breaks in the presentation of data. This structural break in the presentation of data is not noted in the budget papers, but the Auditor-General has picked it up. I am just wondering why that structural break would not be reported in the budget papers.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: It was apparently an oversight, I am advised.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Not a \$1 billion oversight is it, by chance?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I wish it was.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Treasurer, I will move on to a different topic at Part C, page 6. The Auditor-General refers to the surplus in the year 2015-16 being \$512 million, which would be the highest of any year since the 2003-04 year, or a 13-year period. Given the Treasurer has told the house and the public generally through media interviews that revenues are under pressure, how confident is the Treasurer of the predicted \$15 million deficit in 2014-15 and then the surplus in 2015-16? Do you think those figures will still hold?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: There is one thing I can be sure of and that is that the numbers will change. We have seen in the short time I have been Treasurer that our revenues across the forward estimates will, in one year, decline by \$2.8 billion, and I suspect that they will change extensively over the next four years. So, no, I cannot predict or give you any sort of guarantee that there will be a surplus of that size.

The government has made one of its fiscal targets, though, the achievement of a budget surplus by the end of the forward estimates period, and that is something that I will do everything in my power to make sure is achieved, but, when you have revenues bouncing around the way they have in recent years, no, I could not give any guarantee that we would have a \$500 million-odd net operating balance surplus in that year.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Part C, page 19, where the Auditor-General refers to the cost of the credit rating, and the downgrade of the credit rating, can you advise what the impact is on SA Water and other government trading entities in relation to the cost of guarantee fees? Does the downgrade and the credit rating have an impact on their guarantee fees and, if so, what is the increased cost of those entities and, if there is an impact of revenue on the budget, what is that impact?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: If our interest costs go up, and the costs that SA Water would have to pay in interest on their borrowings if they were out in the markets stay stable, then the fee that we charge SA Water you would expect to reduce. However, it is done on an average basis over a number of years and so they have not been recalibrated. But over time, if the interest cost to government increases, by the government going out and conducting those borrowings on behalf of SA Water, and what it would have cost SA Water if they were going out to the market to borrow those funds was stable, or declined, the guarantee fees that they pay you would expect to reduce.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Treasurer, on page 19, again of Part C, the Auditor-General refers to the government's reduction of another 1,000 FTEs, of which roughly 300 are before the election and 700, in round numbers, are after the election. The government has committed to a no getting rid of the no forced redundancy policy at the election, and I am just wondering why then you need to continue to offer TVSPs after the election as part of this package if the no forced redundancy commitment is, as publicly stated, going to be eroded away come election day?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Simply because even if you are exiting someone, for want of a euphemism, you still have to make a redundancy payment. They are still under the awards, there still are provisions for redundancy, so you still have to pay them out. The other thing is that under what we have proposed to be the policy after the next election, there is a 12 month period, so someone who is a redeployee will have essentially 12 months to find alternative work within the public sector and, if they do not, then they will be able to be exited.

However, of course, normally it would be in the interests of the government, particularly if we are trying to reduce our public sector numbers still to offer up front a TVSP and encourage them to take that and not sit around, unless they are very confident of finding alternative work for that 12 months.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: So is the TVSP on offer more generous or less generous than what they would be paid on average under the act?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Yes, it would be more generous to give them an incentive to go earlier.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Page 19 refers to the health department being over 400 people above cap and since the Auditor-General's Report, the government has announced the cutting of various health jobs. Can you advise the house the number of jobs in Health to go each financial year across the forward estimates?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I can get those from the Minister for Health. I do not have those handy. I am happy to get back to the member.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: In relation to the health cap, still on page 19, even after the cuts that have been announced in the last week, Health will still remain above its cap. Is it a requirement of the government that Health make further cuts to bring its FTE number under the cabinet-imposed cap?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I think the health minister has already said there are still savings that need to be achieved that are yet to be identified, so Treasury is working with the department of health to identify how those extra savings will be achieved. That will include FTE reductions as well.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: To clarify: is it the intention through those savings measures to bring Health back to within the Treasury-prescribed cap?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Yes, that is certainly what we will be working towards achieving.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Page 25 of Part C talks about the revenue growth that is predicted within the budget and the Auditor-General raises the point that the revenue growth going forward is higher than in any year's actual growth over the last nine years. Given that we have had, certainly in the early days of the government, significant revenue growth, I am just wondering on what basis the government has budgeted for the highest revenue growth or any year actual growth in the forward estimates greater than any year of the last nine years. On what basis is the government budgeting revenue?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: In the Auditor-General's remarks he is talking about the financial years 2014-15 and 2015-16 but, if you take into account the entire forward estimates period, the revenue growth forecast is about average compared to the life of this government. The sort of revenue growth we are expecting is akin and, in fact, he makes that point. He says:

Comparison with past experience shows that the 2012-13 Budget estimates for key revenue lines are consistent with past average experience but revenue performance is sensitive to economic activity.

He is talking about those two particular years. The reason for the revenue growth that we are predicting in those particular years is the washing out of the HFE implications of the grants we have got. Because the government has been remarkably successful in attracting Infrastructure Australia grants and other commonwealth grants, those have been offset through HFE because there is a three-year lag and that has to wash through the Commonwealth Grants Commission process. As those wash through, we expect our relativity to increase and we are basing the revenue growth principally on that expectation.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Now that the Treasurer has raised that point, I go to Part C at pages 24 and 25. The Treasurer has previously raised this issue of the fact that the commonwealth

has given us a capital allocation over and above our per capita share; therefore, we were penalised in our GST receipts in the recent years and, again, to gain a GST benefit bonus in future years.

Can the Treasurer provide for the forward estimates a list of each project where we have received above our per capita share—so, the list of projects that are captured by this particular mechanism—and, across the forward estimates, the extra GST you think you will gain as a result of the change in relativities? The Treasurer has already told the estimates committee that three of them were the desal plant, the Southern Expressway and the South Road superway, so the Treasurer must have a list—somewhere within Treasury, there would be a list. So, if you could give me that breakdown, thanks.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I am more than happy to provide those numbers. I do not think the Southern Expressway received any commonwealth funding; I might be wrong there, but certainly, the South Road superway was a project which attracted funding—

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Sorry, it was the Seaford railway line.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: —the Seaford rail extension, the money for the desalination plant, and we have received funding from the commonwealth for other rail projects, just to mention a few. We have received substantially more, but as to what those projects are and the effect they have had, I am more than happy to get Treasury to break that down and provide it to the member for Davenport.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: On page 1553, in relation to ForestrySA, it talks about the level of assets being transferred as part of the sale. Can the Treasurer advise the house of the total book value of the assets being transferred as a result of the forestry sale, which the Treasurer handled?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: As the Auditor-General points out, the standing timber, which is essentially what is being transferred to the Campbell Group, the book valuation is \$593,666,000. The value of the land, which did reside with ForestrySA and has now come into the general government sector—it is basically mine, and I lease it to the Campbell Group—is \$438,182,000. That has come into the general government sector out of ForestrySA, and resides in there.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The figures the Treasurer refers to are on page 1553. In reference to that page, is the \$579,000 of assets classified as held for sale? Are they also being transferred? Also, are the water licences (worth \$325,000) also being transferred as part of the sale?

The Hon. J.J. Snelling: Sorry, the water licence and what else?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: On page 1553 of Volume 5, it says there are water licences worth \$325,000. These are 'Assets classified as held for distribution to owner', \$325,000—Water licences, and 'Assets classified as held for sale', \$575,000. Are those two lines also being transferred to the new owners as part of the sale?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: They have been transferred to the general government sector but, no, they have not been sold.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Has the line, 'Assets classified as held for sale', \$756,000, which is footnote 12 on the same page, been transferred as part of the sale?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I will double-check just for safety but, no. I will double-check and get back to the member for Davenport and confirm it. It includes things like footings, trading stock, that sort of stuff. That is remaining with ForestrySA.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Can the minister then also provide an answer as to why it is being reported in the Auditor-General's Report as 'for sale'. If it is not being sold to the Campbell Group, who are we selling it to? Treasurer, my last question relates to Part A, Audit overview, page 8. To the best of our research, for the first time the Auditor-General has included a paragraph, which is the second paragraph in the concluding comments section where he refers to:

Certificates cannot be honestly and responsibly given if the certifiers are aware that information is that knowingly misstated.

So, is the Treasurer or Treasury aware of any certificates not being issued or any certificates being knowingly misstated?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: I can answer the earlier question while Treasury is advising me. The answer to the earlier question is: the reason why those things are for sale is because part

of it will be trading stock and trading stock is generally for sale. My advice is that we are not aware of any.

The CHAIR: The time for the examination of the Auditor-General's Report in relation to the Treasurer has expired.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Premier, Minister for State Development)
(16:23): I move:

That standing orders be and remain so far suspended as to enable me to move that this house—

- (a) acknowledges the commonwealth government commitment to return 3,200 gigalitres of water to the Murray-Darling Basin;
- (b) welcomes the commonwealth government's decision to invest \$265 million in water recovery and industry regeneration projects in South Australian river communities to ensure our irrigators do not bear the burden of adjustment in returning the Murray to health;
- (c) notes that with 3,200 gigalitres returned to the Murray-Darling Basin, the following outcomes can be achieved—
 - i. an average of two million tonnes of salt exported through the Murray Mouth each year;
 - ii. salinity kept below dangerous thresholds for the survival of native plants and animals in the Lower Lakes and Coorong;
 - iii. a reduced risk of the Murray Mouth needing to be dredged to remain open;
 - iv. water levels in the Lower Lakes kept at a level to avoid acidification and riverbank collapse below Lock 1;
 - v. an improved ability for flood plains to support healthy red gum forests, waterbird and fish breeding and greater areas of habitat for native plants and animals;
- (d) calls on all South Australian federal members of parliament to support a Murray-Darling Basin plan that—
 - i. returns 3,200 billion litres to the Murray-Darling Basin;
 - ii. provides for the healthy river outcomes set out above;
 - iii. ensures that the burden of adjustment does not fall upon our irrigators; and
- (e) that the time for the debate be limited to 20 minutes each for the mover and the Leader of the Opposition or one member deputed by her and 10 minutes for any other member and the mover in reply.

Members of the house would be aware that not so long ago we moved a resolution of this place calling upon all members of this house to support the government's efforts to bring the South Australian community together to fight for a healthy river. This was an issue of significant state importance, but not just an issue of state importance, an issue of national importance.

Our judgement at the time was that to achieve the changes that we needed to achieve in relation to the draft plan that had been proposed we needed to use all of the forces at our disposal to send the very clearest message to Canberra decision-makers that 2,750 gigalitres of water was inadequate.

During the period of time since that last resolution and the day we stand here, we have devoted our efforts to this campaign. Just last Friday, the Prime Minister of Australia announced a commitment to put into the river the water that it needs in order to be healthy, namely, 3,200 gigalitres—3,200 billion litres—of additional water, funded through a \$1.77 billion fund to allow this river to return to health.

This funding would allow water recovery projects that would ensure that the burden of adjustment would be minimised upon communities. The water that we have fought for and gained in the commonwealth's commitment—the 450 gigalitres more than was originally proposed—will enable a number of crucial advances to be made for the health of the river and the communities that rely upon it. The motion itself outlines these advances. They are significant: exporting two million tonnes of salt annually—

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The Leader of the Opposition says no, they're not significant. So, exporting two million tonnes of salt annually; preventing the recurrence of acidification and riverbank slumping; reducing the risk of needing to dredge the Murray Mouth; and making river red gum forests in our Murray flood plains healthier.

I was even more pleased that on Sunday we were able to announce that South Australia had won \$265 million in federal funding for water recovery and industry regeneration projects in the South Australian river communities. This funding is a major step in ensuring the burden of adjustment does not fall upon our irrigators and will be a major boost for industry and communities along the length and breadth of this river.

The extra water for the river and the funding are vital for the future health of the river and the health of the various industries that rely upon it: the \$600 million horticultural industry, the \$200 million tourism industry, and the \$6 million professional fishing industry, industries that rely upon a healthy river.

It has always been at the heart of our contention that this river is not just a beautiful environmental asset that renders, obviously, its own intrinsic value to the South Australian community; it is also an essential part of our economy. There is no healthy economy without a healthy environment, and those two things are inextricably linked—

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The leader will have a chance to speak to the motion.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: These are the things that we have always understood—that there is not an either/or proposition here. There is a choice to advance both the environment and the economy and the two are importantly linked. This is something the Ngarrindjeri have always understood. They have understood that not only is this essential to the health of their regional economies and the health of their environment but it is actually intrinsic to their own health. They see the connection between themselves and the river as being a much more vital one than a physical one. It is deeply intrinsic to themselves and their own sense of themselves and their sense of being.

I think that, finally, we are beginning to realise the interconnection between all these elements, and we have reached an incredibly important stage in this fight for a healthy river. So, how do we achieve this? Well, we achieve this by not sitting back. We achieve this by fighting. We chose to fight—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: —and I know there are a few little giggles from those opposite. They folded their hand on the first occasion. South Australia did not sit back and let these things unfold, accepting what was offered. We did the hard work—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind members on my left that, if they wish to speak to this motion, they will get a chance. If they choose to interrupt they will not get a chance.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has a bit of a catcall from over there. He says that there was \$2 million spent on this campaign. Well, \$2 million for an over \$2 billion return, any business that got that rate of return I would be very proud of—very proud of that rate return.

Mr Marshall: It was an advertising campaign.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It was more than advertising campaign. It was an attempt and a very successful attempt—

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Norwood is warned.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: —to unite the South Australian community, and unity is a concept completely foreign to those opposite. They have division stamped on their forehead, and no more palpable example of that is of the team that sits so uncomfortably next to one another.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Norwood will leave the chamber for 10 minutes.

The honourable member for Norwood having withdrawn from the chamber.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: Bye, bye, off you go.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: And, so peace is returned to the South Australia—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next member will leave for 20 minutes.

Mr Pederick: From either side?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Either side.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, the voice of reason returning order to this chamber. That is precisely what we sought to do. We sought to bring together environmentalists, we sought to bring together irrigators, we sought to bring together the city and the country, and that is why, in the first four days I was in this position, I travelled to the Riverland, not an area which is necessarily known to be one of our natural constituencies, although things can alter.

We travelled to that region not because there was some political advantage but because this was an issue of state importance, and the choice that we made was to unite this state behind this campaign because we knew we needed every single South Australian behind this campaign if it was to be a successful one. So it was with that common sense of purpose, armed with the scientific evidence and making our voices heard in Canberra, that we have reached this very important stage in the decision-making process.

Can I say that we have engaged the most eminent scientists to scrutinise the draft plan. They did that work. It was independently checked. We sent that to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and made a comprehensive submission with some 71 recommendations, which have caused an extraordinary number of improvements to the plan. When the revised plan was released without the changes that were needed by the broader community, we embarked upon a more intensive phase of our campaign, the Fight for the Murray campaign.

People answered our call. More than 18,000 campaign members, more than 23,000 people followed our campaign on Facebook and almost 5,000 people sent letters to the commonwealth government, and the achievements of recent days are testament to that campaign. These are the choices that we have made in South Australia, and the choices that we made in this state on this campaign are choices that are borne out of a perspective about our state. The perspective about our state is that it is a first-class state: it is not a second-class state. It is a state that has self-respect: it is not a state that cowers and avoids a fight. It is a state that is proud of itself, proud of its communities and values them and has a sense of justice.

Our sense of justice was aroused when propositions were put to us that we did not respect our historical respect for this river. Since 1969 we have paid this river enormous respect. We understood its natural constraints, we understood that we had to live respectfully within the natural constraints that were imposed upon us by the decisions taken by the upstream states. We understand we live in the driest state in the driest populated continent. We understand that that means that we have to be smarter, more innovative, to work carefully within the natural environment, the fragile natural environment that is presented to us.

So we sought to draw on the South Australian strengths of ingenuity in living in a harsh climate, and we sought to draw on all of those strengths and draw on the unity of the South Australian people to embark upon this campaign. Just as we embarked on this campaign for this purpose, we will use this mindset to guide all of the decisions that we take in the future about this state. The truth is there are too many people in this state who are prepared to settle for second best. There are too many people who want to talk down this state. There are too many people who want to appeal to the worst instincts, the cynicism that exists within members of this community, and seek to arouse that rather than the possibility for us to be better, rather than us having the possibility to imagine a greater and better South Australia.

That is what sits at the heart of our decision-making process, and that is what sits at the heart of the great divide between Labor and Liberal in this state. This is a message we will be taking from this day forward all the way to the election, and every time you start to talk down this great state, we will be rubbing your noses in the surrender that you proposed in relation to the fight for the River Murray campaign. Mr Mazda sitting over there, who you insult us with by leaving on the front bench to this day, who told us that we should haul up the white flag in relation to this river—so paralysed are you by disunity that you cannot act to remove a man who remains a persistent and consistent reminder of the—

Mr Whetstone interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Chaffey!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: —embarrassment that exists on your side of politics, and why can you not do that?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Premier, please resume your seat. The member for Chaffey, you will leave the chamber for 20 minutes; you have been warned.

Mr Whetstone: I have not been warned.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, you have. You were warned first and then I gave a general warning to all members on both sides—20 minutes.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Point of order: standing orders provide guidance on personal attacks, quarrels and arguments between members. The Premier has been personally attacking individuals on this side of the chamber. I ask that you consider that before you eject people from the chamber on the basis that they have responded to those personal attacks. Now, if you are going to eject people from the chamber, why not call the speaker into order so that he stops those personal attacks and the ejections are not required?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: First of all, I gave all members a warning about interjecting. I did allow some interjection to occur, and then it got out of control again. The voice I heard was, one, the member for Chaffey, who I had specifically warned earlier and, secondly, he did not desist. He will leave the chamber.

The honourable member for Chaffey having withdrawn from the chamber:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. What I was doing and will continue to do is to talk about the values that have been projected into the South Australian community by those sitting opposite. The divisions that exist within their party they are seeking to export into the public debate around what should happen on this issue. Their instincts are to divide. Their instincts at their heart are to divide, to set one South Australian against another South Australian. We called for a campaign of unity. I offered that bipartisan request for unity when we had this debate some months ago, and at every turn, at every single turn on every single day that went past from that day to this, they sought to explore the divisions and the fear. They tried to set city against country, they tried to set irrigator against environmentalist—

Mr PEDERICK: Point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Premier, resume your seat. Point of order.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bragg, there is a point of order.

Mr PEDERICK: This is debate. This motion is clearly about the River Murray and not our response to anything that comes out of the Premier's mouth. He should be telling us, as he is trying to do, what he has done for the River Murray instead of just having a crack at the opposition.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I assume you are talking about relevance. The matter is relevance?

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, absolutely.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members on my left will get a chance to respond. Premier, continue.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I will explain the relevance. The relevance is that I am attempting to shame those opposite into supporting this

resolution, because of the deliberate campaign of division they have engaged in over the period of time since I last invited them to undertake bipartisan support. It is not too late.

The good news for the Liberal Party, out of what has been a rather ordinary period and episode for them, is that the fight for the River Murray is not yet over. They do have an opportunity to redeem themselves and to be part of the consensus that I have sought to build in this great state to support this important state and national resource. You can still get on board by supporting this motion today and acting on it once you leave this chamber, because what it calls you to do is to go and speak to your federal Liberal colleagues. That is something that you are expertly well placed to do because—

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Unley, you won't get a second warning.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The basin plan will soon be presented to federal parliament and it will be critical that it is not blocked at that point, so the attitude of federal Liberal members of parliament is absolutely crucial. Indeed, if every federal Liberal member of parliament voted with the government—the South Australians at least—if all South Australians voted as a bloc, this would pass. There would be no issue. Advising that at an early time is not an academic matter, because it will bear on the sort of plan that the federal government decides to present to the federal parliament. They are not going to present a plan to the federal parliament that they think is going to be disallowed, so this is no mere academic exercise. Your decisions in this place to decide to do the right thing and stand up for South Australia could have a material bearing on the shape of this plan.

Through you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask those opposite to accept their responsibilities. For once and for all, stand up for this river, stop playing politics and get in behind this important campaign. That is why I have written to every South Australian federal MP asking them to state unequivocally their support for the basin plan, which does three important things: it returns 3,200 gigalitres to the Murray-Darling Basin; it achieves the healthy river outcomes, as set out in the motion; and ensures that the burden of adjustment is not borne by our irrigators.

That is why all members of parliament have also received a letter from me asking whether they will make similar demands of their colleagues in Canberra. That is why I have brought this motion to this house. It is vital that South Australia's resolve in this matter cannot be questioned. We are on the cusp of a historic breakthrough. We have a rare opportunity to put right an injustice that has been perpetrated on this state for over 100 years. If all elected members in this state stand as one to fight for a healthy river, we will achieve this outcome.

I will conclude by saying that this is not just a debate about a healthy river. It is a debate about a self-respecting state. It is a debate about whether we choose to be a state that cringes and cowers in the corner and shrinks from a fight, or whether we have a small view of South Australia or a great view about South Australia. We decidedly, on this side of the parliament, have a great view for this state. That will be the contest, might I say, and not just now over this issue. It will be the contest that will continue to emerge on every single issue that we put before the South Australian people in the weeks and months ahead and, ultimately, it will be the contest in 2014.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition. Before you start, I will remind members on my right.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen—Leader of the Opposition) (16:44): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for your protection in anticipation. I rise to speak on this motion and may I say what a pleasure it is to have the chance to set out some of the realities of the government's position on the Murray-Darling Basin because it has been anything but consistent and there has never been any real plan. What I want to do is go through the motion bit by bit, look at just what it says and make a comment on each of the little bits of it. The first part, of course, is that the house:

- (a) acknowledges the commonwealth government commitment to return 3,200 gigalitres of water to the Murray-Darling Basin;

Let us really have a look at that. First of all, it is not 3,200 gigalitres: it is up to 3,200 gigalitres and it is not guaranteed to return anything until the year 2024—that is 12 years away from now, that is four federal elections away from now and this government wants to get up and trumpet about this great achievement.

As far as I am concerned, Mr Premier, we do not have a plan. How can we responsibly talk about it when you have not actually given us any details? We do not yet have agreement from the upstream states—Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria—the important states that are going to say yes or no.

We have always had the view that it is important to get an independent authority in charge of this river, so that there can be true independent control that protects the entitlements of the environment, the economy and the communities along the river, so that there is fairness and independence in the assessment; but no, you think that standing up and bleating in this state solves the problem. You have no social, environmental or economic consensus across the basin, no detail at all on how the water is going to be obtained or delivered and, potentially, as I said, 12 years and four federal elections before you actually get any real change. Indeed, there is no indication where the funding is going to come from.

These are serious questions, Mr Premier, that deserve serious answers, not just this number that you throw at us of 3,200 gigalitres. There is nothing to suggest that this move by the Prime Minister and its lavish, almost gushing, support by the Premier is anything more than just more politics and grandstanding by this government.

South Australians actually care about this river. We know that that was the case before the last election and since the last election; that is why people down in the suburbs of Adelaide got upset about the river. Right through, it is the main issue that we fought about over the election and the idea that we needed to recycle stormwater in this state to help protect the river—remember? You promised a desalination plant that you have now mothballed, all in the name of getting a benefit to the river.

What you want is a lot of self-promoting stunts and grandstanding and that is what it is all about, in typical Labor fashion. Why else would you waste \$2 million on a Fight for the Murray advertising campaign—and that is what it was, an advertising campaign—entirely in South Australia? It is not convincing any of the people in the other states who have to be convinced to deal with this river in an appropriate way.

It offered a houseboat holiday. It was such a successful \$2 million. I would love to know what the people in these communities think with \$2 million spent and 13,000 people—that is less than 1 per cent of the population of the state—actually signing up, with all your money that you spent.

Then there was that tough talk about threatening a High Court challenge. Remember day one? Remember day one, when the Premier said, '4,000 gigalitres, not a drop less, and a High Court challenge'? Of course, we still have not heard from you how much the last failed High Court challenge cost us.

Then there was your little stunt yesterday, inviting the media to follow you to Christopher Pyne's office to deliver a letter, knowing full well that he was not there. In any event, the Liberal MPs had been on the radio that morning asserting their support for the need for a solution for this river, their support for South Australia and their intention to cross the floor if necessary. They were all on the radio about that in the morning, but no, you had to have your little stunt; that is what it is about.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Point of order: the leader continually refers—

Dr McFetridge: What number?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Are you still here? The leader continually refers—

Dr McFetridge interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Morphett?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: —to 'you, you, you'. That is not the courtesy that was extended by the Premier to the Leader of the Opposition. He referred to the Leader of the Opposition by her proper title.

Mrs REDMOND: I apologise and withdraw my reference to 'you', Mr Premier. I will try to make it Mr Premier all the way through. Let me remind the house of the Premier's own words, one year ago today, on 1 November last year. This is what the Premier said:

...as you've seen, the Goyder Institute Report talks about numbers of 3,500 to 4,000 gigalitres that are necessary to return the river to health. That's our starting point and I've said that publicly on a number of occasions...

So a year later, having said that that is your starting point, you are actually going to deliver at best—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

Mrs REDMOND: Sorry, the Premier is planning to deliver, at best, 2,750 gigalitres for the next 12 years and yet criticises us for saying at the outset that, actually, that is a reasonable starting point because we have to balance the interests of the health of the river, the health of the communities and the economies along that river. We have to balance all those things, and this government one year ago said 3,500 to 4,000 gigalitres were necessary to return the river to health, and nowhere in the next 12 years is there a plan to get us even close to those numbers. It smacks of self-serving politics and vote grabbing and, clearly, the Premier has no shame in exploiting this matter of extreme importance to this nation for some chief political mileage.

We need only look at the Premier's record when he was environment minister to know that the Murray is well down on his list of priorities. When the Premier was the minister for the environment he did not deal with this issue. Unbelievably, in his three years as environment minister, in this house he mentioned the Murray-Darling Basin only three times—three times in three years—two ministerial statements in November 2008 and October 2009, and in answer to a question in November 2009. He never put up an argument to address the river's plight and that of the irrigators and the local communities, and he never came up with solutions.

Since becoming Premier, he made a quick feel-good trip to the Riverland early on, as he said. In fact, remember yesterday he told us that they love him up there. He went up there and he told the people he would demand 4,000 gigalitres, no water from the food producers or a High Court challenge, and then he headed back to the city after making those announcements. Of course, he thinks that they do not remember up there what he said and what he is actually saying down here. Earlier this year, the Premier made another whirlwind visit, again trumpeting the 4,000 gigalitre mantra. A few months later and, what do you know, he has cosied up to the PM and he is more than happy with 2,750 gigalitres—the original amount that we said was a good starting point, until at least 2019 and maybe 3,200 by 2024—and without seeing the plan, but that is the way of this government.

Let us make things very clear: Premier Weatherill is not interested in the river; he is interested in staying Premier. He says what he thinks people want to hear. He says 4,000 gigalitres one minute, 3,200 the next, and 2,750 gigalitres is the real amount that he is talking about until at least the year 2019—what we said was a good starting point; who would have thought? River Murray reform never came from the Labor side, why would it? If it does not flow through the city, Labor does not care. Compare that with our side. The Liberal Party initiated all water reforms and, led by former prime minister John Howard, we championed the issue of the Water Act in 2007.

Not once have we changed our mind on the figures, the science, the impact on irrigators or on communities. We have been consistent through the whole debate. What we say today is what we were saying years ago. We know that water reform is never just a number and it cannot be a political stunt. It must be real and figured out properly not with just votes in mind. I listened to Julia Gillard in 2010, proclaimed by adulatory media as 'the river queen'—they love that term—for her promises on the Murray. That is two years ago and nothing has happened, and yet yesterday she got up in the parliament and proposed changes to the Murray-Darling Basin and, guess what? They are a once in a generation chance to get it right. Remember the historic agreement that the former premier told us about? Then I watched her, Tony Burke and others pat themselves on the back and celebrate a job well done.

Do not be fooled, the job is not done. The only job Labor is interested in is getting re-elected. Using the Murray River is an excuse to waffle on with flowery rhetoric that is unacceptable and an insult to the many thousands of families and businesses all along the length of this great river who are looking for real solutions and outcomes. We have heard it all before. Promises at the 2007 and 2010 elections to fix the Menindee Lakes. Fail. In 2007, prime minister Rudd set aside \$400 million to fix this system which was losing 426 gigalitres each year to evaporation. Five years later, nothing has been done. Promises to release the draft basin plan two years ago, we still have not seen it; promises to have it all in place in 2014, now 2019 at the earliest, and probably 2024. You just keep putting things back. Let me move on to paragraph (b) of the motion, which says:

welcomes the commonwealth government's decision to invest \$265 million in water recovery and industry regeneration projects in South Australian river communities to ensure our irrigators do not bear the burden of adjustment in returning the Murray to health.

The Liberal Party has always said that our state's river communities should not bear any burden—the weasel words used in this motion 'to ensure our irrigators do not bear the burden of the adjustment'. They could still bear a fair bit, but just weasel words to slide out of it.

Indeed, South Australian irrigators, as we know, are the best and most responsible irrigators in the country. That is why we have always said they should not have to give up any more at all to see this basin plan come to fruition. They have been so efficient and all the people upstream need to be brought up to their level of efficiency before they are asked to contribute another drop towards the health of this river.

Indeed, I did a trip along the river with our rural and regional council back in 2003, and I know a number of my colleagues were with us, and it is just remarkable the degree to which they have improved their efficiency on farm. It is just extraordinary that they are able to do what they do. There is none of this open channel drainage where you have got 50 per cent evaporation. Indeed, it is more than that.

They have companies that do topographical maps of the river blocks that they are going to irrigate. They can tell them, because of the soil type, exactly what sort of grape or other thing they should be growing there and what the moisture requirements are. They actually run from a computer to tell them how much moisture is in the soil, whether it is going outside the band that is required and, therefore, whether water is needed. They can check their computer for whether rain is likely. If it is not likely and they do need to put water in, it is not even done by sprinklers overhead: it is put down into the ground where it is needed, and it is via pressing a solar operated button at the pump at the front of the property to bring the water on. It is so high-tech and efficient that the other states have a mile to go before they get anywhere near the efficiency of our irrigators.

The commonwealth government's decision to invest this \$265 million in water recovery and industry regeneration projects in the South Australian community is (pardon the pun) a drop in the ocean. John Howard earmarked \$6 billion for this purpose and now the government is crowing about having got \$265 million. Further, how will the responsible irrigators of this state access any of these funds? Think about the people who are citrus growers, for instance.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please keep your voices down.

Mrs REDMOND: Citrus growers in this state had to pull out their trees because of the drought, because they did not get the help that the government could have given them and did not in those years of better economic activity in this state. They now have to wait for up to five or six years for new plantings to bear fruit. Again I ask: where is the detail; where is the time frame; where is the consideration of South Australian irrigators who have been doing the right thing for more than 40 years; and where is the guarantee that they will not be made to bear any of the burden whatsoever of the adjustment that they are talking about? Paragraph (c):

notes that with 3,200 gegalitres returned to the Murray-Darling Basin, the following outcomes will be achieved:

- i. an average of two million tonnes of salt exported through the Murray Mouth each year;

This two million tonne figure is actually, at best, arbitrary. There is no science. We do not even know how much of this flow is going to be delivered, so there cannot possibly be an assertion as to how much salt you are going to get through. Paragraph (c) continues:

- ii. salinity kept below dangerous thresholds for the survival of native plants and animals in the Lower Lakes and Coorong;

Again, how can you possibly achieve this outcome with no idea of the details of the plan and how much water is going to be coming through? Paragraph (c) continues:

- iii. a reduced risk of the Murray Mouth needing to be dredged to remain open;

The science says, using the figure of 3,200 gegalitres—which I remind members again will not be achieved until at least 2024, if we ever get there—the Mouth will be open in nine out of 10 years. Do you know what? It also says the same thing for 2,750 gegalitres.

Further, what if there is a drought in the next decade? Then what happens? It is all aspiration without any idea of how to get from where we are now to where we aspire to be. The motion continues:

- iv. water levels in the Lower Lakes kept at a level to avoid acidification and riverbank collapse below Lock 1;

It is very obvious to me that if you send down this much water from the upper reaches, you will have bank collapse below Lock 1. If you push water through all at once, the river will not cope. You may recall that your own Scott Ashby recently asked them not to send down too much water, for fear that having 80 megs a day would actually cause riverbank collapse.

The Hon. P. Caica: Rubbish.

Mrs REDMOND: That's what he said; your own Scott Ashby wrote to—

The Hon. P. Caica: No, that's not true.

Mrs REDMOND: He did; we have got the letter. He wrote to them and said, 'We can't afford to have more than 60 come down a day—'

The Hon. P. Caica: He said, 'Tell us about it'.

Mrs REDMOND: He said, 'You can't afford to have more than 60 come down a day because of the fact that it will cause riverbank collapse. The motion continues:

- v. an improved ability for flood plains to support healthy red gum forests, waterbird and fish breeding and greater areas of habitat for native plants and animals;

Well, anyone would support that if it was accurate. For example, red gums are the most water intensive trees along the river. What the government should be addressing are the black box gums which grow at the back of the flood plain. The government's objectives will make no difference—not one iota—to the future of any red gums; it is pure ignorance, and shows a complete failure to grasp even the most basic facts. Paragraph (d) provides that this house:

- (d) calls on all South Australian federal members of parliament to support a Murray-Darling Basin Plan that—
 - i. returns 3,200 billion litres to the Murray-Darling Basin;
 - ii. provides for the healthy river outcomes set out above;
 - iii. ensures that the burden of adjustment does not fall upon our irrigators...

Again, what is the plan? I am in constant contact with all the federal MPs on this side and, as I said earlier, they have already committed to real reform for many years. May I suggest that the Premier turn his attention to the federal Greens, with whom you are in bed, and the Independent MPs, and perhaps, even further, reflect upon the fact that when Penny Wong was the federal water minister, she did nothing.

I wonder whether our Premier ever asked Penny Wong—with whom he had a very good relationship—to do anything about the river while she was the federal water minister. The time is well and truly over for the Premier to stop playing politics on this issue. We need practical action, not posturing for cheap points; we can all see through that.

The food producers, irrigators and the local communities that live along the river deserve better than what this government has given them. They do not want slick ads; that achieves nothing. In fact, it would have been better to spend the \$2 million up in the river communities to actually help their economies. They do not want sweeping announcements followed by delay after delay. They do not want the slippery Labor approach to the facts: fudging them one minute and ignoring them the next.

The Liberal Party, on this issue, has and remains the true party of water reform. We are consistent and we are transparent. We do not play with the facts. We want fair and balanced outcomes, and we will not support an important piece of legislation without even seeing it. We want a solutions-based approach, we want to know where the water is coming from, how it will be applied, where and when money will be spent, and we want assurances—absolute assurances—as we said, that South Australians who have been doing the right thing for many, many years will not be compromised by this government and their approach.

We will support a basin plan that delivers a balanced outcome socially, economically and environmentally, but I seem to remember that when the first one came out, the previous premier got up and said, 'You know, we've got to support this right away.' Wasn't that what the previous premier said? 'We've got to support this wonderful draft plan.' That is, until they realised that the communities all along the river were in uproar about it, and rightly so, because it had concentrated

entirely on the environment, to the exclusion of the social and economic factors that have to be taken into account.

We will support a basin plan that delivers a balanced outcome socially, economically and environmentally. We will support a plan that delivers improved water security for all water users along the Murray-Darling system. We will ensure that our water users are recognised, not penalised, for being responsible and efficient for the past 40 years. I call on the Premier to take the politics out of it, start being sensible, and start considering some real solutions. I believe that is the least that he could do.

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (17:04): I rise to very enthusiastically support this motion. I must say that I do not know what the position of the leader is after that 20 minutes, and I note that the deputy leader, who got 10 minutes, did not come back at all to show support. It just shows where they are at.

Only a few short years ago we faced the likelihood of environmental catastrophe, the result of a prolonged drought, the most severe drought on record, as well as record low flows over the South Australian border. These conditions exacerbated the damage that had already been done by the over-extraction of water from the Murray-Darling system by upstream states over many decades.

As well as facing an environmental disaster through the drought and low flows into the southern basin, as a state, we also faced the threat of significant economic and social damage. Of course, traditional owners along the length of the river in South Australia also incurred cultural damage. So, to have reached the point now where we have a commitment to return 3,200 gigalitres of water to the Murray-Darling Basin as well as support for our regional communities that rely on having a healthy river is an exciting prospect, given the long battle South Australians have had to fight to secure a sustainable future for the river and its communities.

Hundreds of millions of dollars were spent on addressing the consequences of the drought, and large parts of our state were brought under tight water restrictions; yet, despite these efforts, the severity of the drought saw some towns and parts of Adelaide come close to running out of water supplies as it became clearer that we could no longer rely on the River Murray to meet our water needs.

Our fortunes changed in August 2010 as it began to rain right across the basin, but ecosystems and communities are still dealing with some of the impacts of the drought, even today. There is nothing more certain: with the natural cycles and, on top of that, the impacts of climate change drought will visit us again. Indeed, climate scientists tell us that the drought we have just gone through is a glimpse of the future, where we can expect drought to become more frequent and more intense.

I do note again that this is a debate in the house, and I wonder which way the leader and the deputy leader will vote. I also note that this motion is so important to them that they are not even in the chamber.

The Hon. J.M. Rankine: Neither of them.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Neither of them.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I believe those comments are quite out of order.

An honourable member: Why?

Mr GRIFFITHS: They are out of order by convention of the house.

Mr Gardner interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Morialta, I do not need your assistance. The member for MacKillop is correct. Minister, please do not do it again.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I apologise, sir. The deputy leader and the leader, along with the several other deputy leaders that are here, are, in essence, always here. Is that what we are saying?

The Hon. J.M. Rankine: The vibe. The vibe is here.

The Hon. P. CAICA: The vibe, that is right.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: Except we know.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, that is right, we know. The commitment that South Australia has won from the Gillard government to return 3,200 gigalitres—450 gigalitres more than the 2,750 gigalitres proposed by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority—has the prospect of dramatically improving the environmental outcomes for the basin as a whole and the South Australian environment in particular. We have succeeded in achieving this despite the lack of support from those opposite, from the leader down, who have been telling South Australians that we should accept 2,750 gigalitres as the best we could do without upsetting the upstream states. In fact, we had the then deputy leader of the opposition tell *The Advertiser* on 18 February this year:

This is obviously not the Rolls-Royce, but it's a very good Mazda and we're quite happy to drive in the Mazda. The reality is we're not going to get everything we want and this is a very good start.

Well, on this side of the house we are not prepared to run up the white flag and accept second best. We are not prepared for a very good start. What we are prepared to fight for is a good end point, a good result, and that is what we are going to get.

The return of 3,200 gigalitres of water, along with the removal and the relaxation of key constraints in the system that would impede the most effective and efficient use of that water, will enable more key environmental targets to be achieved, a proposition that is backed up by our scientists and supported by the Goyder Institute for Water Research.

I could not understand a lot of the leader's comments because, quite frankly, she was wrong in a lot of them. A lot of what she asserted was absolutely wrong, and she finished off by not determining a position on this particular motion at any rate. The environmental benefits accruing from this commitment to more water in the River Murray include:

- the delivery of flows sufficient to keep the Murray Mouth open without the need for dredging in at least 95 per cent of years, with flows out to sea occurring every year;
- the export of an average of two million tonnes of salt through the Murray Mouth each year, helping to ensure that salinity levels are kept above dangerous thresholds and ensuring the continued survival of plants and animals in the ecosystems of the Lower Lakes and the Coorong;
- a minimum operating level of 0.4 metres above sea level for 95 per cent of the time, with an absolute minimum of zero metres for 100 per cent of the time as measured in Lake Alexandrina, this helping to protect the lakes from acidification events and minimising riverbank collapses below Lock 1;
- enabling the prioritisation of the delivery of environmental water to the Coorong in times of drought; and
- providing flow regimes to secure the periodic delivery of flow regimes up to 80,000 megalitres per day to help protect and restore healthy flood plain habitats, to maintain connections with the river and support fish like the iconic Murray cod to survive, as well as encouraging the breeding of numerous bird species.

It will not just be the South Australian end of the river that stands to gain from the commitment that South Australia has won from the Gillard government. The science tells us that 3,200 gigalitres, with constraints removed, will mean that the authority will be able to achieve 17 out of 18 of its key environmental targets, including all those in South Australia, and the 18th target, which relates to the Hattah lakes in Victoria, will see considerable improvement.

Under the authority's 2,750 water recovery target—which upstream states have opposed, anyway—only 11 out of the 18 targets would be met. While the upstream states have failed in showing real leadership in demanding a sustainable future for the Murray-Darling Basin, South Australia has been able to obtain a commitment from the Gillard government that not only benefits our part of the basin but, as the Premier said, in fact will deliver significant benefits right across the basin.

The Gillard government's commitment to the future health of the river is backed by a funding commitment to the tune of \$1.77 billion through what will be a legislated fund specifically for recovering the additional 450 gigalitres required to remove constraints. It is also important to note that the water will be recovered through on-farm irrigation efficiency projects, which, of course, have direct benefits for our irrigators in addition to returning water to the environment. The leader

asked, 'Where's the water going to come from?' Well, it is going to come from those people who have been squandering it and wasting it in an inefficient way for far too long.

Mr Whetstone interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: It is. With this in place, what justification is there other than continued self-interest and utter disregard for South Australians downstream for the upstream states to oppose a plan that returns 3,200 gigalitres of water to the river? Given this situation, as the Premier so eloquently pointed out, what justification is there for South Australia's federal Liberal members voting to block such a plan?

As alluded to earlier in my contribution, South Australian irrigators and the communities in which they live also stand to gain from the commitments we have won from the Gillard government. Indeed, the Premier has always made the point that the health of the economies of our river communities is inextricably linked to the health of the river itself.

We have always made it clear that our decision to cap our take from the river in 1969, and the indisputable fact that our irrigators were early adopters of water efficiency irrigation technologies (and I am a bit of a technosaur, but our irrigators know how to do it, as was pointed out by the leader) justifies our demand that our irrigation communities should not have to bear the burden of adjustments related to returning the Murray-Darling Basin to health.

In this regard, minister Burke's announcement last weekend that the Gillard government has committed to funding \$265 million—and I know that the member for Chaffey does support this because all his community does—to support our river communities through the process of adjustment is a vitally important step in recognising past responsible behaviour, and it is an announcement that has been welcomed widely in our river communities. I can only concur with Ben Haslett, who represents South Australian Riverland communities, when he said on ABC radio on Monday:

For the last 40 years the Riverland's done a lot of hard work with regard to irrigation efficiency and really need to take that next step forward and some of those things aren't just about water underground, they're about the processes downstream from producing the food as well. Funding like this, if it's targeted well, will go a long way to helping us move in the direction we need to.

It is just a shame that the member for Chaffey remains out of touch with the mood of his electorate and can only throw rocks instead of getting behind the Premier's campaign for a better deal for South Australia.

I want to finish off by saying this: this is not the end of the struggle. We need to ensure that these gains are not thwarted by cynical political manoeuvres in the federal parliament. It is essential that all South Australians get behind us, particularly the opposition.

Time expired.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (17:15): I rise to speak on this wedge motion. More than anything else, this motion demonstrates the Premier has absolutely no shame when it comes to grandstanding and exploiting an issue of supreme importance for cheap political stunts. It illustrates this government's unmatched hypocrisy on water reform in the Murray-Darling Basin. How dare the Premier even suggest—

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Point of order: I ask the member to withdraw the word hypocrisy; it is unparliamentary language.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, minister, I have to rule against you.

Mr WHETSTONE: How dare the—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hold on. Member for Chaffey, there is a point of order, from your side.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: My recollection, Mr Speaker, on that point of order is that accusing a member of being a hypocrite may be unparliamentary, but I did not hear the member do that. In a general sense, he referred to statements by the government as hypocritical or hypocrisy. I do not think that is unparliamentary. It is not a direct attack at a member.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Waite, I actually said, 'I rule against the minister.' I am glad you took up all that time just to tell me that I was right. Member for Chaffey.

Mr WHETSTONE: How dare the Premier even suggest the Liberal Party is not committed to water reform? It was the Liberal Party that started this process, and it was the Labor Party which made a complete mess of it. The Premier is obviously ignorant of the facts, and quite probably by design. The Liberals in Canberra and in South Australia have been leaders in water reform. The Water Act was an initiative of the Howard government in 2007 and followed the groundbreaking Coalition water reform policy such as the Living Murray Initiative, which has delivered more than 800 gigalitres of environmental flows.

It was the Liberal Party of South Australia which first proposed to diversify Adelaide's water resources and reduce the city's reliance on water supplies from the River Murray. It was the Liberal Party of South Australia which proposed to harvest Adelaide's stormwater, benefits of which were returning an environmental dividend to the Murray and reducing pollution in Gulf St Vincent. It was the Liberal Party which first proposed Adelaide's 50 gigalitres desal plant, the cost of which would not cripple South Australian households with massive water bills, and the main benefit of which would be reducing the amount of water taken from the Murray for Adelaide's supplies.

We have always been committed and consistent to water reform for the basin. In contrast, the government's record on water reform in the basin has been appalling. It has been dictated by political expediency. It has been hypocritical in the extreme, and it has been on record talking tough but doing nothing, of taking credit when there is no credibility, and it has exploited South Australia to score cheap political points.

Labor's one real contribution to water reform in the basin has been to blow out the cost of Adelaide's desalination plant project to \$2.2 billion and then mothball it. It is a \$2.2 billion lemon that does not return a single drop of water to the river. Labor had no intention of helping the river with this massive project, the cost of which has crippled South Australian households and businesses with outrageously high water bills.

Labor said this plant would reduce Adelaide's reliance on the river. Everyone believed this meant reducing the amount of water taken from the river to supply Adelaide. It was years before the government revealed that was not the case. Even the federal Labor government was fooled. It threatened to withhold its \$228 million contribution to the expansion of the desal plant unless there was an environmental dividend to the river. Instead, the state government bought the water on the open market at yet more expense to South Australian taxpayers. It gave up \$212 million in GST revenue. The net benefit of this government dancing around on its broken promise and avoiding its responsibility to the Murray was a paltry \$6 million, and then the government announced the plant would be mothballed because the water from the River Murray was cheaper.

All this time the Premier has been pretending he is champion of the River Murray, but the desalination plant debacle clearly demonstrates his hypocrisy. It was a disgusting episode of the grubby politics this government has been playing in the process of Murray-Darling Basin water reform. The political game playing has also been manifest in the government's inconsistent position on the number of gigalitres it has demanded be returned to the river under the basin plan. Within a week of the Premier taking office (with the assistance of his faceless union mates) he visited the Riverland and told the community he would demand a minimum of 4,000 gigalitres under the basin plan without taking water from food producers and their communities.

Earlier this year he visited the Riverland again to launch his taxpayer-funded \$2 million vote-grabbing campaign and told the assembled media that the best available science was that 3,500 to 4,000 gigalitres was necessary to save the river. He threatened to destroy the plan with a High Court challenge if he did not get his way. Last week he stood grinning next to the Prime Minister, side by side, and declared a victory by settling for up to 3,200 gigalitres. Now he has the temerity to ask for our support for his diluted demands. He has the gall to say he will personally campaign against federal MPs who do not back his diluted demands.

Federal Liberal MPs in South Australia do not fear the Premier's threats because they are committed to fair and balanced water reform that delivers a healthy river, and because they know that this state government is well and truly on the nose here in South Australia. They know that, until a basin plan is actually tabled in the federal parliament, they are acting in the best interests of South Australians by withholding judgement. How could anyone possibly state their support for such an important piece of legislation until they have seen it?

What the Premier should do, instead of blatant grandstanding and engaging in grubby politics, is adopt the South Australian Liberal Party's consistent position on the basin plan. South Australians are indeed unfortunate to be saddled with a Premier who does not have the courage or

the vision to cast aside politics and adopt a solution-based approach to water reform in the basin. Instead, he is more focused on the big announcements involving numbers and claiming credit where he has no credibility.

On Sunday in Renmark, he was claiming credit for the \$265 million program to be provided by the commonwealth to South Australia for recovering 37.5 gigalitres from irrigators. While we welcome this announcement, credit really goes to the hard work of the South Australian River Communities and its committee. Much of this funding is also dependent on eligibility rules for the Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program being changed. The government must ensure these rules are amended and underwrite this Water Industry Alliance initiative to guarantee that the water is delivered. We do not want another disastrous failure like the recent PIIP-SA scheme.

On Friday at Goolwa, the Premier again was claiming credit for another federal government announcement about delivering a further 450 gigalitres to the river by 2024, bringing the total of the basin plan up to 3,200 gigalitres. What is 3,200 gigalitres? It is a number that is not guaranteed. The \$1.77 billion in funding announced on Friday does not guarantee 450 gigalitres; it is up to 450 gigalitres. It is a number that is untested against the environmental, economic and social realities of the Murray-Darling Basin. It is a number, it is not a solution.

In 2010, 23,000 gigalitres flowed into South Australia—more than 12 times the state's minimum annual entitlement—and yet we still have high salinity issues and other environmental problems at the Lower Lakes and the barrages. Numbers do not solve problems. Premier, solutions solve problems, which is why the Liberal Party of South Australia has been proposing them and communicating them to the federal government, to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and to its federal Coalition colleagues.

Federal Liberal MPs listen to us, Premier, not to you. While you as minister for the environment during the drought gave virtually no regard to the plight of the river, I was in Canberra meeting with federal politicians about water reform—Liberals, Greens, Independents and Labor. I was involved in developing the Howard government's national water plan, and as little as two weeks ago I was in Canberra again lobbying Liberal MPs about our solution-based approach to water reform.

Our solution is simple and delivers a win for all stakeholders in the basin. It does not lie with the arbitrary number of gigalitres to be returned to environmental flows, but with how and from where the water is obtained, and how it is applied to the basin's environmental assets. We have consistently called for an audit on all savings which can be made in the basin without compromising food production and regional communities, and for these savings to be prioritised and applied before the imposition of sustainable diversion limits.

We have consistently called for engineering works that enable the most efficient application of environmental water to offset the burden of water reform on irrigated food producers. Examples include the Lower Lakes and the Coorong, and the Menindee Lakes. The Menindee Lakes are an example of Labor's lack of real commitment to water reform. They are an example that Labor's promises, like those uttered at Goolwa and Renmark in the past week, cannot be trusted. In 2007, the Rudd government allocated \$400 million to fix the Menindee Lakes system where, on an average, 426 gigalitres of water each year is lost to evaporation.

Time expired.

The Hon. M.F. O'BRIEN (Napier—Minister for Finance, Minister for the Public Sector) (17:25): Speaking in support of this motion, I will first touch on the historic context within which the substance of the motion sits. The issue of management of the rivers and tributaries within the Murray-Darling Basin and allocation of the waters therein predates Federation. Historic records indicate that this issue was the most contentious and divisive of all the matters considered in the lead-up to Federation and the one that eluded final resolution.

Prior to the first sitting of the 1897-98 Constitutional Convention, which was held in Adelaide, Sir Richard Chaffey Baker, President of this parliament's Legislative Council, issued the following statement to South Australia's newspapers as to why South Australia should support Federation, and I quote:

The question concerning the water of the River Murray which arose between New South Wales and South Australia some time ago has never been settled and is bound to arise again in more aggravated form as more and more water is used for irrigation on the headwaters of the River Murray and its tributaries. In the absence of Federation, there is no authority to settle this or any similar question and both it and the ever recurring dispute

between South Australia and Victoria are examples of questions which give rise to friction and dispute and sometimes ultimately end in animosity.

There are a number of interesting aspects to the statement by Sir Richard Baker, a fine conservative. First, he acknowledges that the issue of disputation between New South Wales and South Australia, which was the sufficiency of water for navigation by South Australian vessels, would worsen as more water was extracted from the River Murray.

South Australia's concerns have now shifted from water for paddle-steamers to the health of the Lower Lakes, Murray Mouth, Coorong and the Riverland-Chowilla Floodplain. However, the causes of aggravation remain, namely, overallocation of water for irrigation by the upstream states.

The second interesting aspect of Sir Richard Baker's newspaper statement is his reference to the 'ever recurring dispute between Victoria and South Australia'. This disputation between Victoria and South Australia on this state's view that 2,750 gigalitre water recovery scenario was inadequate must be viewed against the historic intransigence of Victoria on the issue of over-allocation by that state.

The third aspect of Sir Richard Baker's media statement lies not in the content but the context. It was made during the Federation drought, which extended from the mid-1880s to 1902. The same externalities were at play in the pre-Federation debate as the ones that surrounded the commencement of the work on the preparation of a plan for the Murray-Darling Basin, namely, drought. Finally, Federation did not achieve the objective of providing an authority to settle issues such as overallocation, whereas, importantly, we now have such an authority.

The final constitutional outcome for the River Murray is embodied in section 100 of the Australian Constitution. As I mentioned, the River Murray issue was raised in the lead-up to the Adelaide session of the Constitutional Convention and debated during that session. When the convention moved to Melbourne, that issue took centre stage and took more time than any other issue. It was publicly debated for a week, moved to private conference, then brought back to the public arena for another week of debate in February 1898.

According to the historian John La Nauze, the fierceness of the interchanges were incomprehensible to the Tasmanians and Western Australians, the process being more an endurance test than an exercise in clarification. What was at issue was the desire of the upstream colonies to preserve their independence and protect their right to use the River Murray for irrigation while South Australia wanted to prevent them from diverting so much water that it would dry up the channel and threaten navigation. Section 100 of the Commonwealth Constitution appears to meet both sets of demands. It reads:

The Commonwealth shall not, by any law or regulation of trade or commerce, abridge the right of a State or of the residents therein to the reasonable use of the waters of rivers for [and I stress] conservation or irrigation.

As I mentioned, this state's original concerns were that of ensuring adequate water in the channels of the Murray, the Murrumbidgee and Darling for the purposes of navigation.

Now, this state's focus lies squarely on that other concern of section 100, which is conservation and what constitutes reasonable use. Interestingly, the word 'reasonable' was inserted at the suggestion of that other significant conservative statesman—and I use the word 'statesman' with great respect—South Australian Sir John Downer during the Sydney session of the Constitutional Convention.

It is this state's position that reasonable use would have to ensure greater water recovery than that under the 2,750-gigalitre scenario and, for this reason, the motion acknowledges the commonwealth government's commitment to return 3,200 gigalitres. The Goyder Institute for Water Research maintains that a large percentage of the South Australian flood plain, including the Riverland-Chowilla Floodplain Ramsar site, would remain under elevated risk under the 2,750 scenario, as would other vulnerable sites outside our state.

For this reason, the South Australian government has publicly campaigned to ensure that the additional water required, which the Goyder Institute indicates is the 3,200-gigalitre scenario, be provided by the upstream states. This view has been supported by additional research undertaken by the basin authority and accepted by the federal government. Our view in calling on the upstream states to make a major contribution to providing additional environmental flows is in recognition of the fact that South Australia took the hard decision to cap water allocations in 1969, whereas New South Wales and Victoria continued to allocate water to new irrigation ventures.

This overallocation was brought home to me several years ago when I travelled on the Sydney road via Hay, after not having travelled on that road for at least a decade or two. I was absolutely staggered at the amount of land around Hay that was under irrigation, whereas, 20 years ago, it was reserved for dryland farming for sheep grazing. There has been an absolutely staggering increase by the New South Welshmen of the amount of land under irrigation, which brings me to another matter raised in the motion.

Not only have we applied and abided by a cap on extractions for the past 40 years, we have also applied ourselves to maximising the economic return to our irrigators from the water that we have by applying world-leading irrigation technologies and practices. So efficient are South Australian irrigators that we have found that we are largely ineligible for the nearly \$190 million in Australian government funds allocated to South Australia for irrigation infrastructure upgrades because of the work done in South Australia over previous decades. The South Australian government sought recognition of this fact and this has resulted in a commitment by the federal government to invest \$265 million in water recovery and industry regeneration projects in South Australia against new criteria.

What is clear and what is enunciated in this motion is that the massive expansion of irrigation activity by the upstream states has stressed the basin's ecosystem to the point that areas within the basin, particularly within the lower reaches in South Australia, are under threat of collapse. It is also clear that the earlier 2,750 gigalitre water recovery proposal was manifestly inadequate, and this position was steadfastly maintained and promoted by the Premier and the South Australian government. Our position was supported by the science and the science has now been accepted by the commonwealth government.

As the motion states, this parliament now calls on all South Australian members of parliament to support the Murray-Darling Basin plan that returns the 3,200 gigalitres and does not impose the burden of adjustment on our irrigators who have prudently worked within the cap for four decades. Essentially, we are calling on South Australian representatives in the federal parliament to satisfy section 100 of the Australian constitution to ensure reasonable use of the water for environmental purposes.

Time expired.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (17:35): In 1775, Samuel Johnson stated that patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel. I know who he would be talking about if he were here today because the Premier did nothing but try to invoke patriotism, and patriotism is used by scoundrels when they do not have a good argument, and that is what the Premier does not have.

Every South Australian understands the importance of water, every South Australian understands the precarious nature of this state's water supply, every South Australian understands the importance of a healthy flowing river, not just to meet our water supply needs but to underpin significant food production and economic activity in our river communities, and every South Australian understands the importance of the protection of the environmental integrity of the river and its flood plain.

What every South Australian has also come to understand is the penchant of this government to oversell and under-deliver. The hallmark of this government is to do just that. Rhetoric and spin dominate its every utterance, and this motion is simply another element in that continuum of spin and deceit. To illustrate my point, I note paragraph (b) of the motion and its reference to the commonwealth promise to invest \$265 million in water recovery and industry regeneration projects in South Australia. Let me quote from a government press release. It starts off by saying:

Infrastructure projects to make irrigation systems and water use along the River Murray much more efficient—which will release billions of litres more water into South Australia—can begin this year.

That press release is dated 27 March 2008—4½ years ago. No wonder South Australians are cynical, and no wonder South Australians no longer believe what this government is saying, just as we were told that the plan would be developed independent of politics and that decisions would not be based upon, to quote the same press release, 'political considerations'.

Last week's visit to South Australia by the Prime Minister and the statement regarding the river basin plan was all about politics, just as this motion and the Premier's announcements are all about politics. South Australians are sick and tired of hollow Labor promises and this latest ruse

where we have been promised an outcome to occur some time between 2019 and 2024 is audacious even by Labor standards.

Does anybody really believe that in 12 years' time, after four more federal elections, the federal water minister of the day, of whatever political persuasion, will feel obliged to fulfil a vague promise made this week by the Prime Minister? I use the word 'vague' deliberately as this is what it was, notwithstanding the Premier's grandstanding. Anyone listening could be excused for believing that minister Burke is about to table a whole of basin plan enshrining the figure of 3,200 gigalitres as the volume of water to be recovered from existing consumptive use and applied to environmental use. Unfortunately if they did, they would be sadly in error. However, they could be excused as this is what the South Australian government is intent on having them think.

Let us, however, reflect upon what federal minister Burke does plan to table shortly in the commonwealth parliament. Last Friday on public radio, ABC radio host Anna Vidot put the following proposition to minister Burke:

We're not talking about adjusting things from 3,200 up or down; you're still talking about a 2,750 gigalitre figure that could be adjusted up to 3,200, is that what you're saying?

Minister Burke's response was, 'That's exactly right.' Let us be perfectly clear about this: minister Burke will table a whole-of-basin plan based upon recovering 2,750 gigalitres by 2019, including water recovered from efficiency gains made through expenditure on works to improve both delivery and on-farm systems. The proposal will include an adjustment mechanism which could recover a further 450 gigalitres under strict guidelines described by the minister, and I quote further: 'The rule is it can only happen through methods that have no downside, social or economic.'

According to the Premier, we have a commitment from the commonwealth to return 3,200 gigalitres to the river across the basin. Quite clearly, according to the federal minister, the plan will commit to 2,750 gigalitres, with an opportunity to possibly increase this by further savings found through efficiency gains beyond 2019. Let us not forget that the original Howard government plan set aside almost \$6 billion for the very purpose of delivering efficiency gains through works and measures both on delivery and on farm. South Australians can be excused for being cynical that a further 450 gigalitres will be freed up at the end of this process in 12 years' time after four more federal elections.

The Premier and minister referred to the Mazda and deliberately insinuated that I used a car analogy with regard to the basin plan. Let me disabuse the house of the misunderstanding with regard to this matter—a deliberate misunderstanding. Almost 12 months ago, when the federal minister released the draft plan, a public meeting was held of Riverland stakeholders at Baramera to discuss—

The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you were warned. You are out for 10 minutes.

The honourable member for Colton having withdrawn from the chamber:

Mr WILLIAMS: A meeting was held at Baramera to discuss community response to the draft. Karen Martin, the Chair of the South Australian Murray Irrigators Association, summed up her response by stating that the draft plan was not a Rolls Royce but appeared to be a very good Mazda and she felt that the Riverland communities might be happy to drive a Mazda. My crime has been to accept that feedback from the Riverland community.

The opposition's position has consistently been that the draft plan at 2,750 gigalitres returned to the environment was a good start. We said that because we believed that it was achievable. We believed that it would be acceptable and we believed that the benefits would be significant. We have said a good start because we believe that the future management of the river should be dynamic. We believe that we need to continuously monitor the outcomes of our management with a view to modifying the management regime as necessary where it is demonstrated that outcomes can be improved or need to be improved.

We do not accept that the constraints to river flows are artificial, as the Premier claims; just as the South Australian department of water knows that the constraints are real and present real challenges. That is why in March this year Scott Ashby, head of the South Australian department of water, wrote to the MDBA with a plea not to allow more than 60,000 megalitres per day into South Australian as it would cause flooding. That is a real constraint, not artificial.

The opposition wants the whole-of-basin plan to deliver the best outcome but we are not going to deceive the South Australian community about what is achievable and what is not achievable. The motion of the Premier calls on the South Australian federal members to support a plan that returns 3,200 gigalitres to the Murray-Darling Basin. According to federal minister Burke, he will not be presenting a plan which does this so I believe that the motion is seriously flawed.

That will not worry this government, because they do not care about the truth. That is why this government has spent some \$2 million of taxpayers' funds on an advertising campaign which includes statements about the ongoing elevated salt levels in Lake Albert. The truth is that Lake Albert (which happens to be in my electorate) remains saline not because of low river flows: it remains in this condition as a result of this state government's incompetence and broken promises. The government promised to remove the bund placed in the Narrung Narrows as soon as it was no longer necessary—that did not happen—and the government's ham-fisted efforts see the flow path through the Narrows, vital to the lake's timely recovery, still seriously compromised.

Actions speak much louder than words and this government is condemned by its actions. This government remains full of rhetoric and spin, but deficient on delivery. To revert to the motor-car analogy, this government is not presenting us with a Rolls Royce; it is not even presenting us with a Mazda. I believe this government is clearly driving a 1960 Kombi covered in flowers, and this government is just as removed from reality as those who painted the flowers on that Kombi.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Sibbons.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill with the amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

No. 1. Clause 2, page 13, line 6—Delete 'a day to be fixed by proclamation' and substitute:

1 January 2013

No. 2. Clause 17, page 21, after line 29—Insert:

- (2) A person must comply with subsection (1) to the extent to which the person has the capacity to influence and control the matter or would have that capacity but for an agreement or arrangement purporting to limit or remove that capacity.

No. 3. Clause 34, page 32, after line 32—Insert:

- (a1) To avoid doubt, an officer of a prescribed strata/community titles corporation who is a volunteer does not commit an offence for a failure to comply with a duty under section 27 (but may be liable for a failure to comply with another duty under this Act).

No. 4. Clause 34, page 33, after line 2—Insert:

- (4) In this section—

prescribed strata/community titles corporation means—

- (a) a body corporate established under the *Strata Titles Act 1988* or the *Community Titles Act 1996*; or
- (b) a company that holds land for the purposes of a building unit scheme consisting of 2 or more properties designed for separate occupation where the buildings comprising the scheme were erected before 22 February 1968.

No. 5. Clause 68, page 46, after line 9—Insert:

- (3a) Subsection (2)(g) does not extend beyond—

- (a) a person who works at the workplace; or
- (b) a person who is involved in the management of the relevant business or undertaking; or
- (c) a consultant who has been approved by—
- (i) the Advisory Council; or
- (ii) a health and safety committee that has responsibilities in relation to the work group that the health and safety representative represents; or
- (iii) the person conducting the business or undertaking at the workplace or the person's representative.

No. 6. Clause 68, page 46, after line 11—Insert:

(5) In this section—

consultant means a person who is, by reason of his or her experience or qualifications, suitably qualified to advise on issues relating to work health, safety or welfare.

No. 7. Clause 72, page 48, lines 27 to 29—

Delete 'The person conducting a business or undertaking must, if requested by a health and safety representative for a work group for that business or undertaking, allow the health and safety representative to attend' and substitute:

A health and safety representative is entitled to take at least the prescribed number of days per year off work for the purposes of attending

No. 8. Clause 72, page 48, line 35—After 'conducting the' insert 'relevant'

No. 9. Clause 72, page 48, after line 35—Insert:

(1a) The person conducting a business or undertaking must, at the request of health and safety representative for a work group for that business or undertaking, allow the health and safety representative to attend a course of training under subsection (1) (after undertaking the consultation referred to in subsection (1)(c)).

No. 10. Clause 72, page 49, after line 21—Insert:

(8) For the purposes of this section, the *prescribed number of days*, in relation to a health and safety representative, is—

(a) during the first year of the health and safety representative's term of office—5 days; and

(b) during the second year of the health and safety representative's term of office—3 days; and

(c) during the third year of the health and safety representative's term of office—2 days,

(and if the health and safety representative is re-elected at the end of a term of office then paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) will again apply during that new term of office).

No. 11. Clause 117, page 64, lines 18 and 19—Delete subclause (2) and substitute:

(2) The WHS entry permit holder must reasonably suspect before entering the workplace that the contravention has occurred or is continuing and involves a risk to the health or safety of a relevant worker.

(3) Furthermore, a WHS entry permit holder must—

(a) give consideration as to whether it is reasonably practicable to give notice to the Executive Director about the proposed entry before exercising a power under subsection (1) in order to provide an opportunity for an inspector to attend at the workplace at the time of entry; and

(b) if it is reasonably practicable to give notice to the Executive Director about the proposed entry, comply with any requirement prescribed by the regulations in relation to giving such a notice under this section.

(4) The Executive Director must establish and maintain a policy that relates to the circumstances when inspectors will attend at workplaces when notified of the proposed entry of WHS entry permit holders under this section.

(5) The Executive Director must ensure that the policy is published on a website that is maintained or used by the Department and the Minister must cause a copy of the policy to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

(6) If a WHS entry permit holder exercises a power of entry under this section without being accompanied by an inspector who has attended at the workplace under subsection (5)—

(a) the WHS entry permit holder must furnish a report on the outcome of his or her inquiries at the workplace to the Executive Director in accordance with the regulations; and

(b) on the receipt of a report under paragraph (a), the Executive Director must give consideration to what action (if any) should be taken on account of any suspected contravention of this Act outlined in the report.

No. 12. Clause 118, page 65, lines 1 to 4—Delete subclause (2) and substitute:

(2) However—

- (a) the right of a WHS entry permit holder to require copies of a document under subsection (1)(d) is subject to any direction that may be given by an inspector (which may include a direction that copies of a document not be required to be made and provided to the WHS entry permit holder); and
- (b) the relevant person conducting the business or undertaking is not required under subsection (1)(d) to allow the WHS entry permit holder to inspect or make copies of a document if to do so would contravene a law of the Commonwealth or a law of a State.

No. 13. Clause 120, page 65, after line 38—Insert:

- (6) However, the right of a WHS entry permit holder to require copies of a document under this section is subject to any direction that may be given by an inspector (which may include a direction that copies of a document not be required to be made and provided to the WHS entry permit holder).

No. 14. Clause 123, page 66, line 22—Delete '\$10,000' and substitute '\$20,000'

No. 15. Clause 171, page 82, line 23—After 'inspector' insert:

, subject to the operation of section 172

No. 16. Clause 172—Delete this clause and substitute:

172—Protection against self-incrimination

A person is excused from answering a question or providing information or a document under this Part on the ground that the answer to the question, or the information or document, may tend to incriminate the person or expose the person to a penalty.

No. 17. Clause 173, page 83, line 24—Delete 'warn' and substitute 'advise'

No. 18. Clause 173, page 83, lines 26 to 29—Delete subclause (2)

No. 19. Clause 274, page 115, line 33—After 'if' insert:

the Minister is acting on the recommendation of the Advisory Council and

No. 20. Clause 274, page 115, after line 37—Insert:

- (2a) In connection with the operation of subsections (1) and (2)—
 - (a) the Small Business Commissioner must be consulted before a code of practice is submitted to the Minister under this section so that the Commissioner may assess whether the code of practice would affect small business if implemented and, if so, provide any comments or advice that the Commissioner considers to be appropriate in the circumstances (including that the code be varied); and
 - (b) if the Small Business Commissioner recommends that a code of practice be varied, the Minister may make such a variation without the need to adopt the process envisaged by subsection (2) (but may undertake such consultation in relation to the matter as the Minister thinks fit).

No. 21. Clause 274, page 116, after line 17—Insert:

- (7) An approved code of practice or the variation of a code of practice is subject to disallowance of Parliament.
- (8) The Minister must ensure that each approved code of practice or variation is laid before both Houses of Parliament within 6 sitting days after it is published in the Gazette.
- (9) If either House of Parliament passes a resolution disallowing an approved code of practice or the variation of a code of practice, then the code of practice or variation ceases to have effect.
- (10) A resolution is not effective for the purposes of subsection (9) unless passed in pursuance of a notice of motion given within 14 sitting days (which need not all fall with the same session of Parliament) after the day on which the code of practice or variation was laid before the House.

No. 22. New Division, page 117, after line 31—Insert:

Division 4—Reviews

277—Reviews

- (1) The Minister must cause a review of the operation of this Act to be conducted as soon as practicable after the expiry of 1 year from its commencement.
- (2) The review under subsection (1) must include a specific report on the extent to which inspectors have attended at workplaces under section 117 and an

assessment of the operation and effectiveness of the policy established by the Executive Director under that section.

- (3) The Minister must then cause a second review of the operation of this Act to be conducted as soon as practicable after the expiry of 3 years from its commencement.
- (4) The results of a review under this section must be embodied in a written report.
- (5) The Minister must, within 6 sitting days after receiving a report under subsection (4), cause a copy of the report to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

Consideration in committee.

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

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

Ms CHAPMAN: I simply indicated that what we have before us now is the agreement with Independents and the government in another place to put forward the passage of this bill. It is a piece of legislation that we suggest will not serve the people of South Australia well, and will particularly compromise those who seek to work outside of an employer/employee circumstance.

Certainly, from our side of politics, we have highlighted the intrusion both to the home and the right to be able to operate as a private subcontractor; all of that is on the record. We do not endorse this bill as amended, and look forward to achieving government so that we can remedy this for the people of South Australia.

The CHAIR: Premier, do you wish to respond?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes; I do not think I can agree to the latter proposition. Can I say, though, that this bill strikes at the heart of the purpose of the Labor Party, which is the protection of people in the course of their daily employment, so that they can return home whole and well after performing a day's work. These are much needed reforms. They are responsive to national reforms which have received the backing of the most significant employer groups in the nation. They are pursuant to a national system of harmonisation of—

Mr Marshall: There's nothing national about them.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The Australian Industry Group, one of the largest employer groups in the nation, supports this and, indeed, most other states have now passed legislation pursuant to this national scheme.

Mr Marshall: That's not correct.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Well, it happens to be correct.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The CHAIR: Members on my left had an opportunity to speak uninterrupted. The Premier has actually closed the debate on this.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The CHAIR: Thank you, member for Bragg, for endorsing my action.

Motion carried.

Ms CHAPMAN: I want to raise a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. We received amendments from another place. The Premier advised that the government accepted those amendments. We then spoke and then you, Mr Deputy Speaker, under leave of some kind, without asking the parliament, allowed the Premier to speak again. I just note for the record that I did not hear you give leave to allow the Premier to speak twice on the amendments, but you did.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: My impression was that everybody was happy to have the matter go through. I am not sure what your point of order is. I am not clear on your point of order.

Ms CHAPMAN: That the Premier spoke twice.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Premier spoke to the amendments that came from the Legislative Council. You had an opportunity to speak and the Premier just responded to the issues you raised.

Ms CHAPMAN: But the Premier had already spoken on the amendments.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You could have made another contribution if you wanted to, but you indicated that you had finished.

Ms CHAPMAN: I had not been invited to do so. Just so that we have it on the record, you invited the Premier to speak first and he said, 'We support the amendments,' or words to that effect, a brief contribution nonetheless. You then invited me, or anyone from the opposition obviously, to speak, and I did. You then allowed the Premier to speak again. I just ask on what basis you asked the Premier to speak again (twice) on the amendments without seeking the leave of the committee.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am advised by the Clerk that he was entitled to do so.

Ms CHAPMAN: To speak twice?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will take that, thank you, if that is your clarification.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am advised by the Clerk that, even though we took all the amendments as one question, up to three contributions are allowed per question in committee. My understanding was that he spoke to the motion and you gave the opposition's view on the amendments. I gained the impression that you were the only speaker who wished to speak on this matter. You spoke unfettered and the Premier just closed the debate—finished.

Ms CHAPMAN: I just make the point, Mr Deputy Speaker, that we are not actually dealing with a proposed amendment of the government or any other party: we are actually dealing with the amendments as presented from the other place. The government succinctly indicated via the Premier that it consented to the amendments and we then spoke. That is the end of the matter in respect to that. I do not see any opportunity for anyone else to speak twice on the same information.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am advised by the Clerk that members are entitled to three contributions per question in committee.

Ms CHAPMAN: No, three questions per amendment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, three contributions per amendment or per question, and we dealt with all those amendments as one question.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, we did.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You could have spoken again if you so desired. I inferred from your actions that you did not wish to speak any further.

Ms CHAPMAN: I did not; I just want to seek clarification. What you are saying is that you can speak three times—not even a question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can make three contributions per question before the Chair in committee.

Ms CHAPMAN: Excellent. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Standing order 364.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will be making use of that in future.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have, I can assure you. If you want me to restrict that to three, I am happy to do so in future.

At 17:55 the house adjourned until Tuesday 13 November 2012 at 11:00.