

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 19 May 2016

The **SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Atkinson)** took the chair at 10:32 and read prayers.

### *Parliamentary Procedure*

#### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I welcome to parliament today students from Kangaroo Island, who are guests of the member for Finniss.

### *Bills*

#### **ELECTORAL (PRISONER VOTING) AMENDMENT BILL**

##### *Introduction and First Reading*

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (10:33):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Electoral Act 1985. Read a first time.

##### *Second Reading*

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (10:34):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

What I propose is actually fairly simple and straightforward. The essence of it is that a person who is in custody serving a sentence of imprisonment of three years or longer for an offence against the law of the commonwealth or of a state or territory is not entitled to vote at an election in South Australia. There is a bit of detail to understand about this, which I will go through for the house, but essentially it is really that simple.

In straightforward terms, if a person commits a crime so serious that he or she is imprisoned for three or more years, then one of the many rights that should be taken away is the right to vote at elections. Someone who breaks our laws so seriously surrenders the right to participate in the election of lawmakers. Prisoners in South Australia are already prevented from voting in federal elections, and it should be the same in state elections. South Australia is the only state that does not have a similar restriction, and it is time that we caught up. Very importantly, rehabilitation should be every prisoner's highest priority, and upon completion of their sentence the right to vote would be immediately restored.

It is already the case that prisoners all over the nation, including in South Australia, are not allowed to vote in commonwealth elections if they are sentenced to three or more years in custody. In New South Wales, they have a similar rule for prisoners who are sentenced to one year or more, so obviously that is much lighter than the commonwealth elections or what I propose; in Victoria, it is if you commit a crime that leads to you being convicted and sentenced for five years or more—so that is clearly a much more serious crime.

In Queensland, they take the strictest view. In Queensland, any prisoner sentenced to any term in custody is prevented from voting for the time that they are serving that sentence. Tasmania is the same as the commonwealth and the same as I propose for South Australia: three years. The ACT has no restriction, and in the Northern Territory it is three years, just like us. Right now, South Australia and the ACT are the only state and territory that do not have any sort of rule like this, and I think it would be very appropriate to bring something like this into force in South Australia.

With regard to how long the custodial sentence should be, I have determined to propose three years for many reasons; firstly, because it is what is already in place with regard to commonwealth elections, so then it would be very straightforward and consistent. Prisoners would not then have to wonder and the Electoral Commission would not then have to wonder whether a person could vote in a federal election or a state election, or one or the other. It is also very much in the middle of what other states and territories have proposed, so it seems to be reasonably fair and

consistent in that regard, but I think the consistency with the commonwealth rule is probably the most important issue.

I turn to how this would be applied in a bit more detail. Let me be very clear: of course, we all understand that if a person is convicted of a crime that leads to a custodial sentence and, let's say, they are sentenced to five years in prison, they might be out after four. Let's say they are sentenced to a custodial sentence of three years—so they would be caught by this bill if it was passed here and became law—we know that they could actually be out of prison after two or 2½ years; if they have done everything that has been asked of them, they are offered early release through parole.

My view is that when they go into prison, sentenced to three years or more, this would apply to them and it would apply to any state elections that might come up while they were in prison. If they happened to get out in less than three years, good luck to them, but as soon as they have finished their custodial sentence their right to vote would be reinstated to them immediately. It is about the crime they have committed and about the sentence that they are given by a court, not the sentence that they fulfil, if that makes sense, understanding that most prisoners actually get out of prison earlier than the full term.

That raises another important question that is necessary for the house to understand. A custodial sentence is not only about prison; it is usually considered that way, and it occurs in the overwhelming majority of cases. It is what we all hear most often: sentenced to prison for so many years with a nonparole period of something less, being typical.

The corrections department and the CE of Corrections has the right, towards the end of a person's sentence, to allow that person to leave prison and go into home detention. They are still fulfilling their custodial sentence, but they would not be in prison. In that situation, this bill would still apply, if it is accepted and became law. So, the person, while they have left prison, has not yet completed their custodial sentence if they are allowed to go from prison to home detention.

We also have a bill that is before our parliament at the moment (and I need to be very careful here) with regard to the right for courts to offer home detention instead of imprisonment at the front end. I will not comment on the pros and cons of that bill, other than to say that if my bill is accepted and becomes law and the other bill passes both houses of parliament and becomes law, then a prisoner who is sentenced to a custodial sentence but who goes immediately into home detention and not into prison (because of the other home detention bill that is being debated at the moment) would be captured by this bill. I hope that makes sense.

I have taken advice from parliamentary counsel, and I appreciate the support that they have given me in trying to get this right. I will read what I hope will very clearly encapsulate what I have tried to outline in my comments leading up to this. The bill states:

(5) For the purposes of this section, a reference to a person in custody serving a sentence of imprisonment includes—

- (a) a prisoner (within the meaning of the Correctional Services Act 1982); and
- (b) a prisoner who is on home detention under the Correctional Services Act 1982; and
- (c) a person who is detained in a training centre within the meaning of the Young Offenders Act 1993; and

I will go off on a short tangent here. You would think it would be an unusual crossover for somebody detained within the meaning of the Youth Offenders Act because you would typically think of a person under 18, and when it comes to voting in state elections that is a person over 18. Nonetheless, I accept the advice of parliamentary counsel that paragraph (c) should be there to cover all possibilities, which is the possibility that somebody over 18 might still be detained under the Young Offenders Act. To get back to the meaning of custody and, in a sense, imprisonment:

- (d) a person who is subject to detention of a kind that is—
  - (i) imposed by or under an Act or law; and
  - (ii) prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this subsection.

Hopefully, initially in some pretty straightforward words and then by subsequently reading that section of the bill, that makes it really clear to people the difference between the sentence that is imposed and how that sentence might be carried out, and what the person might end up doing over time subsequent to that sentence being imposed.

It might interest members of this house to have a small bit of information with regard to sentences that are handed down. I will provide a small amount of information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics on aggregate sentence length for the years 2005-15 in South Australia, and any member who wants more detailed information can go to the ABS. The mean, or average, years of sentence handed down in South Australia is 9½ years over the 10-year period from 2005-15.

What is probably more important with regard to this bill is that the median sentence is 3.5 years—the median being the number that actually helps you figure out how many people would be captured by this bill if it were passed. The median sentence is 3.5 years, meaning that half the sentences have been less than 3.5 years and half the sentences have been more than 3.5 years. I am sorry I cannot tell the house how many would have been exactly 3.5 years, but I am sure there were quite a lot.

What that means is that slightly less than half of the prisoner population, based on statistics of the previous 10 years, would not be captured by this bill and that slightly more of the prisoner population, based on these statistics, would be captured by this bill. I think it is important for people to have that in mind. One of the foundations for me bringing this to the parliament is that it is meant to apply only to people who have committed very serious crimes. If you are sentenced to prison for three or more years, you have committed a very serious crime. This is not the low end of the scale. These are serious criminals who have committed serious crimes. It is very much my intention that it is only those people in that category who would be captured by this bill.

There is a very important issue to consider with regard to human rights and civil liberties in relation to what I am proposing, and I do not shy away from that discussion at all. It is important that members, when considering how they choose to vote on this bill, have a little bit of history. Again, they can go and get as much as they want but, for the purpose of this contribution, back in 2007, after the federal government brought in their very similar rule on 5 March 2007, legal action in the High Court to challenge the constitutionality of that legislation and the removal of the right of sentenced prisoners to vote in elections was commenced.

The matter was heard by the Full Court of the High Court in Canberra on 12 and 13 June 2007, and the short version of what they determined was handed down on 30 August 2007. The High Court upheld the fundamental human right to vote, finding that the government had acted unlawfully and unconstitutionally in imposing a blanket ban denying prisoners the vote. However, the court upheld the validity of the law providing that prisoners serving a sentence of three years or longer are not entitled to vote.

To a layperson not legally trained, as most of us are not, that is a fairly confusing ruling, but the long and the short of it is that they supported the principle but said, nonetheless, that they would allow that law to stay in place. So, if this law were to be brought into South Australia, we should not expect it to be removed on any similar basis. I accept that members of the public, prisoners and members of parliament will have some concerns in that area, and I acknowledge that within our own opposition team there were certainly one or two people who spoke on that very important aspect. I expect that one or two of them might even contribute along those lines when they have their opportunity to speak here in parliament.

I know that on the Labor side there will be people who have concerns about what I propose on that basis, but the overwhelming majority of my colleagues support this bill. The Liberal Party supports the bill here in this place, and I ask that the government thoroughly debate every aspect of the bill and work out its position. I ask the government to support this bill. I think it makes good sense. I think it is what the people of South Australia would want for a law in our state.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. T.R. Kenyon.

**DISABILITY SERVICES (INCLUSION AND MONITORING) AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 10 March 2016.)

**Mr GARDNER (Morialta) (10:50):** I am pleased to speak on the Disability Services (Inclusion and Monitoring) Amendment Bill. Members would be aware that some of the issues raised in this bill are those that I have been following with some interest for some time and occasionally make contributions to the house on. I would particularly like to commend the member for Morphett, who has brought this groundbreaking legislation to the parliament for its consideration.

I am not yet certain whether the government has identified whether or not they are going to support this bill, but I think it behoves them to give it very serious consideration. When we have an opportunity to vote on this bill today, I hope they will support it. The member for Morphett, as the shadow minister for disabilities, has identified the significant challenges and disadvantages facing people with a disability who are seeking employment in the Public Service in South Australia, to maintain employment and to fully participate in the opportunities that that employment should provide.

This is a sincere concern for us in 2016. It is a sincere concern at all times, of course, but here in 2016 we have introduced a National Disability Insurance Scheme which is rolling out across Australia. We have moved about five years past Monsignor Cappelletti's Strong Voices report being handed down to the people of South Australia, and we should be doing better than this. There should be no need to have legislation such as this.

We should automatically, as a function of our humanity, be looking for ways to include people with a disability in our workplaces and in our practices, yet so many examples exist of where people with a disability have struggled to find the inclusion that they deserve. Unfortunately, that extends into the South Australian Public Service and the departments that will be impacted by this bill.

When I was doing some work in the disability sphere as shadow minister, one of the things I noticed was that in the government's regular plans, where they set targets for what they hope to achieve from time to time, the South Australian plan that the government had identified employment of people with a disability in the South Australian Public Service. There was an expectation that significant improvements would be made, yet every year when I checked the annual reports of the departments as to how many people with a disability were employed in those government departments there were not steps forward, there were in fact steps back. Fewer people with a disability were being employed in many of these departments.

I do not have individual cases to hand, but anyone who looks through the annual reports—I did an audit one year of those annual reports, comparing I think the 2005 figures against the 2011 figures, and I have recently checked some of the others—can see that it is not just that they have not met the targets to double the number of people with a disability working in these departments, in some departments they have not even maintained the number of people with a disability working in those departments, and that is a sincere concern and very troubling. This suggests that, when efficiency dividends may be sought in some areas, people with a disability may well be the ones who are finding themselves targeted, and that is a real problem.

I commend the member for Morphett who, in noting these problems and so many others, has introduced this legislation, which he did in March. This is a whole-of-government objective, which will assist in the transition towards the NDIS. It will provide disability inclusion plans and disability inclusion action plans across state government departments. The legislation includes provisions that expand the functions and the powers of the Ombudsman and, in doing so, aims to have government and other providers commit to providing safeguards in relation to delivery of support to protect people with disabilities, so they can live their lives free from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Similar measures have been introduced in New South Wales and, indeed, were introduced last year as part of that state's transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. They enhanced the protections of the rights of people with disability enshrined in state legislation there, so I think we should do the same here in South Australia.

The amendments will introduce a process for the reporting of certain allegations or convictions and allow monitoring of the progress of an investigation of a reportable allegation or conviction, if the Ombudsman considers it in the public interest. The Ombudsman will have the power to conduct interviews by, or on behalf of, the department for the purpose of the investigation. The bill also provides for the results and action of an investigation of a reportable allegation or conviction to be reported to the Ombudsman.

A state disability inclusion plan will be required to be developed through consultation with the disability sector and then reviewed every four years by the minister, after which the report on the outcome of the review must be tabled in parliament and be made publicly available on the internet. Disability action plans will be required by public authorities so that people with disabilities can access general supports and services available in the community and, therefore, participate fully.

This broad range of measures, I believe—and the opposition, I think, believes—will enhance the lives of people with disability in South Australia and provide protections where protections are needed, opportunities where opportunities can be provided and inclusion, particularly in public departments where inclusion should be the expectation, not the requirement.

**The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland) (10:56):** I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes ..... 22  
Noes ..... 16  
Majority ..... 6

AYES

Bedford, F.E.  
Caica, P.  
Digance, A.F.C.  
Hughes, E.J.  
Koutsantonis, A.  
Piccolo, A.  
Rau, J.R.  
Wortley, D.

Bettison, Z.L.  
Close, S.E.  
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.  
Kenyon, T.R. (teller)  
Mullighan, S.C.  
Picton, C.J.  
Vlahos, L.A.

Brock, G.G.  
Cook, N.F.  
Hildyard, K.  
Key, S.W.  
Odenwalder, L.K.  
Rankine, J.M.  
Weatherill, J.W.

NOES

Duluk, S.  
Griffiths, S.P.  
Pederick, A.S.  
Redmond, I.M.  
Treloar, P.A. (teller)  
Wingard, C.

Gardner, J.A.W.  
Marshall, S.S.  
Pengilly, M.R.  
Sanderson, R.  
van Holst Pellekaan, D.C.

Goldsworthy, R.M.  
McFetridge, D.  
Pisoni, D.G.  
Tarzia, V.A.  
Whetstone, T.J.

PAIRS

Bignell, L.W.K.  
Speirs, D.

Bell, T.S.  
Snelling, J.J.

Gee, J.P.  
Knoll, S.K.

Motion thus carried; debate adjourned.

**ROAD TRAFFIC (WORK AREA SPEED LIMIT SIGNS) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 10 March 2016.)

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (11:03):** There is nothing more frustrating for a motorist than to see speed limit signs put up on roadworks when those roadworks are complete, almost complete or, certainly at the time of them going through the roadworks, there is no evidence of any roadworks in place. We obviously need to protect our road workers, just as we need to protect our emergency services workers with 25 km/h speed limits past incidents.

The need to have a sensible approach to speed limits around roadworks though is something that I think not only frustrates me personally but continually frustrates many South Australians. I do not believe for one moment that the vast majority of South Australians—I think 99.99 per cent of South Australians—deliberately speed or recklessly speed. They want to keep our roads as safe as possible, particularly for our road workers and our emergency services workers. The need to make sure that we are able to cope with 2016 pressures on people when they are getting about their business is something that this government needs to look at, and needs to look at in a very deep and sincere way.

Driving down Happy Valley Drive this morning, where lights are being put up to improve the safety of that road at night (which is a fantastic thing), the traffic was slowed down and diverted across to one side with traffic cones. It was all well laid out and well marked out. It is normally an 80 km/h speed limit, but was slowed to 60 km/h and then 25 km/h as I approached the work site.

Going past the work site, there was no demarcation, there were no bollards and there was certainly no activity going on for, I would say, at least 200 yards, if not more; however, the 25 km/h speed was still in place. There were no problems at all approaching the work site or driving past it. We want to make sure that our road workers go home safe and well to their families after what they have done for us on the roads. But, surely, a bit of common sense would show that you do not need to keep going at 25 km/h for all that way past the work site. Let us have a little common sense in here.

The need to do this is something that is not hard; it is not going to be difficult. I think that when people look at this they will say, 'Well, that is a good thing to do. We are protecting our road workers, but we are applying a bit of common sense to these limits.' I very strongly support this bill.

**Mr WINGARD (Mitchell) (11:06):** I also rise today to speak in support of this bill. This is an issue that is regularly raised with my office. As we know, this bill enforces the removal of 25 km/h signs when workmen or workwomen have left the site, and it enables fines to be issued if this is not done.

As the member for Morphett mentioned, it is very much about common sense. Of course we want safety to be adhered to, and we want workers to be safe when they are working in these conditions on our roads around state. But, when there is no road work being done, or when there are no workers present on a site, we cannot see why these signs are not removed so that we can get the speed limits on the road back to a safe speed, at either the normal speed or at least a speed above 25 km/h.

As I said, it is something that a lot of people have contacted my office about, and it is a big frustration and bugbear in South Australia. When we go through roadworks and there are people present, again I stress that everyone wants our workers to be safe in that environment; however, when people have gone home and that 25 km/h sign stays up, there is no safety reason for it to be there. It is a bugbear of all commuters in South Australia, and people are very frustrated.

I raised this issue back in October last year and I did get a lot of correspondence in my office. I know the minister spruiked his Operation Moving Traffic in July last year, and it was suggested that this issue might be addressed in that operation. It has been nearly 12 months and we have not seen any action in this area. Again, as the member for Morphett said, it is just a common-sense move and common-sense measure to put in place the bill that the member for Unley put forward.

This bill would ensure that when work is not being done in a roadworks area and all is safe, the 25 km/h would be replaced with a higher speed limit to keep traffic moving in order to stop congestion and frustration for drivers within our city and also the country regions. I have been in

many a country region where there are road signs still up on the side of the road for roadworks and, in fact, there are no roadworks.

It is one small measure, and I think it fits in to what South Australians would like and call for. It is something that can be done very quickly. I commend the member for Unley for bring this bill before the house and ask that action is taken very swiftly to relieve the frustration of drivers in South Australia.

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (11:08):** I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes ..... 22  
Noes ..... 15  
Majority ..... 7

#### AYES

Bedford, F.E.  
Caica, P.  
Digance, A.F.C.  
Hughes, E.J.  
Koutsantonis, A.  
Piccolo, A.  
Rau, J.R.  
Wortley, D.

Bettison, Z.L.  
Close, S.E.  
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.  
Kenyon, T.R. (teller)  
Mullighan, S.C.  
Picton, C.J.  
Vlahos, L.A.

Brock, G.G.  
Cook, N.F.  
Hildyard, K.  
Key, S.W.  
Odenwalder, L.K.  
Rankine, J.M.  
Weatherill, J.W.

#### NOES

Duluk, S.  
Griffiths, S.P.  
Pengilly, M.R.  
Sanderson, R.  
van Holst Pellekaan, D.C.

Gardner, J.A.W.  
McFetridge, D.  
Pisoni, D.G. (teller)  
Tarzia, V.A.  
Whetstone, T.J.

Goldsworthy, R.M.  
Pederick, A.S.  
Redmond, I.M.  
Treloar, P.A.  
Wingard, C.

#### PAIRS

Bignell, L.W.K.  
Knoll, S.K.

Speirs, D.  
Snelling, J.J.

Gee, J.P.  
Bell, T.S.

Motion thus carried; debate adjourned.

### **ROAD TRAFFIC (HELMETS FOR MOTOR BIKE RIDERS) AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 25 February 2016.)

**Mr WINGARD (Mitchell) (11:14):** I rise today to speak on this bill and point out that this is some of the good work of this place, in that this bill was moved by the member for Unley to allow the ECE helmets (European standard helmets) to be used by motorbike riders in South Australia. These motorcycle helmets are used by Moto GP riders—the elite of the elite. Unfortunately, in South Australia motorcycle riders were not allowed the option of using these premier safety helmets because of a flaw in the law.

The story behind this goes back to late last year, when I raised the issue and it was picked up in the media that these helmets were not allowed to be used by motorcycle riders. Since then, the

member for Unley has picked up the case and moved this bill before parliament. It was great to see that the government finally came around and decided that this was a good idea and that we would change the regulations to allow these helmets to be used; so I commend them for that. I am a little bit disappointed that it took as long as it did to happen.

There was a forum last year, in February 2015, where all the states came together, as far as I am aware, except for South Australia, to discuss these helmets. All of the other states moved in this direction, and it was not until the push we made late last year that South Australia and the government finally came around and jumped on board to make these helmets legal in South Australia. We were the last in the country to adopt these helmets and allow them to be legal. It is another example of where South Australia again is a slow-moving state, which is very disappointing for people using motorbikes who want these motorcycle helmets that are used by the elite of the elite.

Whilst there is a positive, in that South Australia has finally joined up and the government has finally listened to this cause, I suppose, it is disappointing that South Australia was last to join the ranks of the states allowed to use this helmet. Tim Kelly did a lot of work with the Ride to Review crew, and I commend him for the work he did to bring this to the public's attention. He should be very happy that we now have this law in place through the changes to the regulations. Again, it is great that we have it in South Australia. It is sad that we were so slow to move, but let's look forward and be positive, and let's hope that in the future people stay safe on our roads, especially those riding motorcycles.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (11:17):** I rise to support the bill introduced by the member for Unley. Having a common-sense approach to legislation in South Australia is something that seems to be becoming more and more uncommon. We have railed in this place about conforming or mirror legislation, harmonising legislation across Australia, but this is an exceptional case where there is a real need to look at what has happened.

We do not want to go back to six railway gauges, we do not want to go back to different Australian road rules being abolished and having different road rules in every state. We need to have a common-sense approach, and having the right safety equipment is very important. We all see the number of serious accidents, injuries and deaths on our roads of motorcycle riders, and we need to make the riders as safe as possible. Giving them the choice of equipment, provided that equipment is up to standard, is very important.

On the subject of fitting helmets, I have had some concerns expressed to me about people with disabilities and older people who use gophers having to wear these motorcycle-type helmets or bike-type helmets. A lot of discussion needs to be had on this topic. If it improves, if there is evidence, or if there is an evidence-based policy on this issue, perhaps we should look at it, but at this stage I do not see any need to further restrict people, who already have restrictions on their lifestyle. Most people who use gophers do so in a very safe fashion. I think this issue is something we need to look at, but whether we go there needs more debate; however, this bill needs to be supported by this government.

**Mr TARZIA (Hartley) (11:19):** I also rise in support today. The Liberal Party has obviously done its job in forcing the government to act. We understand the South Australian government has been forced to act by the member for Unley's bill, by lobbying the government for much-needed action in this area. Finally, the government has decided to keep up with the rest of Australia, and it is only because of the good work, in bringing this bill to the parliament, of my colleague the member for Unley.

My colleagues have testified how this is a common-sense bill that needs to be put forward. We see time and again how much of a serious issue this is on our roads. Whilst the death toll has come down as a trend from decades ago, in recent times, the last couple of years, it has continued to rise. Any recommendation, any motion, that goes towards reducing the road toll and bringing this sort of thing into line with the rest of Australia—anything that reduces our toll on the roads—is a good thing, so I commend the motion to the house.

Debated adjourned on motion of Hon. T.R. Kenyon.



**CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (COMMERCIAL OFFENCES) AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 24 September 2015.)

**Mr TARZIA (Hartley) (11:21):** As we have spoken of in this place before, obviously the bill will insert new provisions into the Controlled Substances Act which allow the DPP to prosecute drug trafficking and manufacturing offences on the basis that the offence is a single continuous offence. We all know that drugs are a scourge on our society. We all have electorates and all understand, in our society, how much this is a serious issue. I thank the writers of the bill and those who have been consulted on the bill and lodged feedback on the bill. We took a recommendation of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court summarised its opinion in a case, and it stated:

The merits of adopting in South Australia a provision like section 5(1) of the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 (Qld) deserves the attention of the legislature.

That was R v Faehrmann; R v Moore; R v Price-Austin (2014) South Australian Supreme Court, Full Court decision, 25, at 57.

As the law stands, a court must sentence the person according to the provisions of the Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act 1988 South Australia on the basis of offending for a single offence, which must be taken into account separately. I implore the government to support the bill. I implore the Independents to show their independence and have the courage to also support the bill. You are either with us today or you are with the drug traffickers: it is as simple as that.

We know drugs are a scourge on our society. We have had a Supreme Court recommendation to the parliament to put this law into place. So, the only reason the government will not support the bill is if it supports drug traffickers or it is playing petty political games. I would say that drugs are a scourge on our society. It is a huge issue. I do not want to see us come into this place, when we have a recommendation from the Supreme Court, and not implement that recommendation. The government needs to put all these petty political games behind it and support the bill. I commend the bill to the house.

The house divided on the second reading:

Ayes ..... 16  
Noes ..... 21  
Majority ..... 5

**AYES**

Chapman, V.A.  
Goldsworthy, R.M.  
Pederick, A.S.  
Redmond, I.M.  
Treloar, P.A. (teller)  
Wingard, C.

Duluk, S.  
Griffiths, S.P.  
Pengilly, M.R.  
Sanderson, R.  
van Holst Pellekaan, D.C.

Gardner, J.A.W.  
McFetridge, D.  
Pisoni, D.G.  
Tarzia, V.A.  
Whetstone, T.J.

**NOES**

Bedford, F.E.  
Caica, P.  
Digance, A.F.C.  
Hughes, E.J.  
Koutsantonis, A.  
Piccolo, A.  
Rau, J.R.

Bettison, Z.L.  
Close, S.E.  
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.  
Kenyon, T.R. (teller)  
Mullighan, S.C.  
Picton, C.J.  
Vlahos, L.A.

Brock, G.G.  
Cook, N.F.  
Hildyard, K.  
Key, S.W.  
Odenwalder, L.K.  
Rankine, J.M.  
Wortley, D.

## PAIRS

Bell, T.S.  
Bignell, L.W.K.  
Speirs, D.

Snelling, J.J.  
Marshall, S.S.  
Gee, J.P.

Knoll, S.K.  
Weatherill, J.W.

Second reading thus negated.

**FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (VOLUNTEER CHARTERS) AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 24 September 2015.)

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (11:29):** This bill is a very important bill before this house. With the few seconds that are left—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind the member that if he speaks he closes debate.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I am very conscious of that, and I hope this government—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Everybody else needs to be conscious of that fact too. Are you on your feet, member for Newland? What is it you wish to say?

**The Hon. T.R. KENYON:** That the debate be adjourned.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Apparently, as we have brought to the attention of the house, through the Chair, the member for Morphett has the call, and we are going to listen to the member for Morphett.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Thank you, ma'am. This bill is a mark 3 version of a bill I have put before this place on a number of occasions to protect South Australian CFS and SES volunteers. We need to bring this bill to a vote and we need to do it today.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, you have finished your remarks. Does the member for Newland have something to say?

**The Hon. T.R. KENYON:** Just a point of clarification: it is the tradition, certainly the custom of the house, to call the attention of the house to the fact that the closing speaker is in fact closing debate.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. T.R. KENYON:** And when you called it, I stood, so—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think we have to move ahead and vote on it. The question before the house is that the bill now be read a second time.

The house divided on the second reading:

Ayes .....	17
Noes .....	21
Majority .....	4

## AYES

Brock, G.G.  
Gardner, J.A.W.  
McFetridge, D.  
Pisoni, D.G.

Chapman, V.A.  
Goldsworthy, R.M.  
Pederick, A.S.  
Redmond, I.M.

Duluk, S.  
Griffiths, S.P.  
Pengilly, M.R.  
Sanderson, R.

## AYES

Tarzia, V.A.  
Whetstone, T.J.

Treloar, P.A. (teller)  
Wingard, C.

van Holst Pellekaan, D.C.

## NOES

Bedford, F.E.  
Close, S.E.  
Gee, J.P.  
Hughes, E.J.  
Koutsantonis, A.  
Piccolo, A.  
Rau, J.R.

Bettison, Z.L.  
Cook, N.F.  
Hamilton-Smith, M.L.J.  
Kenyon, T.R. (teller)  
Mullighan, S.C.  
Picton, C.J.  
Vlahos, L.A.

Caica, P.  
Digance, A.F.C.  
Hildyard, K.  
Key, S.W.  
Odenwalder, L.K.  
Rankine, J.M.  
Wortley, D.

## PAIRS

Bell, T.S.  
Bignell, L.W.K.

Snelling, J.J.  
Speirs, D.

Knoll, S.K.  
Weatherill, J.W.

Second reading thus negated.

*Parliamentary Procedure***VISITORS**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I would like to acknowledge and welcome today in the gallery a contingent of nurses who have joined us. They are from both metropolitan and rural settings. They work in public, private and teaching capacities, and I am told that they have a combined experience of over 1,000 years—I did say combined. We welcome them to parliament and hope that they enjoy their time with us today, and we thank them most sincerely for all they do for us and the community at large. They are guests of the member for Fisher, and we thank her for the initiative.

*Motions***REPATRIATION GENERAL HOSPITAL**

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (11:38):** I move:

That this House urges the Weatherill Labor Government to immediately reverse the disastrous decision to close the Repatriation General Hospital at Daw Park; and to—

- (a) ensure it continues as a vital medical precinct for residents in the Southern Suburbs;
- (b) ensure South Australian veterans have a dedicated hospital which supports their unique needs and provides them with a caring and sympathetic environment;
- (c) recognise the significant contribution to our nation by veterans;
- (d) provide seniors with quality and accessible health care; and
- (e) preserve the special care provided to patients approaching death at the Daw Park Hospice.

This is all about maintaining and retaining that wonderful veterans' hospital, the Repat. What is a hospital worth? Well, if you build one down the road down here, it is the most expensive hospital in the world, the third most expensive building in the world. What is the Repat worth? The Repat is a spiritual home of our veterans. We know that, with the changes in veterans' affairs, the Gold card and the White card, things have changed. We do know now that veterans are attending a lot of private hospitals, thanks to the federal government.

We do know that the buildings at the Repat are tired. They do need refurbishing. This government has spent \$42 million on the Repat in the last 10 years. What is that hospital worth on the books? What is the Treasurer going to say to this house when the bulldozers go through that

place? When the bulldozers go through the Royal Adelaide down here, what is that worth on the books now? They are bulldozing billions of dollars of state assets now and what for? With the Repat, we have a long history at the Repat.

On the SA Health website today, it says that the Repat General Hospital is a 250-bed acute public care hospital, specialising in the care of war veterans. Then it lists those veterans' guarantees, about which I have spoken in this place many times, including the complimentary cappuccino. You will never, ever replicate that anywhere else. I know there is a veterans' health discussion paper out there. It will never, ever replace what that veterans' guarantee has in place.

The 250 acute beds, where are they going? I think there is a net loss of about 510 beds. We cannot afford to lose any beds in South Australia. Yet, under this government's Transforming Health we are not only going to lose beds but we are going to go to the national average which will mean that about 650 acute beds will be lost from our system. If you look at the calculations that are being used to calculate numbers of beds and staffing used by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, if we reduce our number of beds, then what happens? You reduce the number of doctors by about 130 and you reduce the nurses by 500; 500 nurses in this state will lose their jobs as a result of this government's intention to transform our health system.

What are they transforming it into? An absolute mess. They have been there 14 years and they are transforming it into an absolute disaster for South Australians of the future. We know South Australians are dying in our hospitals because they are waiting in EDs longer than they should, not because of our doctors, certainly not because of our nurses, but because the system is not working properly—and that is from the Australasian College of Emergency Medicine.

Let's read what was in today's paper in an opinion piece by Emeritus Specialist Robert Black, a specialist at the Repat, President of the Mitcham RAAF Association and a past president of Adelaide Legacy. I know Robert from my veterans' affairs portfolio. Robert says in the paper today:

The announcement that the site of the Repatriation General Hospital (RGH) Daw Park is to be developed by a consortium including the RSL has been greeted with mixed feelings. While the return to a veteran home focus is welcome, the loss of a capacity for thousands of community health services, associated with projected closure of the Repat, is not. Nor is there any logical reason to cease veterans' mental health services, either as outpatients or in Ward 17.

The proposed move to Glenside was justified on the grounds that: (1) health services would not continue at Daw Park (they will); (2) the PTSD Centre of Excellence needed to be on government-owned land (not so interstate); and (3) veteran comorbidities needed to be provided onsite (they are not, but they are at Daw Park, and could be in the future).

Dr Black continues:

Repatriation hospital services have changed over the past century. Until the 1970s, veterans had free hospital care at RGHS only for their 'entitlements'—that is, for those conditions related to (war) service. In the past 20 years those 'entitlements', in the form of the Gold or White Card, have drawn veterans away from RGH into the private-health sphere, due to market forces. The proportion of veteran inpatients at RGH Daw Park has dwindled, and community patients have predominated. Thus closure of the Repat is not so much a disaster for veterans as a disaster for community health services, and for its diligent and caring staff—

including the nurses—

Yet veterans with mental health conditions such as PTSD have ensured that they are sent to Daw Park, and admitted to Ward 17, despite these market forces. Not just Vietnam and World War II veterans, but younger, so-called 'contemporary veterans' are occupying those beds. And Daw Park has been their safe haven. Even if they like it better at Glenside, there will be fewer beds.

Furthermore, it would seem that comorbidities will not be managed at Glenside—so sick older veterans with mental health disorders may be shunted elsewhere, to new RAH or to private hospitals. The RSL plan includes acute and mental health services, and will provide shelter for homeless veterans, the most vulnerable among those who have served our nation. But if they need inpatient psychiatric management rather than being treated onsite or at FMC, they will require a DVA-funded taxi or ambulance to get treatment at Glenside or elsewhere. As the RSL and veterans plan to return to Daw Park, the illogical decision to close its health services, and to shift the PTSD unit to Glenside, should be reviewed, and preferably reversed.

That is by Emeritus Specialist Robert Black. It is a disaster that that is actually happening. What we do need to recognise is that the veterans in South Australia deserve better than they are getting from this government.

Just as importantly, for the purposes of the Repatriation Hospital, the broader community in South Australia is going to be missing out. You cannot close that facility, you cannot move those 3,500 arthroplasties and neurological surgical procedures somewhere else without having some effect. The 170,000 outpatient appointments, where are they going to go? This government in its Transforming Health policy is creating a massive crisis in health for this state. We see people waiting in our hospitals day in, day out. They are waiting to get in, they are waiting to get out.

We see our nurses working harder every day. We see our doctors struggling under the load. We know that our patients are wanting the best service they can possibly get and we know that our doctors and our nurses want to deliver that service. If we close facilities like the Repat, we cannot ensure that that is going to happen. I do not see any guarantee from this government that Transforming Health and transforming the Repat into what the RSL is proposing is going to do anything other than inhibit the delivery of those health services in South Australia. This is a very sad thing; this is a very bad move for this state. I ask the government to rethink this now.

We would be more than happy to work in a bipartisan way on this site to make sure that we deliver long-term solutions for long-term problems in this place because we know that people in our health services, whether they are in the private sector or the public sector or whether they are volunteers, are working their backsides off. They are absolutely working their backsides off to make sure that they are delivering the best that they can under these trying circumstances. Let's not make it any more difficult. Let's remember the veterans; let's remember the Repat. Lest we forget.

**The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Minister for Investment and Trade, Minister for Small Business, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (11:45):** This is an interesting motion. I am sure that the member has put it forward with the best of intentions, but I just want to straighten a few things out during this debate, as the Minister for Veterans' Affairs but also as one of the local MPs, the member for Waite. Anyone who thinks that we can expect our doctors and nurses to work in very aged and very old facilities indefinitely needs to rethink their position on health. The whole object here is to put our nurses, our doctors and our patients into the very best of facilities.

The government is going to provide a first-class Royal Adelaide Hospital. It will be one of the best hospitals in the world when it opens and it will be first class. The community had that debate about whether we would rebuild the Royal Adelaide Hospital where it was or build a new hospital, and the new hospital argument won that election. In Waite, when someone has a heart attack or a car crash, a serious injury, and is taken to hospital, they do not go to the Repat: they go to the Royal Adelaide or they go to Flinders.

That leads to my next point: there is going to be a great renewal of Flinders, with around \$170 million being spent to build new rehab facilities there and many millions more spent on new facilities in other hospitals in the network. That is good for everyone in the community and it is good for our doctors and nurses, but it is also good for veterans, and this is a very important point because if the opposition is arguing that veterans need a dedicated veterans' hospital they are wrong. They need to recognise that the world has moved on.

The Gold card changed everything. When this first came up, I was the newly-elected member for Waite in 1997, and the person who raised it was the Liberal Party health minister Dean Brown. When the Liberal Party decided to privatise Modbury, the other issue on the table was if we should sell or close the Repat? There was a feisty debate in the party room. I was quite concerned about it as a newly elected member because, at that time, nearly 50 per cent of the patients at the Repat were veterans. That figure today is around 7 to 8 per cent; 92 to 93 per cent of veterans are using other hospitals in the network.

In fact, I went to the Tea Tree Gully RSL and they did not want to talk about the Repat, they wanted to talk about Modbury because that is the hospital they use. They have a Gold card and they can use any private or public hospital in the country virtually free of charge, so we need to renew the facilities at hospitals that veterans actually use, and it is not the Repat any longer; it is at other hospitals in the network, including country hospitals where a lot of our veterans live.

It is a flawed argument that veterans need dedicated hospitals; they do not anymore and that is true in most states in Australia. They are important patients, like all others. They have special

benefits through gold cards and other devices that quite rightly recognise their service, but they do need renewed rehab facilities and great facilities at The Queen Elizabeth, at Adelaide, at Lyell McEwin, at Flinders and at other hospitals in the broader network. They no longer need a dedicated hospital.

There is one special matter and that is post-traumatic stress and Ward 17. I am very concerned about that. As a veteran myself, I have been there often. It needs renewal. Transforming Health has provided a vehicle for that renewal. Without Transforming Health, I do not think we would have got the \$15 million to build a new PTS centre of excellence at all, which is now going to be built at Glenside.

I was looking for advocates to convince me that that should be rebuilt, by the way, at the Repat. I would have been very happy to champion that cause as an Independent member in the Labor government, but I could not find anyone with qualifications, experience or authority in this field to back me up. Every doctor, every senior academic, every senior professional in the field, including, I hasten to add, many of the people who work at Ward 17, generally came to an agreement as part of the consultative process that it should be done at Glenside. It is the best place for the renewed Ward 17.

What we are going to get is a new PTS centre of excellence at Glenside, where it needs to be. Veterans are going to get renewed facilities at the hospitals they are actually using. Services are going to be relocated, not closed, from the Repat to other hospitals in the network. They will be available for all, including general community use. Then we had minister Snelling's terrific announcement on the weekend that the Repat itself was to be renewed and reinvented. Not only will there be a medical practice at the Repat site, but the rehab facilities that are presently there that are generally fairly new and in good condition will, I am certain, be made available to the private health sector as part of the RSL's renewal at the site.

As well as that, the existing private hospital facility at the site is remaining there. That means that veterans who have the Gold card will still be able to access the rehab facilities, the private hospital and the medical centre at the site as they always have. Not only that, the Repat site is to be renewed, refreshed and revived under the RSL's leadership. We are going to see aged and supported accommodation there with, I am sure, veterans having first right of refusal or access to it as a matter of priority. We are going to see childcare centres built there; we are going to see all sorts of other facilities there for veterans, whilst preserving the chapel, the museum, the SPF hall and other things that make it such a special site for veterans.

It is very simple, as a local MP, where you land on these matters. If you land on the side of the politics, you will always land in the mud. If you land on the side of what is best for the people in your community, you will stand on top of the mountain. Let me tell you that the best interests of my community in Mitcham, and the community at large, are served by making sure that, when they have an accident and when they need our outstanding doctors and nurses, they will go to see those wonderful professionals in brand-new state-of-the-art facilities that are ready to receive them, not in buildings that were constructed in the 1940s because somebody thinks no change is a good idea.

We all know that the health system nationally is under pressure. The federal Coalition have a plan: stop funding public health and get the states to increase taxes, charges and emergency services levies to pay for it. I do not think it is a very good plan. They are publicly stating that; it is a fact. We need to properly fund our healthcare system, and it needs to be both federally and state funded.

**Mr Whetstone:** You are so not a Liberal.

**The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH:** It is just a fact, I say to the member for Chaffey. Prime Minister Turnbull said it, along with others, so—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I just want to remind members it is unparliamentary to interject or to respond to them, and I will insist that members be heard in silence. The member for Waite.

**The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for your protection. The overarching point here is what is best for people's health. As the Minister for Health

has claimed all along, we need to ensure that our first priority is the best possible health care we can provide. Part of that needs to take account of the resources we have available. Nine hospitals in Adelaide was always too many hospitals. If you were starting with a blank sheet of paper, you would build fewer than nine hospitals, and you would make sure they were large, well equipped, and that our doctors and nurses had everything they needed.

It takes courage to propose change in politics. I have been in this game for 18 years, and I have seen so many ministers on both sides squib and shy away from the tough decisions. Making change is always hard. There is always someone ready to complain. I note that the opposition has done a wonderful job of harnessing a small number of distressed people about the Repat decisions and using them for their political advantage.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH:** I think you will find that the mainstream veterans community and the mainstream advocates and stakeholders in health are with the government on this issue, particularly after Sunday's announcement. You are on the wrong side of the argument. If you are seriously contending that a future Liberal government will put between \$600 million and \$1 billion into building a general hospital at the Repat, so that we have Flinders, Lyell McEwin, QEH, the Royal Adelaide and a new general hospital for \$600 million to \$1 billion at the Repat, if that is what you are contending—because that is what some on your side of the argument have argued—let's see your budget. Let's see what impact that would have on the facilities that we are providing for our doctors and nurses and for our patients at other hospitals in the network.

I simply conclude with this remark: what the government has proposed is the best thing for the mums, the dads, the families and the children in my electorate of Waite. It is the best thing for veterans, because they do not live close to the Repat; they are going to other hospitals in the network. It is the best thing for South Australia. The right thing to do is what the government has proposed. Frankly, I am very surprised that the opposition has been so negative about this instead of proposing a constructive transforming health agenda of their own. You have to have ideas of your own if you are going to criticise.

Time expired.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. T.R. Kenyon.

#### INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY

**Ms COOK (Fisher) (11:57):** I move:

That this house—

- (a) recognises International Nurses Day celebrated annually on 12 May;
- (b) acknowledges this year's theme, 'Nurses: a force for change: improving health systems' resilience'; and
- (c) congratulates South Australian nurses for their dedication and professionalism and the pivotal role they play in the advancement of all South Australians' health.

In opening, I thank the opposition for its bipartisan cooperation in moving the motion. Today it is my privilege to lead the celebration of International Nurses Day. It is celebrated annually on 12 May, the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birthday. I welcome to parliament some very special guests—my nursing colleagues. I am honoured to represent them here in this place. We have wonderful representation here today from across metropolitan and rural South Australia, from clinical practice, academic worlds, leadership, administration, research and even some very special projects. Welcome.

Nursing is indeed very diverse and it can and does take you anywhere. The member for Elder in this place, the Hon. Gail Gago in the other place and I are living proof of that. The focus for International Nurses Day 2016 is 'A force for change: improving health systems' resilience'. It is an incredibly appropriate theme, particularly here in South Australia as our nurses lead some of the biggest changes in the structure and delivery of health care in the modern era.

These healthcare improvements under the banner of Transforming Health are not new or out of the box. We have been working towards this for as many years as I have been nursing and longer—shall we just say in the 1980s sometime. We have worked through lean thinking principles, diagnostic related groups of care and funding models, clinical pathways, and of course Redesigning Care (who can forget it?), just to name a few.

All were undertaken with a view to reduce length of stay, reduce patient complications, improve outcomes, improve efficiency, achieve and set new benchmarks, drive best practice and so on. These changes have all been successful in their own way. They have been dynamic, they have responded to need and they have addressed point of time challenges. What we now need is sustainable transformation.

All of this is the language of health care. It is what my colleagues and the colleagues in the gallery are confident and comfortable with. They are nursing words. If I use this language now, in public as a politician, outside of speaking to you in here, I am accused of using spin. If only they knew the language we used as nurses that is commonplace. The rest of the world really is just catching up with nurse-led transformation of healthcare systems, and they are unsure, nervous, and lack confidence. Nurses must take the lead because we have all been there before; this is our daily journey.

Nurses can strengthen and develop resilience within themselves and their colleagues by contributing their expertise and creativity, improving organisational resilience and commitment in a time of healthcare transformation. Transforming Health nurses were engaged early in the preliminary stages. This was no surprise to nurses; it commenced in mid-2014. A ministerial clinical advisory committee for nursing was established and comprised more than 20 nurses representing all local health networks and all categories of care, including emergency, elective surgery, numerous clinical specialties, and women's and children's care.

The original ministerial and clinical advisory committee, including nursing, was instrumental in coordinating and conducting a comprehensive review of SA Health systems data, identifying the areas of poor performance and developing new clinical standards of care for our hospital services. This is what Transforming Health is based on. The nurses came with recommendations which ensure that South Australians have access to the right care, first time, every time. It is becoming common language, it is a cliché, but we need to think it, we need to live it, we need to learn it. We are very good at acronyms like the MCAG, but it makes it a lot easier to speak to, so I will continue to use it as an MCAG now.

We also had discrete expert working groups. The MCAG is established to identify the priority clinical areas for the health system and to provide leadership in the establishment of quality principles, standards of care, productivity improvements identified in Transforming Health, and to ultimately deliver the change. Therefore, it is fitting that the chief nurse and midwifery officer is a key member of this group.

Expert work groups are currently developing the discrete MCAG-identified projects, such as stroke, acute low-risk chest pain, fragility fracture, 24-hour senior cover, seven-day allied health, rehabilitation, and paediatric governance. No, the minister is not making all of this up himself. He does not lie in bed at night awake dreaming up different systems of care. This is created by experts: expert clinicians within our health system. By the minister's own admission, he is barely qualified to put on a bandaid. These changes are evidence based, recommended and driven by nurses—by you.

Nursing leaders within SA Health are ensuring that the voice of nursing is heard during the major model of care redesign projects which are committed to improving health care for all Australians. Transforming Health relies on innovative practice models which depend on nurses and midwives using and working to the full scope of their roles. This can only be achieved through the establishment of advanced practice roles—vital in Transforming Health.

The Minister for Health recently announced the opportunity for nurses and midwives to become Transforming Health nursing and midwifery ambassadors. There will be ambassador roles for each of the Southern, Northern and Central Local Health Networks, and some of those ambassadors might actually be in the audience today. Key responsibilities will include professional



leadership, talking to staff about change, and providing opportunities for nurses and midwives to become involved in the Transforming Health process.

Nurses make fantastic leaders. A nurse leader with a passion for client-centred care has led Central Adelaide Rehabilitation Services to become Australia's first Best Practice Spotlight Organisation. We should be so proud of that. For example, since the implementation of the restraint guidelines at Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre only one person has had a restraint applied in the past three years. That is amazing. I worked in rehab for nearly 10 years and I cannot imagine the change that this has made to the patients and to their families. It is incredible.

I was thrilled to attend the Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards gala dinner on 6 May. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary achievements of South Australian nurses, and I will read to that this afternoon as well. The opening of the new Royal Adelaide Hospital is eagerly anticipated. It will be a state-of-the-art and purpose-built public hospital. Our skilled and experienced nursing staff will continue to drive person-centred care, lead innovation, and inspire others with their passion and commitment.

We have so many nurses with so many amazing achievements that help to strengthen our resilience. They are celebrated amongst our profession, and we must always be alert to challenges and threats to our resilience—there are many. An ever-present threat is violence. Having lost my son to violence, I know only too well the serious and everlasting effects it can have in the community. It can be so devastating in the workplace also. We are seeing an increasing level of violence against nurses, midwives and other healthcare professionals, and we have to respond.

SA Health has done a great job of pulling together the Challenging Behaviour policy framework. There are some really practical resources available to clinicians and managers for use in prevention and in response but much more can and should be done. There has been a lot of success following the public campaign asking people to keep their hands off our ambos. I look forward to seeing more work supporting similar practical solutions to protect our nurses.

Gayle Woodford paid the ultimate price with her life in March this year. She gave her heart and soul to the people in her community to help people as a single-nurse responder in the remote Far North. Some people in this house today may have known Gayle. The safety of single-nurse responders must be assured, and it must be a bipartisan approach between federal and state government agencies. We have to work together to ensure that this is the only time that this happens. The community needs this, nurses need this, and it must happen for Gayle.

I am so proud to be a nurse. Nurses have been named in the most trusted professions for many years but again this year, of course for very good reason. I am not quite sure why I and my other parliamentary colleagues have taken this career leap down the ladder to sit in between journalists and car salesmen, so maybe we will just continue to say we are actually nurses and we work on North Terrace. I say that jokingly to many of my friends.

We are going through incredible change with many people challenging and doubting the direction we are taking. The people whom the changes affect directly and most intimately to the largest degree will of course be the ones who are most fearful and often will oppose these changes the most forcibly. We must listen, support, engage and respond.

Ours is one of the most progressive and innovative of careers. Change is constant. We drive change every day we go to work. We have a culture of friendship, comradery, sisterhood and solidarity, and it is second to none. In this place, in the shadows of many images of great women, great trailblazing political women of choice and progressive causes, with my colleagues I give thanks to the many nurses in our community and commit our support of your work.

I am proud to lead celebrations today with so many of you. I, along with my parliamentary colleagues, am proud to represent you. You are the most resilient of all workforces. Never question your courage. You are the force for change. Happy belated International Nurses Day to all of my amazing nursing colleagues, and happy birthday, Florence.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (12:07):** This is a very good motion, but I think it can be improved, so I seek leave to amend the motion to insert after paragraph (c):

- (d) instructs the Parliamentary Committee on Occupational Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation to inquire into and report on measures to address and prevent occupational violence against nurses and other health workers.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am advised that is really probably a separate motion, in that it is outside the theme we have in the motion before us. It would need to be a separate motion altogether, which is procedural.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I will go on the word of the member for Fisher that this already has been done. To my knowledge, it has not been done; it needs to be done so, in the spirit of bipartisanship, we will support our nurses in any way we possibly can, whether it is in this motion or in another referral.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you just going to speak to the original motion then?

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I will speak to the original motion, thank you, Deputy Speaker, because it is a very good motion.

**The Hon. S.W. KEY:** I was going to make a point of order, Deputy Speaker, because, as the Presiding Member of the Parliamentary Committee on Occupational Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation, I can tell you that our inquiry into violence in the workplace, particularly in the health industry, was part of our brief in previous times. We can certainly add to that inquiry should members decide to move a separate motion, but this is something that was brought to the attention of our committee probably a couple of years ago. This is an issue that we took a lot of evidence on and took very seriously. As has already been directed by you, if there is a separate motion, I am sure our committee, which the member for Fisher serves on, will accept that motion.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Ashford. So the member for Morphett is going to speak to the original motion.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker. For the record, in the interim report of the member for Ashford's committee, I do not see that in the terms of reference. However, as all of us in this place are very careful about ensuring that our health workers, and particularly nurses, are given the levels of protection they need, I will take it on trust that the committee will look into that.

This is a very good motion. We must at all times recognise our nurses and the work they do. In fact, on this side the member for Finnis's wife is a nurse, the member for Stuart's wife is a nurse, the member for Mitchell's wife is a nurse, the member for Flinders' wife is a nurse, the member for Hartley's sister is a nurse, the member for Goyder's mum nursed for 50 years before retiring, the member for Hammond's cousin is a nurse, I had two aunts who were nurses at the Queen Victoria and the RAH, and my sister-in-law recently retired after many years of nursing, so how would we dare not, with great enthusiasm, support this motion.

Without our nurses, our health system would come to a stop. We should value our nurses and we should make sure we are doing everything we possibly can to value them. International Nurses Day is a day in particular when we can value the men and women who make up our nursing profession. It is no longer the Florence Nightingale style of nursing, it is far more sophisticated than that.

I am just a humble veterinarian and I had veterinary nurses who knew a lot more about some of the areas of veterinary science than I did because they were able to specialise in that area. I think underestimating the ability of our nurses to fill those gaps and fill those niches that some doctors would like to have as their whole gambit is misguided. We need to recognise that our nurses are there not just for their patients but for the whole of the health system, but primarily for their patients.

Every nurse I have ever met has impressed me immensely with their level of dedication and compassion to their profession. There is no way that we should not be doing everything we possibly can to make sure their jobs are not only safe and secure but also as enjoyable as they possibly can be by giving them the opportunity to advance themselves professionally, have good working conditions to work in and also have that security of career. We should get rid of the short-term contracts and give them those longer term opportunities to make sure that they can do what they want to do, and that is to go about nursing.

There would not be a person in here who has not had the pleasure and sometimes the pain of having a nurse by their side, whether it is having a vaccination or test when you were at school or, unfortunately, at the other end of the scale, being in an accident, having an injury or being ill and going to hospital. It is something that we do take for granted, but we should never ever take for granted, because I know that our nurses in South Australia have thousands of years of experience. That experience is something that has been worked on, developed and cannot be replicated, other than by those hard yards and that hard work at all hours of the day and night, as well as Christmas Day and Good Friday.

Nurses leave their families to go and do their job, and they do it with enthusiasm and dedication, and that is something that we must all applaud. I know everybody on this side, not only those with members of their families who have been in the nursing profession but everybody on this side and everybody in this place, applauds them. People think that we come in here and argue about lots of things, and there has been some demonstration of those differences this morning, but on this particular issue there is not daylight between our support and government members' support.

Congratulations to all the men and women of our nursing profession in South Australia. I wish you all well in the future. I wish you the happiness in your profession that you have all gone into it with, and certainly on a day like today. I was lucky enough to visit St Thomas's Hospital, and it was a terrific experience to see the history of nursing right back to Florence Nightingale. It really makes you think about how far we have come, and then to go into a hospital today and see how far we can go with specialist nurses and nurse practitioners. Who knows what they can do? On a day like today, let's celebrate nursing as the profession it is and the wonderful people in that profession.

**Ms DIGANCE (Elder) (12:14):** Welcome to all nurses in the gallery today. It is wonderful to have the opportunity to acknowledge you all in recognition of International Nurses Day, which is celebrated annually. I am delighted to rise today in support of the member for Fisher's significant motion. Having begun my working life some time ago as a registered nurse and then moving on to become a registered midwife, I know how important the work you do is in our community.

You are the backbone of our hospitals, community health centres, aged-care facilities, rural and remote services, school health services and prison health centres. Just imagine how our community would look—and, indeed, be—without nurses. You are critical to the health and wellbeing of all our community. We are all touched by your expertise and care in some way on a constant day-to-day basis.

For over three decades, International Nurses Day has been recognised and celebrated on the anniversary of the birthday of Florence Nightingale, a courageous and visionary woman and nurse. This year's theme, 'Nurses: a force for change: improving health systems' resilience', builds on the previous year's theme. Increasingly, we hear of the challenges faced by our health system, and this is not just a local issue but a worldwide occurrence, due to the escalating challenges and expectations.

The pressures are continually evolving and changing as our system faces an increase in population, increases in chronic disease, increased consumer expectation, rapidly evolving technology, as well as escalating global changing issues, as demonstrated by the Ebola outbreak of last year, natural disasters, continuing conflict and the impacts of climate change. It is no wonder that we look to strengthen our resolve as these impacts exert their pressures.

We look to improve organisational resilience and, indeed, our own resilience, while supporting that of our colleagues. So, what does resilience look like? The word 'resilience' is derived from Latin, meaning 'to spring back'. I would suggest that that is what many of you do on a daily basis, particularly after a demanding day. In the seventies and eighties, the term 'resilience' was adopted by the humanities community, where definitions such as the following began to appear:

...to anticipate risk, limit impact, bounce back rapidly through survival, adaptability, evolution and growth in the face of turbulent change.

Fundamental to resilience is innovation and excellence, and this was evidenced with the recent SA Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards.

These awards rightly recognise those outstanding nurses and midwives in their field on their quest to progress and champion the professions. We witnessed some amazing people doing some amazing things in the areas of practice, leadership, education, clinical research and patient-centred care. These awards are representative of, and speak for, all nurses and midwives. Critical to resilience is ensuring that your voice is heard and that you champion your profession constantly. I thank you for all you do, and on behalf of all my parliamentary colleagues and all South Australians I congratulate you all and wish you a very happy International Nurses Day for last week.

**Mr WINGARD (Mitchell) (12:18):** I, too, rise today to speak in support of this motion which recognises International Nurses Day on 12 May. I thank all the nurses present here in the chamber and nurses with whom I have been involved in my life. As the member for Morphett mentioned, my wife, Emma, was a nurse and, as I look back over her career, she has had some wonderful experiences. In fact, she began nursing at about the age of 14 in a retirement village across the road from her home. She worked there right through high school and loved the caring, nurturing aspect of the role.

She went on to study at The QEH under the old system, where they actually studied on site. She thoroughly enjoyed that time and worked very hard during that period as well. She then moved to Ceduna and worked in a local community hospital, giving her a great experience of another of the many roles in nursing. She then went on to work in Dom Care as well, travelling around town in a vehicle caring for some very lovely and wonderful people whom she went on to call friends.

A number of friends of mine from school, as well, moved into the nursing profession, both male and female—Eric Egert, Mandy Bray and Sharon Richards, just to name a few who come to mind—and they have done marvellous things in the nursing field. Recently, a friend of mine, Emma Fuller, became a midwife, which is outstanding. She spent a lot of time studying very hard to achieve that. Sadly, another friend works at the Tennyson cancer centre and I have seen a lot of her good work in recent weeks where she has worked with a couple of friends who are undergoing cancer treatment. It is amazing to see the work that Wendy does in very tough circumstances.

There are others in my electorate who have contacted me, Fiona Brunotte and also Jim Hogan, who are very passionate about the work nurses do, and I would like to acknowledge them as well. I am also an Alzheimer's champion and see the role that carers play, and we know that caring is a very big part of nursing. I would like to finish on a lighter note to share with the nurses who are here because I do appreciate, through the studying time, the little things that you come to learn and experience that people who do not do this profession may not understand.

I studied a sports science degree at university and we had a unit that we did in conjunction with the nurses, where we had to impart our skills on them and vice versa. We got in a situation where we were doing some fitness tests on the nurses. Some of them were quite fit and some of them not so fit, but for the first time I had to take the heart rate of someone who was not a contemporary of mine (a university student studying sports science).

Of course, I thought I knew what I was doing. I had to put the stethoscope on the heart of this young girl and she pulled her blouse out for me to put the stethoscope up and, as I looked in her eyes at that point in time, I totally forgot where the heart was positioned. I had absolutely no idea and when I placed the stethoscope about where I thought the heart was, I realised I was wrong. She kept a wonderfully straight face and was so professional; it was a credit to her.

When I moved the stethoscope down to where her heart was and her resting heart rate was 145 beats a minute, I knew I had perhaps rattled her as well, but she was very professional. I am sure from that moment forward in her nursing career she never got that wrong, and I made sure I never got it wrong after that moment either. I hope she had a wonderful nursing career because we had a great time at university working with the nursing students as well. They were wonderful people.

Again, to the people in the gallery and all the nurses out there, I thank you for the wonderful work you do. It is greatly appreciated by all of the community. I wish you all the best for the future and, again, recommend this motion to the house.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (12:22):** I would just like to endorse the comments made by all the other speakers. I will not repeat them. I would just like to add a few comments of my own. Obviously, nurses impact on people's lives every day and probably more so than doctors do. We

often talk about primary health care and GPs play an important role in that primary health care, but I would say that nursing staff and midwives also play an important role.

Obviously, midwives helped deliver my children and nursing staff cared for my dad when he was sick and also for my mother. Nursing staff obviously do quite a bit of work in aged-care facilities and in the disability sector, so when we talk about primary health care, and we often talk about the role of GPs, I think we should also remember the very important role that nurses and midwives play. Our system of health care is enriched by their work.

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (12:23):** I am very happy to support this motion. I have a vested interest, as my wife is a nurse and has been for 41 years. My daughter is also a nurse. She is a nurse in Darwin these days. My wife is still nursing, but as a practice nurse, not in a hospital. I guess there is a real family connection and that was made clear when my mother died a couple of years ago in hospital and my wife and daughter pushed the nurses in the hospital out of the way and said, 'We will do what needs to be done,' which they did. It is just something that goes with the job and they proceeded to do it which was a great farewell for my mother in many respects.

Nurses are an integral part of our very wellbeing, as are schoolteachers and others, of course. I do not think we want to forget any of those. Nursing is, by its very nature, a very demanding profession. It has changed immensely since my wife started 41 years ago, and is it much more subject to technology.

One of the things that my wife says regularly—she is not here to defend herself, but she would say it if she were here—is that she thinks there is now far too much training in universities and not enough in hospitals. She thinks that she got the basis of her nursing training well and truly in hospitals, and she has adopted the technology as she has gone along. I recently asked her what her next job was going to be and she said, 'Retirement,' so I suppose it is indicative that she is not going to back into a hospital, quite frankly.

I noted that the comments, particularly those of the member for Mitchell, were well deserved. I do not really want to go on too long, but I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (12:25):** I will be brief, because I know others want to contribute to this motion. I thank the member for Fisher for bringing this motion and we certainly all wholeheartedly support it. I am very fortunate to be one of the many members who have a strong connection with nurses. My wife, Rebecca, is a nurse; in fact, this year she enters her 30<sup>th</sup> year as a full-time nurse. She says, very regularly, 'Old nurses are the best nurses,' and the reason is that they are the hospital-trained nurses. She has the very strong view that they are the very best nurses by far.

I will just take a couple of minutes to talk about Gayle Woodford and the very tragic situation that happened to her. This is not because there is not a lot more to talk about on this issue—please understand straightaway that I support all the things other members have said. I spent a lot of my working life in the north of the state, including an enormous amount of time at Marla, which is essentially the jumping-off point to the Aboriginal lands. It is also the point where many people from the APY lands, whether they be lifelong residents or people who have been working there for one, or five, or 10 or 15 years, come to regularly for their shopping, socialising, etc.

In my other travels throughout outback South Australia, I came across many nurses doing the sort of work that Gayle Woodford did. Sadly, I can tell you that they often felt concerned that they risked facing the sort of situation that unfortunately came to Gayle Woodford. We must do something about this in South Australia. Nurses face risks in their work in many different ways in metropolitan Adelaide as well, but the tragic murder of Gayle Woodford unfortunately highlights the risks that have been around for decades and which, if we do not do anything about it, will continue to be around for decades.

Fortunately, it is a one-off tragedy in the fact that it has happened, but the risks have been here for ever and ever. It is a workplace risk issue and it is a community risk issue, and we absolutely must address it. I do not believe that we should have twice as many nurses working in these places, because unfortunately that would mean that half of the rest of the communities would miss out on

nurses because there are not that many capable qualified nurses willing to go do that sort of work in remote communities.

If we required that wherever there was one nurse there must be two so that they could support each other, in a similar way to two officer patrols in policing, that would just mean that many other communities missed out. But, we do have to put in place a practical policy, which could be different community by community, so that these nurses have the safety and protection of somebody supporting them after hours.

It might be a responsible community member, it might be somebody's husband, it could be a principal or a teacher from a school, or it could be anybody from any other business. It could be an Aboriginal person or a non-Aboriginal person—that is completely irrelevant—but it is necessary that these nurses have somebody they can call on after hours who will attend with them and essentially be there to support them through that work.

I am not talking about a professional personal bodyguard, but we just know that if there is another person there who can support someone makes a huge difference with regard to how a potential perpetrator would think about their opportunity. We absolutely have to do this in South Australia. First, because we need to make sure that any similar tragedy is averted and, secondly, and nearly as important, so that nurses can feel comfortable about their work. Let us just hope that does not happen again, for decades, but for decades between now and then every nurse who goes out after hours to give care needs to feel much safer at work.

I do not think it would be too much for there to be a bit of a roster system in these communities. Let us say that there were half a dozen people who would fall into the category of being willing and able to support a nurse by attending after hours with them; maybe you just have a week on call where you would commit to not consuming alcohol, commit to being available on the phone, etc. When the nurse gets the call to go and attend a medical situation the nurse could then call that person and say, 'I'll be around at your house in five minutes, I'll pick you up and we'll both go where I need to go to attend to this medical emergency.'

As I said, it can be different community by community, but it needs to be a very practical approach that will support nurses so that they can continue to do their work, without which these communities will not function. If we do not have nurses in these remote communities the communities will deteriorate; the communities will deteriorate without their support. This is incredibly, incredibly important.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:31):** I support the motion:

That this house—

- (a) recognises International Nurses Day celebrated annually on 12 May;
- (b) acknowledges this year's theme, 'Nurses: a force for change: improving health systems' resilience'; and
- (c) congratulates South Australian nurses for their dedication and professionalism and the pivotal role they play in the advancement of all South Australians' health.

Nurses impact all our lives. They impact our lives when we come into this world and they certainly impact our lives when something happens to us or we need to have a hospital admission. When you start having children yourself they are out there front and centre, and at the other end of the scale, whether in hospital or in rest homes, they see you off. They are very pivotal in our lives; if we did not have them, society would be so much poorer because they do play such a significant role in our lives.

Thinking about what I was going to say today, I thought about country sport, country football and netball. As Saturdays roll around at this time of the year, places like Sportsmed gear up on Saturdays, local hospitals gear up, because they know that the injuries will flow in. I want to note that at Murrayville, which is part of the Mallee league, I have to go over to the Murrayville cricket ground (the MCG) with my club at Peake to play footy occasionally. We did that almost two weeks ago and there just happened to be at least four people who needed a parent or caregiver—including my older son, who got concussion playing in senior Colts—to travel through to Lameroo to be looked after by the excellent health care given by the local nurses and the locum doctor (and we were very fortunate to have him on board that day).

I bring up the fact that all these people were coming from Murrayville and they got to Lameroo under their own steam (because there was no doctor at Pinnaroo that day) because of part of the recent discussion about the SA Ambulance Service not covering interstate travel. Here is a perfect example of where it affects communities right on the border, and those even further in, such as Coomandook, where we are, with my boys playing at the Peake football club.

I know of four people who needed attention; my son had concussion, and there were a couple of breaks, broken wrists, and one or two other injuries that I understand happened that day—and those are only the ones they knew about. One of our A-graders did not realise that he had broken his arm until the end of the day; he also had a broken wrist but played on—they make them tough at Peake.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Tough in the country.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Absolutely.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr PEDERICK:** Actually, Peake won that day; so, yes, it reminds you of one of those *Monty Python* sketches.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr PEDERICK:** Okay; no worries. That just shows the need for appropriate health care to be put in place. I have had to attend Lameroo twice in the space of about three years, with both sons with concussion. I must commend the nurses who were there on a Saturday, who did great work checking their vital signs, especially when Angus was there a few years ago and had direct contact with the doctor from Loxton. It was excellent service from the staff on board in monitoring them after they had taken a heavy head knock.

Certainly, as I indicated, we have dealt with nurses when we have had to go to hospital for operations. I have had a hip replacement. They gave great service both at the Griffith Rehabilitation Hospital and Flinders Private. They are just fantastic people who help you when you need painkillers. Obviously, they are very strict with the meting out of Endone and morphine, which is certainly needed with surgery like that.

Nurses are to be commended for everything they do. They always do their utmost, and they are really caring people, especially when you need them at whatever stage it affects your family's life. I would like to commend our nursing community for everything they have done, for contributing to the wellbeing of all of us, and certainly the wellbeing of my constituents and my own family. I would like to acknowledge that they have also enhanced my social life at times. I commend the motion and commend nurses for everything they do.

**Ms SANDERSON (Adelaide) (12:36):** I rise to support the motion celebrating and recognising International Nurses Day, and I also commend nurses and all medical staff for the amazing work that they do. I would like to talk specifically about the Women's and Children's Hospital. In 2010, shortly after I was first elected, I went on a site visit to the Women and Children's Hospital, and I noticed that by 9.30 in the morning I had to drive almost to the top of the car park, and when I left about an hour later the car park was completely full.

Subsequent to that, I have had many, many calls from nurses, other staff in the hospital, as well as patients accessing the hospital. I have given many speeches and asked questions in parliament about the lack of parking for our nurses around the Women's and Children's Hospital. Whilst it is wonderful for the government to celebrate nurses—and I am sure they are very sincere and that they do appreciate their work—I think it is also important to provide safety for our nurses. I believe that providing safe car parking near hospitals is vital and should be provided by the state government. This has gone on for many years.

In terms of the car park across the road from the Women's and Children's Hospital, I have checked with engineers, and it is structurally sound and its height can be increased to take on more capacity. I note that in 2013 the government announced that within 10 years the Women's and Children's Hospital car park would be moved. However, that is still 10 years that potentially nurses

and other staff at the Women's and Children's Hospital are left in dangerous and precarious situations.

Many articles have stated that nurses are carrying knives or weapons when they walk back to their cars late at night through the Parklands. Fortunately, the rapist who raped about four women, I believe, in the North Adelaide area through the Parklands, which also created a lot more angst amongst nursing staff who work shift work and who walk back to their cars late at night, has been captured, and I think it was the same person who raped and attacked all of those women. At least we know that we are safe from that point of view. However, there is still a need for adequate parking for nursing and medical staff who use the Women's and Children's Hospital as well as the Memorial Hospital nearby.

There has been a bit of a stopgap implemented by the Adelaide City Council, which has now issued I think 127 permit parks along MacKinnon Parade. However, I drove past again this morning just after nine and the hospital car park was full already, even with the extra 127 car parks, which were designed to be used by the day staff so that when the afternoon shift comes in they can access the car park, because they are going back late at night.

I measured that it was a one-kilometre drive from MacKinnon Parade to the hospital, which is not that bad in daylight, but if you are returning to your car very late at night that is still a considerable distance. Whilst temporarily that is helping, a long-term measure still needs to be put in place to protect our nurses. I, too, support the motion and ask that the government does more to help the safety of the nurses who work at the Women's and Children's Hospital by providing adequate parking.

**Mr TARZIA (Hartley) (12:40):** I also rise today to support and recognise International Nurses Day, celebrated annually on 12 May, and also to acknowledge this year's theme, 'Nurses: a force for change: improving health systems' resilience', and congratulate South Australian nurses for their dedication and professionalism and the pivotal role they play in the advancement of all South Australians' health.

You never quite know when you will need a nurse, that is for sure. Recently in my electorate of Hartley at an ANZAC Day dawn service we were at The Gums to commemorate the day, the special day that it is for our nation, and an elderly lady collapsed on the lawns at The Gums. Luckily, a nurse was available. There was also a doctor in the crowd, and they were able to render assistance and then pass this person on to an ambulance that was nearby. However, that nurse, believe it or not, was my sister Therese. I am very proud of the way she acted that day. What happened then was almost a microcosm of what can happen any time at any public event out there. We are so fortunate in our community to have such wonderful doctors and nurses who are able to render assistance whenever called upon.

International Nurses Day, as we know, is celebrated around the world every 12 May, which is the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth, as has been stated this morning. The International Council of Nurses I believe commemorates this important day each year, with the production and distribution of the International Nurses Day kit. I understand that the 2016 kit contains educational and public information materials for use by nurses everywhere.

We have heard that this year's theme for 2016 is 'Nurses: a force for change: improving health systems' resilience'. The contents of this year's kit, including the poster image, are for use by individual nurses and also associations, health ministries and health institutions. IND activities I understand continue for much of the year by nurses and others. Nurses are certainly encouraged everywhere to make extended use of this kit, this service, through individual action but also through group activities.

I also pay tribute to Florence Nightingale, who lived from 12 May 1820 to 13 August 1910. As we have been told, she was a celebrated English social reformer and statistician, but also the founder of modern nursing. I take this opportunity to commend the good work nurses do in our community in South Australia, and I commend the motion to the house.

**The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland) (12:43):** In adjourning the debate, I take a quick opportunity to thank nurses across the state for their contribution to our community and commend them on all the work they do.



**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** And on my behalf also.

Motion carried.

### REPATRIATION GENERAL HOSPITAL

Adjourned debate on motion of Dr McFetridge (resumed on motion).

**Mr DULUK (Davenport) (12:44):** Thank you, Deputy Speaker, and I apologise for the bit of a man cold that I have at the moment.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr DULUK:** I need a nurse for my person cold. I would like to thank the member for Morphett for moving this important motion that he has today and has spoken to. Of course, the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network delivers public hospital services to more than 350,000 people living in the southern metropolitan area, including those in my electorate, and of course in the electorate of Waite.

The Flinders Medical Centre, Repatriation General Hospital and Noarlunga Hospital are the bedrock of this network, yet this government is committed to removing an entire hospital from the network. We are not talking about closing a few beds or even shutting down a ward; no, we are talking about removing an entire hospital from the network. The government is intent on destabilising the very foundation of the health network in southern Adelaide by closing the Repat. The effect on South Australia's public health services will be significant and longstanding, not just for veterans but for thousands of South Australians, and especially for residents in Adelaide's south.

The Repat currently plays a critical role in the state's health system, providing specialised services in urology, vascular surgery, respiratory medicine, cardiology, ophthalmology, diabetes and rheumatology, just to name a few. There are around 140,000 outpatient attendances each year at this hospital, 2,000 transfers from the Flinders Medical Centre for overflow and convalescing patients, and almost 200 beds for general medicine, surgery, palliative care, mental health and rehabilitation services.

I suppose the question that goes to the core of this motion is: what will happen to all these services when the Repat closes? What happens to the 1,341 orthopaedic procedures, 1,353 urological procedures, 604 general surgeries and 665 plastic procedures that the Repat handles in most years? Of course, these are the numbers that were handled in the 2013-14 year. Where will the residents of southern Adelaide go for these services? Surgical services in southern Adelaide will take a massive hit due to the loss of beds, operating theatres and day surgery facilities.

No replacements and no alternatives have been announced by the Labor government: no announcement on how the government plans to deliver these essential services currently provided at the Repat, no announcement on how the government will meet the future health needs of 90 per cent of Repat patients who are civilians, and no announcement on how the already stretched Flinders Medical Centre will meet the surge in patient numbers that will follow the closure of the Repat.

Earlier in the debate, the member for Waite indicated that his residents support the closing of the Repat. Can I say, my office is constantly contacted by people in his constituency who are concerned by the closure of the Repat and how the services that are currently being provided at the Repat will be provided going forward. The announcement this week that the RSL will be the new caretaker for the Repat site masks the reality of Transforming Health and its debilitating impact on public health services, and especially its impact on patients and their families in Adelaide's south. Here, we talk about what the role of government is. The role of state government is to provide public health services. It is not to privatise those health services: it is to provide health services for the public.

Public protests and ongoing community opposition have made no impression on this state government in relation to the closure of the Repat. The petition opposing the closure of the Repat has attracted more than 120,000 signatures, and yet the government still refuses to budge. As the Save the Repat campaigner and veteran Augustinus Krikke said, 'For the government to ignore a

petition of that size says something about the mindset of a government that has been in power for 14 years.'

The proposed RSL-led transformation of the Repat site will not provide the medical facilities that the community need in southern Adelaide. There will be no medical and no surgical facilities at that site anymore and no patient facilities for what is proposed within the new RSL-led transformation. The Save the Repat campaigners did not spend five months protesting on the steps of parliament to deliver a retirement living centre with a general medical clinic on the side. Whilst this, seen on its own, may be a good thing, it is not what southern Adelaide needs in terms of health treatment.

To lose a complete hospital leaves a significant hole in South Australia's health system and a giant chasm in the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network. At a time when our population is ageing and demand on hospital services is ever-increasing, the government has taken a razor to the state's health system. Indeed, the proposal by this government, in terms of the renewal of the Repat, fails to capitalise on over \$40 million of government funding spent on the Repat Hospital in the last 10 years, and may I add that the vast majority of that federal coalition spending money is now wasted.

This government is very good at wasting money. After all, this is a government that has spent \$3 million of taxpayers' money spruiking its changes to the health system and trying to sell the virtues of its debilitating Transforming Health policy; changes that of course include the closure of the Repat. Under the government's Transforming Health changes, those suffering from post-traumatic stress will no longer benefit from specialist services at the Repat and, instead, will be sent to a new facility at the Glenside Health Precinct, a precinct unable to deliver medical care for any physical problem that veterans may have in addition to PTSD.

The Repat at Daw Park has played a critical role in delivering vital healthcare services to war veterans for 74 years. It has helped countless veterans, whether they have required medical treatment for physical ailments or assistance with mental health problems. Veterans have been able to receive help in one place. Now this Labor government is fragmenting those services and sending veterans to other sites across metropolitan Adelaide to receive clinical services previously provided at the Repat.

The 15 palliative care beds at the Daw Park Hospice will transfer to a new 15-bed facility at the Flinders Medical Centre; the new facility forming part of the new \$170 million building. That is \$170 million of new money for a building that only includes 15 palliative care beds—no more—the same number that is being provided at the Repat. There will be no net gain in palliative care service in southern Adelaide, as confirmed by the health minister in his answer to the question yesterday.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr DULUK:** That is despite the government's own palliative care services plan for 2009-2016 stating that facilities at the Repat would be expanded to a 22-bed unit and despite the palliative care service plan also highlighting the need to develop a hospice at Noarlunga Hospital with a base capacity of 10 beds by 2016. That is 32 beds that the government identified as being required by 2016 to meet hospice care needs in the southern suburbs; 32 beds the government outlined as a commitment to providing for the South Australian Adelaide areas as well. Of course, the former health minister, the Hon. John Hill MP, at the time said:

SA Health's Palliative Care Services Plan 2009-2016 outlines the South Australian Government's plan to expand and reshape services, in light of increasing demand for end of life care across the health system.

I ask the current Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse: was former minister Hill wrong? Is there new funding for palliative care and in-home care services available? No, of course not. They are simply just not meeting what is in their own plan. They say they are looking at more stay-at-home facilities for those in need of palliative care—we will see what is in the budget coming up.

*The Hon. S.E. Close interjecting:*

**Mr DULUK:** We will see what is in the budget coming up to see if those services have actually been funded.

**The SPEAKER** Order! The minister is called to order.

**Mr DULUK:** But they are not and, of course, the minister is agitated.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Sit down. The minister is called to order. The member is allowed to be heard in silence.

**Mr DULUK:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker, for your protection, as well.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No further remarks are necessary; just carry on.

**Mr DULUK:** The 15-bed Daw Park Hospice that is currently located at the Repat is closing and any funding for a new palliative care unit at the Flinders Medical Centre only provides for 15 beds. These are the facts, yet as I said our population continues to age and the southern suburbs continue to swell and the demand for palliative care service will always continue to grow.

The new \$170 million facility at the Flinders Medical Centre will be immediately inadequate, providing only 15 of the 32 beds the government identified as being required for southern Adelaide. There is another failed plan, another broken promise and another wasted opportunity and the healthcare needs of southern Adelaide, once again, are ignored.

The state Labor government must stop blaming the federal government for its financial mismanagement. It must stop passing the buck and shirking its own responsibility for health policy in the state. Health services are, of course, the core responsibility of any state government. It was the state Labor government's decision to adopt Transforming Health, it was the state Labor government's decision to butcher our health network and, of course, it is the state government that is intent on closing the Repat Hospital.

#### *Parliamentary Procedure*

#### **VISITORS**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I would like to acknowledge the presence in the public gallery today of a very impressive looking group of year 6 students from Woodcroft College. I would like to welcome them to parliament and I hope they enjoy their time with us today, and let them know I go past their school quite regularly: it looks like a wonderful place of learning. They are guests of the member for Reynell. Are you staying for question time later? You are missing out, but perhaps next trip. We look forward to seeing you again very soon.

#### *Motions*

#### **REPATRIATION GENERAL HOSPITAL**

Debate resumed.

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (12:54):** It would come as no surprise to this house that I support this motion by the member for Morphett. It is a good motion. In saying that, I accept the reality that the government have made a decision on the Repat and that they will proceed with that decision, no doubt. The election is nearly two years away, but let me tell the house that it will not be forgotten.

The member for Elder and the member for Fisher will have this brought back to them in shovelfuls during the election campaign. I am not sure of their position on this. I would have thought they would have enough political nous to realise it is going to be a disaster for them, particularly after former premier Rann vowed and declared it would never close. I am informed that I have 700 vets in my electorate. The minister came in here a while ago in a pique of self-indulgence and proceeded to try to lecture this side of the house about what a knowledgeable gentleman he is, what wonderful decisions have been made and how the mainstream ex-servicemen's organisation was behind it.

Well, let me tell you—and I am sure the Deputy Speaker knows some of these groups well—that in my electorate I have the RSL, and I am a great supporter of the RSL and always have been. My father, godfather, grandfather and uncle were all members and it is a great institution. I also have members of the Vietnam Veterans' Federation. I also have members of the Vietnam Veterans Association. I have the South Coast Veterans Association who meet this afternoon, and I can tell you what they think about this. I have representatives of Fields of Blue. I am patron of the Fleurieu National Servicemen's Association.

I can tell this house what they think of this idea. They think it is preposterous. There may well be members amongst them who are supportive of it, and I accept that, but overwhelmingly the veterans of South Australia find the decision to close the Repat a complete public outrage. That was brought to this house's attention over weeks and months by what took place out the front of this house by those people who slept out there 24 hours a day through rain, hail, storm and sunshine and protested. It was brought by the numbers of people who signed the petition; it was 120,000 or so from memory. It was the greatest petition that has ever come in here.

So, do not try to sit on the other side of the house and say you have made a very clever move. Do not do that. The member for Morphett is justified in bringing his motion into the house. He is speaking for a majority of the veterans who find this a disgusting act of betrayal by this Weatherill government, this pathetically inadequate Minister for Health and an even more pathetically inadequate Minister for Veterans Affairs who is lower than a snake's guts in my view. They find it is just an appalling decision.

It will haunt the Labor Party. On its own, it may bring down a couple of seats. Who knows? They will have to find a rearguard action. On top of that, we have a health minister who cannot even tell us when the Royal Adelaide Hospital is going to open; that is how absurd it is. They are going to close the Repat, sell it off, take people out of there who have been able to go there for generations, including the reducing numbers of World War II vets who are in their 90s. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

*Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00.*

#### *Petitions*

### **RETIREMENT VILLAGES BILL**

**Mr PENGILLY (Finniss):** Presented a petition signed by 39 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to ensure that clause 21 of the Retirement Villages Bill include the provision for a maximum 12-month statutory period after the resident ceases to reside in a retirement village, within which the sums of money due to the departing resident must be paid by the administering authority.

#### *Parliamentary Procedure*

### **PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Treasurer (Hon. A. Koutsantonis)—

Aboriginal Lands Trust—Annual Report 2014-15  
Bio Innovation SA—Annual Report 2014-15

#### *Ministerial Statement*

### **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND**

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:01):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** Today, I am releasing an independent report which has highlighted the importance of the \$15 million Regional Development Fund in driving economic growth across our state. The Regional Development Fund offers grants to boost private sector investment in regional infrastructure and create jobs in regional South Australia. I am very pleased to inform the house that in rounds 1 and 2 of the fund \$33 million in grants were awarded to 61 projects, worth a combined \$5.6 billion to the state's economy over the life of the projects.

A total of 14,389 jobs will be generated across regional South Australia throughout the life of these projects. The report shows that in 2015-16 alone projects supported by the Regional

Development Fund will make an economic contribution to the state of \$933 million and will create around about 2,265 regional jobs. This report on the economic contribution of the fund underscores the importance of our regions as the economic engine room of the state.

The impacts of the Regional Development Fund reach far and wide across South Australia, with both direct and indirect job creation, increased economic activity, and greater investment, bringing confidence and growth to regional communities. In 2014, the Regional Development Fund was increased from \$1.6 million to \$15 million per year. This report demonstrates the enormous value of that increased investment by this government in our regions. This injection of additional funding means that community organisations and businesses can bring forward their own investment, invest even more, or undertake projects that otherwise would not go ahead.

The state government is committed to building stronger regions because we know they are an important driver of our economic growth. I am proud to be working with my cabinet colleagues, supporting the many other steps that this government is taking to support our regions. Next financial year, projects supported in rounds 1 and 2 of the Regional Development Fund will employ even more South Australians, with a projected 3,500 jobs on offer. This number will swell further with projects to be supported under round 3 of the fund.

I made the first round 3 announcement on Monday at Ingham's with the Premier and the Minister for Investment and Trade. The exciting statewide expansion of Ingham's facilities, expected to create 850 jobs, is being supported by the Regional Development Fund investment in two projects: a state-of-the-art feed mill near Murray Bridge and four new breeding farms at Yumali. I look forward to announcing further grants under round 3 of the Regional Development Fund in coming weeks.

*Parliamentary Committees*

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

**Ms DIGANCE (Elder) (14:04):** I bring up the 546<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Veterans' Mental Health Precinct—Transforming Health Project.

Report received and ordered to be published.

*Question Time*

**ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL**

**Mr MARSHALL (Dunstan—Leader of the Opposition) (14:05):** My question is to the Premier. Given that the Minister for Health has consistently failed to provide a date for the technical completion of the new Royal Adelaide Hospital, can the Premier confirm whether he has been told when technical completion will occur and whether he is satisfied with the minister's answer that, and I quote, 'The hospital will be finished when it's finished'?

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Premier) (14:05):** Yes, I am satisfied with the minister's answer to the question, and I think everyone in this house—everybody, indeed, in this state—will be celebrating what will be an extraordinary piece of infrastructure when it is open. I am more than happy for the opposition to have on the record their opposition to this fantastic piece of infrastructure because when ultimately—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** I can hear that now: 'The Liberals just said no. The Liberals just said no.' And this has been much—

**The SPEAKER:** The leader is called to order and so is the member for Newland.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** Much of what we are seeking to achieve in this state has been done over the opposition of the Liberal Party, and it's sad. I don't know why they want to have themselves on the record as being opposed to this fantastic piece of infrastructure, and indeed every piece of infrastructure that we build. We will make sure that this first-class piece of infrastructure is ready to go when it is safe to do so. When it is—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** I can't believe that they are so desperate to have a hospital open that they never wanted built: 'It is something that's completely unnecessary, but give it to us right now.' This will be attended to appropriately in the appropriate time, and we are not going to hurry the builders. We don't want to hurry the builders; it's certainly not doing our budget any damage, but we would like to know the time so that we can plan.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** We would like to know so that we can plan and we would like a date so that we can carry out that important piece of work with the nurses and the doctors and, of course, the patients and the families so that they know when they are moving there. I presume all these complaints can be taken as a rejection of their invitation to the opening. I'll note that.

**The Hon. J.R. Rau:** A few extra will come.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** That's right. They will be there. They will be there wanting to sit right up the front.

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** I wouldn't personalise it to Steven; he might not be the Leader of the Opposition.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** That's right—the Leader of the Opposition pro tem. We will send an invitation and whoever is in that role can actually take it up.

**The SPEAKER:** I call to order the members for Morialta, Hartley, Little Para, Kaurna, Reynell, the Treasurer, and the deputy leader. I warn the leader, the deputy leader, the member for Newland—

**The Hon. T.R. Kenyon:** Thank you, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** I just paused for that expression of gratitude—and I warn for the second and final time the members for Hartley and the deputy leader. Member for Giles.

#### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN-NORTHERN TERRITORY MINISTERS' FORUM**

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (14:08):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier inform the house what the government is doing to explore economic development opportunities with the Northern Territory government and improve services across the border?

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Premier) (14:09):** As tempting as it would be to take back our Northern Territory—sadly ceded, I must shamefully say, by a Labor premier in 1911—we have settled for cooperation.

In April 2015, after actually writing to three chief ministers—Mr Henderson, Mr Mills, and then, finally, Mr Giles—we got an important meeting, which was a meeting of first ministers for the signing of a memorandum of understanding to work together to unlock economic opportunities in the Central Australian corridor.

As part of the MOU, the Chief Minister and I meet annually to discuss issues that affect both our jurisdictions. Last Wednesday, I met with the Northern Territory Chief Minister, Adam Giles, in Adelaide for the second First Ministers' Forum. Our discussion was wideranging and incredibly productive. In terms of improved services, we had an important discussion about family violence in remote communities. Both governments committed \$100,000 towards funding a number of initiatives to support better coordination and culturally appropriate services in the APY lands region which spans our two jurisdictions.

Discussions last week also focused on creating economic opportunities for Aboriginal people. Given that approximately 30 per cent of the Northern Territory population is Aboriginal, compared with 2 per cent in South Australia, obviously we face very different challenges; nevertheless, we have been, I think, inspired by the Northern Territory government's approach to government procurement and the way in which they have driven business and employment opportunities for Aboriginal Northern Territorians.

We discussed how government procurement would be a crucial tool to advance the interests of Aboriginal people. Sustainable camel farming in remote areas was also discussed, and we have

since released a viability study that both our jurisdictions commissioned on developing the Central Australian camel meat industry.

A significant part of the forum was dedicated to exploring the opportunities to support the native foods and premium meats industry. We also held a very successful round table, with around 20 industry representatives from both South Australia and the Northern Territory, about the opportunities and challenges for the native foods and premium meat industries. The opportunities are significant. I was told the native foods sector is one of the fastest growing sectors in Australia right now, growing from about \$10 million a year in 2010 to \$75 million a year in 2016.

Given that the majority of the activity currently occurs in South Australia and the Northern Territory, we have an opportunity to corner this emerging market and capitalise on the global demand for premium products like this. It's crucial that we don't lose the ownership of these important native foods. The salutary case is the macadamia nut, which most people regard as being grown elsewhere but is in fact an Australian native.

The forum also discussed a range of avenues for cooperation between our jurisdictions. We received an update on the work we are doing jointly to market tourism opportunities we offer. I provided the Chief Minister with an update on the South Australian government's response to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission and, in particular, the broad consultation that is underway. We also discussed the need for us to maintain our strong commitment to horizontal fiscal equalisation arrangements which, if they were removed, would massively punish South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Finally, we agreed to continue to advocate for increased commonwealth involvement in the area of early childhood education. This is, we think, at the heart of addressing disadvantage, especially in Aboriginal communities. The forum does provide a fantastic platform and productive way in which the two jurisdictions can advance our relationship to the mutual benefit of our communities, and we look forward to deepening this collaboration with the Northern Territory.

#### ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

**Mr MARSHALL (Dunstan—Leader of the Opposition) (14:13):** My question is to the Attorney-General. Is the Attorney-General concerned that the government has not received a response since it issued a major default notice against the SA Health Partnership in relation to the technical completion of the new hospital? Is the Attorney-General aware whether the SA Health Partnership has provided the required cure plan and, if so, whether the government has accepted that cure plan? Has the government sought any advice in relation to the potential moves to terminate the contract by the government?

**The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice Reform, Minister for Planning, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Child Protection Reform, Minister for the Public Sector, Minister for Consumer and Business Services, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (14:13):** I am not aware of the current status of those matters, but I will make the requisite inquiries and let the Leader of the Opposition know.

**Mr MARSHALL:** A supplementary, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Light.

#### INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION ADVOCATE

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (14:14):** My question is to the Minister for Small Business. How is the Industry Participation Policy securing work for local businesses through government projects?

**The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Minister for Investment and Trade, Minister for Small Business, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:14):** I thank the member for his question. I know that small business is vital to him in Gawler and the region, and that is why the government created the Industry Participation Advocate's position in February 2013 to make sure that local businesses, small businesses, got the first go at almost \$4 billion worth of goods and services contracts let annually by the South Australian government and that they win this work to create jobs and investment right here at home.

Added to this is the growing amount of construction, funded by the commonwealth but managed by the state government, that forms part of our plan. The state government, through the Industry Participation Policy, requires the submission of industry participation plans, with tender documents for government projects over the value of \$4 million in metropolitan Adelaide and \$1 million in regional South Australia. Data from the State Procurement Board now records the immediate success of the state government's initiative, and 90 per cent of the value of goods and service contracts was let to suppliers located in South Australia in 2014-15. This compares with 79 per cent in 2013-14 and only 51 per cent in 2012-13 when we set out on this path and made these changes.

Major construction projects valued over \$50 million in the 12 months to the end of April 2016 had an estimated work package dollars spent in South Australia of \$637 million out of \$698 million. That is an outstanding achievement by this state. It is 91 per cent of retained spending in South Australia for major construction procurements in the supply chain benefiting locally-based businesses. A number of ministers on this side of the house need to be commended for their support for this policy and their active involvement in it to make sure that our small businesses get the work they deserve.

Projects built by South Australians for South Australia include the River to Torrens Road Project, the O-Bahn, the City Access Project, the Darlington upgrade and many, many others. Each of these programs had an industry participation plan. This shows the improvement since the launch of the Industry Participation Policy administered by Ian Nightingale, who was appointed as the Industry Participation Advocate in February 2013 and who, may I say, is doing an absolutely outstanding job for the state.

Also, 1,232 businesses attended an OIA Meet the Buyer event in 2014-15. In addition to this, 148 businesses attended our Supplying to Government Workshop Seminar. I was just at one of these on Tuesday and it was attended by nearly 300 people. All the various government departments had their project managers and people there. It was really a 'meet the buyer' exercise, and it was extraordinarily well attended by small businesses and strongly supported by the civil contractors who helped to host the event.

I told local businesses at that event that, over the next three years, the budgeted capital work spend for the state government is between \$1.327 billion and \$1.516 billion per annum. This represents all manner of projects in scale and size. On top of this, the \$985 million Northern Connector will be delivered and provide maximum employment and economic development opportunities for the state. Of course, for housing contractors and suppliers, there is the \$208 million package to build 1,000 homes.

This government is making sure that our own small businesses, and workers within them, get the benefit of every dollar of state government outlay, and that is good for jobs, good for business and good for South Australia

#### *Parliamentary Procedure*

#### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I welcome to parliament today students from Woodcroft College, who are guests of the member for Mawson, and students from Whyalla High School, who are guests of the member for Giles.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Stuart.

#### *Question Time*

#### **ELECTRICITY PRICES**

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (14:18):** Thank you, sir. My question is to the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy. Will the minister stand by his claim on ABC radio on 9 May that South Australia does not have the highest electricity prices in the nation, and can the minister point to one official report that supports his statement? According to the latest AER State of the Nation market report of 4 February, South Australian households paid on average



\$261 per annum more for electricity standing offers and \$203 per annum more for electricity market offers than any other state or territory in the national electricity market.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (14:19):** The shadow minister issued a press release earlier today—

**Ms Chapman:** How about an answer?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** I am answering.

**The SPEAKER:** The deputy leader will withdraw for the next 15 minutes under the sessional order.

*The honourable member for Bragg having withdrawn from the chamber:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** The member for Stuart released a press release, 'Energy regulator exposes shock', talking about the latest data from the Australian Energy Regulator. This data is released I think nearly weekly by the Australian Energy Regulator, something that I don't think is pointed out in the press release. The opposition is attempting to say that the predictions of the AER always turn out to be completely accurate.

It is very difficult to predict what the actual outcomes will be with a very volatile and hostile market, and I will give the house some examples. The AER weekly reports that are released by the Australian Energy Regulator, which the shadow minister quoted in his press release today, predicted in the first week of November last year that for the first quarter of 2016 the average price for electricity prices in South—

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN:** Point of order, Mr Speaker: under standing order 98, I ask you to bring the minister back to the substance of the question, which was about—

**The SPEAKER:** No, I know what the substance of the question is and I don't need to be reminded. The minister.

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN:** It's not what he is talking about.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** It is exactly what I am talking about, sir. It is the AER versus the actual outcomes. The AER weekly report for the first week of November 2015 published what they thought a prediction would be for electricity prices in the first quarter of 2016. They said that, for quarter one of 2016, the average price would be, I am advised, \$80 a megawatt hour.

AEMO, who are the market energy operators, published the actual results for those months. In the first month of 2016, the price was \$50.26, not \$80 as predicted by the AER; in February, the hottest month of the year on average—

**Mr van Holst Pellekaan:** You obviously don't understand.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —it was \$40.72, not \$80 as predicted by the AER; and in March—

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Stuart to order.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —it was \$53.33; on average, for that first quarter, about \$48.10 a megawatt hour, not the \$80 predicted by the Australian Energy Regulator. These predictions made by the Australian Energy Regulator through what Mr van Holst Pellekaan has attempted to do through his press release to frighten—I apologise, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will apologise—

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** I apologise, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** —and not use a member's Christian name and surname; he knows the rules.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Yes, sir. The member for Stuart, in quoting these prices, knows that they are estimates; they are usually wrong. It is no fault of the Energy Regulator because it is a very difficult market to map. Indeed, the latest weekly snapshots released by the Australian

Energy Market Operator show this in terms of what the most accurate outcomes for power prices are: in Queensland, the average price from the first week of May was \$74.32; in New South Wales, it was \$59; in Victoria, it was \$43; in South Australia, \$44.70 a megawatt hour; and Tasmania, \$83.06.

What this shows is that there are fluctuations. Attempting to say one way or another with certainty that over the next three or four years the earth will stop spinning on its axis and the world will come to an end as we know it simply cannot be predicted by anyone. You can see that the Australian Energy Regulator, who are experts in energy regulation, find it very difficult to predict accurate outcomes, and when the market operator shows the actual outcomes they are very, very divergent. Anyone who attempts to make an accurate prediction cannot get it right.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer's time has expired. I call to order the members for Goyder, Unley and Mitchell. I warn the member for Stuart, and I warn the leader for the second and final time. The member for Stuart.

### ELECTRICITY PRICES

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (14:24):** My question is for the Minister for Regional Development. Has Nyrstar advised the minister that forecast electricity prices will put its operations in Port Pirie in jeopardy, even after its current productivity and environmental upgrades are completed; and, if so, what is the government's response?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:24):** I thank the member for his question. The discussion with Nyrstar is being held next week, so I am not too sure what will be in there.

**Mr van Holst Pellekaan:** They haven't told you?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** There has been some discussion. Certainly, we are having further discussions next Thursday.

### RESIDENTIAL PARKS

**Mr PICTON (Kaurana) (14:24):** My question is to the Minister for Consumer and Business Services. How is the government acting to protect the interests of community members in residential parks?

*Ms Bedford interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Not just anyone—community members.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice Reform, Minister for Planning, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Child Protection Reform, Minister for the Public Sector, Minister for Consumer and Business Services, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (14:25):** Indeed! I thank the honourable member for his question. We are acting to do good things for community members.

**Mr Williams:** Leave them alone!

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** Was that the member for Kavel again?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Kavel is innocent. The Attorney will answer the question.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** Mr Speaker, it is his sangfroid that often confuses me. On 17 March 2016, I announced the review of the Residential Parks Act and the release of a discussion paper for community consultation. The review was initiated as a result of the South Australian Residential Parks Residents Association and other members of parliament raising concerns with me about the current legislation on behalf of park residents.

As members may be aware, the issues causing the most significant concern to residents include the lack of security and permanency of tenure for residents who have invested hundreds or thousands of dollars into their homes, a lack of transparency throughout the sales process and the maintenance of shared facilities.

I am pleased to report to the house that consultation is progressing extremely well. As well as notifying many members of parliament with residential parks in their electorates, local councils, caravan and residential parks and other interested parties of the review, Consumer and Business Services have also prepared guides which provide information and advice regarding the rights and obligations of both parties which are available on the CBS website.

Several public forum meetings have also been scheduled over the coming weeks, with the first already having been held last Wednesday at Elizabeth Village. The meeting was a great opportunity for both residents and the park owners to identify and convey what is currently working and what needs to change.

Further public forums are going to be held at The Palms Residential Village, Hillier Park, and Rosetta Village in Victor Harbor to ensure that all these areas with high concentrations of residential parks are consulted and have an opportunity to voice their concerns. Submissions to the discussion paper are open until Friday 8 July and I encourage any interested parties to make a submission via the YourSAy portal or by writing to Consumer and Business Services.

### ELECTRICITY PRICES

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (14:27):** My question is to the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy. Is the minister aware that four out of five of the industry speakers at the government's magnetite forum held on 12 May said that many mining operations will not commence or not expand based on expected future electricity prices? If so, what is his response to them? Speakers from Iron Road, Braemar and Havilah Resources all raised electricity prices as a significant barrier, and speakers from Carpentaria said that they are okay because they are connected to the New South Wales grid and they have much cheaper electricity.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (14:28):** I think it is not a generalisation to say that a lot of people in South Australian industry are concerned about future power prices, but the predicted power prices versus actual power prices are a very different outcome. A lot of South Australian industries are on the spot market. The greatest concern for a lot of those developments is not just power price, although it is a very large and important aspect of their operations, it is access to land, multiple land-use frameworks, negotiating with landowners to gain access.

There is a whole series of issues that concern the Braemar province, Iron Road and a lot of the proponents for these large-scale mining operations. Are they concerned about costs and wages? Yes, they are. Are they concerned about the Australian dollar? Yes, they are. Are they concerned about power prices? Yes, they are. It is not just one aspect holding them back. There is a whole series of things that they have to deal with.

Of course, a lot of these proponents do not actually own the land that they wish to mine. A lot of them don't have mining leases as yet, and they are working on projected outcomes. What I would have told them if I had still been there is that of course by the time a lot of these mines are set to be operating, even with the AER figures the opposition is quoting, you see wholesale power prices dropping to below the current prices today through the AER's own predictions that the opposition are quoting.

For example, OZ Minerals' processing plant at Whyalla is probably not due for operation until late 2018, early 2019, or even later. Things get pushed back the way things occur. The AER's predictions, given that the member for Stuart is so fond of quoting them, shows wholesale power prices are predicted to drop below \$80 to about \$60 a megawatt hour.

What is happening here is that the opposition is attempting to frighten people, scare people, say you can't invest in South Australia, but the reality is 10,000 new jobs in 12 months. Rather than take the 20 per cent loading, as the shadow minister just complained, how about coming up with an alternative policy. What is the alternative? What is the alternative policy? What are we going to compare and contrast it with?

**Mr GARDNER:** Point of order: standing order 98, the member is entering debate.

**The SPEAKER:** Debate? Yes, I uphold that point of order. Member for Ashford.

#### **MURRAY BRIDGE MENTAL HEALTH AND DISABILITY SERVICES**

**The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (14:31):** My question is directed to the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse. Minister, can you update the house on the current mental health and disability services in Murray Bridge?

**The Hon. L.A. VLAHOS (Taylor—Minister for Disabilities, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse) (14:31):** I thank the member for her question. On Monday, as part of the state cabinet meeting in Murray Bridge, I had the pleasure of meeting with local representatives in the mental health sector and visiting a number of disability service providers in the town. It was a pleasure to convene a mental health round table at the Murray Bridge Soldiers' Memorial Hospital that included hospital representatives as well as representatives from Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia and headspace Murray Bridge.

A number of matters were discussed during this meeting. It was great to hear some of the real positive contributions and actions that are being undertaken in the local area to improve the way in which care is provided to mental health consumers. During this round table, we also discussed some of the challenges associated with living with a mental illness in a regional community. As I am sure the member for Hammond recognises, this includes the social stigma surrounding people living with mental illness and how we dissuade other members of the local community from not seeking assistance.

Another matter that was also raised was the issue of culturally and linguistically diverse communities and some of the difficulties that the community in Murray Bridge and the Riverland face in accessing mental health services. I also had the opportunity of visiting two newly built houses in Murray Bridge where people with a disability are living.

It was a pleasure to have afternoon tea with Mark and Gordon, as well as the caring Life Without Barriers team, in their new homes. It was fantastic to talk with them. I had the opportunity to partake of their cooking and they showed me around their new homes. They were so excited to be living in their new premises. They had been there for just under a year. They shared their life stories with me, and what a profound difference a home had made in their lives. It had transformed the lives of these two men since moving into this new residential setting.

It was clear that both Mark and Gordon were enjoying the independence of living with and helping people in that team to cook, clean, shop and budget for themselves for the first time in their lives, as well as undertaking other daily tasks. I would like to personally thank Mark and Gordon for hosting me in their home as well as thank their carers and the caring team at Life Without Barriers for the amazing contribution they are providing in the local community at Murray Bridge and the level of care and independence they are growing in these two men.

I also had the opportunity to visit with Glenn Rappensberg from Novita and the mother of a client who had also recently moved into a newly built long-term residential care facility in the town. It was incredible to hear from the mother of this man about the difference it had made to her son and about the experience of his own development and wellbeing. It was a profoundly different story from both her and her son and how she dealt with living with someone with a disability and how he was growing by having his own independence.

I look forward to visiting more of our amazing service providers across rural and regional South Australia in the coming months to see the amazing difference they make to people's lives.

#### **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND**

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (14:34):** My question is to the Minister for Regional Development. Can the minister confirm that \$5 million of funding from the Regional Development Fund is actually set aside for the Upper Spencer Gulf and outback, as he has announced?

On 12 November, the minister announced that \$5 million from the RDF would be set aside specifically for the Upper Spencer Gulf and outback. However, the government's document, titled 'Regional Development Fund guidelines and assessment criteria', clearly states, 'Where project

proposals are assessed as being similarly competitive, preference will be given to those located within the area,' implying that the money is not dedicated to the region.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:35):** I have had discussions with the member for Stuart before about this. In the last round, round 3, I prioritised \$5 million out of the RDF, out of the \$15 million, for the Upper Spencer Gulf and the outback, plus we allocated another \$2 million for smaller grants. We are still going through the round 3 applications—interest was overwhelming—and I can assure the member that the priority of \$5 million will be given to the Upper Spencer Gulf and outback.

#### MATURE-AGE PERSONS' RIGHTS

**Ms COOK (Fisher) (14:36):** My question is to the Minister for Ageing. Could the minister explain to the house what the government is doing to ensure that older South Australians know about their rights?

**The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Minister for Social Housing, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (14:36):** I thank the honourable member for the question and for her interest in promoting the rights of older South Australians. I am pleased to be able to provide new information to the house about this policy area.

The recognition of the rights of older people is a critical issue for the state government and an important priority for me in my capacity as Minister for Ageing. Earlier this year I was privileged to launch 'Knowing your rights: a guide to the rights of older South Australians', a state government initiative funded through the Office for the Ageing. The publication was developed through a partnership, and utilises the combined intellect and expertise of several agencies, including the Legal Services Commission of South Australia, the Council on the Ageing, South Australia Police and the Office for the Ageing.

While all the information contained in Knowing Your Rights is important, there is one particular area I would like to focus on, that is, that older people have the right to participate in the economic life of our community and continue to work if that is their wish. It is against the law to treat people unfairly because of their age in different areas of public life, including work, education and customer service. This is particularly important for economic participation, when an increasing number of older people want and need to work well past a traditional retirement age.

Some older people want to start businesses in their own right and become senior entrepreneurs, supporting economic growth and jobs creation. Others want to continue to contribute through volunteering and mentoring. Age should be no barrier to a person wishing to make such valued contributions to our community.

Knowing Your Rights is a useful resource which can be used by older persons to confidently remain in control of their life choices and decisions as they age. I would highly recommend it to families, carers, service providers and all MPs to support any older people they know—and as MPs we often have older members of our community coming in to ask for our support. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank and commend the partners involved in the development of this important resource, and their efforts to strengthen the visibility of older people, their rights and our respect for them.

This document has been particularly well received. As I am also the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for Volunteers, I have had the opportunity to spend quite a bit of time with our older communities, and because of that we will now be translating this document into Italian.

*Mr Tarzia interjecting:*

**The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON:** I am very fortunate—I think the member for Hartley spends time on Italian radio engaging with our Italian community—as just last week, during National Volunteer Week, I got to attend—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON:** They might be on my next list. I appreciate that the Polish community is also active, particularly in my electorate, I might add, in the area of Salisbury. I was reminded at the CO.AS.IT Awards, which His Excellency the Governor also attended, social inclusion is important and also—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON:** Sorry, the member for Adelaide as well. In fact, I was very disappointed that the member for Adelaide did not get up on the dance floor and nor did the member for Hartley, although there was much encouragement. When we think about our communities, as they age we know that many people go back to their birth language, and this is a challenge for our aged care sector.

But the biggest challenge is social isolation. So, knowing your rights in your language, knowing your rights across the South Australian state, what is available for you, we want to be inclusive. In this triumph of civilisation, as you age your rights continue to be as valued and important at whatever age you are.

### COUNCIL RATE CONCESSIONS

**Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (14:40):** My question is to the Minister for Local Government. Can the minister confirm the dollar impact for the 2015-16 financial year and the future years estimates on local government providing the mandatory 75 per cent remission on council rates for public housing properties transferred from Housing SA to community housing associations from 1 July 2015? Local governments have reported that minister Brock committed in early 2015 to legislative amendments to clause 161 of the act—rebates of rates, community services—yet these changes were removed from the draft bill provided to me in a briefing by the minister and not part of the legislation debated last year.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The leader is on two warnings.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice Reform, Minister for Planning, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Child Protection Reform, Minister for the Public Sector, Minister for Consumer and Business Services, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (14:41):** This question has been asked virtually in the same terms several times before and has been answered several times before, but I am happy to do it again. The situation is this: around the country there are differing ways in which council rates levied on public housing and community housing properties are treated.

In some jurisdictions, there is no possibility of rating, as I recall; in some, there is some sort of maximum amount which is less than the full amount. I think, from memory, in Victoria it might be 50 per cent or something of that nature. But certainly, as I understand it, the only place in the commonwealth where a public housing property which has been transferred to a community housing provider could be the subject of full rate payment is potentially here.

The situation that we have embraced—and the evidence is there for all to see because we have had a transfer of some thousand or more trust properties across to the not-for-profit sector. In every instance what happened was the government sat down and negotiated with the affected councils and discussed those things on a council-by-council basis, and I think the record will demonstrate that so far what has happened is that those councils have been given the opportunity of receiving rates from those properties.

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** It is a matter—I am saying this—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Goyder is warned.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** If I can just finish answering the question. It is my view that there may well be some local government areas where it is entirely appropriate for the government to negotiate with that local government entity and for the full rates to be paid by not-for-profit housing providers,

but equally there may be areas where the converse is true and where it is entirely reasonable that those providers do not have to pay rates.

As the situation presently stands, if the councils wish to negotiate an agreement whereby rates are to be paid, they have to come to the table, they have to speak to the government, they have to explain why they think that is appropriate, and the government has to listen to their proposal and make a determination. As I have said, in the instance of the last 1,000 or so public housing properties that were transferred, the determination of the government was that those rates would be paid. We want to be in a position where we can continue to negotiate on an as-needs basis as each individual tranche of those public housing properties moves over to the not-for-profit sector.

The government has made no secret of this, that there will be an increasing volume of the government's public housing stock which over the years to come will be put into the not-for-profit sector. That offers opportunities for greater services to be provided to those tenants, and it also provides for the South Australian public housing sector not to be discriminated by the commonwealth funding arrangements because South Australia has an historically—

**The SPEAKER:** The minister's time has expired.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** What a shame.

#### NORTHERN SUBURBS SCHOOLS

**Mr GEE (Napier) (14:45):** My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development. Can the minister update the house on the achievements of students attending schools in the northern suburbs?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Minister for Education and Child Development, Minister for Higher Education and Skills) (14:46):** As members of the house probably realise by now, I am always delighted to answer questions not only about schools in the northern suburbs but about completion rates in our schools because the two most important things students can do for their own education and their own future is to attend school and to complete school.

One of the great triumphs of the new SACE, which came out in 2011, is that it has provided the flexibility to enable more students than ever before to complete school: 14,668 last year, up 618 students on the previous year, and, even more clearly a reason to celebrate the new SACE, double the number of Aboriginal students completing high school with a certificate. At the same time, SACE has maintained a very high-quality offering so that the students who are destined for university do a very rigorous program, perform very well, and their ATAR results as they are scaled and ranked are of a very good quality for entering universities around Australia and internationally.

Specifically about the completion rates in the northern suburbs and the achievements of those schools, I would like to point out some specific examples; one is Mark Oliphant College, which, as members would be aware, is a very popular school and, in fact, we are having to now restrict the entry because it has become so popular that we are full. Back in 2011, 69 per cent of year 12s at Mark Oliphant College completed their SACE, and each year since then the college has attained increases on the figure as well as an increase in the number of students attempting to complete their SACE. In 2012, the rate was 79 per cent, up to 92 per cent in 2013, and in 2014 the school was at 94 per cent SACE completion rate.

What I am really pleased about is that in 2015 the college's SACE completion rate was 100 per cent. I don't want to over read this. This isn't about every student who starts year 8 completing five years later. What it is about is the students who are prepared to undertake the SACE, who have completed the subjects and units necessary to do that by the December of that year in fact completing. I have an ambition that every school should be able to get to 100 per cent on that measure while we simultaneously work to have more and more students being prepared to undertake the SACE, being prepared to put themselves in that situation.

While that completion rate has been rising, importantly the number attempting SACE has almost doubled from 2013 to 2015 at Mark Oliphant College. Last year, more Mark Oliphant College students attempted their SACE than on previous years, and all of them completed this time. That is

an outstanding effort and I would like to congratulate not only all the staff, not only all the parents but all those kids for stepping up to the high expectations that have now been placed on them.

Contributing to these achievements are of course the modern state-of-the-art facilities and the high-quality teaching. Mark Oliphant staff have featured in our Public Education Excellence Awards, including last year's winners, Ray Moss, who won the lifetime achievement award, and Emil Zankov, who won the secondary teaching award.

But Mark Oliphant is just one of the many great schools in the northern suburbs, and we are investing in many of them to ensure that there are many opportunities and choices for young people in that area. For example, Playford International College (which members may recall as being previously called Fremont-Elizabeth High School) has put and is putting enormous effort into changing the culture and expectations for the students at that school.

The school has already achieved an improvement in the SACE completion rates, with an increase in the number of students completing, from 78 per cent in 2013 to 86 per cent in 2015. I can only expect that that will soar up to 100 per cent before too long. Last year, we announced an investment of \$7 million into the school towards a new centre for advanced technologies.

Time expired.

### FAMILIES SA

**Ms SANDERSON (Adelaide) (14:50):** My question is to the Minister for Education and Child Development. What is the government doing to ensure Families SA is adequately resourced so that children are not put in danger? The Public Service Association has today launched a radio campaign, At Breaking Point, which claims that Families SA is understaffed by 187 positions and that the organisation is dangerously under-resourced.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Minister for Education and Child Development, Minister for Higher Education and Skills) (14:50):** Yes, the PSA is engaging in some industrial action and some activism on the subject of Families SA, and there are many reasons for this; one is that it is an extraordinarily difficult area of work. The workers there have been under a lot of pressure from public attention and from coronial inquests and of course, as we all know, a royal commission investigating the way in which we manage child protection in this state.

There are constant challenges in keeping enough staff to do the work. There is a slight disagreement in the figures, but I am advised that we have around 120 vacancies at present out of the 1,900 or so cap of the FTEs. One of the challenges we have (as I have mentioned in this place before) is the rate of attrition, which runs at about 7 or 8 per cent in Families SA, whereas the standard government attrition rate is around 3 per cent. That means losing around 150 staff a year which, as you can see, then makes it very difficult for us to continue to bring people on.

We are running constant panels, so we are constantly advertising for positions to be filled and constantly assessing people's capacity to undertake the work. That has resulted in appointing a large number of people in the last year. However, that's been challenged, of course, by a commensurate loss through our attrition rates.

I have, in concern with what has been raised by the PSA—and I have always had a very good relationship with the PSA previously as public sector minister as well—asked the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment to become involved in discussions with the union in order to make sure that the management through the department and the union, as the representative of the workers in Families SA, are having a productive conversation about ways in which we can make sure that there is a pathway.

The letter that they wrote to me did acknowledge that they see the complexities, and that they see the challenges, and that what they are looking for is assurance that there is a pathway to making sure that we have enough people employed to undertake the work. The royal commission will also be very interesting on the subject of the way in which we structure child protection in this state. We do have a lot of people working in the department, albeit with some vacancies that we would very much like to see filled, but it may be that there are other ways of constructing this form of work which makes that more productive and a better outcome for all involved.



### ANZAC CENTENARY MEMORIAL WALK

**Ms DIGANCE (Elder) (14:53):** My question is to the Minister for Veterans Affairs. Minister, can you inform the house about the opening of the ANZAC Centenary Memorial Walk?

**The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite—Minister for Investment and Trade, Minister for Small Business, Minister for Defence Industries, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:53):** I thank the member for Elder for her question. She and I share a passion for veterans and their interests, and it was on Saturday 23 April 2016 that we saw the official opening of the ANZAC Centenary Memorial Walk. This walk was the preferred project of the Veterans Advisory Council to commemorate the centenary of ANZAC. It was delivered on time. It was delivered on budget. It has been fantastic value for money not only for the City of Adelaide but for veterans, and it was indeed a collaboration between the federal, state, and local governments.

Can I particularly commend the efforts of the head of the veterans' agency, Rob Manton; my chief of staff, Kevin Naughton; and the wonderful Kylie O'Leary from the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure who, in bounds, returned the confidence that her chief executive and minister have in her in delivering this project on time and on budget. These are terrific public servants doing a great job for the state.

The purpose of this 280-metre walk along Kintore Avenue was to physically and symbolically link the South Australian War Memorial with the Torrens Parade Ground and the Pathway of Honour, reinforcing the design pillars of remembrance, service and loyalty. The walk was officially opened by 98-year-old Tobruk veteran Bill Corey, accompanied by His Excellency the Governor Hieu Van Le and the Premier and many others.

The 70-metre interpretive wall and an open-blade fence along the eastern boundary of Government House are key features of the walk. I would commend to all South Australians a tour down Kintore Avenue now to see what a transformation this has been. The granite wall represents a century of conflict and honours for the more than 102,000 Australian service men and women who have died in conflict since Federation.

The walk is a place of quiet reflection where we can all show our appreciation for those who gave their lives so selflessly so we can enjoy the freedom we have today. Footy fans also got to experience the Memorial Walk that afternoon as they made their way down Kintore Avenue to Adelaide Oval to watch Port Adelaide play Geelong. I commend both clubs for their involvement in this wonderful event.

I would like in particular, on behalf of all South Australians, to thank the Governor for his support as well as the Mayor of Adelaide and the state and federal government departments involved for their combined contribution to this wonderful project. It was a complex project and it had its moments, but we got there. It is the memorial for all, not just a few.

For that reason, I would like to make special mention of Sir Eric Neal for his contribution not only to this project but to the Veterans Advisory Council. Last year, Sir Eric advised me of the conclusion of his time as chairman of the VAC, but kindly accepted my request to stay on until this project was completed. His time as chairman has been characterised by decisiveness, pragmatism, inclusivity and consensus.

I congratulate him on his many achievements as chair of the VAC. These achievements, with his leadership and guidance, have significantly enhanced conditions for more than 27,000 South Australian veterans and approximately 80,000 members of the broader veteran community. On behalf of the South Australian government and all South Australians, I sincerely thank Sir Eric and wish him all the best in the future.

### LANDS TITLES OFFICE

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:57):** My question is to the Minister for Planning. Given that the Registrar-General of the Land Services group is aware of the government's investigation into the proposed sale of the group, why haven't the staff of the Lands Titles Office been informed of the proposed sale and, further, given an assurance about their job security and future employment?

**The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice Reform, Minister for Planning, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Child Protection Reform, Minister for the Public Sector, Minister for Consumer and Business Services, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (14:58):** A couple of things: first of all, I congratulate the deputy leader on coming up to speed with the proposal. The second thing—

*Ms Chapman interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** It was there. The second thing I would like to say is that, at this stage, it is simply a matter that is a proposal and it has not advanced any further than that. If and when that proposal becomes a matter of government decision, then I am sure that all of the parliament—

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** I haven't got to that yet. I am working my way through. I am working my way—

**Mr Marshall:** Rapidly.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** I am working my way rapidly through to the answer point. As for the employment of individuals, I would have to check, but it's my understanding that this, being part of the public sector, would actually be a group of people who are public sector employees and, therefore, their entitlements to security of employment would be no different to any other public sector employee.

We are in a position where we have been progressively negotiating with various public sector employee groups, arrangements which provide for them a publicly noted and scheduled set of criteria and entitlements in the event of them being made redundant. But to assume that any decision about this group would necessarily result in any employee's current work not needing to be continued is an assumption I just don't accept.

*Mr Marshall interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** No, that was your people who did that, and I am still to this day disappointed that some time ago the opportunity to buy the SA Lotteries wasn't offered to me because, if I had been given the opportunity of buying it for 50¢ and getting several million dollars back—

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** The TAB.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** The TAB.

**Mr Marshall:** He got it wrong! You sold the SA Lotteries.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** No, I'm talking about—

**Mr Marshall:** You got it a little bit mixed up—a completely different agency.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** Anyway, back to it.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** As I said—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** At least they're awake, Mr Speaker. They picked up on it. But the situation is that these are public sector employees and, as things presently stand, there is no suggestion at all that anything is going to be happening any time soon. So, when a decision is made, if a decision is made, I am sure that communications will be made with any affected individual.

#### **SEAFORD RAIL LINE**

**Mr PISONI (Unley) (15:02):** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. What was the outcome of the minister's investigation into the use of asbestos in the new junction buildings on the Seaford line, and has the asbestos been removed? On 28 January, the minister made public statements, and I quote:

We're certainly looking to investigate who is responsible for this asbestos being present and making sure that we're pursuing the full criminal and civil sanctions that might be available to the state.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Minister for Housing and Urban Development) (15:02):** I thank the member for Unley for his question. I did say that we would be looking to investigate. It wasn't the royal 'we'; it was 'we' as in government, and I wasn't investigating myself; it was the department that was doing it. They have been undertaking that process, and they have been doing it both between themselves and also with the contractor and SafeWork SA.

My understanding is that they are finalising the recommendations about how that is to be treated. It doesn't necessarily mean that that material will need to be removed. As we made clear to the media at the time, this was part of the subfloor of the facilities which were deemed to have had the materials installed with—

*Mr Pisoni interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Yes, you've had your chance to ask your question. If you didn't frame it properly, then you should do your homework and make a better—

*Mr Pisoni interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is warned for the second time.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Gee, you're getting out of control, aren't you? It's not going well for you, is it? The second question for the week with two minutes to go—that's pretty average. As I was saying, these investigations have been ongoing between the department and SafeWork, and they are between them determining the best course of action for the treatment of this asbestos.

#### STATE ADMINISTRATION CENTRE

**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:04):** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, or the Treasurer, whichever one happy to take it. Is settlement on the State Administration Centre still expected to occur prior to 30 June this year, and are there any pending legal proceedings in respect of the sale?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (15:04):** I will have to check the courts list to see if there are any legal proceedings pending, and I will ask the agency. In terms of the settlement period, there is always due diligence to be done by successful purchasers, so I will get a detailed answer for the member and get back to her.

#### KANGAROO ISLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (15:04):** My question is to the Minister for Planning. Can the minister advise why the Commissioner for Kangaroo Island has not complied with the requirement, under part 4 of the Commissioner for Kangaroo Island Act 2014, to prepare and release management plans?

**The Hon. J.R. RAU (Enfield—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice Reform, Minister for Planning, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Child Protection Reform, Minister for the Public Sector, Minister for Consumer and Business Services, Minister for the City of Adelaide) (15:05):** I thank the honourable member for the question and I would like to acknowledge, in fact, that the commissioner is with us today. The commissioner is doing an excellent job and, if the member for Goyder would like to join us for a biscuit and a cup of tea, we might even be able to have a chat about that. I do have some Monte Carlos, which were purchased for various reasons, and they are—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Has the minister finished?

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** I can keep going if that would help. Would it help?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** I don't understand there to be an explicit time limit imposed upon the commissioner about the production of management plans. I do recall one afternoon, or an evening I think it was, where we were in Parndana and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition bobbed up. It was lovely to be there with her, but she kept interjecting from the back, 'Come on, show us your management plan. Come on, you've got a secret management plan.' I said, 'There is no secret management plan.' 'Yes, there is. Come on, show us the secret plan. Show us your secret plan.' I said, 'There is no plan.' I hope now, some 18 months later when there is still no plan out there, that the deputy leader appreciates—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is warned for the second time for the second time.

**The Hon. J.R. RAU:** —how honest I was that afternoon in Parndana, and we look forward to having our first plan.

*Ministerial Statement*

### **ELECTRONIC MONITORING ENHANCEMENTS**

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Minister for Housing and Urban Development) (15:07):** I seek leave to table a ministerial statement made in the other place by the minister for—

**The SPEAKER:** It doesn't need leave. You might tell your ministerial staff that, one of them in particular.

*Grievance Debate*

### **RIVERLAND DENTAL SERVICES**

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:07):** Today, I rise to speak about changes to dental service clinics in the Riverland and what appears to be just another centralisation of services in regional South Australia. Yesterday, I received a letter from the executive director of SA Dental Service stating that SA Dental Service clinics in the Riverland would be closed at the end of 2016 and amalgamated into a new Riverland oral health centre to be located at the site of the Riverland General Hospital.

The specific clinics to be closed will be the Berri School Dental Clinic, the Loxton School Dental Clinic, the Renmark School Dental Clinic and the Berri Community Dental Clinic. The letter goes on to say that these changes are a part of a process of upgrading and consolidating South Australia's public dental infrastructure to ensure that it complies with contemporary models of care and relevant standards, and provides a suitable environment for clients and staff.

This is all very well and good, and I appreciate the significant investment in our dental care facilities, but what concerns me once again is the centralisation of these services, or the consolidation, as the state government often likes to call it. We have seen it happen with our health facilities following the \$36 million upgrade of the Riverland General Hospital in Berri. For example, surgery at Renmark has all but completely disappeared, wound back and moved to Berri.

The major upgrades to our dental services are vital and well overdue, but why do we have to reduce and close services in some of our other towns? Is there not room for upgrades in facilities in these smaller services to complement the new Riverland oral health centre in Berri? It is not as if we do not have the population to utilise these services. The wait for a public dental service appointment in the Riverland once hit more than two years.

The Riverland has one of the state's most ageing populations, it is an ideal destination for retirees and it has been successfully marketed as such in recent years. With some distance between the Riverland towns, one of the main challenges we face is the lack of public transport options, particularly in the Riverland and Mallee. They are virtually non-existent. Many of the elderly citizens rely on council-run medical buses to get them to appointments and the demand for this is extremely high.

What we are now seeing is more centralisation of dental services, with those that are currently in Renmark and Loxton, which take appointments for children, to be moved to Berri. Parents in Loxton and Renmark who are working full-time will somehow need to find a way to get their children

to Berri for a dental appointment in 2017. Do not get me wrong: I welcome this new oral health centre in the Riverland. It will be state-of-the-art with four surgeries for undergraduate students. However, I do not see the need to centralise services, particularly when the demand is high and there is a distinct lack of public transport options in the Riverland.

The last thing we want to do is to further isolate families who are already struggling with the cost of living and who may be unable to afford that travel from Loxton to Berri. Obviously, the recent Save the Children report which was released on Mother's Day revealed that raising children in regional South Australia, particularly in the Riverland and Mallee, is as tough as it gets anywhere in South Australia.

One of the alarming statistics that has just been revealed under the Australian Research Centre statistics—and this survey was conducted for the first time in 25 years—is that one in nine children between the age of five and 14 has never been to the dentist and 25 per cent of children under the age of 10 have untreated decay. What this is saying is that people who are isolated are at a social disadvantage.

The people of regional South Australia continue to see centralisation models, particularly under this government which is a centralist government. It has no regard for people who are doing it tough, who have to travel and who have low incomes, particularly those who have to travel significant distance. They have to take time off work and, in some cases, that reduces pay. Having to travel long distances deters people from actually visiting the dentist, just the same as visiting the doctor.

Regional South Australia will be the beneficiary of one new dental facility, but the strategy around supporting small regional communities has again been put on the backburner and we see another centralised model by this government, which does not care about regional South Australia.

#### **NURSING AND MIDWIFERY EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

**Ms COOK (Fisher) (15:13):** At the Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards Gala Dinner on Friday 6 May, which I attended with the member for Elder and the Minister for Health, six individual nurses, one midwife and a nursing team were acknowledged and celebrated for their exceptional contribution to their profession, to their patients and to the South Australian community more broadly. With more than 30,000 nurses and midwives in South Australia, these individuals stand out as exemplars of excellence in practice and leadership.

All nurses and midwives play a vital role in the delivery of high standards of health care, responding to the changing needs of our communities and looking at new and innovative ways to provide the quality of health care South Australians expect and deserve. Nurses and midwives make a difference on a daily basis in an extraordinary range of settings. This year 19 individual nurses and midwives and three nursing teams were shortlisted by the selection panel as finalists in the eight award categories. Winners of the awards were as follows:

- Jane Keeley—Excellence in Practice: Registered Nurse. Jane is the Aboriginal Primary Health Care Manager, Mid North Community Health at Port Pirie, Country Health SA Local Health Network. Jane's role includes planning and implementing primary health care services to achieve continuity and quality of care across the Mid North. Jane is an inclusive practitioner.
- Alexander Stewart—Excellence in Practice: Enrolled Nurse. Alex works in the Noarlunga Hospital, Southern Adelaide Local Health Network. He and his family have been close friends of mine for about the past 25 years, so this win was really sweet. Alex completed a TAFE course as a mature age student in 2003, following 30 years as a boilermaker—a fantastic transition which sees him now as a highly regarded resource person, role model and educator.
- Merridee Seiboth—Excellence in Practice: Registered Midwife. She is the Director of Nursing and Midwifery at the Loxton Hospital Complex, Country Health SALHN.
- Vanessa Browne—Excellence in Practice: Aboriginal Nurse/Midwife. She is the rural and remote pathways coordinator at the Glenside campus for Country Health SA Local Health Network. Vanessa is currently working in the position of pathways coordinator for

the rural and remote mental health services responsible for allocating Country Health SA patients to the most appropriate bedded surface on a priority basis. The successful outcomes for ATSI mental health patients depends, in large part, on this coordination with the 'right' family members and the seamless journey into and out of metro services, dispelling fear and enabling voluntary admission. It is such a vital role.

- Elisa Gardiner—Excellence in Leadership. She is the clinical services coordinator at the Royal Adelaide, Central Adelaide Local Health Network, and she is currently in the neurosurgery team.
- Vanessa Tilbrook—Excellence in Innovation in Education. She is a midwifery education facilitator at the Women's and Children's. She uses puppets to achieve a positive learning environment, where she challenges her learners to 'feel' the experience and develop lifelong learning strategies and knowledge and skills, a really interesting concept.
- Pamela Taylor—Excellence in Innovation in Clinical Research. She is the clinical research manager and nurse practitioner at the Repat in the Southern Adelaide Diabetes and Endocrine Services. She has been there for over 20 years and is a real leader in her field.
- The one award that really struck me was given to the Hamley Bridge Memorial Hospital nursing staff team. They won the Excellence in Person Centred Care: Team Award. On 25 November 2016, when Hamley Bridge was directly hit by the Pinery bushfires, the courageous nursing staff and other staff at the hospital, who were at work on that catastrophic day, achieved the most remarkable feats. In doing so, they ensured the safety and wellbeing of the elderly residents and visitors. They single-handedly saved the whole facility by fighting the fires. They should be commended.
- Five Premier's Nursing and Midwifery Scholarships were won. It is far too much information for me to read out, but I just want to read out the names and congratulate them: Louise Dewolf, David Hains, Liz Rankin, Suzanne Sharrad and Dana Wright.

Today, I met a few of the award winners at the function that we hosted for International Nurses Day. I can tell you that everybody who received awards and scholarships is extremely excited to be able to travel overseas with some of these scholarships and bring back some best practice models from elsewhere, but also to export their ideas to other countries and set up a really collaborative approach to developing our healthcare system in South Australia.

All the finalists should be congratulated for excelling in their field. I am so proud to be a nurse and represent them here in Parliament House. Congratulations to all recipients.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hear, hear! Member for Hartley.

#### **MAGILL TRAINING CENTRE SITE**

**Mr TARZIA (Hartley) (15:17):** Today, I bring to the house's attention a significant local issue in my community, namely, that concerning the development of the former Magill Training Centre site. This proposed development continues to raise significant concerns within the local community, including the residents of Magill.

I attended a recent community meeting with local residents and community leaders, including the member for Morialta, on Thursday 12 May at the Rostrevor College Pavilion, and it was at times a loud meeting, let me tell you. Many residents were rightly furious about the arrogance of the current government and its failure to address the challenges which this proposed development will present. Over 115 residents attended. I note that neither the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Transport nor the Minister for Road Safety attended the meeting. The only gentleman, in fact, who attended on behalf of the government was Mr Paul Gelston, a very capable man who I am sure will have reported to his minister the severe levels of concern in the area.

It was back in 2009 that the state government decided to flog off the site. Since then, since 2011 and 2012, hundreds of residents have attended an array of public meetings, putting forward various valid propositions. In the state government's complete arrogance, a ministerial DPA was

released right near Christmas 2013, ignoring most of the community's feedback. Land division was submitted with the local Adelaide Hills Council in July 2015.

In a joint venture between Starfish Developments and Devine Limited, we have now learnt that the DAC has approved close to 400 developments at the site. I note that a number of regulated trees, even eight significant trees, are proposed to be removed. An array of issues were raised at the meeting, as you can understand, notably the inappropriate increase to near 400 homes from 250. Whilst the government has already allowed that, it does have the power to change other aspects which affect the development.

Before I was elected as the member for Hartley, I lobbied, and now as the member for Hartley I continue to lobby for improvements to our area to make it the best that it can be. The state government has the budget, and not only the budget but the capacity, to improve the transport solutions surrounding the site. These include cycling infrastructure and public transport infrastructure, as well as improvement of key roads and intersections that have issues now, even before the traffic of 400 dwellings hits the area.

As reiterated by the feedback received from local residents in the local traffic survey I recently sent out—and I thank the hundreds of residents who sent in their surveys—the increase of 400 dwellings to the site will increase traffic by thousands of movements every day. Various intersections will be negatively impacted by the development, including Glen Stuart Road and Moules Road, Moules Road and St Bernards Road, and Magill Road and Norton Summit Road. Additionally, roads such as Koongarra Avenue, Edward Street and surrounding streets will have dramatically increased volumes.

Along with the member for Morialta I wrote to the Minister for Transport in December 2015 to alert him to these issues. The minister must now escalate these concerns. With the state government to receive over \$50 million from the sale of the site it simply cannot bank a tonne of cash from developers and ignore the concerns of my residents. The state government must implement a road traffic management plan, it must allocate funding for these problem intersections and roads. I will continue to lobby the state government on this issue, because my residents demand and deserve action to be taken.

### **MARION BOWLING CLUB**

**Ms DIGANCE (Elder) (15:21):** I rise today to speak about the Marion Bowling Club. On the evening of Sunday 1 May, I was privileged to attend the Marion Bowling Club's annual presentation evening. Gathered that evening for an amazing dinner were over 100 people, which included members, family and friends. I was delighted to have the great honour of presenting the annual Volunteer of the Year Award that I sponsor.

This year the award was presented to an extremely worthy and outstanding recipient, Robert Fitzell. Robert was chosen by his fellow members because, I am told, he does everything required at the club without question. He is not a bowler, but can be relied upon to see something and do it. He is a worthy and humble recipient and, as such, it was a delight to present to him as I could see he was deeply moved. Congratulations.

It is wonderful to see volunteers who are so important to our local clubs being recognised by their peers for the great work they do. Volunteers know how to build community, and they are the glue that keeps these networks flourishing. I am told that Marion Bowling Club is one of the largest, largest and strongest bowling clubs in the metropolitan Adelaide area, having been established back in 1946. It is situated on busy Sturt Road at the entrance to the Marion Sporting Complex. It is a highly successful bowling club with facilities very well utilised by the general community, catering for 120 seniors on Friday evenings and serving meals.

It is estimated that 17,000 to 20,000 people attend the facility annually. The club is served by an active and involved committee with a passion for success in both fellowship and competition. The club fields many pennant teams and hosts many national and state championship events, including both the men's and ladies' country carnivals, the Victorian carnival, and also the under 18s competitions. In one of my recent newsletters to the electorate I was pleased to highlight the success

of Mason and Preston, the club's youngest members, who excelled in the recent Victoria versus South Australia under 18s competition.

The club has nearly 190 members and another 200 night owls players participating in social bowls on Tuesday and Wednesday nights. Members' age groups vary from secondary students through to retirees. The more serious bowlers also participate in country and interstate tournaments at the club. During the summer season between September and March/April, opposition members visit the club for competition on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Like any active club and active committee, they are always seeking to improve and upgrade, maintain and repair the club rooms and facilities to be of the highest standard for their members and the community. Because the club membership is predominantly seniors, the club is always on the lookout and actively applying for funds to improve facilities to make the club more comfortable for its demographic.

Currently, the funds being sought are focused on purchasing and installing step-up poles to assist elderly players to step up from the greens to the surrounding area, a retractable awning to provide shade in summer and shelter in winter for both players and spectators, and a security screen for the bar in the club rooms. In the latter part of last year, I was pleased to advise the club that on behalf of the South Australian government I was able to congratulate them on being awarded \$17,646 to assist in installation of solar panels. Marion Bowling Club is a wonderful and active club, doing and providing amazing opportunities in my area. I commend them for their vision and energy and wish them well in the future.

### ROAD FUNDING

**Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (15:25):** Last week, I had the pleasure of twice travelling the Tod Highway in the seat of Flinders on Eyre Peninsula, that distance of road between Karkoo and Kyancutta that I have spoken about often in this place. On both occasions, I was visiting the town of Wudinna; the first was to join our shadow minister for local government, Steven Griffiths (member for Goyder), to take part in a meeting he was having with representatives from the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association and councils from right across Eyre Peninsula.

The second visit I had to Wudinna was on Sunday last, and it was an absolute delight to be able to join 100 year-old Maurie Bartley at his birthday in the Wudinna sports club. He was joined by family, friends and residents from all over Eyre Peninsula, giving him their best wishes. I was pleased to see on driving that road that preparatory work for the much anticipated shoulder sealing had begun, on a stretch just south of Lock.

I was aware that this work was to begin, that funds had been committed and was pleased to see that work had started. What concerned me a little was that when I was in Wudinna on Thursday the Mayor of Wudinna raised concerns with me about ongoing funding for the shoulder sealing. I indicated that I had seen that it had already begun and she said that was funding that had already been committed and they were a bit cautious about the ongoing funding to see the job completed.

Earlier this week, having visited Wudinna, I read a press release from our federal member, the member for Grey, Rowan Ramsey. It states:

The Member for Grey Rowan Ramsey is disgusted that the \$800K from the Federal Government for upgrading the Tod Highway has been refused by the State Government. 'It's unbelievable really,' Mr Ramsay said. 'The Tod Highway as part of the state network is 100% State Government responsibility and for the want of a 20% top-up they [the state government] have refused a virtual gift...They could have spent a million dollars on the road for a net cost of \$200,000.'

He goes on quite rightly to say, and I have mentioned this many times:

The Tod Highway is a major transport route and is vitally important to the most important industry in the region, agriculture.

Mr Ramsey had announced federal funding in July last year and since that time has tried to work constructively with the state government because he believed eventually they would come to the table as the deal was too good to pass up. Now it just seems that the state government does not seem to care about rural South Australia.



For Mr Ramsey, it is an enormous challenge to quarantine the funds for the future, given that the end of the financial year is looming, as is the upcoming federal election. It has not only left the Tod Highway on the table but also a similar road in Goyder, the Kadina-Kulpara road, on Yorke Peninsula. In fact, the member for Goyder asked the question of the Minister for Transport yesterday relating to that road.

The minister's response was that it was one of a list of projects which was put to the government as part of a \$25 million roads package some time ago from the previous federal assistant minister. Our Minister for Transport said that what the commitment overlooked is that it was a redirection of \$25 million which was to be spent by South Australia as one of four basin states in the Murray-Darling Basin for water initiatives. Redirecting it to this purpose would necessarily trigger a readjustment of our GST revenues.

The minister went on to say why the particular road project that the member for Goyder raised was not funded:

That's because it was part of a larger package of road funding projects which, rather than ending up with an 80:20 federal/state funding contribution, would have in fact ended up as basically a 100 per cent state funding contribution. Notwithstanding that, my commitment, as I have expressed to the federal minister...remains. I will continue working with him; the federal department...as well as even regional mayors, if that helps, to try to deliver these projects in a way which doesn't penalise South Australia...

On the back of those comments, I look forward to working with the minister to deliver these road upgrades across South Australia, particularly the Tod Highway on Eyre Peninsula, for which I have lobbied for many years in this parliament and in many other places. I say enough with the smoke and mirrors. It is time for this government to demonstrate that it really does govern for all South Australians and commit to making our country roads wider and safer.

#### **BRIGGS, PROF. FREDA**

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (15:30):** I rise to take the opportunity to recognise the contribution of Emeritus Professor Freda Briggs AO, educator, author, scholar and ambassador. Described by her family as having been propelled onto the world stage through her fierce intellect and determination to change the understanding of protecting children from injustice, Freda Briggs worked towards her vision to provide a safer and more caring world for children.

Professor Briggs worked in child protection as a police officer in London before undertaking studies to become a teacher. On migrating to Australia with her husband, she began developing curriculum at the State College of Victoria. Her journey then brought her to Adelaide, where she rose to the position of Professor of Childhood Development at the University of South Australia. The inaugural Dean of the Institute of Early Childhood and Family Studies at the University of South Australia, Freda established a world-first, multiprofessional course in child protection, assisting universities in the US, Hamburg and Brazil to create similar courses.

Her significant contribution to the development of South Australia's Keeping Safe child protection curriculum, taught in our state's public and Catholic schools and preschools and recognised nationally and internationally, is widely acknowledged. The UniSA website tells us that across her career she worked as a consultant/adviser, teacher/educator and policy development expert in areas as wideranging as providing advice on how foster parents can best support children who have been victims of abuse, right through to advising international governments on the best systems to support early childhood teaching and learning.

She was an expert witness in child abuse trials, advised the Scouts, the Christian Brothers, the Australian Defence Force cadets, and the Anglican and Catholic churches on the development of child protection protocols and guidelines, contributed to Senate inquiries and addressed the Australian parliament.

Freda Briggs was the inaugural recipient of the Australian Humanitarian Award and in 2000 became the first woman to be appointed Senior Australian of the Year for her pioneering work for child protection education and the protection of children. She also received the national Centenary Award, for outstanding services to the nation, and in 2005 became an Officer of the Order of Australia, recognised for 'service to raising community and professional awareness of child abuse

and neglect, and as an advocate for effective child safety education programs.' Freda Briggs wrote more than 20 books on child protection and consulted to UNICEF and the World Health Organisation.

Recently, Professor Briggs wrote a submission to a federal Senate inquiry into the harm caused to children by online pornography, recommending that the child protection school curriculum, which South Australia implements, be compulsory across Australia. She was adamant that 'children need to know what constitutes wrong behaviour and to whom it should be reported', and that 'parent education is essential, given that most exposure to pornography and most sexual abuse occurs in the family setting'. University of South Australia Vice Chancellor, Professor David Lloyd, said:

Whether it be in advocating for children and the protection of children or championing the rights of older Australians to continue to work, achieve and be properly valued—Freda was there.

Her career as a researcher and educator and a champion and protector of all children, but especially vulnerable children, has been an inspiration and in many ways she was an international treasure. She was the champion everyone wants on their side—dedicated, intelligent and brave—a force to be reckoned with.

The University of South Australia has established the Emeritus Professor Freda Briggs AO Memorial Fund to honour one of its most influential educators and to continue her legacy by supporting higher degree scholarships for child protection in law, education, or social work. Vale, Emeritus Professor Freda Briggs AO, champion of vulnerable children.

### *Bills*

## **DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 23 March 2016.)

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Chaffey, are you the lead speaker on this piece of legislation?

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:36):** Yes, I am. I rise to speak on the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015 and note that I am the lead speaker for the opposition on this bill in the house. The bill has been many years in the making, and the proposed amendments to the current act are the greatest widespread reforms in the state's animal welfare laws in more than 20 years.

Approximately two-thirds of South Australians are dog and cat owners, meaning that there are nearly 3,000 dogs registered in the state. Whilst the vast majority do the right thing and care for their pets, there are irresponsible pet owners who, essentially, provide a broad risk to the community on a number of levels. The mistreatment of animals is clearly a threat to the welfare of those animals, but it is also a threat to other animals, both domesticated animals and native fauna. Humane treatment of all animals is a shared value of civilised societies. Irresponsible pet ownership also impacts on the amenity of local communities, the natural environment, and the local ecosystems we rely on.

Accordingly, measures which promote the proper care of animals, such as the Dog and Cat Management Act, are well established and broadly supported. To put this into further perspective, the management of dogs and cats in our communities has evolved since the act was introduced in 1995, and I think it is important that the act reflects the changing landscape of the management of pets. The higher number of dogs and cats being euthanased and the illegal practices of puppy and kitten farms are two contributing factors to why it is so important that this act evolves.

Ten thousand dogs and cats are euthanased in South Australia every year. Dogs and cats are an important part of family life, and for the vast majority the welfare of these pets is paramount. However, as is always the way, a small percentage often spoil it for the majority. Some may argue that this bill is a paternalistic measure that impedes the rights of pet owners. It is the Liberal Party's view, on the other hand, that it puts in place necessary and appropriate controls that manage the risk of irresponsible pet ownership without unnecessarily impeding the enjoyment of pet owners. Our view is that this bill is well overdue.

It is also important to note the contribution of the late Hon. Bob Such to animal welfare and to this act. In 2006, Dr Such introduced the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Commercial Breeding of Companion Animals) Amendment Bill 2006 and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2006. Dr Such introduced the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Animal Welfare) Amendment Bill in 2008. He then initiated the select committee on dogs and cats as companion animals, and this was convened in 2012 after tabling the Animal Welfare (Commercial Breeding of Companion Animals) Amendment Bill in November of that year. It was the first step in arriving where we are today with this amended act on the table.

The select committee was established and received input from 124 individuals, 34 organisations, and 10 breeders. The committee reported in July 2013, and 11 key recommendations were made. Some of the key recommendations were to improve welfare standards in the breeding of companion animals, increase purchaser confidence in the source of their companion animals, reduce the number of surrendered animals and, by extension, euthanasia numbers, and increase public awareness of animal welfare issues and owner responsibilities. I acknowledge the quality bipartisan work of the members of this committee.

Despite extensive calls from the community urging this current Weatherill government to act on the recommendations of the select committee, no action had occurred during the period that followed the recommendations. In the context of the government's lack of action, the Hon. Michelle Lensink in another place introduced the Animal Welfare (Companion Animals) Amendment Bill in September 2014. I understand that the Dog and Cat Management Board was tasked by the government with developing a bill.

A citizens' jury of 35 South Australians was established and undertook consultation in 2015. The jury received advice from animal welfare organisations, local councils, academics, veterinarians and government representatives about issues including, but not limited to, dog attacks, feral cat management, compulsory desexing and the number of cats and dogs euthanased in animal shelters. I am advised that over 1,800 submissions were received. The citizens' jury made the following recommendations:

- firstly, that there be greater coordination of educational programs about responsible pet ownership, including the introduction of an online test;
- legislation to encourage more acceptance of tenants with dogs and cats;
- compulsory desexing of new generations of dogs and cats;
- legislation to restrict the sale of dogs and cats from pet stores;
- a proposal for a trial of a trap, neuter, release project;
- mandatory registration and licensing of dog and cat breeders; and
- a centrally-managed, statewide database for microchip data for dogs and cats.

The proposed trial of a trap, neuter, release project was not supported by the government. The government says it will investigate legislation to restrict the sale of dogs and cats from pet stores and encourage more acceptance of tenants with dogs and cats. I am advised that the other four recommendations are supported by the government.

On 18 November 2015, the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation finally introduced the state government's response to the select committee in the form of a Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015. The bill seeks to amend the Dog and Cat Management Act and make related amendments to the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, the Equal Opportunity Act and the Major Events Act.

The government's bill implements a combination of the select committee's recommendations and the recommendations made by the citizens' jury. There are some differences between the Hon. Michelle Lensink's bill and the government's bill. In summary, they are that the Hon. Michelle Lensink's bill included enforceable standards for the breeding of companion animals by regulation. The government alternatively proposes to implement that through a code of practice currently being developed.

The Hon. Michelle Lensink's bill provided for a licensing scheme for breeders, subject to a range of conditions which could be revoked or suspended. The bill would make it an offence to breed or mate companion animals without a breeder's license. The Hon. Ms Lensink's bill was based on select committee recommendations; however, after the bill was introduced, she consulted with relevant stakeholders and was considering amendments based on this consultation. The government's bill does not include a licensing scheme for breeders; rather, breeders will be required to be registered and adhere to the code of practice.

The Hon. Michelle Lensink's bill required animal welfare organisations to be approved by the minister. The government's bill does not include this; however, mandatory standards for the knowledge, competency and skills of staff would be incorporated into a pet trade code currently being developed. The Hon. Michelle Lensink's bill proposed that the minister provide general exemptions for desexing, registration and so forth. The government's bill allows the Dog and Cat Management Board to provide exemptions through regulation.

The Hon. Ms Lensink's bill proposed to make it illegal to sell an animal unless it was vaccinated and wormed, and the government will require, by regulation, sellers to provide buyers with written information on vaccinations and other treatments given to the animal. The Hon. Michelle Lensink has undertaken consultation following the introduction of the Animal Welfare (Companion Animals) Amendment Bill and following the release of the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015. The honourable member again sought feedback from interested parties.

It is often the role of local councils not only to help mitigate damage through the promotion of responsible pet ownership but to deal with the ramifications when such standards are not met. The capacity of local councils to provide suitable welfare centres for abandoned and/or abused animals is becoming increasingly strained, and sadly many animals are euthanased each year as a consequence of neglect.

In an attempt to reduce these pressures, the Liberal team endorses the proposed amendments to the act put forward in this bill, which will ease the administrative burden placed on councils. In turn, this will reduce the heavy demand on animal shelters, minimise waste and, most importantly, save a significant number of animals from preventable suffering. The proposed changes to registration will remove unnecessary complications in the administration of the act within councils. The new system will encourage dog owners to take active precautions, offering discounts to owners whose pets are both microchipped and desexed.

Additionally, the proposed system will reduce complexities, decreasing the number of registration categories from eight down to two. Any dogs that are not desexed will fall under the non-standard category and their owners will pay higher registration fees. As the mandatory desexing rule comes into effect this will become one category—a 'standard dog'—which is a microchipped and desexed dog, or an exempted dog. This will be a significant step towards simplifying the current system without any cost to its efficiency. Paradoxically, the impracticality of monitoring the training of dogs has rendered the previous rebate for trained dogs ineffective and it is abolished in this bill.

Again, the Liberal Party similarly supports the proposed amendments to sections 5 and 6, which amalgamate dog and cat management. The establishment of a single officer identification and the subsequent abandonment of the requirement of council employees to hold separate authorisation as dog management officers and cat management officers will remove unnecessary administrative barriers for councils in responding to relevant threats.

It is important to remember that the desexing of a domestic animal reaps benefits, not only in controlling populations but through addressing hormone-related nuisance behaviours. The opposition acknowledges the work of the citizens' jury in relation to mandatory desexing, and it is anticipated that the ramifications of this amendment will support a decrease in animal welfare admission rates as well as help to tame the cat overpopulation. Additionally, desexing can prevent hormonal wandering and aggression, creating a safer environment and, importantly, a safer environment for pets.

Although I understand that there will be parties who are concerned about the amendments, it is important to remember that the exemptions will apply through certification by a veterinary surgeon

that certain dog owners can be exempted from desexing their animal, with reasonable allowance made for working dogs, greyhounds and security dogs. Exemptions in relation to specific breeds can also be considered until a certain age.

Regrettably, the existence of cat and puppy farms, interested solely in economic gain at the exploitation of animal welfare, is also an unwanted strain on our society. The government's bill makes it illegal to sell a dog or a cat that a person has bred unless the breeder is registered as a breeder. Registered breeders are required to adhere to a code of practice. In requiring all breeders to be registered with the Dog and Cat Management Board, the proposed amendments allow councils to monitor breeders in the area more effectively, in turn alerting them to any emerging problems.

This provision will enable the government and the community to be aware of where breeders are located, and if an offence is committed prosecution will be facilitated. I am advised that the government intends to implement a statewide breeder database but no time frame has been given. The aim is to stamp out puppy farm operators who are currently difficult to locate as companion animals are often sold in public places and cannot be tracked. Breeder registration revenue will be paid into the Dog and Cat Management Fund and used to administer the breeder registration and conduct compliance activities. The government allows the board to keep a register relating to microchipped and desexed dogs and cats.

The Liberal opposition was looking to amend the legislation to specifically exempt working dogs from being desexed. The government has recognised this concern and has proposed that provisions be included in the regulations. The Dog and Cat Management Board has been working with Livestock SA, the South Australian Working Sheepdog Association and the South Australian Yard Dogs Association to determine an appropriate definition of a working dog. The board has indicated that it prefers the definition used in the Queensland legislation, a definition which I understand is also used in New Zealand.

In 2012, the select committee made the distinction between companion animals and working dogs, and members of that committee were of the understanding that working dogs would not be captured by the proposed regime. The Hon. Michelle Lensink again consulted with the working dog community following the introduction of her bill. Generally, the working dog community was supportive of such a scheme, which would ensure that appropriate checks and balances were in place.

Support was given under the proviso that exemptions would be permitted for desexing and, once implemented, would be workable. Livestock SA, the South Australian Working Sheepdog Association and the South Australian Yard Dogs Association all confirmed extensive involvement in formulating an appropriate definition of working dogs and fully supported the Queensland definition. The Hon. Robert Brokenshire tabled amendments in February which will provide full exemption for working dogs. The definition of 'working dogs' was not supported by the working dog community over the definition formulated by the board, in our view, and I understand that the board does not support the Hon. Robert Brokenshire's amendments.

The Liberal Party has considered both alternatives and resolved to support the use of the Queensland definition. We are also of the view that the issue is one that is appropriately dealt with in the legislation rather than the regulations, so I foreshadow an amendment to that effect. Working dogs are not an area where practices are rapidly evolving such that a definition could become rapidly redundant, so we believe that a statutory definition is both appropriate and workable.

The government's bill includes increasing the expiations and penalties. The Dog and Cat Management Board is advocating, with the support of the Local Government Association, to remove expiations and penalties and place them within the regulations. This, it is argued, would allow the board to update them every three to five years rather than having to convince parliament to reopen the act and review them.

The Dog and Cat Management Board has suggested that there is an option to give power under the bill to increase the cost of fines through regulation. It is suggesting that at least a rise of CPI annually would be suitable. The minister has said that he has no preference either way as to whether there is the power in the bill to increase fines without having to open the bill each time he increases the fines.

The proposed increases to maximum fines for offences under the bill have increased substantially, due to the bill not being reviewed for the last 20 years. The proposed increase in fines is on par with fines for similar offences in other states. Again, the Liberal Party considers that fines should appropriately be in the bill so that they are amenable to parliamentary oversight. The Liberal Party has filed amendments which prescribe the maximum fines, as suggested, without CPI increases. That will allow the bill to be reviewed every five years when any further fine increases are considered.

While the opposition regrets the unnecessary delay in this legislation coming before the parliament, we acknowledge the work done by many stakeholders to make this the best bill it could be. We trust that in the years ahead we will see the benefit of this bill in terms of better treatment of domesticated animals and native fauna, the amenity of local communities and the protection of our natural environment.

Following the release of the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015, the Hon. Michelle Lensink again sought feedback from interested and affected parties, and some parties did express concern regarding the following:

- increased expiation fees, including 'dog wandering at large' (currently \$80, draft proposal \$315) and other administrative offences. The Liberal Party has been in the media arguing against the increase to wandering dogs and, as a result, it has been reduced to \$210;
- working dogs and other service dogs should not be included in compulsory desexing;
- some cats groups and interested parties indicated opposition against compulsory desexing and microchipping;
- regulations have not yet been drafted; and
- no allocation of funding for a statewide microchipping and desexing register.

The Dog and Cat Management Board also suggested that there was an option to give power under the bill to increase the cost of fines through regulation. They were suggesting that a rise by at least CPI annually would be suitable.

The proposed increases to maximum fines for offences under the bill have increased substantially due to the bill not having been reviewed for the last 20 years. In fact, through the opposition and the community's concern, the state government revised its initial fines proposal and, in its amendment bill, the proposed increases in fines are, we believe, now on par with fines for similar offences in other states.

My contribution has reflected that there has been significant consultation. The Hon. Michelle Lensink in another place has done a fine job. She did take some maternity leave during the consultation on the bill and at the time of this bill being introduced into the upper house, and we thank the Hon. Stephen Wade for stepping in to manage the passage of the bill through the Legislative Council.

It is a sensible amendment bill. The Dog and Cat Management Act is long overdue for amendment. It has been 20 years since we have seen any form of movement in regard to the management of dogs and cats. We cannot continue to see the massive numbers of dogs and cats that are being euthanased in South Australia. The dog and cat breeders must be held to account. We are seeing too much piracy.

To my mind, the crossbreeding is very scary. Dogs and cats are being purpose-bred, in some cases for fighting or for breed heights and sizes, for hide shapes and colours, head shapes and all sorts. The by-product of that is many unwanted animals and many animals that are deformed or misshapen and really should not be part of today's society. I know a number of members would like to make a contribution. I look forward to that, but I would like to see the reasonably smooth passage of the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill.

**Ms COOK (Fisher) (15:57):** I rise to speak in favour of the government's bill to amend the Dog and Cat Management Act. Throughout the seat of Fisher, we have a number of very committed animal activists and fauna rescue officers, none more vital to our wildlife than the amazing Bev

Langley. Bev operates Minton Farm in Cherry Gardens which I have spoken of in this place previously.

Minton Farm has been caring for and rehabilitating sick animals since 1992. On the goodwill of the community, grants and volunteer time, Minton Farm reaches out, shelters and provides veterinary assistance to animals from right across the state. Bev will tell you herself that one of the biggest problems she faces is wildlife maimed and damaged by feral wild animals, namely, cats. My late mother was a collector of strays. My late father made friends with the local birds and took great pleasure in gaining their trust.

We had a house full of tea towels and pens and we always used greeting cards from a variety of worthy animal-related causes. I was indoctrinated into loving and being kind to animals. We were taught to respect and be kind, and it started a lifelong commitment to protecting our furred and feathered friends which has seen me take up a patron role recently with Labor for Animals. I look forward to influencing policy via this group, along with the member for Little Para, who is also a patron.

I am especially proud to support this bill because it continues the very important work of the former member for Fisher, the late Dr Bob Such, which was pursued throughout his entire political career. Dr Such was committed to the protection and safety of all animals. He often spoke in this house in favour of the good work this government was doing to improve the welfare of animals. I know that Dr Such spoke passionately about the religious slaughter of animals in 2011, rising to support the Minister for Agriculture's legislative amendments that ensured that all animals slaughtered in South Australian slaughterhouses were stunned prior to being killed.

Dr Such was also very passionate about the protection of companion animals and appalled at the growing trend of the puppy and kitten farms in South Australia. His work on the 2013 Select Committee on Dogs and Cats as Companion Animals was instrumental in informing the bill that is before us today. In many ways, the recommendations of the select committee form the basis for the reforms outlined in the government's bill, but in many ways, too, this bill goes further than the select committee's recommendations. The three key reforms of this bill are: mandatory desexing, microchipping, and breeder registration. These same themes can be found in the recommendations of the select committee.

The government believes there are good policy reasons for the desexing of both dogs and cats. This would help reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats that are euthanased every year, clearly. In addition, we know that desexing also decreases the likelihood of some nuisance behaviours, such as hormone-driven aggression and wandering. The select committee also recommended that dogs and cats be microchipped, and I am pleased to see that this bill proposes that.

As for the breeder registration scheme in this bill, I note that the beginnings of this scheme can be found in the select committee's recommendations for breeders' licences. The select committee recommended that breeders' licence numbers appear in all advertising for dogs and cats and highlighted the importance of education about dog and cat ownership, particularly around responsible pet ownership. This amendment bill proposes that dog or cat breeders selling animals need to register as a breeder with the Dog and Cat Management Board. A breeder registration number will be required at the point of sale in addition to the animal's microchip number.

Like Dr Such before me, I want this government, and indeed our entire society, to do everything in its power to improve conditions for dogs and cats and promote good dog and cat ownership. On behalf of the constituents of Fisher and for the Hon. Dr Such, I therefore strongly commend this bill to the house.

**Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (16:02):** I will be very brief. I know that there will be several speakers from both sides of the house who will make very fulsome and informed contributions. I appreciate that they are doing so on behalf of themselves and also on behalf of our respective sides in this chamber. I will not go into great detail myself, other than to say that I do support the bill and the key issues with regard to the registration of animals and of breeders of microchipping and desexing, unless there is a good reason not to. Of course, one of those good reasons is if a person is a registered and responsible breeder.

What I want to talk about for just a few minutes is the other very good reason not to, that is, with regard to working animals. As a member of parliament representing country and outback areas, I know extremely well how important working dogs are to primary production businesses. I think it is entirely appropriate that working dogs have been excluded from the requirement for automatic desexing. I would like to thank the many people in my electorate who approached me on this over the last few years that this has been dealt with by this parliament, this issue in various forms, whether it is in a bill, in committee or in broader discussion.

It would not have been practical at all to require people on farms or stations to desex their working dogs if they were not registered breeders. These people have no commercial interest in being a registered breeder, but they have a very sensible practical interest in being a responsible breeder on a very small scale for their own and for their neighbours' appropriate purposes.

By that, I mean that the people I know, surrounding where I live and also throughout my electorate, work pretty responsibly with each other. If there is a good dog and a good bitch and they are a good match for each other, and if there is a need for another generation of working dogs in that region, they get together. It is not a moneymaking venture, it is not a puppy farm. It is not a way to try to benefit in any way from the breeding of animals, other than the fact that you and your neighbour might need one or two more dogs and that if you get together and work it out in a very sensible and responsible way you can benefit.

To be quite blunt, the dogs will benefit as well because these dogs are bred to work and they are better off if they work. In a home/primary production business environment, where they are treated well and fed well, kept warm and dry and trained to do the job they are intended to do, through their genetic background, that is entirely appropriate. I support the bill. I thank other speakers who will make comments on the bill, and I highlight how important it is that working dogs are dealt with responsibly.

**The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton) (16:05):** I will follow the example of the member for Stuart and be very brief as well. It was one of the pleasures of my life—and that is not overstating the fact—to be on the select committee that did some work with companion animals, chaired very, very well by the now Minister for Education. I am very much pleased that the recommendations that came out from this particular committee have found their way into the bill we now have before us.

I also want to pay tribute to the work that has been undertaken over many years by the Dog and Cat Management Board. They are very good people and very sound thinkers, and they know a lot about all aspects of animals and husbandry, but in particular about companion animals. So I put on the record the outstanding work they have done over an extended period of time in this particular area.

Like you, Deputy Speaker, I am a dog lover. I was once very offended that when you looked at our dogs—who happen to be Cavalier King Charles spaniels—and you said, 'They're not dogs, you would hardly call them a dog.' Of course they are, they are the most beautiful dogs. We walk them down the beach, every day they get down the beach. I get there mostly on weekends but occasionally take them down when Annabel goes to work on Tuesday or Wednesday mornings for a short period of time—and one of the greatest ways to meet people is by meeting other people who own dogs down at the beach. You get to know their dogs first, and then after a period of time—

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** Well, no; that does not occur. You get to know these people down the beach and then they will say, 'Oh, that happens to be Annabel, Moby's mum.'

*Ms Digance interjecting:*

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** Your dog, that's right. You know the mums and dads of these dogs before you get to know the people's names. You get to meet the dogs first and then you actually meet them. It is a great atmosphere down there, where dogs are socialised.

However, as the member for Chaffey interjected ever so slightly, from time to time there are some problems. You see some dogs down there that you know should not be let off the lead; they are scary. They scare me and they scare some of the dogs that are there, and, quite rightly, these dogs should not be let off the lead. Sometimes they are, and they do create a problem. I think these



are dogs that need to be the subject of some form of—how do you say this in a nice way—temperament control.

We know that temperament control can be done through neutering and, as I understand it, it is also dependent on the stage at which the dogs have been neutered. With Moby, our most beautiful Cavalier King Charles—and he is a king of a dog—we did not desex him very early. We thought we might be able to breed from him, and his sons and daughters, if he ever had them, would have been beautiful. We got him desexed much later and we wish now that we had done it a lot earlier because it would have been a lot better for him.

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** Did he get a say?

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** No, he did not get a say. I would let him off the lead, and when he got a sniff I can tell you that he could run three kilometres down the road to get back to that young, attractive female dog. It would nearly kill me, trying to go and get him. So we wish we had done that earlier, but not only for that reason in particular: I understand that some of the health benefits of an early neutering, if you are not going to breed them, can be most beneficial for those dogs.

I am not an expert in this area, but from the limited information that I have—and I can tell members right now that I have visited the Dog and Cat Management Board meeting a couple of times—and my understanding is that not only are there health benefits, it will also improve the temperament of dogs.

With cats, it is a different matter. I will state here that I am not a cat lover. I can tolerate them and I know that will probably create a problem with some people. I do not like cats, but I respect that some people do and I respect and support their right to have a cat. I have had lots of cats during my life but I much prefer dogs, but I also believe and have always believed that the desexing of cats should be mandatory, as it should be for dogs.

I know that from an environmental perspective, it is more likely that cats will create a greater level of damage than dogs ever will. When we were growing up, mum would say, 'Where are you going?' I would say, 'I'm going down to the beach, I'm going to the oval, and I'll be home before the sun sets.' Well, in those days we used to let the dogs out, be home for dinner, and they would always be home for dinner. Life has changed; that does not happen anymore. Dogs are under a greater level of control than they have ever been at any other time of our lives.

The difference is that cats are not necessarily in that category. There are responsible cat owners; even those who allow their cats outside would believe they are responsible cat owners. However, I think we need to manage the impact of cats, and the management of cats, in a different way from the way we have in the past, and that is why I support a move to make sure that we do that through restricting the manner by which they continue to breed.

I support this bill and I think it has been a long time coming. I heard the member for Chaffey's comments about exemptions for working dogs. I support that, but I also understand that we will be accepting the positions that were put in the upper house, and that is already in place. It is not really a worry at all now, and that makes a lot of sense. I think this bill is a quantum leap forward.

I congratulate all those who have been involved with it. I congratulate the parliament for the support that I understand this bill is going to receive. I also congratulate the leadership that has been shown by the Dog and Cat Management Board on this issue and lots of issues before this and those that they will be putting to government in the future. I apologise to anyone who is going to misinterpret the words that I said about cats. I hope it is not being misinterpreted. Just because I do not own a cat does not mean that I do not respect a person's right to own a cat.

*Mr Pederick interjecting:*

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** What? Dig a deeper hole? When you compare them to dogs there is no comparison, in my view. This bill is not just about dogs, it is about both dogs and cats, and it is a good move and a good step forward. I am sure this act will continue to evolve over time when people see that the changes that are being made by this bill are making, not even a jot of difference to their ownership but an improvement, and that will give us the mechanism by which we can go forward even further, if that is the determination of this place. With those words, thank you very much.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett) (16:13):** Dog and cat management has obviously been part of my life for many years as a humble veterinarian out there trying to do his best for his clients. To be part of the select committee into dog and cat management was a great pleasure, along with the member for Mawson, the member for Port Adelaide, the member for Hammond, the then member for Mitchell and, of course, the late member for Fisher the Hon. Bob Such.

When I first came into this place, one of the things I promised my veterinary colleagues was that I would do whatever I could to advance animal welfare. I remember I introduced a private member's bill to amend legislation to ban the tail docking of dogs in South Australia. Many of my colleagues to this day say they have never received as much feedback from their constituents; some are vehemently against it, but the vast majority of people are in support of it.

Animal welfare is a huge issue for us nowadays and people are very passionate about it. To that extent, I still have a letter from the then government whip, Robyn Geraghty, congratulating me on being the first opposition backbencher in the over 100-year history of this parliament (or whatever it was) to have government legislation time put aside for a private member's bill. That is how passionate people are about animal welfare. Both sides knew that I was on a winner. Mind you, having said that, I was warned not to go to the Royal Show that year because there were some dog breeders who wanted to do some desexing on me.

There was a need to push the point that this was all about animal welfare, so I went along to the Royal Show, with the Channel 2 team in tow, and we had a wonderful discussion with an English dog judge. She was livid, but then there is karma in life because her next job was to judge Rottweiler puppies under six months and every one of them had a long tail. I just stood back and had a quiet smile—not gloating, but because we did what was right. This legislation should be aimed at doing, that is, what is right for dogs and cats.

Dogs and cats get into your lives, and everybody here who has had a dog or a cat—and I know the member for Colton said that he was not really passionate about cats, but he understood how people could be passionate about them—well know that people grieve more for their pets than they do for their relatives. It is well known that people spend more time looking after their pets than sometimes they do looking after other family members. I remember a lady brought her dog to me to be examined for a particular problem and she said, 'You can put the kids down; just don't put the dog down.' She was obviously being facetious, but people are very passionate about their dogs and cats.

There is an old veterinary line that dogs have owners and cats have staff. One of the problems we have in Australia is that dogs tend to treat their family as a member of the pack. Hopefully, there is an alpha dog and the dog, the four-legged creature, is not the alpha dog. You see that happen on many occasions. I remember one client who was put in hospital three times by his Rottweiler, but he could not understand that there was something wrong with that relationship.

People are so forgiving about the way their pets rule their lives. They cannot go to bed or they cannot sit on the lounge if the dog is on the lounge or the dog is on their bed, or if the dog is on the bed and they move the dog will growl at them. That sort of relationship is wrong, and yet I understand how passionate people are about their pets. As vets, we often say that the definition of a feral cat is a cat that is outside a lounge room. The problem with cats is that, while they occasionally enjoy the company of other cats, and they certainly appreciate the company of their owners, there is always something in it for the cat.

Cats give a lot of pleasure to a lot of people, and the health benefits of owning a pet are well known. The moment you pat a dog or even sit down and talk to a dog, it is well known that your heart rate drops and your blood pressure drops. Owning a pet is a really healthy thing to do. The problem with cats, though, is that they are such independent creatures. In fact, most dogs know their owners better than the owners know themselves. Cats are way ahead of people. They have psyched their owners out, and that is why I say that dogs have owners and cats have staff.

We need to make sure that we recognise that cats are quite solitary creatures and they do want to wander around and inspect their range and their territory. This causes great grief to many people, and certainly if those cats are undesexed it can cause all sorts of problems. The range of the average cat, the domestic moggy that comes in at night for a feed, is about four acres. I should say that when they come inside for a feed you cannot always be certain that it is your cat.

I remember a cat coming into the clinic that had been in a brawl and we treated it for an abscess. There was no obvious treatment, but we lanced the abscess; it had gone down and left a bit of a hole where the abscess had sinused, and we gave it some injections. The next day, the neighbours of these people brought the same cat to me saying that their cat had been in a fight. I said, 'Hang on, this is so-and-so's cat,' and they said, 'No, it's our cat.' This cat had adopted these two families. Cats are pretty smart like that, but in the process they are wandering around the district and they are doing some damage—quite a bit of damage in some cases.

I am not sure of the actual number of wild dogs we have in Australia—perhaps some of my rural members, the member for Stuart or the member for Hammond, can educate me here—but it would be in the tens of thousands, I would imagine.

**Mr Pederick:** Tens of thousands.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Most of those are dingo crosses. The most astounding figure is the number of wild cats we have in Australia. In a good year, a year of no droughts and plenty of feed, it is estimated that there are 60 million wild cats out there. In a drought year, it drops down to about 10 million. Those cats are not your domestic moggy. Remember, if those cats were four times the size they are now, they would be eating us. They would be like a lion or the size of a puma, a mountain lion—and that is pretty scary. When I worked at Perth Zoo as a student I was in with the mountain lions, and when they are not far away from you it is pretty scary to know that an animal like that could eat you, and wild cats will do that.

Wild cats are growing enormously, with the hybrid vigour that is developing, the crossbreeding and the amount of food they are eating now. It is really a disturbing thing to see. When millions of cats are eating the native flora and fauna, they are doing serious damage. So, anything we can do to reduce the number of wild cats and wild dogs out there and manage the domestic cat population is something we should be aiming for.

Can I just put on the record, before I go too much further and forget to do this, that my daughter, Dr Sahra McFetridge, is a veterinarian who works at the RSPCA. Sahra is currently in the United States on a study tour looking at animal shelters and the management of shelters so that we can reduce the numbers of animals that are being euthanased in animal shelters. She is also looking at how to improve the number of animals being rehomed more quickly and at all the ways we manage animals when they are locked up together, so disease management, nutritional management, a whole range of things. That is what is happening in South Australia through the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League and other groups, and I am very proud that my daughter is part of that process.

The need to manage the number of dogs and cats that are in domestic bliss, shall we say, living in people's homes, is something that we need to be very aware of. Some people out there are breeding dogs with gay abandon. They have no concern about the numbers they are breeding. I saw a documentary last night about a lady who had 41 dogs, and she only had 41 dogs because that was the number that could be kept under the council regulations. In most cases, our council regulations limit it to three dogs, and that is quite an acceptable number. Depending on how big those dogs are and how you treat them, that could be a pretty cosy house.

The number of cats is not restricted. We register dogs, we microchip dogs, and we encourage people to desex dogs. Certainly, it is the same sort of thing with cats. There is a real need now to start tracking the number of cats we have in domestic residences that are people's pets. The number of wild cats along our beaches and in our suburbs would astound people. One of the recommendations of the citizens' jury was to trial the capture, neutering and release of wild cats. 'Neuter' is the American term for desexing, and in this case it was a straight-up castration or a spay. I like to use the English spelling of 'spey', s-p-e-y, not the American s-p-a-y, having been trained in the old school.

Catching these wild cats and castrating the males and spaying the females through an ovariectomy (taking out the ovaries and the uterus) and then releasing them, to me, is the wrong thing to do. The advocates of this say that if these cats are put down they will just be replaced by other cats. Well, hang on, no, not if you keep removing them, if you keep constantly at it. They do not breed that quickly. Cats do breed very quickly. They are what is known as seasonally polyoestrous, so as soon as the length of the days start to increase, the females (the queens) will

start to come into season. When cats mate, they ovulate, so just about every mating is going to result in a conception.

Cats will produce four, five or six kittens per litter, and they can do two or three litters per season, so they can reproduce quite quickly but, if you keep catching them—and, unfortunately, these cats, in 99 per cent of cases are not suitable for being rehomed—then euthanasing them, you are not only giving the local environment and the local native fauna a huge benefit but the public health also benefits from that because there are some zoonotic diseases that cats carry—not just fleas and worms but also toxoplasmosis. Some of these zoonotic diseases are a serious threat to the residents of South Australia under some circumstances.

Controlling the numbers of dogs and cats is something this bill aims to do. We should always be aiming to do that. The way we do that, though, is by the licensing, or registering in this case, of breeders, which I think is a good thing. There is a need to make sure that those breeders know what they are about and know their responsibilities.

I had a guy who was breeding St Bernards, who openly admitted to me that he was breeding them so he could pay off the mortgage of his house. He was not treating those dogs, particularly the pregnant bitches, in the way I thought he should, and in the end I started charging him quite considerably for what he considered his pleasure. I thought he should have had a little bit of pain in the process to try to educate him about how important it was that he look after his dogs because he was not doing that. He kept bringing them back to me. It was good for business but not good for the dogs. We need to regulate the breeding industry, and this legislation goes a long way towards that.

Exempting working dogs and livestock dogs is part of this, and the member for Hammond will talk more about that. The controlling of cats, and not only restricting their wandering but also restricting their prolific breeding in some cases, is something we need to do. This bill does not go as far as I would like it to in making some of those recommendations of the citizens' jury and also the select committee more forceful. There is a lot of detail that we need to get out of this bill that is hidden in the regulations. I have not seen any draft regulations yet. I would love to have seen the draft regulations.

The bill is about management. It is about having dog and cat management plans, which is great. I hope they are going to be reviewed as often as they say. The bill is about having authorised officers. I just wonder whether veterinarians are going to be part of those authorised officers. I remember that the former member for Stuart, Graham Gunn, used to go on and on in here about the powers of authorised officers. I still have some issues with that because I know of a recent case where an authorised council officer went onto a property to look at a bushfire prevention issue and then found some other things that were thought to be wrong and reported this person to the council.

This act, as other acts should, states that officers are 'authorised persons for the purposes of this Act'. Authorised officers should not feel that they have a badge on their arm and can go and do whatever they like. Some of these authorised officers often have more powers than police officers. I hope that an authorised officer, under this legislation, is going to be a veterinarian. I hope that the groups that are going to be authorised under this will include such organisations as the Animal Welfare League and the RSPCA.

I see there is a definition of a 'standard dog or cat'. I do not think there is such a thing as a standard dog or cat, but the lawyers have some way of working out what a standard dog or cat is. I do not think any owner would say that there is a standard dog or cat.

I am concerned that the insertion of section 21B states: 'The Board may keep a register relating to the microchipping and desexing of dogs'. I would rather have that read that the board 'will' because what is the point if we do not have these registers set up? We need to be able to track these dogs and not have four or five different microchip registers, as we have had in the past. We need to have one central register that perhaps coordinates these others so that, if your dog is lost, or if your cat is trapped by somebody and then taken to be put down, it is microchipped, the chip is there, and we know whose it is straightaway.

There is a need to make sure that the plans of management related to dogs and cats are open to public consultation. They should be there as well, and I think that we need to make sure that we are well and truly across those who do want to breed. To show the family that this is what nature

is about, that this is about the birds and the bees, is a good thing. We should not be eliminating that, so I think that there are opportunities in here for a family to have their dog or their cat, their bitch or their queen, have a litter of puppies.

With respect to the desexing definitions in this bill, I have had a number of discussions with a lot of people about this. I am still a registered veterinary surgeon and I have spoken to a lot of my veterinary colleagues about what they are considering here. I know that the definition the government wants to bring in is quite a tight definition; it is not used very often around the place. I have a lot of sympathy with it because, even though it is only a small improvement, there is an improvement in the number of animals that calm down, that are not as aggressive.

If we can reduce the number of dog attacks each year, that would be a good thing, and there are thousands of them. You can see those reported in the Dog and Cat Management Board's annual report—thousands and thousands of attacks. We can reduce that number by reducing that aggression, and one of the best ways of reducing that aggression is by desexing.

If you have ever handled a stroppy tomcat—and I have castrated thousands of tomcats—they can be pretty stroppy. I remember one tomcat launched itself out of a cage at me and latched onto my leg. As I picked it up off my leg it started chewing into my arm. By that time, fortunately, I was close enough to open up the cage and place the tomcat back in the cage—perhaps not as gently as I might normally do—and I was able to slam the door as the tomcat was coming at me for another go. It knew that it did not want to be there and I was going to be the person it did not want to be with. You do not want to be with a tomcat that is really aggressive. If you get bitten by any cat, you want to be very wary about that.

However, with respect to the definition of desexing, I think that at this stage I need to rely on the ability and training of my veterinary colleagues to make that choice, whether a castration is the right thing to do for a male. A vasectomy is not going to remove the testicles, it is obviously just removing the tube that goes from the testicles to the penis so that sperm can come out. An ovariectomy is removing the ovaries and the uterus. Removing the uterus—doing a tubal ligation on the tubes that carry the egg from the ovary to the uterus—is something that is considered. That is stopping the reproduction. It is not really desexing the animal that way, but it does control them.

There are a lot of chemicals coming into the process now that will stop reproduction. It is not, in my mind, desexing the animal. If, in the opinion of the veterinary surgeon, though, that is the best thing to do for that particular patient at that time, then I think we should be relying on the veterinary surgeons to make that decision. That is why I am more than happy to support the amendment that has been put in place. I have had a lot of thought about it, but I am trusting my veterinary colleagues to make that decision on their clinical practice when they see a particular patient.

The government, I understand, wants to go back to the original definition. I hope that it does not insist on that because I think there is room. Ninety-nine per cent of dogs and cats are still going to be castrated or spayed, or have an ovariectomy, so let us not get tied up in knots over this, but let us make sure that we do what we want to do, and that is manage the population, manage the behaviour and manage the people who own dogs and cats.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:33):** I rise to speak to the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015. As the member for Morphett has indicated, I was a part of the select committee into companion animals. The member for Morphett was on the committee, as was the Minister for Education, the late Bob Such (who brought this to the house) and the former member for Mitchell.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** And me.

**Mr PEDERICK:** And the Deputy Speaker, sorry. I am doing this off spec, without notes, so forgive me, Deputy Speaker, the member for Florey. There is a whole range of issues that have to be managed in relation to dogs and cats. It is one of those issues, even though generally it is a council-managed issue in an electorate, it is amazing how many calls come into an electorate office about. I am sure that would be the case right across the board. It does not matter what party or group

you represent or if you are an Independent, I am sure every electorate office has their dog and cat calls that come in.

Some councils have become far more proactive in how they manage cats especially. I know the Rural City of Murray Bridge has got on board with microchipping programs, which are part of this bill, to sort through a cat issue in the local area. It is good to see most councils taking up their full responsibilities under the Dog and Cat Management Act. In regard to the desexing of animals and that kind of thing, something needs to be done so that we can manage the populations into the future. You do not want to be over-run because that brings up a whole heap of health problems and management problems, to name just a couple of areas.

Sadly, a couple of years ago I had to put our pet cat down when he had an injury, because we have a fairly hard policy on the farm. We picked up our next cat, Spooky 2, from the Animal Welfare League. I think we had to spend about \$195 and I thought, 'That's a fair bit to pay for a cat,' but then I realised it was desexed, microchipped, the whole box and dice, and we were doing it properly. He has become a great cat. In fact, he is a bit like a homing pigeon. We lost him for five days around Christmas and I thought he had left the building completely, but one morning at about 5.30 he turned up scratching the back window, so he did a great job in finding his way home.

I want to talk about issues around assistance dogs, which are part of this bill. The bill talks about the groups that can accredit assistance dogs. The groups that are the prescribed accreditation bodies are: the Dog and Cat Management Board, the Royal Society for the Blind of South Australia, the Guide Dogs Association of South Australia and Northern Territory Incorporated, Lions Hearing Dogs Incorporated, and any other person or body declared by the regulations to be a prescribed accreditation body.

An issue was raised recently in regard to a residential aged-care village in my electorate. I am involved with it and there is an issue, because pets are not allowed to be kept there, and that has been a rule for around 30 years. We had an issue where some people have moved in and said that they have a hearing dog. However, when we did the investigations we realised that it was not a hearing dog. It was used for the same benefit, but it was not accredited. It would have been fine if it was a fully accredited dog. That would have been no problem at all because it would have been exempt from any ruling, so we are working through and around the issues involved with that.

That example just goes to show that everyone needs to be aware of what is allowed and what is not allowed in regard to what you can have on a premises. Before people get a bit excited and say, 'You're infringing on my rights,' or this and that, what they need to understand is that we pass legislation in this place for a reason, and that reason is to try to make it as black and white as we can in regard to pet ownership and where you can have those pets and where you cannot.

I mentioned microchipping, and there are great moves being made around the place, and certainly a lot of local government sectors are getting on board. Some of the new local councillors, since the last council election, have got right on board to make sure their councils are doing the right thing in relation to microchipping; otherwise, you end up with so many stray cats especially around the place, which causes havoc and is not good enough for society as a whole. That is certainly a good thing that we need to keep on board.

The bill provides for desexing for all companion cats and dogs. Further on, the bill deals with the breeding and sale of dogs and cats and the registration of breeders and prescribes offences for breeders of dogs and cats who are not registered. I joined the Select Committee on Dogs and Cats As Companion Animals because I wanted to make sure that working dogs—or, according to the definition that will be moved in amendments today by the minister, livestock dogs—will be exempt because farmers do trade dogs between each other. Someone might have a good dog and they might want to put a bitch with that dog and get some really handy pups and sell them to a neighbour.

I was concerned and that is why I joined the committee. I am wondering whether the minister in either her summing up or at the committee stage, if we go into committee, can confirm whether or not livestock dogs will need to be microchipped. Obviously, they will need to be exempt from desexing; otherwise, there is not much point having them as part of the rural framework. As the member for Stuart indicated, they are such an asset to a farmer's life. You can have a good working dog that will beat three or four men—or women. Let's not be sexist.

**The Hon. S.E. Close:** Or five or six women.

**Mr PEDERICK:** No, I'm not going there. They can do a great job. They can run down the backs of sheep in the yards and save so much time. If you have a good dog, they can half think what the sheep, especially, are doing and get around them. There are good cattle livestock dogs that can do similar things. Cattle can be pretty ordinary beasts to handle at times, and you have to be on your toes. Some dogs have paid a fairly high price dealing with cattle, as have people in the rounding-up of cattle, as well.

They are a vital part of the landscape, whether you are on the inside country or the pastoral country, which is most of the country that the member for Stuart looks after. They are vital to the make-up and to make sure things work in rural areas. There are problems plaguing the state at the moment with the downturn of so many other industries, yet agriculture is holding up because beef is on a bit of a run at the minute and lamb is holding up quite well after quite a while in the limelight.

That is good to see because we have seen dairy basically collapse in the last few days under a global glut of milk. That is going to cause some real issues for our dairy farmers with Murray Goulburn and other companies reducing their contracts retrospectively. I have problems with that from the start. I am not sure how you can get away with that, but things will roll out in the next couple of months and we will see how that does pan out.

In regard to microchipping, desexing and the breeding and sale of livestock dogs, I would ask the minister to confirm in her remarks whether those issues are going to be dealt with as exemptions under the act itself or in regulations under the act. I just want to make sure that farmers and livestock owners have the opportunity to do what they have done for years, not necessarily as registered breeders.

Early in the piece, when this debate was going on—and it could have been nearly two years ago—I was starting to get some phone calls from registered sheepdog breeders saying, 'We are really concerned that we are getting caught up in this.' I am certainly concerned that mixed messages were coming from the different consultation meetings around the place. That is the main concern I have. All the other parts of the bill seem quite sensible for companion animals, but I must stress that livestock dogs are a whole other sphere that we need to make sure we keep so that we can make this great state operate. To be frank, I am not sure how you would police it any way if you made it so hard for livestock breeders to get their dogs.

I must make mention of people who are doing the right thing. One of my staff has a golden retriever. His name is Bear and he is four months old. I note that usually they are desexed at around six months, but he needed some surgery, so Bear woke up whole this morning but he is going to bed tonight missing a few bits. That is the right thing to do. He is a lovely golden retriever, and I am sure he will recover in the next couple of days. But this is all about—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** He might be psychologically scarred.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Yes, he may be psychologically scarred; I think his owner is slightly, but she will be fine and Bear will get over it. That is a small price to pay for responsible dog ownership, especially if you have a large dog like a golden retriever. I am sure he will have many happy years once he gets over this minor operation today.

I am keen to see this bill go through, but I am also very keen to hear what the minister has to say about exemptions for livestock dogs. I note that it has been carefully worded so that we do not get the wrong working dogs brought into the bill, or the act when it becomes an act, and it is quite clear that we are talking about livestock dogs. I am just seeking that clarity to make sure that sheep farmers and cattle farmers in this state are looked after and keep operating as they have done for many years.

**Mr DULUK (Davenport) (16:47):** I would also like to make a small contribution to this debate and welcome the government's finally presenting the long overdue legislation. I would like to acknowledge the many stakeholders who have made a contribution to the substance of this bill, including the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League, the Local Government Association, the Australian Veterinary Association and, of course, the many dog breeder associations. I also want to

acknowledge Andrew Lamb, who is here in the chamber today, for all the work that he has been doing in this bit of legislation (and also for the umpiring he is going to do on Saturday).

In my small contribution, I want to highlight some of the outcomes of the committee and of the citizens' jury. One thing that strikes me about a lot of this legislation is that it seems to take so long from go to whoa to get it through this government, from when consultation starts to when we almost see legislation pass. The community has long urged the government to act in this matter, and I am not sure why it has taken so long. Of course, the Hon. Michelle Lensink in the other house introduced the Animal Welfare (Companion Animals) Amendment Bill in September 2014, and the government introduced its own bill only in November 2015, so we have been talking about this issue for quite a while now.

This bill proposes a number of changes to the act, including mandatory desexing, mandatory microchipping and mandatory breeder registrations. Maintaining animal welfare is of course something that is very important to so many of us. This bill ensures that there are measures that protect animal wellbeing, and that is of course supported. Irresponsible pet owners will now be punished under this new bill. On this side of the house, we support many of the changes, and one issue that this debate has been able to bring out in the community is the need for people to be responsible animal owners, responsible pet owners, and really focus individuals on being responsible for their pets.

As I said, we had a bit of a consultation period on this. There was a citizens' jury, which are becoming very popular at the moment with this current government. We are going to have a citizens jury—

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**Mr DULUK:** Well, yes; the member for Chaffey interrupts and says that they cannot make a decision for themselves, and supposes that is why they have these citizens' juries. However I think in this case, with dogs and cats, it is quite a sensible one, because it is an issue that really goes to the heart of a lot of suburban communities and streets, around dogs and cats and the noises those animals cause.

Some of the recommendations of the select committee were to improve welfare standards in the breeding of companion animals, increase purchaser confidence in the source of their companion animals, reduce the number of surrendered animals and, by extension, euthanasia numbers for those animals, and increase public awareness of animal welfare issues and owner responsibilities, which I believe are some of the most important. The citizens' jury created by the Dog and Cat Management Board recommended some other points as well:

- that there be greater coordination of educational programs about responsible pet ownership, including the introduction of online tests for kids and people in general to become pet owners( and I can just see all those kids out there on their iPads doing their online test in order to look after Moxie the cat);
- legislation to encourage more acceptance of tenants with dogs and cats, which I think is a really important one, especially for many elderly citizens who may live on their own and who may use dogs and cats as companion animals; that is very important for interaction and a sense of responsibility and companionship as well;
- legislation to restrict the sale of dogs and cats from pet stores and mandatory registration and licensing of dog and cat breeders; and
- a centrally-managed, statewide database for microchip data for dogs and cats.

As I said, there is broad support from this side of the house, and it has been mentioned before that the member for Hammond—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr DULUK:** Indeed; Hammond, Chaffey, Morphett, Hartley, all of them, and the member for Stuart. We do want to ensure there is exemption for working dogs in this bill. I certainly know that it is members on this side of the house that always champion dogs and anything related to the land,



so we want to see an exemption from that, for the four-legged ones. We also believe that fines in this bill should be open to parliamentary oversight, that that should be looked at through the legislative framework rather than through regulation.

There are a couple of other differences as well around the code of practice. Indeed, for me—and I suppose it will be something we will be seeing coming through—it is how we are going to deal with the code, how breaches of the code will be dealt with, and councils be relying on information from the public to investigate breaches of the code. That is probably a bit of a grey area in terms of how the code will work and how that will be implemented.

As I said, by and large there are big advantages to the community in this legislation, and that is why I think it is broadly supported in the community as well. I think it will see an administrative burden on councils. Reducing the reach of government is always welcome, and I think we will be able to save a bit of money here as well.

The dog registration categories are being reduced from eight to two, so a simplified system, and of course the establishment of a single officer identification will be an important one as well. Councils will also be able to monitor registered breeders in this new legislation, and will be able to further tighten the grip in removing puppy and kitten farming, which we know is a really unsavoury element in the community. I know that the member for Bright has been very vocal in his opposition to puppy farms and those sorts of practices.

Of course mandatory desexing decreases animal welfare admission rates and helps to reduce cat overpopulation, creating a safer environment, and that is one I certainly welcome very strongly. Finally, it is good to see this bill before the house. We would all have liked to have seen it sooner, but I congratulate all the stakeholders in their efforts.

*Sitting extended beyond 17:00 on motion of Hon. S.E. Close.*

**Mr SPEIRS (Bright) (16:54):** It is a pleasure to be able to speak this afternoon on the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015. I have had a good wait this afternoon to have this opportunity to speak and I guess it is fair to say that the state has had quite a wait for this legislation to appear before the parliament. It is essentially an amendment of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, and it is fair to say that that act, as legislation often does, had become quite outdated and did not necessarily meet the modern needs of dog and cat management, and certainly not the introduction and availability of knowledge and understanding of new science in the field.

It is good to see it before the parliament but, as I said, it would have been good to see it earlier than it has actually arrived. As the member for Chaffey said earlier, it has been quite a work in process. Throughout the 2000s there have been attempts by members of this place to see the Dog and Cat Management Act updated, no more so than the efforts by the Hon. Dr Bob Such, former member for Fisher, who spent a significant amount of time lobbying to see an update of dog and cat management legislation in South Australia. I guess it is worthwhile at this time paying tribute to the Hon. Dr Such's efforts on this front.

The need to have appropriate management legislation for companion animals has progressed through parliament initially as a select committee of our parliament, which the Hon. Dr Bob Such championed and brought into being back in 2012. That committee looked at the way our state's legislation dealt with companion animals and ways that it could be updated in order to ensure that our legislation in South Australia was as modern as it could be to give both state and local governments the opportunity to effectively manage and control dogs and cats in our community.

The term 'companion animals' was a term that was used frequently by the select committee and I find that term to be quite interesting in that it is largely restricted to dogs and cats. In my household—and I have just been having a conversation with the Deputy Speaker about this while I was waiting to speak—does not have either a dog or a cat as a companion but we do have a house bunny named Pancakes. I have just had an extensive conversation with the Deputy Speaker about Pancakes.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I counselled you on Pancakes.

**Mr SPEIRS:** I was counselled. We discussed how—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr SPEIRS:** Almost as relevant as the member for Hammond's previous speech about his staff member's dog. I was discussing the desexing of Pancakes and how it cost five times as much to desex her as it cost to purchase her, but it was something that we did willingly because she is a very important part of our household. She is fully litter trained as well. They are much smarter animals than you would think. Rabbits are actually more closely related to horses than rats or mice and should never be described as rodents. They are very good pets.

Anyway, I digress, and I do not like to wander off on frolics of my own in speeches but, during my two years in parliament I have been trying to find an opportunity to talk about Pancakes in the house, and that opportunity arose today with dog and cat management, so there it is. Pancakes is officially on the record. She actually has an Instagram account with more followers than me—princesspancakesbun—and you can follow her, and anyone listening in the building can, and add to her 5,000 followers. I think she is more popular than any politician in South Australia on social media, so check her out.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We can fix that. Pancakes vanishes.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Yes, things like that—so check it out if you are on Instagram. Anyway, I am making a mockery of the parliamentary process. I will go back to my discussion on the dog and cat management bill. I want to reflect on a few items which are contained in this bill, which are receiving broadly bipartisan support from my side of politics. The area that I want to briefly discuss is puppy and cat farms, and the fact that the bill will make it illegal to sell a cat or a dog that a person has bred unless that person is a registered breeder.

The hope from getting this brought into legislation is that puppy and cat farms will be appropriately dealt with in this state, and we will hopefully see the eradication of those because we know that significant unscrupulous practices are undertaken in puppy and cat farms in this state. Animal welfare is not something that many of these farms have at the top of their list of priorities; rather, profit-making is what they are all about. We have seen, on current affairs programs screened on television in the last couple of years, some very unfortunate practices being undertaken on puppy and cat farms.

I know it is something that is brought up time and time again by constituents in the electorate of Bright, which I represent, and it is something that we as legislators here in parliament have to take very seriously. I know I speak for many people in my community when I speak out against puppy and cat farms and the abhorrent conditions that many animals endure in those environments. So, I applaud this legislation in attempting to tighten up on these farms, and I really hope that the appropriate legislative instruments are now in place to be able to target and deal with such farms. I look forward to seeing their eradication in South Australia because, unfortunately, they are present and they are a significant animal welfare issue in this state.

The other area which is a very important part of this bill, in my view, is the introduction of mandatory desexing of dogs and cats. That will not only look at reducing the aggression in many pets because we know that, particularly when dogs are desexed, we tend to see their aggression levels substantially reduced. We know from studies in recent times that the incidence of aggression by dogs is actually increasing across the Western World. I did quite a bit of reading on this when I was on the City of Marion council, and during my time in council there was an increase in aggression from dogs and dog attacks in our community and that is a problem.

We know that something that goes a long way to reducing that level of aggression in dogs is having them desexed, so mandatory desexing will assist significantly with that. Mandatory desexing will also, hopefully, significantly reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats in our community. Unwanted dogs and cats can lead to not only mistreatment of those animals, but also the abandonment of those animals, and that is not good for the animals. It is not a great thing to be going on in our communities. It also has a significant environmental impact, particularly when it comes to cats.

We know about the abandonment of cats, and cats getting out into conservation areas, into rural areas, and into our Hills Face Zone. In my electorate, along the coastal zone, there is quite a problem with abandoned cats and feral cats living along Adelaide's coastline, living in the rocks and

crevices along the coastline. There have been problems down at Somerton Park and at Brighton, in the rock walls there, and certainly from Marino through to Hallett Cove where the coast is a bit wilder with the two conservation parks at Marino and Hallett Cove.

There are real and significant problems in my community, but I know that problem extends into the Hills Face Zone, into the Hills, and into rural and regional South Australia, where cats which have been abandoned, which have gone feral, can become an even more significant environmental problem. It is no secret that one of the most significant environmental problems in Australia today is the existence of a substantial feral cat population which really is marauding through our countryside and causing huge environmental damage, particularly to native birdlife and native wildlife.

There is strong evidence to suggest that feral cats have resulted in the extinction of at least 20 Australian mammals, and they are only the ones we can directly attribute to the impact of feral cats. It is no doubt a problem that exists in our own environment at the moment and something that hopefully this bill will do something to reduce, in terms of unwanted cats being abandoned or tipped out into the community and into the countryside.

I believe there is also a need for our state government, for our local councils, and for our federal government to tackle the problem of feral cats out there in our Australian environment. I know there is federal money available for the control of feral cats, but that is perhaps not always on our radar. It is something that I think we should really be putting a lot of emphasis on, from an environmental perspective, to deal with it because there is an epidemic of feral cats out in the Australian environment.

In closing, I want to briefly touch on the opportunities that come from this bill moving forward, as I presume it will move into legislation very quickly from this afternoon. There are a number of opportunities for local government to take this act and really run with it and do good things with it. There is an opportunity, from talking to people on the Dog and Cat Management Board, for local government to look at an electronic implementation system that will see a whole-of-council approach to dog and cat management. This bill creates an opportunity for that, and would benefit hugely from councils getting on board as one rather than fragmented across 68 councils in South Australia and actually coming together and saying, 'How can we bring in an information management system that can help dog and cat management in South Australia?'

There are examples of this in other areas of local government at the moment, including the One Library system, so they have shown that they can do this sort of thing. It would be great to see them come together and have a single data management system for dog and cat management covering registration of dogs and cats and having a really good statewide database of what is happening with regard to dog and cat management.

The benefits of this would be broad. One of the most significant benefits would be if a dog or a cat happened to be lost, if it happened to wander off and cross council boundaries. If a dog was in Marino, say, in my electorate, and wandered a few hundred metres from its home and ended up in Kingston Park or Seacliff, and it was then picked up by the City of Holdfast Bay council, bearing in mind that it was registered in the City of Marion council, there is no guarantee that the City of Holdfast Bay council is going to be able to trace it back because it is not logged in their system. That dog might end up down in the RSPCA pound at Lonsdale or being held by the council, which just adds a whole layer of stress and potential cost to the process. It is a lot of stress for not only the animal but also the owners.

There is an opportunity for a whole-of-state management system to overcome that problem. It is not just a problem that happens within council boundaries. If you were living in metropolitan Adelaide, you might go down to Victor Harbor for Christmas. Again, if you took your dog with you and it were to go missing down there and was picked up by the Victor Harbor council, they would have an opportunity to easily trace it back to the metropolitan owner if there was a whole-of-state data management and registration system for dogs and cats.

I would really like to see local government, hopefully led by the Local Government Association of South Australia, actually take that on as a challenge because if they start developing their own systems in line with this new act there will be the problem of unscrambling the egg. We could end up with 68 different management systems all across the state and the opportunity will be

lost because councils will not want to then, down the track, merge systems and move towards a whole-of-state system.

I think there is a really good opportunity now and in the coming months for the Local Government Association to say to councils, 'We are going to lead this project. Let's gather together some money and actually have a centralised process for dog and cat management.' The new act provides a catalyst for that opportunity, and it would be great to see them run with it. That is a challenge for the Local Government Association and hopefully councils will get on board with them. They are far better placed to manage 68 different jurisdictions than any other body, so I would definitely commend that as a challenge to the Local Government Association of South Australia.

In closing, I would like to thank all of those who have been involved in the development of this amendment bill, particularly the Dog and Cat Management Board itself and the staff of the Dog and Cat Management Board. To Andrew Lamb, who is here today, thank you for your work on this.

I would particularly like to pay tribute to my good friend and former colleague in the City of Marion council, Dr Felicity-ann Lewis, who is now the chair of the Dog and Cat Management Board. I would like to thank her for her work on this. Felicity-ann is always someone who, if you want something to happen, you can give it to her and she will drive it through. She has definitely had a lot of passion for the Dog and Cat Management Board reform and the legislative change they are now proposing through this act. I would like to thank Felicity-ann for her work and commend the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015 to the house.

**Mr ODENWALDER (Little Para) (17:13):** I rise to indicate my support for this bill and, in doing so, echo the sentiments of the many speakers who have spoken before me. This of course is an important piece of legislation that will significantly contribute to the welfare of our companion animals. With nearly 300,000 dogs registered in South Australia and more than two-thirds of us sharing our life with a dog or a cat, it is important that the government reforms dog and cat management in this state.

The reforms contained in this bill seek to improve the ability of pounds and shelters to return lost dogs and cats to their homes, to reduce the number of lost dogs and cats that end up in shelters, to provide assurances to people that the puppy or kitten they are buying comes from a reputable breeder, and of course to enhance the ability of authorities to detect and prosecute puppy and kitten farms. It is these last two objectives that I would particularly like to speak about today.

The problem of puppy farms is of course complex. A number of approaches and reforms are needed to achieve the government's aim of dealing with this problem and ultimately stamping out puppy farms. Firstly, the bill provides regulatory oversight of the breeding industry to ensure that dogs and cats are being bred in humane and healthy environments and not in puppy and kitten farms.

Under this amendment bill, anyone breeding a dog or a cat for sale will need to register as a breeder with the Dog and Cat Management Board. Breeder registration numbers and animal microchip numbers will be needed to be included in advertisements for sale and to be provided to purchasers to increase the traceability of breeders and animals. The amendment bill also proposes that a breeder registration number be required at the point of sale.

The other reforms in this bill work together to help stamp out puppy farms, and the introduction of a breeder registration scheme, which can be accessed by the public, local councils and RSPCA animal welfare inspectorates, will place greater scrutiny on dog and cat breeders. The proposed definition of breeding is also broad enough that it will encompass most operating models and unscrupulous breeders will not fall through the gaps. Moreover, mandatory microchipping will ensure the identification of all animals, and mandatory desexing of animals will restrict the capacity for ad hoc breeding.

It is in all of our interests to ensure that our family pets are taken care of and bred in humane conditions, and I therefore join with other members in strongly recommending this bill.

**Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (17:15):** I rise to make a contribution on what has been a very popular debate in this house to support the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015. As many on this side have suggested, it has been a long time coming. In fact, it was on

18 November that the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation finally introduced the state government's response to the Select Committee on Dogs and Cats as Companion Animals 2013 recommendations. That select committee has been mentioned a couple of times and, in fact, those members who sat on it have made contributions today.

There were extensive calls from the community urging the government to act on the recommendations made by that select committee in 2013. Unfortunately, it has taken until now, with some encouragement, I might add, from the Dog and Cat Management Board which has been very active in the consultation and promotion of this bill.

I guess the concern in all of this from our side, given that a lot of us represent regional and agricultural areas, was that we really needed our working dogs to be exempted from this legislation. We did not necessarily have a problem with the legislation itself; in fact, the bill is a good one and will enable management of dogs and cats right throughout the state, and the metropolitan and regional areas to be far better than it currently is.

Given the number and importance of working dogs to the agricultural industry, it was particularly important that we were able to gain an exemption from this bill for those dogs. This was particularly in regard to mandatory microchipping and sterilisation. That is not to say that some working dog owners will not take up that option, but it will actually be their choice whereas for the rest of the community, of course, it will become mandatory.

There has been some suggestion of government amendments. I will flag that the opposition will not be supporting the government's amendment regarding the definition of desexing. The government is looking to have that defined as being castrated or spayed. The member for Morphett gave Hansard a couple of options for the spelling of the word 'spayed', but his preference is for s-p-e-y-e-d. We believe, and certainly the member for Morphett believes, as a former veterinarian, that there are chemical options that are equally as effective and, of course, not as invasive. We will not be agreeing with that amendment, but the rest of the bill we are happy with.

As I said, it has created much interest. Most of us in this place have been lobbied by constituents with regard to this bill, and I would thank those constituents in the electorate of Flinders who have spoken to me about this. That includes not just owners of dogs and cats, but also a couple who bred cats and sold cats as a business and were very passionate about their business and also their cats. They love their cats very much and they were interested to see how they were going to be caught up in that. They were quite prepared to microchip their cats anyway and, in fact, from memory, I believe that that was a matter of course for their operation.

A breeder of kelpies at Streaky Bay also contacted me a couple of times. He had great concerns, and it was really from correspondence with compatriots of his in Victoria who had been caught up in the Victorian legislation. They were breeding working dogs and had inadvertently been caught up in the legislation in that jurisdiction. It pleases me to see that the government has recognised that that is an issue on its own and has dealt with it.

Having been an inaugural member of the Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management Board, I was forever conscious of the problem of feral cats throughout the Australian landscape. The member for Morphett, in his contribution, mentioned that the number of feral cats across Australia at any one time, depending on seasonal conditions, can range anywhere between 10 million and 60 million. Of course, they almost fly under the radar, so to speak, but the impact on native fauna has been quite significant. It is so significant that the member for Bright suggested that the demise of at least 20 species of native marsupials can be attributed to feral cats.

I remember as a kid that we used to spend a little bit of time rabbit trapping. Of course, you are not allowed to do that any more because rabbit traps are illegal, but I remember a highlight one particular day was when we actually caught a feral cat in amongst the scrub, the size of which was extraordinary. This would have begun as a domestic cat, as a kitten probably that went feral, and it grew to at least double the size of a household cat. It no doubt had a very enjoyable diet of birds and rabbits, but that is the sort of thing that can happen when cats go feral.

I am going to take my lead from the member for Bright. Again, he made mention of his house cat Snuggles. I think it was Snuggles.

**Mr Pengilly:** No, it was a rabbit. A house rabbit.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Called Pancakes.

**Mr TRELOAR:** Yes, a house rabbit called Pancakes. I was close, wasn't I?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Nowhere near it.

**Mr TRELOAR:** It was a house rabbit called Snuggles.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You weren't listening.

**Ms Chapman:** Four legs.

**Mr TRELOAR:** Yes, four legs. I must confess, the house rabbits that we had did not actually last very long at all, generally speaking, much to the disappointment of my children. We had much more luck with our cats and dogs. We have Maisy at the moment, who is the house cat, or the shed cat really. We are more than happy to leave her at home when we are away and she looks after the place.

**Ms Chapman:** Keeps the mice down.

**Mr TRELOAR:** She keeps the mice down and keeps the rats away, and lives between the house and the shed. I would like to regale the parliament with one story, my favourite dog story. In my 30 years as a farmer, I have had many working dogs, which of course will be exempt from this legislation. This particular dog that I want to talk about, although he did not have an Instagram account, unlike Snuggles—

**Mr Pederick:** Pancakes.

**Mr TRELOAR:** Pancakes—he did make the front page of the local newspaper. This particular dog was called Baldrick, after Baldrick in *Blackadder*—I kid you not, he was named after that character. Baldrick was out with me in the field one day and he had a cunning plan, but it went awry. On a particular day when he was out with me spraying, we had the agricultural spray planes in to spray a crop because we had some disease that was going around. It was in the days prior to GPS, so the owner or the farmer actually had to mark for the planes. You would walk along the edge of the paddock, the plane would go over, you would go another 22 yards and you would flag it again.

Baldrick, being the loyal companion that he was, was with me and, unbeknown to me, every time the plane flew over Baldrick was barking and jumping up at the plane. I was not taking a lot of notice, but the pilot called me up on the two-way and he said, 'I think I've hit your dog.' I turned around and, sure enough, there was Baldrick in the mud with his eyes popped out, and he was not looking too good. He had jumped so high or the plane was so low (one or the other) that Baldrick had been hit on the back of the head by the tyre of the spray plane. It is all good from here because Baldrick survived.

**Mr Pederick:** I was going to say, it wasn't sounding good then.

**Mr TRELOAR:** It was not sounding good; I feared the worst. We finished the run and I walked over and carefully picked up poor old Baldrick. I noticed he was breathing, but we were still thinking that it was probably the end of his days. I carried him over and laid him down on the ground next to the ute, and he stood up, shook himself and jumped into the back of the ute. And that was Baldrick.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** And that made the front page?

**Mr TRELOAR:** It did, because it was—

**Ms Chapman:** A slow news day.

**Mr TRELOAR:** It was a quiet week in Port Lincoln. The headline was 'Dog fight over Wanilla skies', which I thought was great. Anyway, Baldrick went on to be a loyal companion for many more years and did a lot of good work for us and our sheep flock. I am really pleased that we have managed to exempt working livestock dogs—I am still not sure whether it is 'working livestock' or 'livestock working', but we will see when the wording comes through.

I, too, would like to thank all of those who have contributed to this bill, and the constituents right across the state who have taken an active interest in this. They have provided input and have got the bill to where it is today. With that, and my brief story of Baldrick, I will support the bill.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before I call the minister, I would just like to let the house know that I have bred dogs for 30 years and I have a lot of dog stories, but I am going to let the minister speak and close the debate.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Minister for Education and Child Development, Minister for Higher Education and Skills) (17:26):** I would like to thank all members for their contributions to this debate—some in particular have been very entertaining and interesting. There are three key changes to dog and cat management in the bill: mandatory desexing, mandatory microchipping, and mandatory breeder registration.

There was a query raised by the member for Hammond about the role of working dogs. There have been some changes in the other place that have been accepted and have come down. This has meant that there are exemptions for working dogs from the requirement to be desexed, and also, as I understand it, in exempt trading. I will invite him, however, to ask further questions during the committee stage in order to make sure that he is reassured on that matter. The government has embarked on a reform package to dog and cat management to achieve a number of aims, including:

- stamping out puppy and kitten farms by providing assurance to people that their new puppy or kitten comes from a reputable breeder, and enhancing the ability of authorities to detect and prosecute puppy and kitten farms;
- reducing the number of lost dogs that end up in shelters; and
- ensuring a safer and more social dog population and improving the management of cats in the broader community.

Mandatory desexing is a key priority of the government in achieving these aims. It is important to note that, throughout the government's extensive consultation on the bill, mandatory desexing has been strongly supported.

The development of this bill has come about through public and targeted stakeholder engagement. A 10-week consultation period received over 1,800 submissions from the public, and a citizens' jury was established to explore ways to reduce the over 10,000 unwanted dogs and cats that are euthanased every year in this state.

Along with this public consultation, the government has worked closely with stakeholders. The Dog and Cat Management Board has been instrumental in building support for the bill among stakeholders, including:

- local government groups;
- animal welfare groups like the RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League SA;
- breeder groups;
- the SA Yard Dog Association, the SA Working Sheepdog Association and Livestock SA;
- disability services; and
- veterinarian and pet care associations like the Australian Veterinary Association and the Pet Industry Association of Australia.

The government maintains that to achieve the bill's aim of making a safer dog and cat population, the desexing of dog and cats requires procedures that prevent reproduction and diminish the secretion of hormones that influence behaviour.

Permanent desexing helps to reduce the tendency in dogs for aggressive behaviours towards people and other dogs; reduce territorial behaviours in dogs and cats; and help control the urge in dogs and cats to wander, thereby reducing the number of pets that arrive at shelters, and reducing the number of lost pets that are euthanased each year. There is an amendment to this effect that we will be discussing when we go into committee, about ensuring that the method used

for desexing is one that results in behavioural change, not just in the contraceptive capability of other forms of tubal ligation and the use of chemicals.

The government's position on mandatory desexing has been supported by public health physician Dr Katina D'Onise in *The Advertiser* and on radio on Wednesday 18 May. Dr D'Onise's research shows that the desexing of dogs significantly reduces the risks of dog attacks and bites. She was quoted on 891 ABC yesterday morning as saying:

I would love to see it mandatory to desex dogs and cats...desexing dogs reduces the risk of aggression...that's been known for a number of years, veterinary behaviourists know this to be true, dog owners know this to be true so this is just...taking it one more step...that reduction of aggression does also lead to a reduction in dog bite risk.

That is why the government is committed to legislating for mandatory permanent desexing of dogs and cats and I look forward to exploring these issues more in committee.

I also would like to add, on a personal note, having chaired the latter part of the committee that led up to this legislation, and having clearly benefited from and been inspired by the contributions of the Hon. Dr Bob Such, I would like to pay tribute to the work he undertook in that area and hope that this will be a lasting legacy for him. I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

*Committee Stage*

In committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 passed.

Clause 5.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I move:

Amendment No 1 [EduChilDev-1]—

Page 5, lines 31 and 32 [clause 5(8), inserted definition of *desex*]—Delete the definition and substitute:

*desex* means to castrate or spay an animal so as to permanently render the animal incapable of reproducing (and *desexed* has a corresponding meaning);

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Actually, I was going back a little bit further in the bill to 'Amendment of section 4—Interpretation', in regard to animal welfare organisation—

**The CHAIR:** Where are you?

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Clause 5—Amendment of section 4—

**The CHAIR:** We're in clause 5.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Yes. I am looking at:

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

animal welfare organisation

Paragraph (c) refers to any other person or body declared by regulation. When will we see the regulations, and who is envisaged as being 'any other person or body'? We have a myriad of pop-up welfare organisations and animal refuges, some of which are run by people who I think should not be in charge of a chook raffle, never mind an animal welfare organisation

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will start drafting the regulations as soon as the legislation is through, but it is not anticipated for those organisations to be any other than the RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** If that is the case, minister, why do we have 'any other body or person declared by the regulations'? I personally think we do really need to restrict this, because there are numerous examples where animal welfare organisations pop up. There is one particular fellow who runs an organisation who is a heavy social media user and, quite honestly, I do not think he should be in charge there. It would be nice to have some assurances that this is going to be really tight in the regulations.



**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The legislation is drafted so as to enable a response to changing circumstances. There are some 80 shelters, as I understand it. None of them, at this point in time, appears to be of the kind of heft, with the financial holding of assets or the employment of staff, that would warrant inclusion, but we have created the legislation in order to enable a further regulation, should that be necessary or considered useful in the future.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Can I just ask, then, that when those regulations are being drafted, they include that the staff will have to have some specific level of training and that perhaps there should be a consultant veterinarian. That does not mean to say they have to use a vet every day, but they should have a consultant veterinarian or access to veterinary services that they have contracted, so that we cannot have these people who are out there and find that we then play catch-up when we see that they are far from being a welfare organisation but are more of a self-interest charity that is more about the egos of the people than the welfare of the animals.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I appreciate the comments made by the member for Morphett and I am sure we will take those into account.

**The CHAIR:** You have had three questions. Is there anything you really have to ask? Three questions is usually what we have.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I do, and this is the whole crux of the amendment that is coming through to subclause (8):

Section 4—after the definition of...[desexing] means to permanently render an animal incapable of reproducing.

We know that 99 per cent of dogs and cats are going to be desexed, either by having been castrated or having an ovariohysterectomy, when the females have their ovaries and uterus removed. There is a lot of evidence that the reduction in the reproductive hormones, particularly testosterone in male dogs, does have a benefit in reducing levels of aggression. It cannot be guaranteed, though. In my mind, that is something we should be continually aware of. If we can reduce aggression, even a minor amount, we should be looking at desexing to include castration and spaying.

That is in here, but at the same time I owe it to my veterinary colleagues to voice their opinion that they still need to be able to make that professional judgement on those few occasions. They are the ones with the training, not the Dog and Cat Management Board or the people in this place, and they are the ones with the clinical decisions right in front of them. They should be able to make that decision about what is best for that animal's future, in regard to the animal's temperament, size and its potential to cause damage. That said, many bites that put kids in hospital are from little dogs in backyards. I think the veterinarians should be able to make that decision.

Having said that, I am well aware that 99.9 per cent of veterinarians will castrate or spay 99.9 per cent of dogs. I think that the government insisting on their amendment, that we go back to this, is a bit narrow-minded. I know evidence has been presented in the media today and there is evidence will be presented at the Australian Veterinary Association's national conference next week that does show a good correlation between reduction in aggression and dog bites as a result of the castration or spaying of dogs, but it is never a guarantee. In fact, the people who have done these studies say themselves that it is not a guarantee. If it helps, great, but that then opens it up. If there is no guarantee, surely the veterinarian who is examining the animal and who is in charge of that animal's health and welfare should be able to make that decision.

I think agreeing with the current definition, as in the bill that came down from the other place, is something that this government could do and could do with a clear conscience. There is enough scope in the regulations to control those people out there who want to have a dog for their ego—an ego on a lead, an aggressive dog. The penalties are now at last reflecting the fact that you need to be a responsible dog owner. I think the whole bill compounded could give the government that security they need to have an effective way of managing—this is not a dog and cat desexing bill: this is a dog and cat management bill—not only the animal population but also the aggression that we all want to reduce.

Having said that about desexing, a lot of it is about training the owners to have their dogs and cats (particularly dogs, obviously) socialised from the word 'go'. Vets are doing that; they are

making these judgements. Let the vets make those judgements. I appeal to the government to just wear this one for now. It is not an onerous change. I think it is quite a reasonable change. The minister may insist on going to deadlock; I would be very disappointed if that were the case, particularly after other conversations we have had. There is a need to recognise the fact that we do have a very fine body of veterinarians out there making highly expert decisions.

**The CHAIR:** Could we just ask what the question is, member for Morphet?

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Let's stick with the bill as it is and not move that amendment.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I understand the point that the honourable member is making, which is a concern about the latitude that we ought to be giving professionals such as vets. The reason that the government has brought this amendment to this place and therefore is insisting on the original version in the other place is that of a concern that the bill does not create an expectation that there might be other ways routinely to render an animal no longer capable of reproducing that does not have the desired effect on the behavioural changes, which is the main purpose for this desire for desexing, the subsidiary benefit being also not having a proliferation of dogs and cats who are not wanted and therefore are euthanased or go wild.

I think this may allay some of the member for Morphet's concerns, which is that we will be producing regulations under the act which will enable a veterinarian to make a decision on their professional judgement to do something slightly different than is expressed in this act. We are going to create that power, but it is important that the act itself articulates clearly what is currently understood to be necessary, which is the proper and complete and utter desexing of these animals in order to create that behavioural change. I hope that that allays his concern, that at this point we are insisting on bringing this amendment forward.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Just to clarify that then, I understand where the minister is coming from, but if the regulations are going to give exemptions to castration and spaying of animals on veterinarians' advice, surely that means that veterinarians should be able to make that judgement about whether that dog or cat needs to be castrated or desexed or in some other way controlled through a chemical castration, when it becomes more readily available, or whether it needs a tubal ligation or vasectomy. That may be enough in this particular case with this particular animal. The regulations are the detail we have not seen yet, so I am still very concerned. While I have every faith in this particular minister, I do not trust this government, unfortunately. I am very concerned about that.

**The CHAIR:** You have asked the question; could we have an answer to the question?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is important that the legislation articulates what the government is seeking to achieve, which is that it is currently absolutely necessary to do the spaying or the castration. The importance of the regulation is to enable a vet to make a professional judgement that that might not be appropriate in some discrete and particular circumstances, not that it is routinely acceptable to use alternative methods which might not result in the main purpose of the act. We may have to agree to disagree at this point. We are going to maintain our desire to have this amendment considered by this house.

**The CHAIR:** I intend to ask if there is any further debate, otherwise I am going to put amendment No. 1 on schedule 1 in the minister's name, which deals with clause 5, page 5, lines 31 and 32. Do you have a question on that amendment?

**Mr WHETSTONE:** No; I would just like to indicate that we do not support the amendment.

Amendment carried.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I move:

Amendment No 2 [EduChilDev-1]—

Page 6, line 22 [clause 5(17), inserted definition of *working dog*]—After 'working' insert 'livestock'

This amendment makes sure that we understand that when we talk about working dogs we are talking about dogs who work with livestock.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 6 to 9 passed.

Clause 10.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** It states in 21B that the 'Board may keep register relating to microchipped and desexed dogs and cats'. Why is it 'may' and not 'must'? Surely, the whole object of this is to have a database, have a record of the numbers of dogs and cats we have, so that we can manage them in a way that the whole bill is aimed at.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The advice I have is that it is in order to enable the database to be held by the Dog and Cat Management Board or by the Local Government Association.

**The CHAIR:** So it could be in either place.

Clause passed.

Clause 11.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Section 23A—Delegation provides 'Subject to this section, the Board may delegate functions or powers.' That is okay, but it then provides:

A function or power delegated under this section may, if the instrument of delegation so provides, be further delegated.

How extensive is that further delegation; will it be to dog trainers, to veterinarians, to who knows? How is it treated at the moment and what is envisaged there? Is that in the regulations again?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** This is an enabling clause. There is no particular desire for delegating at this stage, other than perhaps to staff for some financial issues. It is to enable that to occur as and when necessary.

Clause passed.

Clause 12 passed.

Clause 13.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Can the minister tell the committee who is envisaged to be appointed as an authorised person under section 25A? It provides:

The Board or a council may appoint suitable persons (other than members of the council) to be authorised persons for the purposes of this Act.

I know that for a number of years veterinarians have been 'authorised persons' for the purposes of cat control; I am not sure whether this is intended to be part of that. Who are potentially other 'authorised persons'? Are veterinarians in there?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No, it is not for veterinarians. The idea is that in emergency situations, say in a bushfire, when there is a need to go in and detain and seize animals, that we are able to employ someone and authorise them immediately.

Clause passed.

Clauses 14 to 25 passed.

Clause 26.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I move:

Amendment No 3 [EduChilDev-1]—

Page 17, line 33 [clause 26, inserted section 42D]—After 'working' insert 'livestock'

**Mr PEDERICK:** Can we go back to—

**The CHAIR:** No, unfortunately we can't. Was it—

**Mr PEDERICK:** I just wanted to ask a question in regard to microchipping—and sorry, I should have picked it up as I was coming through. I know that an amendment was attempted to be moved in the other place in regard to whether working livestock dogs would need to be microchipped.

I understand that in the realms of desexing, etc., working livestock dogs will be exempt, but I am just wondering about if, for instance, a farmer just wanted to sell a dog to a neighbour, even if they are breeding their own dogs. From my understanding, because that amendment did not get up they will need to be microchipped.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** They are not exempt from the requirement to have microchipping; that was discussed and debated in the other place, and it was determined that all dogs should be microchipped. However, they are exempt from the requirement to be desexed. So if a farmer wants to sell a non-desexed dog to a neighbour he is able to do that if he is registered as a working dog breeder, and, of course, if the purchaser were using it as a working dog. If the purpose of the dog is maintained then they are not required to be desexed.

**Mr PEDERICK:** So, just for clarification, did the minister say that they have to be registered as a working livestock dog breeder?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** They only need to be registered if they are breeding for sale. So, if they are not breeding for sale, and because they are not desexed dogs they might have puppies and they might be able to give them to the neighbour, that dog does not need to be desexed if they are going to be a working dog, but if they are breeding it in order to sell then they have to be registered as a working breeder.

**Mr PEDERICK:** So, that is the nub of the question: essentially, someone can give away a dog, because I am assuming there will be many livestock dog owners who may not be registered breeders, and a neighbour may want one of their pups, so they will need to give it away, because if there is a transaction they will be in breach?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That is correct.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 27 and 28 passed.

Clause 29.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I just want to comment on this and ask: clause 29—Amendment of section 45—Transporting unrestrained dogs in vehicles, is there any contemplation of a penalty for transporting an unrestrained cat in a vehicle, other than having the penalty of urine and faeces sprayed all over the inside of the car, because cats normally do not travel very well? It does not have to be onerous; it can be as simple as putting the cat inside a pillowcase, which many of my clients have done—you can leave the head in or out, whatever you like. It can be a serious road hazard having a cat loose in a car.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No, this act is not picking up that issue, although of course there is already the provision that one must not be cruel to animals, and there is the requirement to drive safely, so that may then result in some form of restraint for a cat, but it is not something we require under this legislation.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I just put on the record that putting a cat in a pillowcase is not cruel; the cat actually calms right down in there. But having some sort of lead or harness on cats is becoming quite commonplace now, so perhaps it is something the government may want to look at.

Clause passed.

Clauses 30 to 35 passed.

Clause 36.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I move:

Amendment No 4 [EduChilDev-1]—

Page 22, after line 19—Insert:

(1) Section 47(1)—delete 'Division 1 or 1A' and substitute 'this Act'

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 37 to 50 passed.

Clause 51.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I move:

Amendment No 5 [EduChilDev-1]—

Page 37, line 23 [clause 51, inserted section 70(4)]—After 'working' insert 'livestock'

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** A question on clause 51—Grounds on which orders may be made, destruction or control orders: does that include dangerous dog, menacing dog, nuisance dog and barking dog? My reading of it is that it is just a dangerous dog, but we also have barking dogs, nuisance dogs and menacing dogs. Can a destruction order be issued in those cases?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am wondering if the member for Morphett has the same clause that we are discussing.

**The CHAIR:** What page are you on, member for Morphett?

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I am on page 24.

**The CHAIR:** We are not on page 24, so that is going to make a big difference.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Mine is 'as received from the Legislative Council'.

**The CHAIR:** That is going to be a difficulty. What are you actually looking at? Could you tell us what it is called? What clause are we looking at?

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Clause 40.

**The CHAIR:** Clause 40, and what is it called?

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Where did you get up to?

**The CHAIR:** You tell us what you are looking at.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I am looking at clause 40, the substitution of section 51.

**The CHAIR:** That is on our page 24, so which part of that are you looking at? The grounds on which an order may be made?

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Yes, the grounds on which an order may be made—in the case of a destruction order, in the case of a control order. I am wondering whether destruction orders are envisaged to be made in other cases. If you cannot answer it now, it does not matter. I would just like you to get back to me on it.

**The CHAIR:** Okay. We are going to look at the amendment to clause 51 which adds the word 'livestock' after 'working'.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 52 to 60 passed.

Clause 61.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I am conscious of the time, but I have one small question on this. As to the procedures following the seizure of a dog, it says if a dog is seized under the division, it must either be returned to the person or be detained in a facility approved by the board. Does the board actually inspect these facilities, and how regularly?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, at least once every three years.

Clause passed.

Remaining clause (62), schedule and title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Minister for Education and Child Development, Minister for Higher Education and Skills) (17:58):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

**FARM DEBT MEDIATION BILL**

*Introduction and First Reading*

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

*Resolutions*

**STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

The Legislative Council informs the House of Assembly, in relation to its resolution to adopt a Statement of Principles for Members of Parliament, that it has resolved to adopt a similar statement of principles relevant to members of the Legislative Council.

*Bills*

**CRIMINAL ASSETS CONFISCATION (PRESCRIBED DRUG OFFENDERS) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Final Stages*

The Legislative Council insisted on its amendments to which the House of Assembly had disagreed.

At 18:00 the house adjourned until Tuesday 24 May 2016 at 11:00.