

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 8 August 2017

The **SPEAKER (Hon. M.J. Atkinson)** took the chair at 11:00 and read prayers.

The SPEAKER: Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of this land upon which this parliament is assembled and the custodians of the sacred lands of our state.

Bills

APPROPRIATION BILL 2017

Estimates Committees

Adjourned debate on motion:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

(Continued from 3 August 2017.)

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) (11:02): I rise to speak on the estimates process and signal that I have been a long-term supporter of the estimates process in my 20 years here. I think it has delivered good outcomes for South Australia. I know it has its critics but, certainly when I was in opposition and now that I am in government, I think that it is good for both sides of the house.

In government, it gives departments an opportunity to spring-clean, to really dust off all the issues of concern and bring them to the attention of the minister, to focus everyone's attention, at least once a year, on an entire array of issues that developed in the preceding year related to budget, how the money is deployed and performance against budget. On each occasion as a minister, both in the Liberal government and now in the Weatherill government, I have found it to be a very good process indeed.

In opposition, it was particularly useful. A good opposition will use this as an opportunity to really scrutinise the budget, to go through it line by line and obtain a stack of information. I am sure that those opposite did that during the course of the estimates session. I am not one of those who is critical of estimates; I think it is a very good process. I am particularly encouraged by the fact that it is under the control of the House of Assembly. I think that is a distinct advantage in the way we work as compared with the federal parliament.

I want to go into some of the details. The budget is produced in the fourth year of the election cycle, and at an interesting time nationally given the state of the national economy. You would have to say that things at the national level are, in historic terms, reasonably buoyant. At the national level, unemployment, for example, is at a very low level. I remember being in business in the 1990s, when unemployment was 12 or 13 per cent and interest rates were around 18 per cent. I can tell you that it was tough running a business in those days. I employed about 126 people in six businesses across the state. I remember advertising a position vacant on one occasion and receiving 423 written applications for the job.

To those who would go around and portray the economy as being in some sort of crisis at the moment, compared with what it was like in the 1990s, I would say you have to be joking. It is buoyant by comparison with what it was like back in 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996. Our unemployment rate in South Australia is too high. It is at the top end of the nation. That is unacceptable and we need to work tirelessly at that.

I frequently remind the house that the non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment or the natural rate of unemployment used by most economists is in the 4.5 to 5 per cent category, a group that for one reason or another may not be employable for reasons often not of their own choice. There are people with disabilities, there are people with drug and alcohol issues, there are people

with a host and array of factors that might militate against employment. It is really that gap between 4.5 to 5 per cent and the level that we have at the moment that focuses my attention. That is the one that we need to really work on, and the government is working on that.

The costs of borrowing money at the moment are at record lows. We have had all the reports saying that South Australia is one of the top five or 10 places in the world to live and to work. We have had all of the economic indicators, from anyone from KPMG through recently to CommSec and Deloitte, pointing out that in terms of the cost of doing business South Australia is pretty competitive, but it could always be more competitive.

I acknowledge that there are other reports out there that talk about business confidence needing to improve at the moment. I have always found business confidence to be a pretty wobbly measure. It is very subject to the newspapers of the day or the stories of the day. It flows and ebbs, and does U-turns and jumps and falls all over the place. I certainly prefer harder economic measures, and that is why I was very pleased to see Deloitte and CommSec indicate that business investment in South Australia was leading the nation just a few weeks ago. Those hard economic indicators are to me far more important than the so-called question of confidence. I will come back to that point later.

We do face some economic challenges, but they are challenges that many would like to have. I lead trade missions. The unemployment rate in Europe at the moment, in most nations there, is fluctuating from between 9 and 10 per cent to, in some cases, well into the 20s. There are the costs of borrowing money and a host of other considerations in a range of markets with which we deal. A lot of people would like to have the problems that Australia has at the moment. We are in a period of unbroken economic growth. The nation, by any measure, is doing rather well.

We just need to have a bit of a reality check every now and then for those who would go around and purvey doom and gloom, including during the estimates process. In Australia, as far as the rest of the world is concerned, things are pretty buoyant at the moment. Commodity prices have recently risen and foreign direct investment flows are strong. As I have mentioned, employment at the national level is looking very healthy, and there is growth and activity right across the Australian economy, which is pleasing.

That is not to say that it does not need restructuring. We are in a process of transformation, and that came out during budget estimates. We are moving from a high volume, low value, low margin manufacturing base into a high value, high margin, low volume manufacturing direction. We are moving away from motor cars towards building submarines and frigates. We are moving away from whitegoods towards building medical devices and technology products and more and more into the services sector. I was encouraged to see that in terms of growth services exports lead the nation at the moment, at around 9 per cent compared with 7 per cent nationally.

There are all these areas of growth, but I want to move from there and move into some specific areas, to do with estimates, for which I was responsible. Firstly, in the trade and investment area, it is pleasing to see that in chain volume terms we are at around \$15.4 billion a year of goods and services exported. The only reliable figure the ABS recommends for use in assessing these things is the chain volume measure. The FOB price on-board measure produced monthly jumps all over the place. It is not adjusted, it is an unreliable figure, by the ABS's own observation, and the chain volume figure is the one to use. By the way, it is up from around \$10.4 billion in 2006-07.

Growth is particularly strong in wine, in fruit and veg, in food generally and in primary production generally. As I have mentioned, services are growing strongly. We are also doing very well in a host of other export categories, including, of course, copper, lead and various other commodities, including wheat. All these things are heading in the right direction. We are not blessed with the bountiful quantities of coal they have in New South Wales and Queensland, nor with the masses of iron ore and natural resources in WA, which exports 42 per cent of Australia's total exports. We are just not as lucky as they are in terms of those natural gifts. We have always had to be a fairly savvy, smart state, we are at the end of the river and we have always had to think on our feet—and we are—and you can see signs of that everywhere in our economy. Exports are particularly strong.

I want to make some references to comments made by some others. First of all, I noted the very intelligent and constructive contribution made by the member for Goyder in response to

estimates, which I read with interest. I also read with interest and listened to the contribution made by the member for Chaffey, the shadow minister for exports. I am sure he and I would both want to see growth in exports and growth in the number of jobs and the amount of investment we receive from it. Around 72,000 South Australians go home every night with a meal on the table based on selling our goods and services.

It is clear from the estimates process and the questions that were asked that the opposition is struggling to work out what it wants to do to try to develop a policy on exports and investment. That does not surprise me because the program I have introduced over the last three or four years was the one I wrote when I was the shadow minister for trade and investment, opposite. It is exactly the program the Liberal Party took to the last state election, and I know that because I wrote it. I have actually implemented the exact plan that would have been implemented had things turned out differently at the last election, and that is because it is the right thing to do. On that basis, it would be good to have seen a little bit more bipartisan support for that program since it is effectively the one the opposition embraced at the last election.

Instead, we have had quite a lot of criticism of China, some of which has been quite nasty, if I may say that. China is our biggest trading partner and a great friend and a very important part of the jobs and investment story for South Australia going forward. We have had kneejerk type criticisms of what we are doing that have not been based on much careful reflection but were shots from the hip in an effort to criticise without making constructive alternative suggestions. The fact is that we have done a lot to get more companies overseas.

The challenge in this area is to educate, inform and encourage South Australian businesses to go overseas and sell their goods and services. We have done that through a revamped export partnership program. We have done that through a regular schedule of outbound missions to our major trading destinations. We are the only state that has an annual program of outbound missions and regular inbound missions, and we are commended everywhere we go for that.

Rather than leading trade missions on a whim when a gap appears in a minister's diary or a premier's diary and suddenly asking companies to come, or conducting government-only trade missions without businesses accompanying them, we have a very business to business approach. We take large numbers of companies away, they sell their goods and products, we put buyers together with sellers, sellers together with buyers and investors together with investments. It is very proactive, it is very hands-on and the business community love it. They love it, and they are voting with their feet by attending these missions and by growing their business and then going back separately later to follow up and to carry through because if the government to government side is right the business to business side will be right.

The opposition are obviously considering setting up larger, bigger flashier offices around the world as part of their offering. If they want to put the money into that, fine, go right ahead. It will swallow up millions, if not tens of millions of dollars. I can tell you that they are very expensive to run. They have been critical of the embedded Austrade approach we have taken of having an office of one person embedded with Austrade. I caution them because they will find, whether you are talking to tourism or trade, that you are better off to be inside the tent with Tourism Australia or Austrade, knowing what is going on, being part of the information network and in a position to push the cause of South Australia, than to be out there at a separate address, in a separate building on your own, isolated from that information and those contacts and trying to paddle your own canoe.

The member for Chaffey talked about how impressed he was with Queensland's office in Tokyo, and I am sure they do a very good job. I have met with the trade commissions of nearly all the states in various other parts of the world, and they are not all that happy. There is no point in having flash offices overseas if their only role is to receive ministers and take them on guided tours. You need people who are well connected, who do not lose their value when the regime or the government changes because their contacts have all gone out with the change of government. You actually need people who can help South Australians to sell their goods and services. So I raise some concerns about that.

If I were starting with a blank sheet of paper, I would like to see a whole lot more cuts to government spending. There are all sorts of things that could be done and all sorts of programs that

could be reformed. It is easy to talk about that, and I am sure there will be debate about that leading up to the next election. This is not a time to be sacking thousands of public servants, if that is the opposition's intention, because all these promises they are seeking to make can only be funded by significant cuts to government spending. Whichever way you slice that, it boils down to whether you are going to cut 1,000, 5,000, 10,000 or 20,000 public servants. I cannot see how that is going to help the unemployment situation at the moment.

That can only be the opposition's plan. They need to be really frank about that because where else is the money going to come from? They do not want any form of tax reform; in fact they want to cut a whole lot of taxes, but they just will not tell anyone where the money is coming from. It does not grow on trees, so I look forward to having a more intelligent and informed debate with the opposition once they tell us where the money is going to come from.

The bank tax issue has flavoured estimates. I see it as tax reform. Most of the money that will be raised from the banking tax is going to be spent on payroll tax cuts, property tax cuts and various other tax cuts or incentives directed towards small business. The money is basically coming from the big end of business and going to the small end of business. I see it, effectively, as a tax reform. I do not like any new tax at any time; it irks me. The less tax the better. I am for low tax and small government and efficient government. I do not blame the banks for defending their bottom line but, at 30¢ in a hundred dollars, I fail to see how the end of the world is going to be nigh as a consequence of this particular measure.

The advertising campaign that is going on with the full encouragement of those opposite is what is doing the damage, not the tax itself. It is talking the state down. It is incorrectly rubbishing South Australia. As the Minister for Investment, I can tell you that there are nothing but green shoots and positive signs everywhere I look in regard to investment at the moment. We are getting lots of inquiries. It is ironic that business investment is at an all-time high and leads the nation, according to reports by CommSec and Deloitte's in the last two weeks. It flies in the face of the argument the banks are running.

We all know what they are trying to do. If I were a banker, I would probably be doing the same thing—that is, trying not to pay tax—but the fact is that governments impose taxes. This tax is being redirected to small business by and large. The banks may not like that, but I think the small businesses that will be the beneficiaries will.

In regard to the Defence aspect of estimates, I draw to the house's attention that we face some serious challenges going forward. We need to decide as a nation, before we go further with contracts, whether or not an Australian company is going to build the submarine to the DCNS design or the Naval Group's design, or whether the designer is going to be invited to also be the builder, and whether that leaves us with a sovereign capability and a truly indigenous industrial capability to build our own submarines. I think this is a really serious concern, and we need a resolution to it.

The same concern exists with the frigates. Are we going to get Fincantieri, Navantia or BAE not only to design but build the ship? I favour a model where an Australian company is the builder, Australians are doing the work and we optimise the supply chain. I think that is going to become the key issue going forward with naval shipbuilding.

There has been some publicity and I was asked questions about Land 400. We know exactly how many jobs are on offer with Land 400 and how much the state government was prepared to offer. It is like going to a house auction and being suckered into paying far more than the house is worth through a bidding war. I suspect that what has happened, when all the information is known, is that Queensland and Victoria have been pushed right up in terms of what they were prepared to put in on behalf of their respective taxpayers to a point where it may not be quite as beneficial for those states as they might think, when you actually look at the number of jobs and the amount of investment on offer. I wish them well. We were not prepared to be drawn into a bidding war, given a very thorough assessment of what was on offer there.

In regard to international students, we are doing well, but I would love to see us do better. We have an International Students Action Plan out there; similarly with migration—I would love to see stronger flows. Generally, I think the estimates process has been worthwhile. I thank members opposite and all my own staff and departments for the help they provided.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11:23): I rise to speak on the Appropriation Bill, which comes before us subsequent to the estimates process. This is a process in which the minister responsible for portfolios presents to a committee of the parliament, usually with a significant number of senior advisers from their department or areas of responsibility, to provide information to the parliament, via this committee, arising out of the budget of that year.

It is an important process established originally by premier Tonkin, and it has been one that I think overall has served the parliament well. In the 15 years I have been here, however, in regard to the presentation of ministers, I would have to say there has been a variety of assistance given by different ministers; some have been quite forthcoming. I remember that the member for Ashford, when she was a minister, would promptly provide information to the committee. When it was not available to her from the people sitting around, she made sure that it was provided promptly.

However, the myriad who are presented today, unfortunately, I think fail to give any credibility or credit to the government in their responses. Surrounded by very senior people, they frequently take matters on notice which are clearly available and in relation to which advisers are rushing to present their material to the ministers. Unfortunately, anything they see as slightly controversial they will of course take on notice. So it is sabotaged, I suggest, by lazy ministers who fail to act when they should and who attempt to frustrate a process to which in the ordinary course of business they ought to be proud to present on a budget they have endorsed.

With that, can I turn to the Attorney-General, who presented with the Chief Justice on the Courts Administration Authority and with senior personnel for the Attorney-General's Department, together with consumer and business affairs, the Electoral Commission and State Records, matters in relation to which I was a member of the committee. Firstly, can I say this: I raised with the Attorney a number of questions that were outstanding from last year, that is, the 2016 estimates. This is not uncommon; we frequently have to ask for them. The Attorney took great delight in advising the committee that he would check on what happened with those answers, but he accepted that they should have been answered. He thought they had been.

We then found, as he presented to the committee later, that he had identified that a number of those questions had been presented, apparently, to the parliament on 20 December 2016. That is eight months ago. On further inquiry, it became clear that not only had the answers to those questions never been tabled in the parliament, never in that time, but apparently the email through which they had been presented to the parliament had never even been opened or read.

That is a matter that I think should be brought to the Speaker's attention. Since then, I have been provided with copies of those, and I understand that sometime this week those answers to the questions for the 2016 committee will in fact be tabled, as they should be. Any suggestion that it is outside of the practice to provide answers outside of the proposed estimates time would not only make a mockery of the system, because we frequently get them outside of the proposed time, but in addition to that, subsequently I have received other questions from other ministers. I want that matter brought to the attention of the Speaker, and I do not want it to be repeated. If there is a breakdown in the system of that information being provided, then it ought to be dealt with.

Apparently, there was an old email used from the Attorney-General's office. That may be the fault of his office. I do not really care whose fault it is. These are answers to the parliament and we should see them, the committee should see them and I should see them, having asked for them. I will not say anything further about that, but if it was the Attorney-General's office's fault then he can give me the usual apology.

In respect of the budget this year, the Attorney-General's Department and the courts administration area in particular received some continued maintenance and repair work, an extra Supreme Court judge, some redevelopment of the superior courts building at 1 Gouger Street and the Sir Samuel Way Building and, frankly, not much else. That is disappointing. In the lifetime of this government, we have had three announcements of a courts precinct rebuild and three cancellations, the last one followed up within weeks by a \$100 million development at the Festival Centre when the government had claimed it did not have the financial resources to progress the courts precinct.

As has been indicated frequently by Chief Justice Doyle and now Chief Justice Kourakis to the committees of this parliament, our superior courts buildings are in a disgraceful state of disrepair.

At a recent ABA conference in London it was a source of mirth that we had a Supreme Court building in which there was a mattress still lashed to the wall at the bottom of a stairway as some kind of occupational health hazard management model to collect somebody if they slipped down the stairs. It is an utter disgrace. Chief Justice Doyle could not even get into his own courtroom because of inaccessibility in terms of disability provision when he was in a wheelchair for a period of time. It is a disgrace. We have the worst superior court buildings in the country, and they are a source of great embarrassment.

People should understand that this is the workplace of not only many people who work for the Courts Administration Authority but also judges and their staff, offenders—it is true—plaintiffs and defendants. These are normal citizens who go to a government service to have their case litigated in an appalling situation. That is not to mention the number of witnesses for cases, who come along to support civil and criminal cases, who are living in that squalor. It is unacceptable and clearly needs to be remedied.

The government's commitment of \$31 million to re-create courtrooms on the top floor of the Sir Samuel Way Building was identified in estimates as \$18 million for that and \$13 million to be spent on the Supreme Court building. That is the 1 Gouger Street property, which is owned by the state, the former of which is leased by Funds SA. The Chief Justice was helpful in his contribution, telling us that, at a rental cost of some \$6 million a year, something had to be looked at in terms of paying out the tail of that 40-year lease and/or land value and that that would be a financially sensible way forward.

The 40-year lease expires in 2023. Given the government's financial commitment to someone else's building, it is expected that it will sign a further period of lease and/or hopefully take the Chief Justice's advice and acquire the building so that the services that are there can continue. Any precinct rebuild now will take some time. If things change in March next year, we will have more comments to make about that, but at the moment this is the expenditure that will be introduced. Apparently, the first tranche on 1 Gouger Street will be completed this year, followed by work to be done on the Sir Samuel Way Building by June 2019. It will create two new criminal courtrooms and refurbish another area for civil matters.

There is some financial support for the Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) that has been established as more areas of responsibilities are moved across. The Attorney is so slow in introducing the legislation for that to actually happen that I will be surprised if that \$6.1 million is spent in this financial year; in any event, it has been announced. The Legal Services Commission gets a tiny bit extra. The most disappointing aspect was the lack of provision of financial support for our community legal services, particularly in regional areas.

Even the federal Attorney-General saw the folly of attempting to cut out community legal service costs. Although significant amounts of federal money are still tied, he had the good sense to backflip on his original decision on that in the federal budget. The state Attorney, however, obviously failed in the cabinet, if he put the submission at all, to get continuing support. We now have this absurd situation where, although there can be some tissue of services rescued in Mount Gambier, the rest of the southern part of the state, including the Riverland, has to get services from Christies Beach, which is a three-hour drive away. It is utterly absurd. If the Attorney's submissions fell on the deaf ears of the Treasurer in the cabinet room, then the Attorney's failure to deal with that area is not to his credit and he has failed the people of regional South Australia.

Some moneys have been put towards an ice strategy for the Stop the Hurt program, which apparently came as a result of a task force jointly chaired by the police and mental health ministers. We are yet to have a briefing about that because not much has been forthcoming. How ridiculous! That report, apart from some glossy pictures, has been published on their website. The recommendations from that report, of which I understand there are about 50, are a secret. We are not allowed to see the report. Obviously, it has been expensive for the ministers and their entourage to skip around the state.

We are not even sure who they consulted. Did they just talk to themselves or have lunch at Port Pirie or something? I do not know what they did, but it is a secret. We are not allowed to know. This is the most pressing issue for young people, in particular, in this state, yet we are not even

allowed to see the report. We are not allowed to have any particulars of what has been recommended. I find that disgraceful.

While we are on secrecy, the \$1 million report and business plan for the courts maintenance and continued structural requirements, commissioned by the Department of Transport and Infrastructure under minister Mullighan, is also a secret. Nobody is allowed to see that. We have asked for it in estimates: again, it is a secret. For goodness sake, why are we not able to see what is being recommended by either external consultants or internal persons who are advising the government? The people of South Australia pay for these reports. In this case, the Department of Transport paid \$1 million for this business plan and report on the infrastructure requirements of the court precinct, and we are not even allowed to see it. It is utterly disgraceful.

It is hardly surprising that we have a situation where the Attorney will not even progress the integrity bill to deal with whistleblower reforms in this state, which has stagnated in the i-cloud between these two houses of parliament because he will not convene a meeting to actually progress it. It is scandalous conduct. It is juvenile behaviour for a minister and he perpetuated that behaviour at estimates.

A further temporary deputy coroner is to be appointed to help with the critical shortage there, apparently to deal with some backlog. We have been waiting for one for Graziella Daillér from 2014—a shocking shooting murder-suicide in respect of which we want some answers. After the Abrahamzadeh coronial inquiry, it is scandalous to think that the Coroner has not had the funds to progress that.

The Coroner is now burdened with the responsibility of dealing with multiple deaths at the Oakden facility and has no money to do it. The government's answer to the independent statutory authorities of this parliament is to starve them of money so that they cannot actually do their job. Instead, they commission a secret inquiry by MinterEllison to undertake the issues in respect of potential breaches of the obligations under the Aged Care Act and other matters. Really, the government just perpetuates a continuing problem.

A paltry \$270,000 for justice reinvestment in respect of the safety and wellbeing of our Aboriginal people is symptomatic of the government's refusal to deal with important areas of support for a community that is absolutely in pain. People who have jobs are fearful that they are going to lose them and people who do not have jobs are worried about providing for their families. We have major social dysfunction.

I will speak later today about unemployment. As at the end of last year, there are close to 60,000 unemployed in this state, not to mention the underemployed, who are expected to be in the hundreds of thousands and mounting. The situation is quite dire, yet the government has abandoned these important areas of service and support, which they have an obligation to provide to the people of South Australia. On the other hand, the Attorney-General's Department is quite happy to spend over \$20 million to refit their facilities in the GPO Tower—a flash new office for the Attorney-General. I think there is about \$24 million all up to relocate all of the Attorney-General's Department over into the new GPO Tower.

I have no issue about the provision of adequate accommodation for those who work hard, and that includes those in the Attorney-General's Department, but this is on the back of consumer affairs having a refit of all their offices last year. I think that was about \$4 million. The government is quite happy to spend money in respect of the services of those who work for them at the high end, I might add; just about everyone else in the government has to hot-desk these days. The high end get their facilities in the new offices but not others.

Forensic Science SA has a major role in respect of the work that it does, particularly in DNA crime scenes and the drug driver and illicit drug testing that it does. The failure to deal with the performance indicators in respect of turnaround times is a direct reflection of the government's failure to provide adequate resources to ensure that that occurs. When I asked what the full-time equivalents for the 2017-18 year was, Forensic Science SA is actually going to lose half a person. How they expect them to do more work and comply with these areas is beyond me.

In respect of the youth offenders boot camp, we have this absurd situation where again another secret report, the final evaluation, is due out this year. We are not allowed to see the interim report. Again, taxpayers' money has been spent on this, but we are not allowed to see whether it was good and should be continued, whether it was hopeless and should be abandoned or whether it is not a bad idea but needs some remedy and we could make amendments. Again, it is all a secret.

As for the Fines Enforcement and Recovery Unit, what a mess! We have a situation where the major portion of close to \$379 million is owed to the state, and it is growing. All that does is prop up the very dodgy budget of the Treasurer as an asset on the balance sheet, but it does nothing to act as a disciplinary tool for those who should be paying their fines or provide appropriate relief and alternate penalties for those who clearly cannot pay their fines.

With those comments, I indicate that we are again waiting for a whole lot of answers. There are a whole lot of red stickers on my material, so the Attorney is on notice. I expect him to deliver those; I think a date has been set in September for answers to be provided. When they come here, I hope someone in this house makes sure I get a copy.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (11:42): It is my pleasure on behalf of the people of Stuart to rise to contribute to the Appropriation Bill 2017. We all know this is about the estimates period that follows the budget period. Let me put on the record right at the start that budgeting is always difficult. It does not matter if it is the smallest household or the largest national economy: budgeting is difficult. There is never enough money to do all the things that you want to do.

It actually comes down to your priorities. It comes down to picking necessities and picking priorities. Of course, that is one of the foundations of politics in our system. Many priorities are the same and many priorities are different. There is also another difference, and that is the capacity to manage money. We on this side of the house believe that we would be much more efficient and much more effective budgeters on behalf of the people of South Australia, keeping in mind that the money is not ours.

The money does not belong to government, the money does not belong to parliament or to MPs; it belongs to the people of South Australia. It is money that they have been taxed by the South Australian government or the federal government and then a share of that tax from the federal government has been passed on to the state government to spend on behalf of South Australians. It is not the government's money; it is South Australians' money, to be spent for their best benefit.

I have to say that through the budget, towards the estimates period, estimates is a very frustrating thing for opposition. The government knows that. I understand that they know that. I understand that they try to make it frustrating. It is frustrating not only for members of the opposition but also for members of the public because they know it is their money, they know it is being spent on their behalf and they are incredibly frustrated that the government frustrates the opposition when it comes to finding out how that money is being spent.

The process is meant to allow detailed questions to lead to detailed answers so that everybody can know exactly what is going on, but that certainly has not happened this year. I sat in on defence industries, veterans affairs, employment, science and technology, manufacturing and innovation, automotive transformation and, from the opposition's perspective, I also led the mineral resources and energy session.

In those seven different sessions that I sat in on, there were very few open and frank answers about how the money is being spent or why the government has established the priorities that it has established. I say again, 'Don't worry about us. Don't worry about the opposition MPs. Worry about the South Australians who are frustrated because the government won't give us answers on their behalf,' because we represent South Australians as well; it is not only the government that represents them.

The opposition and this whole parliament represent South Australians, so we are asking those questions on behalf of the public so that the public can get the answers they deserve, but unfortunately they were not forthcoming at all. I understand that we are only a few months out from the election and tempers get frayed, that relationships are stressed and life becomes a lot more difficult in this building the closer you get to an election. Guess what? That is just bad luck. The

government still is obliged to provide straight answers, even a few to several months out from an election.

It will not surprise anybody in this house that one of the most argumentative ministers in estimates was the Treasurer, the Minister for State Development, the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy. He has a particular knack of putting forward his view and nobody else's view and avoiding and dodging questions. I suppose in many ways that might well be described as a political skill, but the reality is that the overwhelming majority of people in South Australia do not view it that way. The overwhelming majority of people in South Australia view it as dodgy, as a way of avoiding scrutiny and applying spin to a particular point of view.

Be that as it may, it is the opposition's job to get the best that we possibly can out of the estimates process. Some people find estimates dull and some people find it ineffective, but my view is that, as frustrating as it is, it is the opportunity that we have and, if the government gives us only a small percentage of the value out of it that we are entitled to, we should still take whatever we can get on behalf the people of South Australia.

This year, of course, there was a strong focus on energy. In the estimates session I led as the shadow minister for energy and mining with the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy, the focus was entirely on energy, not because mining is not important—it is very, very important, and I am an extraordinarily strong supporter of our mineral resources industries in this state, including petroleum—but because that is where the public focus is and that is where the biggest mess is at the moment with regard to government policy.

Also, this year the government provided less time for mineral resources and energy than it has in previous years, so time was tighter. Interestingly, the minister took government questions this year, which he has not done in all the last several years in which I have participated as the shadow minister. A greater focus on energy, a shorter time allowed by the government and the minister's taking government questions all meant that the opportunity for me to ask questions was significantly diminished, so I thought it was appropriate to focus on energy—apologies to the mining sector. It is just the way it had to be this year, but that does not mean for a second that mining is not important; it certainly is.

The reason that it was so important for the minister to provide straightforward, helpful answers is that energy in our state is a mess. Everybody knows it. Everybody all over Australia knows that energy in our state is a mess, and everybody knows that, after 16 years of state Labor government policy, energy is a mess. The government has punished South Australians with outrageously high electricity prices, job losses and blackouts. The government has said that that is necessary because it wants to reduce emissions, help the environment and have an extremely quick leap towards a lower carbon emissions world.

But one of the most startling things in the budget—this is the information that the government itself put in the budget—is that emissions generated within South Australia from electricity generation will actually increase from 2016-17 to 2017-18. It will increase from a target in the last year of 43½ per cent—I would have to check that—to a forecast for the 2017-18 year of 55 per cent (and I know I have that number right). They are punishing all South Australians with increased electricity prices, job losses and blackouts, all to reduce emissions, they say, yet their budget says they will not reduce emissions. That is absolutely disgraceful.

This has led directly to South Australia having the highest unemployment rate in the nation for the last several years. It is not an accident. High electricity prices flow through from the smallest household to the largest employer. It is an additional cost on every household and every business. The reason I focus on business is not because I am so focused on business profitability but because I want businesses to be able to employ people, and if a business is not making a certain level of profit and does not have a secure future then that business cannot provide secure employment and secure employment is what every person deserves to have. Everybody deserves secure employment—that is why businesses need to be successful.

This increase in electricity prices and the blackouts—we all know the Business SA figures say nearly half a billion dollars was lost from the statewide blackout on 28 September last year, plus the other five blackouts that we have had in the last year or so—have had an extraordinarily negative

impact upon business and that is why employment is suffering, among other reasons. But we all know—every member on this side of the house knows and every government member knows—that if we had lower electricity prices, we would have higher employment; it is just a fact.

This business that the government trots out about privatisation nearly 20 years ago being the cause and the devil that has created all this is absolute rubbish because for most of that nearly 20 years Victoria and South Australia have both been privatised and for most of that nearly 20 years South Australia has had the highest prices and Victoria has had the lowest prices for electricity. So that privatisation argument is dead and buried and absolutely ridiculous.

As we know, there are some commentators who say South Australia has the highest electricity prices in the world. That is absolutely shameful. It is also shameful that the minister would not honestly, directly and in a very open way answer estimates questions that people quite rightfully want to know the answers to. They want to know why we are in this situation. Of course, through the budget, from the government's announcement back on 14 March and all the way through the estimates period that we are talking about at the moment, the government has clung to its \$550 million plan, which it says is going to help South Australians in this area.

Interestingly, the government said at the beginning of this process, back on 14 March and in the days immediately afterwards, that the government's plan would reduce electricity prices. That is what they said. If they spent \$550 million of taxpayers' money it would reduce electricity prices. However, you cannot find any government member, let alone the minister or the Premier, saying that these days. They have totally walked away from that commitment because, as the opposition said at the time, that was never going to happen. Unfortunate as that fact is, they tried to oversell, they tried to overspruik and they said things which now you cannot get them to say again because they know they were not true.

What we quite regularly get, and what we got through estimates, was the government saying, 'Don't worry about all of this; we're going to spend \$550 million,' but they will not provide any detail at all about how that money is going to be spent. The answer is, of course, that as they keep changing their plan, as they have done half a dozen times, the answer is always, 'It's okay; it's within the budget.' Let me tell you, Deputy Speaker, if I were to drive your car—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You wouldn't fit in my car!

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: —and if I were to crash your car and I then said to you, 'Don't worry about it because I'm going to spend a lot of your money getting your car fixed,' you would not be very happy. If then I kept changing my plans about how it was going to be fixed and if I had said at the start, 'Don't worry, it will be completely fixed,' but a bit later on said, 'Maybe I'll fix it a bit; maybe it will be sort of fixed. I can't keep the promise that I made to start with,' you would be even less happy. Then if I said to you, 'But don't worry, Deputy Speaker, it will all be within the very high budget of your money that I told you that I would spend,' you would not be happy.

However, that is what the government is telling the people of South Australia. The government is telling the people of South Australia not to worry because it is going to be within the \$550 million budget of South Australians' own money that the government is going to spend to fix the problem that the government created—and they think that is okay. They think that is okay but no-one else thinks it is okay.

No-one anywhere in South Australia thinks that is okay. I know that if members opposite were in a position to speak openly, many of them would say they know it is not okay, as well. It is not okay to say that they are going to spend \$550 million of taxpayers' money to fix the problem that they created and then, when they cannot explain exactly what the solution is (and they change the solution regularly), say, 'It will all be within the \$550 million so you don't need to worry.' No-one is falling for that.

South Australians are being left in the dark about how their money is being spent, whether it is considering the big battery near Jamestown, the gas generator which we were told initially would be in place for this coming summer, the diesel generators we have subsequently been told will be in place for this coming summer or what will now be the same generators which can run on diesel and can run on gas and will be in place for two years and then will be transferred to gas, which they are going to lease to begin with but there is an option to buy them but they cannot tell us what the price

for the lease or the price for the purchase is, and they cannot tell us when they are going to transfer from a lease to purchase.

It is no wonder that nobody out there is comfortable with this plan. It is no wonder that they are angry about the fact that they are being told, '\$550 million of your money, it will all be okay; don't worry about it,' when none of those very straightforward questions will be answered, not even in the estimates process, which is exactly where those questions should be answered. Even with regard to some technical questions—and it is fair to ask technical questions in estimates when there is a budget allocated to the work to be done—it is fair to ask, 'How is this particular money going to be spent? What is going to be done with this money?' It is fair to ask even very straightforward questions like, 'Are the connections into the grid at Jamestown at the Hornsdale Wind Farm sufficient currently to allow for the installation of the new battery next to the wind farm? Will there be extra connection infrastructure required to make that happen?'

Of course, then the energy minister looks up and laughs and says, 'That's how little the opposition knows about this stuff. Why would you ask a question like that?' as some sort of high and mighty defence, and then turns around to the advisers and starts chuckling, so they all start chuckling as if they think it is funny. They do not, but if the minister chuckles, they chuckle and that is just what often happens. There are a lot of unanswered questions about this energy plan. The government will have to answer these questions. They also have to explain why they are backing away from the commitments they made when they initially announced the plan.

This plan has been changed half a dozen times, and no doubt it will continue to change. A very fair question that comes out of all this—and one we hear regularly, and I do not mind it at all—is: what about the opposition's energy plan? That is a fair question, and the very fair answer is: the opposition's energy plan will be released well in advance of the next state election.

The opposition's energy plan will be focused on delivering affordable, reliable electricity for South Australians that will flow through to increased employment in every way imaginable, as I said before, from the smallest household to the largest employer. Every single South Australian is affected by electricity. We will deliver a plan months out from the election that makes it very clear how South Australia will again retain affordable and reliable electricity for the benefit of every South Australian.

Mr TARZIA (Hartley) (12:01): I also rise to speak about the estimates process. I was delighted to be involved in an array of estimates sessions, including but not limited to some of those involving the Attorney-General's Department, as well as multicultural affairs, the departments of volunteers, investment and trade, police, industrial relations, Consumers and Business Services, employment, manufacturing and innovation and automotive transformation. I wish to touch on a few of those today, starting with some of the issues that were raised in relation to the Attorney-General's various areas.

We learnt that at the moment the state's prosecutors are labouring under workloads that one prominent figure in the law is saying are 30 per cent higher than those of their interstate colleagues whilst receiving far less funding. Obviously, this is unacceptable to us, but it is also unacceptable to the DPP. I note that recently, in a published local paper, the DPP, Adam Kimber SC, said that resourcing remains a consistent theme of his tenure.

We know that funding per case in South Australia is currently about \$10,500, and the closest to that is Western Australia, with \$17,000. However, they point out that solicitor file loads are twice those in some states—almost 30 per cent higher than the nearest comparator. Mr Kimber goes on also to state that, while the Rann government knew about this issue, it has been exacerbated in recent times.

We also learnt—and of course we are not having a go at any of the judges; we know that they do a fine job and do their work to the best of their ability—that what we have here is a government that seriously thinks there are not any votes in the law. That is why they have allowed some of the courts to spiral into, quite frankly, a state that is not one we should be proud of. Another thing that came out in relation to this area is that a number of unpaid fines are owed to the state government's Fines Enforcement and Recovery Unit. Quite early on, as a backbencher, I proposed a bill that sought to eradicate one of these problems; however, the Attorney opposed—

The SPEAKER: The member is anticipating debate on one of his bills, I see.

Mr TARZIA: No, this is a past bill, sir.

The SPEAKER: A past one; I am sorry.

Mr TARZIA: No, thank you for clarifying that.

Matter of Privilege

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton) (12:04): Sir, I raise a matter of privilege.

The SPEAKER: Stop the clock. The member for Colton rises on a matter of privilege.

The Hon. P. CAICA: During the debate last Thursday on a resolution to determine this place's position on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, the member for MacKillop said the following:

During the debate that just ensued, the member for Mawson attributed to me comments that I had made at some stage that it was not a Rolls-Royce but a Mazda, and I was happy for us to drive a Mazda. The Premier made a similar assertion just now. I have never made that comment.

The SPEAKER: Was that said during debate or as a personal explanation?

The Hon. P. CAICA: That was made as a personal explanation. I draw your attention and that of the house to an article that appeared online in *The Advertiser* on 17 February 2012 at 11pm headed 'Libs' Murray plan a glass half empty'. Halfway down, the member for MacKillop is quoted in this article. He says, or the journalist says he says:

'This is obviously not the Rolls-Royce, but it's a very good Mazda and we're quite happy to drive in the Mazda,' Mr Williams, the Opposition's water spokesman, told *The Advertiser* yesterday. 'The reality is we're not going to get everything we want and this is a very good start.'

Sir, I ask you to investigate this matter as a matter of privilege.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (12:06): If I may assist the house, I made a personal explanation last week and I wished to explain that article in *The Advertiser*, but the acting Speaker prevented me from going further. I acknowledge that *The Advertiser* did print that. I protested to the journalist, Daniel Wills, at the time. It was not what I said. After I had attended a meeting, which was arranged at Waikerie a few days prior to that article being published, Daniel Wills asked me to give him some comments regarding the meeting.

I gave him that quote, which came from the then president of the Murray irrigators' association, Karen—her surname escapes me at the moment. That was a direct quote from her. I said, 'This is what the Murray River irrigators' chair said to me, that they are reasonably satisfied.' *The Advertiser* printed that article attributing that comment to myself. I have protested ever since that they were not my words but the words of the chair of the River Murray irrigators' association. I have never said those words myself. They do not reflect my thoughts—they never have—notwithstanding that the government has, on numerous occasions, sought to paint that both on me and on the opposition. That is just not the case.

The SPEAKER (12:08): Of course, it is one thing to say in the course of debate that one has never said these words; it is another to bring the issue to a head by making a personal explanation in which one says that one has never said these words and yet not canvassed all the matters that the member for MacKillop now relies upon, namely, that he was misquoted. It would be relevant to my deliberations on the matter of privilege to see evidence of what steps the member for MacKillop took to repudiate those remarks.

I will reserve my position on this matter and come back with a ruling on whether it is a matter that needs to receive priority of debate. If it is not a matter that needs priority of debate, it might be referred to a privileges committee, but I will hear representations from the member for MacKillop and, in particular, what steps he took to alert everyone that they were not his words in the five years between his being quoted and the current day.

Ms Redmond: Do you expect *The Advertiser* to correct themselves?

The SPEAKER: The member for Heysen interjects, 'Do we honestly expect *The Advertiser* to correct themselves?' They would rather cut off their right arm with a rusty knife than admit they got something wrong.

Mr WILLIAMS: Exactly. I think I protested this matter previously in the house. Whether I can find those comments—

The SPEAKER: 'Mazda' is a fairly easy word to search on in the house.

Mr WILLIAMS: Yes. I will do a search of the *Hansard* and see if I can find it, but I can assure you, sir, that those words were never said as my thoughts on the matter.

The SPEAKER: But it might have been useful in the member's personal explanation that he shared with the house.

Mr WILLIAMS: I indeed last week sought to do that. Even after the Deputy Speaker prevented me from doing so, I went and sought further advice from the Clerk of the House, who relied on a ruling you had previously made that I could only state that I had been misrepresented and point out the misrepresentation, and could go no further.

The SPEAKER: I see.

Mr WILLIAMS: I did endeavour, sir.

The SPEAKER: That is a matter I will consider.

Mr WILLIAMS: I am sure the Clerk will—

The SPEAKER: An extenuating circumstance.

Mr WILLIAMS: Thank you, sir.

The SPEAKER: The member for Hartley.

Mr TARZIA: Thank you, sir.

Mr WILLIAMS: Just on a matter of clarification, sir—

The SPEAKER: I am not very keen on matters of clarification. The member for MacKillop can be enlightened by approaching the Chair. The member for Hartley.

Bills

APPROPRIATION BILL 2017

Estimates Committees

Debate resumed.

Mr TARZIA (Hartley) (12:11): As I alluded to, we learnt during the estimates process that an exorbitant amount of money is still owed to the state government's Fines Enforcement and Recovery Unit, with South Australia's worst fine defaulters in fact owing more than \$1 million. One of the worst fine dodgers, I am led to believe, was actually gaoled for two months last financial year, as the state government still moved to reclaim millions of dollars owed to the state coffers.

We learnt that over the past 12 months the Fines Enforcement and Recovery Unit pursued 125 people who owed significant sums of money as well. In estimates, the Attorney told the parliament that the unit had acted in five cases over the past year where fine defaulters refused to complete community service, that one person had been gaoled for 62 days as a result, that two people had paid the sum owing in response to the enforcement proceedings and that two people were still awaiting hearing.

The Attorney also told parliament that a total of \$302 million in unpaid fines was still owed to the state government. Of that, the fines unit managed to recoup \$124.5 million over the past 12 months, which is up 7 per cent on the previous year, but during the 2016-17 year more than \$58 million in outstanding fines was waived or put on hold, possibly to be reclaimed later. It is very clear that the government needs to be doing better in this regard.

We also learnt during the estimates process about the good work that community groups do in respect of multicultural affairs. I want to thank all the community groups in my electorate of Hartley. Obviously, I have a very strong base of several groups, but especially the Italian groups, the Chinese groups, the Indian groups and the Greek groups. I want to especially thank them, as well as all the others, for the great work they do in truly enriching our state in all aspects of our daily lives.

Whether it is our food, our fashion, our language or our sport, these groups in our community certainly enrich South Australia. They have done so and they continue to do so. I also want to thank all the volunteers. We were able to ask the minister questions about volunteering in this state. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers in my electorate for the wonderful fabric of society that they contribute to.

We learned a little bit about the state bank tax in the estimates process. What we saw was that, unfortunately, adding a tax is the current government's answer to everything. Whether there is a problem, real or perceived, the answer is to tax. We know that Labor has form in this area. We know that the state Labor government has implemented, or tried to implement, or has even considered implementing, several taxes: the state bank tax, ESL increases, a car park tax and GST increases. It has proposed a foreign investor surcharge on stamp duties, and also a land tax on the family home, and we know that these proposed increases are unacceptable.

One way or another, we know that South Australians will pay for these taxes if they are forced on them. In South Australia, we know that we cannot tax our way to prosperity. The government has had a crack. They have had 15 years to get this right and, unfortunately, it has not worked. What we need to be doing is lowering taxes, not increasing them. We know that someone has to pay these taxes that the government is inflicting on South Australians. We know that these taxes—especially the state bank tax—one way or another, will be passed on and that they will result in higher borrowing costs for banks, and therefore higher lending costs for banks, but also for the businesses and the households that depend on a strong banking system.

We know that there may well be lower interest payments for savings deposits as well. We all know that if the state bank tax were allowed to be passed, it could result in lower returns for shareholders, including superannuation accounts via reduced dividends and/or lower share values. It can also have a detrimental effect on confidence in the state. As we have seen in recent times, why would the government want to inflict more pain when confidence is already as it is? That is not even to mention the increased sovereign risk, reputational risk and damage to the state if the state bank tax is allowed to be passed.

We know that it is a punitive tax. We know it is levelled at a few businesses that are operating in South Australia. We have heard that it is not just the banks that might be hit; it is also another group of businesses that, if this government deems they are not paying their fair share, may also be expected to cough up. We know that businesses think on the margin and that businesses will shop around. *Ceteris paribus* (all other things being equal), if they can get a better deal interstate they might just look at that as well.

We think we should be making this state a more attractive place for businesses to do business, for them to then go out and employ more people so that we can lower the unemployment rate that we have in this state, which, by the way, is the highest unemployment rate in the nation, which is just absurd. We should not be there; we need to be doing better. We need to be lowering business taxes, not increasing them. If the state bank tax does pass, we have seen that investors have already begun selling off. They have been shorting state government bonds. That will obviously increase the bond spread, lead to more volatility and raise the costs of borrowing in the future. It also potentially means high interest costs for taxpayers.

It is obviously very different from the federal bank tax. In economic terms, it is called the fallacy of composition: just because something might be good for the whole, does not necessarily mean that it is good for one part. Conversely, the Australian government provides an implicit guarantee for major banks, and this protects deposits and ensures the stability of the financial system—obviously very different from South Australia. The state government provides no such guarantee. I ask the government to review this measure they are proposing. During the estimates process, it was confirmed that not many people were actually consulted on this bank tax. Even the

government's own advisers were not consulted, which is truly remarkable and also shows the arrogance that this government has fallen into.

In relation to those who work with children or people with a disability, we saw in the estimates process that at least 11 people have already had their clearance revoked in the months since a new real-time monitoring system was introduced. A \$6.5 million system took effect on 1 July that enables authorities to continuously monitor whether people who have passed screening checks later commit or are charged with crimes that would then prevent them from working with children or other vulnerable people in South Australia.

I understand that the minister whose department is responsible for the screenings said that the screening unit had received more than 300 notifications about potential applicants from the child protection department and SAPOL since 1 July. The government said that the new process means that the screening unit now receives daily updates of any charges, convictions and any other relevant information relating to any person who holds a clearance.

We on this side of the chamber warn that those delays are causing good South Australians to miss out on much-needed jobs or volunteer roles. Whilst we understand that this effective screening mechanism is imperative, the latest figures show that 119,815 applications for a background check were processed last financial year and 4,667 of those—almost 4 per cent—took longer than 30 business days to process. That is an increase from 106,190 applications in 2015-16, of which 2,522, or almost 2.5 per cent, took more than six weeks to clear. Some of the people who have been left in limbo include social workers, aged and disability carers, tradespeople, teachers, taxidriviers or personal trainers—you name it.

Whilst we understand the need for these checks, we want to make sure that there are fewer delays. We know that people looking for work and looking to volunteer invest substantial amounts of money to attain the relevant qualifications for a wide variety of jobs, but if they are forced to wait for lengthy periods of time for what should be a pretty routine background screening test it is not a good outcome. We do not want to see good, capable, ethical, moral South Australians, who are both mentally and physically fit to work, watch a job opportunity disappear because the government failed them by having them wait an excessive period of time for one of these background screening tests.

We also learnt in the estimates hearing pertaining to this area that the government had collected \$6.69 million in fees to process background checks in the past year and that applications for screenings can cost anywhere between \$58 and \$105. Whilst we do understand that these background screening checks need to occur and must occur, we do not want good, capable, honest hardworking people to have to wait longer than they already do, when they could be putting their good skills to effective use.

Mr DULUK (Davenport) (12:23): I also rise to speak on the appropriation debate and report of estimates, and I thank all those who were involved in the estimates process. It must be a phenomenal back-end process for all our hardworking public servants and departmental officials who come to this place, with folder upon folder of notes and thousands of hole-punched pages, ready for the grilling by the opposition. I have sat in on quite a few estimates, and this year there was once again a very high standard of grilling by opposition members only for them to be told by the responsible minister, 'We will take that question on notice.'

You have these chief bureaucrats and Labor appointees at the top of the chain going back and telling the very hardworking and diligent public servants in the departments, who actually do the work of government, to prepare the folders for estimates. You have staff coming in on weekends, sweating over what should or should not be in the folders and trying to work out what that single line item in the budget really means or does not mean. Does spending money through the transport department mean we are going to send out 18,000 doorknockers into the electorate, or electo-rort, which is not mentioned as a single estimate?

All the staff get ready for this, and it all ends up as a question taken on notice. Going through the process, it is quite interesting to find out which ministers take more questions on notice than other ministers. You can see without any doubt the pecking order of ability in the government when it comes to taking those questions on notice.

I sat in on estimates of Premier and cabinet, Treasury and Finance, Health, arts, of course, veterans' affairs, Defence SA, disabilities, and I was the lead in mental health. I will begin my remarks on the estimates process with the mental health section. This is an important process. I know the member for MacKillop, in his speech on the 2017 estimates, said, 'Scrutiny is what the parliament is here for—that is our job...to scrutinise the workings of the executive.' That is why it is important to have the estimates process, but it is disappointing that the government or the executive do not feel that they need to be put under scrutiny. We can see that in the longwinded opening statements the ministers provide and also in the number of Dorothy Dixers they take.

A testament to members opposite, especially the member for Ashford who is in the house at the moment, was that, every now and then when the going was tough for a minister, in the committees I attended, the member for Ashford would chirp up with a perfectly timed Dorothy Dixer to allow the minister a bit of time to reflect and seek some advice. Very well played by the government but, as I said, good ministers and good executives do not need to hide away from this process. I am alarmed, as we all are, at the number of questions taken on notice this year. I doubt I will get my questions on notice back this side of the election.

Ms Redmond interjecting:

Mr DULUK: As the member for Heysen just indicated, she is still waiting. I am still waiting for answers to questions I asked in the 2016 estimates, particularly questions I put to the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse and for Disabilities.

I think there is an opportunity to look at reforming the estimates process. If you look at the way estimates is conducted federally in the Senate, it is run purely as an upper house system. It is a system that allows greater scrutiny of senior bureaucrats and senior public servants, who are the people actually implementing government decisions. It is also a process that happens more than once a year.

Senate estimates occur in several blocks throughout the year, which allows the parliament the opportunity to ask questions of the government on decisions they are making at the time. This leads to much greater accountability and disclosure, which is of course what good government is about. Good disclosure is fundamental to our Westminster system of government, as it keeps government honest and ensures that governments make better decisions and, when government makes the wrong decisions, allows them to be held accountable for that decision-making.

This once-a-year estimates process is jammed in over five days. In some portfolios, ministers are only required to sit for 45 minutes. After they make a 10-minute opening statement and take a few Dorothy Dixer questions, there is probably time for only four or five questions from the opposition on one or two line items. Somehow this Labor government—this tired, 16-year-old Labor government—considers that to be a good, open, accountable process of scrutinising a \$19 billion state economy. I do not think that is acceptable and I would like to see that reformed.

I said I would go back and start with my involvement in the mental health estimates, which of course this year were scheduled at 4pm on Friday for 1½ hours. I am surprised, actually, that the government allocated that long to the portfolio, given that it is presided over by the most incompetent of the government ministers. It was 1½ hours on Friday, perfect timing to ensure there was very little media coverage of that estimate, given the amount of media coverage and interest that there has been in this portfolio for the last 12 months, but in particular from April this year.

It is only the work of the parliament and its committees that has allowed there to be proper scrutiny of that minister and to reveal properly to the people of South Australia the government's failed care and neglect of those it is meant to look after, in particular with respect to those South Australians suffering geriatric mental health issues at the Oakden facility and the mistreatment they have received at the hands of those who are meant to be providing care for them.

We had about an hour and a half of mental health estimates. Of course, there was a five-minute opening statement from the minister. Mainly because of media scrutiny prior to the day, we were able to get out of that estimates process that there have been more referrals of staff at Oakden to AHPRA. We know that, as of 28 July, 32 staff have been referred for investigations by AHPRA, nine staff have been referred to SAPOL and 15 staff have been suspended from the workplace, pending further investigations, on paid leave. These figures are up from when the Minister for Health

made a statement to the house on 20 June 2017 when he said that there were 26 referrals to AHPRA, eight referred to SAPOL and 15 suspended from the workplace, pending further investigations, on paid leave.

The government was very good at letting us know what was happening at the time, yet in response to a further question from me they were unable to tell us the total number of employees at the Makk and McLeay facilities. They could not tell me how many employees were at Makk and McLeay, but they could tell us that 56 staff in total had been referred to AHPRA or SAPOL. I never understand in this process how the minister or the department know some answers to some questions, but they do not know what the answer is to the most logical next question. You would have thought that the answer to a common question, 'How many total staff at a certain facility are working at any one time?' should be able to be provided to us.

It is this holding up of the estimates process that I really think the people of South Australia do not like. It is the simple hiding of simple questions that leads to a lack of accountability by government. The minister only made information public following media inquiries and reports seeking a copy of the progress report on the government's commitment to its report into the review of the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service. In the government's own response to the Chief Psychiatrist's report, they said that they would release their report on their interim progress within 90 days. Of course, that report was due on 19 July and nothing was forthcoming until five minutes before the estimates schedule was meant to begin.

Once again, the government has failed—and this was highlighted through the estimates process—to provide certainty and clarity to the people of South Australia about the way it looks after its most vulnerable. I read again in today's paper that it looks like there have been more issues with staff working in the child protection system. I find it incredible that the government cannot get this right. It has thrown royal commission after royal commission at the way it looks after its vulnerable people in South Australia. It has received report after report from agencies and from experts.

It has poured hundreds of millions of dollars into these agencies, yet we cannot get the culture right. I think a lot of these issues start with culture, and the culture at the top of these departments is sick. Its ministers are not up to the task of leading reform. We certainly know that the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse does not have the confidence of her department; her Chief of Staff recently quit. She is not over her brief and, of course, the care and ongoing abuse continues.

From the estimates committee, we also know that the minister could not confirm when she received the borderline personality disorder report 2017-20. She knows she has it, but she cannot recall whether she has read it or what actions will be taken in response to the recommendations. The Mental Health Commissioner has confirmed that the final report was provided to the minister in November, but the minister would not ask the commissioner, who was sitting next to her, when she received the report. I assume she did not want to admit that she sat on yet another report for an extended period of time. I go back to accountability: this is the problem with the estimates process. If we had a system where the bureaucrats were given the opportunity to be asked questions of parliament then I think we would see better decision-making and better accountability by government.

We still do not have a state mental health plan, despite the last plan, commonly known as the Stepping Up report, concluding in 2012. At least the minister did confirm that it is due by the end of the year, when it will be handed down by the independent commissioner, Commissioner Burns. When the government announced that Commissioner Burns would be the Mental Health Commissioner, there was a lot of fanfare about how he would be impartial and independent. However, that final state mental health plan has to be signed off by cabinet and the minister. It is interesting: if the commissioner is to be independent of government yet that commissioner and report need to be signed off by cabinet, you wonder how independent it can be.

We also know that we have only a draft of the Suicide Prevention Plan 2017-21. It is a shame that the government has been sitting on the draft for a while. The Chief Psychiatrist did very well to release in April that draft mental health plan in the midst of concluding his review of the Oakden report and delivering it to government. This is on the back of staff reductions in the Chief Psychiatrist's report, which were reduced last year. It also begs the question: how long has the minister sat on the

draft report? We still do not have a final plan, but there is a budget line of \$600,000 committed to support the draft plan, but of course the minister could not tell me what that \$600,000 will be spent on.

There was a nice little surprise from that committee in regard to tobacco usage. The member for Heysen forensically asked a few questions about that. It was one of the highlights in the subprogram. If the government is puts a highlight into the program, it means that it must be pretty excited about it and meeting some benchmarks. However, when the minister was asked about this highlight in her own budget line—and we are talking about only five or six pages within the whole state budget—she had absolutely no idea what the question was related to or what the performance indicators and targets were.

It was a pleasure to sit with the member for Schubert in health estimates and ask the Minister for Health questions. We repeatedly heard that recent budget decisions about funding of Health were all made on the basis of political decisions and that the Minister for Health would not be bullied by the opposition to not take clinical advice in regard to decisions of government when it comes to spending taxpayers' dollars in certain areas.

I asked the minister whether he had taken clinical advice about the use of Ward 18 at the Repat and whether he had spoken to the Chief Psychiatrist—and I have asked this question to the minister in question time quite a few times. When I asked him whether he had asked Chief Psychiatrist, Dr Aaron Groves, whether Ward 18 at the Repat is sufficient to take clients or residents of Oakden, to facilitate the closure of Oakden, the Minister for Health was his usual best evasive self. Yet last Friday, in the Transforming Health select committee chaired by the Hon. Stephen Wade in the other place, Dr Aaron Groves gave evidence that Ward 18 at the Repat was a suitable site to take residents of the now disgraced Oakden facility.

This is the hypocrisy of those opposite, that they take advice and they pick and choose what they like. As I mentioned in this place before, the member for Lee; your good self, Deputy Speaker, in your constituency; the member for Kaurana; the member for Fisher and the member for Reynell have all fought and received political funding for hospitals in their areas, being The QEH, Modbury and Noarlunga Hospital, yet the member for Elder and the current member for Waite could not even facilitate a political decision of government to have residents in need at the Oakden facility transferred to the perfectly workable, safe, secure, friendly and accessible site at the Repat, because one political decision that the government does not want to make is the closure of the Repat.

It astounds me that in a \$6 billion health portfolio the government can make political decisions across the board and listen to respected communities, but they cannot do it in one particular situation. It is particularly disappointing that health decisions are made on political bases and not made on one that is related to clinical care.

Included in other committees I sat on was the arts portfolio. Once again, I think this government has a poor record when it comes to supporting the arts. It cherrypicks left, right and centre. It looks for headlines where it can, in terms of what organisations it supports and those sorts of priorities. Also, once again the estimates process showed a lack of detail across the arts portfolio by the minister. I asked him some questions about Carrick Hill, which is part of the community that I am very close to, and there was a complete disconnect between what the Carrick Hill Trust put in its annual report, what was reflected in the budget in terms of numbers visiting that wonderful facility and what the government intends to do with that site, in terms of Carrick Hill's plans for development going forward. Obviously, the government had very little input with the Carrick Hill Trust in what it can do.

I also spent quite a lot of time in the Premier and Cabinet portfolio and the Treasury portfolio. One thing that the government did not want to go into was government waste, government advertising and the amount of wasted taxpayers' dollars. Of course, we know the government is spending millions of dollars of taxpayers' hard-earned money on government advertising. We are seeing this left, right and centre. We are seeing them spending taxpayers' dollars on selling their budget; we are seeing them spend about \$2.6 million on the Premier's energy plan; another \$1 million spruiking the grant accelerator scheme, a scheme that is not working at all, and about half a million dollars more on the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. So waste and government spending are certainly high on the agenda within the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Ms REDMOND (Heysen) (12:43): If I may quote Lewis Carroll:

'The time has come,' the Walrus said, 'to talk of many things—

The Hon. S.W. Key interjecting:

Ms REDMOND: And the member for Ashford can even complete the sentence. Thank you, member for Ashford. It is with some considerable pleasure that I have had my arm twisted to make a few comments on what will be my final contribution on estimates. Having had to tolerate the estimates process since 2002, I thought I would take a more broadbrush approach in my final comments on this topic, although some of the comments will be those which I have repeated, possibly ad nauseam, in this chamber over the past 15 years.

Acting Speaker, I do not know whether you have ever heard these comments, but I will start at the very beginning. It has always seemed to me to be passing strange that we undertake this process and report on the budget in August, as we are again doing now. The budget, like financial years for most organisations, runs from 1 July to 30 June. Therefore, most organisations present their budget in late April or May and pass their budget in June ready for the commencement of the new budget on 1 July. But every year our budget is not presented until mid-June, and we discuss it during July and get around to finally passing the budget bill in August or thereabouts.

I can understand why that would happen in an election year, because the parliament does not sit during that part of an election year. Of course, the third Saturday in March next year, St Patrick's Day, will be the election day. I can understand, especially if there were a change of government, why there would possibly be the need for a delay in the budget being brought into the chamber for discussion and for it ultimately being passed. That would make sense in those circumstances, particularly, as I say, when there is a change in government.

However, there has not been a change of government for an awfully long time, yet this government finds it impossible to bring in a budget in a timely manner, which would enable us to commence our year without having to pass in addition an appropriation bill so that we can continue to pay the Public Service after the financial year has ended and we are into the new financial year. That is my first comment about the estimates process; the next one is the time and money involved in the estimates process. Estimates is really just the committee stage of the budget bill, yet it has all these peculiarities that attach to it.

Normally, if it were just a normal bill, the relevant minister would introduce it to this house and there would be a debate at the second reading—which we have; we have our budget bill debate—and then we would have our committee stage. I accept that it is recognised through the estimates process that the budget bill is so big in its many volumes that it would be impossible to simply have three questions per clause and that the committee stage would go on ad nauseam and laboriously if we did not break it down, as we do, into the various portfolios with the relevant minister answering questions in relation to their portfolio. I have no difficulty with that idea.

That is the origin of the fact that we then end up with two committees going at the same time: one in this chamber and one placed in the other chamber, and the two committees have these peculiar rules where, if the shadow minister happens to be a member of the Legislative Council, they cannot be the person asking the questions because technically we are the House of Assembly meeting to have our committee stage of the budget bill. So I can understand that.

But why on earth do we have to go through this nonsense of being signed in and signed out and the peculiarity of the omnibus questions not being able to be simply read once for all portfolios? Why do we have lengthy opening statements? As the member for Davenport pointed out, usually the length of the opening statement, and indeed the number of Dorothy Dixers, is inversely proportional to the competence of the minister, so the less competent the minister, the longer the opening statement and the more likely we are to have Dorothy Dixers.

I have seen budget estimates committees on occasions have a situation where, by the time you get a 15-minute opening speech from the minister and then you get three questions to which the minister gives an extensive answer but is not really answering the question, and then three Dorothy Dixers which have been prepared in advance to allow the minister to spend a considerable amount of time answering the question, you are left with maybe another two or three questions and your

estimates opportunity is over. As a habit, while I was a shadow minister I always put in the rest of the questions I had prepared as questions on notice. Most of them have never been answered, but we will move on.

What concerns me most about the estimates process is the inordinate amount of time that public servants are taken away from their normal duties and must focus, with some degree of panic I suspect, on the possibility of a question coming up at estimates. I know this from contact with various organisations before I ever came into this place and experienced estimates. I know that CEOs and senior people in various departments and organisations would spend literally weeks worrying about and preparing for the estimates process.

I have said before on many occasions in this place, and I will say again in my final comments, that I accept that the government of the day is the government of the day and they have the right to set the budget. They have the right to decide how the money will be spent. Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has the right to understand, to question and to challenge that budget but not to prevent it, unlike in America where, for instance, in most states the governor—unlike our Governor who is basically a figurehead representing the Crown—is separately elected and has the right to veto the budget.

We have no right as an opposition to do that, but we do have the right to understand what the budget contains and, to that end, to ask questions about it. It is a big, complex document, and it takes years to get yourself across it well enough really to understand what is being said. It seems to me to have become a cat and mouse game where the government quite deliberately sets about setting the timetable for the whole process to be as useless as possible for the opposition, minimising the amount of time that vulnerable ministers may face questioning and placing those ministers at odd ends of the day so that the media may be less interested.

When I look around, even in the smaller portfolios that I was involved in this year there would usually be 15 to 20 public servants in the room for the entirety of the budget process. Admittedly, there were usually a couple of Labor candidates there, too, but there were many public servants. Let's assume that on average they are senior public servants and probably paid in excess of—let's be generous and say only \$100,000 a year. If we calculated what it is costing us to run the budget process the way the government is, we could really make a difference in many communities by putting the money that it is costing to much more worthwhile uses.

My questions about this budget process are: why is it so late in the year? It should be done and dusted before the end of June. Why do we have this process where we have to sign in and out for members of the opposition and, indeed, for members of the government who are sitting there usually reading the newspaper or something else? Why do we take all this time from our public servants, who are highly paid, to prepare answers for questions that may never be asked? I accept the process in its overall concept.

What I would like to see is a change in the way we do it and perhaps a situation where the minister could meet on a less formal basis with members of the opposition who are interested in a particular aspect, find out what it is they need to know and then bring in the relevant public servants to answer questions. The way it operates at the moment is extremely expensive and extremely time consuming and, at the end of the day, we get very few answers. Indeed, we had a number of times in even the most straightforward situations where the answer of the minister was, 'I will have to come back to you on that,' or, 'I will get an answer on that and get back to you,' or something along those lines.

My favourite, of course, was not these estimates but the estimates on the ageing portfolio last year or the year before. It was only a very short estimates because not a large amount of the budget is put towards ageing. To me, ageing has always been one of the areas that I think is extremely important, particularly in this state where we have the most ageing population. Given that already in this country there are over 4,000 people over the age of 100 and they therefore have children who are in their 70s and 80s, and given that we are the most ageing, and given that by the year 2055 they anticipate that there will be some 78,000 people in this country over the age of 100, it is a very important area. At the moment, our budget line for the Office for the Ageing is very small, but I digress.

The minister on this occasion when I was in estimates began with a lengthy opening statement, and I thought, 'Well, that was very interesting, minister. Perhaps I'll ask a question or two about the opening statement before we move on,' because there were a couple of things I did not really understand. In particular, in her opening statement the minister read out a comment that they had a policy of 'prosperity through longevity'. I am paraphrasing the conversation here: 'Minister, could you explain prosperity through longevity because it seems to me that the longer you live, the more your money has to stretch out and therefore the less prosperous you are going to be? Could you please explain to me what you mean by this policy you have of prosperity through longevity?'

After a considerable silence, which of course does not show in the *Hansard*, sadly—and, again, I am paraphrasing—we got a response that was something like, 'I'm pleased with the march of civilisation.' I have pondered that. Maybe it was something deeply philosophical that I am just too thick to understand, but I really worry when that is the answer you get to a question about the opening statement the minister has just given on a portfolio that is very limited in its scope within our current budget.

One of the other problems with the budget, of course, is that so much of what happens in government never appears in the budget. I do not know, for instance, whether there is any sign of the sale of the Lands Titles Office in the budget. I think it is a disgrace that this government is planning to sell the Lands Titles Office. Sir Robert Torrens, whose portrait by Andrew MacCormac appears in the marble corridor outside, would no doubt turn in his grave to think that the Torrens system, which originated in this state, is to be sold off—possibly, I understand, to an overseas company to run our Lands Titles Office.

I have often said that our next problem with terrorism is not going to be another plane flown into a building. I think we take more than enough precautions in our airports these days. I think our next terrorism incident will be some sort of cyber attack, and for a government to relinquish its own controls over the running of our Lands Titles Office I think is a despicable act by an incompetent government.

One of the other things that I do not think appeared in the budget was the engagement of 18,000 trained conversationalists. If they had appeared in the budget, I am sure that a question or two would have appeared. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.

Parliamentary Procedure

ANSWERS TABLED

The SPEAKER: I direct that the written answers to questions be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to parliament today pupils from East Marden Primary School, who are guests of the member for Hartley.

Ministerial Statement

SA PATHOLOGY

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries) (14:03): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: The latest round of consultation about the SA Pathology Efficiency Improvement Program ended on 21 July. There have been numerous staff forums, several periods of consultation and over 400 pieces of feedback received from the most recent consultation paper. We have listened to the feedback received, and the proposed reconfiguration of SA Pathology has been suspended until mid next year. The state government's decision has been made following extensive consultation and advice from the SA Pathology director, staff, industry bodies and unions.

Everyone involved in this process agrees that, due to improvements in technology, modern laboratory automation and ICT systems, it is possible for pathology services to be provided much more quickly, effectively and efficiently, while maintaining the same high level of patient care.

With the move to the new RAH and the introduction of new state-of-the-art technology, such as the Enterprise Pathology Laboratory Information System, now is not the right moment to be making changes. Today's announcement gives us more time for the new technology to be integrated into the health system and for staff to get settled at the new RAH.

A working group made up of clinicians, other staff and union delegates will be set up. It will help transition pathology services in South Australia to complement our modern and innovative health system. SA Pathology will work closely with staff, clinicians and consumers to develop a fresh vision for the future of SA Pathology. This vision will recognise SA Pathology's unique history, its commitment to excellence in diagnostics, clinical care, research and teaching, and enable them to develop a plan for a positive and exciting future.

SA Pathology will convene on-site staff forums in the coming months to provide staff with more information. SA Pathology has a long history of providing superior pathology services for all South Australians, and this will never change.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley, I call him to order.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following paper was laid on the table:

By the Minister for Local Government (Hon. G.G. Brock)—

Local Government Grants Commission, South Australian—Annual Report 2015-16

Ministerial Statement

COMMUNITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION DEPARTMENT SCREENING UNIT

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) (14:06): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON: I am pleased to inform the house that the screening unit within the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion has implemented significant reforms to improve the delivery of screening services to employees and volunteers. In the 2016-17 budget, the state government invested \$5.3 million over two years to undertake continuous monitoring of screening, which enables new offences to be identified on an ongoing basis, instead of the current system, which provides a snapshot of a person's history at the start of the three-year lifespan of the clearance.

DCSI led the development and implementation of the continuous monitoring system in partnership with the South Australian police and the Department for Child Protection. This significant reform to screening management means that South Australia is the only Australian jurisdiction with continuous monitoring of both criminal history and child protection information. Since its introduction on 1 July 2017, DCSI has received more than 500 notifications from the Department for Child Protection and the South Australian police.

The monitoring of new information means that screening clearances are now based on the latest information available and will continue to be updated as new information becomes available. As at 8 August 2017, 18 clearances have been revoked affecting 16 individuals with child-related employment and/or disability services screening clearances. My office continues to receive queries about screening from members of the public and members of this house. The time taken for DCSI to

process a screening application depends on the relevance, complexity and amount of information requiring assessment. Those who need a screening for employment purposes will continue to be prioritised.

In 2016-17, DCSI received 120,000 screening clearance applications, an increase of 14 per cent from the previous year. Of these applications, 92 per cent were completed within 20 business days. Let me be very clear: the applications that take more than 31 business days to process represent the most complex applications. It is important that additional information from third parties, including the South Australian police and their interstate counterparts, be ascertained to allow a comprehensive assessment.

The expectations of our society have increased around the importance of screening as an essential in protecting South Australia's children, elderly and vulnerable groups from harm. Everyone on this side of the house agrees that it is our duty of care to ensure that vulnerable groups are afforded the highest level of protection. The government makes every effort to fully investigate all relevant matters pertaining to screening applicants for employment and volunteering. The implementation of the continuous monitoring of screening demonstrates the value we place on our community, and I am proud of our government's commitment to support those most vulnerable in our community.

Parliamentary Procedure

ESTIMATES REPLIES

The SPEAKER (14:10): Earlier to today in the house, the member for Bragg raised a matter concerning the processing of answers to questions asked in the 2016 estimates hearings. The member for Bragg noted that the Attorney-General had provided answers to the parliament on 20 December 2016 but that the answers to those questions are yet to be tabled. The member for Bragg has indicated that she has now been provided with copies of those answers.

Instructions sent out about answers to questions taken on notice during the 2016 estimates directed that all estimates answers were to be sent to the repliestoestimates@parliament.sa.gov.au mailbox by Friday 28 October 2016. The 2016 estimates answers received on or before this date from the mailbox were published during the sitting weeks commencing on 1 and 15 November 2016. The same instructions directed that estimates answers received after 28 October 2016 would be tabled as answers to questions on notice.

In the normal course of business, answers to questions on notice are directed to the HAQuestionsonNotice@parliament.sa.gov.au mailbox. Estimates answers sent by the Attorney-General, which included some asked by the member for Bragg, were sent to the repliestoestimates@parliament.sa.gov.au mailbox on 20 December 2016 instead of the HAQuestionsonNotice@parliament.sa.gov.au mailbox.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Do I hear interjections of, 'Resign!?' No? As a consequence of the answers being directed to the incorrect mailbox, they were not processed in the usual manner. This matter came to light upon an inquiry from the member for Bragg on 26 July 2017 during the 2017 estimates hearings. The matter was subsequently investigated, and the estimates answers were discovered in the repliestoestimates@parliament.sa.gov.au mailbox, where the matter was rectified.

Subsequently, the responses will be tabled at the earliest opportunity, with the member for Bragg having received the responses as soon as the oversight was identified. The majority of responses to estimates questions on notice received after the response deadline of 28 October 2016 have been processed through the HOA questions without notice process and tabled in the house. It is envisaged that a review of the estimates answers process will be undertaken to prevent a similar occurrence from happening in future, so do not feel the need to resign.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:13): Point of clarification, Mr Speaker: thank you, Mr Speaker, for identifying that it is the Attorney's fault and not the parliament's, and I appreciate that. Can I be assured that some inquiry is being made as to whether any other outstanding estimates questions might be languishing in redundant boxes?

The SPEAKER: The Clerk tells me there is a forensic examination of the same.

Parliamentary Committees

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (14:14): I bring up the 123rd report of the committee, entitled Fleurieu and the Kangaroo Island Region Fact Finding Visit.

Report received and ordered to be published.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Ms COOK (Fisher) (14:15): I bring up the 40th report of the committee, entitled Inquiry into Regional Health Services.

Report received.

Question Time

ENERGY SECURITY TARGET

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (14:15): My question is to the Minister for Regional Development. Does the Minister for Regional Development support the introduction by the state government of a state-based energy security target?

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Finnis, I call him to order for that quite unnecessary outburst because he must know that any minister can answer a question asked in question time.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (14:16): Given, Mr Speaker, that the energy security target is well and truly within the purview of the Minister for Energy, it's appropriate that I indeed answer it. Yes, the state government believes that the energy security target is a very important part of Our Energy Plan. In fact, it is a very important part of our plan. I do note that Our Energy Plan is being debated daily. Our Energy Plan is out there, there are six vital key elements to it, and those elements are being rolled out—

Ms Sanderson: You keep changing it.

The SPEAKER: The member for Adelaide is called to order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —across the coming months and years. You have seen the introduction of our temporary and permanent solutions for our temporary generation to maintain system security. You have seen the battery and the renewable technology fund being implemented with the investment of Neoen and Tesla. We have gone out to the market to try to procure a new competitor into the South Australian market to offer their services. PACE Gas is doing a good job incentivising more exploration wells and more gas being produced, especially in our first ever region where we went looking for oil and gas, the Otway Basin. Of course, an essential part of it is a mechanism to incentivise new investment through the energy security target—a key and vital point of Our Energy Plan.

I read today a Liberal Party press release saying that they have released submissions that were publicly available on a website that were written about in *The Advertiser*, I think, four or five days ago. Apparently, they have released it after it was published in *The Advertiser* and already on the website. Yes, the government believes that the energy security target is the right thing to do by South Australians.

It is the right thing to do by our energy system, and I do believe that the energy security target will incentivise more generation, producing more electrons here in South Australia, making more electricity production made available here rather than reliant on imports from Victoria. We are retaking our economic sovereignty by making sure that we can produce as much electricity as possible. So, yes, the cabinet is united on this.

ENERGY SECURITY TARGET

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (14:19): Supplementary: did the Minister for Regional Development consult the largest employer in his electorate, Nyrstar, before determining that he supported the energy security target?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: These members are called to order: the member for Schubert, the member for Mitchell, the member for Chaffey, the member for Mount Gambier, and the member for Davenport is warned for those ejaculations before the minister had uttered a word.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (14:20): That was my line. He stole my line about 'premature', sir—point of order.

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Unley for making the obvious interjection.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, we did consult with major employers. In fact, the press release the shadow minister actually talks about is about our consultation with Nyrstar employers because we—

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Point of order: I believe the minister is debating the substance of the question and not answering directly. My question was whether they consulted before making a decision, not consulted after making it.

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Stuart for a bogus point of order before the minister had even got into his stride. I dealt with this the other day with the member for Morialta taking a point of order against a minister who was three words into an answer.

Mr Gardner: They weren't very good words.

The SPEAKER: Well, that may be so. I think the words were, 'It galls me.'

Mr Gardner: It's usually a sign of debate to come.

The SPEAKER: I agree with the member for Morialta. I agree with him about that. The Treasurer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The energy security target is not slated for implementation until later this year—1 December, I believe.

Mr Knoll interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Schubert is warned.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We are consulting with industry, we are consulting with retailers, and those responses have been made publicly available. Indeed, they are so publicly available there was a story about this in *The Advertiser* which was reported publicly, and I think five days later the opposition put out a press release saying they had discovered these submissions.

Yes, we went out and spoke to companies about what their views on an energy security target were. Some raised concerns, and I tell you who raised the most concerns: the energy retailers. They don't like an EST very much because our modelling shows it will lower wholesale electricity prices and will have downward pressure on wholesale electricity prices. I have to say that when you've got the major retailers in this state arguing against or advocating against an EST, it makes me feel we are on the right track. It makes me feel we are doing the right thing.

Of course, whenever you are bringing a new mechanism into the market, especially a market that was established primarily to be non-competitive to maximise the sale price of the assets that were flogged off during the privatisation of ETSA—and you will find that in the modelling released by Frontier Economics. Frontier Economics say very clearly that any market mechanism, like an EIS or an EST or a clean energy target or a low emissions target, whatever the mechanism is, the more competitive the market is, the greater the impact on lowering prices.

What we found is that our market isn't very competitive, which is why the government is using its procurement to bring a new competitor into the South Australian market to try to undo the damage done by members opposite when they privatised ETSA. They created a monopoly market where retailers are charging us monopoly rents.

Mr GARDNER: Point of order: the minister is debating contrary to standing order 98.

Mr Whetstone: How is reducing power prices going?

The SPEAKER: Yes, the minister is debating the matter, and the member for Chaffey is warned.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Supplementary, sir.

The SPEAKER: He hasn't finished.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The energy security target, through our own modelling done by Frontier Economics, shows that the energy security target will have downward pressure on wholesale prices, and the more competitive our market becomes, the bigger the impact the EST will have. No doubt, there are people who have concerns about the EST and, predominantly, those are the ones who—

Mr GARDNER: Point of order: the minister is not answering the question, 'Did the Minister for Regional Development consult Nyrstar before forming a view? Standing order 98.

The SPEAKER: The way I hear it, the minister has talked quite a bit about whom the government has consulted and has even given the house the bonus of whom the opposition has consulted.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Not only did we consult with Nyrstar, they put a submission in. Nyrstar put a submission in, and the shadow minister knows it because he referenced it in his press release. But he gets up here and asks the question about whether they have been consulted, so how duplicitous is that? Knowing that they have been consulted and that we sought a submission, he then gets up here and says, 'Were they consulted?' Well, what does that say about the formulation of the mind of the shadow minister?

ENERGY SECURITY TARGET

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (14:24): Supplementary: did the Minister for Regional Development consult with any other employers in his electorate before determining that he supported the government's energy security target?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:25): Mr Speaker—

Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Kavel is called to order.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: —everybody in this house is concerned about where energy prices are going. I hear nothing from the other side about solutions, opportunities or anything at all. All I hear is negativity.

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order: clearly, this is debate, and I would ask that the minister address the question as to who he has consulted.

The SPEAKER: Yes, I uphold the point of order. The opposition's policy or conduct is not in question.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: I take that on board, Mr Speaker. What I will say—

Mr Knoll interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Schubert is warned for the second and final time. He seems to wish to be ejected from the house under the sessional order.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: From my travels across all of regional South Australia, yes, there are concerns, but there are lots of comments out there about what the minister and this government are doing in regard to looking at security of power and to bring it down in the long term.

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: The member for Finniss might say, 'Put a battery in there,' but I have full faith in the way this government is going in addressing the power issue and the reliability and, in the long term, the power price will come down.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Point of order: taking your advice that you gave me previously, I did wait for a full minute through the minister's answer and he has not yet addressed the substance of the question, which was: did he consult employers in his electorate before deciding that he would support the government in its energy security target?

The SPEAKER: I will listen carefully to the minister's answer, bearing in mind the strictures of the member for Stuart.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: I will just reinforce what I said a minute ago. I have discussions across all of regional South Australia when I am out there and we have our discussions within the cabinet. Again, I believe that the way this government is going, they are looking at the long-term viability, reliability and sustainability of energy prices in South Australia.

ENERGY SECURITY TARGET

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (14:27): Supplementary to the Minister for Regional Development: how much does the Minister for Regional Development believe South Australian electricity prices will fall as a result of the energy security target and when?

The SPEAKER: Since the member for Stuart has asked about the minister's belief, he gives the minister rather a lot of scope.

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:27): The member for Finniss has some very complimentary remarks. Again, I will just reiterate that I have full belief in what the minister and this government are doing and the long-term viability, security and reliability of power. I will continue to look at other opportunities and discuss those within the cabinet.

ELECTRICITY PRICES

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:28): My question is to the Minister for Regional Development. What are the likely impacts to regional employment after the increase in electricity prices paid by businesses, such as Golden North, who saw their annual power bill increase from \$280,000 to \$500,000?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (14:28): Those increases are unacceptable and no South Australian should be satisfied to see prices like that increasing. Indeed, what you are seeing across the entire National Electricity Market are prices in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and the ACT increasing in dramatic ways that are unacceptable.

What the commonwealth government and the states have done is commission the Chief Scientist, and the Chief Scientist to set up a blueprint. They came up with 50 recommendations in an expert panel on how to lower prices, increase security and have more investment in the National Electricity Market to make Australia more competitive so we can lower power prices.

Those 50 recommendations were endorsed by Queensland, by South Australia, by Victoria and by the ACT, but only 49 were endorsed by the other states. Thus far, the opposition have had no view on electricity or put any policy forward.

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: clearly, this is debate in relation to the opposition's alleged position. The question was about the impact on Golden North, which is not in Queensland.

The SPEAKER: And other regional employers.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, indeed—in there, in Golden North.

The SPEAKER: No. No, not just Golden North. Not just Golden North.

Ms CHAPMAN: After the increase.

The SPEAKER: Treasurer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The most important aspect of Dr Finkel's report is to end the scarcity that is occurring in the National Electricity Market. What I mean by scarcity, what is occurring, is because there is a lack of policy direction from the commonwealth government. What that means is there is an investment strike.

The only signal, the only price signal in the National Electricity Market, is for renewable energy through the commonwealth government's renewable energy target. That is the only new investment entering into the Australian National Electricity Market. The only other two investments being made are by the commonwealth government in Snowy 2.0 and this state government's investment in gas-fired generation. These are the only two synchronous investments in generation being made.

What needs to happen now is we need to incentivise more storage. We need to incentivise batteries, pumped hydro and, of course, more gas-fired generation as we transition. Gas-fired transition needs to have a price signal. That is why we advocated an energy intensity scheme. If anyone wants to understand how that works, speak to the member for Mitchell. He will explain it to you; he is an expert on this. Of course, the commonwealth government refused to accept an energy intensity scheme despite Prime Minister Turnbull formally advocating an energy intensity scheme with Senator Xenophon when they were arguing for an intensity scheme in place of an emissions trading scheme.

Now Dr Finkel has recommended a clean energy target, which operates in much the same way as a renewable energy target; that is, it is a price impact on the bill. You use that money to try to incentivise low emissions generation into the market that is synchronous; that is, it meets an emissions level. The states believe that this is the second best option, with the best option being an EIS. Given that that can't be accepted by AEMO, we accept Dr Finkel's recommendations that we should move to a clean energy target immediately.

Until you get that, you are going to have perverse outcomes like Golden North, like BHP, like you are getting at the Portland smelter and like you are getting in industry all across New South Wales. I tell you what will make it worse: banning exploration of unconventional gas in South Australia. It is gas that sets the price of electricity, and our opponents want to ban it. They want to ban it. They say, no, they don't. Well, yes, they do. They do want to ban it. Quite frankly, what you've got opposite is a party with no policy other than to ban unconventional gas—just typical.

The SPEAKER: Supplementary, member for Hammond.

ELECTRICITY PRICES

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:33): A supplementary to the Minister for Regional Development: what modelling has the Minister for Regional Development commissioned on the impacts of exorbitant power price increases on regional businesses like Golden North?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (14:33): It is obvious that those types of price increases are unacceptable. It is obvious to anyone that that type of price increase hurts business. That's why all the states, including the Prime Minister, commissioned Dr Finkel to lower power prices. That's why all the states awaited his report for a national response. That's why all the states want to see all 50 recommendations implemented but, unfortunately for us,

the conservatives in the commonwealth government will not allow it to occur, so we have to wait. We have to wait until 2020.

So while you are complaining about Golden North and the impacts, or any other business in South Australia, perhaps, just perhaps, you should speak to your commonwealth colleagues about implementing the recommendations of their own report that says the only way to lower prices is by having a market mechanism and, when you have that market mechanism in place, you will get better outcomes.

In the absence of a national market mechanism, we will bring in our energy security target, which is a price mechanism to get more generation into the market. What has been the outcome? AGL announced new generation, despite members opposite saying they wouldn't, and they did. As soon as we mentioned the energy security target, what did we get by the largest retailer? Brand-new investment in new generation.

CLARE VALLEY WASTE

Mr KNOLL (Schubert) (14:35): My question is to the Minister for Regional Development. In the wake of the collapse of Plastics Granulating Services due to high electricity prices, what has the minister done to assist Clare Valley Waste in finding an alternative for their soft plastics processing?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:35): Again, the Minister for Energy has fully explained the situation where this government is going towards, with the commonwealth government, and the 50 recommendations.

Mr Bell: Did you meet with that business?

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Mount Gambier.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: It is a concern and this government, working with the commonwealth and the energy market, is endeavouring to get the best opportunity and the best—

Mr Whetstone interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Chaffey is warned for the second and final time.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: —reliability and sustainability of energy costs in all of Australia. As the Minister for Energy has just indicated—

Ms CHAPMAN: Point of order: I don't know whether the minister misheard the question, but it wasn't actually about—

The SPEAKER: No, this is a bogus point of order. The minister has only just begun answering the question and he is referencing a previous answer from a minister. So, unless the deputy leader is seated immediately, she will be departing under standing orders.

Ms CHAPMAN: Am I not allowed to even complete the reference?

The SPEAKER: I know what the point of order is and I am ruling it bogus, and I am warning the deputy leader. The minister.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: Where I will continue is that this government, and through the hard work of—I think it is Frontier, I am not too sure—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: Frontier—

The Hon. L.W.K. Bignell: Economics.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: —Economics have done a lot of work for this government and have presented all that information. I again have full belief—it is a slow process, but I have full belief—that in the long term we will get sustainability and we will get the price down. If we can all—including the commonwealth government—actually endorse the 50 recommendations that were put before them, I am sure in the long term we can get a good result.

CLARE VALLEY WASTE

Mr KNOLL (Schubert) (14:37): Supplementary: has the minister provided any assistance to Clare Valley Waste with regard to their specific issues around soft plastics processing?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:37): I haven't had any direct response from Clare Valley Waste, but I am happy to take that on board.

CLARE VALLEY WASTE

Mr KNOLL (Schubert) (14:37): Further supplementary: does the minister think it's acceptable that Clare Valley Waste is looking to send their soft plastics to Melbourne to be processed?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:37): I just answered a minute ago, 'Not to my knowledge.' I have had no official response from the—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: This is the first I have heard of this, and I just indicated to the member for Schubert that I am happy to take that on board.

CLARE VALLEY WASTE

Mr KNOLL (Schubert) (14:37): Further supplementary: has the minister offered any assistance to Clare Valley Waste to deal with the \$60 a tonne extra cost that they are now going to have to deal with moving their soft plastics processing to Melbourne?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (14:38): That question says, 'Should we cover the costs of the increase of them moving to Melbourne?'

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Because the question, the way I heard it, was, 'Will the state government—

Mr Gardner: Are you familiar with what has happened?

The SPEAKER: The member for Morialta is called to order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —subsidise the extra \$60 a tonne that it costs to move to Melbourne?'

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I think that's what he said. I stand to be corrected—I will check the *Hansard*—but it seems to me that that's what the shadow minister said. No, we won't be subsidising a company to move to Melbourne. What we have got in place is the jobs fund, and the jobs fund is there to offer support to South Australian businesses through low-interest loans or, of course, grants.

There have been a number of businesses that have applied for these low-interest loans and grants; one in particular has been a family company that the shadow minister has lots of involvement with. His own family business is applying through our jobs grant. Good on them, I say, because—

The SPEAKER: Point of order, member for Morialta.

Mr GARDNER: The minister is debating the topic and completely irrelevant to the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: No, the question is: what assistance is given to companies with energy costs? The point of order is bogus. The member for Morialta is warned. The minister.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We are offering businesses assistance through our jobs fund. We are also offering businesses assistance through our \$31 million grants loan program to

help businesses with demand management; that is, we help them with assistance in terms of being able to audit their own business on energy efficiency. Once they have completed those audits, we co-invest with them to try to help lower their energy costs, whether it is in cogeneration or some other form of using their own heat that they generate to store energy so that they can offset high price demands.

We have seen a lot of this being done at Kimberly-Clark in the South-East, and we have seen a lot of work being done at Electrolux here in Adelaide—\$31 million goes a long way to helping these businesses. What we want to see ultimately, and what we have been pushing for very hard through rule changes, is the creation of a demand management market where people can use our investments and we will co-invest with them, using the budget surpluses and the proceeds of the major bank levy, to try to help businesses to invest in their own generation on their premises.

At times of high demand, when the national operator comes calling and says, 'Perhaps we should load shed,' if a company has the ability to come off grid and use their own generation, they can be paid by the market at the rates they would have been paying to receive electricity at that time. A demand management market, incentivised by the government by rule changes that we are making—that is what we are doing to help South Australian businesses.

It's called an energy policy—an energy policy through demand management, getting more gas out of the ground, getting more competitors into South Australia, having reserve generation to avoid load shedding, putting our money where our mouth is. That's an energy policy—not sitting on the sidelines and just complaining and offering whingeing remarks with no alternative. What we should be doing is debating policies: our policy versus your policy. That is what we should be having right now. Instead, all it is is complaints, complaints from people who don't know what they are talking about.

The SPEAKER: The minister has escaped the hawser of relevance. The member for Unley.

RATE CAPPING

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:41): My question is to the Minister for Local Government. Can the minister advise the house if the Local Government Association recently held a public forum in Port Pirie to explain the negative impacts of rate capping and only two members of the public turned up?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:42): Can I get that question repeated? Sorry, I couldn't quite hear it.

Mr PISONI: Can the minister advise the house if the Local Government Association recently held a public forum in Port Pirie to explain the negative impacts of rate capping and only two members of the public turned up?

The Hon. J.M. Rankine interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Wright is called to order.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Finniss is warned. The member for Wright is warned. It is the duty of the Speaker to intervene to prevent quarrels between members.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: It is a very good question, in actual fact. Can I make the suggestion that the member for Unley inquires with the LGA regarding whether they had a meeting there and how many turned up.

RATE CAPPING

Mr PISONI (Unley) (14:42): Supplementary: does the minister support the Local Government Association spending \$800,000 of ratepayers' money on a political campaign against rate capping?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:43): I again compliment the member for Unley for the high-quality questions. Again, I have indicated what councils do. The member for Unley was on council some time ago, and I am sure that he would agree with us privately. What local governments do is their own issue,

providing, of course, that they debate it within the open chamber and, if anything is being discussed, that they make certain that it is in the general public's view. Again, I would ask the member for Unley to maybe ask the LGA for a bit more clarification.

NORTH TERRACE LIGHTING PROJECT

Mr ODENWALDER (Little Para) (14:43): My question is to the Minister for Housing and Urban Development. Minister, can you inform the house about recent lighting developments along North Terrace?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Minister for Housing and Urban Development) (14:44): This government is serious about its commitment to improving South Australia's premier cultural boulevard, North Terrace. North Terrace is a unique boulevard, with many important state institutions located there. The Art Gallery of South Australia, the South Australian Museum, the State Library and the University of Adelaide are amongst many other heritage buildings lining the boulevard.

Of course, there is a lot of development which is occurring in the vicinity of North Terrace as well. As well as the massive investments that are occurring in the city, both at the western end and in the central part, and soon to be in the eastern end of North Terrace, we shouldn't forget that sometimes it's the little things that can add atmosphere to a city.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: The deputy leader nearly has it accurate. Ninety-eight trees will be illuminated on the northern side of North Terrace, between King William Street and East Terrace. An outburst of light will emanate from our premier boulevard. The trees will use bud lights and will spread outwards along main branches and encircle the trunks of the trees.

The lighting project has two functions: not only will they look good on the trees, forming a pattern along North Terrace, but they will also act as better lighting for pedestrian safety. To add to these 98 trees, two very large trees outside the University of Adelaide's Bonython Hall will be utilising solar lights as a trial to gauge the viability for future lighting projects. The trial commitment is supported by the University of Adelaide, the state government and the City of Adelaide and is part of the Carbon Neutral Adelaide commitment.

I can advise the house that through a competitive tender process for the design of the lighting, and to manage the project, two firms have been selected: Deadshort Electrical, a family-owned Adelaide business, which has been around for approximately 25 years, and engineering consulting firm Bestec.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Those opposite might want to mock South Australian family-owned businesses: we are interested in giving them work. Renewal SA are delivering the \$380,000 project—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: —funded through the Riverbank Authority—

The SPEAKER: The member for Elder is called to order.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: —and the Capital City Committee. This lighting project is the latest in a series of enhancements throughout the city.

In December last year, between King William and Morphett Street 44 trees along a 660-metre stretch were lit up, and it made a big difference to the northern side of the Torrens. Installed by local firm Rawson Electrical and lights supplied by local firm Buckford Illumination, and Inlite, it demonstrates this government's support for locally based businesses to participate in these city projects.

This government has also supported major projects, which bring much pride and life back into the precinct, such as the ANZAC Centenary Memorial Walk along Kintore Avenue, and of course the soon to be installed new tram stops along North Terrace. North Terrace will be the link from our

emerging health and biomedical precinct to our entertainment, educational and cultural precincts. As part of the old Royal Adelaide Hospital activation of the site, the heritage buildings along North Terrace will also be lit up. The light installations will be activated from September onwards, with coloured lighting of the North Terrace building facades.

As I said, it's often the little things that can make a big difference to people's enjoyment of a precinct, and these little bud lights on these 98 trees will make a big difference to the life of this city. It's one further effort where this North Terrace lighting project is contributing to a world-class precinct linking the Adelaide Riverbank.

GAS INDUSTRY

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland) (14:48): My question is to the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy. Minister, can you update the house on the government's initiatives to increase supply of affordable gas to the South Australian market?

The SPEAKER: Is the minister able to help the house with that?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for State Development, Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy) (14:48): I will do my best to assist, sir. PACE Gas is one of the six key initiatives that comprise Our Energy Plan. The initiative centres on providing incentives to source and use more South Australian gas to generate our own electricity. Put simply, we want to increase the supply of affordable gas to local gas users—first, to electricity generators, then manufacturers and then retail customers—to put downward pressure on energy prices for all South Australian customers because we are a gas state.

The government is committed to incentivising projects that have the greatest likelihood of securing new and significant gas supplies to South Australian customers by the end of 2020. It is with this in mind that the government initiated round 1 of the PACE Gas initiative that led to grants being awarded to five exploration and production projects.

Those projects together shared \$24 million of state government funding to accelerate those projects that aim to bring forward gas supplies to the state. Together, these grants are generating up to \$174 million worth of new investment by oil and gas companies in local production projects either in the Cooper Basin or the Otway Basin—a great play in the Otway Basin. I am pleased to report that progress is underway in these projects.

Beach Energy has recently announced the location of their Haselgrove-3 gas exploration well near Penola in the state's South-East. Haselgrove-3 is expected to begin drilling next month and, if successful, gas can be delivered to local enterprises at prices below what they are currently paying at a time when prices elsewhere are rising nationally. I can confidently say that because of the well's proximity to local markets and existing infrastructure, which means lower pipeline tariffs due to the shorter distance to the markets in the South-East. On the strength of the business bids received in round 1, I announced a second round of funding for PACE Gas grants, and applications for those grants closed on 1 August.

There has been a strong response to the second round of grants, with a total of 15 applications lodged on behalf of 11 companies through six operators representing a diversity of projects. The applications in aggregate represent considerably more than the \$24 million in grants offered in PACE Gas round 2, and that bodes well for contestability of what will be determined to the highest ranked projects. These applications will be rigorously assessed, and successful applicants are due to be announced by October.

I look forward to these grants bringing forward a diversity of high-quality gas projects that will help maintain downward pressure on power prices for all South Australians because gas overwhelmingly across the country is now beginning to set the price of electricity. Policies of banning gas or gas exploration or locking gas in the ground are pushing power prices up.

Any party, whether it is the Northern Territory Labor government or the New South Wales Liberal government, that attempts to lock gas in the ground is having an impact on electricity prices. Anyone who attempts to block this gas in the ground has to answer to constituents with higher power

prices. Treasurer Morrison has threatened to cut GST grants to the states on the basis of their ability to have policies that allow for the exploration of gas products in South Australia.

COOBER PEDY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:52): My question is to the Minister for Local Government. Has the minister checked, as he indicated that he would do so in question time on 31 May, if he provided any notification to the Treasurer of concerns that he had about the governance of the Coober Pedy council before the Treasurer issued a letter on 29 March 2016 consenting to the council entering into the energy contract and, if not, why not?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:52): I will just get the chronology on this one, if I can, Mr Speaker. I haven't got it here; however, I have already given a briefing to the shadow minister regarding this incident. I'm happy for it—

Mr Gardner interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Morialta is warned for the second and final time.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: The chronology of it has been going on for some time. Sorry, was it power or was it the—

Mr van Holst Pellekaan: Power.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: I have written a letter to the Treasurer regarding other issues, and perhaps if you want more information I can ask the member to redirect to the Minister for Energy.

COOBER PEDY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:53): Supplementary: do I understand it, minister, that you have conveyed concerns to the Treasurer, prior to him signing that letter of support, about the council? If so, can you check what the date is and bring the information back to the house today?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:54): I will perhaps rephrase that. My correspondence, as the Minister for Local Government, was audited returns regarding the Local Government Act. It was nothing to do with power, but that was also conveyed to the Treasurer. Can I get the member, if she is talking about power, to redirect it to the relevant minister, which is the Minister for Energy.

COOBER PEDY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:54): Further supplementary: if a letter expressing your concerns as minister was conveyed to the Treasurer, would you ascertain when that letter was sent and provide a copy of your letter to the house?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (14:54): Can I get that and come back,

INTERNATIONAL ASTRONAUTICAL CONGRESS

Ms DIGANCE (Elder) (14:54): My question is to the Minister for Defence Industries. Can the minister update the house on the upcoming International Astronautical Congress 2017?

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) (14:55): I thank the member for her question because it is now less than 50 days until Adelaide hosts the 2017 International Astronautical Congress. South Australia is leading the way when it comes to development of the space industry in this country. The space industry has an important role to play in South Australia's economy, and it brings with it high-tech jobs, opportunities for innovation and international collaboration. The IAC 2017 presents a significant opportunity to promote the state's capabilities in space defence, telecommunications, advanced manufacturing, education and research and development.

This is a \$330 billion industry around the globe—\$3 billion to \$4 billion in Australia, over 11,000 jobs—and we need to be the industry node in this future capability. Updated figures show the IAC 2017 is expected to attract more than 4,000 delegates to Adelaide and result in an estimated \$25 million boost to the South Australian economy. As of 31 July, there have been almost 2,000 registrations received, with country participation led by Australia at 30 per cent; the USA, 13 per cent; Germany, 12 per cent; and Japan, 7 per cent, with those figures moving swiftly. This is above the level expected this far out from the congress.

The IAC 2017 will have a focus on education, and the South Australian government is promoting STEM to more than 1,400 schoolchildren through a range of activities and workshops at the State Library and Museum, as well as training 600 teachers. The South Australian government will have key involvement in the congress, with the Premier speaking at the opening ceremony, alongside the Lord Mayor of Adelaide, the Chair of the Space Industry Association of Australia and the President of the International Astronautical Federation.

The South Australian government will also be represented with an exhibition stand, which includes exhibits from 11 private local companies, three universities, five government agencies and the Hamilton Space School based at Hamilton College in Mitchell Park. The Premier will host the South Australian state dinner, which will feature Dr Andy Thomas, as keynote speaker. The dinner will be attended by 150 guests, including heads of space agencies, astronauts, international parliamentarians and senior industry and academia representatives.

As the Premier recently announced, Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX, has confirmed he will speak on the final afternoon of the congress and, in fact, he has indicated he will update the international community on the mission to Mars program in conjunction with NASA. The congress will establish ongoing partnerships with leading agencies, companies and educational research organisations that will benefit South Australia and add value to our industries and services over the long term. South Australia is moving away from high volume, low value, low margin manufacturing towards high volume, high value, high margin manufacturing, a future economy based around science and technology, and space is part of that story.

The IAC 2017 is an opportunity to excite and inspire young people in schools and universities and promote STEM career opportunities for future jobs creation. Members can find information on the congress at www.iac2017.org. I look forward to updating the house on the outcomes of the congress in due course. The dates of the IAC are 25 to 29 September.

SPACE LAW CONFERENCE

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:58): Supplementary: given the minister's indication of the high priority of this for South Australia, why then did he refuse to provide any financial support to the Space Law Conference earlier this year at the University of Adelaide for which the commonwealth had also made a provision of financial support?

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) (14:59): I thank the deputy leader for this Dorothy Dixier because my advice to the deputy leader, if she is keen to promote—

Ms Chapman: I've got a copy of the letter.

The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH: —space as a future for Australia—

The SPEAKER: The deputy leader is warned for the second and final time.

The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH: —would be to get on to her federal colleagues, in particular the minister, minister Sinodinos, and ask him to agree to form a space agency. That space agency will have funding, and that space agency's funding may well be available to support the very sorts of ventures the deputy leader has just mentioned. But what do we have? What we have is a statement from the federal government that, wait for it, 'We won't have a space agency; we will have another review.' Well, there has been review after review after review, going back to the early 1990s, both Labor and Liberal federal—

The Hon. J.M. Rankine interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Wright is warned for the second and final time.

The Hon. M.L.J. HAMILTON-SMITH: —both Labor and Liberal federal governments have commissioned review after review and what is the answer of the Liberal Party? Let's have another review.

So the vision the deputy leader has for South Australia's future in space is to get up at the International Astronautical Congress in September and say, 'You know what? We are so committed, we are going to have another review. We are going to have another review.' We will sit there and, while everyone else is looking to the frontiers, the deputy leader will be examining her navel as she has another review.

The funding for the law congress that the deputy leader mentioned has a secret answer, and that is within the funding that might be linked to a space agency, and I would encourage her to go and see her federal colleagues. In fact, we know the opposition don't have a policy on anything—

The SPEAKER: The Speaker is satiated with the answer. The minister will resume his seat.

Ms Chapman: Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Don't get too excited because I am calling the member for Florey.

TRANSFORMING HEALTH

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:01): My question is to the Minister for Health. What multiple initiatives have been introduced under Transforming Health to unlock capacity and improve patient access and flow across the system of care, particularly in emergency departments and especially at Modbury Hospital?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries) (15:01): Well, many—firstly, making sure that we have emergency departments that have the services they need. I will give the member for Florey a very good example that she will be familiar with, and that is moving to a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week orthopaedic roster where we had elderly patients who were needing hip operations having to wait on average 150 hours in extreme discomfort in the emergency department before they could have the operation. Since we've moved to the 24-hour, seven-day-a-week roster, that time spent in the Lyell McEwin ED is down I think to an average of 15 hours, so a 90 per cent reduction in the amount of time those patients are waiting in the emergency department to have their operation.

Another good example is when I first came into the portfolio. Members will be aware we did have significant problems with mental health patients waiting sometimes many days to be admitted to a mental health bed and this caused significant problems: it was poor for the mental health patient because obviously an emergency department is no place for a person who is undergoing some form of psychosis, and it was terrible for the staff of the emergency departments because obviously a mental health patient who is disturbed consumes an enormous amount of the time of the clinical staff in the emergency department.

It was very important that one of the first things I made a priority, and committed to a target of, was having no mental health patient having to wait longer than 24 hours for admission to a bed and being stuck in the ED. I have to say that we have largely achieved that. It does still happen on occasion, but it has basically been eliminated. It is very rare that we have a mental health patient waiting in an ED.

There are any number—and I could keep going—of other initiatives being undertaken. I know that Flinders Medical Centre have done a lot of work to pull patients out of the emergency department, having senior clinical staff available to pull patients out of the emergency department if they need to be admitted into a ward. Another example for the Lyell McEwin are the changes we made for medical imaging at the Lyell McEwin Hospital, where we had significant problems with access to medical imaging; that was largely as a result of the difficulty we had recruiting to the Lyell McEwin emergency department. There was a long list of reports waiting, so patients were waiting in the emergency department because the clinicians in the ED did not have access to the diagnostics that they required.

With regard to the Modbury emergency department, I know that nurse practitioners have been particularly successful. I have my own personal story. Last year, I took my son to Modbury Hospital because he had injured his wrist playing soccer. He is the goalie and took a kick to the wrist. I took him to the Modbury Hospital ED. We were seen—

The SPEAKER: Did he save it?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: He did, yes. He put his body on the line and he did save the goal. I think the team actually won the game as well. Anyway, we went to the Modbury Hospital ED. We were seen by a nurse practitioner very quickly. The nurse practitioner ordered that my son have an X-ray, and he was taken to have the plaster applied. We were in and out of the emergency department in a very, very quick point of time. I could go on—

The SPEAKER: The minister's time has expired.

TRANSFORMING HEALTH

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:06): Supplementary: is the minister satisfied that critical issues, such as access and bed block, have been resolved?

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries) (15:06): There is always more work to be done, and I don't think there will ever be a health minister who will look on our health system and say, 'There is nothing here to be improved.' It would be a pretty foolish health minister who did that.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING: Treasurers, however, might have a different point of view. No, there will never be a health minister, I would have thought, who would ever look at our system, as large and complex as it is, and say there's no scope for improvement, but I would also say that we have made significant advances over the last few years. Our hospitals are busier than they have ever been, but our emergency departments are standing up very, very well to an unprecedented number of presentations to all our emergency departments. I would like to thank our doctors, nurses and other health staff, who work extremely hard to make sure that our patients are dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible.

COOBER PEDY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:07): My question is to the Minister for Local Government. Did the minister or any member of his department meet with Adrian Tisato of GT Legal, the lawyer representing Coober Pedy council, since December 2015 and during the period in which the council signed the power price agreement with Energy Developments Limited and, if so, when?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (15:07): Not to my recollection. I must admit that this is the first time I have heard that firm's name, but I am happy to double-check and come back to the member.

COMMUNITY HOUSING

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:08): My question is to the Minister for Local Government. In light of comments by LGA president, Lorraine Rosenberg, has the minister sought a meeting to discuss the LGA's concerns regarding rate rebates for community housing being transferred from South Australian Housing Trust stock?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Schubert is already on two warnings.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Minister for Housing and Urban Development) (15:08): I thank the member for Mount Gambier for his question. The housing transfer program is being conducted by Renewal SA as part of the housing portfolio where a number of Housing Trust houses are to be managed by community housing organisations in the future. The member for Mount Gambier highlights the issue that some councils are concerned about, that is, that the transfer to these community housing providers will entitle these

providers to a significant rate rebate—75 per cent, I think it is—for the council rates which would otherwise be paid for these properties.

Some councils are concerned about that potential loss of rating revenue, particularly those councils that might have a significant number of houses that are being transferred in their council area. To give you an idea of the scale of the program, 4,500 houses are being transferred in several tranches across South Australia. I think the member for Mount Gambier's council areas are included in that, as well as metropolitan councils and other regional councils.

It's important to make it clear, though, that it's not just a simple equation of a number of houses being transferred and there being a calculation as to what the impact will be on rates because part of the drive of this program of the transfers is to enable for the first time these dwellings to attract the commonwealth rental assistance. That will provide additional income for the property, and it will mean that the housing providers have a greater source of revenue for those dwellings than will be the case if the Housing Trust maintain them for themselves.

With that additional revenue, they are able to make further investments in housing stock in the area in which those dwellings are. It might be improvements to individual dwellings, or it might even be the construction of further separate dwellings so that more people can be accommodated in social housing. On that basis, it's anticipated that, with all the transfers, there won't be a simple net impact of rate reductions that councils are worried about.

Yes, it is likely there will be some reduction but not of the quantum that they are anticipating from a simple calculation of X number of properties at a 75 per cent reduction in rating revenue. Indeed, there is likely to be a significant offset from the redevelopment activity, whether or not that leads to an increase in property values of those redeveloped properties, or the establishment of new dwellings, which become newly rated properties.

We have made it clear from the government's perspective that if councils, particularly regional councils, are concerned about this, they should approach the government and see whether there is not a case that can be made for a form of exemption or separate entitlement for those affected councils who are worried about the impact on their rating base so that they are not left too short of rating revenue and put in a difficult position so that they can't afford to maintain their services and maintenance of infrastructure, etc.

MARTINDALE HALL

Mr SPEIRS (Bright) (15:12): My question is to the Minister for Regional Development. Is the minister supportive of any future move to lease or license Martindale Hall to private or non-government parties?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (15:12): Can I again thank the member for that. It's nice to see him ask a question. That responsibility is under the auspices of the Minister—

The Hon. L.W.K. Bignell: For the environment.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: —for Environment in the other house.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Wright has already received a full set of warnings. The member for Bright.

MARTINDALE HALL

Mr SPEIRS (Bright) (15:13): A supplementary: has the minister been consulted by the Department of Environment on potential legislation to facilitate the lease or licence?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (15:13): It was quite some time ago. It was a long time ago, and I think things have changed a bit since then. However, I haven't had a briefing recently, but I am sure that the minister in the other place is already indicating that. Through my discussions with the relevant council, I know that the minister is looking forward to giving me another briefing as the local member.

MARTINDALE HALL

Mr SPEIRS (Bright) (15:13): A supplementary: will the minister be supporting any legislation that is brought here by the Minister for Environment regarding the lease or licence of Martindale Hall?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (15:13): I wish that I could foreshadow or foresee X Lotto numbers in the next X Lotto. There is no legislation, to my knowledge, before the house at this stage or even being contemplated at this particular point. So, as it is a hypothetical question, I can't give anything but a hypothetical answer.

COUNTRY ROAD SPEED LIMITS

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:14): My question is to the Minister for Regional Development. Does the minister support the Labor government's push to lower speed limits to 100 km/h on country roads?

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Local Government) (15:14): Certainly, it is an interesting thing to all of us in here from the regions, and can I ask the member for Mount Gambier to refer that to the relevant minister, the Minister for Transport.

ADVANCED FOOD MANUFACTURING GRANTS

Mr PICTON (Kaurna) (15:14): My question is to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. Minister, how is the state government contributing to the growth and profitability of the food manufacturing sector?

The SPEAKER: I call the nightwatchman.

The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL (Mawson—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Tourism, Minister for Recreation and Sport, Minister for Racing) (15:15): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the member for Kaurna for that question. The government is helping the food sector here in South Australia in a number of different ways.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL: Of course, I don't think I will need it against this opposition. This is an industry that's worth billions of dollars to our state and one that forms one of the key economic planks in our priorities, and that is premium food and wine produced in our clean environment and exported to the world. What we know is that people around the world want innovative food, not just really great high-quality food, so we are helping food producers here to make their products even more exportable and palatable.

We have had two rounds of grants so far in the Advanced Food Manufacturing Grants Program. We whacked \$1.2 million into 19 projects, and that was matched by \$1.44 million of industry co-funding, to deliver an estimated 26 jobs across South Australia. Earlier this year, following round 3 of the program, I announced a one-off small advanced food manufacturing program for businesses with an annual turnover of up to \$10 million. Six South Australian food businesses received up to \$30,000 each through the program:

- Gelista, partnering with TAFE SA, to develop new low-GI ice-cream and sorbet products. The Minister for Environment may want to try them out—a little bit of low GI there.
- The Lobethal Bierhaus—big Al up there at Lobethal and his fantastic crew—is partnering with the University of Adelaide's School of Agriculture, Food and Wine to develop a gluten-free beer that mimics attributes and flavours characterised in high-quality craft beer.
- Pangkarra Foods is partnering with Orgran Health and Nutrition to utilise pilot extrusion technology to create a new snack range of puff pulse produce.
- This one is my favourite, though: Potatoes South Australia, working with the University of Adelaide's School of Agriculture, Food and Wine, to develop (wait for it!) a premium

South Australian vodka from waste potato peel. Has there ever been a better use for waste potato peel? I don't think so. It's going to be fantastic. We can't wait for that one to come out.

- SA Mushrooms is partnering with Food Processing Specialists Pty Ltd to develop and commercialise export-ready packaged long shelf-life cooked mushroom products.
- Woodside Cheese Wrights is partnering with the Orana Foundation to develop a luxury series of native Australian inspired cheese. Of course, we must remember that last year Kris Lloyd, who runs the magnificent Woodside Cheese Wrights, won a number of international awards, but I think the biggest gong she received was for a cheese that's covered in green ants. I don't know whether anyone has tried that, but it's an excellent cheese. You get this cheese and it's got all these little green ants all over it, and apparently they are good for you—eat your greens!

This is a terrific example of how our government is working side by side with the food and beverage sector here in South Australia to make sure that we are producing world-class quality produce that's not only very fresh and high quality but also innovative. I congratulate all the successful applicants and wish them well for the research they will be undertaking to deliver new produce to markets right around the world.

Ministerial Statement

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Minister for Education and Child Development, Minister for Higher Education and Skills) (15:19): I table a statement made by the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation in the other place.

Grievance Debate

RIPPLES COMMUNITY ARTS

Mr TARZIA (Hartley) (15:19): At the weekend, I had the great pleasure to support Ripples Community Arts Inc for their *Edgy* art exhibition as part of SALA 2017. It was held at The Gym on Brookway Drive, Campbelltown, in my electorate. It was a great event attended by many in the Lochiel Park family and surrounding areas as well, with many of their family and friends. It was a great opportunity to look at what was a very interesting and varied exhibition of high-quality art aspects.

Ripples Community Arts Inc was formed to provide a forum where artists of an array of ages from all kinds of walks of life in Campbelltown and surrounding areas can cooperate, support and encourage each other in their artistic endeavours. In that process, Ripples has been able to increase the visual amenity of Campbelltown and not only help create a unique identity for the local area but also contribute through art to creating a shared history, feelings of belonging and a sense of wellbeing for residents of Campbelltown and nearby areas.

They also engage local residents of all ages, including schoolchildren, in the creation of community artworks. They run workshops and other educational events for each other and for interested people. They exchange ideas and information amongst members and support and encourage emerging and young artists in Campbelltown, a number of whom were present that day. They support and promote small arts businesses and arts markets in Campbelltown. They also promote local artists as teachers, conductors, producers and other roles whilst promoting the sharing of art across diverse cultural communities in our local area. It is very inclusive.

Many people are continually encouraged to come up with ideas or projects that can be considered by Ripples members. I especially would like to thank the committee: Dave Parker, the chair of the Ripples Community Arts committee, and Pam Gunnell, the secretary, as well as the rest of the committee for doing the fantastic job they do. While I have a short time this afternoon, I want to commend some of the artists from the 2017 SALA at Ripples Community Arts. It was a real pleasure to look at their wonderful displays of artwork, and I know that a lot of time goes into making them.

I will start with Jenny Bates, Elise Bennett, Helen Blackman, Paul Blackman, Jen Campbell, John Campbell, Leanne Campbell, Ken Dyer, Alicia Gerkens and Pam Gunnell. Helen Nichols had a juxtaposed image of a variety of the magical buildings of India. Others included Karen O'Brien, Dave Parker of course, Judy Parker, Bruce Rossini, Rayna Schofield, Erica Walker and Julienne Webb. Jill Whittaker had a few items, and I particularly enjoyed looking at her Fox Glacier New Zealand piece. There were also many others.

I again commend the local artists and thank them for their investment of time and effort in our local community. This group does a fantastic job; we are certainly very lucky to have them. I will continue to do everything I can as the member for Hartley to help Ripples Community Arts in the various projects they continue to lead in our local area. I wish them well and I thank them once again for their efforts. I commend them to the house.

VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford) (15:23): I understand that there is work being done in Victoria with regard to voluntary assisted dying. I was very impressed to read about the work being done by the Victorian government's Ministerial Advisory Panel on Voluntary Assisted Dying. The panel consisted of the following members: Professor Brian Owler, who was the chair, is a neurosurgeon and immediate past president of the AMA; and Professor Margaret O'Connor AM, who was the deputy chair, is Professor of Nursing, Monash University, with a palliative care background.

Members were Ms Mary Draper, who has a background in health administration and clinical governance; Mr Julian Gardner AM, a lawyer and immediate past Victorian Public Advocate; Dr Roger Hunt, a palliative medicine consultant and also well known in South Australia; Emeritus Professor Ian Maddocks AM, first Chair of Palliative Medicine in Australia and first president of the Australian Association for Hospice and Palliative Care, another well-known South Australian; and Ms Tricia Malowney OAM, who is a health advocate for women with disabilities. The panel came up with recommendations to try to assist with the legislation that I understand the Victorian parliament will be considering.

It was also interesting to note that Premier Daniel Andrews accepted 66 of the panel's recommendations, and the panel published a 257-page report. Premier Andrews argued that, regardless of an individual's view on end-of-life choices:

The time has come to make some profound change and to no longer deny to those who want a more dignified end to their life, or at least want to know that that option is available to them. The time has come to stop denying them that.

He went on to say:

I've come to the conclusion that whether you would avail yourself of this option isn't really the point.

My advice is that the panel used the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 as a basis for its report and that seven human rights contained within that act were considered to be relevant to the voluntary assisted dying proposed legislation. They include:

- the right to recognition and equality before the law, section 8;
- the right to life, section 9;
- the right to protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, section 10;
- the right to privacy and reputation, section 13(a);
- the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, section 14(1);
- the right to protection in the best interests of the child, section 17(2); and
- the right to liberty and security of the person, section 21(1).

It is interesting to follow the different path taken by the Victorians, and there are a number of recommendations about what the legislation should look like. Some of the principles that are part of what is being proposed include:

- every human life has equal value;

- a person's autonomy should be respected;
- a person has the right to be supported in making informed decisions about their medical treatment and should be given, in a manner that they understand, information about treatment options, including comfort and palliative care;
- every person approaching the end of life has the right to quality care, to minimise their suffering and maximise their quality of life;
- the therapeutic relationship between a person and their health practitioner should, wherever possible, be supported and maintained; and
- open discussions about death and dying and people's preferences and values should be encouraged and promoted.

These are some of the points that have been taken into consideration by the Victorian government.

RIVERLAND GENERAL HOSPITAL SIMULATION CENTRE

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:28): I am very proud to stand up and acknowledge the great work that Flinders University is presenting in the Riverland, and last Friday I was lucky enough to visit the Riverland General Hospital at Berri to witness the opening of the new simulation centre. Professor Jennene Greenhill, Director, Flinders Rural Health here in South Australia is a proud proponent of the simulation centre, which will enable students and clinicians to work in the Riverland General Hospital and maintain a state of clinical skills through artificially experiencing real-life situations.

Deputy Speaker, I wonder whether you would understand what the word 'moulage' means. The rural health centre was opened at the Riverland General Hospital. Flinders' lecturer Sarah Boyd has published a book on the subject, entitled *Moulage: Making Simulations Come Alive on a Budget*. I witnessed simulations, through make-up and all sorts of false wounds and burns, on mock patients, after which medical staff dealt with them. The thing that really got to the back of my throat was that they burnt hair to simulate the smell. They also use a lot of make-up and simulation equipment that typify what health professionals go through when dealing with real-life scenarios.

The Riverland General Hospital now has a simulation centre and it also comes on the back of the Renmark clinical school, which trains doctors and nurses who live in the Riverland. It offers undergraduate nurses degrees and nursery and midwifery training, with a three-year degree. What more could you ask for than living in the Riverland and experiencing the lifestyle, while doing your medical training and undertaking a 12-month program based on medical practices? Each year, more than 200 professionals undertake training at Flinders Uni's medical facilities at Renmark. They will now be able to undertake the simulation training at the regional hospital. It is a great initiative.

I would also like to pay tribute to Professor Jennene Greenhill, the Associate Dean of the School of Medicine at Flinders University at Renmark. She was recently awarded honorary membership of the Australia and New Zealand Association for Health Professional Educators, the ANZAHPE honorary membership. It is a prestigious category of membership that recognises exceptional, sustained contributions and loyalty to the health system.

Many Riverlanders know Jennene Greenhill. The health professional network is very familiar with her work and her passion. Her opening presentation at the Riverland General Hospital at Berri highlighted her passion and what she brings to both the Riverland Hospital and the Riverland General Hospital. It was great to see the Hon. Senator Anne Ruston open the facility. She is also a local Riverland woman, and she told great stories about what this means to the Riverland.

It gives health professionals the opportunity to come to the regions to undertake training. Living in regional centres, we all know that it is very hard to attract health professionals and it is very hard to keep them. A lot of the health professionals who come to the Riverland experience the place, the lifestyle and the friendly nature of people who live there. Giving health professionals such opportunities will give the Riverland the best opportunity to have them remain in the region and keep our health networks in safe hands. It was a great experience. Professor Jennene Greenhill is an asset to the Riverland health system.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr PICTON (Kaurua) (15:33): When you represent an outer suburban electorate of the city, transport becomes a very important issue, particularly commuter transport. It is certainly something that is regularly raised with me as I doorknock, phone people and meet people across my electorate. In turn, I raise a few issues with Minister for Transport and his office from time to time.

Of the different transport systems, public transport is very important, in particular rail transport in my electorate. We are very fortunate in the Kaurua electorate to have the benefit of the Seaford rail extension and the Seaford line electrification, delivered by this government and opened about 3½ years ago. It is a very popular service, and it has increased not only the number of people catching the service but also the convenience for people from the outer suburbs and, in fact, even all the way down to Victor Harbor. When I am at the train station at Seaford.

I regularly meet people who have driven from Victor Harbor to catch the train to make their way into town. It is much more efficient and effective for people to travel into town. Of course, the new electric trains provide really a very high level of service for residents. When I was catching the train home after the Showdown, two three-car sets were connected together—so six carriages altogether—and they were full of people, so it has the capacity to carry a huge number of people across the Seaford line once they are all connected together.

One of the issues in relation to rail service is always the timetable, and one of the issues regularly raised with me is getting more rail services in place, and this is something I have been lobbying the transport minister about for a long time. I was very delighted to see that the transport minister and the Treasurer have been able to deliver \$22 million extra in this budget for rail services across the state. Of course, that will help the Seaford line, as well as the other lines. In particular, that money is going to go towards additional services for night-time and weekend services to increase the frequency of those services, and to increase the predictability for people when they are catching trains, so that they know that there will be one coming relatively soon.

Some of the issues that that will deal with are particularly when we have Mad March festival time in Adelaide. The night-time services from the city to Seaford are very busy, and at the moment they are only one hour apart. This will go a long way to addressing that need. It is also an issue even if you are working late at night in the city or if you want to catch up with somebody after work, that suddenly you can be very quickly put onto an hourly schedule for trains, and we are looking to address that. Also, we want to improve the predictability and regularity on the weekend for people who want to come into the city or to get out to the beach at Seaford. That is very important for the Seaford line and it has been very well received by people in my electorate.

A number of other issues come up from time to time. Because it is so popular, we have seen that the Seaford station park-and-ride gets very busy and very full in the mornings. From some recent correspondence from the minister, I understand that work is now being done to look at how we can improve the popularity of the Seaford Meadows station, where the car park is nowhere near as full in the mornings, including potentially investigating some stair options, rather than the significant ramp, as well as some other promotional material that could encourage people to use that station instead of the other Seaford station, which is very full and very landlocked and where there is not much room to extend the park-and-ride.

Obviously, there are always issues in terms of interchanges with the connections of buses and trains, and that is another issue we are constantly working on and I am raising with the department. I also appreciate that a lot of work has been done on some of the unsafe pedestrian crossings along the Seaford line to address removing some of the unsafe crossings and upgrading some of the others. All that work will have improvements in terms of the timetable as well because it will mean that the trains will have fewer places where they need to slow down along the journey between the city and Seaford.

We have also announced a ticketed station at Noarlunga, which will be an improvement in terms of security, and there are also significant security staff who work at those stations. Wi-fi on our trains will also have a very positive impact and I congratulate the minister on that.

RURAL FREIGHT

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (15:38): I rise today on behalf of the people of Stuart to take this opportunity to talk about rural freight. This is an issue that affects all our state, but of course I am far more familiar with it in my electorate; however, let me say that this is a statewide issue. Freight efficiency is incredibly important to rural businesses, whether they be supermarkets that need to receive stock as cheaply and efficiently as possible or whether it be with regard to freight taking away rural produce.

Most rural people would be aware of grain freight because during the harvest season it is a really big issue. We have grain trucks on most of our rural roads, and they are contributing to the economy in many ways through efficiency and obviously through getting freight to silos and from there on to ports and markets. Those trucks and their drivers contribute through what they consume, whether it is fuel, food, tyres, mechanical repairs or whatever else, while they are on the road, and it is a very big issue.

One thing we need to do is contribute as much as we possibly can to freight efficiency. Largely, when it comes to heavy vehicle freight, freight efficiency is impacted enormously by the size of the load that can be carried. While of course it is not always true, typically the larger the truck the more it can carry, the more efficient per unit—per bale of wool or per tonne of grain, or per head of cattle or sheep—and the more efficient that freight will be, and that is incredibly important.

It is very easy to underestimate the big impact freight efficiency has on businesses in rural South Australia, and that then flows through to other businesses as well. It might be the wholesaler in a metro area supplying a supermarket who would benefit. It might be the abattoir or the butcher or retailers in metropolitan areas who might benefit by getting rural produce down to Adelaide more efficiently. I acknowledge that councils are very involved in this issue, and they have a significant burden and a significant cost with regard to the maintenance and upgrade of their roads.

The issue I am talking about has an implication for them, but of course overwhelmingly it is a state government responsibility to allow this to happen. It must only happen safely and it must only happen where large and larger trucks can be used to carry freight in a very safe way. Standards upon freight companies and drivers have lifted enormously in recent years, and they have all gone out of their way to lift their game. As is true in many other areas, there are fewer 'cowboys', to use a colloquial term, who are trying to stretch or break the rules. There are responsible freight operators, whether it be one operator, one truck, or a much, much larger operator working all over regional South Australia.

Specifically, I would like to turn to the need in the electorate of Stuart for 26-metre B-doubles to be able to traverse without a permit between Melrose and Wilmington—that would close in a significant gap in the B-double freight in that Mid North area of South Australia—and also to travel from Booleroo to Orroroo. Again, that would close another very important gap that exists at the moment where 26-metre B-doubles are currently not allowed to go without a permit.

I would also like to raise a very important issue, and this again comes back to councils. There is a whole network of roads throughout regional South Australia where operators are allowed to take B-doubles and road trains, and I am focused particularly on B-doubles at the moment. There is a very big issue about operators who are typically not on the main road. They might be from a farm or they might have a depot and they are on a back road off the main road.

They need to be able to get their vehicles to and from their own workshops, their own home bases and their own properties to the gazetted road; right now, it happens a lot, but it happens when it probably would not be technically right. That is a very important issue for the government and local councils to work on collaboratively to try to open up so that those operators can legally get from their home to the gazetted road as they need to.

SOCCER

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Minister for Housing and Urban Development) (15:44): I rise to speak today about something I do not have a great deal of experience in, let alone expertise—that is, football. I do not mean Aussie Rules football: I mean the beautiful game of football that some of us might refer to as soccer.

I am very privileged not only to represent the electorate of Lee but to have two thriving, growing clubs in my electorate, and I speak of two in particular: the Western Strikers football club and the White City Football Club. Both are large clubs that are not only keeping hundreds and hundreds of members of the local community active and participating in this game but also importantly recruiting juniors, getting them involved in team sport, getting them involved in a club environment and, of course, bringing their parents and their extended families all the benefits that participating in a club can bring.

White City is a football club that plays its home matches at Frank Mitchell Reserve in Seaton and it is a club with a proud history. It was founded in 1949 by a group of local residents who were Yugoslav migrants, who were often fleeing political persecution from places in Western Europe and other areas in Europe as well. Since that time, for more than 65 years or nearly 70 years now, this club has grown into one of the most successful sporting clubs in the western suburbs. Andrew Popovich, their president, ably helped by Sasha Lalic, has recruited Michael Keens, the senior coach, and they currently sit fifth in the state league.

You might think: why is that of interest or why is that relevant? For good reason—because the Western Strikers football club play in a local derby in the electorate of Lee, and it is an important match because Western Strikers have been even more successful than White City. They sit second on the state league table for the juniors, which is pretty impressive considering that their under 18s and their reserves are first respectively on their ladders. Should Western Strikers be successful, this will assist them greatly in the finals series.

But both clubs are important not just for their on-field activities and how successful they have been in this current 2017 season but they are also really important for what they are contributing to the community of Lee. Western Strikers are about to embark not just on some improvements to their clubrooms, and they are about to expand the number of teams that they field but, importantly, from next season they are looking to include women's teams. That will obviously encourage a great number of additional people who can participate in the Western Strikers club, and we look forward to assisting them with their discussions with the council, who own their clubrooms, in seeing how best they can be improved to accommodate not just the additional number of teams but women's teams, in particular.

Similarly, White City are embarking on a very significant expansion of their activities and their operations. They have recently won funding through the Treasurer and the Minister for Recreation and Sport's program to establish new football facilities—this time at Seaton Park Primary School. Seaton Park Primary School has a little over 100 students but, importantly, the partnership with White City Football Club will see the establishment of a junior soccer program at this school.

Not only will that assist the primary school students attending Seaton Park but it will ensure that more and more students can be attracted to attend this primary school in the future, and of course it can assist White City to continue to grow their junior football program. They have 13 junior teams at White City and Western Strikers have 12. I very much look forward to the local derby this weekend, and I wish them both the best of luck for the finals season.

Bills

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE BILL

Conference

The Legislative Council agreed to grant a conference as requested by the House of Assembly. The Legislative Council named the hour of 9am on 9 August 2017 to receive the managers on behalf of the House of Assembly in the King William Room.

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) (15:49): I move:

That the request of the Legislative Council for the continuation of the conference on the Public Interest Disclosure Bill be agreed to and a message be sent to the Legislative Council advising of this house's agreement.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL 2017

Estimates Committees

Adjourned debate on motion:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Heysen has a further five minutes.

Ms REDMOND (Heysen) (15:50): Can I say what a pleasure it is to follow the member for Lee, who must be very worried about his own seat because that is the first time in forever that I can remember a minister coming in to do a grievance. I am pleased to know that our candidate in Lee is working so hard and has obviously rattled the minister.

As it happens, when I sought leave to continue my remarks I was commenting on the fact that, in all the budget papers, I had not noticed a reference to 18,000 people being interviewed by trained conversationalists. I want to know how I can get to be a trained conversationalist. The Minister for Local Government, who faced all those questions in question time, asked me as we went up in the lift if I had any plans for after I left parliament, and I thought to myself, 'Being a trained conversationalist might be something I could aspire to.' I have a one-year-old grandson, and I hope that by the time he starts school he is a trained conversationalist.

This government is trying to pretend, of course, that this is not part of their election campaign, and they have put the thing out to tender without knowing where they are going to have these trained conversationalists or how many there will be. They just know how many conversations they are going to have. I will put money on where the conversations are going to take place and which electorates are going to be involved.

Mr Bell: They are outsourcing their doorknocking now.

Ms REDMOND: Yes, they have outsourced the doorknocking, although some of the trained conversationalists might be some of the candidates, no doubt, but I digress. I only have a couple more minutes to conclude my final ever remarks on estimates, after 16 lots of estimates—the greatest waste of time in which this parliament indulges. I would have to say, as I am not going to be here any longer after 17 March, that my wish would be that when we win in March we come to a new mechanism for examining the budget, rather than going through this laborious procedure that does not actually get us anywhere in terms of better information on the budget.

The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:

Ms REDMOND: I already said before lunch, when the minister was not in the chamber, that I absolutely endorse the government's right to set the budget. They are the government. They have the right to decide how the taxpayer dollar is spent, but we, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, do have the right to ask questions about it and to understand it. It is now a very big document.

The whole aim of the game from the government's point of view is to make the timetable as difficult as possible to get information, to put vulnerable ministers in the least exposed positions possible, to answer as few questions as possible, but for it all to cost as much money as possible, in terms of money being taken out of the public purse because senior bureaucrats are having to spend days, weeks and months, not to mention the hours in the chamber, waiting for potential questions, only for our potential questions to be met on many, many occasions with, 'I will have to bring that back to you. I will have to get an answer for you.'

I really would love to see a change. The problem is that, after putting up with this for 16 years, the reality is I suspect any new government coming in will not be kindly minded towards those who have inflicted this upon them for the last 16 years, hence it will go on interminably when there must be better ways to handle this particular issue.

I can only encourage people who are going to be in this chamber long after I am gone to think seriously about the real value of estimates and whether the taxpayers of this state would indeed be better served if we could simply add up the money that is taken by all those public servants doing all those things and get a little bit of that as money that we as members could distribute in our own

electorates. We could then each ask the ministers for an interview on a one-on-one basis and ask the questions that we believe need to be asked on any aspect of the budget papers. That being said, I am delighted to conclude my remarks for the final time ever on the estimates of the South Australian parliament.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel) (15:55): It is always a pleasure to follow the member for Heysen and to sit here and listen to her eloquent words and her contribution. I have been doing that for the best part of 16 years because we both entered the parliament at the same election. I join with the member for Heysen because this will be my final contribution in relation to the estimates process, as I am retiring at the election in March next year.

What the member for Heysen said in her contribution pretty much hits the nail on the head. We know that estimates is basically the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill or the budget bill. As has been the case over the last 16 years, I sat in on a number of the committees, committee A and B in both chambers. I sat in on the status of women and ageing, and the member for Ramsay was the minister responsible for that committee. I then had industrial relations with the Attorney-General, the member for Enfield. I had infrastructure and trade and small business, and the member for Waite was minister responsible for those portfolios. That is a fairly broad cross-section of ministerial responsibilities.

In relation to the process undertaken here in the South Australian parliament concerning estimates or the committee stage of the bill, it is interesting to make a comparison with other parliaments in Australia, particularly the federal parliament. It is my understanding that the House of Representatives does not have estimates committees following the bringing down of their budget but that the Senate does. The Senate has a different configuration in relation to the estimates committee process: they have rolling estimates conducted throughout the course of the parliamentary year, again across a whole range of ministerial responsibilities.

When I was doing a little bit of part-time work for a particular federal member of parliament, I had the privilege of travelling to Canberra while the Senate estimates committee was being conducted and I sat in on that process. That was obviously many years ago before I entered this place, so longer than 16 years ago, but I found it quite an interesting experience to witness the Senate estimates process.

As has been the case over the last 16 or so years of being a part of the estimates process on this side of the house, on the opposition benches, I have witnessed the varying capabilities of each individual minister in their grasp and knowledge of their areas of responsibility in their respective portfolios. The ministers who are across their issues or their areas of responsibility and who have a thorough understanding of the detail of their portfolio responsibilities can often answer questions put to them by the opposition members without any reference to their departmental heads, their ministerial staff or even their notes.

We see mountains of files brought in for the estimates committees, huge lever-arch folders full of notes and information. I have seen that the ministers I regard as more capable, who are across their portfolio areas, do not need to refer to their officers or their notes. Conversely, on the other side of the equation, the ministers who tend to struggle with their overall performance and their knowledge and understanding of the issues within their portfolio responsibilities are constantly referring to their officers, chiefs of staff, departmental heads and their notes.

At one particular committee I was part of, I think that for pretty much every answer to every question—not every question, but pretty much every question asked—a note was extracted from a huge, voluminous lever-arch folder and a response was read. The response did not necessarily match up with the question but, nevertheless, the minister read the response. That was the supposed answer to the question. In some cases, it was not really an answer to the question, but it was the response the minister provided.

I join with members on this side of the house—as I said, the member for Heysen hit the nail on the head—in saying that the extensive period of preparation of the departments and ministerial staff for the estimates committees is disproportionate to the information that is provided. It is weeks and weeks of preparation, probably months; who knows? The government members, government

ministers, government staffers and bureaucracy certainly know. We have a pretty good idea that it would stretch into months of lead time in preparing the massive volumes of text.

The astounding part of it all is that, as the member for Heysen said, when the opposition asks a question, notwithstanding the fact that there is mountains of information, mountains of notes and reams of information, the minister cannot provide an answer, so they have to take the question on notice and provide an answer at a later date. That is quite astounding when arguably months of work go into this process.

Obviously, the ministers would have an understanding of the budget before we receive the budget papers on budget day. I imagine that there would be quite a lead time prior to budget day when the departments and the ministers' staff would be heads down and feverishly working away on every aspect of every budget line and every budget paper for which each individual minister has responsibility. But they cannot, or maybe they do not want to, answer the question because it might be a bit tricky. It might be a bit sensitive, so they like to use the old stalling tactics and come back later when the issue is perhaps not the topic of the day or the week.

I have not seen any change in the way the government has run estimates over the last 16 years. The exchange in some of the committees is perhaps not as inflammatory as it may have been in those earlier years when the then member for Port Adelaide was the treasurer. Those particular estimates committees were always a bit of fun; you never knew quite what was going to take place. In those early years, because I came from a banking background into parliament, I was obviously keen on understanding money, so I would sit in on the Treasury estimates as a new member. It was interesting because you did not quite know what the then treasurer might come out with. Over some of the years, some of the carry-on was quite extraordinary.

I remember one committee had to be suspended one year. I cannot remember the year, but the committee actually had to be suspended because things got a bit too willing and a bit too heated. We had to have a little break for a half an hour or an hour. We went off until things calmed down and we could come back and resume. There were accusations being thrown around of people telling lies or something of that nature. I must admit that was a bit of an eye-opener in my earlier years of being a member. After 16 years in this place, you have perhaps seen not everything but most things that can be thrown up in the course of parliamentary sittings.

As I said, I think the more competent ministers are across their issues and areas of responsibility. They can answer questions without reference to briefing notes, or whatever you like to call them, or without reference to their departmental officers. I remember one year when I was the shadow minister for local government and, with every question that was asked of the poor old local government minister at the time, there was this little conflagration or communication between the minister and his chief of staff or one of his senior officers on every question before the minister was prepared to provide a response, which I found interesting.

The process of estimates is the committee stage of the legislative process. We all work through the debate on the second reading of the budget bill and, in essence, the estimates committee is the third reading. In the second reading, we on this side of the house communicated our reservations about the budget, particularly about state bank tax. In the weeks since it was announced, we have seen massive opposition to the state bank tax from the community and the business sector, right across many sectors of the South Australian community.

This government hopefully has only another 7½ months to run. Over the 16 years that this government has been in power, they have implemented really what is a failed economic model, and I spoke about this in the second reading speech on the budget. We have some of the highest unemployment in the country, we have the highest electricity costs in the world, we have some of the highest water costs in the country, we have one of the highest taxation regimes in the country and we have some of the lowest economic indicators in the country.

In their quietest time, government members must realise that the way they have been running the economy, through high taxing and high spending, is a failed model. The economic indicators of high unemployment, high energy costs, high water bills, high taxation, low productivity, and all those sorts of things, point directly at the failed model that this government has put in place. I have said before that you cannot tax your way to prosperity; it is a failed economic ideology.

I cannot remember the name of the writer, but it was interesting to read in recent weeks that South Australia is a government state. I think the lines were that South Australia is a government state: if you want to do business in South Australia, you do business with the government. I believe that is the ideology of the state Labor government; it is in their DNA. They like to control whatever they think they are in charge of. It has nothing to do with the free market. They do not let business go and let the private sector manage themselves because they are the engine room of the economy. They do not like that. They like to be able to control things. I will have a bit more to say about this before I leave this place, but it is a part of their ideology.

They purposely implemented this model. If you want to do business in South Australia, you have to do business with the government. In terms of all the big infrastructure works—roads, hospitals, The QEH, and all of that—if you are in the civil engineering business, the only major works or the only major bit of business that you can get is to contract to the government. That is a real issue that the Civil Contractors Federation have raised over the years. If you do not do business with the government, you are going to go out of business. I believe that is the ideology that the Labor Party likes to push through the community.

I have lots more notes that I could keep on about, but I have pretty much used up my time. Things change, but things stay the same. I am retiring, but the estimates committee process has stayed the same for 16 years. I listened intently to the member for Heysen's contribution. It may not change in the future. We do not know, but it certainly will not change if we do not have a change of government. The final thing I want to say is that if the voting public of South Australia want to change the government, the only way they can bring that about is to vote Liberal.

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland) (16:13): Madam Deputy Speaker, as you know, estimates has changed a little bit. The estimates process in its current form was largely set up in 1980 by the Tonkin government. It has been a relatively stable structure since then, and it has not changed much. However, there have been some changes, and I will illuminate the house on those changes. Trending through 1980 to 2001, there was not a huge variation in the way the estimates went. We can look back to that reference and use 2001 as our last year of the former Liberal government and 2002 as the first year of the current Labor government, and we can see how it has changed from that point on.

It is very interesting that back in 2001 estimates committees started later in the day, at 11am, and often finished later in the day. With 11am starts to estimates, about half the estimates committees—six out of the ten—necessitated full dinner breaks between 6pm and 7.30pm, although it must be said that some of these wrapped up less than an hour after the dinner break.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: What year?

The Hon. T.R. KENYON: That was 2001. It should be noted that examination of four estimates committees was completed by approximately 6pm. In recent years, the estimates examinations have reduced the need to sit late because of earlier starts, with much more family-friendly hours, in the same way the house has made some changes over the last few years.

We remember in the past estimates being a forum where members asked longwinded questions, where there were little more than speeches and answers from ministers that were even more longwinded. Whilst since 2001 we have seen a reduction in the scheduled hours of estimates examinations, we have seen far fewer government questions and generally shorter opening statements from ministers. That is contrary to some of the speeches in here. I got the feeling that a lot of the speeches rolled out in the last few days of debate in this place were just pretty much the same speeches from last year and the same speeches from the year before that, regardless of what was actually going on.

Madam Deputy Speaker, you would know that of the 15 former Liberal ministers who appeared before estimates in 2001, only two of those remain in parliament: the Hon. Rob Lucas in another place and the Hon. Robert Brokenshire in another place, who was a former member for Mawson. I am advised that in 2001 the former Liberal government ministers received almost 220 government questions and the former Labor opposition had the opportunity to ask just over 900 questions. Across all the 10 estimates committees, there were 220 government questions and 900 opposition questions. You might think that is a lot of questions for both the government and the

opposition, and if you were there at the time you probably were right, as is always the case in estimates.

Members might be curious to know what happened at the 2002 estimates, which was the first year of the current Labor government. Labor ministers received almost 270 government questions, which is almost 50 more than in 2001. However, it should be noted that the Liberal opposition had the opportunity to ask more than 1,100 questions, which is about 200 more than in 2001. The opposition asked 200 more questions and the government asked 50 more questions. In addition, it should be noted that the late Bob Such, the former member for Fisher, had the opportunity to ask almost 70 questions to ministers of the day.

Last year, there was quite a lot of outrage in this place about the supposed overuse of government questions and everything else and, perhaps, a lack of opposition questions. It would be interesting to have a look at the actual numbers from 2016. I am advised that last year the opposition asked 3,100 questions. At this year's estimates, the opposition had the opportunity to ask more than four times the number in 2001: 3,900 questions. This year alone, there were 3,900 opposition questions across the entire 10 committees.

If you compare that with 2001, we had 220 government questions and 900 opposition questions, so there were more than four times the number this year than in 2001. That begs the question, of course: how many government questions were there this year? The answer is 35. There were 35 government questions across all portfolios this year, compared, of course, with 220 in 2001 and 270 in 2002. There was a blip up, and we have seen a steady progression down over time to the point where we had 35 government questions across all estimates committees this year.

Compare that with the Hon. Rob Lucas's 30 government questions that he received in his last year as a minister in 2001. In fact, the Hon. Diana Laidlaw received 36. One minister alone, Diana Laidlaw, had more government questions—36—than the entire total of government questions asked this year of 35. There are some interesting statistics there.

What is happening and the actual number of questions do not reflect the rhetoric we are hearing from those opposite. I mentioned before that the Hon. Rob Lucas in another place had 30 government questions in his last year as a minister. This year, the Treasurer had two government questions in total. The Hon. Rob Lucas, in 2001, in his last year as a minister, had 70 questions from the opposition. This year, the Treasurer had 700 questions directed towards him—this year alone—compared with 70, that is 10 times the number. Between 2001 and 2017, the number of government questions has dropped dramatically and the number of opposition questions has skyrocketed, ballooned.

There are some other comments. This year, we saw opposition members seeking to butt in very early, trying to talk over the top of ministers, and then feigning outrage when they were not getting answers. It is very difficult to answer a question when you are being talked over the top of. They were quarrelling with the Chair. A couple of times when I was in there, I saw opposition members quarrelling with the Chair, trying to lecture the Chair—obviously never a successful venture in my experience but, nevertheless, it was tried.

It is largely an unchanged process from the one they instigated—not them personally, but from the process the Liberal Party instigated in 1980. If they have a problem with the way it is running, perhaps the answer lies in the way in which they approach estimates, the way they treat it and the questions they ask, rather than in the number of questions or the number of ministerial statements that come at the front.

Motion carried.

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) (16:21): I move:

That the remainder of the bill be agreed to.

Motion carried.

Third Reading

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) (16:22): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BUDGET MEASURES BILL 2017*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 6 July 2017.)

Mr WINGARD (Mitchell) (16:22): I rise today to speak on the Budget Measures Bill which is centred around what has been a big talking point in South Australia of recent weeks, that is, the state bank tax. That is the Labor government's answer here in South Australia to any problem: throw a tax on it. When in doubt, put a tax on. When in doubt, take money from South Australians. When you have created a problem, and you have taken the state to the bottom of the pile of the ranking list of all states in this country, how do you get your way out of it? Well, according to this state Labor government, you put a tax on South Australians, and that is exactly what this state bank tax is and that is what the Treasurer and the Premier do at every turn.

We saw not so long ago, the last time they had a problem, what did they do? They increased the ESL. They take more money out of the pockets of South Australians, they rip it out and they put it back in their coffers so that they can go and spend and waste South Australian taxpayers' money. This is the measure they thought they would be really tricky with. They thought people would be okay with putting another tax on the banks, and they tried to use the banks as a shield, but South Australians are awake—awake to what the Treasurer and the Premier are trying to do here in South Australia.

South Australians know that this state bank tax means that they will have their hip pocket pilfered. They will have money taken out of their back pocket, money out of their wallets, money that they could be spending on their families or on their businesses or on trying to grow South Australia. If this state bank tax goes through. That is how this Weatherill Labor government operates and that is fundamentally why South Australia has drifted its way to the bottom of the pile after 16 years of state Labor government. I think the South Australian people are awake to what is going on here, and they can see what this constant regime of taking from South Australians has done to our state. We say enough is enough. It is no good.

I have said in this place before that when you go down the street and you talk to people at the local sporting club, local supermarket, school, shopping centre, or wherever you might be, and you ask, 'How is South Australia going?' no-one can say that we are going well. They say that we are going poorly. We are struggling and our state is really languishing when you stack us up against all the other states and, quite frankly, South Australians are sick of that. We have great people in this state. We are seeing a lot head interstate for better opportunity, that is for sure, but we know that we produce great people in South Australia and we need to give them more optimism.

This whole idea of taxing your way to prosperity is not working, and that is why our state has been heading south for a long, long time. We really are situated at the bottom of the table. We know that because we look at the unemployment rate and see that for 31 months in a row we have had the worst unemployment rate in the nation on trend. We have languished at the bottom of the table, below every other state, including Tasmania. We used to mock Tasmania and say how bad they were going. Well, they are in front of us now when it comes to unemployment—that is how bad this state Labor government is going.

We can see that from this bill and through this measure of the state bank tax, and we know what happened the last time this government got its hands on the State Bank. We know the catastrophe that happened when the State Bank collapsed under a Labor government and here, coincidentally, we now have the government again with a state bank tax. There is a little bit of irony,

I suppose, in those two terms, but that is where this government has got us: we are in a poor situation and again they are trying to claw back funds.

We looked at this state bank tax and we asked the Treasurer: why have you gone down this path? Who have you spoken to? How good an idea is this for South Australia? How is this going to grow opportunity, grow investment and ultimately grow jobs for South Australia? We asked the Treasurer: who did you model this with and what modelling was done to implement the state bank tax? We asked the Treasurer that question and the answer was, 'We didn't do any modelling. That didn't happen.'

We asked: did you check out the negative impact that this might have on South Australia and not just the money it is going to put in your pocket that you want to spend and waste? I will talk more about that a little bit later. We also asked: did you look at the impact it might have and what it might do to small businesses, big businesses and anyone who might have an involvement with a bank, such as someone with an EFTPOS card or someone who does internet banking? How is this going to impact South Australians? Again, the Treasurer said that no economic modelling had been done. Through the estimates process, the Treasurer was asked further questions along those lines, but again he had no responses.

The Labor government does have an Economic Development Board and an investment attraction agency made up of esteemed people who have operated in business and right across the spectrum, people the government could go to and lean on when they needed economic advice. Again, the question was put to them: did you speak to anyone on these boards? We know that the former head of a bank, Rob Chapman, who is a very astute person in South Australia, is involved in the Investment Attraction agency; in fact, he chairs that committee.

We asked: did the Premier speak to Rob Chapman and ask what this state bank tax was going to do to South Australia? That was put to the Premier and the answer was no. It was put to the Treasurer and the answer was no. We said, 'You have a banking expert here. Did you speak to them and ask them what impact this state bank tax would have on business and the community of South Australia?' No, they failed to do that, so where the idea of this state bank tax came from and how the Treasurer feels it is going to help South Australians beggars belief.

I have talked about taxes. We are debating the state bank tax here and now, and I have also mentioned the ESL increases. We know that this state Labor government went to the last election wanting a car park tax and, whilst they did not talk about GST increases after the election, lo and behold, what did they want to do? They wanted to increase the GST. Foreign investor surcharges on stamp duties and land tax on the family home—that is what this state Labor government know and that is all they know.

When they need more money, they just come for people's hip pockets and they want to take it out in any form of tax. Again, to the state bank tax now, we say no. Enough is enough. South Australia has been dragged to the bottom of the pile over a number of years with this state Labor government and you cannot keep taxing your way to prosperity. On this side of the chamber, we are saying no to the state bank tax. We know that, when you have a tax like this, the state Labor government will talk about the banks paying the tax and not consumers paying the tax, not South Australians, not people here in this state. This is a state tax, so South Australians will be paying for this state bank tax, and they are very well aware of that.

A lot of research has been done. A lot of independent groups have gone out to find out how this is going to work. There was a Galaxy poll just recently, which found that 65 per cent of small and medium-sized businesses are against the state bank tax and believe that it will impact negatively on the state and will not help to grow jobs in South Australia. That is a significant finding.

On the more technical side, we know that a tax like this will create higher borrowing costs for banks and therefore higher lending costs for businesses and households, lower interest rate payments on savings deposits and lower returns for shareholders, including superannuation accounts, via reduced dividends and/or lower share values. If you are a self-funded retiree and have a bank account, if you are working with banks in any way, shape or form—and, let's be honest, we do it all day, every day on the internet or however it might be—this will come back to hit you and hurt you.

We always talk about the other factor. I have spoken about unemployment in South Australia and how we are perceived across the state because we have been languishing at the bottom of the table for 31 months in a row with the worst unemployment rate in the nation. With this state bank tax, we need to think about companies wanting to come and invest here in South Australia. I have been out visiting a number of really good companies and industries in South Australia over recent times. I try to get out and speak to these businesses as often as I possibly can.

I was with one last Friday, and we were talking about the investment opportunities. They are owned by a foreign entity, and they say they have to report back to the shareholders of this entity. They are questioned and quizzed often about what is happening in South Australia. Firstly, they have to explain our electricity situation, and I can talk more about that later, but we hear about that ad nauseam. We have the highest priced electricity in the world, and businesses have to go and explain that to foreign shareholders and people running their company, but then they get word of this state bank tax.

These people who own this company run it out of Belgium, and they say, 'Why are we in South Australia when these extra fees and charges are put on top of what we are trying to do in running our business? Why do we not go to another state and set up there? Why do we not leave and go somewhere else altogether?' We are playing on a national stage, and the government is adding these taxes, fees and charges onto these businesses. The businesses make commercial decisions, and they say, 'Why would we be in South Australia?'

That is the competitive disadvantage being created in this state. Not only do we have high water prices and high electricity prices but this state Labor government now wants to put more taxes, more fees and more charges on businesses. It is businesses that provide jobs for South Australians, so business, and industry more specifically, says, 'We do not want to keep this industry here. We cannot afford to have this industry here anymore. We want to leave.' That has a really negative impact on jobs and a very negative outcome for South Australia. Those are some of the major concerns we have here, and South Australia really cannot afford to be in this situation again.

In looking at some of the surveys that have been done, I want to refer to the Sensis Business Index that was released on 28 July. This took a look at the attitude to state and territory government policies, and it was alarming because South Australia came off incredibly poorly. South Australia was the only government whose rankings deteriorated, and they deteriorated by 16 points.

The main criticism of the South Australian government focused on cost of utilities, power and rates, and too many cost impositions, government charges and hidden taxes—there we go. This is the state bank tax. That is what we are talking about. There have been ESL charges, the car park tax that they tried to bring in and the GST increases they tried to push as well.

The state Labor government are just addicted to taxes. What people are concerned about when it comes to our state Labor government is the cost of doing business and taxation that is too high or increasing. Other relatively prominent concerns included excessive bureaucracy and a lack of support for country areas, which is a real key here. That was the Sensis Business Index. It is a totally independent report that talked about where South Australia is at. Again I stress that this Budget Measures Bill, with the state bank tax, hinges on how we are perceived as a state.

This state bank tax is just another noose around the neck of South Australian businesses and it will ultimately come back to hit and to hurt South Australians in the hip pocket. That is taking money out of the family budget. That is taking money from businesses that could reinvest in their business and potentially employ more people. We need to change the culture of this state. At the moment, everyone is feeling dragged down and constricted by this state Labor government. People are not feeling like they want to get up, have a go and take a chance.

Business SA has also had a look at the state bank tax. I know those on the other side will say, 'Of course Business SA is going to side with you.' That is not entirely true because Business SA is an independent body and they will talk about what is good for South Australia wholly and solely. If the government does something good, Business SA will come out and support them, but in this case Business SA says that there are some major concerns with this state bank tax. It states quite categorically that this tax will be a drag on South Australian businesses, and we know it is businesses that grow jobs. You need to have that business confidence to be able to grow jobs within the state.

Nigel McBride, who is in charge of Business SA, is concerned that people will not want to borrow money, people will not want to take risks and people will not want to employ more staff and grow their businesses. That is where this state bank tax has placed South Australians. Last week, a Bank SA State Monitor showed that confidence levels had crashed to a four-year low and had fallen 16 per cent since February alone. The survey was taken within weeks of the June state budget, reflecting the inevitable conclusion that the budget did not send the kinds of signals required to build business confidence.

They are the sorts of things that Nigel McBride is talking about. To have that hit in the confidence of South Australian businesses is not what we need when we are languishing at the bottom of the table. The State Monitor shows that net pessimism in the SA business community sits at negative 46 per cent compared with negative 10 per cent after last year's budget. Again, that shows that this state bank tax has a real negative impact on our state. The NAB business index, another independent report, showed a 10 point drop in business confidence in May, with no states improving in that time.

At a time like this, with all these negative indicators aligning, the Weatherill government have failed to recognise these sentiments. Instead, they have taken the South Australian public for granted. That is what has happened here. They think, 'We need more money; let's rip it out of the pockets of South Australians,' and they are happy to go after everyone: mum-and-dad investors, anyone with a bank account, someone who has a superannuation policy or small businesses that actually work in our economy, trying to grow our economy. They are the ones who are being attacked by this state bank tax, and it is a major concern—a major concern for everyone.

While the Treasurer thinks, 'I just need money. I need it to prop up by budget. I am going to grab some cash any which way I can,' no long-term thought has been given to the implications it will have down the track, and that is a real concern. As I said, did the Treasurer consult anyone, speak to anyone or do any modelling to find out what the knock-on effect was going to be by bringing in the state bank tax? The answer is no.

What we need to do is grow business confidence. That is why we have said right from the get-go that one of our key policies—this was announced a long time ago now in the whole electoral cycle, given that we still have about eight months until the next election—is that we will return the ESL remissions to South Australians. This is the money that the government took out of the pockets of South Australian families and businesses to again prop up their own budget failings.

We have said that we will give that money back to South Australians because it creates an environment where people have confidence, people have money in their pockets and they want to go and spend it. People will go and spend that money in our economy here in South Australia. Businesses will also say, 'Right, we've got a bit more money in our pocket. Let's invest back in our business. Let's invest in a new staff member. Let's invest in new plant and equipment. Let's grow our business.' If we can grow businesses, we can grow jobs.

It is not for the government to create jobs; that does not create a sustainable economy. We need to actually give confidence back to businesses and the South Australian people who run businesses so that they will go out and grow their business. I have not met anyone who has a business in South Australia who says, 'You know what? My goal and ambition are to wind my business down and reduce the number of people I employ.' That is not how business works.

Business wants to actually grow the economy, grow what they are doing, employ more people and have more success. We need people with that attitude. This state bank tax, through this Budget Measures Bill, is what is holding up South Australia. It is a great flagship example of what is strangling South Australia and preventing that optimism, that have-a-go spirit that we are so well known for. I stress again that we have wonderful people in South Australia—talented, capable people—but they are being strangled by this state Labor government.

This tax really epitomises that exact nature. We see what this government does with its money. On this side of the chamber, we are not a high-taxing government. We do not want to be a high-taxing government. We do not think that we should be putting our hands into people's pockets and ripping money out like those on the other side, like the Treasurer and the Premier always want

to do. That is what a state Labor government has done for a long time: they want to rip money out of the pockets of people.

We do not believe that. We want to leave the money in the pockets of people, and we back the people to actually do good things with it: to go and create businesses, create jobs, spend that money in our economy and create a far more vibrant, go-getting sort of place. We have talked about the young people who are leaving South Australia, who are heading overseas and interstate. We know that net migration to other states last year was 6,900 people. These are some of our youngest and brightest people who are saying, 'This state is strangling me. This state is choking me. I need to get out and take my opportunities to the eastern seaboard or beyond our borders.' That is not good.

We need to grow as well. We need to grow as far as bringing money in from outside our state is concerned. That is why we have a policy in place to open trade offices overseas. We need to be really focused on making sure that we are bringing money in from outside our borders. The leader on our side has said many times, 'You don't get rich selling lattes to yourself.' In simple terms, what that means is that money just going around inside our economy is not growing our economy.

We need to be selling goods and services outside our borders to be bringing money in. That has to be a key focus of government, and that is a key focus of the Marshall Liberal team. That is what we know has to happen. That is why we want to open these trade offices overseas. I stress again that we have wonderful people doing wonderful things, creating wonderful services, goods and commodities that we can sell overseas, but we need to have an environment in South Australia that is not being tied down, strangled and choked by the tax after tax that this state Labor government wants to impose on South Australia. This state bank tax typifies what we are talking about.

The upside is that South Australians are seeing what is going on here. They see the numbers, they see the figures, they see where our state is at and they realise that we cannot keep going on choking our state and inhibiting people from growing, creating and making our state a better place. We want to work with South Australians. We back South Australians. We want to allow them to do what they do best, and this state bank tax will not do that. That is why we oppose this state bank tax in the Budget Measures Bill.

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (16:42): I was highly impressed by that contribution by the member for Mitchell. He did an outstanding job.

The Hon. P. Caica: You are easily impressed.

Mr PENGILLY: Get in your seat if you want to have a go. Despite the interjection from the member for Colton, what we seem to be witnessing here are the final days of the Holy Roman Empire circa the state Labor government in South Australia. For the life of me, I cannot understand why they would even consider bringing in this ludicrous bank tax in South Australia. As has been stated, and no doubt will be stated again over the next few speeches, the answer to this Labor government's problems is always to go and tax, tax, tax.

I can assure you that the good people of South Australia are completely over it. It does not matter much where I go, what I get is, 'When are you going to get rid of this government?' They are completely over the Labor government in South Australia. The sooner polling day comes the better so that the good voting public of South Australia can get out there and have their say. To quote another cliché, 'They fiddle while Rome burns.' It is an outrageous disgrace.

It has been thrown around the place a bit, but this morning there was yet another piece of news that came out definitely saying that we have the highest power prices in the world. We then had the Minister for Regional Development this afternoon who could not put two words together and come out with a sensible response. He could not answer any questions on power and where it is going to go. He said he had complete faith in the government to handle the electricity issue.

I am sure that the good people of Frome in particular will be delighted to hear what he said in parliament this afternoon. Even his most ardent supporters in Port Pirie will have another think about just what on earth the member for Frome has delivered for them in his time in this place, particularly in the last few years when he has aligned himself closely with a Labor administration. It was an insipid, pathetic performance, quite frankly. We deserve more from somebody who is getting paid to be a minister of the Crown.

This bank tax is just completely ridiculous. Why on earth do this government think that the only way that they can get themselves out of trouble is to tax, tax, tax? It was mentioned earlier and it will be mentioned again, at the risk of repeating myself, about the emergency services levy, the price of water, the price of power—the list goes on and on. There is no light at the end of the tunnel financially for the long-suffering taxpayers of South Australia. It is arrant nonsense to believe almost anything that is uttered from the lips of the Treasurer, the Premier or the Deputy Premier. They really do not have the answers. They have no answers.

The only answer they have is tax. The only answer they have in this latest budget is this bank tax, which is the most stupid thing they have ever dreamed of for South Australia. This is not the federal government: this is the government of poor little South Australia, with about 1½ million people, with the highest unemployment rate in Australia and going south even further. It is just terrible and it is a disgrace. It is no wonder that families, young people and so on are leaving the state in droves and going elsewhere where they think they can see some daylight.

Three and a half years ago, the people of Tasmania, despite their curious electoral system, threw out Labor and put in place a Liberal government, under Premier Will Hodgman. What a turnaround that has been. It is an amazing turnaround. It has been stunning to watch and it just shows what can happen if you get a good Liberal government in with good Liberal policies, people who have an understanding of how things work and how you do not have to tax the daylight out of the population of the state to achieve a turnaround.

It is bewildering to me to see where this state is after the State Bank disaster, which led to the election of the Liberal government in 1993, and to think that we are back in this parlous economic state that the Labor Party thinks that they can sort out by increasing taxes. The new President of the United States, Donald Trump, had a cliché he used often about becoming president—draining the swamp. In this case, the swamp is the Labor Party government in South Australia and they want draining completely and putting out of their misery. It cannot come soon enough and, along with many others, I wait with bated breath for that day. I am hoping, when I wake up on 18 March next year, that Labor will be—

Mr Duluk: Dead, buried and cremated.

Mr PENGILLY: The member for Davenport says, 'Dead, buried and cremated'—politically speaking, not practically. That is what I hope, and then it is my earnest hope that a good Liberal government under the Leader of the Opposition, Steven Marshall, will get in there to try and start to sort this mess out.

The government have had 16 years of creating a disaster. All they have done is increase taxes and increase debt and go on and on, puffing and blowing and spending millions and millions of dollars on spin. We saw another example of this today with the announcement that they are sending people out to have conversations about transport. How absolutely ridiculous! I have never heard so much nonsense in all my life. They think that the answer to everything is spin, that the answer to everything is creating committees and that the answer to everything is raising taxes, but they are not giving the people of South Australia a fair go.

I would have thought that they could learn a thing or two from Port Adelaide on Sunday. They got out there and did not know what they were going to do, and they ended up getting an absolute flogging. It is a sad state of affairs in South Australia. I hope that I will not be delivering another budget measures speech in this place, and I hope that those who are on this side of the chamber are in government next year, if the good people of South Australia elect them, and that the budget measures speech will be very positive from our side, if in government, and get South Australia back on the track to a bright and promising future.

With those few words, I remind the house of this iniquitous bank tax that the government is trying to push through. Although we cannot stop it in the lower house, I am very hopeful that it will be stopped in another place and that the good members of the Legislative Council will have the fortitude to carry through with what they said and do something about it. That is enough from me, and I look forward to a contribution from the member for Stuart.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart) (16:51): I rise on behalf of the people of the electorate of Stuart to make my contribution on the Budget Measures Bill. As I said earlier today, I

accept and everybody on this side of the house accepts that budgeting is difficult. It really does go without saying. There is never enough money to do all the things you want to do, whether it is a small household trying to pay the bills, looking after the kids, maybe buying a house rather than renting, or perhaps upgrading your car—all those sorts of regular everyday challenges that most South Australians face.

Of course, there are many South Australians with many more hardcore, almost day-by-day and hour-by-hour challenges. There are a lot of very disadvantaged people in our state. Fortunately, they are in the minority, but they deserve attention, too. Even for those people, perhaps even on a day-to-day basis, budgeting is a big issue. All the way through—councils, states, federal governments—budgeting is a very difficult issue. As I said before today, it comes down to priorities, and we do have different priorities.

We also have different ways of going about the management of money. We do not believe that when things get tight and it is hard to balance your budget, you just go and tax people more. We do not believe that is the answer because of course that sends you on an ever-downward spiral. When you start taxing people more, you put the handbrake on the economy. As our leader says very often, and he is quite right, if you put the handbrake on the economy, then the income from the state government's perspective starts to dry up. Your budget is then under even more pressure, so then the Labor government goes and taxes even more. It is just a forever-downward spiral and it is not necessary.

As our leader says very regularly, we need to take the handbrake off our economy so that productive people in a productive place with productive equipment and good minds, and a whole range of positive attributes, can actually start to grow the economy. Then, instead of being consistently the state with the highest unemployment rate in the nation, we will start to turn that around. We will start to slowly move our way up the ladder and get off the bottom of the table, which is what we need to do at the moment. After 16 years of government, what they are doing is not working. It is just a fact.

What the current government is doing is not working. It is not as if they have been here for two years, four years, six years or 10 years, and we should give them another chance, give them another try and give them time for their way to slowly filter through and become effective. It has been 16 years and it clearly is not working.

We need a change, and there is no greater example of that than the predicament we find ourselves in in South Australia with regard to energy. We have the highest priced electricity in the nation and, some say, the world. That is completely unacceptable. When Labor came into government 16 years ago, it was nothing like that. Electricity prices have gone up and up and up. We were competitive with other states back then. Now we are not anywhere near competitive with other states.

In fact, the ASX forecast of future electricity price, based on future contracts, shows that up until March 2022, South Australia is expected to have electricity prices 18 per cent above the national average. That forecast comes with the ASX being fully informed about the state government's energy plan. The ASX can look at everything that the state government has published, everything they have said, all the information that they have, all that everybody else has said about the energy plan, and weigh up all those things.

It is largely based on the forward contract prices, all the people selling electricity and all the people buying electricity. It is important to point out that it is a market. The data that the ASX publishes is factual, with market data and willing buyers and sellers. Even the willing buyers, who are looking for contracts years into the future, are saying that they will lock in prices at 18 per cent above the forecast national average. Clearly they do not think things will improve, clearly the ASX does not think things will improve, and the buyers and the sellers do not think things will improve.

South Australia's own Labor energy minister has said in this place that the very best forecast of future electricity prices is the forward contract market. By any definition, the plan that the government has announced is not expected to work. That flows through to employment and, unfortunately, to unemployment. Electricity is a cost that places pressure on households and businesses, and the reason businesses are so important is that they employ people.

On a per capita basis, South Australia has the highest outstanding debt on electricity across households. We have the highest number of customers in electricity hardship repayment plans and we have the highest number of disconnections of any state in the nation. Unfortunately, there is no end in sight for that under the current government's energy plan. That is a really shameful issue.

As members of parliament, we are extraordinarily fortunate in the work that we do and, by most standards, we are very fortunate with regard to our lifestyle and income. We are fortunate and we should never take that for granted, but we should always be focused on the most vulnerable people. We should always be focused on trying to help the people who struggle to pay their bills. Those statistics that I just mentioned about outstanding debt, hardship repayment plans and disconnections are shameful. It is shameful to find our state in that situation.

One of the ways to get out of that is to support businesses, and not because we want business owners to be ultra profitable, extremely wealthy, or anything like that. Good luck to them if they are; I do not begrudge them that, and that is terrific for them. The reason to support them is so that they can offer secure employment to more and more people. If a family wants to go to a bank to get a loan to buy a house so they can have a secure home ideally for the rest of their lives, they can only get that loan if they have secure employment. They can only have secure employment if the company they work for has a secure future, and that is not happening in our state at the moment. It is just a very unfortunate fact that that is not happening in our state at the moment.

I have spoken about energy, and I will turn to mining. Mining is and has always been incredibly important in our state. Agriculture has always been and will continue to be for a long time a bigger business, a greater contributor to our state's economy and to our state's employment. I keep coming back to employment. I want people to have jobs so that they can get on with their lives and have useful, enjoyable, productive lives.

Mining, while not as big as agriculture, is an incredibly important contributor, and it is a very important growth area, too. It is a very important growth area for us, and one of the most important things that we can do as a government, Liberal or Labor—do not worry; on this side we have plans for how we would go about it—is deal with that land access issue, when an exploration or a mining company wants to access what is currently agricultural land to go about their business.

After 16 years of Labor, that issue is a mess. That issue has never ever been more volatile in our state than it is today. There are people all over the state who are very concerned about this issue. There are times when it is, and it should be, a concerning issue, but there are other times when there are good solutions. It does not need to be that bad. There are very good and very positive solutions, but let me tell you that the current government is not addressing those issues as far as I can see.

In fact, the current Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy is actually inflaming those issues. He is out there in rural areas trying to make them worse than they need to be. I know that the government are undertaking a review of the Mining Act, but let me tell you that no proposals have come from the government yet about what they intend to do. They have received all their consultation. They have received the messages loud and clear from players, whether they be in the mining industry or the agricultural industry or anybody else who has an interest, but we all wait to hear publicly what the government intend to do in that area.

Let me be fair about this. The government have said that they want to take proposals forward that the government and the opposition would both think are positive. Let's get on with it. The government have done the consultation. I am happy to meet with anybody to talk about these things. I am happy to be very clear in my discussions about what I think. I am happy to go back to my colleagues and help formulate our Liberal team's position. I am very happy to articulate that on behalf of our team, but why is the government holding off on sharing with the public what they plan to do with regard to the Mining Act?

That holding off is doing nothing to allay the concerns of people in regional South Australia, whether they be agricultural producers or whether they be exploration companies or prospective mining companies. This is a very important issue. Of course, that work must be done with regard for the environment. Of course, that work must consider the appropriate use of our environment, which belongs to all of us and in fact makes an incredibly important contribution to South Australia, Australia

and the rest of the world. We have extraordinary landscapes and seascapes in South Australia that must be protected, but we have to get on and start to use them sensibly, respectfully, responsibly on behalf of all South Australians.

When I think about this budget, and when I think about all things the government does, my mind turns to all the corners of the electorate of Stuart. I think about the people in the far south of the electorate, which starts only 75 kilometres north of Adelaide, and the people in Kapunda and Truro. Not many people would know that a chunk of the Barossa Valley is in the electorate of Stuart. I think about those people and what this will mean to them, what this budget means to them, many of whom commute every day to and from Adelaide for work.

They have a life in a beautiful part of the state after hours. They have a fair bit of time commuting: some drive all the way, some get a car to drive to Gawler or share a car to Gawler and then get the train from Gawler into the city. There is a whole range of different possibilities. What does it mean to them when they are thinking about metro issues and rural issues? What does it mean to the people of Oodnadatta and Innamincka? They are over 1,000 kilometres from Adelaide. What do they think about the budget? I can tell you they feel sorely forgotten. Whether they be pastoralists or Aboriginal people living in important Aboriginal communities a long way from Adelaide, they feel sorely forgotten.

What about the people in Port Augusta, the people at the heart of the electorate of Stuart? That is a very important regional centre. I can tell you they are not impressed with the budget. They look at what the government has done for Port Pirie particularly and for Whyalla and they are unimpressed with this government's budget. It would be incorrect to say all of them, but they at large are hoping for a much better government to give them a much better budget next year.

There are some tiny parts of the electorate of Stuart. Think about the township of Bower between Eudunda and Morgan. That is a very small community but a very proactive community, and their heart and soul is in what goes on there. When they have a community gathering, it is not at all unusual for 150 people to turn up. The casual observer who is not familiar with the area would look around and wonder where all these people have come from, because it is a community with a very big heart.

Part of the Riverland is in the electorate of Stuart, and they are calling out for all sorts of services. They are still suffering, let me tell you. Morgan, Blanchetown, Cadell, Murbko, that part of the electorate of Stuart and that part of the river are still in many ways suffering from the Millennium Drought, suffering from the lack of support from the government during that time. Of course, we come to that very large Mid North, Southern Flinders section of the electorate of Stuart, and I spoke earlier today about the need for freight efficiencies.

There are 30 different communities in Stuart; not one of them is the same with regard to their make-up, where the people come from, what they do, where they work or where they live. But there is one thing that is common between all of them: they are dissatisfied with this state budget. In rural, regional and remote Australia they are feeling completely forgotten by this government. The reason at the heart of it is that they look at this budget and there was not one cent for the upgrade of one school in regional South Australia, there was not one cent for the upgrade of one hospital anywhere in regional South Australia and there was not one cent for the upgrade of one road anywhere in regional South Australia.

Regional South Australians are pretty resilient. They do not want everything laid out for them on a platter. They do not want the government to do everything for them, but they do want to be given the tools they need so that they can get on and live their lives and be productive. They need schools, they need hospitals and they need roads. That is not everything, but it easily summarises the highest priorities that the people in rural and remote South Australia want from their state government. It is not one cent just in my electorate; it is not one cent anywhere for regional South Australia, in any of those three areas. That is absolutely shameful.

We move on to environmental issues, police, corrections, the Attorney-General's Department, Aboriginal affairs, regional development, manufacturing, primary industries, trade, child protection, infrastructure, River Murray, road safety, on and on and on—these are all issues that are

very important to people in regional South Australia, but not one cent spent to upgrade a school, a hospital or a road in regional South Australia is a dreadful shame.

But let me tell you that there is hope on the horizon. Let me tell you that we have made it very clear over the last few years that if we are successful at the next state election—and, let me be clear, I am a very cautious person; this is not in the bag and we know that we have to work incredibly hard to be successful at the next state election—there will be a huge change. There will be a huge change for all South Australia, not just for regional South Australia but for the people of Adelaide as well.

We will be very much focused on cost of living. We will be focused on reducing taxes and reducing charges. We will be focused on reducing red tape so that people can get on and live their lives and be productive, whether it is in their home or whether in their business so they can employ more people. We will be focused on productive infrastructure. We will establish infrastructure SA so that we know that when the government—a Marshall Liberal government—spends taxpayers' money on infrastructure in South Australia it has been fully assessed.

It will not be a callous vote-grabbing exercise like the O-Bahn, for example, which the government has embarked upon. When we talk to people from the north-eastern suburbs—of course, good luck to them, that is fantastic, we do not begrudge them their good fortune—most of them cannot understand exactly why the government is spending \$170 million to give them a four-minute faster commute. I say again: good luck to them. I am pleased for them that they will get that.

With trade and exports, we will significantly boost our performance as a state in that area to bring wealth from other states and other nations into South Australia. We will be very focused on regional development. We will also be very focused on getting the very best that we possibly can out of our state's Public Service. We value South Australian public servants incredibly highly. We know that the overwhelming majority of them want to make a very positive contribution to our state, and that they are there to work hard and diligently for the right outcomes, but at the moment they are hampered from doing that.

We will unlock their talents, their skills and their abilities so that they can help us, and so that they can help all South Australians get the outcomes they deserve, and we will do it through much better budgeting than we have seen for the last 16 years.

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (17:11): I rise to make some comments on the Budget Measures Bill and, in particular, the state bank tax. Is it not interesting that tax is always Labor's answer to any problem? Whether it is real or perceived, the answer is tax. Over the last couple of years, Labor has tried to implement, has implemented or is considering implementing the following taxes: state bank tax; emergency services levy increase; of course, the car park tax; GST increases; foreign investor surcharge on stamp duties; and land tax on the family home.

Make no mistake: South Australians will pay for this tax because somebody has to pay, whether it be by one or a combination of the following: higher borrowing costs for banks and therefore higher lending costs for businesses and households; lower interest payments for savings deposits or lower returns for shareholders, including superannuation accounts by reduced dividends and/or lower share values; and increased sovereign or reputational risk.

The bank tax is a punitive tax levelled at five businesses operating in South Australia. I guess the difference between the federal bank tax and the state bank tax is that the Australian government provides a guarantee for the major banks that protects their deposits and ensures the stability of the financial system. This guarantee allows these banks to go out to the market and borrow at a lesser rate. The federal government is saying, 'Since we give the guarantee with taxpayers' money, we are looking for a return to the taxpayer because of that guarantee, and we want a return to the taxpayer on that guarantee.'

That is very different from a state-based tax that will pit our state against other states with lower overheads, which will mean that business will flow away from South Australia and into other areas. In fact, I had one very large trucking company come and talk to me about it and their accountant had already investigated moving all their accounts to Queensland which, again, would be detrimental to the State of South Australia, the state that we all want our children to grow and prosper in.

Of course, in the budget we have electricity and the number one issue in this state, bar none, is the price of electricity. It is forcing businesses out of South Australia. It is increasing hardship on the most vulnerable. No matter which way they try to spin it, Labor have had 16 years in government. In fact, the Premier has been in cabinet for the entirety of those 16 years, so the buck stops to a large degree with the Premier, because he has sat around that table for 16 years and had a hand in every decision that has been made. That \$550 million of taxpayers' money will really just try to cover up the mess that has been created after 15 years of Labor.

South Australia already has the nation's most expensive electricity and many believe that this latest policy will push up the price even more. What I find astounding is that \$550 million is basically there for backup generation in case there is load shedding. That \$550 million will not actually enter the market at any point other than as a backup, so it staggers me to understand how the government can come in here and say that it will reduce power prices.

In fact, if you listen carefully, they have moved away from those words and now they are using words, undoubtedly from a well-paid spin doctor, that it would put downward pressure on the price of electricity. As we all know, you only have to look at this and say, 'Well, hang on, if this \$550 million isn't actually going to enter the generation market to drive prices down'—that is, competitively bid against private generators—and is only there for a backup, how can it drive prices down?' The reality is that it cannot.

It will be there as a backup for load shedding or days of extreme weather. Of course, we now find that in this substitute plan, plan 3.0, the backup diesel generators do not work at optimum efficiency on days over 40°, but that is okay. We are hoping the South Australian people just gloss over the finer details of that part of the energy plan that they carry around next to their chests like it is a beating heart.

Different from Labor, a Marshall Liberal government will have a comprehensive electricity policy based on the following principles, including certainty, that is, cooperating with other governments to manage the transition to a lower carbon economy, including a single agreed renewable energy target for the nation. We are not going to have an artificial renewable energy target for the state; in fact, we will agree on one that is good for the whole nation. There will be reliability and more operating base load that will deliver on-demand electricity to strengthen the stability and security of the network.

There will be more gas supply from the Cooper Basin to support electricity generation. This notion that we are preventing gas extraction in South Australia, or banning it, is absolute nonsense. Even the Minister for Energy cannot say it with a straight face because he knows that it is not true. What we propose is a moratorium on a technique of extracting gas called fracking. Let me tell you that gas extraction is going on right now in the South-East of South Australia, or at least exploration for that gas, with a view to it coming online, and that will be done via a conventional method. We have no problem with conventional gas extraction; it is only the newer technology of fracking or slick water hydraulic fracking, to be more exact.

Of course, we know that storage is important, and we will be accelerating the development of storage technologies for renewable futures. There will be demand management to give consumers choices to better manage their demand for their own benefit. There will be improved competition in the retail electricity market and the national energy market, actually working together with the federal government and other states to improve the market operation for the benefit of all consumers.

It is this national energy market that I think the government should turn their minds to, in that at the moment the energy markets operate as different states because that is how it is determined, yet there are rules around the bidding and also the transmission of electricity into another market. It is not a single market. It is basically made up of five markets.

There has been a suggestion of working with COAG, Victoria and Tasmania to create one market that would be South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania where the generation and flow of electricity in that single market would actually drive prices down. I had an expert in the field, who was doing some consultancy for a large energy producer in my electorate, talk to me and say that that one change, if the three states would agree, would drive the price of power down by 10 per cent in South Australia at a minimum, just by changing the rules around how energy producers can bid into

the market and actually look at Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania as a single market within the national energy market.

Of course, when talking about energy, you know you are on the wrong track when you see the level of hardship payments increase. In South Australia, 1.8 customers per 100 are repaying debt under a retailer's hardship program. That is up from 1.5 per 100 in 2014-15. The average electricity debt of customers when entering a retailer's hardship program in South Australia is \$1,081.

The average electricity debt amongst hardship customers in South Australia is \$1,706. This is the highest in the nation, and if we take that from the previous figure of \$1,081, which is the national average of electricity debt, you can see that we are about \$620 more in debt before going on hardship programs in South Australia. The number of residential customers who are disconnected for non-payment increased by 3.6 per cent in South Australia. This, again, is the highest rate nationally.

It staggers me when the Treasurer and the Premier come in here and try to rewrite history. I am just going to go through a few quotes from both the Premier and the Treasurer over the course of this journey. I will go back to 26 September last year in *The Advertiser*. The Treasurer said, 'If they close Hazelwood, it's going to be good for South Australia,' which just shows the naivety of the Treasurer at the time.

The Premier, on 3 November last year, on the closing of Hazelwood, said, 'Perversely it could have a positive impact for South Australia'—unbelievable. Then, of course, the Treasurer would come in here and lament the national energy market. In fact, he would use words like, 'It's broken. We have to do something about it. We need to stand alone and again fight everybody else in the country.' Quite frankly, they cannot manage their own system, so the easiest distraction method is to pick a fight with somebody else instead of looking internally. On 29 September last year, the Treasurer said, and this is from *Hansard*:

I have to say that Matt Zema, God rest his soul, and I worked tirelessly to help us integrate renewable energy into the National Electricity Market. His successors and Tony Marxsen at the Australian Energy Market Operator have been fine advisers to the state government; indeed, they are great advisers to all state governments. They are the first port of call that we make because these people run our market...

As I said, the entire framework for AEMO's operation, for the operation of the National Electricity Market, is based in this parliament. In bipartisan ways, we have built the National Electricity Market in this chamber and in the other chamber by bringing amendments and bills here to this parliament on behalf of all other Australian parliaments, and we voted on them.

That is from *Hansard*, 29 September 2016. On the same day, the Treasurer said:

We are the lead legislator for the National Electricity Market. We have a lot of in-depth, in-situ advice given to us constantly by world experts based here in South Australia—people whose lives have been dedicated to the management of the National Electricity Market and its establishment...

We have designed it, we have built it—

That is from *Hansard*, 29 September 2016. I quote from 28 July 2015:

Increasing the capability of the Heywood Interconnector from 460 megawatts to 650 megawatts in July 2016 will deliver greater access to generation invested at peak times, maintain reliability and facilitate the export of renewable energy out of South Australia. It also has the potential to reduce the level of frequency of extreme wholesale prices. I am quite confident that we will be fine. Like you said, if they were making money and the demand was there, it would not be an issue.

So on the one hand he is saying that the Hazelwood interconnector is good and that in fact that is going to drive prices down and increase reliability, then, 12 months later, he is saying, 'If Hazelwood closes, that will be good for South Australia.' This is a Treasurer who does not know his portfolio. He is obviously being briefed as his lips are moving, and it quite astounds me that this person, the Treasurer, is in charge of our electricity market with comments like that. With those final remarks, I commend the bill to the house.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:27): I rise to speak on the Budget Measures Bill 2017, which essentially is to introduce and provide the legislative framework around the government's budget, provided by the Treasurer in June this year. The government, of course, via the Treasurer promised another jobs budget; instead, it delivered new taxes and higher charges, which frankly are the last things South Australia needs. Already our communities are

haemorrhaging in debt and the fear of losing their jobs, for those who have them, and things such as the \$370 million bank tax certainly will not be delivering jobs. It will make the risk even greater, far from relieving the households that are struggling with the cost of living.

The key revenue initiatives, some of which are covered in this bill, are the \$370 million over four years that will be received from a new state bank levy, \$48.8 million over four years for a foreign investor surcharge on stamp duty liabilities, \$230 million in revenue from the sale of the Techport Australia Common User Facility to the federal government and the distributions from the Motor Accident Commission, now forecast at a total of \$2.76 billion: \$947.5 million in the 2016-17 year and \$321.7 million in dividends budgeted for the 2017-18 year plus \$16.9 million in return of capital. Of course, there is another half a billion dollar sale in the background, which is the sale of Land Services, which of course could be significantly higher, but clearly the government have now admitted that that is going to be sold.

The government, of course, have sold everything they can get their hands on, run up debt and now has another tranche of ways that they can take from South Australians, in every possible way, money to provide for their election campaign for 2018 and to continue their rampant expenditure, among which there has been disgusting waste. Just in the last few days, the government have acknowledged that something like \$4 million is being spent on pre-election advertising campaigns, which is a scandalous application of funds. Little wonder that we now have a situation where, when asked what the difference is between the state government and a bank, the answer is that one is a blood-sucking leech and the other is a financial institution.

Can I say that, in respect of the bank tax, we on this side of the house will be opposing that provision in the bill. We will be opposing it. In the past, we have opposed some initiatives of the government when they have been inconsistent with an election commitment or when they have been a tax or claimed to be a tax under the guise of other legislation. Examples of these include the biosecurity levy and, after the last election, the car park tax, so it is not without precedent. It is not something we do without careful consideration. We certainly do consider carefully.

As lead speaker on this, I want to outline some of the disadvantages of this tax and some of the concerns we raised about the briefings provided before reaching our decision in respect of this matter. It has not been a kneejerk reaction; we do listen to the advice of the Treasury officials, who were finally able to provide us with briefings within a week or so following the budget announcement. We thank them for that.

I want to say at the outset that I am a client of the National Australia Bank, to which this new tax is to apply. The four big banks and the Macquarie Bank will be subject to this tax under the new rules. Fortunately, I have more of the National Australia Bank's money than they have of mine; nevertheless, for the purpose of this exercise, I disclose that interest.

The financial institutions to which it will not be applicable include institutions such as Bendigo Bank and Suncorp. I make no direct or personal reflection on these entities, but I want to highlight the difficulty raised in providing an advantage to some financial institutions in South Australia and not to others. Bear in mind the very significant employment of people in the banks to which it will apply in South Australia and the risks which it will place on those jobs and the government should realise what a serious impact this will have.

It is quite clear from the briefings we have had that this was not something that was dreamt up by Treasury: this is the brainchild of the Treasurer and/or members of cabinet. This is not something that has come as a recommendation from Treasury. Clearly, the Treasurer had seen that the federal government had instituted a nationwide tax under its Major Bank Levy Bill 2017 and the Treasury Laws Amendment (Major Bank Levy) Bill 2017 following the federal budget. He decided that he would piggyback on those, notwithstanding the disadvantage that would give South Australia in the federation of states; nonetheless, he progressed with the desire to provide funding for his spending splurges. Let us first look at clause 13 of the Budget Measures Bill, which provides:

State major bank levy payable by an [authorised deposit-taking institution] ADI under this Act cannot be directly recovered from customers of the ADI and must be paid out of profits or other funds of the ADI.

The government briefing and information provided subsequent to the briefing advised that, in response to the question, 'In which court would any legal action be taken over an alleged breach of

section 13 of the bill?' the answer would be the Supreme Court. They have provided that to us. I have asked the question, and I think all the people in this house should ask this: what is the penalty? What is the sanction in the bill for a breach of this directive under clause 13? The answer is nothing.

There is not an offence. There is not a financial payment. There is not an obligation to be able to be subject to some civil claim. There is absolutely nothing in the bill. I do not know what they will be asking for in the Supreme Court. They might be seeking a declaration that there has been a breach. What is that going to do to protect the public against that? As is quite clear from the Economics Legislation Committee, which is a national committee which provided its report in June 2017, there are not protections against this. That is the risk that is taken.

The problem with it being in South Australia as an extra tax is that our people are going to risk being the subject of having to carry the burden of that because, although it says there is to be no direct payment, the banks, of course, can provide that indirectly. There is no prohibition even on that as some kind of quasi request. There are other circumstances in which banks are liable for prosecution if they do not do the right thing.

Just in recent days, the Commonwealth Bank was the subject of allegations and charges of breaches of anti-money laundering and counterterrorism financing laws, which suggests that there have been multiple breaches—53,506 cash transactions of \$10,000 or more. There is an obligation for reporting on this. There is a claim that they did not do it. They counterclaimed to say that there was a coding error and that they had remedied it as quickly as possible. That will be a matter sorted out in the courts.

I will say that the Commonwealth Bank, to its credit, has stripped its chief executive officer and its high-level executives of their bonuses—about time, frankly. One thing that really upsets the public and really sticks in their craw is not so much that bank executives are paid so much money—as that is a matter for the shareholders to make decisions on at their annual general meetings and their boards to be accountable for—but that banks create massive profits or create huge blunders and then still get their bonuses. Unsurprisingly, they have not, so well done to the Commonwealth Bank for actually taking some initiative in that regard.

We have a bank tax applicable to some and not to others. That is discriminatory and will obviously directly affect the jobs of those working in those areas, several thousand of whom are at risk in South Australia. Secondly, we have no protection or enforceability in respect of the transfer of that to the consumer.

Finally, in respect of the actual measure itself, when asked whether there had been any legal advice on the enforceability of the major bank levy proposal as a state tax—for example, in respect of whether it might breach the obligations under the free trade arrangements between states—can I say that these are matters obviously of concern to a number of people as to whether there may be some constitutional challenge to this legislation in the High Court or on the way to the High Court. They are matters of concern because we are being asked to deal with this legislation.

Far from the government saying, 'This is novel in its approach. We appreciate the concern of the opposition or anyone else who might ask in this house. Here is a copy of the legal advice we have received.' They confirmed that they did obtain legal advice from Professor John Williams, who is an academic at the University of Adelaide, but they will not show it to us. I find it unconscionable to ask us to take the risk of passing legislation and not present it to us with some reassurance when clearly there is some controversy surrounding this.

This is not some Crown Solicitor's advice about whether a public servant has done the wrong thing or a minister has stuffed up. This is about a major piece of legislation and, frankly, I find it very concerning that the Treasurer has not actually walked in with it and said, 'Here is the basis of the legal stability of this legislation,' and presented it in support of their argument to encourage us as a parliament to support it. No, that is a secret and we are not allowed to see it.

When the shadow treasurer asked in the briefing how the bank levy will be administered, the Commissioner of State Taxation advised that they would go out to consult the affected banks to make the process of compliance as simple as possible, utilising information provided to the commonwealth government agencies. There had not been even any discussions with the commonwealth agencies

at the time we had this briefing, so again we are in this space of no identified process as to how this will operate, yet the government is asking us to sign up to that and accept it.

Finally, at the briefing I inquired why there is an omission from this bill, in my view, and that is why there is no protective provision in the bill for the proposed sale of the Land Services Group data, which the government has also announced. There is no mention about it in the bill, yet we have had repeated statements by this government—in respect of the period over the last 18 months and in documentation they put out in respect of invitations of expressions of interest to acquire this data that has gone out in published material by this government—that the privacy of people in respect of the data would be protected.

Issues about protection against any increment in the cost of access to data in the future and protection against the sale of data are all things that have quite reasonably been raised, in addition to the security of that information, its storage and the like. These are all quite reasonable questions being asked by all the stakeholders, yet there is no provision in the Budget Measures Bill to protect the interests of South Australians in the sale of Land Services Group data and the like, and I think that is scandalous.

What they told us at the briefing was that that was going to be in the contract. Can I say, firstly, that we do not get to see these contracts. Secondly, if the government's capacity in drawing up contracts is evidenced, for example, by the Royal Adelaide Hospital and the subsequent years of litigation in respect of the compliance and/or progress of contracts, then frankly I do not have a lot of confidence in signing up to a budget measures bill with no statutory protection—

The SPEAKER: Or the contract with United Water.

Ms CHAPMAN: —we will get to the Allwater contract later as well—and I think that is unacceptable. I think the omission of that from the Budget Measures Bill goes to show the disrespect the government has towards the people of South Australia and the protection of their interests.

Of course, I could speak for a long time on Sir Robert Torrens and how he might be turning in his grave at the very prospect of the sale of this data, but I will not today; suffice to say that I am very concerned. That asset has not as yet been sold, but clearly that is on its way. We are probably going to face a situation where there will be alarming outcomes from the disclosure of data and the sale of that data which, let's face it, is very valuable to financial institutions, for example, or to people who have access to information on who owns property. The exclusion of that from what is necessary for conveyancing, registration of mortgages and easements over property and so on, we may find that access to that data will be at a higher penalty rate. I think there is a very substantial omission there.

In respect of the bill itself, the government claims that this will not have an impact on jobs. I asked the Parliament Research Library to provide me with a list of significant reported employment losses in South Australia over the last few years, and it is a very concerning list. I will read it as quickly as possible because I do not propose to address the parliament at any length on this bill, but it is important that we consider it. Some members will remember very significant losses of employment from the closure of companies or the stripping down of jobs in companies, even in your own electorate, Mr Speaker, which is very concerning.

In 2004, Sheridan lost 150l. In 2005, Kimberly Clark, lost 70; Ratbag, 70; Carter Holt Harvey, 90; NAB, 80. In 2006, AGL lost 200; Conroy's Meats, 60; Hills Industries, 87. In 2007, Motorola lost 66; GMH Holden, 600. In 2008, Mitsubishi lost 930; Cooper Standard Automotive, 116; Boart Longyear, 55, Le Cornu, 10; and ANZ, 10.

In 2009, National Foods (Berri) lost 200; Exacto Plastics, 101; Trident Tooling, 40; Media Monitors, 20; Clipsal, 200. In 2010, Bridgestone lost 600; Carter Holt Harvey, 130; Clean Seas Tuna, 22; Australian Submarine Corporation, 41. In 2011, Bianco Steel Supplies, lost 50; Tantanoola, 80; and Malaysian Airlines, 32.

In 2012, Autodom lost 60; Santos, 100; Carter Holt Harvey, another 207; Digislide, 40; Orlando, 85; Accolade Wines (Reynella), 175; Qantas, 150; Hills Holdings, 150; Elders, 75. In 2013, Brown Wood Panels lost 47; Boral, 80; Modular Furniture, 40; Saab Systems, 30; McCain Foods, 59; Mondello Farms, 140; GMH, 400; and Penrice, 70.

In 2014, Penrice lost 11 to 180; Nilsen, 30; ForestrySA, 66; Pacific Services Group, 100; Australian Office, 55; Edinburgh North, 70; Royal Park, 100 (bus makers, not the suburb); Nyrstar, another 124. Continuing in 2014, Pacific Brands/Sheridan lost 30; Arnott's, 120; Ingham Aldinga Turkeys, 79; ACI, 60; Caroma, 76; Treasury Wine, 33; Bradken, 120; and ABC Adelaide, 37.

In 2015, Mindarie mines lost 36; Holden, another 270; BGC Contracting, 125; Arrium, 580; Santos, 520 across SA and Queensland; Santos, a further 200 in SA; United Dairy Power (Murray Bridge plant), 90; JBS Australia (meat processor, Bordertown), 62; and BHP, 90. In the same year, BHP lost another 140, and again in the same year BHP lost 380. In 2015, Monroe lost 30; SA Outreach, 400. Fairfax, 35; ASC, 120 contractors; ASC, 101; Beach Energy, unknown but speculated loss; Unibooks, 100; Origin, 800 across four states. I do not have a specific number there, but obviously a significant reduction.

In 2015, the University of Adelaide lost 120; Australia Post, 1,900 nationwide; Alinta (Leigh Creek coal), 200; Arrium (Whyalla Steelworks), another 55; Arrium (Whyalla Steelworks), another 250; Tagara, 50; ASC, another 45; and Korvest (Kilburn plant) 30. In 2016, we then had another loss of 240 at Alinta, at the Port Augusta power station; Schweppes at Payneham, 28; SMR car components, 140; OZ Minerals, 70 to 100; Iluka, which is the Jacinth Ambrosia mine, mothballed, 33; de Bruin Group Timber/Tech Engineering, 20; Industrial Engineers and Spring Makers, 54; Dick Smith, 3,000 nationally; and ASC, 26.

At Arrium Whyalla steelworks, obviously at risk of even further losses, another 30 were actually lost; Holden's, 400; Hewlett Packard Enterprise, 200; Hillgrove Resources, as flagged, a further 200 jobs at that stage; and SA Pathology, 332, although I note the announcement today that some of those jobs are going to be salvaged apparently. At Optus, 200 jobs were lost; VIP Electrical, 45; State Library, 20; ASC, 175; CSM Steel, 40; Telstra, 27; Martelco Hire, 50; for Homestead Homes, I cannot say, as that is not well known, of course, but there has obviously been the demise of that enterprise with Mr Day; and Plympton Steel, 20.

This year, at ASC, the speculation is that there will be a workforce fallout of 1,130, obviously with the valley of death in lack of work as the programs come online. That is not entirely the state government's fault, obviously. Mr Rudd and Ms Gillard failed to do anything for seven years in respect of the defence industry, so we have a valley of death, thanks to them. AGL at Torrens Island is speculating reduction, and TAFE SA has 500 to go by 2019. The years 2015 to 2017 were shocker years, obviously. The years 2017 and 2018 are not looking good. I make the point that—

Matter of Privilege

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

The SPEAKER (17:52): Deputy leader, matters of privilege take precedence. You can resume after this. I make this statement about the matter of privilege raised by the member for Colton in the house today. Before addressing that matter, I wish to outline the rules on privileges that relate to the house and its members.

Privilege is not a device by which members or any other person can seek to pursue matters that can be addressed by debate or settled by a vote of the house on a substantive motion. McGee in *Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand*, which I think states the practice on this matter well, makes the test for whether or not a matter is a matter of privilege by defining it as a matter that can 'genuinely be regarded as tending to impede or obstruct the house in the discharge of its duties'.

Of course, it is possible for an opposition member to do that, not just a minister, and indeed for a government backbencher to do it. Clearly, a member giving a knowingly and deliberately false statement would have that effect. An essential aspect of privilege is to ensure that each member can speak without fear or favour but at the same time be able to rely on the accuracy of a statement made in the house by a member. It is not designed to punish poor wording or unintentionally inaccurate information.

I refer to the matter raised by the member for Colton, where it is alleged that the member for MacKillop has knowingly and deliberately misled the house. The member for Colton refers to the member for MacKillop's personal explanation made in the house on 3 August, when the member for Colton suggests that this statement made by the member for MacKillop has misled the house:

During the debate that just ensued, the member for Mawson attributed to me comments that I had made at some stage that it was not a Rolls Royce but a Mazda, and I was happy for us to drive a Mazda. The Premier made a similar assertion just now. I have never made that comment.

The member for Colton then goes on to say:

I draw your attention and that of the house to an article that appeared online in *The Advertiser* on 17 February 2012...headed 'Libs' Murray plan a glass half empty'. Halfway down, the member for MacKillop is quoted in this article. He says, or the journalist says he says:

'This is obviously not the Rolls-Royce, but it's a very good Mazda...Mr Williams, the Opposition's water spokesman, told *The Advertiser* yesterday. 'The reality is we're not going to get everything we want and this is a very good start.'

In explanation earlier today, the member for MacKillop indicated to the house that he wished to explain that article but that the Speaker prevented his going further. This is in the course of a personal explanation, of which the member for Colton complains.

I must say with personal explanations that there is a danger that they will descend into a diatribe, so it is incumbent on any Speaker or Deputy Speaker to intervene when it appears a personal explanation may become more than a personal explanation and turn into inflammatory remarks. So it was quite natural that the Deputy Speaker would try to cut off the member for MacKillop at that point, but in retrospect it would perhaps have been best if he got a few more sentences out. The member for MacKillop did indicate, however, that, had he had the opportunity to do so, he would have advised the house that it was not what he told *The Advertiser*. He went on to say:

After I had attended a meeting, which was arranged at Waikerie a few days prior to that article being published, Daniel Wills asked me to give him some comments regarding the meeting.

I gave him that quote, which came from the then president of the Murray irrigators' association...

In effect, the member for MacKillop is claiming that he had been misquoted but alas never had the opportunity to explain himself fully. About any action taken by the member for MacKillop to repudiate those remarks and to alert everyone that they were not his words, I refer to debate in the house on 1 November 2012, *Hansard* page 3634, that has been brought to my attention, on a motion on the Murray-Darling Basin. The member for MacKillop is quoted as saying:

A meeting was held at Barmera to discuss community response to the draft. Karen Martin, the Chair of the South Australian Murray Irrigators Association, summed up her response by stating that the draft plan was not a Rolls Royce but appeared to be a very good Mazda and she felt that the Riverland communities might be happy to drive a Mazda. My crime has been to accept that feedback from the Riverland community.

Further, on 11 July 2012 during question time, the member for MacKillop is heard interjecting to this answer by the Minister for Water and the River Murray at the time, *Hansard*, page 2406:

The Hon. P. CAICA: Thank you, Madam Speaker—what we already know is an inadequate water recovery target because they do not want to offend their upstream colleagues. On 12 February, *The Advertiser* quotes the deputy leader, when referring to the draft plan, saying:

This is obviously not a Rolls-Royce, but it's a very good Mazda and we're quite happy to drive in a Mazda...

Members interjecting...

Mr WILLIAMS: —I said which I didn't say...

Mr Williams: Just because you read it in *The Advertiser* it doesn't mean I said it, Paul.

End of quote, amen. As Speakers have stated in previous opinions, an inconsistency between the words used by a member in the house with those previously used in the house or elsewhere, or words spoken that are inconsistent with the text of any document, is not of itself a deliberate and intentional misleading and therefore not a matter of privilege.

On reading the information that has come to my attention, it is clear that the member for MacKillop has visited this matter on more than one occasion, and in particular on 1 November 2012 there is sufficient information to suggest that he has attempted to repudiate the remarks attributed to him. The information also accords with the member for MacKillop's explanation earlier today.

In this instance, it is unfortunate that the member for MacKillop was prevented from being unable to more fully explain the circumstances surrounding his misrepresentation last Thursday.

Accordingly, I do not propose to give precedence which would enable a member to pursue this matter forthwith as a matter of privilege. We find the defendant not guilty.

Bills

BUDGET MEASURES BILL 2017

Second Reading

Debate resumed.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:59): I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

At 18:00 the house adjourned until Wednesday 9 August 2017 at 11:00.

*Answers to Questions***HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT INVESTIGATION**

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (23 February 2016).

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries): I have been advised:

The matter has been investigated and a report on its findings has been completed. The report will not be tabled in parliament.

I can advise that appropriate action was taken in respect of the person(s) involved in the changing of the medical record.

The SA Health chief executive issued a communication to all staff in on 14 December 2015, reminding staff the creation and maintenance of medical records is a fundamental element of SA Health's service delivery and that all staff have a duty to ensure official records are maintained in good order and condition as per the *State Records Act 1997*.

A project to encapsulate the principles of existing standards and guidelines in a single overarching policy has resulted in the Medical Records Policy Directive (Health Record Management Policy). After several rounds of consultation beginning in March 2016, the policy was distributed for final consultation in January/February 2017, and is expected to be approved by Executive shortly.

HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT INVESTIGATION

In reply to **Mr MARSHALL (Dunstan—Leader of the Opposition)** (25 February 2016).

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries): I have been advised:

The matter has been investigated and a report on its findings has been completed. The report will not be tabled in parliament.

I can advise that appropriate action was taken in respect of the person(s) involved in the changing of the medical record.

The SA Health chief executive issued a communication to all staff in on 14 December 2015, reminding staff the creation and maintenance of medical records is a fundamental element of SA Health's service delivery and that all staff have a duty to ensure official records are maintained in good order and condition as per the *State Records Act 1997*.

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ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

In reply to **Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett)** (2 November 2016).

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries): I have been advised:

1. Consistent with triennial independent valuation processes, Australian Valuation Solutions Pty Ltd, a Certified Practising Valuer conducted a valuation on 1 June 2015, of the existing Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) land and buildings, including site improvements, which resulted in an updated value of \$138.654 million on the basis of their use for hospital purposes.

2. Due to the upcoming completion of the new Royal Adelaide Hospital the existing RAH site has been subject to an expression of interest and a detailed negotiation process for the development and occupation of the current site.

As the buildings are of a specialised nature and difficult to reliably measure, SA Health decided to value the buildings and site improvements at no value. This resulted in a net \$78 million revaluation decrement for buildings as at 30 June 2015, with \$24 million adjusted against an existing asset revaluation reserve and \$54 million recognised as a loss on revaluation of building assets expense. The RAH land continues to be valued using a market approach. Accordingly, the adopted valuation is considered consistent with accounting standards.

As at 30 June 2016, the written down value of the RAH land and buildings was \$36.725 million.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

In reply to **Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett)** (29 November 2016).

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries): I have been advised:

Consultation was recently undertaken on a proposal to relocate rehabilitation services from Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre to The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (TQEH). After listening to clinicians, staff and consumers on the planned transfer of services to TQEH, Central Adelaide Local Health Network will establish a number of working groups to discuss and address a number of matters that were identified during consultation.

As part of the 2017-18 budget the state government announced a \$250 million investment towards stage 3 of TQEH's redevelopment. This will include a larger, new state-of-the-art emergency department, operating theatre, day surgery suite, new outpatient and medical imaging services and the state's most advanced brain and spinal injury rehabilitation service.

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

In reply to **Mr MARSHALL (Dunstan—Leader of the Opposition)** (21 June 2017).

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries): I have been advised:

The Women's and Children's Hospital currently has 117 beds for women and newborns (including Helen Mayo House).

Estimates Replies

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL SITE REDEVELOPMENT

In reply to **Mr MARSHALL (Dunstan—Leader of the Opposition)** (1 August 2016). (Estimates Committee A)

The Hon. J.J. SNELLING (Playford—Minister for Health, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Health Industries): I have been advised:

1. The heading on page 26 states 'Investing Expenditure Summary' and hence the \$256 million reflected in the table is the investing expenditure component only of the new RAH project budget. The difference of \$207.5 million is the operating expenditure component of the total project budget, which includes operating related costs such as transition, remediation and dual running.

NEW RAH BUDGET	TOTAL Program \$'000
Investing	256,049
Operating	207,517
Total Budget—SA Health	463,566

2. The funding for commercial settlement which included remediation, was approved by cabinet in September 2015, and published as a policy measure as part of the 2015-16 MYBR (pages 32-33).

3. The total project figure increased by \$87.8 million from the 2015-16 budget to the 2016-17 budget. The majority of this relates to the additional resources announced as part of the 2015-16 MYBR. As I pointed out in the estimates hearing at the time, the \$34.3 million in net additional funding announced in the MYBR was a net number that included savings of \$57.1 million due to budgeted service payments no longer required to be made to SAHP as a result of the delay. The total project figure does not include service payments (which commence after the project is essentially complete), and therefore is a gross figure that doesn't factor in the saving.

UNIONS

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

No election services were provided to any unions in the 2015-16 year.

CONSUMER AND BUSINESS SERVICES IDENTIFICATION

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

Consumer and Business Services (CBS) hasn't previously focused on this area as SA Police's Licensing Enforcement Branch holds additional powers and resources in order to deal with this issue.

CBS is focused on the regulatory requirements, however this issue is being considered as part of a compliance strategy for the next 12 months.

ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

The 27.4 FTEs referred to is for Public Sector Act employees of the Electoral Commission SA, which excludes the Electoral Commissioner and Deputy Electoral Commissioner. These two statutory officers are accounted for in the 2.0 FTEs under 'Administered items for the Electoral Commission of SA', as they are remunerated from Special Acts appropriations.

While the Deputy Electoral Commissioner is presently the Acting Electoral Commissioner, there is no person acting in the role of Deputy Electoral Commissioner.

SALES, GOODS AND SERVICES

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

The figure of \$478,000 is taken from the Statement of Cash Flows and represents the estimated cash generated from sales of goods and services for 2016-17. The breakdown of this work is:

Description	Agencies/Clients	Amount (\$)
Local government roll contribution	Councils	398,000
Local government representation reviews	Councils	75,000
Local government supplementary elections	Councils	70,000
Industrial ballots – non-SA gov	Estimate	3,000
Industrial ballots – SA gov	Estimate	2,000
Sales of electoral rolls – non-SA gov	Estimate	1,000
Sales of electoral rolls – non-SA gov	Estimate	14,000
Miscellaneous income	Estimate	10,000
Total sales of goods and services		573,000
Less increase in accounts receivable in 2016-17		(95,000)
Cash generated by sales of goods and services		478,000

CARTLEDGE, MR A.

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

Mr Aaron Cartledge has received the following fees since March 2014 for his appointment to government boards administered by SafeWork SA:

Construction Industry Long Service Leave Board

1 March 2014—30 June 2014: \$177

2014-2015: \$1,062

2015-2016: \$1,593

Fees and allowances are paid from the Construction Industry Fund, pursuant to section 9(2) of the *Construction Industry Long Service Leave Act 1987*.

Mining and Quarrying Occupational Health and Safety Committee

1 March 2014 – 30 June 2014: \$774

2014-2015: \$1,518

2015-2016: \$1,062

Fees are paid from the Mining and Quarrying Industries Fund.

Mr Cartledge has remitted all fees to his employer.

ONLINE ADJOURNMENT SYSTEM

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

A three month pilot of the online adjournment system was commenced on 18 July 2016.

To date, one application has been received. The pilot was restricted to the Adelaide Magistrates Court and the Legal Services Commission due to testing considerations. The CAA is looking to expand the pilot to all suburban courts during November 2016. They have also met with the Legal Services Commission on several occasions to take them through the system and encourage them to use it.

If the system is implemented a communication plan will be adopted which will engage the Law Society and legal firms

CAPITAL WORKS

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

Summary of Annual Provisions funded 2016-17

Amount Funded	Nature of Works
	Building Projects
\$1.470m	Supreme Court Works
\$0.550m	Christies Beach Court – Security Systems Upgrade
\$0.300m	Adelaide Magistrates Court – Air Conditioning Upgrade
\$0.074m	Sundry Building Works
	Other Capital Projects
\$1.073m	Library Purchases – text books, subscriptions (Law Reports, journals)
\$0.691m	IT Asset Replacement
\$0.040m	Judicial Security – Supreme Court Car Park works
\$4.198m	

RETURN TOWORKSA

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

Subsection 21(3) of the *Return to Work Corporation of South Australia Act 1994* provides that the CEO will be appointed by the board of ReturnToWorkSA on terms and conditions determined by the board.

Subsection 21(4) provides that a person must not be appointed as CEO unless the board has first consulted with the Minister about the proposed appointment and the proposed terms and conditions of the appointment

RETURNTOWORKSA

In reply to **Mr KNOLL (Schubert)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

Under the *Return to Work Act* 2014 ('the Act') an injured worker is entitled to be compensated for the necessary costs of medical and other services reasonably incurred by them as a result of their work injury.

The amount to be compensated may be either in accordance with a scale of charges I publish as the Minister for Industrial Relations under section 33 of the Act or, if the service is not covered by the scale of charges, to the extent of a reasonable amount for the provision of the service.

The Act also provides that the scale of charges for services provided by a public hospital can be based on the government charges for the relevant service. For 2016-2017 I have, upon the recommendation of ReturnToWorkSA, published a separate scale of charges for services provided by public hospitals.

The Minister for Health publishes in the Government Gazette different scales of charges for compensable patients and Medicare patients under the *Health Care Act* 2008.

It is an offence under subsection 33(16) of the Act for a person who provides a service for an injured worker, knowing the worker to be entitled to compensation for the service under the Act, to charge for the service an amount exceeding the amount allowed under the scale of charges.

COUNCIL LEVIES

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

The LGA was aware of the council levies and provided comment on these provisions.

A full cost recovery of the project will be achieved within thirteen years. The cost recovery will commence in year 2 (1 June 2017) as the benefits of the new system begin to be realised.

The annual council levy has a flat fee of \$4,000 and is scalable up to \$32,000 depending on the level of development activity in each council.

Annual Value of Development	Council Fee
Over \$100m	\$32,000
\$50m—\$100m	\$24,000
\$10m—\$50m	\$16,000
Less than \$10m	\$4,000

The increased development assessment fees occur in two ways:

A development fee of 40¢ per \$1,000 for developments over \$250,000, capped at \$20,000.

Incremental increase of lodgement fees from year 2, this involves a 2.5 per cent increase p.a. (plus CPI), capped at 10 per cent at year 5 when the system is expected to be fully implemented.

COST RECOVERY

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

A full cost recovery of the project is proposed to be achieved within thirteen years. The cost recovery will commence in year 2 (1 June 2017) as the benefits of the new system begin to be realised.

Proposed Cost Recovery

	2017-18 \$'000	2018-19 \$'000	2019-20 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	TOTAL
Lodgement fee increase (2.5% per annum x 4 years)		147	303	469	644	664	685	706	728	751	774	798	823	7,492
Development Cost increase (2.5% per annum x 4 years)		107	221	341	469	484	499	514	530	546	563	580	598	5,452
Council Levy	950	979	1,009	1,040	1,072	1,105	1,139	1,174	1,210	1,248	1,287	1,327	1,368	14,908
TOTAL	950	1,233	1,533	1,850	2,185	2,253	2,323	2,394	2,468	2,545	2,624	2,705	2,789	27,852

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

There has not been a \$1 million allocation from the P&D Fund for the review of the 30 Year Plan. The Departmental costs in implementing the *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* are paid from the Planning and Development Fund in the amount of \$1 million per year. This funding arrangement was introduced in 2011-12.

The use of the P&D Fund to support the implementation of the Planning Strategy is one of the prescribed uses under Section 111 of the *Development Regulations 2008*.

No consultancies or external work was funded for the 30-Year Plan Review in 2015-16.

The full \$1 million was paid to the department in 2015/16 and this annual payment arrangement will continue to apply in 2016/17.

The amount spent on the recent 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide Update has been \$163,085. This included funding of a full engagement program, which has involved a new web site, printing of a short form brochure and full long-form document, workshops with council's, industry groups and planning practitioners.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

The department has identified all owners that will be affected by the EFPA rural living provisions. DPTI will write to all affected landowners and councils when the provisions are expected to commence next year, when the 2 year provision commences, as committed to by government.

The number 35 relates to the specific number of Rural Living Zones affected by the EFPA, which was a question raised in the Legislative Council during debate on the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Bill 2016.

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I have been provided the following advice:

The Planning and Development Directorate of DPTI currently employs 130.9 staff to work across the range of portfolio responsibilities, including (but not limited to) development assessment, building policy, development plan policy, strategic and regional planning and demographic analysis.

The transition from the *Development Act 1993* and into a new system under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* will mean that DPTI staff will be reallocated into delivering the new system. A dedicated team of 29 currently work on delivering the new system, which includes a team building the new electronic platform (e-planning portal), as well as a team working on the creation of the new instruments and governance arrangements.

The 6 team members currently working on delivering the e-planning solution are counted in a different directorate (Customer and Information Services Directorate) and as such do not form part of the 130.9 FTE count as at 30 June 2016.

Seven vacancies have recently been filled in the Planning and Development Directorate.

ATTRACTION AND RETENTION ALLOWANCES

In reply to **Mr KNOLL (Schubert)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I am advised:

Attorney-General

Courts Administration Authority

Attraction, retention and performance allowances as well as non-salary benefits paid to public servants and contractors:

(a) 2014-15:

Dept/Agency	Position Title	Classification	Allowance Type	Allowance Amount
Courts Administration Authority	Manager, Human Resources	MAS-3	Retention	\$10,000
	Manager, Finance	MAS-3	Retention	\$10,000
	Senior Analyst/ Programmer	ASO-7	Attraction	\$33,892 (equiv. to 40% ASO-7)

(b) 2015-16:

Dept/Agency	Position Title	Classification	Allowance Type	Allowance Amount
Courts Administration Authority	Manager, Human Resources	MAS-03	Retention	\$10,000
	Project Director, Electronic Court Management System	MAS-03	Attraction	\$22,740

ATTRACTION AND RETENTION ALLOWANCES

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I am advised:

Minister for the Public Sector

Attraction, retention and performance allowances as well as non-salary benefits paid to public servants and contractors within Shared Services SA, Service SA and Office for the Public Sector:

(a) 2014-15:

Dept/Agency	Position Title	Classification	Allowance Type	Allowance Amount	End Date
DPC	PROGRAM MANAGER	ASO803	Retention 15%	\$16,539	11/12/2015
DPC	PROJECT MANAGER CHRIS21	ASO803	Attraction \$	\$10,757	3/3/2016
DPC	SAGSSA PRINCIPAL CONTRACT MNGR	ASO803	Retention 30%	\$33,077	31/7/2017

(b) 2015-16:

Dept/Agency	Position Title	Classification	Allowance Type	Allowance Amount	End Date
DPC	PROGRAM MANAGER	ASO803	Retention 15%	\$16,539	11/12/2015
DPC	PROJECT MANAGER CHRIS21	ASO803	Attraction \$	\$10,757	3/3/2016

Dept/Agency	Position Title	Classification	Allowance Type	Allowance Amount	End Date
DPC	SAGSSA PRINCIPAL CONTRACT MNGR	ASO803	Retention 30%	\$33,077	31/7/2017
DPC	MANAGER RETURN TO WORK SVCS	MAS301	Retention allowance 10%	\$11,226	

Note: Two retention allowances expired and were not renewed in 2015-16.

GRANT EXPENDITURE

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I am advised:

2015-16

The following provides information with regards to grants of \$10,000 or more:

Courts Administration Authority

Name of Grant Recipient	Amount of Grant	Purpose of Grant	Subject to Grant Agreement (Y/N)
Nil			

GRANT EXPENDITURE

In reply to **Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I am advised:

Minister for Planning

2015-16

The following provides information with regards to grants of \$10,000 or more for the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, for each year of the forward estimates:

	BUDGET
Name of Grant Program	2016-17 \$000
Planning & Development Fund—Open Space and Places for People	19,550
Laneway Revitalisation – Adelaide city council	7,300
Adelaide Shores – Tax Equivalent regime	880
Total Grants Budget	27,730

Total indicative grants forecast for the forward estimates (\$'000) are:

- 2017-18: \$20,949
- 2018-19: \$21,547
- 2019-20: \$22,565
- 2020-21: \$23,129

Note that:

1. Not all grant funding is allocated to a specific grant program. Allocations are made during the financial year as a result of the finalisation of agreements between the department and relevant stakeholders.

2. Budgets for the forward estimates are not allocated to individual grant recipients as the majority of grants are provided/allocated to recipients during the financial year in which the grant is applied for. Budgets are subject to the annual budget process and final cabinet endorsement.

For the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, grants paid during 2015-16, greater than \$10,000 were:

Name of Grant Recipient	Amount of Grant (\$)	Purpose of Grant	Subject to Grant Agreement (Y/N)
Various Councils	20,547,000.00	Grants from the Open Space and Places for People grant programs to implement open space and public realm programs across South Australia.	Y
Adelaide Shores	887,119.90	Tax Equivalent Payment.	Y
Conservation Council SA	15,000.00	Contribution to Conservation Council planning, transport and infrastructure initiatives	N
Total Grants Paid 2015-16	21,449,119.90		

TARGETED VOLUNTARY SEPARATION PACKAGES

In reply to **Mr KNOLL (Schubert)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I am advised:

Courts Administration Authority

(a) \$66,890.72

(b) Funded entirely by Courts Administration Authority

(c) One

(d) No budget allocated in the forward estimates for TVSP payments. The Courts Administration Authority's future year's savings strategies do not anticipate payments of TVSPs.

MINISTERIAL STAFF

In reply to **Mr KNOLL (Schubert)** (28 July 2016). (Estimates Committee B)

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): I am advised:

For a list of ministerial staff and salaries please refer to the Government Gazette.

Non ministerial appointments are as follows:

FTE	Classification
1.0	ASO8
0.8	ASO7
0.8	ASO6
1.0	ASO6
1.0	ASO6 Equivalent
0.8	ASO6
1.0	ASO5
1.0	ASO5
1.0	ASO4
1.0	ASO4
1.0	ASO4
1.0	ASO3
1.0	ASO2
1.0	ASO2
0.8	LEC5
1.0	TRA