

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 18 June 2020

The **SPEAKER (Hon. V.A. Tarzia)** took the chair at 11:01 and read prayers.

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

Matter of Privilege

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE, SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

The SPEAKER (11:02): Before I call Mr Clerk, I rise in relation to the matter of privilege that was respectfully raised in regard to the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government on bus stops. I make the following statement with regard to the matter of privilege raised by the member for West Torrens in this house yesterday. Before addressing that matter, I wish to outline the significance of privilege as it relates to this house and also its members. It is not a device by which members, or any other person for that matter, can seek to pursue matters that can be addressed by debate or settled by the vote of the house on a substantive motion.

As I have referred to on a number of occasions, McGee in *Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand* in my view 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'. Generally speaking, any act or omission which obstructs or impedes the house in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any member or officer of such house in the discharge of his or her duty, or which has a tendency, either directly or indirectly, to produce such a result, may be treated as a contempt and therefore be considered a matter of privilege, even though there is no precedent of the offence.

I now refer to the matter at hand. I refer to the matter raised by the member for West Torrens in relation to an answer given by the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government to a question in the house on 17 June, where the member for West Torrens alleges that the minister has deliberately and intentionally misled the house. More specifically, the member for West Torrens asked the following question of the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government. He asked:

Where is it publicly available a list of all the bus stops being removed by this government?

The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government provided the following response to the question:

It is clear that they haven't looked at the Adelaide Metro website, which clearly shows where the route changes are being undertaken.

He goes on:

What they are now trying to say is that, under the redesigned routes—where those routes go—they are now trying to ask a question about whether or not there are changes to any of those bus stops. All they need to do is click on adelaidemetro.com.au, head down to the frequently asked questions section—because these questions get frequently asked—and in there it says that all of the stops on existing and redesigned routes are going to be maintained. So, where there are changes, those are clearly highlighted in those redesigned maps, and it provides that information to South Australians.

The member for West Torrens alleges that the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government has misled the house, as: 'The opposition has searched the government website for any list of bus stops slated for closure as a result of the government's policy announcement last Saturday, and no such list exists on any publicly available government website.'

I have had the opportunity now to carefully read the minister's response. The minister goes to some length to indicate how information is presented on the Adelaide Metro website concerning the changes to bus routes and bus stops. I cannot, however, find anywhere in the minister's answer where he indicates exactly the existence of a list of bus stops set for closure.

While the minister's answer does not accord with the specific information request of the member for West Torrens, there is nothing that has been brought to my attention to suggest that the minister informed the house that the information sought by the opposition, namely, a list exactly of bus stops set for closure, was publicly available on the government website.

So, therefore, in the Chair's opinion that is not a matter of privilege for the reason I set out above. Accordingly, I do not propose to give the precedence which would enable any member to pursue this matter immediately as a matter of privilege. However, I make it very clear to members, respectfully, my opinion does not prevent any member from pursuing this matter by way of substantive motion, if it is the will of the house to do so.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: JOHN PIRIE SECONDARY SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:07): I move:

That the 83rd report of the committee for the Fifty-Fourth Parliament, entitled John Pirie Secondary School Redevelopment Project, be noted.

John Pirie Secondary School is located, Mr Speaker, as you well know, in Mary Elie St in Port Pirie in the Port Pirie Regional Council. The secondary school was selected as a pilot school, offering year 7 into high school in 2020. As a consequence, the school now provides for year 7 to year 12. The Department for Education has advised that John Pirie Secondary School delivers specialist programs, including music excellence, which provides a variety of opportunities in the performing arts.

John Pirie Secondary School was allocated funding of \$10 million as part of the Department for Education's capital works program. The Department for Education allocated further funding of \$5 million for the provision of a new secondary school education class in April 2020. As a result, the total project funding for the redevelopment at John Pirie is now \$10.5 million.

Capital works are required at the school to accommodate the expected growth in student enrolment numbers, which includes the transition of year 7 students to high school. There is also additional accommodation on the school site. It requires demolition and existing spaces require refurbishment.

The redevelopment project will be staged and construction is expected to be completed in October 2021. The committee examined evidence in relation to the project and received assurances that the appropriate consultation had been undertaken. The committee is satisfied that the proposal has been subject to the appropriate agency consultation and also meets the criteria for the examination of projects set out in the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991.

Based on the evidence presented, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee recommends to parliament the scope of the proposed public works.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome) (11:09): I would also like to speak on this redevelopment and pay tribute to the 2017 education department capital works program, where it was first mooted. I thank the previous minister, the Hon. Susan Close at that particular stage, and I thank the current minister, the Hon. John Gardner, for allowing this project to continue on through the process. I was not able to attend the Public Works Committee due to COVID-19, but I certainly thank them for putting this through the process.

This school has had a great transformation over the last few years. Some of the buildings to be replaced under this \$10.6 million project were transportable buildings that were there when I attended the school, and that is many years ago. That is how long this project has taken and the sorts of buildings the students of Port Pirie have had to contend with over many years. It is good to see that those buildings will now be removed from the site, providing better opportunities for not only the students but also the teachers.

Over many years, the school has had a bad reputation, until the last few years, when Roger Nottage, the current principal, came in from Port Broughton Area School. The transformation of the image of that school has improved dramatically, not only the aesthetics and the image from the

outside but also the attitude and confidence of the students and the people who send their young kids to the school.

This school will now be a state-of-the-art teaching facility with a great STEM facility. As part of the redevelopment, they are going to convert the old power station—from a time when the Port Pirie city council had its own power supply before it went to ETSA—to a hall with seating that people from the arts will be able to use. You have to remember that in education everyone wants a different vocation going forward—some people want to go into acting and into the arts, and some want to go into music—and this facility will certainly provide an opportunity for kids who want to go in that direction.

There are many children in our state who may have issues, whether it is a health or behavioural issue or not being able to concentrate or attend mainstream classes. The school has a FLO program, which allows children who have trouble attending school because of their social background or whatever it may be, to be taken aside, put through another program and tutored basically on an individual basis. Those children are now excelling.

I know that for a fact because some parents have come to my office and indicated that their children or grandchildren had issues attending school because of behavioural issues and things like that, and, to the school's credit, they transformed those children to be able to come into the mainstream and gave them opportunities to enter the workforce. I could name five or maybe eight of those children straightaway (but I will not do that) who have gone through this process and been able to get work in the outside world, and I think that is very good.

Education is one of those things that some people take for granted. I did not have the opportunity to go any further than year 10 because of circumstances with my parents and things like that. Certainly, I want our children, no matter where they are, to have the best teaching facilities, the best opportunities and the best teachers in order to give them an opportunity because our world is changing dramatically. It is changing rapidly, and we need to make certain those opportunities are there.

Again, I am very honoured to be the local member and also to have been part of the transformation of this school, working with the education department—with not only the current principal but previous principals—and with the community up there to make certain that the John Pirie Secondary School is renowned for its ability and the students going through the school.

The minister was there for the STEM opening, and we did an experiment (and I am not too sure whether or not minister Gardner was trying to get rid of me) where it looked as though you were blowing flames out of your mouth and we took a photograph of it. It was certainly something I was very hesitant to do, and I asked the minister to go first. He said, 'No, you will go first, just in case there is an issue,' so I was the guinea pig.

We certainly had a good time there, and I am sure the minister would agree with me that the behaviour, the attitude and the appearance of the students and the surrounds of the school were first class. Again, I thank everybody involved—the previous government and this government—for allowing this to go through. I am indebted to the Public Works Committee for finally approving it, and I am looking forward to the future direction of those kids and the success of the students attending the school.

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart—Minister for Energy and Mining)
(11:15): It is a pleasure to rise in support of the motion from the Chair of the Public Works Committee, and I certainly agree with the member for Frome entirely that children are the future and probably one of the most important things in the world. It seems like a big statement, but I think it is absolutely true.

I do have a slightly different opinion from his of the John Pirie Secondary School over recent years. He said that it had a bad reputation, which recovered. My impression of the school has actually been very positive. I worked in Port Pirie for three years before joining parliament, and in fact I had the pleasure of visiting the school when I was doing tourism work through the Southern Flinders Ranges and in Port Pirie.

It was absolutely fantastic to be invited by the school to come and talk to one of their year groups—I think it was a year 11 group—when they were investigating career opportunities and that sort of thing, and to talk about tourism, the incredible opportunities that exist in tourism not only for people who might want to work in it but also for the region. That memory came back to me very positively last Thursday when I was in Port Pirie visiting the smelter.

There is a lot of good stuff happening in Port Pirie. It is fantastic that our government has been able to provide \$15 million, in the \$10 million plus the \$5 million, which the Chair of the Public Works Committee mentioned just a while ago. This is a tremendous school that is becoming better and better under a Marshall government.

Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (11:17): I also rise to speak on the 83rd report of the Public Works Committee regarding the John Pirie Secondary School redevelopment. As a committee, it was certainly one we went through in detail, and it was very enlightening to see the benefits that this redevelopment will have. It is a good use of South Australian taxpayer funds.

The John Pirie Secondary School is located, as the member Frome said, in Port Pirie, and it is in the Port Pirie Regional Council area. Interestingly for the committee, this school was selected as one of the pilot schools that is going to offer year 7 into high school in 2020. Certainly, something that as a committee we are very interested in with many of these school upgrades is how the introduction of year 7 is going to be catered for, and I would say that in this case, and in all the cases we have look at, it is very well.

As a general commentary, it is really exciting that our state will be catching up with the rest of Australia in terms of bringing our year 7s into the secondary forum, allowing them to grow their education, which will have long-term benefits for our state. Year 7 students across the state will be at secondary school from 2022 and, of course, they will graduate from school towards the end of the decade, and that will certainly bear fruit in terms of the output and the productivity of our population.

That is an important initiative of this Marshall Liberal government, and we are here as a committee to see that it is supported so that South Australia can grow as we move into advanced manufacturing and the like. Advanced manufacturing will be very important for us going forward. The member for Frome talked about the STEM facilities that are available, and that is going to be important again for us going forward—to make sure we skill up our students to handle what will be a changing workplace for them when they graduate.

The school itself provides a variety of options, not only STEM but also work in the performing arts. We were interested in that, and I will get onto that going forward in this contribution, and how that is catered for. To provide for this, funding of \$10 million was allocated as part of the capital works program from the education departments. Overall, in terms of the school itself, the committee was interested in the 665 enrolments based on February 2020. Going forward, the school is projected to have an enrolment capacity of 800 places by 2022, to be able to cope with not only the introduction of year 7 students but also the natural growth in the area.

In terms of what the redevelopment will look to do, it will construct a single-storey building, which will provide general learning areas, a science laboratory, teacher preparation and undercover outdoor learning areas, which are certainly very important. There will be construction of a single-storey building that will provide general learning areas, service learning areas, teacher preparation, as I said, and also refurbishment and extension to the Powerhouse Theatre, providing a performing arts learning area, rehearsal rooms and storage area.

That is certainly well received. Not all schools have performing arts centres, but they really do help schools that have them. It gives a boost to those students, as others have mentioned previously, who are interested in the arts as a vocation going forward. In this proposal there is also refurbishment of some buildings. Building 26 has been refurbished to accommodate new special options. Classes will provide for teacher preparation, which is very important. Teachers can prepare and at the same time have oversight of the students themselves. It also includes a kitchen, a laundry facility, a sensory room and landscaping.

Also, there was some demolition. As part of this footprint there were some aged buildings—buildings 9 and 10, so quite a few buildings there. Some of the demolished buildings were up to

350 square metres. They have been replaced with a new building of 1,360 square metres. It is a really big footprint that will provide for the students and their learning.

In terms of the key outcomes that this redevelopment will hopefully deliver, it will provide contemporary learning areas that will consider and support a 21st century learning pedagogy. As a committee, when we speak with education department staff we talk about the flexibility of these buildings not only in current teaching pedagogies but also, potentially, for what could occur down the track, so that we are not building a building that is great for now but then find, as teaching methodologies change, they are no longer suitable.

The committee has seen previous cases of such projects. In Nuriootpa, there was a building that, at the time, was open space and subsequently had shortcomings and was required to be redesigned. We are very keen on making sure that, where we are spending this money, we get bang for buck in terms of the taxpayer.

As to other outcomes, they are looking to develop creative, flexible learning spaces to enhance student engagement and allow collaborative teaching practices. I must say that in my electorate, with some of the STEM facilities, students really thrive in these new facilities and take great pride in them as well. Previous members talked about buildings that have been demolished in the John Pirie Secondary School, which has been around for many years. We will not say how many, but certainly the students see that, and many students have stepped where they are stepping, but now they will be in buildings that they are the custodians of. It can be a new start for them as well.

In terms of the culture, it is a set-up that has improved markedly in the last two years, and this will further highlight that. I know the students take great pride in it and keep it clean, and I think that goes towards their learning as well. Other outcomes include providing spaces to support the transition of year 7 students to high school. Of course, you still have a big range, so the year 7s, the 12 year olds, are dealing with the 18-year-old year 12s, and of course much bigger units. We still have to be mindful of the middle-school years—that those students have their space to fill with their peers and are not overwhelmed by the bigger bodies who are the seniors of the school.

Another outcome will be replacing aged buildings with new, efficient facilities. In terms of energy efficiency, the committee also likes to look at building designs and whether they will provide for electricity and water usage that is efficient. Also, how does landscaping interact with the school? Is there sufficient shade, not only around the buildings but in the nearby surrounds, so that the students themselves can not only enjoy the new buildings but also spend quality time outdoors with their mates?

I will finish off by touching on the cost. As I mentioned, it is \$10.5 million. Of that, \$500,000 is for the commissioning by the Department for Education. Most of it, about \$8.3 million, is for the actual building itself, with a contingency of \$416,000. Finally, fees and project costs are \$1.2 million. I should mention that the committee certainly does home in on the project costs and fees, because that is money that could otherwise be spent on the building.

The committee makes sure that there is good management to ensure that the building is well built and the actual project is delivered on time, that they are as tight as possible so that we are not wasting exorbitant amounts of money on consultants but, rather, spending our money on buildings that then have a long-term and sustained impact on our students as we go forward.

In summary, the committee examined evidence in relation to the John Pirie Secondary School redevelopment, and, based upon that evidence, reports to parliament that it recommends that the proposed public works go ahead.

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:27): I wish to acknowledge and thank the member for Frome, the member for Stuart and the member for Morphett. The member for Frome is closely familiar with this project, and we certainly apologise that he was not able to be present during the hearing, coronavirus restrictions preventing him being there. Of course, others were present as well, but we know that he is a strong contributor and a very strong advocate for the project.

The scope of public works in relation to this project has of course been identified by the member for Frome and the member for Morphett. It was very useful and illuminating to hear from the member for Frome of the age of the buildings and his familiarity with the school, and also about the

work of Roger Nottage, whose substantial contribution to education in Port Pirie has been felt keenly, as I understand it. We are very grateful for that contribution; we appreciate it very much. As members will know, my own parents were schoolteachers. May I say, too, that we very much appreciated the safe commitment to the science project the member for Frome related to us. It is some time, even in my own case, since I was subject to such risks, but these were safely negotiated by the member for Frome.

I also appreciate the contribution from the member for Stuart, who is equally familiar with the school—so familiar that his work in the district has been of substantial interest to the school community. I know they are very grateful for his willingness to attend at the school and provide guidance to students who would want to make a contribution to or to work in tourism. I am sure they are also appreciative of the member's capacity to provide some guidance, not just in relation to that industry but also in relation to opportunities in the region more generally, a region with which he is very closely familiar. He is also a very substantial advocate for the school and of course for other schools throughout the district.

May I say that I am particularly thankful, too, to the member for Morphett, who is the deputy chair of the Public Works Committee. On his shoulders falls the additional burden of being the engineer present amongst others who depend on his knowledge, skill and experience. In a very self-effacing, humorous and gentle way, he is able to supply us with the knowledge that, at times, we lack. We are all his students as a result and we are particularly grateful for that.

As deputy chair, he also detailed the scope of public works that will be undertaken at this site. That scope of works is quite substantial: the construction of a single-storey building, providing general learning areas; undercover outdoor learning areas; the construction of additional buildings; and, of course, as the member for Frome and the member for Morphett detailed, the refurbishment and extension of the Powerhouse Theatre, which is described rather briefly as 'building 2', but which will ultimately provide a performing arts and learning area, rehearsal rooms, storage spaces and, equally, I understand, member for Frome, an office and amenities, as you well know.

The scope of works also includes the refurbishment of building 26 to accommodate a new special options class, providing teacher preparation areas, a kitchen, laundry facilities, a sensory room, additional amenities and additional secure sensory landscape, and, of course, the demolition of ageing buildings 9, 10, 19, 20, 21 and 23 in the construction of a new staff car park adjacent to the school oval, as the member for Frome knows. When complete, as the member for Morphett mentioned, the enrolment capacity at John Pirie Secondary School will be 800 places by 2022.

As was made plain by the member for Morphett, the Public Works Committee recommends the scope of the proposed public works, and it is also right to say that we benefit greatly as a committee from the analysis, contribution and insight of the member for Davenport. We are particularly well served by his focus on and attention to financial matters and are very grateful for his experience and management skills in that regard.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: WOODVILLE HIGH SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:32): I move:

That the 84th report of the committee for the Fifty-Fourth Parliament, entitled Woodville High School Redevelopment Project, be noted.

Woodville High School is located on Actil Avenue, St Clair, within the City of Charles Sturt. The high school requires capital works to accommodate up to 1,300 students on the existing high school site. This includes catering for the transition of year 7 students to high school in 2022. It certainly was a pleasure to hear from witnesses in relation to this project and take the benefit of their knowledge and experience.

Woodville High School was allocated \$10 million as part of the Department for Education's capital works program. The proposed redevelopment will include a combination of new works, the refurbishment of existing facilities and the demolition of ageing buildings on the existing school site. Specifically, the project scope includes:

- the construction of a new building to accommodate food technology and vocational education and training. Kitchen and horticulture facilities will be provided as part of that construction program;
- the construction of a new physical education building to accommodate general learning areas, teacher preparation areas, storage and change rooms;
- the refurbishment of a vocational education and training centre kitchen to convert it to a general learning area;
- the refurbishment of male student amenities to create new unisex and disability access compliant amenities;
- the refurbishment of the visual arts facility to provide flexible learning spaces opening to an existing courtyard; and
- external landscaping, redevelopment of the horticultural garden and new car parking.

As I mentioned, there is quite a substantial scope of works on the extant site.

Construction for the Woodville High School Redevelopment Project is expected to be complete by September 2021. In the course of its inquiry, the committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to this project and received assurances that the appropriate agency consultation in relation to this project had been undertaken. In consequence of that examination, the committee was satisfied the proposal had been subject to appropriate agency consultation and also meets the criteria for the examination of projects that, as you well know, Mr Speaker, are set out in the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991.

Having regard to the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed scope of works.

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11:35): I rise to speak briefly to acknowledge the importance of Woodville High School. Although it is not in my electorate, it is not terribly far away. Given the specialisation that it offers in music, a number of students from my electorate attend the school on the basis of their talent in music. It is one of four music schools in the public system.

Incidentally, I recall that, as minister, probably in the final year before the election there was a magnificent concert that was held to celebrate 40 years of the four specialist music schools. Playford International, which is the school to be discussed next, I believe, Woodville, Brighton and Marryatville all came together to perform separately and combined in an extraordinary evening of talent. I believe that the Hon. Don Hopgood attended the event, having been involved in the decision to establish such a program 40 years ago.

Woodville High School is a school of extraordinary merit. It also has a high proportion of Aboriginal students, not simply Aboriginal students who are located in the Woodville area but also specifically children who come down from the APY lands and attend a program at Woodville High School. It is therefore one of those schools that caters to a range of specialisations and, at the same time, responds to the needs of all students, as is consistent with all public schools—the extraordinary balance between specialising to provide the stretch that is required and expected for students who are highly talented or highly specialised and the breadth to make sure that every single child, regardless of ability, is able to get a good and high-quality education that reflects who they are.

Woodville High School, in this case, is being discussed in the context of a development. I was pleased to hear some of the details of the development when the work went to the Public Works Committee. I must say that they will use that money that was allocated by the previous Labor government very sensibly in order to make Woodville continue to be a school of growth and of achievement. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to speak briefly in support of the public works project to acknowledge the excellence of that school.

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:38): I acknowledge, thank and appreciate very much the comments of the member for Port Adelaide in her contribution to the debate but equally her

contribution to education over many years, including before, of course, she entered this place. I recommend the report to parliament.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: PLAYFORD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE REDEVELOPMENT

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:39): I move:

That the 85th report of the committee for the Fifty-Fourth Parliament, entitled Playford International College Redevelopment Project, be noted.

Playford International College is located, as you will know, Mr Speaker, on Philip Highway, Elizabeth, in the City of Playford. The Department for Education has advised that the Playford International College focuses on music, sport, language and performing arts and offers vocational education and training pathways.

Playford International College was allocated funding of \$3 million as part of the Department for Education's capital works program. This funding allocation was confirmed, with further funding announced in February 2019, bringing the total project funding from \$3 million to \$15.6 million. Playford International College requires works to provide the capacity to accommodate 1,500 students at the site and this will support expected future enrolment growth, including the transition of year 7 students to high school in 2022.

Aged infrastructure will be replaced with newer facilities. Specifically, the proposed scope of public works for the project includes construction of a new wellbeing centre, incorporating an extension upgrade of part of the grounds floor; construction of a new mathematics and numeracy centre, incorporating an additional extension and upgrade to that part of the facility; construction of a new technology centre, which will also see an extension; and an upgrade and extension to the visual arts centre comprising the first floor over the new technology centre.

There is also the extension of the existing hospitality and function centre and the redevelopment of the courtyard between the new mathematics and numeracy centre and the existing science labs. There will also be the need to construct a new link bridge. It is clear that there will be capacity to provide an outdoor learning area. These buildings will be earthquake resistant, which was of some interest to the committee. Demolition of aged relocation buildings will also take place.

The committee has taken quite an interest in not only seismology matters, which we were not particularly familiar with in relation to this or other projects, but also geological matters, including the costs associated with various clay and soil types across Adelaide. I must say that evidence has been of some use to the committee and also of great interest to me and, I am sure, to the member for West Torrens.

When complete, the project will deliver additional accommodation on the site to support the transition of year 7 students to high school and local population growth. The project will be staged and construction is expected to be complete by December 2021. The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to this project and received assurances that the appropriate consultation in relation to the project had been undertaken.

The committee is satisfied that the proposal has been subject to the appropriate agency consultation and meets the criteria for the examination of projects as described in the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991. Based on the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the scope of the proposed public works.

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:42): I rise to speak briefly on this report from the Public Works Committee. I must say that I have not yet read this report, but I do intend to read it soon. I am going to take particular interest in the seismological information contained therein. I think I have lived within two kilometres of that school for most of my life and I do not recall an earthquake of any particular magnitude that would require such an extensive seismological report, but I look forward to reading it. I am glad these buildings are futureproofed in such a way.

I do want to thank the Public Works Committee for the report. While the former minister is in the chamber—as unparliamentary as it is to refer to that fact—I want to thank her for her interest in

this particular school and, of course, in the current minister's continuation of that work. This is my old school; specifically, it is my old campus. Two schools were melded into one and that was the other campus, so I did not actually attend that site, but it was my old school and I have taken a particular interest in it. The school has been in my electorate since I was elected and I am on the governing council, so I have taken a particular interest in it.

It is fair to say that the school exists in an area of considerable disadvantage and it hosts a cohort of students who are, in various ways, subject to certain sorts of disadvantage. This has always been recognised, ever since I went to the school, but it was particularly recognised by the incoming principal, Mr Rob Knight, in 2015, and I want to pay tribute here to his work and his advocacy on behalf of the students and the community of Elizabeth.

If memory serves me correctly, he came to the school in 2015, his first year at that school, and very soon after that, after his assessment of the school and its community and what that community needed, he basically sat me down—not just me, but members of the Economic and Finance Committee as well on another occasion, and I think also the then minister—and said (and I am paraphrasing) that we were doing these students a disservice, that we would be better off closing the school, spending the money we are currently spending on the school and just farming them out to other schools.

He said that the way the school was structured and the amount of funding it was getting, and had been getting in the past, was not sufficient to give the students an adequate education and that we were doing them a disservice. He made no bones about it. Although, of course, I was aware of the disadvantage, that shocked even me. I had conversations with the then minister about it, and was pleased that in the 2015 budget there was a considerable increase in funding, both for capital works and for STEM, as well as for the program Rob Knight set out.

I am not aware of how it has been taken on in other schools, but he took a groundbreaking approach to teaching in that school, in terms of changing the way the school day was structured for various students, scrapping the way year levels were so tightly controlled into age groups and having later starting for some students recognising that teenagers operate on a slightly different timescale from some of us. There were all sorts of radical changes he has slowly been implementing since 2015 with some considerable success.

I want to pay tribute to Rob Knight and to the school council. They have done an excellent job. I lose track of some of these projects—there are so many things going on at that school—and to my shame, and because of the coronavirus, I have not been able to visit or attend a governing council meeting this year, but I want to pay tribute to them. I hope that the investment the previous government made in this school continues, and I know that Rob Knight will continue to advocate on behalf of that school community. I commend this report to the house.

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:47): I appreciate very much the member for Elizabeth's contribution and his obvious passion and commitment to the school community. I also recognise that he is a former student who is not only familiar with the school's current operations and needs but who, as a result, equally has a very good longitudinal view as to what has occurred at the site over time.

I also amplify and emphasise the comments that the member for Elizabeth has made to recognise the contribution of Rob Knight to the school, his commitment, knowledge and passion for education, his belief in the value of education and its ability to transform lives and lift horizons. I also recognise the school council and their belief in the school and its students.

As I earlier mentioned, as the child of two schoolteachers who taught in a variety of schools over many years I, too, fundamentally believe in the value of education and educational investment. I am very pleased that I am able to recommend the scope of the proposed public works to the parliament.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: OCEAN VIEW P-12 COLLEGE REDEVELOPMENT

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:48): I move:

That the 86th report of the committee for the Fifty-Fourth Parliament, entitled Ocean View P-12 College Redevelopment Project, be noted.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your indulgence in continuing to abide my comments. We are certainly making a lengthy contribution here for the public works, and we are very proud of the reports we are bringing before you today.

As you will know, Mr Speaker, Ocean View College is located on Gedville Road at Taperoo in the City of Port Adelaide Enfield. The Department for Education has advised that the college community includes students from a range of backgrounds and nationalities, including a significant Indigenous cohort.

The college requires capital works to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate 800 students, and this additional capacity will cater for expected future enrolment growth, including the transition of year 7 students into high school in 2022. Ocean View P-12 College was allocated funding of \$5 million as part of the Department for Education's capital works program, and the redevelopment will consist of demolition, new works and refurbishment of existing facilities to accommodate up to 800 students on the extant site.

The proposed scope of works for the college redevelopment project includes the construction of a new performing arts facility, with learning areas for drama, music and art; the decommissioning of the student amenities and refurbishment of the teacher preparation areas to incorporate art labs and multimedia; the refurbishment of the student withdrawal area; landscaping of the southern entrance to the school; an upgraded car park; and demolition of aged buildings. Construction is expected to be completed by July 2021.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to this project, and received assurances that the appropriate consultation in relation to this project had been undertaken. The committee is satisfied that the proposal has been subject to the appropriate agency consultation and meets the criteria for the examination of projects as described in the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991. Having regard to the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the scope of the public works that I have described.

Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11:51): I rise to speak briefly about the school, given that it is in my electorate. Beautiful Ocean View College: once the location of Taperoo high and then, with the closure of the primary school, one of the early superschools, the merger many years ago to create Ocean View College. It is an extraordinary privilege each year (and I am assuming that it will be happening later this year) for me to go to their year 12 graduation. It is the first of the graduations in the electorate's schools for me to attend each year, and it is one of the warmest and most joyous of those occasions.

The pride the community shows in their young people graduating and completing school is an absolute delight to be a part of. I am very pleased to hear about the money that was previously allocated being now refined into a project. It was very heartening to see how successful the STEM project was previously: it looks wonderful, it is being used brilliantly under the stewardship of the principal and the governing council, and now to have that additional money that was previously allocated under the Labor government to be able to continue to improve the facilities available at the school is extremely welcome. I therefore wholeheartedly support this report.

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:52): I recognise, appreciate and thank the member for Port Adelaide for her contribution, enthusiasm for and commitment to this school community, but equally her commitment to education long before she entered this place. It was very interesting to hear of her enthusiasm for year 12 graduations at the school, and the warm and very joyous environment that exists on that occasion, and the belief and commitment of the whole school community in what is occurring at the school. I also appreciated her reflections on earlier STEM works at the site. I have no hesitation in recommending this project to parliament.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: VICTOR HARBOR R-7 SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:53): I move:

That the 87th report of the committee for the Fifty-Fourth Parliament, entitled Victor Harbor R-7 School Redevelopment Project, be noted.

Victor Harbor R-7 School is located on The Parkway, Victor Harbor, within the City of Victor Harbor. The R-7 school currently provides a primary school curriculum to students from reception through to year 7 and also includes a special education unit catering for students with moderate to severe disabilities.

The proposed redevelopment will provide sufficient capacity to accommodate 730 students on the site, and the school was allocated funding of \$5 million as part of the Department for Education's capital works program. The proposed redevelopment will consist of demolition, new works and the refurbishment of existing facilities on the school site and, as mentioned, there will be capacity to accommodate additional students on the extant site.

The proposed scope for the Victor Harbor R-7 School redevelopment project includes construction of a new single-storey learning centre, incorporating general learning areas; a computer workshop; a science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM) learning area; breakout spaces; and staff preparation areas. It will also include the replacement of roofs, gutters, downpipes, ceilings and lighting, and the replacement of a covered walkway and covered outdoor learning area and, equally, general landscaping and paving. The proposed redevelopment works will be staged, with the construction expected to be completed by August 2021.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the project and received assurances that the appropriate consultation in relation to this project had been undertaken. The committee is satisfied that the proposal has been subject to the appropriate agency consultation and meets the criteria for the examination of projects as described in the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991. Based on the evidence considered, and pursuant to section 12C of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the Public Works Committee reports to parliament that it recommends the proposed public works.

It would be remiss of me not to add that we are very grateful for the member for Finniss' commitment, passion and dedication to this project and to seeing it through.

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (11:56): I thank the member for Kavel for his kind words about the Victor Harbor R-7 School. I have the privilege of having numerous schools in my electorate, with I think seven in total. Interestingly, I have had immediate family attend or are attending six of those schools in the electorate in my lifetime. It is quite interesting to have a connection to all of them.

The site of the Victor Harbor R-7 School was relocated back in the late 1980s. The previous site is where the current Woolworths complex is, behind what is now the Target store in that complex, and the old school building that sits on that site is alongside the service station and the Kentucky Fried Chicken business. Interestingly, that occurred when my wife, Kate, was in her final year of primary school at the school. She was one of those lucky students to experience both campuses.

The new site for the school is not right in the centre of town like the old one, but not far—on a beautiful site on the banks of the river. These improvements to the school are very important and allow the school to deliver for the students and the people of Finniss.

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (11:58): I recognise the member for Finniss' connection to the school and all present here very much enjoyed hearing about his wife Kate's attendance at the school as well and the historical uses for the site, which we of course would not know about without the benefit of evidence from a bona fide local. We appreciate very much hearing that detail.

It is extraordinary, I think, to have a connection to almost every school in an electorate. There would be few of us in this place who could claim that to be the case. It stands the member in extraordinarily good stead to have an instant knowledge and recall of those sites when, of course inevitably and quite rightly, constituents approach him seeking advice and guidance in relation to many matters, not just education but transport, road safety and other issues that come up in and around school sites, which are raised with all of us in this place.

Can I say, too, at the end of my contribution, in this hour, how grateful we are to our committee officers. There are a substantial number of reports that are necessary now to prepare in order to see through a public works program. We are very grateful for the work of our committee

officers. They are diligent, uncomplaining and very talented, and they serve us and South Australians well.

Motion carried.

Bills

FAIR TRADING (FUEL PRICING INFORMATION) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 17 June 2020.)

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (12:00): I am pleased to have the chance to rise to make some remarks in support of the Fair Trading (Fuel Pricing Information) Amendment Bill 2020 setting out, as it does, the structure under which regulations would be put in place for real-time fuel price monitoring in this state. This is another good outcome in the early days of this Marshall Liberal government.

Consistent with what we have now seen as a pattern of behaviour by the government, it is driven by the merits and an appropriate inquiry into comparative schemes and in the light of advice as to the extent of benefits that will accrue to members of the community who are buying fuel in this state. That has come to the government more specifically in the form of the Productivity Commission report.

The commission completed its work in March and provided that report for the government's consideration and that has led then promptly to this response, providing as it does for real-time price monitoring. The Productivity Commission report tells us some important things that I think are important to bear in mind in the context of this debate, particularly where we have heard about alternative schemes in some contribution from the member for Florey primarily and her crossbench colleagues, as well as some observation from the opposition.

The evidence is mixed, according to the Productivity Commission, about the nature and extent of the benefits that will accrue, so there is an element of caution in the Productivity Commission's work. However, there is an indication that by implementing a fuel price monitoring scheme we can anticipate that there will be benefits in the order of \$3 million to \$8 million accruing to South Australian purchasers of fuel. So that is good news and the implementation of the scheme in due course will tell the story.

Of course, South Australians will not be surprised to see that a good government will not be persisting in any arrangement that would have any tendency to increase fuel prices on the contrary. So we will see what that brings over the course of the proposed two-year trial. I say that to the member for Florey, the opposition, and those who have considered this matter, very much with a view to ensuring good consumer outcomes, because there is a deal of compare and contrast that needs to happen in the context of this debate.

In this respect, I highlight, just as a matter of principle to start with, what is really very clear and is clear in a whole range of walks of life that we experience, particularly in public affairs: information is key both to getting to grips with the merits of an argument and also to ensuring that markets can be as competitive as possible and that those who require the factual information can then act on it. It is something that the Productivity Commission adverted to as well. It said, 'Benefits will accrue, provided that the information is available to the purchasers of fuel and they choose to act on it.' The proof is going to be in the pudding. They are provided with information, they act on it and we can expect to see some benefit accrue.

Information is at the core of all of this: information, transparency and the real-time provision of it to purchasers of fuel. I will say one more thing in this regard, because it reminds me of the journey we have been on in relation to developments in technology over time. The use of technology as a disseminator of factual information is something that we all now take for granted. My children have grown up in a world where if you want to get your hands on a fact you just ask Siri or Google Search and off you go, and you assume that you can get access to the facts.

That is obviously not the elixir for all purposes, but we know that the technology permits the very rapid dissemination of information, and we also know that people take up and use technology where they find it useful. This scheme will facilitate participation by app developers in the market who would assist consumers to get hold of the information that will be brought together in the course of putting the scheme on.

I reflect as well on the necessarily organic nature of that. I remember, back in the mid-1990s, the advent of what we now routinely describe as text messages on a range of platforms. It was initiated in what was called a short message service, and it happened to be incidental to the provision of digital handsets. It is my understanding that all the telecommunications providers at the time were surprised that the short message service got such rapid take-up and that people found it so useful.

SMS became a commonly used aspect of that technology, so much so that people are more likely to engage with each other routinely through the day by means of text on a variety of platforms these days, and the younger generation is far more likely to do so than to take up each other's time talking to each other on the traditional handset. The use of technology to disseminate information to then make sure that that is available to people has enormous benefits.

We know that once the facts are revealed a great deal of benefit can flow from that. That is what the government is going to embark on. I indicate that there is a bit to then contrast with what might be alternatively proposed. I will put this in terms of the critique of the contribution of the member for West Torrens, who had the last word yesterday evening on this matter. The member for West Torrens went out of his way to characterise what he described as the 'genius' of an alternative model that would involve a combination of price-fixing on the one hand and the acceptance of all of the risk by the retailer on the other hand—so a combination of price-fixing and the acceptance of risk.

All of us in the real world know that (1) as soon as you ask one party to accept all the risk in any transaction, they will tend to price that in and (2) wherever you impose a price fix on someone, again, you have imposed a barrier to the process, an artificial step that is at the very least likely to impact on the capacity for the price to be as low and as competitive as it can be.

The further trouble with the member for West Torrens' description of 'genius' in this case is that it would appear that he has not really taken a particularly close look, if at all, at what has been proposed in terms of this alternative scheme. In his contribution, he talked about how he had been persuaded of this 'genius', as he described it, the requirement to provide pricing information 24 hours in advance. He said this is genius because this is going to put 'immense pressure on retailers'. He said it will place 'all the risk on the retailers' and that that was something that he would prefer.

Then he embarked on a narrative around that. He said what would happen was, if they got it wrong—and the *Hansard* records this and, as always, I really invite close scrutiny of it; there is much to be found—and if the retailers make a mistake 'they are in serious jeopardy, and the only way they can go is down to match others'. He says that there is genius in that, and the reason that there is genius in it is that it stops bad things like collusion up. He says, 'If anything, it incentivises more downward pressure.'

This is the analysis of the member for West Torrens yesterday afternoon. I do not want to be too terribly unfair to him because he was urged, as I recall, by members on this side to perhaps have a look at the provisions in the alternative scheme that was proposed. I just do not think that he has done that because it would be more or less immediately apparent if he had done so that that is really not what the alternative scheme would be doing at all—in fact, the opposite.

There is a clue to that as early in the Objects that are proposed. I am conscious that we are not here to debate amendments in the course of the debate presently. There might be more to say in committee, but we see in the Objects of the alternative model to which, presumably, the member for West Torrens was adverting, that they include:

- (c) to mitigate negative impacts on consumers and the economy of the State as a result of fluctuating fuel prices;

So there is a clue. The alternative scheme is designed to stop fluctuation.

Then the member for West Torrens might have read on, as he was contemplating the level of genius involved, and he might have got to the proposed new section 45I, and in subsection (2) he

would have found that there is—and credit to the proponent, because no doubt the proponent has considered this matter—a requirement that the fuel retailer offering fuel for retail sale within what would be described as a fuel watch area, and I quote, 'must not increase or decrease the price at which fuel will be offered for retail sale', and, relevantly, 'for the period that the price is fixed', and that is broadly 24 hours under this alternative scheme.

So let's be under no illusions. The member for West Torrens, in talking about 'genius' yesterday in his contribution to the debate, might be presumed to form a different view entirely having had his attention drawn to what in fact an alternative model would provide for, because presumably the 'genius' really evaporates when one looks at the written word on the page, and there is the vice in the alternative model.

There is the vice, because by providing as it does for this combination of price-fixing—that is, both up and down—it does not provide the opportunity in fact for the retailer to match on the down side. It does not do that at all. What it does is that it sets about an artificial rigidity. It sets about a process under which the market is simply frozen from time to time, and this arbitrary period of 24 hours has been selected for that purpose, and whatever the merits of that are you are left with a clear comparison: on the one hand, the benefits of transparency coupled with rapid and broad dissemination for consumers to make of what they will and to enjoy the benefits to the extent that they apply the benefit of that factual information in real time; on the other hand, you have this price-fixing and passing of risk in its entirety to one party.

We can proceed to have a debate about the ideology that might go along with that, but let's be under no illusions about what we are comparing, and it is very much contrary to what the member for West Torrens was endeavouring, I think, to praise the authors of the alternative scheme about, and that is unfortunate.

I stay with it for the reason that it also serves to highlight the basic difference between one scheme and another: one that sheds light and provides for transparency—and, as the cliché goes, provides that best disinfectant that sunshine often brings in these matters, and on the other hand you have this imposition of a heavy burden artificially to interfere with the process of the market.

It is apparent that it has been misunderstood by the member for West Torrens. I am certain that it has not been misunderstood by the member for Florey, and I very much appreciate the alternative view that the member for Florey brings and the debate about that—but this is what we are debating.

We know also from the Productivity Commission report that we have the benefit of some comparative experience in Queensland in this regard. We also know that in the course of the early days of rolling out this scheme, including the introduction of the aggregation of the basic data that the government will be needing to assemble for these purposes, there will be a role for Consumer and Business Services.

As I think I have already adverted to in the earlier part of my remarks, my understanding is that the government intends that this scheme be introduced at first for a period of two years, very much indicating at the outset that there will be no persisting with a scheme that does not demonstrate in the outcome what the Productivity Commission has told us are the potential benefits to consumers, because that is what it is all about. I commend the bill to the house.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee) (12:21): I seem to be in the habit of following the member for Heysen in making remarks on bills this week. I rise in this instance to make a contribution about the fuel watch bill—if I can put it like that—the Fair Trading (Fuel Pricing Information) Amendment Bill. This is not quite as extensive as the history of the freedom of information bill, which I was pleased to furnish the house with earlier this week, but this issue has a bit of a history as well.

The Hon. V.A. Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Apparently my contribution was gap-filled, hopefully not in recalling the history of the Liberal Movement in South Australia.

The Hon. V.A. Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Well, especially in that area. We look forward to further information about that. Of course, this bill has a bit of history as well because this was an issue which the then Liberal opposition campaigned about at the last state election. They committed to bringing in a scheme for fuel price monitoring, essentially, as I understood it, to try to give motorists better information about where better priced fuel was around the community and, in itself, there is not too much wrong with that really.

After the election, with the member for Bragg taking on the portfolio responsibility she has, as the name of the bill suggests, the responsibilities fell under a minister for, essentially consumer services, and we were surprised to hear in a ministerial statement given to this place that it seemed that fuel pricing was off because the government was not able to reach agreement with the RAA here in South Australia about what an effective model would be.

Of course, this was a disappointment to the RAA, who had been looking forward to the government making good on their election commitment and delivering a fuel price monitoring regime for the benefit of motorists in South Australia, and presumably a disappointment to all those who had taken the Liberal Party at their word that they would introduce a scheme.

This is not the juncture where I say, 'Enter the stage, the member for Florey,' because of course this had always been an issue that the member for Florey had been passionate about. After an extensive amount of work, research and investigation, she announced publicly her intention to bring a private member's bill to this place to make good on the commitment to South Australians, albeit given by the Liberals at the last election, to deliver a fuel price monitoring regime in South Australia. Well, didn't that suddenly get the wheels in motion for the government? We had the Premier hastily writing to the Productivity Commission seeking a comparison of models from around Australia and really trying to compare some of the benefits.

I think everybody was surprised that the Productivity Commission in their report basically failed to make a recommendation about one model over another, because there are different models. As we have heard members like the member for Heysen and the member for Florey and also, I understand, the member for Bragg outline to the house, there are different models in operation around the country.

There is quite an extensive amount of literature about how each model operates and what impact it is deemed to have on fuel prices in those jurisdictions. So it was a surprise that the Productivity Commission was unable to make a recommendation. If you turn your mind, though, to page 33 of the Productivity Commission's report, there is an analysis, a table, and assessment criteria of different models, and, through the rigorous statistical analysis of ticks, double-ticks or crosses, attempts to weigh up the differences between the—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: That would have taken a long time.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: That's right. Ticks are not as onerous to use as numerals. They are shorter in length and presumably more easily applied and, of course, more ambiguous in their context and meaning as well. Nonetheless, we see a minute difference between the two options when we get down to the second to last of the criteria of the Productivity Commission's analysis and that is criterion 6: 'Which option is cost-effective and efficient for industry?' Option 1 merely receives one tick on the scale of effectively one to three where three is a double-tick, two is one tick and presumably a cross is one. Option 1 is cost-effective for industry and option 2 is not cost-effective for industry.

It is my understanding that this bill basically goes with option 1 rather than option 2, and is that not a fascinating insight? Who are we doing this for? Who are we meant to be contemplating this for? Are we doing it for industry, which we can all admit is dominated by significant market players, or are we doing this for consumers? Are we investing our time and legislative efforts and authority into a scheme which is going to make life as easy as possible for consumers or are we making it as easy as possible for industry?

I would have thought, if you cast your mind back to the former Bannon government when they moved the Fair Trading Act in 1987, and before that when we had the former Dunstan government really be the first mover when it came to consumer legislation in Australia, that we would

be trying to do our best by consumers rather than those people who are extremely dominant market players, i.e. industry, as they are described in the Productivity Commission's report. If we remove that criterion, that one which is easiest for industry to navigate and adhere to, then it is pretty lineball, is it not? It is pretty lineball between the options according to the Productivity Commission's analysis.

We have had the member for Heysen point out that essentially we have a difference in model between what has been called 'real-time pricing' where I think there can be an opportunity to update prices every 30 minutes, or we have—and I know this is not the correct term—essentially once-in-a-day pricing where there is an opportunity once every 24 hours to update prices.

That is where members will have to make up their minds about which they think would be more beneficial, because how does the current fuel pricing regime here work in South Australia? Other than the obligation imposed by government for there to be a publication of prices closest to the road of a premises, showing the prices for a select number of fuel products, there is virtually no other regulation about how those prices must be set, displayed or advertised to the community.

So what we see is a disparity—sometimes a remarkable disparity—in fuel prices in roughly the same proximity across the state. Let me give some examples from the western suburbs. If you take the BP or On The Run service station at Largs Bay on Military Road, you could be reasonably sure that nearly every day of the week the fuel price advertised for unleaded would be somewhere between 25¢ and 30¢ a litre higher than the fuel price that is being advertised and offered at the Mobil service station on Semaphore Road at Semaphore, the next suburb down, which is a distance of about a kilometre away.

Despite there being two On The Runs very close to each other at the bottom half of the Lefevre Peninsula, if residents in the area want cheaper fuel they just go to Mobil, and you would hope that you timed your run best to make sure that you got the bottom of the price cycle at Mobil. If you head a little closer to the city, along Old Port Road, where there is a relatively new petrol station, you would see that there is another independent retailer—we call them 'independent' in comparison to On The Run—who you can be pretty sure is going to be somewhere between 20¢ and 30¢ cheaper per litre on most days of the week compared to the Caltex, which is on Port Road, getting closer up towards Woodville Road.

If you move over to Torrens Road, for example, it is the same thing. There is a Liberty close to Addison Road, opposite St Clair, which is usually remarkably cheaper even than the Mobil further towards the city on Torrens Road. Motorists have had to get used to the price disparities between companies, which is usually significant. Just as we see in the grocery market, it is usually the smaller players, usually independent owned, who do the best by the consumers compared to the Coles and Woolies that are so constantly feted by members opposite. It is the same in the fuel industry. It is up to motorists then to try to work out, when they see petrol prices change, whether or not it is in their interests to fill up.

I do not think it is unreasonable that we have a situation where we require all retailers to participate in a scheme, and in that scheme that they be asked to nominate their best price for a 24-hour period. They have to hope that their price in that 24-hour period is going to be attractive enough to get motorists to come through their stations, use their bowsers and go and buy their coffees, KitKats and whatever else they want to do when they are buying petrol, rather than have a regime that we are told is for the benefit of industry, which is real-time pricing. When we say 'for the benefit of industry', presumably these benefits accrue the bigger the industry player is.

For the sorts of disparities that I have just made reference to, quite often BP or On The Run servos are much more expensive than smaller Libertys or Mobils, for example, in the western suburbs. You would hope that having that once in a 24-hour period incentivises them, for the first time, to offer the lowest and best price they possibly can to attract motorists to their premises rather than their competitors' premises.

The alternative, which is what is being pushed by the government's bill, is that we have a regime where a market participant can go out with a price, they can have motorists come in under that price, they can check to see what their competitor's price is and think, 'Geez, I'm 5¢, 10¢, 20¢ or 30¢ a litre above them, I'd better drop it down.' That is terrific if you are thinking about the motorists who buy petrol after that subsequent price change is made, but it is not so good for those motorists

who have gone through and filled up under the initial price because they of course are paying too much. In terms of the mechanism failing motorists, that is a pretty good indication of why the government's model here is deficient.

I was interested to hear the member for Schubert—the socialist member opposite who carries, literally to his breast, a copy of Sir Thomas Playford's memoirs—recalling what Playford did when he was premier and led government here in South Australia. Any first-year economics student will tell you that information leads to economic efficiency—in principle, absolutely. I think we all agree here that some fuel time-monitoring regime will increase either the access to information or the quality of information, which will enable motorists to make a choice and pay less at the bowser. We all agree with that, and now we are just arguing about which model it should be: option 1 or option 2, as described by the Productivity Commission.

However, for consumers there is also a risk of too much information. You only have to look at a mobile phone contract, an electricity contract or another utility contract to realise that consumers can easily be put out when they are deluged with information, when they are hoodwinked by large market players with too much information that disables them from being able to make an accurate decision that will lead to them paying the cheapest rate possible for petrol.

It is my concern that having a real-time model, where prices can be updated on a regular basis, will put motorists at a similar disadvantage to what many people experience when they sign up for a mobile phone plan, bearing in mind that some years ago it required federal government intervention on mobile phone plans to make sure that they were offered a little bit more simply to try to help people decipher the jargon and the hidden costs.

I think it is reasonable to think that starting this regime out with a once in 24-hour model will encourage, if not require, people to put their best price forward for petrol. At the beginning of a 24-hour cycle, a motorist can look at all the information available in their local area, see who has offered the lowest price and visit that business. It will not take too long under that model for a proprietor of a petrol station to realise that if they do not put their best foot forward in offering a low price then they are likely to be undercut by their competition, likely not to be offering the lowest price and likely to lose motorists—and is that not what we want?

The other enormous financial commitment that most South Australians have to make is to housing. We have methods of sale here, whether it is by private treaty or by auction, where people are asked to put their best foot forward with the best possible price that they want to enter into the market with. Why is that so unpalatable here for the government when it comes to fuel?

I want to make a couple of other points before I finish. The stakes here for motorists are very significant. A 30 per cent disparity per litre in the price of unleaded is really significant. If you think that somebody might fill up the average family vehicle petrol tank, let's say of approximately 60 litres, that is an \$18 disparity. If you have to travel a reasonable amount of kilometres—and I know that there are many opposite me who would travel far more than a 60-litre tank per week would afford them to service their electorates and their communities, but if you take as a proxy a tank—if you have to suffer the burden of paying 30¢ a litre too much every week for a year, that is nearly \$1,000 that motorists are out of pocket.

We have over 1.7 million registered vehicles here in South Australia. That is not to say that there are 1.7 million cars that are getting around—some of them are trailers—but my understanding is that there are more than 1.2 million registered cars here in South Australia. It does not take too much maths to realise that, if you start working out the possible savings, even an average saving per motorist of a fuel price monitoring regime, and apply that across the motor vehicle fleet here in South Australia, we are talking about a significant proportion of state consumer spending and how that could be better redirected.

There are much better and further arguments that people can make about the composition of the fuel price, such as the fuel excise, for example, which is one of those terrific taxes that we were assured would be low, maybe even phased out one day, when it was first introduced and which for the past few decades has continued to escalate and increase. If we can do something about petrol prices, it should be this, and if we all agree that we are going to do something on this, then let's get the model right.

I do not think it is reasonable to make sure that we keep some information asymmetry going here, where the large players have the capacity to continue trying to game the pricing system and can continue to have access to real-time updates to befuddle motorists and to try to put themselves at an ongoing advantage over smaller retailers who genuinely want to lower prices. I think the once-in-the-day pricing model works, I think it is to the benefit of motorists and that is why the opposition will be supporting the member for Florey's amendments to this bill.

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (12:40): I rise to just make a few remarks in relation to this bill. Fuel pricing in my electorate is something that I would consider extremely stable. We do not see price fluctuations at service stations. There are eight crewed service stations in my electorate and there is also a ninth self-serve diesel 24-hour depot, and the pricing at all these services stations is relatively similar and there are very few fluctuations.

Intriguingly, as we saw the price of fuel drop in the last few months, with COVID and the world price of oil dropping significantly, we effectively saw that there have been two price changes in the last three months. The first change was about three months ago, where it dropped down to about \$1.40 at most if not all the service stations in my electorate. Then, about three or four weeks ago, we saw it drop down to about \$1.15, maybe \$1.11, or in that sort of range. Those prices sit there and stay there. They do not go up and they do not go down until there is a significant move again, I imagine, in the wholesale price that they are paying for the next load of their fuel.

The interesting thing about making the fuel price available for the consumer to see what is happening is whether that will lead to fuel pricing fluctuations in my electorate. Will they drive down to Seaford or Old Noarlunga and get petrol at a significantly lower price than they would be paying in Victor Harbor? I doubt they will.

We have seen at times over the last 20 years different service stations try to put those competitive pricings forward. They do not seem to last. No-one seems to follow them. They are more than happy to let that service station have the trade for a short period of time and then come back to them over time.

I do not see that this is going to make a huge fix or change to the pricing because I think there are also benefits with that stable price. When the price in Adelaide goes up to the highs of the moment around the \$1.30 mark, Victor Harbor through to Goolwa and Mount Compass do not and they still stay at that \$1.11 to \$1.15, so we see that stable price there. On the other end, we certainly do not see it drop down to prices around the 80¢ mark that we have seen in the Adelaide regions recently.

There is also the purely opportunistic nature for the residents of my community to drive to Adelaide for a purpose and, while they are in Adelaide, they may see the fuel price is significantly lower than down on the coast, so they choose to fill up. That is the opportunistic nature of it that is available there, but in very rare circumstances would it be of value to actually drive those extra kilometres to go and get that fuel. The hour minimum that is involved to actually drive that far, let alone the fuel to drive that far, would barely even cover \$18, as was mentioned previously. There is not the ability for that benefit to the residents of Finniss.

I am hopeful that we might see some benefit though if people are able to see where that cheap fuel is. If just before they leave Victor Harbor they see that Seaford has cheaper fuel over Old Noarlunga, maybe they will go into Seaford and fill up there rather than quickly duck into the service station at Old Noarlunga. Those opportunities will exist for those people if there is a live fuel price. I do not see significant benefit for my community from this, but there will hopefully be some. I commend the bill, but I think the benefit is very much for the city and not regional areas.

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (12:45): A number of regional members have spoken about petrol prices because it is an ongoing issue in our communities. We acknowledge that our markets are different from a market such as Adelaide with a population of over 1.3 million people. That is a far larger market, so the nature of the competition works out in a different way.

Back in April, I was deeply concerned about petrol prices in Whyalla and also in Port Augusta. It was because of the lag when it came to the change in petrol price compared to Adelaide. Petrol was being sold for somewhere between \$1.30 and \$1.40 a litre, but in places in Adelaide it was less than \$1 a litre at the time.

I wrote to the ACCC. I was not expecting much from them, given their history when it comes to these issues, but I thought that, on behalf of my community, I would write to the ACCC and call on them to do an investigation into whether there were anticompetitive practices occurring in a number of regional communities. I believe that there are anticompetitive practices occurring in a number of regional communities and I believe that there is almost active collusion when it comes to the larger service stations owned by different companies—an oligopoly in places like Whyalla.

I received a response from the ACCC and some of it touches on apps, which I will get to in a minute. They gave a whole range of reasons why prices differ in regional areas: the size of the market, the volume sold, the turnover and when contracts were entered into—a whole range of variables. It was really interesting that they listed all these different variables, plus some places have convenience stores attached and some do not, so there are lots of different factors, multiple factors.

You can accept to a degree some of these elements. They are going to have an impact on prices. I accept that freight is going to have a marginal impact on prices when it comes to regional communities. You can accept some of this stuff.

I went around to all the major service stations in Whyalla. There are all of these variables at work. The ACCC say that all of these variables have an influence on prices. There are five major service stations in Whyalla. Service station No. 1 was selling unleaded petrol for \$1.16.9. Service station No. 2 was \$1.16.9. Service station No. 3 was \$1.16.9. Service station No. 4 was \$1.16.9 and service station No. 5 was \$1.16.9.

Given all the variables that are at work, given that these service stations are owned by different companies, you are telling me that there is not collusion going on or at least some agreement that they will all sell at the same price in these markets? This goes on; this is regular. The member for Finniss indicated that the range does not vary much. It certainly does not vary much, but when you get every service station selling at the same price to the last decimal point, there is something going on.

I would think that the ACCC would take that seriously and have a look at what is going on. It means that people in regional communities are being actively ripped off. Millions of dollars are leaving our community to line the pockets of these big operators. It is a direct and disgraceful rip-off that is occurring in a lot of regional communities. The ACCC should carry out an investigation.

In its response to me, the ACCC touched upon websites and apps. They indicated that motorists can save money if they actively use the free fuel price information available from a number of website and apps, and they named MotorMouth, GasBuddy and one or two others. The ACCC stated that people can use these to help decide when and where to buy fuel at the best available local price—yes, \$1.16.9 everywhere, but never mind. According to the ACCC:

In the current difficult economic conditions, it is important for motorists to direct their fuel purchases to retail outlets that are pricing competitively—

\$1.16.9 for all of them—

as it sends a strong message to those that have high prices that they will lose business.

Then the ACCC goes on to say that it:

...recognises that in many regional locations, where there is often little range between the highest and lowest retail price, the value of these tools may be limited.

In fact, I would say that the value of tools in places like Whyalla are probably going to be non-existent. The member for Florey has indicated that the application of her app might not assist our regional communities because there are other issues going on in those communities. We will pass, in one form or another, an app that will be used—either the 24-hour app or the real-time pricing app. However, for most regional communities, it probably will not make much difference.

There needs to be a genuine investigation by that incredibly slack body, the ACCC, into what is going on in some of these regional markets. What is going on in those regional markets is coming at the expense of consumers in those markets. This is not the first time that I have written to the ACCC, so I was not expecting much from them. I have to give them marks for consistency; their

approach is the same on every occasion. Get off your bloody arse and come out to these regional communities and have a look at what is going on.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:53): I rise to support the Fair Trading (Fuel Pricing Information) Amendment Bill and note the government's strident efforts to improve the accessibility to real-time pricing in South Australia and to increase competition. I note the work of the Attorney and her officers in progressing this. We are trying to address the high and very variable cost of fuel because it is a real concern for most South Australian families, as has been outlined, especially when you are in a regional area like I am.

I represent from Pinnaroo almost through to Mount Barker, down to Clayton Bay almost to Mount Pleasant and up the river towards Nildottie and Walker Flat to the other side of Cambrai. My constituents are spread far and wide and they have many venues where they can access fuel throughout the electorate.

In regard to this, we have done our own research as a government because there has been mixed evidence from other states about fuel price monitoring. We note that the Productivity Commission has been involved, and has recently found from its own research that there were likely to be net benefits of \$3 million to \$8 million, and that to get the most benefit from this scheme pricing information must be accurate and comprehensive and motorists need to be able to act on it.

Using real-time pricing information can save motorists big money when they shop around for the cheapest price at the lowest point in the price cycle. It is interesting with price cycles; we notice it going into long weekends, for some strange reason—it must be that the world oil price goes up or something—when there is a demand with people going away, and that sort of thing. There are other cycles during the week, but with real-time price monitoring people can factor in when they should be buying their fuel.

As a government, we are very keen to encourage everyone to get involved, when this becomes available in various apps, so that people right across the state can get access to real-time price monitoring. We have got the best possible advice from the Productivity Commission and we are getting on with the job of relieving cost of living pressures. Real-time price monitoring will become a reality when this bill becomes an act and is assented to. As a government, we have committed to implement this as a priority, and that is exactly what we are doing with this. The design of the scheme will come through in the regulatory phase.

In terms of what fuel retailers will need to do in regard to this, they will need to report any pricing changes to a central database within 30 minutes of a change. There will be private apps that will be able to access this data for free, which is what has been successfully implemented in Queensland. Consumers can choose whichever app they like most but, importantly, they will all have accurate pricing information. I am sure my 19-year-old and 16-year-old boys will explain to me how to download the app and how it works and I will be fine, because they will be all over it.

Consumer and Business Services will take proactive steps to ensure that retailers are complying, and I understand there are significant penalties if people do not comply. The scheme is designed as a two-year trial to ensure the stated benefits of fuel price monitoring are met; we will certainly not support any policy if it is found that it tends to increase fuel prices.

There are many avenues to access fuel. I know there is talk about different so-called monopolies in this state, that there are some groups that link to the supermarkets, like Caltex and Shell both being linked to Woolworths and Coles. Obviously there is the On the Run group, the Peregrine or Sam Shahin group, that has built many service stations across the state. Some people will say that a certain person has a monopoly, but it is just not true; there are various big groups.

There are not as many total independents any more, although there have been various ones over time that have done a great job. There was one on South Road for a while there that had really—

The Hon. G.G. Brock interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Mick was it, Skorpos? He did a great job. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. S.S. Marshall)—

Remuneration Tribunal—

Determination No. 2 of 2020—Auditor-General, Electoral Commissioner, Deputy Electoral Commissioner, Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner

Determination No. 3 of 2020—Application for Additional Salary—Deputy President Magistrate Stuart Cole of the South Australian Employment Tribunal

Report No. 2 of 2020—Review of Remuneration for the Auditor-General, Electoral Commissioner, Deputy Electoral Commissioner and Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner

Report No. 3 of 2020—Application for Additional Salary—Deputy President Magistrate Stuart Cole of the South Australian Employment Tribunal

By the Minister for Education (Hon. J.A.W. Gardner)—

Parliamentary Committee on Occupational Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Inquiry into Workplace Fatigue and Bullying in South Australian Hospitals and Health Services—Government Response 2020

By the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development (Hon. T.J. Whetstone)—

Natural Resources Committee Inquiry into South Australian Livestock Industries—Government Response 2020

Ministerial Statement

SKILLING AUSTRALIANS FUND

The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley—Minister for Innovation and Skills) (14:02): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.G. PISONI: The Marshall Liberal government has again achieved its targets under the Skilling Australians Fund National Partnership Agreement in the second year of the Skilling South Australia program.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The minister has leave.

The Hon. D.G. PISONI: Under the Skilling Australians Fund agreement with the commonwealth, South Australia has achieved 100 per cent of the second year of its funding—that is for the 2019-20 year—of \$20.1 million under the national partnership agreement. South Australia reported full achievement against the 2019-20 performance benchmarks and milestones including:

- apprentice and trainee commencements;
- pre-apprenticeships and pre-traineeships; and
- higher apprenticeships.

Milestones achieved include the development and rollout of:

- a training provider development program;
- industry sector plans;

- a skills advisory service;
- communications and marketing strategy;
- student supports; and
- employer supports and incentives.

These measures and milestones are agreed with the commonwealth, and recent discussions recognise the importance of continuing to work in partnership to back skilled careers and adjusting to the impacts of COVID-19.

Full achievement of these performance benchmarks and milestones comes on the back of last week's excellent results. The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) last week reported South Australia has yet again recorded nation-leading growth in apprenticeships and traineeships, with the latest national training data for the December quarter 2019 showing a 13.8 per cent increase in paid training commencements for the year ending 31 December 2019, compared to the previous year.

South Australia recorded the largest percentage increase in the nation, while nationally commencements declined by 3.6 per cent for the same period. For the quarter ending December 2019, South Australia achieved a 9.3 per cent increase in apprentices and trainees, while every other state recorded a decline, illustrated by a 14.8 per cent decrease nationally. South Australia also recorded the largest increase of any state or territory for the number of apprentices and trainees in training as of 31 December 2019, with a 9.1 per cent increase compared to a national decline of 1.6 per cent.

Other highlights for South Australia in the NCVER data include a 114 per cent increase in commencements for mature age apprentices and trainees. These are people over the age of 45, Mr Speaker—some years away for you, but many in this chamber are around that mark. This demonstrated a transition to new roles and sectors as older workers upskill or retrain. This is crucial.

In addition, data shows a 22 per cent increase in female commencements in apprenticeships and traineeships and a 90.8 per cent increase in apprentice and trainee commencements who are existing workers, showing that Skilling South Australia is allowing people to upskill for their existing roles or re-train for roles in other growing sectors of our economy.

It is no secret that Australians these days will have more than one career in their lifetime. As a matter of fact, they can have up to a dozen careers in their lifetime. It is important that they are skilled for those changes as the economy changes. From a standing start, this is a 407 per cent increase in commencements for higher level qualifications at diploma and advanced diploma level apprenticeships. This is crucial for the defence industry here in South Australia.

The Marshall Liberal government's Skilling South Australia program is delivering these results. Growth in paid skills training translates into more jobs and lasting careers in new and expanding industries for South Australians while meeting the needs of industry as our economy continues to transition to the high growth sectors of defence, space, advanced manufacturing, high tech, and the health and medical industries.

The success of Skilling South Australia has been built by government working with industry through significant reforms and the re-establishment of industry skills councils to shape the bespoke projects that employers and industries want to meet their skills needs. Training and skills development underpin economic growth and industry diversification as part of our reforms to ensure a skilled workforce.

Legislation will soon be introduced to update the Training and Skills Development Act. The emphasis of skills and training at a national level is terrific. How good is our Prime Minister—lifting apprenticeships and traineeships to his office. Our reforms to promote and streamline training and workforce development form a key part of economic recovery.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: there were a couple of tables attached to that ministerial statement and the minister has not sought leave to table them, so I ask that he reads them into the record.

The SPEAKER: I think the minister sought leave to make the statement.

The Hon. D.G. PISONI: I sought leave to present the ministerial statement, sir.

The SPEAKER: I imagine the minister is happy to insert the tables?

The Hon. D.G. PISONI: Certainly, sir.

The SPEAKER: For the avoidance of any doubt, does the minister have leave to insert the tables?

Leave granted.

The SPEAKER: The minister will insert the tables.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I was just clarifying. Thank you, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: It's all too much for him, sir.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for West Torrens for his encouragement. The issue has been resolved and we will now move on.

Table 1: Commencements in the 12 months ending, and the change from the previous 12 months, by State, Territory and Nationally

	Commencements		Comparisons of change		
	December 2018	December 2019	Absolute	Percentage	Ranking
New South Wales	45,830	43,575	-2,260	-4.9%	7
Victoria	36,790	33,265	-3,525	-9.6%	8
Queensland	37,605	36,190	-1,415	-3.8%	6
South Australia	7,985	9,080	1,100	13.8%	1
Western Australia	16,755	16,575	-175	-1.1%	4
Tasmania	4,930	5,405	475	9.6%	2
Northern Territory	2,205	2,180	-25	-1.2%	2
Australian Capital Territory	4,490	4,750	265	5.9%	2
Australia	156,585	151,015	-5,570	-3.6%	-

Notes: 1. All numbers have been rounded to the nearest five. Rounding can lead to situations where the numbers might not add to the rounded totals. 2. Percentages presented in this table are calculated on non-rounded numbers. 3. State rankings are calculated on non-rounded percentage changes.

Table 2: Commencements in the quarter and the change from the quarter a year earlier, by State, Territory and Nationally

	Commencements		Comparisons of change		
	December 2018	December 2019	Absolute	Percentage	Ranking
New South Wales	9,515	7,645	-1,870	-19.7%	7
Victoria	8,085	6,905	-1,180	-14.6%	4
Queensland	8,025	6,940	-1,085	-13.5%	3
South Australia	1,600	1,750	150	9.3%	1

	Commencements		Comparisons of change		
	December 2018	December 2019	Absolute	Percentage	Ranking
Western Australia	3,835	3,235	-605	-15.7%	6
Tasmania	1,150	970	-180	-15.5%	5
Northern Territory	455	310	-145	-31.8%	8
Australian Capital Territory	860	815	-45	-5.2%	2
Australia	33,525	28,570	-4,955	-14.8%	-

Notes: 1. All numbers have been rounded to the nearest five. Rounding can lead to situations where the numbers might not add to the rounded totals. 2. Percentages presented in this table are calculated on non-rounded numbers. 3. State rankings are calculated on non-rounded percentage changes.

ELECTRICITY NETWORK STABILITY

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart—Minister for Energy and Mining)

(14:08): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: On 31 January, a severe storm in western Victoria damaged powerlines near Portland, effectively islanding South Australia from the national electricity grid and creating the potential for both electricity supply and network stability problems.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: That's right, storms cause blackouts. Well done.

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister has leave.

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: South Australian generated electricity also supplied the Portland aluminium smelter because it was also cut off from the rest of Victoria, preventing the shutdown of the smelter and saving approximately 4,000 jobs. If it had shut, it almost certainly would never have reopened again. Fortunately, the weather was mild when the interconnector was unavailable throughout February and South Australia had sufficient supply of electricity.

Network stability was a different matter, however, posing a very real threat to the state's energy supply, due in large part to the lack of planning by the former state Labor government, which means South Australia unfortunately has insufficient interconnection capacity. Of course, we have been there before with our system vulnerable to the damage of storms as the previous government did not plan to manage declining system strength and did not ensure the right settings and controls on renewables were in place. As we all know, these weaknesses—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: Is this what ministerial statements are for, Stephan? Is this part of our arrangement?

The SPEAKER: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: —have plunged the entire state into darkness—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: Is this part of our arrangement?

The SPEAKER: Minister, one moment. The member for West Torrens may have something to say to the Minister for Transport; however, the Minister of Energy and Mining has the call, he has leave, so if there are interjections I am going to call them to order. The Minister for Energy and Mining has the call.

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Of course, we have been here before with our system vulnerable to the damage of storms as the previous government did not plan to manage declining system strength and did not ensure the right settings and controls on renewables were in place. As we all know, these weaknesses have plunged the entire state into darkness before.

South Australia is more reliant on variable renewable energy generation than any other gigawatt-scale jurisdiction in the world. We have gone from having negligible amounts of renewable energy 15 years ago to having the capacity to supply more than 100 per cent of our needs from renewable sources under certain conditions.

The former Labor government's helter-skelter approach to energy policy has come at a huge cost to South Australian electricity consumers and the state's economy. It delivered the most expensive electricity in the Western world and also the statewide blackout. Critically, the former government failed to deliver the solution to the fragility that it created: an interconnector with New South Wales, first promised by Labor in 2002. Had the interconnector been constructed as promised, consumers would likely have avoided the great majority of costs from transmission outages over the last 10 years.

It would also have avoided the majority of the ancillary services costs associated with the February islanding. The islanding, combined with the inherited network stability problems, required the Australian Energy Market Operator to carefully manage the system hour by hour for a month. The output of wind and solar farms was limited. Only the heaviest gas turbines were directed on and our three big batteries played a critical role in keeping the lights on. AEMO's work to keep the lights on whilst the interconnector was down cost an additional \$90 million to control grid frequency. While no-one is impressed with the cost incurred—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: You were; you are defending it now.

The SPEAKER: The member for West Torrens is called to order.

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: While no-one is impressed with the cost incurred, experts are impressed that the lights stayed on throughout the month. The Leader of the Opposition claimed, and I quote:

That's \$90 million that could have easily been saved if Steven Marshall had decided to turn on our back-up generators. That's what they are there for.

It is hard to imagine a more erroneous statement. First, if that is what they were there for, why did the previous government not register the generators to provide frequency control? They were, in fact, specifically registered to only provide energy in case of a shortfall and not for frequency.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Secondly, if they had intended the generators to provide inertia or frequency control—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: What is inertia, Steven?

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: —they would have procured different generators for that purpose.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Torrens!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for West Torrens is warned and the Premier is also called to order because the Minister for Energy and Mining has sought leave, he has leave and, therefore, interjections are out of order.

The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Lee!

The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Secondly, if they had intended the generators to provide inertia or frequency control, they would have procured different generators for that purpose. The fact is that the power system experts at AEMO would have turned on Labor's dirty diesel generators if they were going to help grid stability and reduce costs to consumers, but they did not. In fact, it was a lack of grid demand, not a lack of grid supply, which was the primary risk for most of the month, so why would the Leader of the Opposition suggest turning on more generators

during this time? He just does not understand. A small but obvious hint for the leader: do not take your advice on energy matters from the former minister who created the problems.

A new interconnector with New South Wales that will contribute cheaper electricity and more reliable electricity for all South Australians is what we need. It will also allow South Australia to responsibly continue down the lower emissions pathway without penalising consumers. The interconnector, which is in an Australian Energy Regulator approval process, is supported by the state government, the power system experts at AEMO, the Clean Energy Council, the renewables industry and just about every other organisation with expertise in the electricity network.

It is described in the national system plan as a 'no regrets' measure, yet the Labor Party, that closed the Northern power station, drove up electricity prices by 30 per cent and presided over the blackout of the entire state, still opposes the interconnector. It will not be long before the Leader of the Opposition will have to choose: does he support cheaper, more reliable and cleaner electricity for all South Australians or the policies of the former energy minister?

Mr Brown interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Playford is called to order for that interjection.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr CREGAN (Kavel) (14:15): I bring up the 89th report of the committee, entitled Strathalbyn Residential Aged-Care Facility Expansion.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Mr CREGAN: I bring up the 91st report of the committee, entitled Elizabeth North Primary School Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Mr CREGAN: I bring up the 92nd report of the committee, entitled Greenwith Primary School Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Mr CREGAN: I bring up the 93rd report of the committee, entitled Ardtornish Primary School Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Mr CREGAN: I bring up the 94th report of the committee, entitled Modbury High School Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Mr CREGAN: I bring up the 95th report of the committee, entitled Glenunga International High School Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:17): I bring up the seventh report of the committee, entitled Emergency Services Levy 2020-21.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Question Time

INTEGRITY CARE SA

Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:17): My question is to the Premier. Does the Premier think it is acceptable that Integrity Care is still operating and providing NDIS services for vulnerable South Australians?

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:18): As a state government, we are not responsible for the accreditation of providers, NDIA providers in this state. My understanding is there is currently an investigation underway. We look forward to the conclusion and any actions taken from the investigation.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for West Torrens, I remind him that if he interjects he will be called to order. He has already been called to order once.

RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

Ms STINSON (Badcoe) (14:18): My question is to the Minister for Child Protection. Is the minister aware of any people who have failed mandatory psychological tests to work in residential care homes but who continue to work in disability and aged-care services?

The Hon. R. SANDERSON (Adelaide—Minister for Child Protection) (14:19): I thank the member for her question. Clearly, I am not responsible for the disability portfolio. I am not aware of anyone who has failed a test who is currently working directly with children in my own department, but I can certainly take that on notice and find out. I am not responsible to the house for any other departments.

RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

Ms STINSON (Badcoe) (14:19): My question is to the Minister for Child Protection. Has the minister been informed by any psychologists of any people who have failed mandatory psychological testing to work in residential care homes but who continue to work in disability and aged-care services? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms STINSON: On ABC 891 this morning, Luke Broomhall, a forensic psychologist with PsychCheck, whose company conducts the mandatory psychological testing of all residential care workers, stated:

I do know that there are people who have been found to be unsuitable to work with children in residential care who are still currently working in the disability and/or aged care sector.

The Hon. R. SANDERSON (Adelaide—Minister for Child Protection) (14:20): That is clearly a question for the Minister for Human Services, who is in the other house. I can take it on notice and find out for you, if you would like.

The SPEAKER: I have given the opposition three. It has only been two minutes in. I am going to give them one more.

RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

Ms STINSON (Badcoe) (14:20): My question is to the Minister for Child Protection. How many people have failed the mandatory residential care psychometric testing?

The Hon. R. SANDERSON (Adelaide—Minister for Child Protection) (14:20): Clearly, I don't perform the psychometric testing and don't have access to that number, but what I can let the house know is that Shannon McCooole actually—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Minister for Education, I heard that, and you are called to order.

The Hon. R. SANDERSON: What I can inform the house is that the whole reason psychometric testing came to this chamber was because, under the former government, Shannon McCooole, who was employed by the Department for Child Protection, then known as Families SA, actually had red flags on his psychometric test—which was a different test at the time—that was ignored by the department and then by the Labor government.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Dr Close interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Deputy leader!

The Hon. R. SANDERSON: As a result of the red flags being ignored and Shannon McCool going on to be employed in child protection, in residential care, and then raping children in his care, under the former Labor government, under your testing process, there was a royal commission. The royal commission found that psychometric testing should go ahead.

That was put into our laws, and everyone in my department, I am advised, who is working with children in residential care has passed the psychometric testing. That is the latest advice that I have. The non-government sector was given a slight extension under the regulations to also adhere to that. My latest advice as of April was that everyone had adhered to that, so that all people working in residential care with children under the guardianship of the now CE, but in my department and my responsibility, have passed that test.

During COVID, you would be aware—because my department briefed you, and it has also gone to another committee in this house—we had to plan for what could be the possible worst-case scenario, and what would happen if some of our staff got COVID, or our children, and we had to lock down houses or we had to move staff away from homes. We didn't want to leave ourselves short and not have any staff to manage residential care.

So we brought to the house, as part of the emergency planning bill, a regulation with a sunset clause of six months, which would allow for other staff employed by the state government—obviously a first preference would be in my own department—who already had their working with children check that if, in the emergency situation, we did not have enough staff to work at our residential care facilities they would be able to work without a psychometric test, and to my knowledge we have not used that.

We have not had any outbreaks of COVID in any of our houses, so we have not needed to implement that. However, it was a measure that we had to plan for the worst. None of us knew what a pandemic would look like, and that regulation was changed and amended with the consent of the opposition—thank you, and you were briefed. That is all I have to say.

WATER PRICING

Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (14:24): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Water. Can the minister outline how the Marshall Liberal government's recent water reform announcements benefit South Australia's regions, including in the electorate of Flinders?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Minister for Environment and Water) (14:24): It has—

Mr Malinauskas interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The leader is called to order.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: —been great this week to be able to update this house on the many, many reforms that the Marshall Liberal government has instituted to the way that water pricing is undertaken in South Australia, not only water pricing but also huge investment and water infrastructure right across the state.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: We know that water infrastructure is one of the inputs into our economic development which can really drive job creation—

Mr Malinauskas interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Leader!

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: —and no more so than in regional South Australia, one of the most productive parts of our state. Regional South Australia under the Marshall Liberal government's reforms is benefiting from significantly lower water prices when they are connected to the SA water

network, but importantly will also benefit from very significant investment in water infrastructure. We are seeing this in every corner of South Australia; the news is just incredible.

If we look a little bit down from Adelaide into the Fleurieu Peninsula, in the first place, that is a peri-urban area with a growing population and is a very important part of South Australia's productive agricultural economy. It is part of our food bowl, really. We see that community, so reliant on water for both residential and business purposes, having very significant benefits.

If you look to the growing town of Myponga, where the median house price is \$405,000, the annual water savings there for reasonable use will be \$260 to \$355 per annum. Households that use a good amount of water in Myponga will be saving \$325 to \$460 per annum—significant savings that will make all the difference to these households. We know that we are taking that cost-of-living pressure off them, handing them back money so that they can make the decision as to what to do with their household incomes.

It is worth reminding listeners today—and no doubt there are many—that customers can access SA Water's new bill saving calculator on SA Water's website: 18,000 people have done that already because 18,000 people have been very keen to see how much their water bills will be reduced under the Marshall Liberal government. It really is great news for them. If we look a bit further afield into regional South Australia to Kangaroo Island, a part of our state that has been doing it tough in recent times, they are having historic investment in water infrastructure.

I had a chat with the Deputy Premier the other day about this and she believes the investment of some \$28 million to improve water security and supply Kangaroo Island's water through a new desalination plant will transform the island's water security and will create job opportunities. We will look for opportunities to draw business to invest on Kangaroo Island, while also creating much more stability in the water network there. We saw that stability come under real threat in early January when the bushfires unfolded over there. This is an opportunity to fix the water supply there once and for all.

I am conscious that the member for Flinders asked me this question today, and it is important to update the house on a piece of infrastructure that will be one of the biggest government spends in the history of Eyre Peninsula. The member for Flinders has been a strong and dedicated advocate for the Port Lincoln desalination plant to secure water security on Lower Eyre Peninsula and give households and businesses certainty that the groundwater resources which they are reliant on, and which have become increasingly fragile, can be significantly supplemented by a \$95 million desalination plant.

That is great news for Lower Eyre Peninsula. It will stimulate the economy while it is being built and it will give them water security into the future. We have invested in water infrastructure like no government in the past and coupled that with historic reductions in water prices. It really is good news for South Australia.

RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

Ms STINSON (Badcoe) (14:28): My question is to the Minister for Child Protection. What protocols exist in the Department for Child Protection to advise other government departments of people who have failed mandatory psychological testing for residential care facilities?

The Hon. R. SANDERSON (Adelaide—Minister for Child Protection) (14:28): I will take that on notice.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: You don't know?

The SPEAKER: The member for West Torrens is warned.

The Hon. J.A.W. Gardner interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Education is warned for provoking the member for West Torrens.

RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

Ms STINSON (Badcoe) (14:29): My question is to the Minister for Child Protection. Will the minister commit to informing other government agencies of people who fail the mandatory psychological testing for residential care facilities? With your leave and with that of the house, I will explain, sir.

Leave granted.

Ms STINSON: On ABC 891 this morning, PsychCheck director Luke Broomhall stated that in the last 12 months his company alone has found that 74 people, or 2 per cent of the residential care workforce, failed the mandatory psychological testing.

The Hon. R. SANDERSON (Adelaide—Minister for Child Protection) (14:29): Obviously, I'm not going to be making policy on the run, as the former government did. There are plenty of statements—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R. SANDERSON: —that Labor made that never came to fruition. One would be the combining of the three different offices to form one: that never happened and was not funded or budgeted for. What I can say is that this government is reviewing the safeguarding of all our children and looking at the procedures as a result of the very, very sad case of Ann Marie. We are all looking at the way that we share information, and that is continuing.

Ms Stinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Badcoe is called to order. I am going to allow one more on my left and then we will switch.

BUS SERVICES

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens) (14:30): My question is for the Minister for Environment and Water. Does the minister support changes to bus timetables in his electorate? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sheidow Park residents in some areas will have to walk almost two kilometres to their nearest bus stop.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (14:31): I do thank the member for his question.

Mr Malinauskas interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Leader! I think that's enough.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am certainly not going to accept the purported fact that the member for West Torrens put in that question.

Mr Picton: Well, change the cuts then.

The SPEAKER: The member for Kaurna is called to order. We have the question. I would like to hear the answer.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: For the electorate of Black, which is going to see 17 new Go Zone stops, they are also going to get under this government a brand-new on-demand bus service, one that we know—and that the member for Kavel has made many representations to me about in his electorate—that's extremely popular, one we are now rolling out across South Australia in key areas.

In the member for Black's electorate, there is going to be quite a large on-demand area, which is going to help people connect to various parts of not only of his electorate but a part of Adelaide in South Australia. It will help people connect to the Seaford train line, help people connect to be able to get to Marion and it will help people to be able to get in and around that area with a bus

that is going to rock up to the door or within 150 metres of their door and drop them where they need to go within the service area. We are also rolling them out in the member for Waite's electorate.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order: the question was about whether the member supported the changes, not debating the changes.

The SPEAKER: Yes, yes, and the question had several facets and I believe that the minister is perhaps speaking to things that are related to the changes. But I will listen carefully to the minister's answer, and I thank the member for West Torrens.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In the member for Waite's electorate—

The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Lee!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —again an on-demand service that we know is popular and works and, again, in the member for Port Adelaide's electorate, a brand-new on-demand bus system. This is just another example of how we are embracing innovation to improve our public transport system. We have seen this work in other jurisdictions. In fact, we have been able to learn lessons from the other jurisdictions about how to implement it here.

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

The SPEAKER: Member for Mawson!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And this is all part of our plan to help drive patronage and growth across our network. Mr Speaker, 220,000—

The Hon. Z.L. Bettison interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Ramsay!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —South Australians are going to now have access to a Go Zone under these changes. This is a fantastic step forward, one that we are proud to move forward and not put one of these difficult problems in the too-hard basket, the lowest levels of public transport usage in the nation, some of the cheapest public transport in the nation, as well as half of our customers thinking that they don't get value for money in this area.

More people were using buses 10 years ago than they did when Labor left office. That is not a record that we want to sit on our hands and let fester. We want to get on and tackle difficult reform like improving our bus network. It's out for consultation at the moment. I encourage everybody to look at those route maps, understand what these changes can mean for them and provide feedback to the department—

Mr Picton interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Kaurna!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —so that we can make sure that these changes are the best that they can be.

SKILLS TRAINING

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:34): My question is to the Minister for Innovation and Skills. Can the minister update the house on how the Marshall Liberal government is supporting South Australia's economic recovery by growing our skilled workforce?

The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley—Minister for Innovation and Skills) (14:34): I thank the member for Colton for his question. He is very kind. He knows I love speaking about apprenticeships and traineeships and skills here in South Australia. Of course, South Australia's economic prosperity is underpinned by a skilled workforce. It's critical that we have workers with the skills that industry needs. Over the past two years, the Marshall government has successfully rebuilt South Australia's training system, delivering critical skills training to more South Australians.

As per my ministerial statement earlier, we have again achieved our targets under the Skilling Australians Fund National Partnership Agreement with the Morrison government, and we have

received the full payment of \$20.1 million. I must say what a pleasure it is to work with the minister, Senator Cash. She gets it. She understands what needs to be done to increase Australia's skills base, and we are very pleased as a state that we are leading the nation.

Did I mention the figure of 13.8 per cent earlier? There was a 13.8 per cent growth in the number of apprentices and trainees through the year up to December last year, compared with the same period last year, and nationally there was a decline of 3.6 per cent, so I think we have proven the model. The Skilling South Australia model works. Other interesting statistics to come out of the NCVET data, particularly in the different cohorts of training, are the mature age apprentices and trainees, with a 114 per cent increase. What this is showing is that we are preparing—

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Point of order.

The SPEAKER: If the minister could be seated for one moment, I am anticipating that the point of order is for public information that is already available.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: No, but that is another one—well, thank you, sir, I am much obliged. I was going to cite standing order 128: repetition. He is even reading from the same ministerial statement.

The SPEAKER: Well, repetition is definitely bogus, but what I may do is draw the house to the fact that the minister may utilise some of the information that he has provided to the house a short time ago; however, I am confident that he will also furnish other information that isn't available to the house. I will listen carefully and I will decide whether I need to step in, and I thank the member for Lee. The Minister has the call.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D.G. PISONI: I think that it's more the case that they don't like to hear good news. I like to talk about things that are good, things that are happening in South Australia and the achievements of this government because I'm proud of the achievements of this government. I think that the important thing about the mature age apprenticeships—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Cheltenham!

The Hon. D.G. PISONI: —is that we recognise that there are many South Australians over the age of 45 who had very valuable skills 10, 20 or 30 years ago. The economy has changed. Those skill requirements have changed, and we have been in partnership with industry making sure that those South Australians are learning those new skills, acquiring those new skills and being paid to do so. It is a tremendous change in the attitudes to more mature South Australians than we saw under the previous government.

There has been a 22 per cent increase in female commencements in apprenticeships and traineeships. We know that has always been an ambition of governments, employers and unions, and here we have the Minister for Innovation and Skills uniting employers and unions—in this case, in increasing the number of women in apprenticeships and traineeships.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D.G. PISONI: Aboriginal participation increased by 6.3 per cent in Indigenous training commencements and higher apprenticeships was 407 per cent. New projects developing future leaders, this was supporting Indigenous workers to progress their careers through the Diploma of Leadership and Management, and this is a higher apprenticeship pathway. Aboriginal participants were supported into the health services industry through HenderCare.

The project includes Aboriginal mentors to provide guidance, support and assistance, and 30 women affected by domestic violence will be supported into paid traineeships in Certificate III in Business Traineeships with Complete Personnel. Of course, Aboriginal jobseekers have also been identified to participate in this program. The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation will partner

with SA Local Health Networks to recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants to undertake a Certificate III in Individual Support.

We have delivered more skills funding to expand subsidies and more courses in line with the needs of employers. Gone are the days when bureaucrats made those decisions: industry is making those decisions.

PEARCE, MS D.A.

Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (14:39): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier assure the house that a statement given to the media by the government last night was actually a statement from the family of Debbie Pearce? With your leave and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms COOK: The government last night released a statement to the media that it claims was from the family of Debbie Pearce, which stated, and I quote:

We are grateful for the care that our sister received. We have no concerns with staff at the home and do not want them to be blamed for her death. We do not wish for this to be a matter of media interest.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (14:40): I thank the member for this question because she has raised a very important matter in this whole sorry saga commenced by her yesterday. As the member would know, if I can just deal with this very specifically, information that might be given to the media which they choose to publish obviously is a matter for them to confirm about their source. We have special laws, actually, in South Australia, the member might be aware, that protect journalists in relation to that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Nevertheless, it was brought to the attention of the parliament yesterday, purportedly 16 days after what the member for Hurtle Vale considered to be shocking revelations of serious allegations from her own material that she published in her press release with attached emails that she received on 1 June. She saw these as so shocking, as so serious, that she would wait 16 days to even raise it in parliament—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I am listening to the Attorney-General.

The Hon. T.J. Whetstone interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Minister for Primary Industries, please!

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: —let alone take up those matters. So it didn't surprise me at all that in fact the media released a statement by the family, which has been read out. I don't need to repeat it, but what I will say is this: I think the member for Hurtle Vale does need to account to this parliament for why she would take 16 days in relation to alleged shocking revelations that she found.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I think it's timely that we all be reminded, as members of parliament, that we are public officers under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. We have legal obligations to report matters to various authorities, including but not limited to the Office for Public Integrity.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: Say that outside, Vickie.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: It's a timely reminder. The member decided to do nothing about this for 16 days—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Picton interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Kaurana is on two warnings.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: —in asking a question in the parliament, for that to occur. So I think she does need to account to this parliament, whether there was anyone—

Mr Szakacs interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Cheltenham!

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: —who had decided that this was a lower priority than bus routes and the like, and that be considered.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: But I did indicate to the parliament yesterday that I would make an inquiry of my own department about whether the person in question had been the recipient of services of agencies under my responsibility. I can confirm that she was not under the guardianship of the state, which, as the member and I am sure others would be aware, is an area of responsibility for the Office of the Public Advocate. She was, apparently, a client of the Public Trustee; I am not sure in what form. She may have had her will done there or she may have had an account. I don't have the detail of that at this point.

I don't have any particulars as to whether the Coroner has or is still to be seized of any inquiry other than the fact that, under the Coroners Act, the Coroner is obliged to consider certain matters, including if someone dies in a hospital and in certain other circumstances but, for the purposes of this issue, in that circumstance. What I am aware of, and I think this issue was outlined in detail in the Legislative Council yesterday by the minister, is that there is a critical incident process, and it has been undertaken and it is still continuing.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

PEARCE, MS D.A.

Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (14:44): My question is to the Premier. Who in the Premier's government authored the statement released to the media last night claiming to be a statement from the family of Debbie Pearce?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (14:44): I have no information on that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left, this is your question time. I am trying to give out as many questions as I can, member for Cheltenham. The member for Hurtle Vale and then the member for Finniss.

PEARCE, MS D.A.

Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (14:44): My question is to the Premier. Did the Premier's government release the statement to the media without the knowledge and consent of Debbie Pearce's family?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (14:45): Again, back to the member: we have no knowledge in relation to that allegation. I suggest that she go to the media outlet if she has concerns about the validity of any information.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: You released a statement last night.

The SPEAKER: The member for West Torrens is warned for a second and final time. This level of interjection cannot continue or members will be leaving.

CORONAVIRUS, SCHOOLS

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (14:45): My question is to the Minister for Education. Can the minister provide an update to the house on how South Australian schools are making progress towards a COVID-safe environment, and is the minister aware of the progress of approaches in any other jurisdictions?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (14:45): I thank the member for Finniss for the question and I know that he has a particularly high level of interest in this. He was very supportive at the beginning of term 2 and through the school holidays in encouraging the students in his area to get back to school, and indeed sharing the advice that Nicola Spurrier and the public health officials provided to students, to staff and to the South Australian community on the low-risk environment that schools represented.

Term 2 has indeed been an extraordinarily positive experience in many ways for many South Australian students and families. From about the second or third week of term 2, we have been back up to 90 per cent attendance in our schools in South Australia. The educational development of our students and young people in South Australia, which we greatly feared might be challenged by the coronavirus pandemic—they have had very limited interruption to that as a result of the pandemic.

There were home-schooling arrangements put in place and supporting our students very quickly, but of course we know that face to face is best. Very few South Australian students have suffered prolonged absence from school. That hasn't been the case in other jurisdictions around the world; it hasn't even been the case in some other jurisdictions around Australia, which I note the member asked about. I will come back to that.

Today, we are particularly pleased to provide the public—our schools, our students, our teachers and their school communities—with information about the further release of restrictions that are coming at the end of this month for the last week of term 2 and which will hopefully be in place throughout term 3 and term 4.

This is a release of restrictions on things which, while they might not have been the primary educational activities going on in our schools, nevertheless are the sorts of activities that make school the experience that we want it to be: things like school assemblies that help our schools gel together as a group; things like sporting carnivals, school discos, the interschool choirs and camps and band opportunities; and the opportunity for class photos. These things make the school experience as good as we want it to be.

These things will now be able to take place once again in our schools in South Australia. We are leading the way, and not just in the nation. Western Australia and Northern Territory are close to us and the other states on the eastern seaboard are slowly catching up, but we are in fact doing very well by world standards and our children, our young people, are the beneficiaries.

We are also really pleased that parents and volunteers are increasingly going to be welcomed back to our school campuses, which I know many will be glad of. Playgroups will be coming back. It is very important through this, of course, that if our families, our children in particular, and our staff are unwell, they stay home. This has always been the case in workplaces and schools, but it is very, very important now. Hopefully, the use of that good hygiene and the discipline to stay home if you are sick will start being very much the norm everywhere. It is very important in this environment.

As I said, not every state is the same. I note that there are some interstate politicians who have been feeling a bit febrile and a little bit feisty in the last couple of days. I've no doubt that if they have children at home, that might have added to their anxiety. In New South Wales and Victoria, for months on end everybody has been working from home and that is very testy.

New South Wales had an unusual return to school. Some students were back on certain days for a period. Some students were told they would be able to come back one day a week or two days a week, maybe when the moon was high or the moon was low. I'm sure that sort of activity has probably had an impact on the New South Wales Treasurer, for one, in terms of his anxiety.

In Victoria, of course, we actually have the Grattan Institute expressing some concerns about the length of time that so many of their students were out of school. Indeed, they are now looking to return to school. South Australia is here. We are leading the nation in our schooling activity and our children, our young people and our school communities are so glad about the term 2 they have had. It has been hard work, but my goodness, our children have been the beneficiaries.

CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (14:49): My question is to the Premier. Why is South Australia maintaining stricter rules than most states are on indoor fitness and recreation activities, such as Pilates, spin classes and the like, despite our success in arresting further transmission of COVID-19? With your leave and that of the house, I would like to explain.

Leave granted.

Ms BEDFORD: I have been contacted by a constituent who operates a Pilates class at a local council-operated community centre currently restricted to 10 persons per room at the density requirement of four square metres per person. In a recent article by Clare Peddie, published in *The Advertiser* on Tuesday 16 June, it was mooted that the government may consider a change to allow classes of up to 20 in a room but with a density requirement of seven square metres per person. My constituent tells me this will in fact be more restrictive than the current requirements and crushing.

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:50): I thank the member for her question. Each jurisdiction determines their own arrangements in terms of tackling the COVID-19 pandemic. In South Australia, to date we have been extraordinarily successful. Part of that is the state borders that we have put in and part of it is the restrictions that we have put in place. As we have said in this parliament many times, we are tackling two crises simultaneously: one is a health crisis and the other one is an economic crisis.

I think South Australia has led the way in terms of tackling the health crisis and we now need to lead the way in terms of tackling the economic crisis. That's one of the reasons why we have been progressively lifting those restrictions in South Australia. We have led the way. We led the way in terms of getting our students back to school in South Australia, something that I know benefits students in our state. I want to particularly thank the teachers in South Australia, the parents and the governing councils and principals for the courage they showed when many other states weren't prepared to act in that way.

We were the first state to open up for regional travel, the first state to open up for caravanning and camping. We were the first to lift the ban on elective surgery in South Australia and return to 100 per cent elective surgery and dental activities as well. These are all important restrictions that have been lifted. They were important when they were put in place but are important also to be lifted.

There are differential arrangements with regard to activities that might occur indoor versus outdoor, contact versus non-contact. They are revised on a regular basis by the Transition Committee, which looks at three principal criteria: first of all, the health criteria, then also the economic and the social. The Transition Committee has a range of representatives from Health and also from other government departments, including the State Coordinator, the police commissioner Grant Stevens, the Chief Executive of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Under Treasurer, the Chief Executive of the Department for Health and Wellbeing and the chief executive of the Department for Trade and Investment.

At the moment, they are meeting twice a week so they will be meeting again tomorrow morning. The member is right: there has been a change to the original arrangement with just 10 people for those indoor fitness arrangements. We did announce a change earlier this week so that for those organisations that have been petitioning us saying, 'We've actually got a very large area and we can take a lot more people in line with a new national standard,' we allowed that to go up to 20 provided that seven square metres per person could be provided.

These will continue to be looked at. The member is right: we have done extraordinarily well in South Australia. I think today is 22 days that we have not had a new infection in South Australia. That is something that all South Australians should be very proud of. They have played an enormous part in making sure that we have tackled this coronavirus and done particularly well. I am happy to

raise that issue with the Transition Committee and see whether there can be a further issue with regard to the density for indoor activities. I know this is an issue that has been raised with me on a very regular basis.

It is something that the Transition Committee is actively looking at at the moment. The committee is also looking at the issue of state borders. Earlier this week, we said there was no longer a requirement for 14 days of self-isolation for people coming into the state from Western Australia, the Northern Territory or Tasmania. I hope that we have an announcement very soon with regard to those people who are coming in from Queensland.

PEARCE, MS D.A.

Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (14:54): My question is to the Premier. Did a representative of his government call the family of Debbie Pearce this morning seeking approval for a statement that had already been issued to the media by his government the night before?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (14:55): I have no knowledge of that information.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson is warned. The member for Hurtle Vale and then the member for Narungga.

PEARCE, MS D.A.

Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (14:55): My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier satisfied himself that the statement released by his government last night purporting to be on behalf of the family of Debbie Pearce was actually from the family?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (14:55): I reject entirely the premise that has been alleged in the question—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I have allowed the question.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: —because I have indicated that that hasn't been a circumstance that's been acknowledged at all. We have no knowledge of that.

Mr Picton interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Kaurna is on two warnings and he will be leaving shortly if this continues. The member for Narungga, and I will come back to those on my left.

SPORTS FUNDING

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (14:55): My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Can the minister please update the house on what the Marshall Liberal government is doing to help lower costs for local sporting clubs?

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD (Gibson—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:56): I thank the member for Narungga for his question and acknowledge and recognise his wonderful passion for sport, especially in his local community.

Now, more than ever, we need to be doing all we can to be helping families and helping people as we return to sport by lowering costs right across all sectors of the recreation, sport and racing industries so we can get our way through this terrible pandemic. Sport is back, nature is healing and I am pretty sure there was a big buzz of excitement last Saturday night when the Showdown was back. At least there was excitement for the first quarter, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: At the start of the game.

The Hon. C.L. WINGARD: At least for the first quarter. The Marshall government has a strong plan for jobs, businesses and organisations and getting our economy back and moving and the sporting sector has received \$15 million over recent months to make sure that it returns stronger

than before. Even before COVID-19, our very popular program around our Sports Vouchers program had been incredibly well received.

Of course, when we came to government we knew that putting money back in people's pockets was an important thing to do, getting people active was an important thing to do and we increased the sports vouchers from \$50 per child in primary school playing sport up to \$100. It has been extremely popular. Last year, more than 70,000 people claimed those vouchers.

An even more generous program was a winner for South Australian families, as I said, easing the cost of living and putting money back in their pockets. Already this year, despite COVID-19, more than 26,000 vouchers have been claimed and we have noticed an increase in recent weeks as junior sport gets prepared to return to our parks, our ovals and our fields and we are looking forward to that. From 1 January 2020, we further expanded this program to take in swimming as well. We know that not only does this get young people active in our state but it also makes our state safer and helps young people to learn how to be safe around water, and we know that's incredibly important.

For the 2019 calendar year, under our government 74,668 vouchers were redeemed, totalling more than \$7 million back in the pockets of families right across South Australia. This compares with 58,324 vouchers claimed in 2018, \$2.9 million, finishing off the old scheme under the old government. You can see the big increase there, Mr Speaker, and how much families have appreciated that—a 28 per cent increase in the uptake of vouchers in 2019 compared with 2018. To date in 2020, \$2.6 million in vouchers has been redeemed—again, money back in the pockets of South Australians. The success of this program is undeniable and I love it when I come face to face with families who are really enjoying the value of our program.

Just a few weeks ago, it was great to catch up with Michelle, who explained how much she appreciated those vouchers for her five sons: Ricky, Dion, Alex, Jordan and Yanni. The increase to \$100 has been of significant benefit to her family budget. You can imagine that putting five boys through a soccer program is expensive for any family.

We have been actively supporting in a number of ways as well through the COVID crisis, as I have pointed out, with money going to a number of sports along the way. With respect to soccer, \$490,000 has gone to Football SA through the Community and Jobs Fund during the COVID-19 crisis. One of the conditions, of course, has been that this benefit flows on to grassroots participants so that South Australians who play soccer will have their affiliation fees discounted this season.

Full credit to Football SA that has provided the cost reductions for many members, which has led to zero dollar team registration fees for juniors and social women, zero dollar state insurance costs and a 15 per cent to 30 per cent reduction in referee fees—again, money going back into sport. We know it is important. It is good to have it back and saving money for South Australians as they get their kids back into sport.

MINISTERIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (15:00): My question is to the Premier. What is the penalty for a government minister who issues a false statement to the media?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (15:00): Well, firstly, I think that question is totally out of order—

The SPEAKER: Asking for legal advice, but—

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: —but nevertheless—

The SPEAKER: Without providing legal advice, Deputy Premier, I will allow you to answer the question.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: —on this issue I will refer to my previous answers on this.

REGIONAL JOBS

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome) (15:00): My question is to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Can the minister update the house on any consultation that has taken place regarding the future direction and employment of regional DPTI officers and staff. With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain further.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: It has been identified by statements made by the minister on radio last week that these facilities will be privatised or outsourced. Have there been any discussions with the numerous clients, including SA Health, the Department for Education and numerous others, and has there been any communication with local government in the regions?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (15:01): I thank the member for Frome for his question. It is an important one and again another reform that we are seeking to undertake to drive the taxpayer dollar further in relation to how we undertake road maintenance in South Australia.

At the moment, about 60 per cent—and this is under our government and under the former government—of the road maintenance work that is done in South Australia is currently outsourced to private contractors. Those contractors operate in various parts of South Australia. Early on coming to government we undertook analysis that said that, if we were to move to a 100 per cent outsourcing model, we could save money and we could use that money to reinvest in being able to get more road maintenance work done in South Australia.

We are in the throes of a tender process in relation to that, and we will have more information shortly to share with members. But it is very clear to me that, in regional South Australia, getting access to good, qualified road maintenance staff is not that easy. It's a discussion that the member for Stuart and I have had often. In fact, we have just had four new staff being employed in the Port Augusta area.

Getting access to these quality staff is difficult and so, in relation to the job opportunities for road maintenance staff under this new model, we will work through those arrangements in the way that we normally do. However, I know already from discussions within the department that keeping and getting access to these qualified staff is actually quite a high priority because these people know those roads and they are good at their job. What we do know is that we need more of them.

In fact, what is having to be done at the moment is that the department is relying on contract labour to be able to fill some of those positions, and so there is more work out there than there is staff. Also, once we move to these contracting arrangements, we will actually be able to drive that dollar further and be able to get more road maintenance done in regional South Australia.

I know that we were left an ever-growing road maintenance backlog in South Australia, especially in our regional areas. It has led us to have a very underserviced and undermaintained regional road network, and it is why we are now spending some \$1.5 billion fixing up country roads in South Australia.

In the member for Frome's electorate, whether it is the Goyder Highway, whether it is the Blyth Plains Road, whether it is the Horrocks Highway, or whether it is the Augusta Highway, this government is spending money upgrading those roads to make them more safe. Whether that be basic shoulder-sealing treatment, whether that be audio tactile line marking, whether it be road rehab and reseal, we are undertaking this work right across regional South Australia to help catch back up some of that lost time and those lost years in relation to our roadwork.

I can assure the member for Frome that all those appropriate consultation processes will be undertaken, and I can assure South Australians that we are looking at this as a great opportunity to be able to get more roads done and drive taxpayer dollars further as we seek to drive reform here in South Australia that is going to leave our state better off than when we found it.

BUS SERVICES

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens) (15:04): My question is to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Does the minister stand by his statements to the house earlier today in question time regarding on-demand services being available in Sheidow Park in the electorate of Black?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (15:05): I'm not sure that the member is representing my previous answer correctly.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There is an on-demand bus service within the electorate of Black, which was the question I was being asked. To maybe jog the member's memory, the question was whether the member for Black supported the changes to bus routes in his electorate. In his electorate—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Minister, be seated one moment. Member for Kaurna, I'm going to ask you to leave for the remainder of question time under 137A for repeated interjections.

The honourable member for Kaurna having withdrawn from the chamber:

The SPEAKER: I'm trying to listen to the minister's answer. I anticipate that—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Well, the way things went yesterday, I know that this subject matter has been given a lot of attention by the opposition, so I would like to listen to what the minister has to say. The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The answer is, yes, I do stand by my previous answer about the 17-odd new Go Zone stops in the member for Black's electorate, as well as the new on-demand bus service. Again, these are reforms that are tough; they are difficult. Any time you seek to make change in customer-focused and customer-facing environments change it is difficult, but we cannot continue to sit still and watch fewer and fewer people use public transport in South Australia.

Because of the flow-on effects to traffic congestion and the flow-on effects to the cost to the state budget to continue to upgrade roads where we need to create increased peak time capacity, as well as for the health and wellbeing of citizens, we need to reform this area. It's why we are undertaking this. It's why consultation is open until the end of July. I look forward to this being progressed so that we can see higher public transport usage here in South Australia.

BUS SERVICES

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens) (15:07): My question is to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. How will residents in McLaren Flat be able to access public transport? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The government's new timetables published online have removed all services from this area.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (15:07): I thank the member for his question. It is interesting that he is asking me about specific bus routes and bus stops when yesterday he was trying to assert that he couldn't actually look at the website and understand what was going on.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: this is clearly debate. It was specifically about McLaren Flat, and we ask that he address the substance of the question.

The SPEAKER: I have the point of order. I'm going to allow the minister to talk about public timetables, bus stops and buses, but if he starts teeing-off the opposition initially straightaway that is not going to go well, so I would ask the minister to think about that and I will listen carefully to his answer.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have provided information publicly previously that says that of these bus stops 31 per cent had zero average daily boardings and 71 per cent of them had five or fewer boardings over an entire day. That was over an entire day with figures that were used based

on the most busy month that can be used in assessing what the average daily boardings are. My understanding is that every single one of those stops is within that 70 per cent; in fact, quite a number of them that are within that 30 per cent.

REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:08): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Can the minister inform the house as to how the state government is stimulating the economy through the Regional Growth Fund?

The Hon. T.J. WHETSTONE (Chaffey—Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development) (15:09): Yes, I can. I thank the member for Hammond for his important regional question, because on this side of the chamber, representing all of South Australia once again, the regions are the beneficiaries.

What we have seen is that the Marshall government has brought forward the Regional Growth Fund, once again, a \$15 million stimulus round of the Regional Growth Fund, to give more life back into the regions, particularly after the COVID-19 impact, particularly after we have seen the continual headwinds that the regions have endured not only through bushfires, not only through drought, but again the COVID-19 pandemic that has impacted on many, many businesses not only in the city but in regional South Australia; they, too, have had the headwinds.

To facilitate the Regional Growth Fund, we have seen fit to bring forward another \$15 million as a stimulus round. This round is a new round. It will fast-track the recovery in our regional economies. It is critically important that businesses that see fit and want to be a part of a growing economy put submissions into this latest round. It will close on 6 July, but it's about stimulating an economy in the regional centres that, again, are critical to the state's economy. It's also important to note that this is on the back of another stimulus round. Directly after the COVID-19 pandemic was announced, we also announced an extra \$5 million of stimulus through the Regional Growth Fund. That is key to rebuilding the confidence in the regions' economy.

The applications are now open; \$2 million is the cap to unlock business investment. It is really about jump-starting some of those regional economies. It's also very, very important to understand that sits on the back of the amount of applications that already came in. The \$5 million stimulus round has had 33 applications seeking over \$19 million of funding. That's \$19 million of stimulus into the regions.

We are also seeing the confidence in the business models that is now being exposed, with the stimulus round of the Regional Growth Fund. This is on the back of and just exemplifying what the regions are going through at the moment. The Seasonal Jobs website, if we look at that, has over 2,000 page views every day. That's almost 70,000 since the Seasonal Jobs website was released. That's more than 57 job advertisements across a number of industries. For example, Citrus South Australia has been inundated with applications for jobs, and that has saved the 2020 citrus season, so that's an outstanding success.

What I will say is that the Regional Growth Fund, the stimulus round, is open. It's open for businesses in regional South Australia. So for every member in this chamber that has a regional representation, I urge you to tap on the shoulder of those businesses to say that you've got a government that is again stimulating the local economy, and it's about building our businesses. It's about giving them the opportunity to employ more people and to give every regional person an opportunity to be part of a stimulus package.

Here in South Australia we are attracting investment into this great state, strengthening regional economies and creating regional jobs in a scandal free, non-toxic environment, unlike our friends across the border with their rotten Labor branch-stacking scandals. Here in South Australia #RegionsMatter.

BUS SERVICES

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:13): My question is to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Why did the minister's office assure me only two months ago that there were no

planned changes to bus services in my electorate? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: In an email dated Tuesday 31 March the minister's office wrote to me stating, and I quote, 'There are no planned changes at this time,' only to announce cuts to bus services in my electorate just two months later.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL (Schubert—Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning) (15:13): I am trying to just piece together the time line here. If I accept what the member says is accurate in relation to that, we were running through a tender process, and we are still right in the midst of that tender process.

Certainly no decisions have been made in relation to services in the member's area. Can I say that one bit of great news for the people of Gawler is that they have been running for some time a very analog, on-demand bus service, one where you have to sort of call up an hour in advance, book in, to be able to get around. That's part of Gawler, and then there was a fixed-route service, off the top of my head, that satisfied the other part of it.

The great news is that, because of the new technology we will be trialling, we will actually be able to upgrade that service to the app-based system that we have been trialling in both Mount Barker and the Barossa Valley. It means that people who have been using that existing essentially quasi dial-a-ride kind of service are now able to, through the use of technology, get access to a better on-demand bus service.

I know that's going to be a massive improvement for the people of Gawler and it builds off the fact that we are spending \$620 million of taxpayers' money to electrify the Gawler line. The Gawler people have for so long been cynical about whether or not that line was ever going to be electrified. I'm certain that the member for Light would have been standing nodding at every press conference every time Jay Weatherill announced it or Mike Rann announced it. I'm not sure if he was at the press conferences where the project was scrapped, but there are workers out there now undertaking the work to electrify the Gawler line. A \$175 million contract has been let to buy 12 new electric—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —three-car sets. We are delivering better public transport services for the people of Gawler. Once that line is electrified and those new electric trains run down them, the people of Gawler can finally realise what they have long been promised and that is a faster, smoother and better service to Adelaide, one that provides some 15 per cent increase in capacity and one that will deliver them the better service that they were promised by the former government for a decade.

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:16): My question is to the Minister for Education. Why is one of the oldest and most respected women's studies programs delivering masters and graduate diplomas facing further marginalisation at Flinders University? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms BEDFORD: Following reductions in 2018 and the diminution of seniority of staff, this vital program for local, national and international students, who go on to work for government and NGO sectors, faces further difficulties beyond COVID leading to lower enrolments and reduced resources, and a chicken and egg situation that leads to further marginalisation of an already marginalised majority of the population, which is women.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:17): I thank the member for the question and I note her ongoing interest in tertiary education in South Australia and, indeed, programs that benefit women in South Australia. As the member is aware, I am not

responsible for management of the day-to-day activities at Flinders University. The Flinders University legislation that establishes the university and requires annual reporting to this house is under the auspices of the Minister for Education, but beyond that there are very limited day-to-day activities that I'm directly responsible for.

I will, out of an abundance of caution, check if the change identified by the member is in response to any changes in state government decisions or funding, but I suspect it is not. I suspect it is far more likely a decision that has been made by Flinders University management in response to what they see as their needs and priorities. That said, I indicate that I will be happy to assist, if this will help, in making inquiries of Flinders University, bringing to the attention of Flinders University management the question that the member has asked, and I will encourage them to respond to the member with any information that would be further useful.

As I say, I don't believe there is any decision I have taken or my agency has taken or my department has taken that is responsible for the decision the member has drawn attention to, but if there is I will also get back directly to the member.

Ministerial Statement

BUDGET AND ECONOMIC UPDATE

The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (15:18): I table a ministerial statement made by the honourable Treasurer in the other place.

Grievance Debate

PEARCE, MS D.A.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens) (15:19): Last night, the government released a statement to the media, and they purported that this statement was from a grieving family relating to the death of a family member. The government released this statement in an attempt to change the media coverage of that death. We have serious questions to ask the government about who authored this statement. Was the statement issued with the consent and knowledge of the family who the government claimed it was from?

Just imagine that we have a government—with all its resources, all its departments—issue a statement to a media outlet, and then we understand that today, after the statement had been read out on news services, a government representative called the family asking for retrospective approval of that statement. There are words for this behaviour. Most of them can be found in the criminal code: fraud and deceptively dealing with documents, let alone misconduct by a public officer, maladministration and potentially corruption.

No media adviser works for their ministers. They have contracts with the Premier. They answer to the Premier. This starts at the top. The Premier is responsible for all media statements that go out. The Premier is responsible for all actions of his government. If a subordinate is told to issue a statement, it is not the subordinate whose name is on that statement; it is the government's. If the government rings up a media outlet, the free press, and says, 'This is from the family, this statement is from the family and this is what the family's wishes are,' and it is a forgery, or it is fraud, or they did not call the family, or they did not seek approval and consent and give the family knowledge that the statement would be issued, well, heads should roll.

If they do not roll, there are other independent bodies that look at this type of behaviour. One I will not name. The one I will name is South Australia Police. The idea that anyone in government would issue a statement, see it on TV and see the statement read—of course, you cannot blame the journalist for this because a journalist in their wildest dreams would not believe that the government would issue a statement from a third party without their consent and knowledge, because that would put everyone in jeopardy.

No doubt, we will get to the bottom of this one way or another. The very idea that the first law officer of the land was not horrified by the accusation but immediately launched into a tirade against the person daring to ask the question is behaviour does not belong in democracies. The first thing the first law officer should have said was, 'I will investigate and, if that is true, it is entirely inappropriate.' We did not get that at all. What we got were accusations.

This is not the first time this modern Liberal Party has used false documents, and I know that firsthand. I have to say that if it does develop that, last night, a journalist and media outlets were given documents that were not with the consent and knowledge of the family they were purported to be from and the government sought retrospective approval from the family for those statements, what does that say about what kind of government we have in place now? A government that is simply trying to manage media by any means necessary, and the truth is not part of it.

Misrepresenting people about what they think and what they feel is an abuse of public office, and anyone, any member of the government or any public officer who does that, should immediately resign and should be subject to an independent investigation. Let's see if responsibility stops at the department door or the minister's desk. Let's see if the government will put words into actions. Let's see if the Premier meant what he said when he was opposition leader about a different standard. Let's see if this government holds itself to real account and, if it will not, independent bodies will.

CHAFFEY ELECTORATE

The Hon. T.J. WHETSTONE (Chaffey—Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development) (15:24): Today, I rise to take the opportunity to speak about and reflect on the strength of my local community, particularly through the adversity of COVID-19, and how they have risen and rallied together through an uncertain period of time, particularly owning a local small business, running a farm or just being in a service sector.

It has shown me the capacity that my local community has during times of adversity. Yes, they are fairly well versed in it, having been through the drought, the hailstorms and the low commodity prices. But again they have rallied. They have looked after one another, and I commend some of the great work they have done. I must say that many of the local businesses have adapted through the crisis, implementing new processes, and the community has rallied behind them. We have had our 'Shop Local' mini campaign that has been very successful in Chaffey. It has shown that the locals are prepared to support local businesses, family businesses, so that they can still be there when we get to the other side.

Also, I want to acknowledge the number of tourists who came into the region over the long weekend. It was an outstanding success to see that some of those restrictions had been lifted. It meant that the Riverland was once again filled with visitors. People had come up to explore the River Murray. People had come up just to explore the hospitality of the Riverland. They came up to have a look at what our parks are doing. I must commend Destination Riverland for its Return to the Riverland campaign on behalf of every tourism operator and business that has weathered the storm, because we know that many of the tourism businesses have been severely impacted.

One of the parks I would like to talk about is the Katarapko section of the Murray River National Park, which has recently opened after an 18-month closure due to some of the environmental works that have been undertaken there. That was part of the South Australian Riverland Floodplains Integrated Infrastructure Program to improve the health and resilience of the flood plain.

I visited the Katarapko area of the park and also the structures. Of course, we know that this program is part of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan to look after our environment, making sure that the wetlands are watered, that those banks of river red gums close to the main channel get a frequent water, but also that those black boxes that are set further back from the watercourse get a water so that they can survive and be part of that thriving flood plain environment.

I refer also to the completion and construction of the regulators and the fishways. Again, that is about enhancing one of the great aspects of the Murray River National Park so that the flood plains are healthy, the wildlife is there, the fish are there and breeding, and it is a great spectacle. It was great to see that the park was booked out. It was full; it was almost overflowing. People were coming, whether they were camping or just there to see what all the fuss has been about with the reopening of Katarapko. I must commend the team, headed up by Benita Dillon from the department, who have lived that park for the past 18 months and have done an outstanding job.

While I was out and about, I visited the Loxton RSL sub-branch on their centenary. As restrictions have eased, it gave me the opportunity to visit the RSL sub-branch where I met with President Rob Manuel OAM, David Ward and the secretary, Lorraine Masters. They are a very

strong, tight-knit team, doing an outstanding job on behalf of the RSL at Loxton. Recently, driving through the electorate, I had to drive down the Browns Well Highway. It is just outstanding news that a \$15 million package has been brought forward through the COVID-19 stimulus. The contracts have recently been awarded, so the Browns Well Highway will be upgraded in the coming weeks. Great news! Also, the MRI will now be at the Riverland General Hospital thanks to a \$3.5 million commitment, which is great news for health and great news for the Riverland.

PEARCE, MS D.A.

Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (15:29): I would like to place on record a time line of events that have happened over the last few weeks in respect of Debra Ann Pearce.

Debra Ann Pearce, aged 62, had resided in supported care accommodation for most of her life. She had an intellectual disability and she had mobility problems. She needed assistance with all her daily living and, from the reports I have had from family members and other acquaintances of hers, Debbie would often be seen clapping happily and singing songs and out in the public and basically making the best of her life with support.

During the course of the last four-odd weeks, I have been exposed to some stories about failures in care and, when I received an email on 1 June from a person who was particularly worried about an incident that had occurred at their residential care facility at Pooraka, I immediately called this person to inquire what they wanted to share. I was told that on the night of 1 May leading into the 2nd, Debra was being attended to by a single worker. The person who spoke to me said they had been told that this was against procedure and could not for the life of them work out how this would happen, that one person would be attempting to deliver this care.

During the course of that care, Debbie proceeded to overbalance in the bed and, I am told, was grabbed by the leg, which then fractured. Debbie was transferred to Lyell McEwin Hospital and, as happens with people who then are put into a hospital bed with a major leg fracture, she became unwell and passed away on 9 May. It was 1 June when I received an email. I asked what had been happening. The main concern was that the night worker was still working and attending to residents and that there had been no investigation done.

This person had escalated it through the managerial levels of the department, she had evidence of this and she was very concerned about the procedure of the incident report. She understood that these incident reports went to the directors in the department and to the minister, and she could not understand why nothing was happening. It was not long after that that she told me that another investigation had been triggered. In fact, since this time a couple of weeks ago, I understand that someone has been stood down pending this investigation.

This person who told me was not the only person who reported this to me, but the only person who has put it in writing. They were extremely distressed, upset and felt aggrieved. During the last two weeks, I have had numerous conversations with this person, and I have also reached out and spoken to several family members who provided consistent stories. I made sure I had absolute permission from them to escalate this through the parliamentary process and ask questions.

I was satisfied that there was an investigation being undertaken by that point. Although it was slow, it certainly happened. I felt that the process hopefully was going to come to the conclusions that it needed to come to. But why did it take so long and why are there so many people who are so desperately upset and aggrieved that they felt they had to reach out? The family are very upset that this has happened to their sister.

The family does not want people in the residential facility, who gave excellent care for many years and were lovely to Debbie and were her family, to get into trouble at all, but they do want an investigation into this. They absolutely did not give permission for any statement to be released to the media yesterday or today. They are aggrieved that that has happened. They were misled by the person in the department who rang them yesterday afternoon and a person who rang this morning and left a message, who they will not ring back or talk to.

They have spoken to me on a number of occasions today, and it is not appropriate that any employee of the government has a conversation with someone and puts information out into the

media about them without their permission. This is the shameful thing—not that there is any lack of care by me; I have been providing that support for the last two weeks—and it is shameful.

ELDER ELECTORATE

Mrs POWER (Elder) (15:34): I rise today to talk about an initiative my team and I have undertaken of late—namely, 5,000 calls to local residents and businesses in just five weeks. I set this challenge for my team and I at the height of the COVID-19 restrictions because it was a significantly challenging time for many people. It was a priority for me as a local member to touch base and speak with as many residents as possible in the face of the global pandemic.

As we have all experienced, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted our everyday and day-to-day life, so I thought it was important to reach out to people in our local community to ensure that they had the opportunity to voice their questions and have the necessary support and information in an environment that was changing by the day. The 5,000 calls in five weeks challenge, which we not only reached but surpassed, wrapped up earlier this month.

As a member of parliament, I am very fortunate to be able to speak with so many people in our community and so many business owners day in, day out about our community and our state. Obviously, during the five weeks, and in light of the COVID-19 restrictions, that looked a little bit different and so it was done over the phone. It was an intense period of connection. From Hawthorn to Cumberland Park, from Mitchell Park to Clapham and everywhere in between, my team and I heard people's thoughts, their feedback, their questions and their praise, during a time when many people were unable to connect with their loved ones as they normally would.

One thing that was abundantly clear from the many conversations is just how lucky people have felt, how lucky South Australians have felt to live in South Australia. Of course, we know that SA is one of the great states at any time of the century, but certainly in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic we are in one of the safest states in one of the safest countries in the world. I had countless calls with residents who wanted me to pass on their thanks to the government, the Premier and the health authorities for their handling of the crisis.

In the first two weeks of the challenge, we prioritised reaching out to local businesses and the elderly, two groups in our community who were hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions that were put in place to save the lives of many South Australians. Overwhelmingly, many of our senior citizens found the call reassuring, with many grateful for the opportunity to have a chat, given the isolation they found themselves in. They also appreciated our care for their welfare, and many said that they now felt that they could reach out to my office in a different way just because they had already had a chance to chat with us.

For businesses, the calls provided an opportunity for them to raise their concerns about the COVID-19 restrictions and the impact they were having on their businesses and, of course, for them to be able to ask questions around the stimulus packages, which both the state and the federal governments released very quickly in the pandemic to bolster our economy and to support people who were doing it tough.

The final three weeks of the challenge included speaking with people of all ages and professions and people from all suburbs throughout the electorate. It was really a random selection of people in our community, and this melting pot of voices and opinions was a wonderful opportunity to hear about the issues that were most affecting people during this challenging time. For many in our community, our calls provided them with the chance to raise local issues. Some of them talked about the footpaths needing repair or trees they had issues with and, of course, they asked specific questions about the restrictions.

I was really heartened by the number of people who wanted to do the right thing in our community and just needed some of the restrictions explained to them and some clarity so that they could abide by them and do the right thing as a neighbour. Without a doubt, the majority of people were appreciative of the work the government did and continues to do. I was very grateful for their positive feedback, and I would really like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to everybody in our community for doing their part in stopping the spread of the coronavirus. We could not have done this as a government without South Australians coming together.

Obviously, there is still more work to be done. We are doing extremely well in South Australia, but the virus is still out there. We have the challenges of the economic crisis and, no doubt, together we will continue to rise to those challenges. I look forward to continuing to work with and for my community as we progress from here.

BUS SERVICES

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:39): Today, I wish to talk about the impact the bus cuts will have on the people in my electorate, not only the people but also small businesses, which will be affected by the bus cuts because people will not be able to travel throughout the electorate to access these businesses and services.

Before I get to some examples provided by people in my community about the proposed bus cuts as we know them—and I say 'as we know them' because it is not very clear from the website how the services will impact at this point in time—I want to talk about these cuts to bus services, as we understand them today, and the difference between this Marshall Liberal government and the opposition Labor Party, because these cuts go to the heart of what the role of government is in our society.

They go to the heart of the relationship between government and the community, and they also go to the heart of what the role of government is in supporting our community. It is interesting to note that the language used by the Minister for Transport in justifying these cuts is that of corporate management, corporate business, not the language one would use about a community service, a service that is important for people in our communities. I will elaborate because I think it is a very important point.

As I said, it illustrates the big difference between this government and the opposition Labor Party and the relationship it has with its community. The minister refers to efficiency and how the cuts will improve efficiency, and by efficiency he means that it will cost less. It will cost less to provide services, but that is achieved also by reducing services. Contrast that with an effective bus service. An effective bus service talks about an element of efficiency but does it do the job it is required to do? Does the public bus system support people in our community? Does it meet the needs of individual people in our community?

So it is efficiency versus effectiveness. I support effectiveness because it talks about the whole community and what we need to do for our community. Then the minister talks about market forces. He went on and on about the importance of market forces, and he is quite right to talk about market forces. It is the difference between market forces and need in our community. The reality is that market forces do not always deliver on need. They do not deliver on need. Market failure has been shown time and again throughout history, throughout all societies.

What these cuts do not address are the needs of our community, and by that I mean the needs of people with a disability. The minister says, 'Well, what's an extra few hundred metres if you have to walk to the bus stop?' If you have a disability, or you are infirm, elderly or whatever, the 200 metres or 300 metres more to walk to a bus stop means the difference between accessing a public transport system or not. That is the difference. Market forces are about those who can pay without addressing those who need it the most, and that is the difference. I support addressing the issue of needs in our community.

Then the minister talks about customers. 'Customers' is an interesting concept—when you reduce the value of citizenship or citizenry to just customers. In other words, customers pay, and you only deliver to customers who pay. That is a market force. That is market business language. It is the difference between that and what citizens require in our community to live a dignified life. What is it our citizens and our society need to be treated with dignity?

It is not about being treated as a customer. It is about being treated as a citizen and the inherent rights that come with citizenship in our community. It is about ensuring that our citizens—and I use that word broadly to distinguish citizens from customers—have the right to access services, and it is part of a civil society. When I say citizens, I also include people who are Australian residents, etc. The difference in the language is very important. It talks about citizenship; it talks about needs.

That is very important, because the things the minister talks about—efficiency, market forces and customers—are all about profit, making the system cost less so that the new private operator of the buses can make profits, compared to what I believe: that the services should be there for people. We need to look after the people in our community. What these cuts do is undermine the needs of the people in our community.

MEMBERS' REMARKS

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (15:44): Today, I place on the record my sincere sympathies to the family of the woman whose death, and allegations surrounding her death, was raised in the parliament by the member for Hurtle Vale yesterday, and the circumstances of her history being thrown into the media spotlight. I say that because there have been further questions raised today and allegations made by the member for West Torrens and the member for Hurtle Vale in relation to the alleged reliability of statements that have been made to the media on behalf of the family yesterday.

It is tragic enough that they might lose their sister or other family relationship, but I feel deeply saddened that it was thrown into the public arena. I have an email, which I place on the record, from the Department of Human Services, making it abundantly clear what occurred. It was sent, I think, at 5.37pm on 17 June, and states:

To clarify my earlier emails, I have double checked with the Accommodation Services director who spoke to the family and these are their words on the record:

- We are grateful for the care that our sister received.
- We have no concerns with staff at the home and do not want them to be blamed for her death.
- We do not wish for this to be a matter of media interest.

That concludes the transmission on that matter. I also raise for the record my concern that the member for Hurtle Vale has persisted again today in making allegations as to the origin of this material. I do note, and I am concerned to note, that apparently a statement—purportedly a comment of the Hon. Kelly Vincent which had been posted online and addressed to the member for Hurtle Vale—stated:

You are being deliberately misleading for point scoring. This family did not want to be in the media and you know that. You are profiting from grief and it's disgusting.

I do not make an assertion as to the accuracy of these matters, but I make the point that it has disappeared from being online. I think it is incumbent upon the member for Hurtle Vale to remember that she is a member of the parliament and she has responsibilities. We have a great privilege in this house to be able to make statements to protect the interests of our constituents and to have free and frank disclosure of matters, but we have a statement of principles—which is like our MPs code of conduct—which requires us to also be cognisant of making statements under privilege in this house.

I think it was bad enough that the member saw fit to name this person yesterday without having identified the basis upon which it was necessary to do so. I think that was perhaps ill-advised or a circumstance for which she might be forgiven if she was new in the parliament, but she must understand—I think all members need to understand—the sensitivity of these matters and that we need to respect our constituents.

Certainly, by all means bring issues of importance to the parliament, but it has got to a stage where there are allegations being made and a family has been drawn into and trapped in a sick political stunt, and that is not acceptable, and it should not be acceptable for anyone in the parliament. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to ensure that he at least provides some counsel for the member for Hurtle Vale if she does not want to listen to me, about the importance of maintaining the dignity and respect of families who are in grief.

Parliamentary Procedure

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (15:49): I move: That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 30 June 2020 at 11am.

Motion carried.

Bills

FAIR TRADING (FUEL PRICING INFORMATION) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Harvey): The member for Hammond.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:50): Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. What a fine job, and how good you look in that role today, sir. I rise to continue some comments in regard to the Fair Trading (Fuel Pricing Information) Amendment Bill. At the conclusion of my remarks just before the lunch break, I was talking about the ownership of service stations and how there are some quite large companies involved, with Woolworths involved with Caltex, Coles involved with Shell service stations and, obviously, we have the On The Run group here in South Australia.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Harvey): Member for Hammond, there is a point of order. The member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sir, the Attorney-General read from a state document in her grievance debate. I ask that it be tabled.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I note the member's request for the provision of the copy of the email. I am happy to oblige him. I want to make it absolutely clear what has been received. I will just find it again in my folder, but I undertake that provision.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Harvey): The member for Hammond.

Mr PEDERICK: I was talking about the ownership of fuel companies in this state. There are not too many independents left. I noted the On The Run network, which is a network of essentially BP outlets throughout this state.

I note the forefather of Peregrine On The Run was Fred Shahin, the father of Sam Shahin and his brothers Charlie and Yasser. He came out here from the Middle East in 1984 and started with one service station. I think it is another one of those success stories of a migrant coming to the state and working hard and the family subsequently working hard and doing extremely well. Now, with at least 130 sites, I think they have somewhere around 4,000 employees, so they are significant economic contributors to this state.

What I also want to acknowledge, because I think it is important in this debate, is that we have had investment from bigger companies, obviously the bigger fuel companies, in the past. This is a company that has invested in fuel in this state and its service stations have made a massive investment in my electorate, at The Bend Motorsport Park, of at least \$160 million. I think Sam Shahin is probably resigned to the fact that some of that he will never see again. It is good that he is dedicated to his sport, driving his Porsche around the track.

It is so great to see that massive investment just outside Tailem Bend. I note that the new dragstrip is being built there as we speak, and it will be fantastic not just for the locals but for people to get out there from Adelaide. It is only an hour from the edge of the city, and it is fantastic entertainment and in exactly the right place. I also note the recent investment at the Mallala track in recent times. What I am saying is that there are some people who have made significant investments, many and varied, in this state in regard to service stations. I acknowledge all of those investments.

I also want to acknowledge another thing, and I know that it is talked about widely in this debate, and that is the price of fuel. I certainly believe that the price of fuel not just here, because we work on world parity pricing, would be a lot more if we did not have fracture stimulation around the world. As I have said to this house before, I was involved with it in the early eighties. For 12 months I did low volume fracture stimulation with Gearhart Australia. High volume fracturing in the US has pretty well made the United States self sustaining in oil and gas.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: Energy independence.

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, energy independence. As we know, fuel is dear enough. We have had many conversations in this house around fracture stimulation and access to fuel, but the simple fact is that we are going to need oil and gas for a long time yet. I appreciate that things are moving forward in relation to electric cars, but they still need their power generated from somewhere.

We have a vast range of power generation, whether it is solar, wind or gas, and we are still linked in to coal obviously in the network through the interconnector. We are going to build—and I am sure it will get through all the regulatory approvals—the interconnector through to New South Wales, which will link our renewables, our solar and our wind, through to coal in the Eastern States.

I want to make the point that we will be reliant on petrol, oil, gas and diesel for a long time yet. It has always intrigued me how diesel can be—I do not know, I will throw a number out—20 or 30¢ a litre dearer than unleaded. What is that all about? Why I ask that question so much is that obviously it gets cleaned up in refineries to a reasonable state but it is far less refined than any unleaded petrol.

Part of my work was in the oilfield all those years ago at East Mereenie field, a few hundred kilometres outside Alice Springs. To get access to fuel they had a light crude well and all they had on the surface was a separator to drain the water out. We ran that light crude oil straight into our diesel vehicles. They ran a bit lumpy, but it was good enough.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: That's right. I saw it myself.

Mr PEDERICK: Absolutely. It was certainly good enough for the long haul trucks, the rig trucks and certainly for our Toyotas, or what we called them in the field, as the Minister for Primary Industries would know from his time in the gas fields, whoopies. Mainly, it was Toyotas that would run on this light crude oil, which essentially comes out of the ground and you just separate a bit of water off and away you go.

It has always intrigued me that the price of diesel can be so much more than the price of unleaded. I believe that there are a lot more diesel vehicles on the road now than in times gone by and it is a very good fuel, but it just shows where there is a need. Certainly, there was no need at the time because the fuel was good enough for diesel vehicles to cart fuel. It was very energy efficient to cart fuel those 200 or 300 kilometres out to the oilfield and have all that cost and impact on the companies. It is a big tale, the price of fuel.

The measure we are taking involves several apps, depending on whichever app you are keen on. As I said, I will probably rely on my two young boys to download it for me and make sure I have everything on spec and ready to roll.

The Hon. C.L. Wingard: You got them dinner last night.

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, I did get them dinner last night. We can get this online so that we can save costs for South Australians and move forward with real-time pricing and distinctly heavy penalties if people do not comply. I commend the bill.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome) (16:00): I also would like to contribute to this bill. I would sincerely like to express my great thanks to and admiration for the member for Florey for the great work that she has done since the last election on this issue of fuel price transparency. I have been working with the member. The more we investigate this issue, the more it appears that the major retailers have taken the general public for granted. I have had numerous discussions with the RAA regarding this issue and commend them for their continued campaign. It has been going on for many years, and they have been asking lots of questions.

It intrigues me to see many service stations change their prices, in some cases more than once a day. As the member for West Torrens pointed out yesterday, as a state we are dependent on fuel imports. The member for Hammond also mentioned the issue of reliance on overseas oil and how we should be looking at more of what we have within Australia and South Australia in particular. We no longer have the Mobil refinery at Port Stanvac, which was closed several years ago, so all the state's fuel requirements are imported and, as I understand it, through a single distribution point at Outer Harbor.

From there, again to my knowledge, it is distributed to the various operators across the state. These operators consist of several oil company brands, mostly major global operators with only a few of the smaller brands, including a couple of independents. From my memory, when a shipment is received into the storage facility at Outer Harbor, all excise and government taxes are paid at the time of the shipment being received. Wholesale landed prices are then calculated on the price of the crude oil barrels at the time of the shipment being loaded at the destination. This forms part of the calculation of the wholesale price, established at the distribution point for South Australian retailers and commercial users.

From there, each distributor is then charged the same wholesale price—well, that is the theory. But this question needs to be clarified: do all retailers get the opportunity to purchase at the same wholesale price, or do the larger operators get a better deal because of their volumes? If so, they should be able to offer lower retail prices. This is one of the reasons why I support the member for Florey's amendments based on the Western Australian model because, unlike the government's bill, they apply to wholesalers as well as retailers.

That is the degree of transparency we need to see in the fuel marketplace in our state. It begs the question: how fair is the competition for the smaller service station operators to compete and continue in this field? I drive to Adelaide for parliamentary work and am astounded at the price volatility and variability during my three-hour drive. Sometimes there are price changes, even by service stations with the same owners that are in close proximity, more than once in a single day.

As you come through Port Wakefield, there are three roadhouses that most people know, whether travelling north or south. Out of those three roadhouses, two always have the same price. The other one, which is an independent, United, is always 10¢ to 15¢ or sometimes 20¢ per litre cheaper. You have to ask: how can a small operator the same distance from the supply point still have a cheaper price? I come to Adelaide in the morning, and then on the way back I see the petrol prices at particular service stations have significantly increased from when I travelled that morning.

Did all these sites receive a new tanker of fuel that day? Has there really been a significant change in their underlying costs? What really justifies this kind of price change, or is it just market manipulation? A good question. Surely, if pump prices increase, it should be in response to change costs. That is, when the last delivery is fully used and the site has received a new load of fuel by a road tanker, then the new price should come into effect.

This brings me to another question. When these new loads come from the distribution point at Outer Harbor, is the fuel coming from the same international shipment? That is, is it all coming in from the same location? What price was the global crude oil price per barrel at the time when that shipment was loaded overseas? Bear in mind, I understand our wholesale prices are based on the Singaporean crude oil price and, as mentioned by the member for Florey, the crude oil price recently was at a 17-year low. It begs the question yet again: why do retail fuel prices fluctuate so frequently? Indeed, as mentioned by the member for West Torrens yesterday, the crude oil price was at one stage in the negative.

Ms Bedford: Spectacular speech.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: It was a great speech.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: I was inspired by the member for Florey. You're my muse.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: I will start again. Indeed, as mentioned by the member for West Torrens yesterday, the crude oil price at one stage was in the negative. From memory, it was minus \$37 per barrel, meaning that producers were paying for people to store their crude oil at that particular period of time. Recently, we have seen retail prices get as low as, I think, 70¢ per litre in Adelaide.

Ms Bedford: 73.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: Okay, corrected. The member for Florey says 73. But it was only momentary and the average price has remained, to my knowledge, at about \$1.08 per litre for the last 45 days. Of course, there are costs that have to be factored in, including commonwealth government excise of 42.3¢ per litre, shipment costs for import to South Australia, retailers' profit margins, road freight costs to regional locations across the state, plus their profit margin.

The member for Florey mentioned that in April CommSec found that the retail margins were at a record high of 22.7¢ per litre. I have found a later report in May that retail profit margins are now even higher than this. It is now at 24.6¢ per litre—a record high profit margin. That is around double the two-year average. I note a report by the ABC's Philip Lasker and Michael Janda of 5 May, as follows:

Petrol has not been this cheap since 2004, but many motorists watching the global price of oil plunge feel like it should be lower still.

Figures from the Australian Institute of Petroleum, quoted by CommSec, show that the national average price of unleaded petrol last week fell to 98.3¢ per litre.

Metropolitan prices fell to an average of 94.9¢, while regional prices dropped to 105.1¢ per litre.

But wholesale prices have been dropping even more into the low 80s—the lowest levels in around two decades.

That means the retail petrol margin—the difference between what the retailer pays for fuel and the pump price the motorist pays—is now at a record 24.6¢, according to CommSec.

The article is very informative and goes on to comment on the high prices being experienced in various eastern seaboard capitals, including Brisbane and Sydney, both of which have Fuel Check-style price monitoring schemes which the government proposes in this bill. In Brisbane and Sydney, prices were hitting \$1.20 per litre on the long weekend. The article goes on to state:

Mr Felsman noted the particularly extreme example of Adelaide, where prices surged 33 cents in a matter of days last week, before easing back somewhat.

Mr Felsman is CommSec's senior economist. Further on, the article refers to Mr Geoff Trotter who operates the petrol price monitoring company FuelTrac. Mr Trotter believes motorists in Australia are being uniquely gouged by fuel companies. He says:

The difference in some capital cities between petrol stations relates to where they are in the pricing cycle.

It's helped oil companies achieve a higher margin than they otherwise would have achieved.

The price cycle is unique to the Australian petrol market. It doesn't exist in any other market that I've ever seen.

It's fake to the extent that the increases don't bear any relationship to any change in the underlying wholesale price.

I consider anything above 99 cents a litre over the top in terms of profit margin and anything below 99 cents would be a fair price for the oil company, for the dealer and certainly for the motorist.

Regarding the unique Australian petrol market, I certainly do not see supermarkets putting up their prices and dropping them down on a daily basis. They are set. Petrol comes in at a set price; therefore, the profit margin should be realistic. In my area within Upper Spencer Gulf, prices have only gone below \$1 per litre on a couple of occasions, unlike in Adelaide, where it has been below \$1 per litre on many occasions. Even so, the 45-day average price for Adelaide prices is still \$1.08, which is well above where it should be were the market not dominated by the major retailers.

I know that there has to be a freight cost of getting to regional locations, but this increase in costs compared with Adelaide prices is hurting not only the general public but also our regional business operators, who in many cases need to get their raw products from Adelaide and transport them to their facility, manufacture their products and then transport their product back to Adelaide for distribution to the larger market in Adelaide or interstate. In many cases, it could be far more economical and competitive for them to relocate to Adelaide or interstate if they want to achieve far better profitability. They elect to stay in the regions because they want to create work within the regions and they understand the value of the regions.

Many years ago, there was a fuel equalisation scheme which established regional zones in an attempt to minimise the difference in fuel costs between the country and the city. By stabilising metropolitan prices, we can also stabilise regional prices. This will allow far more opportunities to establish businesses in regional South Australia and in turn diversify the spread of the population instead of concentrating in the Adelaide metropolitan areas. That is why I will be moving amendments to this bill during the committee stage.

Even though the regions may not have a large share of the population, we need to remember from where the majority of the funds or royalties comes into the government coffers: the regions. Upper Spencer Gulf and the northern section of the state are not only going to be tremendous contributors to royalties for resources and minerals, but very importantly, to renewable energy for the state and future growth. I commend this bill to the house.

The Hon. T.J. WHETSTONE (Chaffey—Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development) (16:12): I, too, rise to speak on the Fair Trading (Fuel Pricing Information) Amendment Bill. Many members in their contributions talked about their concerns about the price of fuel. Over the course of my life, there has always been a focus on the cost of fuel. Really, at the end of the day, it was about the monthly fuel bill.

Living in the regions, the majority of people I associate with have multiple vehicles, and that means multiple pain when you go to the bowser. If you have to go to your farm bowser, which has had fuel dropped off at a nominal price, every vehicle that you have—especially if you have multiple vehicles—continues to put a drain on your bottom line.

If you reflect on people in regional South Australia, the majority of families each have a vehicle. There is a need for independence, and in most cases, a significant amount of distance needs to be travelled. If you are living on farm or out of town, we know that comes with a burden. In many cases, we do not have public transport. A lot of regional centres do not have taxis or Ubers and so we have to gear up to use high levels of fuel.

If you live in an electorate such as Chaffey, everyone has one or more boats in their driveway or shed. They also have multiple motorbikes. They have multiple pieces of machinery that chew fuel at every step of the way. We have to remember, too, that those primary producers, by and large, nowadays have equipment, tools and all sorts of implements that, if not fuel driven, would be assisted by a vehicle that would generate power through a PDO that would require fuel to drive those pieces of machinery.

On top of that, we travel a lot of long distances. As a regional MP and now with the privilege of being a minister, I cover a minimum of about 100,000 kilometres a year. With that comes the burden of the cost of fuel and over time it is having an impact. On reflection, as a young fellow I remember way back working at the local service station after school. I remember putting fuel into vehicles at 10¢ a litre. That might give some sort of disclosure as to my age, but it gives me the opportunity to reflect that we have come a long way.

The cost of fuel is driven, in some instances, by the cost of production, but the majority of it is about the large corporations that continue to drive the numbers in relation to the price of fuel. If we look around, particularly in the regions, the price of fuel, as a number of members have said, is 20¢ to 30¢ a litre dearer; occasionally it is around parity with what we find in the city.

One thing that has raised my eyebrows, particularly due to the experience with COVID-19, is that we have seen a significant decline in the amount of fuel that the service stations are selling. That means the big end of town, the big fuel companies, are hurting because they do not have the turnover and yet we saw the price go through the floor. We saw diesel go from around \$1.30 or \$1.40 a litre down to well under \$1.00 and in some cases down to 80¢ a litre. Here in Adelaide I saw some service stations with unleaded as low as 65¢ a litre.

The math does not add up. Normally when there is a reduction in sales that means that the price goes up to cover all the ongoing or fixed costs with the running of an operation, the running of a service station, the running of the logistics to get the fuel to the service station, the processing and the distribution costs. Those numbers really do defy the odds as to why we see the large fluctuations in the cost of fuel.

As a young fellow, you never really think about having to buy a fuel-efficient car. I remember way back in the early days as an apprentice filling up my EH Holden, which was an HP EH Holden I might add, a Bathurst version. It had a 179 with a high compression head with twin Strombergs and headers, which meant that it used more fuel. Back then it was more about pride of place and making sure you had the fastest car, and it did not matter what the cost of fuel was as long as you got there

first. A lot of my friends, my mates and my car racing colleagues had Torana XU1s, Monaros and we had all sorts.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: The XU1 was a great car.

The Hon. T.J. WHETSTONE: Great car. It is one of the most underestimated cars. The GTR XU1, a little six cylinder with triple Strombergs, goes to Bathurst and kills the giant-killer, the GT phase 3. Henry Ford would never have guessed that that would be the case. They are the legacies these big fuel-guzzling, heavy steel bumper-barred cars left and still have today. They are fetching mammoth prices, because they are some of the great pride of Australian history, particularly in the car or motor manufacturing industry.

Again, we look forward. Particularly in my chosen sport of waterski racing, we look at the cost of fuel, we look at the type of fuels and putting large drums of fuel into boats that are generating between 1,650 and 1,700 horse power. Yes, they consume a lot of fuel, but at the same time that was part of the chosen sport that I used to compete in.

It just typifies the reliance that we have on fuel, whether it is a pastime, whether it is work, whether it is an occupation, whether it is the high consumption of living in a regional centre and how reliant we are, particularly on farm. As I said, being isolated tends to make you more reliant on fuel. Having machinery, implements or any maintenance-type programs on farm you become very, very reliant, whether it is diesel or whether it is any fuel products and the oils that come with it. Putting large amounts of hours into this machinery again requires significant amounts of fossil fuel inputs, and that comes at great cost.

Again, this fuel app, I think, will help—whether it helps the bottom line, whether it helps the hip pocket, or whether it just satisfies curiosity, I think will be determined along the way. Before I go on, I just want to pick up what the member for Hammond said about his experience in the oil industry, or the oil and gas sector, and when he worked up in the Cooper Basin.

I worked up there as a project manager and I, too, saw a significant amount of capacity for, well, I would not call it crude, I would call it condensate up there. The quality of condensate in our aquifers deep under is somewhat puke. I would call it at best clear green when you compare it with some of the great condensates and crude oils in the northern hemisphere, which is dark, black treacle and which tends to make a much better product, and you receive much more of the higher value return in some of those condensate.

We talked about a barrel of oil. That is about 35 gallons in old-fashioned terms—about 160 litres. That is what we talk about in today's terms. When we talk about the price of crude oil, it comes in a barrel and it normally comes in that quantity. At one point in time we were installing the bean pumps, and for those of you who have been up through some of the oil fields, whether it is here in the Cooper Basin or somewhere else across the globe, you would see those knocking magpies, as you would call them.

What we used to do is that we would put the condensate straight into the tanks and it would run these bean pumps that would suck oil out of the ground and then pump it to tanks. It would then on-go to the processing plant at Moomba central, and then most of it would be pumped down to Port Bonython where it would be put into ships and shipped away.

I guess that does allow me to reflect on just the enormity of the oil and gas sector. The cost of the exploration is the big cost. It is not expensive by any stretch of the imagination to extract. Once you have done the exploration into the down hole and found it and got positive pressure, or if you have had to suck it out, it normally becomes an unviable well. Again, I do understand the complexities of sucking out fossil fuels out of our underground aquifers, and what it means to an economy.

I think the transparency really is more important and particularly, as I have said, coming back to the regions in South Australia. The regional centres are at a disadvantage. They do not have the competition but they do have the capacity. A primary producer gets the diesel fuel rebate and that does help. That takes a lot of pressure off the cost of running a farm or running a lot of equipment. As the Deputy Speaker would know only too well, there are a number of vehicles that you need to have. Whether you are running livestock, planting crops or harvesting crops, maintaining crops or maintaining your equipment, it all seems to come back to the amount of fuel that you use.

Again, the information and the transparency are key to the success of this app. It gives us the ability to be satisfied when we are looking to fill up our tank. We can go to the app and note whether it is around the corner in the next town and actually have the capacity to buy larger stores of fuel for on-farm storage. That is the way regional people live their lives, particularly those heavily reliant on fuel.

We have to acknowledge that people living in the regions have to travel longer distances to socialise, to go to work or just in the way they live their lives. Everything is at a much further distance away and, again, to achieve those distances there are more inputs into your vehicle—and that is primarily fuel. The more you travel the more fuel you need, and the more you travel the more you get to achieve.

There are other disadvantages living in some of our regions and one is that the majority of us do not have public transport. Most people who live in the city take for granted that they have public transport—buses, trains, trams, taxis, Ubers—at their disposal. If you live in the regions—in some cases somewhat more isolated areas—you have to rely on putting more fuel into your tank to get to where you have to go. Whether it is visiting or for work, it costs more to do that same operation than it would normally in the cities.

I guess the discount is always a problem. I have made it very clear to my children because all three of them drive vehicles. They are very watchful and understand the cycle—what day is the best day to fill up with fuel—and make sure that they get the best deal possible so that they can capitalise on the high cost of filling up a car with fuel and then, of course, doing plenty of kilometres. My constituents have identified the discrepancies where we have one town that could be 10¢ a litre dearer. Some people are driving 15 or 20 kilometres to fill up their vehicles at 10¢ a litre cheaper—and good on them because that is, I would say, the sort of desperation that they use in order to save a dollar or two, particularly when filling up.

People need to understand that the cost of fuel is a large input to any primary sector. It is a large input to any regional person. It is a larger input to any people living in an isolated situation. I think we need to acknowledge that, and that is why the fuel price app will improve the information available and it will give consumers a choice. That is really what it is about: giving consumers the choice to fill up at the servo that is five kilometres up the road or a servo that is 25 kilometres up the road. It gives country motorists the ability to compare prices and then make their choice.

It is inevitable that in the coming decades we will see somewhat less reliance on fossil fuels and more reliance on other forms of fuel, whether it be electric vehicles, whether it be hydrogen or whether it be something very new that is not before us at the moment. I think it is important that we deal with the capacity that we deal in today. We know that electric vehicles are not proving successful in the primary sector, if we are talking heavy vehicles, trucks and tractors. There are prototypes out there but, particularly with the heavy workloads or the loads that are put on those engines, they consume very quickly, whether it is electricity, whether it is diesel or whether it is gas.

What we are seeing at the moment is that there has been probably 50 years of development, and there will be another 50 years of development to see a new world that we live in. I see fossil fuels still being a part of our life for the next two, three, four, five decades but to a diminished amount. I think that is a good thing. It is advancement and it is also dealing with our contribution to CO₂ emissions. I will take this opportunity to be very proud to say that, as a government, we have given our farmers the choice of GM technologies.

That is not just about the seed that we plant. It is not just about the food that we eat. It is about reducing the chemicals that we put in to the atmosphere and it is about reducing the CO₂ emissions because we have fewer tractor hours that we will be using on-farm because we will not be out there putting chemicals on plants and we will not be out there continuing to spray herbicides on weeds. We will be out there being a part of saving those emissions that go into our environment.

We know the primary sector that grows our food do have to put large amounts of inputs into their business operation. It is a little bit like the CO₂ emissions that we are looking at at the moment to reduce cows putting CO₂ emissions into the environment; they burp and they fart, and they are large emitters. Some of the technologies that we will put in train now will be—

Ms Bedford: Can you fix those prices?

The Hon. T.J. WHETSTONE: —yes—about reducing emissions. Having a good fuel app is about getting cheaper fuel. It is about saving money. It is about making sure that you do the best with what you have. We are going to use our devices for a whole lot more as life progresses, and a fuel app is just one of those. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr PICTON (Kaurna) (16:32): I rise to speak on this very important piece of legislation that is vitally important for people who live in my electorate in the southern suburbs. In the electorate of Kaurna, in areas like Seaford, Hackham or Noarlunga Downs, people are acutely aware of what the petrol price is because they need to fill up their tanks very regularly because they live 30 kilometres away from town, and many people have to drive much, much further than that to get to work.

Sadly, since the decline of manufacturing in the southern suburbs, there have been more and more people who have to travel from the southern suburbs to the outer northern suburbs to get to work, or even to the north-western suburbs out at Techport to get to work. Those people spend a lot of their time in the car. Those people spend a significant proportion of their income on petrol and on their car solely to get to work. If the government has its way, through privatisation and cuts to bus services, that is going to be an even higher percentage of people who will have to drive and pay a significant amount of money for petrol.

However, the people I represent are continually getting screwed by the oil companies, getting screwed by the system that makes it difficult for them to know when it is the right time to fill up. It makes it difficult for them to get proper competition. It makes it difficult for them to get proper information. What we want to do in this parliament is to give those people a fair go, so they have a proper choice, proper market competition, that enables them to have the choice of where they go to fill up with petrol, to have complete information. It is a part of a proper market, a perfect market, to have perfect information. Consumers do not have perfect information at the moment about when they fill up with petrol. It is a game of luck. It is a game of chance and people at the end of the day bear the brunt of that.

I would like to congratulate the member for Florey on moving her amendments and on being a tireless advocate for bringing in a proper, fair dinkum system for South Australia that is going to protect consumers and is going to give them the best available information. That is why on this side of the house we will be supporting the member for Florey's amendments to this legislation that are going to give consumers the greatest amount of information and the greatest certainty in terms of filling up their fuel tank.

Last year, I was going to the Seaford Meadows train station, as I do from time to time, to hand out some leaflets and have a chat to commuters. I believe that it was probably about the privatisation of the train services at the time. As I was driving from my house at Port Noarlunga, I heard Spence Denny on ABC radio talking about fuel prices and how there was a dramatic increase happening across the city in fuel prices that day.

One of the areas that had lower prices at that time was Seaford, so I took a picture as I was driving past some of these lower prices and sent it through to the ABC. By the time I had finished speaking to people and left, probably an hour or an hour and a half later, I went past again and the price had risen by about 30¢ a litre. This is what people are having to deal with. You want to go and fill up your tank at a cheap price. You hear about it—it might be on the radio—but by the time you get there it has skyrocketed by 30¢ a litre.

Ms Bedford: You take an hour off work.

Mr PICTON: That's right. The member for Florey says you take time off work to do it. This is not a good system, and what the government is proposing does not address the situation where people find these rapid changes in prices and are not able to appropriately plan or appropriately shop around because, by the time they get there, the price has changed. That is why we are happy to support the member for Florey's amendments, which will mean a fair dinkum system that is going to protect consumers in those sorts of situations.

A lot of people in my electorate are very grateful that we have in my electorate a decent amount of competition through the fact that we have Liberty petrol stations and Mobil petrol stations

that have been providing good competition in the market. There are a lot of places where those sorts of competitions do not exist and they tend to have higher prices because of that lack of competition. What we are hoping to enable consumers to do, if they get access to a real scheme, as is in place in Western Australia, is to plan and say, 'This is where the cheapest price is available for me in my vicinity today,' and go to that, whether it is a Liberty or whether it is one of the bigger players.

Under the government's proposal, they will still be up to the chopping and changing of people. Good on them, as that is what capitalism is designed to do—people trying to make as much money as possible—but there is a significant amount of effort that those companies put in to manipulate the market and get as much money as possible out of the market. This bill is about protecting consumers, and that is why we will be supporting the amendments from the member for Florey—because we believe that they offer the greatest protection for consumers.

I understand that the scheme being promoted by the member for Florey has been in place in Western Australia for 20 years, whereas the scheme being promoted, only as a trial mind you, by the Marshall government has only been in place in Queensland for two years. It has only been in place as a trial there and they are only promoting it as a trial here. This is very different from what was promoted at the last election, when we were told that there was agreement. We had certainly promoted this. The then opposition had promoted it.

We then had two years when nothing seemed to happen on this whatsoever, and now we have come up with this scheme, which is only a trial and not actually a full scheme. We think that is disappointing. If the amendments we are supporting do not pass, we will not seek to block the bill. We will support the bill because it provides some improvement on the status quo, but it is certainly not what we think will provide the ultimate benefit for consumers.

Ultimately, if the Attorney-General is successful in getting her bill passed, those consumers will be able to judge what has been the outcome. Are they getting cheaper fuel because of that? We will certainly be talking to those consumers in terms of whether they believe the Attorney's solution here has delivered any benefits. I suspect the benefits will be very marginal for consumers. Time will tell. We will certainly be talking to people about that and holding the government accountable if there have not been benefits to people at the end of the day, particularly people in outer suburbs, such as in my electorate, or in regional areas, where a significant amount of weekly income is devoted to filling up your tank.

It is not 'fill up your tank once every few weeks or once a month': it is 'fill up your tank more than once a week' for those people who have to drive very long distances. That is why it is so important to get this legislation right. Part of the strange element we are in in terms of the COVID pandemic response around the world is that petrol prices have actually been lower during this period. I fear that is not going to last, though. We are already seeing petrol prices increasing, combined with the economic headwinds that people are facing.

We know that we have the second highest unemployment in Australia. We know that the proportion of people with jobs at the moment in South Australia is the lowest proportion it has been since September 2001. We know that women are being hit harder in terms of job losses than men. We know that we have seen over the past few months a significant number of job losses, and we know that there is significant risk to come if we see a reduction in JobKeeper or JobSeeker in their support for the community.

There will be more economic headwinds. That means that getting measures like this right is so important because people will have reduced budgets. People will be hurting economically and, if they are facing significantly higher petrol prices and an inability to properly be able to get the information they need to get a lower price, then that will hit them hard. With those words, we support what the member for Florey has been doing, her hard work on this issue and her advocacy. We hope that those amendments are successful to bring in a fair dinkum scheme to support consumers.

Personal Explanation

MEMBER'S REMARKS

Ms COOK (Hurtle Vale) (16:42): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Ms COOK: During the grievance debate today, the Attorney-General in her speech referred to a Facebook post on my page and stated that comments made by Ms Kelly Vincent had been deleted from this page. This is untrue. The post and comments remain on my personal Facebook page as they were placed there by Ms Vincent. At no time have they appeared on my member of parliament page, which is where the confusion may be. It is untrue.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The personal explanation has been made.

Bills

FAIR TRADING (FUEL PRICING INFORMATION) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General) (16:43): In the absence of any other speakers, I wish to make a few comments. Firstly, of course I thank all members for their contribution on the bill. I do not think there is any question that everyone in this parliament understands the significance of the cost of fuel within family budgets, at a personal level and also the cost to business. Energy and fuel costs are a significant component, and they need to have the attention of us here in the parliament. Just like water—for which the government has been very keen to introduce reductions—power prices and the like, fuel is another cost of living and a cost to business that we have to keep an eye on.

I thank members, and I do accept that there is a genuine commitment to try to introduce means by which we can keep consumers informed as to how they can best take advantage of the price imperatives in those budgets. The member for Giles raised some regional aspects, as did others. I will not go through them all. He pointed out a concern—and I think it is worth addressing—that the ACCC ought to be more vigilant in the monitoring and enforcement of compliance in this area, in particular to be alert and take action if necessary if there is any colluding between retailers in the offering of prices.

He provided information suggesting that, if he drives around the main town in his electorate, he will find repeatedly at multiple stations exactly the same retail price advertised, and that was supportive to him of the assertion that there was clearly collusion between retail operators. I think that is a far stretch. I do not come in here to jump to the defence of the ACCC; they can look after themselves.

He may be familiar with the Hon. Liz Penfold, a former member here, who I recall was a frequent writer to the ACCC—in fact, Deputy Speaker, she was a predecessor in your beautiful electorate of Flinders—about the practices she wanted to bring to their attention that she saw as depriving full benefit to her regional constituency, now yours. She would also complain that she would frequently get a rather short response or none at all and that they were not activating initiatives that she thought were meritorious and deserved their attention.

Having become the Attorney-General, with particular responsibility for Consumer and Business Services, we had a meeting of other responsible ministers in New Zealand last year, at which representatives of the ACCC attended, which I was pleased to see because I have never seen real people from the ACCC. I have had plenty of correspondence from them over the years, so it was quite nice to have some discussion with them. They were explaining to me the loss of a significant prosecution they had undertaken in relation to—and I cannot remember the particulars—a restraint of trade or some other breach they were asserting and they had lost. Of course, they were facing a significant legal bill as a result of it.

So I just tell the house this, for the member for Giles' sake: ACCC prosecutions, like any other successful prosecution, require evidence and obviously sufficient evidence to enable there to be, at least on the balance of probabilities, a successful outcome when they prosecute these matters. If the member has evidence of collusion between his retail outlets within his electorate, certainly they are matters that he could bring to the attention of the ACCC.

But it is not enough to simply say, 'They all have the same price, so they must be getting together on Sunday night'—and I am paraphrasing the situation—'saying it is going to be \$1.09, so everyone agree to that and tomorrow morning that is what we are going to do'. I do not know what they do on Sunday nights but I make the point that it is not that difficult, especially if they all have the current apps, to be able to go online to see what is available in their town and to match it.

It may be that it is more likely that they are in a regional town and they do observe a price that is achievable for them to market their product at. They want to be competitive, so they match it. That may be a perfectly rational explanation. I am not the expert on fuel. In all my life, I have never understood how we have such huge fuel price fluctuations. They have all sorts of excuses and reports about these things, all these multi-ideas, and then there is the catchall, of course, about the wholesale oil prices and how the barrel price has gone up, and the Arabs want this and so on. We get all this anecdotally but, at the end of the day, it is probably something which is quite complex and there are a lot of factors which affect this. We are not going to be able to change that overnight.

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: The member interjects to ask, 'What is the ACCC doing?' I have read a number of inquiries undertaken by these national agencies. I am none the wiser. The member may take the view that a body, like the ACCC, responsible for consumer law enforcement, ought to be following that up, and that may be so. Perhaps we just need another report. I am not sure that we are actually going to be able to have such an influence to do that. We are a big consumer of oil and fuel in this country. The member for West Torrens raised the valid point that oil refinery operations in Australia have plummeted, I think, to zero.

Ms Bedford: Four.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Four left in the Eastern States. The last one here was Port Stanvac, from which Mobil evacuated. They did not even clean it all up, but I think they left some fund—

The Hon. S.C. Mullighan: Yes, not completely evacuated; they left quite a bit behind.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Well, they left. They left their rubbish behind, they left the tower behind and there has been a huge lot of clean-up needed. In fairness, I think Mobil paid for most of it, but it is still sitting there as vacant land and has not been developed into something useful for South Australians. I will just make the point that that has happened. I remember the Hon. Kevin Foley trying to give us all an explanation and excuses about what was going to happen there and what great aspirations he had for the site, but it is still a dead site. It will be another thing that our government has to fix up I suppose.

Moving on, I thank the member for Hammond for, as usual, his entertaining, educational illumination about the use of fuel for heavy vehicles such as tractors and the like. We had the spectacular water-skiing career outlined by the member for Chaffey, who also discussed how he utilised fuel. We all need it. We need it for our transport services. We need it for those heavy vehicles that deliver our milk and butter and everything else into our food supply.

Everything we buy and eat and the services we rely upon rely on fuel. Clearly, it is the necessary ingredient for our commercial and social survival. I do not want to slip over the others, as they were all meritorious contributions, but what has completely escaped me is any indication from anyone in the opposition as to why, in 18 years—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: Sixteen.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: —no, 18 years—I have not heard anything from the Australian Labor Party about pursuing a Western Australian 24-hour price cycle in 18 years. They were in government for 16 years, and I heard the member for Kaurua discuss how difficult the high cost of fuel is for his constituency. In 16 years, none of them came in here with a bill of any model to say, 'This is how we're going to address this.'

Over the past two years, Leon Byner and I have had lots of chats with the RAA, which of course was a significant proponent of having a mechanism by which consumers could maintain some input into getting cheaper fuel, yet in that time there has been stunning silence from the opposition

as to a model. From time to time, they come out and bleat, 'Oh, it has taken the Liberals so long to actually get on with this,' or, 'They should be hurrying this along.' If this was the hare and the tortoise, let me tell you, we are the hare. There was nothing from them for 18 years, no model indicating the Western Australian model.

I do not say that because I am in any way foreshadowing the government's opposition to the consideration of the member for Florey's amendments—I would not be so disrespectful. But, in the absence of there being any indication of its merit, it does beg the question why they kept insisting that we hurry up with the New South Wales model and that, when Queensland did theirs, there was no excuse whatsoever for not getting on with implementing that.

When the member for Florey raised a private member's bill to support a replica of the Western Australian 24-hour freeze model, they did not rush out to say, 'This is a great idea. We know we must have missed it since it has actually been happening in Western Australia since 2001, but even though we might have been blinkered and not listened, now that she has done it we think it's a great idea. We would encourage the government to do this.' Not a peep.

When we go through the consultation on the proposal ultimately, as recommended by the Productivity Commission, without excluding the Western Australian model in suggesting that it is completely unmeritorious, again there is absolute silence. The ALP do not come out and say, 'The member for Florey has got it perfectly right. She is spot on. We have to jump into this opportunity.' There had been public statements by me in the parliament and by the member for Florey that she was pursuing this model, and not a peep.

We encouraged the member for Florey to present her model to the Productivity Commission, because it is true that she has been quite tireless in her advocacy for this consumer matter to be dealt with. Since raising the model that she thinks we should pursue, she has been, I think—I hope—respectfully brought into the fold sufficient to ensure that she has been consulted along the way. In fact, she is mentioned in the Productivity Commission report outcome, so I think that has been an important initiative.

Now I hear glowing recommendations by members of the opposition that the member for Florey has not only been a champion of this cause but she has this stellar model which should be, I think, in the member for West Torrens' description, immortalised as being in the genius category. In fact, I was so interested to see the member for Torrens—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: West Torrens.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: —West Torrens' description of how important this model was and how attached he was to it that I thought to myself, 'I wonder if the member for Florey is writing this down to edit it for her next preselection speech.'

Ms Bedford: I don't need to be preselected to think about it.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Well, you might be, of course, if you start your own party or something of that nature and you want to be preselected for that. It was just unbelievable listening to that. This is the man who was the architect of her removal from her seat—

Ms Bedford: No he's not. That's untrue.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Well, of the Labor right, who has done everything he can to get rid of the member for Florey, yet now I hear ringing endorsement of this genius contribution.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, I am anticipating the point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sir, I have never done any harm to the member for Florey. She is someone I hold in high regard and I ask the member to withdraw that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I was about to ask—

Ms Bedford: I can tell you who wanted to get rid of me, if you want to know.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Florey, I am speaking. I was about to bring the Attorney back to the topic at hand. It seems the member for West Torrens has taken some offence to the member's comments. Attorney, would you be prepared to withdraw?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I am happy to withdraw and even apologise to the member for West Torrens if he is in any way offended at being in any way involved in the execution of the member for Florey as an ALP member.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, we will stay on topic.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Anyway, there it was, that ringing endorsement from one after another of this magnificent structure that is being proposed. I also want to make it clear that the commitments made prior to the election were by the Labor Party that they would have a fuel initiative—if I can put it as general as that, as I do not want to be tripping up on any little aspect of that—and that, from our side of politics, we would review all of what was there and that we would look at what we would introduce.

We did not want to simply come in and say, 'We are going to pick this apple or this orange and this is what we are going to do.' We made it very clear what our election commitment objective was. Very shortly after we came into office, it became abundantly clear that Victoria as a state was looking at the New South Wales model at that stage and how they were going and had done their review of it and took the view that petrol prices could go up and decided that they would not have a model at all; they would not have an initiative at all.

I suppose that threw a bit of a level of concern into what New South Wales was doing and whether in fact it was going to be effective. So it does not surprise me that we have some different models around the country. Nobody has picked up the Western Australia model, but nevertheless it suits the Western Australians; that is fine, they can do as they wish. They have had it for a very long time. Some jurisdictions have elected not to have anything at all because they are not satisfied even of the threshold issue that some kind of application via an electronic app is actually going to be useful.

This is picked up to some degree by the Productivity Commission because, when it became clear that we had different models and different data of reliability on this, we asked the Productivity Commission to look at it. I think it is very clear from their report that they are not 110 per cent confident that any kind of intervention is going to work anyway, but they say that, if it is successful, then the models they have examined are what we might rely on for the purpose of taking up a model. So we have done that and brought in the legislation.

Of course, meanwhile, what has happened is that there has been a plethora of applications available because, typical, there are some genius teenagers out there creating all these apps, as they seem to be very capable of doing. I am looking at one of my favourites at the moment—Ingo Block of my office is the genius who puts it on my phone and makes sure that I know how to work it—and it tells me that right at the minute apparently the cheapest place to buy fuel is at Thorngate and the closest to me is at West Terrace.

I can go to a little map and it tells me exactly what stations are around where I am at this point, or I can look all around the state. These are already out there. This information is already out there. There is a lot of other data that they give with it, but why then are we doing something else? What we are doing is we are making sure that by law everybody who sells fuel has to put that information in here. This is not completely comprehensive; that is the first thing. There can be retailers who decide that they are not going to be in these schemes and they are not going to provide that data. This is to mandate them to do it.

The second thing this requires under the new law is that, if they change these prices, they have to record that data within 30 minutes. I am advised (because I am not an expert on these things) that as the prices change—this is a push of the button exercise—obviously the outlets are all advised of what the new price is and various aspects in that regard. The retailers press another button, of course, for lots of other compliance obligations they have, and this will be one other thing by law they will be required to do.

It may only be a matter of seconds before that new information transmits to the central pool and then is available on this mechanism, but they have up to 30 minutes, and if they do not of course there are \$10,000 fines, etc. I say to the house that, although we have had some rather interesting approaches now by the opposition on what they think is the answer to this, newly enlivened by the

matter that has been brought to their attention in this debate, realistically we do need to give this particular model as per this bill a go.

I just conclude on that matter by saying that my office did a bit of an audit of all the people, including members of the public and MPs who have written to me about this matter during the last two and a bit years, and except for the feedback from the member for Florey, which has been prolific, where preferences are stated every single submission I have received, apparently, has been for a Fuel Check system. So that is exactly what we are proposing to implement in this legislation.

I have not yet identified whether any of those letters have come from any of the people in the ALP, but I will soon let you know if I find them. In any event, I suppose they are all a bit busy working out over there on the Labor right who is going to take over the ALP Victoria division—good luck with that. I just loved reading the front page of *The Australian* today, which was just beautiful. I might even get it framed actually. There are some magnificent quotes there about the way they address each other and speak so highly of each other.

Another aspect I will just mention is that the RAA (Royal Automobile Association, and I disclose that I am a member and perhaps other members of parliament are members as well) provides a service for motorists and it is the peak body. It has, as the peak consumer, been calling for a Fuel Check model, at least to my knowledge, since the latter part of 2017. I note that that continues, and again our proposal is consistent with that.

I think I have mentioned the Productivity Commission model as identifying the net benefits as best they can to the most number of consumers, as a net benefit. The crossbench has been personally briefed by the lead commissioner on why the model is preferred. Again, I respect the member for Florey's view that she maintains that her model, the Western Australian model, is the best, but in any event they have had the opportunity to meet with the commissioner.

While the introduction of the bill has occurred I have requested that regulations be prepared and made available for circulation to the opposition and the crossbench. That is not usual. I place on the record that that has not been done on the basis of presuming what the parliament will do with this legislation, but I have worked on the premise that there is a universal request for action in this area, and we are delivering it. Obviously, these regulations will be the subject of industry and retailers' consultation following the passage of the bill if it is passed.

Should alterations or modifications to the scheme need to be made, these will easily be able to be accommodated. I make the point that it is like some of the other legislation when you introduce a new regulatory regime: it takes a significant amount of resources to develop these proposals. Consistent with a number of things made by the Productivity Commission in its report, and the way in which the options are moving at such a rapid rate in the community as to what products are available, the trial period is really a safeguard.

What we do not want to do is to introduce something and then find that it is not as good as something else that has been developed and that we are already locked into something permanently. I say here in the parliament that if we have a mechanism, either in the form we are proposing or in some other modification of it, and it does not work and there is an opportunity for another option to be pursued, then I will advocate for that. I think that is important. I think we all agree that we need to have this service available to consumers. We think we are offering the best model; others think there is an alternative.

Ms Bedford: Do I have to wait two years?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Two years, of course, is just a little tiny dot in time of the member for Florey's luminary career in politics. I make this point: if we just simply say, 'This is what we're going to have and this will be forever in place,' and we start signing up contracts, then we may find it very difficult to become flexible as to where we advance from there. However, I for one will be advocating for us to have an effective fuel price reducing model that is available to consumers for them to get the cheapest possible fuel on the most occasions for the most vehicles.

Another aspect I will place on the record is to remind members—and the Productivity Commission alluded to this as well—that for the scheme to be successful it also has to have a high level of take-up. I do not know how many members here in the parliament or members

of their staff or family would take up the opportunity to check fuel prices every time they went to buy fuel for their domestic vehicles.

Obviously, especially those who might have multiple vehicles in their family or business may be more encouraged to follow this as it may be a bigger proportional aspect of their budget. But, because there are a number of people out there who are already taking up these options in the apps available—and there is a number of them like PetrolSpy and MotorMouth, and I could ask Mr Block to give me a list of all the others but I do not want to be here commercially promoting any particular product—I make the point that there are a lot of them out there.

If they already have a client base, what we want to be able to do if they want to stay with the product that they currently have for free is encourage them to keep using them. What will be saying to them is, 'You will have all the information in here. It will be a better service and it will be more timely.' That is obviously what we are trying to do: make sure it is timely, accurate and comprehensive.

With those few words, I thank members for their contribution and seek that the bill be now read a second time. I think there is a desperate aspiration and appetite to go to committee, as I foreshadow some amendments and a few from the government.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clause 1.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I move:

Amendment No 1 [DepPrem-2]—

Page 2, line 4—After '*Pricing*' insert '*Information*'

Essentially, this has been brought to my attention as necessary to make the legislation consistent. This has been identified as an omission in the drafting.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: My question is in regard to consultation and, specifically, who from industry participated in the consultation.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: The following parties provided submissions to the commission for its report: the Australasian Convenience and Petroleum Marketers Association, the Australian Institute of Petroleum, Caltex Australia, the member for Florey, informed sources, the Royal Automobile Association (RAA) and four confidential submissions. They were matters that we have taken into account in relation to the productivity aspect.

I think it is fair to say that Ingo Block of my office also made me meet with all sorts of different people who apparently are experts on fuel, including people from interstate. I recall having meetings with informed sources. Obviously, I had meetings with the member for Florey. There were some petrol retail personnel I met with.

All the way, we were getting a viewing and the extensive services not just of Abbie, who is sitting here next to me, but all of her team at CBS, who were frequently referring back to the Royal Automobile Association and what their view was in relation to trials and reports on other interstate matters, notably New South Wales, Queensland and Northern Territory. Comprehensive assessments were done of those by our CBS division.

Not long before the member raised the Western Australian model, there had been some viewing of that and I had been briefed as to how that program worked and how it had been operating. I was surprised to hear at that stage that it had actually been operating since 2001. In any event, I had briefings internally on that.

I am also advised that consulting on the regulations with major and independent retailers and industry has occurred and will continue because we are still only in draft form, which I think you all have copies of, as I understand it.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Which industry respondents to the consultation were supportive of the proposal?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Of all the models that were out there, member for Lee, all of the respondents, except for the member for Florey, considered that the Queensland model was the most appropriate.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Just to clarify, all industry respondents to the consultation were supportive of either the Queensland or WA models?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: As I am advised, of the submissions we have, if we were to intervene—that is, to impose a regime—the Queensland model was preferred.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How many consumer groups did the Attorney-General meet with?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Apart from the business consumer group itself, there was also another group. I will just get their correct name because they are a lobby group or an association that sits within CBS. They have a room there, but they are actually independent people. They are Consumers SA. That was not their original name. Some of them are fairly mature in age. They meet on a voluntary basis and have meetings with me from time to time. We go through issues of the day and this is another matter they raised. I cannot recall them ever having any objection to us having some process to try to get fuel prices down.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: When the matter was referred to the South Australian Productivity Commission, why did the government not seek recommendations?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I cannot recall specifically what the terms of reference were now, but the Premier formally referred the matter as an article of investigation for them to look at and to make an assessment of two things, firstly, whether there was merit in having an intervention at all and, secondly, if so, looking at what models were already out in the field and what should be taken up. I think they have done that.

I do not think they prioritised that you have to do it or recommended that you do this, this and this. I think they identified fairly clearly their concerns. I would not put it that high. They are not as confident that there is going to be an automatic reduction in price, but that level of transmittal, as I am advised, did not specify. I asked for recommendations, but the findings were made.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I have to say that I find that answer unsatisfactory. The Productivity Commission was established by the government for a particular purpose. I would have thought that, in referring a scheme such as this to a commission such as the one the government established, the government would be interested in the commission's views about how this scheme would work and would seek recommendations, yet the advice I have is that the commission in its report said they were specifically asked by the government not to make recommendations. I do not think I have had a satisfactory answer from the government as to why. Why do you not want the Productivity Commission to make recommendations? As detailed in the second reading contribution by the member for Lee, I understand the report gave us a tick-and-cross scale—

The Hon. S.C. Mullighan: Some double ticks.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —and some double ticks in various colours for their approval or disapproval. I would have thought that any inquiry by any organisation independent of government that has expertise in this area would ultimately make recommendations, yet the Productivity Commission—and I do not want to put words into their mouth—seems to me was saying, 'In the normal course of events, we would have made recommendations, but we were specifically told not to.' That is the part that I cannot grapple with in regard to the government's handling of this.

I think it is important to note, as the Attorney-General considers her answer to this question, the Productivity Commission is populated with people of expertise. I would have thought the government and the parliament would have benefited from their views and recommendations on this

matter. I can only speculate that perhaps they had a predetermined outcome in mind when they gave it to the Productivity Commission, and they were fearful of recommendations from the Productivity Commission being in opposition or adverse to the government's intention.

I hope that is not accurate, but I would like the Attorney-General to elaborate more to the house why a referral was given to the Productivity Commission and then an instruction—if it was an instruction—not to make recommendations.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: To dispel the inaccuracies that are pitted through that contribution, I will read you the letter of instruction:

Dear Dr Butlin,

As you would be aware, my government is committed to supporting South Australians to manage the cost of living.

My government has been exploring options to increase transparency of fuel prices and support South Australians to access information that would enable them to take advantage of the cheapest prices.

To assist our work, I ask that the Commission investigate and report on potential models that would increase transparency of fuel prices and enable customers to make informed choices when purchasing fuel, having regard to:

- a) the net benefits and effectiveness of models used in other jurisdictions, including the real-time fuel pricing scheme in New South Wales and the 24-hour price locking mechanism in Western Australia
- b) current regulatory arrangements for fuel pricing in South Australia and how alternative models compare
- c) the most cost-effective solution to increase transparency in fuel prices in South Australia.

It is recognised that the cost of fuel is influenced by many factors, including overseas and local market forces.

The commissioned report detailing the outcomes of the investigation is to be provided to me no later than three months after receipt of this letter. Per the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular 046—The South Australian Productivity Commission relevant agency staff will be made available to the Commission to support it in undertaking this investigation.

I thank you and the Commission in advance for your efforts in relation to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Hon Steven Marshall MP

Premier of South Australia

Most importantly, there is no instruction that they cannot give recommendations. Clearly, it was open for them to do so.

I think it is very clear in their report that they had some question about whether anything like this, any intervention, would produce lower prices. Perhaps they were cognisant of the Victorians' review and their dismissal of whether these things even work, because in their case they were worried it was actually going to push prices up. That would be a disaster for consumers. But they have raised the concerns about that in their report. Notwithstanding that, they have identified the models that could work if they have a capacity to reduce fuel and that they may be workable. So here we are.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I understand you are trying to clarify a point on this. This will be your last question on this clause.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is very generous of you, sir.

The CHAIR: As always, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you for giving me my three questions, as stipulated in the standing orders. It is very big of you.

The CHAIR: I took your second question as seeking clarification.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Excellent; so I have some more. Thank you, sir. You are a good man. The government has produced draft regulations, I understand. Can I ask why the

government has decided not to enshrine the scheme in legislation to provide certainty, rather than just by regulation, given it believes that this is the best model for motorists and retailers?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: For all the reasons I have outlined and the need to keep flexible so that we can make some adjustment if other methods and/or amendments need to be made to make this effective. We have taken notice of what the Productivity Commission said. We accept that there are myriad industry models out there, apps and everything else. We want to be able to be cutting-edge on this and responsive and flexible to make sure we have a model that works.

The CHAIR: Member for Florey.

Ms BEDFORD: You can take it as a given, sir, I will have questions on everything. Attorney, with regard to the Productivity Commission, they were asked to evaluate doing either of the two models or perhaps doing nothing. They could do nothing. They could recommend or give you the option of doing nothing. Did any of the submissions suggest doing nothing?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Yes, Informed Sources, which is a company that operates in Queensland. They are data aggregators, which is a generous way to describe them. They provide the base information and aggregate it for the purposes of these products that we see on our phones. I do remember meeting with a representative from the firm from Queensland, who came down to Adelaide.

His view was that it was not necessary and that this was a product they produce anyway. For arrangements with the ACCC, my understanding is that it is provided free as a service from them. So that was something that they did not think was necessary. I do not think they were opposing having apps and so on, but they were just saying that it was not necessary to mandate it by legislation.

Ms BEDFORD: Of course, this is one of the reasons why we have an interest in the whole thing, and that is, as it stood, the apps were not providing accurate, timely information for the whole of the city. That is why we welcome what you are doing in one respect because you are at least forcing that to become something that is an improvement. The problem is that the apps are not going to allow people to get to where they need to go if it is further than 30 minutes away if prices are fluctuating. That is part of the problem.

A number of submissions were received for the report, but four of them were kept confidential. Can the Attorney confirm that the four were perhaps even just from the fuel industry and perhaps why they had to be kept confidential? What is in these submissions that is so important that we cannot be privy to the information that is in them for the purposes of making a decision by evaluation?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I do not know the answer. I am aware that there are four confidential submissions that went to the Productivity Commission. It is not a completely unusual circumstance that people put in submissions and then ask for their material to be kept confidential, so I do not know. They have not come to me. They were just presented to the Productivity Commission and, for whatever reason, they have elected to respect that confidentiality and not release them.

I think it was not to the Productivity Commission, but the highest number that I can ever recall of secret, confidential submissions that were put in was on the Mount Barker development. I know because I tried to FOI them all, and a whole lot were not able to be produced because of the confidentiality that had been offered and made available to the people making the submissions. So I do not think it is an unusual practice. What they said and who put them in, I do not know.

Ms BEDFORD: I just want to clarify whether the group called Informed Sources is also known as MotorMouth somewhere else, or if they are associated in any way, and if that is the same group—that is, MotorMouth—that has found to be involved in price collusion by the ACCC?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I do not know. My understanding from Informed Sources when I met with them—and I do not know if they have an interest in MotorMouth; I think they provide data to a whole lot of app people. That is their job: they aggregate data. I am advised that it is a separate arm of the business. How they are interrelated I do not know, as I have not done a company search on them, but my understanding is that they aggregate data.

I think they also provide it, do they not, to populate the data in the Queensland model and New South Wales? I am getting a no for New South Wales. Apparently, Queensland use this data aggregate company. I might be underscoring their importance in relation to what other work they do, but that is all I know them as—a group that collate data, then they package it up and make it available for products to populate a service.

Ms BEDFORD: As a supplementary, can I just clarify if you have an email from Informed Sources that we can see?

The Hon. V.A. Chapman interjecting:

Ms BEDFORD: You do not have an email. Then the supplementary really is: if these two entities, MotorMouth and Informed Sources, are indeed involved with each other, and one of them has been found to be involved in price collusion by the ACCC, is that not a concern for us?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I think it is a concern, member for Florey, for anyone who falls foul of any laws. Whether there is any integration between a data provider and an application service—I have not identified if On the Run or Caltex or any of these other companies have shares in other entities, but that is not an uncommon situation where there is a financial investment or relationship across wholesale, retail or service provision.

That in itself I do not see as sinister. I think if there was a circumstance where they were only providing to a certain application, and they wanted us as a government to look at only that product, like if you are saying there is some connection with MotorMouth, and they were trying to sell us that product, then I think there would be matters to be concerned about. But we are actually proposing a model that sets out a regulatory arrangement where we are not picking who they use.

It was a decision of the Queensland government, obviously, to use Informed Services (it is a Queensland company) to provide the data for their model. That is a matter for them. What we are doing here today is proposing to the parliament that we have an enforcement regime to make everybody put their data in, and in a timely way, and then you can use whatever product you want to secure that because all retailers will have to be in. I also add that the South Australian aggregator will be subject to a procurement process.

Informed Sources are the ones I happened to see who were on the list who came to see us, but there may be other data aggregate companies that through the procurement process present and they think they should be ultimately selected. I just make the point that it was only this group that came to see us, I think, of that industry.

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Yes, that's correct.

Ms BEDFORD: On the indulgence of the Chair, just again to clarify beyond any doubt: are we not concerned that the decision, or the evaluation of the options which has resulted in you going down this path, has used information that could have been sullied in this fashion without going—to be perfectly clear that it has nothing to do with it being successful in one jurisdiction rather than the other?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I hear what you are saying; that is, how can you rely on information they have given you for the purposes of making a decision in what we are doing? Well, I suppose in this instance that entity was one that said, 'You don't need to do this,' so we have actually not listened to them. We are actually doing something that is inconsistent with what they say needs to be done.

I would start to be a bit concerned if they were the ones who said, 'You have to do this,' and we are doing what they want and then everyone else said no, and then we find out they are a party to a potential procurement process. That might raise some concerns. But they are the ones in this instance who have said, 'You do not need to do this.' We have obviously taken a different view. We think we do.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: Just getting back to the confidential submissions, how can we be certain that anything that was discussed—and I understand that you do not want to know the names

and who put the submissions in—but how can we be certain that anything that was put to the commission with suggestions or whatever was taken on board in their report without identifying who may have suggested it? That is the issue. I can understand not divulging who may be interviewed but, if it is not commercial-in-confidence, take all that other stuff out about the recommendations or whatever is discussed with those four submissions, could I get an assurance that it is in the commission's findings?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I am not the author of the report, so I cannot say that specifically. But I urge the member to note two things. Firstly, the four submissions have been identified as confidential submissions. There has been no indication whatsoever by the commission that they have just ignored them or said, 'They did not give their name on the bottom, so we have just ignored them,' or, 'They have raised some ideas but we are just going to dismiss them.'

I think by listing them we can start with the presumption that they have read them and, if there is something in them that is useful, they will have taken that into account. I think otherwise in fairness I would have expected that they would say, 'We received these submissions but they were too late,' or, 'They were off topic,' or, 'They were just some rant,' and, 'We have not addressed it.' But I think in the sense of disclosure, it is reasonable that the Productivity Commission makes clear what they have taken into account, and that is the disclosure of the submission process. I think we would have had an indication from them if they felt they were of no weight or merit.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: The Attorney has supplied draft regulations to be made under the bill's provisions if passed. Can the Attorney indicate what consultation will be undertaken in relation to these regulations prior to their being made?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Yes, all of the industry groups. That particularly relates to the people who have to comply with them, and there are a number on that list that I read out before. Basically, the retail operators need to disclose they are going to be putting their price up. They may come along and say, 'What happens if we have multiple outlets and we are 31 minutes late on one of them or multiple of them? How is that going to apply? Do we get \$10,000 fines on each?' These are the sorts of things that are teased out in regulation. I am also foreshadowing some amendments to allow for the capacity for prosecution as an expiable offence to deal with what we would expect to be the minor infraction of that. But we are also happy to provide a full list of who they are as retailers. I have a whole list here somewhere.

Clause as amended passed.

Clause 2.

Ms BEDFORD: Should this bill pass, Attorney, when do you anticipate Adelaide Motorists will have access to the new fuel pricing information?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I am hopeful, subject to it getting through the house in some timely manner. Obviously, in this next session, we have July before the winter break. Obviously, we need to go out to procurement and get the regulations in order. So I am still very hopeful that before the end of the year we will have a process in place which will have the mandatory obligation and will populate the extra information to make our current apps both timely and fully accurate.

Ms BEDFORD: Can the Attorney indicate what discussions have already been had with interstate governments and market operators in anticipation of the procurement of an aggregation system and, in particular, Western Australia's system which, as we know, is older? In fact, the Productivity Commission said to me that that was one of the problems with it, that it was old and had not been reviewed. As you probably know, it was brought in by the Court Liberal government at the time. Will the Attorney be speaking to Western Australia about theirs as well?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I have not, personally. I have spoken to various people in government during the time we were looking at different models but Mr Soulio, the Commissioner for Consumer and Business Services, obviously has regular meetings in terms of keeping an eye on what models are available. He has also been a key person to consult with the RAA; they both get various pieces of information about how those models are going.

However, all the discussions that are to take place in relation to the procurement process are handled exclusively by CBS. It would obviously be entirely inappropriate for me—and frankly I could not even tell you who are in the data aggregate business—

Ms BEDFORD: It will be a relief for you to know that I do not know either.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: No; in any event, for the purpose of this model that is what has to go out to procurement, and that is the process that has to have various integrity regimes sitting above it.

Ms BEDFORD: In terms of the two-year pilot the government proposes, can the Attorney indicate if anything would make her review it faster than two years? If it went to the full two years, how would she expect that review to be undertaken, what evidence would it consider, and how would its independence and credibility be assured?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I think there is an opportunity for it to be earlier. If, for example, there was a new product and it became clear it was going to be better, that may happen.

Ms BEDFORD: As in an aggregating system?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: As in a completely new system. It may be that Victoria, which has not taken up any system, decides that they progress something and come to us midway through next year and say, 'Look, this has been brilliant. We recommended it around the country.' Obviously we would not ignore that.

The advice we have is a two-year trial; do not have something for six months or a year. I think they had a year in Queensland. We did not think that was long enough, and I think they are still working through how they are going to review that sufficiently in that initial time. I think December last year was the—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: It was two years? I beg your pardon. I thought they were going to do an interim assessment after—no, I am getting a no; it is two years. I was mistaken. I thought Queensland was doing it after a year. We have picked a two-year trial, and that is just the advice we have as to sufficient time to implement something, obviously get someone interested enough to do the job, and also be able to give it a review.

In terms of how you review these things, quite frankly I do not have the detail of that. The most pressing objective of this is to make sure that prices do not go up; that is the first thing. The second is that we give the chance for a good number in the community to have access to cheaper prices. They are the two big things we want to do. If it turned out that this model does put prices up—which, I think, is a possibility foreshadowed by the Productivity Commission—then we will have to think about whether we abandon that earlier, I suppose.

All I can do is indicate to the member that I am committed to providing a product that will help people get access to cheaper fuel. If this one does not work I would advocate to the government they look at any other model that had a demonstrable success rate. So far Queensland has been the stand-out, and that is what we are following.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Did the Attorney-General just tell the committee that, as the Productivity Commission suggests, this model may push prices up?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I was trying to paraphrase what they are saying. They have raised the fact that there were concerns about other models and the price going up, because when New South Wales was reviewed—they also have a model similar to this, as distinct from Western Australia—their review, that Victoria took notice of, suggested there was a real risk of there being a sustained increase in fuel prices. That is, it would have the directly opposite effect.

It seemed they were so concerned about that, from the commentary they made, that they said, 'We're not going to go down this line at all. We are just going to abandon this.' That was back in 2018. I do not think the Productivity Commission can dismiss that. Queensland has continued and is still working to the idea that it can work. I think time will soon tell as to whether or not that has had a deleterious effect.

I think it is pretty clear from the Productivity Commission report. They are not saying that a program like this will work; they are saying it is something you have to assess. It is difficult to quantify their benefits, but I am saying to the member for Florey, and indeed to all members, that our government's objective is to provide a system that actually gives people access to cheaper fuel. That is our objective. If it turned out that any of these systems actually forced prices to go up and we had reports saying that, we would have to think about what else we could do.

Ms Bedford: Not in WA; it went down.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I know the member for Florey is passionate about WA. They do not have oscillating prices in the ACT either. My understanding of their system is that they have a fixed regime and their price continues. They do not get the benefit of changing fuel prices, whereas we do. We hear all the stories of people who are irritated by that, and who get annoyed that they did not get the 99¢ fuel in the morning and see that it is \$1.10 when they drive home. However, we do not hear complaints from those who are driving along in the morning and see that fuel is \$1.10 and then it is 99¢ when they go home in the afternoon.

Ms Bedford: There are not that many of them, that's why.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: Well, people who actually want to watch the prices and take the benefit of when prices are low and not at their peak are effectively denied that in the ACT. They are not denied it in Western Australia, but they know they have a freeze for 24 hours. I know the member is keen on that one. I will just make the point that there are pluses and minuses to these things.

The ACT, let's face it, has a high level of public sector employment and a lot of people probably have fuel cards as well. I do not treat Canberra as being representative of Australian country towns; nevertheless, it is a system they live with. I think other regional towns have a very different dynamic. They do not have a critical mass of government money in them and they certainly do not have as generous an amount of money applied as Canberra has. It has a territory government with commonwealth benefits. Moneys flow in Canberra.

Bendigo in Victoria or Whyalla in South Australia, which is another major regional town, do not have anywhere near the infrastructure and benefits of somewhere like Canberra. It is hard to identify those benefits, but I hope you are clear about what we are saying: the benefit is cheaper prices of unleaded fuel.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can I just put to the Attorney-General—and I am not accusing her of misleading the parliament or anything like that—that she just gave two contradictory statements. She said to the parliament that if, as the Productivity Commission suggests, this system puts prices up, the advice the government has received is that this may do the opposite to the intent of the government. What advice are they relying on that this will lower prices?

Those two statements about the government's intent and the advice they receive do not make any sense. If the intent is this program, and the advice she has received is that this program may increase prices, then the intent is not to lower prices; the intent is just to have a fuel watch scheme. If you want to lower prices, you would implement a system that the advice says will lower prices. The Attorney is telling the parliament that the advice she has received from an independent agency that has been asked to inquire into this is that it may push prices up, and the government presses ahead anyway in the hope that it will lower prices.

So it seems the strategy here is not a fact-based piece of work but hope: 'Despite the evidence, we hope it will work. Despite the expert opinion, we hope this will lower prices, and if it does not, we will change it.' I have to say that concerns me—the process concerns me. These are not my words: these are the Attorney's words. The Attorney has just told the parliament that the advice she has received from her Productivity Commission is that this may have the opposite effect to the government's intent. If it may have the opposite effect, firstly, why are we doing it, and secondly, do you have any other advice about any other schemes that may not increase the prices, other than do nothing?

The opposition have committed, if these amendments are unsuccessful, to supporting the government's legislation. So we are relying on the government—because they have access to the experts, and even geniuses, according to the Attorney-General; you can put that in the preselection

pamphlet later on—that this will work, despite the Productivity Commission's concerns that it may not work. If I could ask the Attorney-General to come back to South Australia—not Queensland, not New South Wales, not Canberra and not Western Australia: does the advice that she has received say or not say that the scheme will lower prices?

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I will take most of that as a comment, but I would urge members to review page 5 of the report, where the commission sets out the task they are given. It states:

In addressing the task, the Commission has confined its analysis to retail petrol prices. Diesel and autogas are excluded because neither has demonstrated price cycle behaviour. That said, diesel and autogas information could be included in any price transparency [agreement South Australia] might decide to adopt, which is consistent with the approach taken in some other Australian jurisdictions.

The Commission considers four tests must be met to justify government intervention to increase fuel price transparency to consumers (motorists). The intervention must:

- improve the scope, quantity and integrity of fuel price information available to consumers;
- be taken up by consumers;
- be acted on by consumers; and
- provide benefits to consumers that exceed the costs of regulation to retailers and government.

That is what it set itself to achieve in that task. In doing that, it has looked at exploring the options and has ultimately identified—I think as best it can within the envelope of not being certain as to how these things are going to work—that the intent is to improve transparency and access to the information about the cheapest local prices, as I am directly advised.

Essentially, that is the best we can do. I want to thank the Productivity Commission for undertaking its work promptly and helping us to try to make some assessment. It is not just as simple as going to a furniture shop and working out which couch you are going to buy. This is complicated—

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis: And that's hard work.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: It may be hard work for the member for West Torrens, but I will make this point: we are not certain about how these things are going to work. The apps, as they are, I think people apparently use quite a bit—

Ms Bedford: They are not accurate.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: The member says they are not accurate. Well, it is not comprehensive. It is not all of it. It does not mean it is not accurate as to what will be on West Terrace station, which is the one I have referred to; it is just that it may not have two others around it that could be cheaper, because they are not in the system at all. So I agree with that: that is exactly why we are proposing this law.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is clear to me now that the intent here is not to lower prices but simply to advertise the cheapest price. That is the difference. We have got to the core of it now: the government's policy is not to lower fuel prices but just to make known the cheapest price. That is a passive approach to the market—not to interfere with retailers, not to give any competitive advantage to consumers but simply, as a passive observer, to say, 'These are the prices. This is the most expensive and this is the cheapest.' That is it. That is not what we were told before the election. Before the election we were told by shadow minister after the shadow minister that the proposal by the Liberal opposition was to lower petrol prices through a fuel watch scheme. That is what we were told.

Now we are being told the opposite. Now we are being told to vote for a framework that may not work, and the government's intent is not to lower prices but to simply let consumers know where the cheapest price is—so let us know the best of a bad lot. I do not think that is what anyone in this house is looking for other than maybe the executive. I think the rest of us in the parliament are looking for a scheme that actually breaks up this monopoly and gives consumers the power and authority that they need to get cheaper prices.

The intent now is laid bare and unfortunately I think it shows the government's intent is not what they said it was. It only just occurred to me now, being again referred to the terms of reference,

that nowhere in the terms of reference does the government ask the commission to come up with a scheme or give advice to the government on a scheme to lower petrol prices. It simply says, 'We want to work out a way to show everyone where the cheapest fuel is.'

No wonder industry is endorsing this—because it is just passive. I suppose that is the great thing about parliament: it brings these things out, maybe intentionally or inadvertently, but then again I go back to my second reading contribution where the Premier was attempting to backtrack completely on FIVEaa from a fuel watch scheme because he said it could have an adverse impact. Yes, it may have an adverse impact if you are passive, but if you actually intervene to the scheme, as the member for Florey is attempting to do, to remove the risk from consumers and place it entirely on the retailers—

Ms Bedford: But only for 23 hours.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, every 23 hours they have to make a decision about what their fuel pricing is. That changes the market dramatically. It goes from being a passive observer to what the prices are—I seek leave to continue my remarks.

The CHAIR: I am at the will of the house. Far be it from me to stifle debate but I would be keen pass clause 2 at least before 6 o'clock.

The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN: I am happy to give it a shot. I take most of that as comment, because I know there is a message to receive. I would urge the member perhaps in the adjournment to have look at the report again and reread my second reading speech. This is a scheme to enable consumer choice to get the best price. What the Productivity Commission observed is that if you have big buy-in to this you have an opportunity for it to work and be of effective.

There has been an alert interstate that sometimes this type of intervention might have the effect of actually pushing up prices. Our objective here is to arm consumers with all the information so that if they are interested in this issue, that is getting the cheapest possible price, then they are going to have a chance to do it. I do not think I can add any more to that answer. If you are able to pass that clause then I will move progress.

The CHAIR: I think the best thing might be to just report progress. With the idea of encouraging future debate, I will accept the Attorney's motion at this point to report progress.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

LIQUOR LICENSING (LIQUOR PRODUCTION AND SALES LICENCE) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

At 17:59 the house adjourned until Tuesday 30 June 2020 at 11:00.