

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 3 March 2021

The **SPEAKER** (Hon. J.B. Teague) took the chair at 10:30 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.

### *Bills*

#### **STATUTES AMENDMENT (BAROSSA RAIL CORRIDOR) BILL**

##### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 17 February 2021.)

**Mr KNOLL (Schubert) (10:33):** I rise to make a contribution on this bill, as it quite clearly represents a longstanding issue in my electorate, and I figure that now is a good time to put on the record the chronology of events that have led us to today and the mischievous interventions of the member for Light.

The Barossa has had a rail corridor for a long period of time in South Australia, a rail corridor that wends its way out from Gawler through the southern Barossa, through to the outskirts of Tanunda and Nuriootpa, with a line that went up to Angaston—that no longer goes to Angaston—replaced by a shared use path some 15 years ago and a spur line that headed off to Penrice, where the quarry at Penrice was used to ship product along that train line down to Port Adelaide.

There were rail passenger services provided to South Australians and to Barossans that stopped in 1968, so we have not had a passenger train service in the Barossa for some 50 years. There are still many who remember that passenger service and some who remember the intermittent rail passenger services that were from time to time used to ferry kids down to the beach during summer holidays and the like, but certainly the passenger service as a regular feature to get people to and from Adelaide stopped in 1968.

For a brief period around the year 2000, a private tourist train did operate. Unfortunately, with 9/11 and the ensuing changes, or the reduction in international travel as well as increasing insurance costs, what was a service that was just getting to a break-even point was no longer viable and that train service stopped. Somewhere between 2002 and 2005, Mr John Geber from Château Tanunda bought the Bluebird, which used to be the vehicle that was used in that tourism service and, over the course of the next 15-plus years, has sought to put a private-for-profit tourism service back on that line.

Over the course of this time, there was a Penrice train that ran every day. It would pass through the Barossa at 6.30 in the morning. I know this because it would go straight past my house when I lived in Tanunda and we used to hear it at 6.30 or just after 6.30 each and every morning. That train service stopped in about 2014 when Penrice Soda essentially went into liquidation, into administration, and it was no longer needed. Then we come forward to 2020.

In 2020, we have a situation where we have an intersection that exists on Barossa Valley Way, the road that runs between Tanunda and Nuriootpa, at the intersection of Menge Road and Burings Road, a busy and very dangerous part of the Barossa. Being built at that time was a new chocolate factory, which is increasing traffic down Burings Road, and there is also a desire from local wineries to see improved freight access and heavy vehicle access in and around that intersection.

So the company Pernod Ricard put their own money on the table and the Barossa Council put their own money on the table and partnered with the state and federal governments to fix that intersection by putting in a roundabout, something that was going to improve heavy vehicle productivity and also, very importantly, improve road safety in the Barossa.

I was the minister at the time, and we had a difficult decision to make because that intersection had the Barossa train line run through it. We were essentially left with three choices: we

do not undertake the upgrade and see the ongoing detriment to road safety as well as to heavy vehicle access; we put in a new roundabout but reinstate a train line that has not been used for passenger services for 50 years, has not been used for a tourist service in 20 years and has not been used at all for six years; or we build a roundabout, ensuring that there is future provision for that track to be reinstated if and when a viable proposal comes along wanting to use that line.

The cost to reinstate the line was roughly costed at somewhere around a million dollars. Again, as a minister under budget pressure and wanting to make sure that we get the absolute utmost for every dollar we have to spend, putting a million dollars there meant a million dollars less being spent on other road safety improvements or other regional road improvements right around South Australia. Hearing the calls, especially from regional South Australia, screaming for upgrades to roads that had been neglected for two decades, made it very difficult to contemplate putting a million dollars into a roundabout upgrade where that million dollars was very likely never to be used.

So what did we do at that point? We decided to put out an expression of interest process. The reason we did that is that Mr Geber and other proponents had suggested that a tourism train could be viable. That is something that has been talked about in the Barossa for some 15 to 20 years, and it has become something of a running local joke about whether or not we will actually ever get a tourism train back in the Barossa.

The difficulty is that we have this decision to make and it has to be made now, so the government is undertaking an expression of interest process to be able to flush out proposals and once and for all make a determination about whether or not there is going to be a viable proposition. That EOI process elicited four proposals, one of which was from Mr Geber, one from the Barossa Council and two other less well-formed proposals.

Every single one of those proposals called for significant state government money. I know that there are some out there in the public sphere, including Mr Geber, who suggested that is not the case. I am not going to use parliamentary privilege to name the figure that was used in that expression of interest, because I think that is an inappropriate use of parliamentary privilege, but I can reassert in this house that there was a very substantial sum of money that was asked for as part of that proposal to get a Barossa wine train underway, and anybody who suggests different needs to take a good hard look at the facts of that EOI process.

Having made the decision that there was no viable proposition and not wanting to waste \$1 million on a private enterprise, which by the way, had we undertaken, would have drawn calls of wasted spending from sections of the community, we decided to go ahead with the roundabout as planned. That is where we see a process that has been begun by the member for Light, interestingly well after any of this has been undertaken. Maybe it could have been a result of a boundary change. We will let the member for Light answer that question himself. But I would like to take this opportunity to read a small passage. It states as follows:

Let me put the record straight from the outset: the government positively supports the notion of a tourist passenger train operation to the Barossa Valley. However, it is the government's view that it is not prepared to compromise on considerations of sustainability and viability.

In keeping with the approach to other project proponents, the ball is in the court of Mr Geber to submit a feasibility study that would incorporate a proven and compelling commercial business case for a Barossa Wine Train service to the Barossa region and, importantly, a business plan that will demonstrate research into: expected product demand, anticipated costs, covering both return to service and also recurrent outgoings (return to service is very important, because the line is not of a standard that will enable passenger train services to recommence immediately); pricing structure and policy; expected return to investors; and governance model.

The onus has always been on the Barossa Wine Train's owner and the project proponent, Mr John Geber, and not the government, to prepare such feasibility studies and business plans to underpin and make a strong case for the Barossa Wine Train product. Pivotal to the project proceeding is the need to recognise and acknowledge that there are a series of mandatory return to service requirements that must be met before the Barossa Wine Train turns a wheel in revenue service. It is that to which I refer to in making sure that the line is upgraded to meet the passenger transport needs of today.

Further—

maybe this is a hint—

minister Conlon's office has advised that, while the necessary track access framework is in place for a private operator to provide a service to the Barossa Valley, this is subject to meeting necessary rail safety accreditation requirements.

The passage I just read is the exact words of the member for Light in this place on Thursday 29 March 2012. All of those comments that Mr Geber just made are comments I agree with, that this is a private proposal. It is a proposal that I as an MP would love to support, but I do not think it should be subsidised by government money even in the creating of a feasibility study. This is a private proponent with a private operation that should be funded privately.

I would question why it is now that the member for Light has changed his mind in regard to this proposal. One can only consider that it is politics and political expediency as to why we now have this bill before this house with the changed attitude of the member for Light, as distinct from the exact words he put on the table back in 2012.

Over my time as minister, improving road safety was perhaps my number one objective in this house. In fact, the thing that I am most proud of is the record amount of spending that this government has put into fixing up our regional road network in South Australia. Too many people—in fact, two-thirds to three-quarters of people—who die on our roads die in regional areas. I am very proud to have been part of a government, as a minister and a local MP, that has prioritised road safety above all other objectives to help keep South Australians alive on our roads.

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning and Local Government) (10:44):** I thank the member for Schubert for his contribution and his advocacy in relation to the importance of road safety in South Australia. I certainly confirm that is a priority of the government.

The idea of reviving the Barossa train service as a tourism operation is clearly not a new one. Of course, the Barossa rail line has not been used as a commuter passenger service since the 1960s, which was probably before the member for Schubert was born. However, the Barossa Wine Train did run for approximately five years, ceasing operations in 2003. Since this time, there have been a number of attempts to revive the rail line as a tourist offering but nothing has eventuated. The member has outlined to the house some history in that regard.

This bill seeks to insert a new section 20A into the Highways Act. New section 20A would prevent the Commissioner of Highways, subject to ministerial approval, from acquiring land forming part of the Barossa rail corridor or any interest in such land, whether by compulsory acquisition or agreement, unless it is approved by resolution of both houses of parliament.

The government is of the position that the bill is simply not necessary, given that road and infrastructure projects that require the removal of a section of the existing railway track within the Barossa rail corridor can be designed to allow for the reinstatement of the removed section of track should it be required in the future. This has been seen most recently with the Kroemer's Crossing Roundabout Project.

Secondly, the proposed amendments to the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 are not necessary, as any applications for development are assessed against policies in the Planning and Design Code which are subject to parliamentary scrutiny under section 74 of the act through referral to the Environment, Resources and Development Committee. So parliament has oversight of planning policies and any proposed policies that could provide for development in the rail corridor to be disallowed by this parliament.

Furthermore, the bill may prevent or hinder the government carrying out road projects and infrastructure upgrades in the Barossa Valley that aim to deliver improvements to road safety and heavy vehicle productivity as well as creating jobs during their lifetime. An example of a project that could be affected by the bill is the planned replacement of the Altona Bridge on Barossa Valley Way. Additionally, the government has already considered the potential future use of Barossa Valley line by way of an expression of interest for the rail corridor between Gawler Central and the Penrice quarry which was issued in 2019. On the basis of the responses received, the decision was made to abandon the process.

Also, the bill sets out a precedent for fettering the Commissioner of Highways' land acquisition powers under the Highways Act 1926 as well as other powers of the commissioner under section 20(1) of the act. Such a precedent may result in others seeking to have similar legislative

fetters placed on the commissioner's powers in the future in order to protect their own interest. This is a precedent which should be resisted, and I will refer to an example shortly.

In addition, the definition of 'Barossa rail corridor' in the bill includes the rail corridor between Nuriootpa and Angaston. This section of the rail corridor is now a shared use path and, if railway services were to be reintroduced in this section of the corridor, the shared use path would have to be removed and the railway reconstructed. I also note that the Barossa Council owns land located within the Nuriootpa to Angaston corridor and obviously consultation would need to be undertaken with them. I would hope that had happened before this bill was introduced.

Finally, the honourable member stated in his second reading contribution that the bill is a holding mechanism until the feasibility of a Barossa tourism train service has been assessed and a final decision on its viability is made. However, the bill does not contain a sunset clause which means the amendments to the Highways Act and the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act will be permanent unless repealed by parliament in the future.

Let me refer to an early rail line in South Australia which was on Kangaroo Island in the late 1800s. It was established to join the salt pans of the southern part of the island to American River, a port to export salt. It was established by the Commonwealth Salt Company to transport the salt from the end of the tramline, as it was described in those days, by trucks, and then a 40-foot motorboat vessel took the salt around to Kingscote and Hog Bay.

Why do I mention this? It traversed miles and miles, in those days, of the island. It was important and efficient for its purpose. Salt was no longer required in the tonnage that was exported from the island in the early part of the settlement—whaling and sealing became last century's industries—and obviously other industries flourished.

My point is this: had we had a situation of requiring that that line, which had been carved out across the island for the purposes of this venture, be kept in some perpetuity and requiring the parliament to deal with the matter, for both houses of parliament to resolve, we would have cut across an area that is now conservation park, is now productive farming land and provides other transport services, and impeded the Commissioner of Highways in relation to the very reason that position that is usually held by the head of the transport department is there. It has enabled the Rail Commissioner and Commissioner of Highways to deal with the roads and rails, to access stone for road building, etc, and has of course enabled rail to support the infrastructure of these ventures.

But things change, and we need to accommodate that and we need to employ the best use and the best opportunities for South Australians for that purpose. I urge members not to support this resolution. If there is to be a bigger discussion in relation to the reasons we have a Rail Commissioner and a Commissioner of Highways in this state, then let's have that discussion, but please do not introduce bills that simply try to throw a hand grenade into a local political issue for the advancement of those who might see this as a worthy option, and destroy and undermine the very structure of what we have for the rest of our infrastructure in the state.

**The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart—Minister for Energy and Mining) (10:51):** I have listened very closely to the two speakers who have preceded me today, both of whom have made very useful contributions. Let me say, as did the member for Schubert, that the suggestion of a Barossa rail trailer train that actually works on a commercial basis, put forward with private money for the benefit of those shareholders and of course those who use the rail potentially, and those who would benefit from it in other ways whether they be bakeries, tourism offerings, motels, pubs, etc., is a fantastic ambition and I fully support that ambition.

The idea, though, that I would support this bill is very farcical, to be honest. This is a bill that has been put forward, perhaps mischievously, perhaps by a member just trying to endear himself to a part of the state that he at one point in time thought he might have the opportunity to represent. There are a range of reasons why the member might bring this forward, but I do not support this bill. I support the principle of anybody who is inclined to seek the permission, seek the investment, seek the business case, on and on, to make a project like this work. That would be terrific.

This is not common only to the Barossa. There are people in my electorate of Stuart, and people outside my electorate of Stuart, who have an interest in similar types of development within the electorate of Stuart. Every time I have said to them, 'That would be terrific. Let me wholeheartedly

support you in what you want to do, but you will need to find the money to do this. You will need to find the investors and the backers to help you do this. Good luck, and let me know what else I can do to try to help you,' but I am not supportive of the extraordinary amount of taxpayer funds going into the proposal, as has been proposed by some, for a project like this. The idea that we need a bill like this to change the legislation that applies is not something that I personally support.

There are closed rail corridors all over our electorate of Stuart and they are used overwhelmingly for very good purposes—some might argue not as good a purpose as reinstating a rail line and running a train on it and, as I have said before, that is for others to make a case for. Certainly there is land that is leased for grazing, there is land that is set aside for walking trails, there is land that is set aside for cycling trails, there is land that is set aside necessarily, unfortunately, because it is contaminated and needs to be cleaned up at some stage, but usually this land is being put to some useful purpose at the moment.

Could it be transferred back to rail? Hypothetically, yes, it could but, as the Deputy Premier said, there are some things that have changed. It is not likely that we are going to have freight demand in the volume that will be necessary to justify an investment like this. Very close, about 25 kilometres or so from where I live in Wilmington, is a very small town called Hammond, a very lovely town on the Willochra Plain. I think there are now four homes in this town and it used to be a thriving centre. The people who live there now love it, and they are terrific people. It is a lovely quiet place to live not too far from Wilmington and a few other towns like Quorn and Booleroo.

I raise this because at one point in time Hammond had the record for the highest grain loading from any railway siding anywhere in the state in South Australia, a terrific record to have, but of course that was back when grain was loaded by hand into sacks which were stitched by hand and carried—'lumped' as was the term back then—and that was technology as they knew it at the time. That was the best way to take grain delivered in bulk: pour it into hessian bags, hand stitch them and then carry them on a person's back onto the train. It was a thriving centre at that point in time and there was every reason for the rail to be there, but that is not the world we live in any longer. The idea that grain would be handled that way is long gone.

Gladstone, about 80 kilometres south of Wilmington, is now the largest inland grain handling facility, certainly in Australia and I think it might even be in the Southern Hemisphere, but that is the largest inland one that we have at the moment. It operates entirely differently, and there is rail access to that receivable site. So the world has changed. That is the freight side of things.

On the passenger side of things, whether that be passenger transport or passenger use with regard to tourism and bringing people into a region, it is very attractive to think that Adelaide people could get on a train and come up to the Barossa or further north into the electorate of Stuart, into some of the most beautiful country anywhere in the world as far as I am concerned, but would there be enough of them? Would there be enough of those people? It could not be people getting on the train just once; every single person could do it once, and that still would probably not justify the investment. It would have to be something that people wanted to do time and time again to keep up the volume of demand that would be necessary.

I am not an expert in this area. My hunch is that that is not going to be the case, but my hunch is quite irrelevant. My hunch does not matter: it is actually up to the people who would like to put their money forward into a project like this. I really would love them to be successful but, as I have said, to bring a bill into this place to try to address this issue for not, in my mind, the right reasons, certainly does not fly with me.

Part of our electorate of Stuart, including my home town of Wilmington, is actually on the old rail line. The towns are all about 20 or 25 kilometres apart, because that is what was needed for the trains to run through to pick up water and coal and other passengers and things. That was about the right distance for a train to go to a station for all of the different reasons that it might need to go to a station. So we are blessed in my part of the world to have beautiful towns in the Southern Flinders Ranges—so close, fantastic communities, beautiful places and ever-growing tourism opportunities in those areas.

Would we like to have a train coming to our area again to support tourism? Yes, we would. Would the people of the Barossa like to have a train again in their area to support tourism? Well, I expect the answer would be, yes, they would. So as the member for Schubert said and as he said that Mr Geber, who I have met and had some very positive conversations with, also said, let this be

a case for private enterprise to develop, with the government's support to develop, but not in the massive financial way that some have suggested. Let this be a private enterprise opportunity which our government would want to support in many ways other than putting money forward.

But let this not be derailed by an opportunistic private member's bill by a member who hoped at one point in time that he might represent this part of the state and so wanted to endear himself to people in this part of the state. Let me say that given that that opportunity has passed this member by, I suspect that his heart is actually not in this bill or this topic anymore either.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley—Minister for Innovation and Skills) (11:01):** I always enjoy the opportunity to speak about trains and rail. They are something I am quite interested in. I do not know where that puts me on the spectrum, but it is something I have always been interested in. It takes me back to the days when I was living in Salisbury and starting my apprenticeship and leaving home at six in the morning to catch the 6.25 train into Adelaide to clock on at about 7.20 in Wright Street in the city.

Of course, when I was on the Salisbury station it was chock-a-block full, and the train would turn up with about 10 carriages on. There would be plenty of room until everybody from the Salisbury station got onto the train, and then for anyone who got on after Salisbury station it would be standing room only. These were the golden days of metropolitan rail.

**The Hon. D.C. van Holst Pellekaan:** Back when you were an apprentice.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Back when I was an apprentice, I am reminded by the minister. Not long into my apprenticeship I used the rail system on the way home, past Salisbury station off to Smithfield station, where I used to go to the gym. I would spend two hours in the gym four nights a week, buy my iced coffee at the deli after the workout, wait for the train, get off at Nurlutta station and walk 20 minutes home to Barnett Street, where my mother would have a bowl of pasta ready for me at about 8.30 at night. So I have very fond memories of the rail system.

Also I paid a lot of attention to the closure of quite a big section of the metropolitan rail system by the Bannon government. We all remember the Northfield line. Imagine how wonderful it would have been to have the Northfield line, particularly for the electors of Playford now. That is the line that used to turn east at Dry Creek and end up going past the abattoirs, crossing Main North Road and finishing just before Hampstead Road. That was closed in the 1980s and the tracks were ripped up.

Beyond the Salisbury station was Hildra railway station, which serviced the Housing Trust homes in Salisbury North, not far from Salisbury High School. That was a very interesting station. It had just a few steps, not even a platform—just a few steps—and the train driver would very skilfully stop the train at the steps, where the door was, so you could get from the train down to the ground.

It then went on into the old WRE site, where there were three stations with very imaginative names—Penfield 1, Penfield 2 and Penfield 3—and that would finish in a loop. I always noticed that they had the best toilet facilities of any railway station in the metropolitan system in Adelaide. The infrastructure was quite extraordinary. It was closed down and the tracks were ripped up as well in the Bannon days.

So I think we can see what is in the DNA of the Labor Party and we can see how opportunistic this bill introduced by the member for Light is. Remember, he wanted to be the member for Schubert. You could see that the shoppies union were desperately looking for a state seat for Nick Champion, who has been in the federal parliament for 13 years and never been on the front bench. They thought they could give the member for Light an honourable shift.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister will resume his seat. The member for Light rises on a point of order.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Relevance. The minister has to at least try to talk to the bill before us. Up until this point he has not mentioned the bill once. He is now going even further astray. I know he is trying to filibuster, but his behaviour is quite insulting to the people of the Barossa—

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** —because he has not even touched upon the bill itself, which is quite insulting—

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** —to the people who support tourism in the Barossa.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Light will resume his seat. The opportunity to raise a point of order is not an occasion to provide a speech or to participate further in the debate. The minister, in addressing the broader context of the bill, has made some observations about the context in which the bill might have been first brought before the parliament. I remind all members of standing order 127 and I otherwise draw the minister's attention to the subject matter of the bill. The minister has the call.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Thank you very much, sir. This conversion on the road to Damascus by the member for Light came about when he was pushed into the seat of Schubert and thought he may have had a chance with 5.4 per cent. What a political genius, to make a decision to shift seats prior to the final redistribution being delivered based on margins. But, as we all know, it was not his decision. It was a push because they were looking for somewhere for Nick Champion, the very lacklustre backbencher in the federal parliament who is desperate to be on the front bench. You can see the massive opportunities in the Labor opposition over there, with so many lacklustre front bench spokespeople.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, I draw your attention to standing order 128(1) and I call attention to the point of order raised by the member for Light and I draw you back to the subject matter of the bill. The minister has the call.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** It is important that we look at the intent of the bill. There is no doubt that you in your profession as a barrister, Mr Speaker, would have often gone to *Hansard*, gone to the committee process, to try to understand the intent of a bill, and that is exactly what I am expressing here: the intent of the member for Light in bringing this bill to the house. He was looking for something to be relevant in his push into the seat of Schubert from the—

**Ms BEDFORD:** Point of order.

*The Hon. A. Piccolo interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Florey on a point of order.

**Ms BEDFORD:** Again, relevance. The member has been brought up twice. I have received information about the Barossa rail and I have an opinion on it, but it does not mean anything untoward, and I just think we need to get back to the bill.

**The SPEAKER:** I understand that to be a point of order on standing order 127(2). I stand to be corrected, member for Florey, if that is not the case. I remind all members that a member may not impute improper motives to any other member. I am listening carefully to the debate and so far as there is a reflection upon the reasons why a particular member may have been focused on a particular area of the state, I am not sure it arises so far as to be an imputation of improper motive. I do draw the minister's attention to the subject matter of the bill. The minister has the call.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** There is no doubt that the focus of the member for Light was on the Barossa. After nearly 15 years in the parliament all of sudden there was this interest. Why is there interest in the Barossa? Because there was a political pathway for the member for Light to attempt to stay in this place—

**Ms BEDFORD:** Point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** —and so this is a—

**The SPEAKER:** The minister will resume his seat. The member for Florey on a point of order.

**Ms BEDFORD:** It is again 127, sir. He has already had three goes at this. We have other business on the *Notice Paper*. Can he not finish?

**The SPEAKER:** The minister will resume his seat. The member for Florey rises again on a point of order. I have ruled insofar as the point of order might relate to standing order 127(2). The member for Florey might indicate if there is a point of order on standing order 128; I am happy to hear it.

**Ms BEDFORD:** It is repetition, sir, is it not? We have heard the same thing four times now. Can we not move on to the next part, which is about the actual substance of the bill, which is the railway itself?

**The SPEAKER:** I have the point of order. I have drawn the minister's attention to that matter now on more than one occasion. The minister has the call.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Mr Speaker, if I was not interrupted as often, I could continue with my remarks. The whole reason that we are in this place is to debate the merit of the bill. To debate the merit of the bill we need to understand the motivation of the bill. You cannot dispute that. There are motivations for legislation that we want in this place that come from the community for all sorts of reasons. Just because a bill is in this place does not mean it warrants being supported.

Consequently, my argument is that this is a poorly thought-out bill by the member for Light for the wrong reasons. There was an opportunity, when the member for Light had access to cabinet ministers, when he sat around cabinet ministers, for this to be raised in a proper manner, with the resources of the Public Service to support the member for Light in doing that, but he chose not to do that. I do not know what the reasons are. He has not explained that in his contribution to this place so far.

It is important that we identify the reasons for bills being brought to this place and whether there is a genuine community benefit or whether a bill has been brought to this place for a perceived political benefit to the person who brings the bill to this place. I do not think I am an orphan here in suggesting that. There are many people in the community who have a very cynical view about politics and politicians, so I think it is our duty as members of this place to ensure that we look at all of the merits and the motivations for bills to appear in this place.

I expressed earlier in my remarks how excited I am about trains. I like to go down to Victor Harbor to see the Cockle Train as it leaves the station. I have even been known to take photographs of the Cockle Train for my album, both stationary and moving, so any changes to legislation that has an effect on train or rail corridors and the use of the train infrastructure here in South Australia is of interest to me.

I am always very interested in those thoughts being shared and legislation coming to this place for debate. I am also very interested in the motivation for that. My only motivation is for a good public transport system and an honest debate on why change is needed.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON (Adelaide—Minister for Child Protection) (11:16):** I, too, would like to speak on this bill and reflect on rail that affects my electorate, such as the Gawler electrification. The electrification of the Gawler line, which goes through my electorate from the city through to Ovingham, Dudley Park, Prospect—

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Point of order: I think the minister has to at least attempt to actually debate the bill, at least know what the bill is about.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members on my right!

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Relevance, Mr Speaker: she has actually started her whole speech about something totally unrelated to it. I know the government would have talked us out because they would not have got to a vote—

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** —but they should at least try to know what they are talking about.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Mr Pederick interjecting:*



**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hammond will cease interjecting. I draw the member for Light's attention to standing order 127(2). I have the point of order. The Minister for Child Protection is, to my observation, less than 30 seconds into her contribution. I am listening carefully. The Minister for Child Protection has the call.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is very relevant. We are talking about the Barossa rail corridor bill, and I believe it would be quite relevant to talk about Labor's track record on rail and how hypocritical it might be that a member of the Labor Party sat there for 16 years of government, the entire time this railway line was not functioning, and did nothing. Now suddenly it becomes important.

*The Hon. A. Piccolo interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Light!

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** What is important to the people in my electorate is the—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** —electrification of the Gawler line, which was announced three times by Labor and cancelled twice. It was announced in 2008 and 2013 and cancelled both times, and then announced again in 2018. To quote from my own words through the Public Works Committee:

The cancellation of the Gawler electrification project meant the loss of \$76 million of commonwealth government funding, an approximate cost penalty of \$70 million if the government should restart the project, and a write-down of over \$40 million by the Auditor-General as underutilised infrastructure. This is a total loss of over \$186 million, yet the reason for abandoning the project was supposedly a lack of funds.

In the lead-up to the 2014 election a figure of \$160 million was [somehow] found for the O-Bahn project and was announced by transport minister Stephen Mullighan in February 2014, only weeks [if not days] prior to the election, just to save a few minutes for the users of the O-Bahn.

Obviously a political move, as this is today regarding the Barossa train.

Again, Labor members do not think about the whole state: they think about electorates and winning electorates. Well, my electorate of Adelaide did not want the O-Bahn through Rymill Park and they fought against it. It happened. The Gawler electrification was cancelled as a consequence because they did not have the money, but they found the money to help the north-east suburbs. I am just making the point that this is always political, unfortunately, when it comes to Labor.

I would like to put on the record the amazing work of residents, particularly Kate Barrett, who lives in Prospect and has a great fondness for the railway line. In fact, she set up the Friends of the Dudley Park Railway Station and co-opted, with my help, the Prospect Blair Athol Lions. I have been involved in many of the tree plantings and working bees at the Dudley Park Railway Station, and Kate has been a very strong advocate for the greening and beautification along the whole railway corridor. She even puts out her own newsletters to keep all the residents informed, and she is doing an amazing job to hold both the state government and the council to account.

The state government has put in \$500,000 to the greening and improvement of the streetscape along the corridor, particularly in the Prospect council area, which is the Ovingham and Dudley Park stations. Kate is keeping a close eye on what the council does with that money, because the grant was given to the Prospect council to protect the trees.

Unfortunately, there were trees that did have to be cut down for the electrification because of fire danger and they were overhanging the railway lines. Originally, around 300 trees were going to be cut down and, through the advocacy from my office, via people such as Kate Barrett and other residents putting pressure on DPTI and making sure they relooked at the plans and relooked at the plans, that was reduced to approximately 64 trees, from the original figure of 300.

Thank you to the community for their hard work and effort in lobbying, and to my electorate office for taking all the calls and emails and passing that onto the minister, who has listened. I am really pleased that we have minimised the removal of trees because people in my electorate, particularly in Prospect, love trees. They love greening and they really care for the environment.

Again, further improvements have been made along this railway line, with the announcement of the Ovingham overpass, which will stop the traffic hazards. Currently, the interstate trains, the freight trains that carry all the goods, hold up the traffic there for up to 10 minutes at a time, so it is important to fix that intersection. I believe, from talking to staff in the department, that this has been on the books to be an overpass for over 20 years. I have spoken to people who have been in the department that entire time.

It was always going to be an overpass under the Labor government, for their 16 years, and it still continues. They have looked at an underpass and all the different options. However, again playing political games, the member for Croydon, the Leader of the Opposition, suggests that it should be an underpass. He does that just to cause trouble in my electorate, of course, and to grandstand.

The unfortunate thing for people in his electorate of Croydon is that running a railway line under Torrens Road at Ovingham would require 109 properties to be demolished, at a further cost of \$61 million, and those 109 properties are actually all in the member for Croydon's electorate. But he does not care about that, because all he cares about is political pointscore and game playing, and making it seem as if an underpass is a better idea.

It is not; it would be very disruptive and a lot of people would lose their houses and their businesses should this be an underpass, despite the difficulty. You would have to reroute the train, the freight, you would have to build two extra lines temporarily, and then you would have to move them back. It is a complete nightmare and not even possible. Again, it just shows that Labor is motivated by politics, and politics only.

The concept plans for the Ovingham crossing, the things that we have heard and that have been included, include rain gardens for sustainable management of stormwater, realignment of Napier Street for safety and improved access to residential areas and schools, landscaped bush tucker walk, retention of as many trees as possible to provide a buffer for housing, new fencing with acoustic treatment to rear of housing, nature play space with re-used timber and natural materials, landscaping for enhanced amenity and buffer to housing, additional landscaping along old Churchill Road, reinstatement of Guthrie Street access to Torrens Road, local road connections under the bridge to provide improved access in and out of residential areas, and increased visual surveillance for safety.

There will be a plaza area to be used for small events and activities, including opportunities for the creation of public art. In the concept plans, there are community courts to meet local open space needs and create active safe places. There will also be additional car parking for businesses and increased footpath width for outdoor trading, along with improved access in and out of residential areas and protected left and right-hand turns into Chief Street and Napier Street for safety.

There were five community consultation meetings after there was a concept plan because having community meetings when there is no plan is pointless. Labor held them very early, again for political pointscore, just to make it look like we were not doing anything. There was nothing to consult on at that point. Once there was a concept plan, there were five different public consultation meetings on both sides of the tracks, in Ovingham as well as in the member for Croydon's electorate at Brompton Primary School.

I attended all those to hear the community's concerns and to make sure that DPTI, or DIT as they are now called, were listening to the concerns of residents and coming up with solutions. I am really pleased that they have. There are some amazing improvements based on feedback, because of course it is the people who live around the area who know the impacts of a local project. Having access to the staff in the department is invaluable and really gets that feedback through. I am really looking forward to seeing the amazing improvements that will come from the Ovingham overpass as well as the Gawler electrification and the beautification along the railway corridor.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:27):** I rise to make a contribution to the Statutes Amendment (Barossa Rail Corridor) Bill. I want to make the point that my grandfather Clarrie Dutton worked out of Gawler railway station. He lived at Freeling and used to ride his bike from Freeling to Gawler so he could be a guard on the trains—and we had guards in those days.

When the minister, the member for Unley, was commenting on his rides into Adelaide, I was fondly remembering going on rides on the Redhens from the Gawler station. The air conditioning always worked. They slid open those big side doors, which I think would have been at least six feet wide in the old language, or nearly two metres. They may have been a bit bigger, I am not sure. They were very open things and you could just sit there and take in the breeze. I do not think they would allow that these days with occupational health and safety.

Certainly, as has been expressed here today, Labor do not win any prizes when it comes to managing rail in this state. In reflecting on this bill and its significance to the Barossa, I want to talk about the relevance of some rail lines in my electorate in comparison to this, that is, the Mallee railway lines. One goes up through Karoonda to Loxton and the other one goes to Lameroo and Pinnaroo—and look what happened there. I remember commemorating the century of rail on the Mallee lines in 2006. After over a century of rail, in 2015, under the Labor government, those two lines were closed. No longer could grain freight be moved along those lines.

When we see the Barossa rail corridor brought forward, I agree with the member for Schubert, who knows better than anyone the history of that Barossa railway line. There were discussions around it when it closed in 1968 regarding its future viability and whether or not it could go ahead and have a department put it out to tender. But what everyone wanted was government money, millions and millions of dollars of government money, to make sure that it went ahead, and that just does not happen in the real world. I get it: people come to us for grants, and governments of all colours have grant processes, but people think that grants fall out of the sky. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

### *Motions*

## **REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (11:30):** I move:

That this house—

- (a) recognises the significant effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of South Australians;
- (b) ensures regional South Australians, with the unique challenges of living in rural and remote areas, are a strong focus of future planning and funding commitments; and
- (c) funds and implements a five-year strategic plan to improve regional services and attract mental health professionals to the regions.

Since I began in this place some seven years ago, mental health has been a major focus of my work. In fact, in my maiden speech I talked about the inadequacies of South Australia's regional mental health services. Our state and our regions are facing some of their biggest challenges, and ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of people in the regions is paramount as we recover from the pandemic.

For many people the pandemic has been a perfect storm, with people facing uncertainty, job losses, border closures, an increase in alcohol usage, relationship breakdowns, financial concerns, etc. Last year made us very aware of our mental health, and perhaps for the first time the stigma of asking for and accessing help and support is beginning to lift. I would like to see a time when our mental health is given the same importance as our physical health and visiting your counsellor for a check-up is just as common as visiting your GP. But that coincides with a huge demand for services—services that cannot keep up and that just are not there for regional people.

It takes a fair amount of courage to acknowledge that you need help and to pick up the phone to make an appointment with your GP to get a mental health plan or to call a counsellor. I spoke to a counselling service in the Limestone Coast that reported a large increase of first-time clients accessing their services for the first time in their lives. However, people are having to wait months and months to get their first appointment. In the Limestone Coast, the waitlist to access services, including counselling and psychologists, is anywhere up to 12 months. I spoke to a child psychologist who said that their waitlist was 12 months.

If you cannot access services and support early, problems build and build until they reach an acute stage. This is having a major impact on our hospital system, which is seeing more and more

people presenting for crisis care and putting existing services under demand. The Mount Gambier hospital has six dedicated mental health beds, which are frequently full, and medical beds that are used for mental health crises. If some of these people were able to access care and support early, they would not need to be in a crisis situation and accessing acute care.

In my electorate, we are very fortunate to have some passionate and dedicated people working in this space and putting forward solutions to bridge the gaps. Last year, Leah Griffin and Samantha Benton from Lifeline South East conducted a study to determine the need for a central mental health hub in the Limestone Coast. The idea of the hub was to provide a free service for anyone experiencing mental health challenges. It would be a first point of call to access face-to-face support, information and assistance in navigating local, state and national mental health services. With 1,045 participants, the local survey produced the following insights:

- even though 86 per cent of respondents reported either knowing someone who had or had themselves used local mental health services, only 53 per cent said they felt confident they could locate appropriate mental health services in our region;
- nearly half of respondents showed a significant preference for accessing mental health service information through face-to-face contact, with online at 29 per cent and over the phone at 15 per cent the least preferred methods; and
- over 95 per cent of people surveyed agreed with the two following statements: we need more local mental health services, and more collaboration is needed between local mental health services.

In the comments, most spoke of their support for a central hub to coordinate existing services and provide a safe space for people to get face-to-face and immediate support. They shared personal stories, some of which are very concerning. People spoke of ending up in hospital emergency departments after waiting months for appointments and of being shuffled from one service to another. They spoke of spending considerable money travelling to Victoria to see any available psychologist about being cut off from services after their plan had ended. I will read a few of the comments to you now:

My local GP had no appointments available until next year for me to get myself a mental health plan and without financial support, I can't afford my psychologist visits. It's incredibly disheartening to call up and request an appointment specifically for a mental health plan and be turned away. More communication between GPs and mental health services needs to be established and different pathways to access these services need to be promoted.

Another said:

If you are dealing with a person with serious mental health issues, they need help the day they finally have the courage to speak up and say they need help. Not months down the track. If they are feeling suicidal, chances are they won't be here to need that appointment by the time they can get in.

Finally:

I'm a psychology student so I'm fortunate to know the processes, services and steps required if I wished to access mental health services but unfortunately, I don't think many people are aware of these. A mental health hub would be so incredibly valuable in Mount Gambier and would have the potential to improve so many people's lives.

Following the results of this study, I received a statement from Lifeline Australia, which reads:

Based on the community engagement, and on Lifeline's long experience of supporting South Australians within this region we recommend a Central Hub focused on needs assessment and information and referral be situated in Mount Gambier.

A central hub would provide the following benefits to the Limestone Coast community:

- support, information and advice being delivered for local community members by well-trained and supported local community members employed within the central hub—'by locals, for locals' is the hashtag;
- recognising the very strong preference expressed by the community, the hub would offer face-to-face service to community members;
- a single point of entry for local residents seeking information regarding mental health and counselling support services;

- facilitating interservice collaboration and further developing help-seeker pathways to better match services to need;
- maintaining up-to-date information regarding the mental health and counselling ecosystem within the Limestone Coast region;
- needs assessment and initial triage and, where required, needs-matched referral to the right level of care in the right time frame; and
- provision of non-clinical care and practical support to help-seekers and their families.

There will be unprecedented demand for mental health services in the years to come. Before the pandemic, the South Australian Mental Health Services Plan 2020-2025 recognised a potential workforce crisis looming and major shortages in country South Australia. To quote from the plan:

Workforce shortages, particularly in some geographic areas, are already a problem and this is expected to get worse.

The significant risk this poses to achieving improved mental health outcomes in the future cannot be overstated. Effort and resources need to be directed towards workforce planning to mitigate this risk.

In parts of our system, we are unable to fill vacancies and there are major shortages in country South Australia. There are not enough graduates coming through the training system and no strategic oversight of how many graduates we need in what disciplines to meet population needs.

Last year, I spoke to the house on regional mental health being a focus of the 2021 state budget. Obviously the state's response and recovery to COVID-19 has been the focus, and rightly so; however, now is the time to focus on long-term planning and a region-by-region approach. The needs of the Limestone Coast are different from those of metropolitan Adelaide. It is no use announcing funding for mental health services when we cannot staff the existing services we have.

There need to be retention and recruitment strategies for mental health workers in regional centres. Right now, in regional cities like Mount Gambier it is an ongoing challenge to find experienced staff, such as mental health nurses. Not only does there need to be retention and relocation support to fill these positions but there also need to be career progression opportunities. We cannot expect to keep highly skilled people if there are not the jobs for them to progress to.

On the Limestone Coast, we are lucky to have groups like Lifeboat, The Junction, the Mount Gambier and Districts Suicide Prevention Network, and the Mount Gambier and Districts Health Advisory Council. But many of these services, particularly Lifeboat and The Junction, are volunteer run and receive no state government support. These are headed by dedicated and passionate people, such as Matthew Brookes, Maureen Klintberg and Nel Jans.

We are also lucky to have huge community support behind events such as the Full Monty, which raised more than \$50,000 for local mental health organisations; however, this should not be the main funding source for this early intervention. To continue their important work, they need a long-term funding commitment by the state government. I have spoken to the health minister many times on this issue, and I take this opportunity to invite the health minister to the Limestone Coast to look at the hub model.

In today's *Advertiser*, the Victorian government is fast-tracking mental health treatment centres due to a landmark report that highlighted that the state's mental health provision is a fractured system. Quite coincidentally, the new system will focus on providing a front door for people to access care and initiatives that are there, so it is very similar to exactly what this study was aiming to achieve and what I am talking about today. I will quote a few little parts from this because I think it is informative for our South Australian system. It states:

Victoria's mental health system will be torn up and transformed after a two-year Royal Commission found the state had been failed by an 'antiquated' system that was driven by crisis.

A new Mental Health Commission will be established, services will be moved and expanded into local communities...sweeping changes to the state's patchwork of struggling services.

In a damning 3,000 page report tabled to parliament on Tuesday morning, the Royal Commission found the current system was overwhelmed and that more than 95,000 people missed out on needed services during the 2019-20 financial year.

The report found this was vital to ensure people with poor mental health were picked up early, did not slip through the cracks of the system and received the right treatment.

Again, that is exactly what I am aiming to highlight here today in this parliament. The report also found that under-resourcing has led to an over-reliance on medication. That is certainly very similar to the experience I am seeing in people coming into my electorate office talking about their loved ones or their experiences. It continues:

We know a collection of discrete reforms to an antiquated system is not enough. We have recommended a fundamental redesign.

I encourage people to read the stories in today's *Advertiser* of people who have fallen through the cracks and, unfortunately, in many instances highlighted here and similarly in our regions, that falling through the cracks can result in people taking their own lives.

I want to highlight the work that has gone on in Victoria, the work that Lifeline in the South-East has done with this one-stop shop, this face-to-face referral where people can come in, understand the services that are already offered and they are matched with those services. But, of course, it highlights a greater need in the mental health space, and that is that without serious focus from the state government on this issue we are going to continue to see people falling through the cracks.

I see it as a workforce development issue in terms of working with the universities to train more and more people in this area, attraction packages to regional areas to attract those skills to our region, a retention package and career progression so that we retain those skills in our regional areas long term, and, of course, early intervention.

We need to make sure we fund early intervention adequately so that, where possible, we reduce the number of people who are progressing through to an acute stage that ends up with hospitalisation and, of course, reduce the most tragic of circumstances, where people who have fallen through the cracks take their own life. With those words, I commend the motion to the house.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (11:47):** I am pleased to rise on this motion on behalf of the government and indicate our support for the motion, for the most part. I thank the member for Mount Gambier for bringing the motion to the house and recognise in particular his long-held level of concern and focus on these issues, not just in the seven years he has been in the parliament. I know, through the people I have spoken to, of his engagement in schooling around the South-East in Mount Gambier and other parts of the state, where the member for Mount Gambier previously also worked hard to support the mental health needs of students in regional and rural South Australia.

In supporting the motion, I indicate that the government wishes to offer what I hope will be an uncontroversial amendment and which I have spoken to the member for Mount Gambier about. He can indicate whether or not he is comfortable with it in his response, but I certainly got the impression from him that he did not object to it. I will start with that amendment and then reflect more broadly on the motion because in (a) and (b), the first two parts of the motion, the government unambiguously supports and is absolutely committed to agreement with those.

In paragraph (c), I think we have a better way to express what (c) is seeking to determine. Of course, we do not appropriate funding through the motions part of the house's work. Indeed, there are a couple of programs where I think it is appropriate to acknowledge the investment that is in place and, indeed, through those investments some of the specific examples the member for Mount Gambier has brought, and I am sure others will bring as well, can therefore be reflected on in the work that the Department for Health and Wellbeing are going to be undertaking and will be in place for the people of rural and regional South Australia.

Therefore, particularly the three areas that the member for Mount Gambier reflected on are captured in his intention in paragraph (c) and certainly are captured in our proposed amendment to paragraph (c) to ensure that funding and investment in rural and regional mental health services is present and that there is a heavy focus on workforce development issues.

The member for Mount Gambier identified some of the challenges in those areas, and meeting those challenges requires that work to be done with long-term thinking and, indeed, long-term strategic thinking about the process altogether. The motion refers to a five-year strategic

plan in the proposal and the amendment recognises that. I therefore seek to amend the motion as described so that it would read as follows:

That this house—

- (a) recognises the significant effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of South Australians;
- (b) ensures regional South Australians, with the unique challenges of living in rural and remote areas, are a strong focus of future planning and funding commitments; and
- (c) acknowledges the Marshall and Morrison governments' combined approximate \$100 million investment towards new mental health initiatives and services in South Australia and welcomes the implementation of the Mental Health Services Plan 2020-25 and the Rural Health Workforce Strategy.

The long-term strategic thinking is necessary and the workforce strategy is, I think, central to the intent of the member's motion. As I say, the amendment is intended to be uncontroversial but express the intention of the motion in a manner that we feel is slightly more appropriate.

This motion is important because it gives the parliament an opportunity to reflect on this important issue. It gives the government the opportunity to engage constructively with the member for Mount Gambier and indeed for all members to provide suggestions for the consideration of the investment that is coming.

We know that the negative effects of drought and bushfires, in addition to the pandemic, on the mental health and wellbeing of South Australians is significant and that is particularly evident for those living in regional areas of South Australia. Recent data, reported by Rural and Remote Mental Health Services indicates a 23 per cent increase in calls to the Emergency Triage and Liaison Service's phone line and a 17 per cent increase in presentations to community mental health services from January 2019 to December 2020.

This has been further highlighted through the COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line, established in April last year, which has received over 4,800 incoming calls, more than 2,000 ongoing support calls and support for over 10,000 people in hotel quarantine. The continued demand and uptake of mental health services across all age groups throughout COVID-19 highlights the impact the pandemic is having on the mental health and wellbeing of the South Australian community.

The government has responded to the needs of regional South Australians by providing funding to increase clinical staffing in the Rural and Remote Mental Health Service, the Emergency Triage and Liaison Service and the older persons mental health rapid inreach service. The increased demand is being closely monitored and this funding will be maintained while the need remains.

Access to mental health services for regional South Australians has improved in recent years with technology, increased awareness and reduced stigma relating to mental illness and better understanding of the impact of mental illness on individuals, families and communities. A substantial improvement enabling better access to mental health services to country residents is through the Digital Telehealth Network. The platform has brought clinical assessments and care to consumers living in the most remote areas of the state, in addition to a range of other supports and services.

Given the established technology, our mental health teams were able to offer regional and remote consumers a seamless service transition during the COVID-19 shutdown, using existing digital modality such as the Digital Telehealth Network and trialling new platforms for delivering services remotely. Evidence suggests that care close to home improves outcomes for all consumers of health services. Reducing travel to Adelaide for regional consumers is a key benefit, enabling greater family and carer involvement and support.

Within regional mental health, three integrated mental health units each with six beds are located at Whyalla, the Riverland and Mount Gambier. These mental health units have supported evidence-based care and provided a vital expansion of country-wide acute mental health services. These facilities have supported consumers and carers with high-level acute care, including a stepped model of care closer to their homes.

Positive feedback from consumers, carers and the community supports the Integrated Mental Health Inpatient Unit as a welcoming and calming environment for therapeutic care. This model of regional inpatient care has also reduced pressure on metropolitan services. A constant

focus of rural and remote mental health services is on recovery for country people from mental ill health. This focus is in the form of the provision of clinical support to all regional local health networks and a program of continual review and evaluation to explore alternative opportunities to enhance recovery services.

The rate of suicide by South Australians living in regional areas compared to metropolitan areas continues to be an area of concern. Wellbeing SA is now responsible for the implementation of the South Australian Suicide Prevention Strategy, which includes supporting existing suicide prevention networks and establishing new networks, in addition to developing a new state suicide prevention plan.

Wellbeing SA works with rural and regional organisations to engage local communities in establishing new suicide prevention networks. The regional local health networks are working with the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist together with rural and remote mental health services to form a Towards Zero Suicide steering group to implement a consistent and comprehensive zero suicide strategy in regional South Australia.

The evidence further indicates that people who have experienced previous traumatic events prior to COVID-19, or indeed bushfire or drought, are at greater risk of having mental health concerns following a subsequent event. The risk was realised after the Adelaide Hills and Kangaroo Island bushfires, with an immediate increase in the acuity of existing mental health consumers.

At the onset of COVID-19, these communities required a comprehensive and specialised clinical mental health response to mitigate a second layer of trauma. The Marshall Liberal government responded by providing specific funding to employ five additional clinicians across both areas for a two-year period. Further supports have also been provided in response to the bushfires, including funding for Wellbeing SA to work with communities and co-design plans and activities to strengthen their mental health and wellbeing.

Addressing mental health and wellbeing in peri-urban and regional communities goes beyond having specialist mental health services available to treat mental illness. It is also critically important that we have a regional mental health planning project. It is currently reviewing statewide mental health services across all levels of care. The needs of rural and remote residents are a strong focus in that planning.

The extensive consultation led to the SA Mental Health Services Plan 2020-2025 identifying service gaps and recommendations for new services already being delivered. A focus for that Rural and Remote Mental Health Service will be input into the plan from Aboriginal consumers and carers. Implementation of the plan includes the workforce plan, and recommendations from the regional mental health planning projects will be included in the regional local health network's commissioning plans over the next five years. I thank the member for bringing the motion to the house.

**Mr PICTON (Kurna) (11:57):** I congratulate the member for Mount Gambier on moving this very important motion and absolutely, on behalf of the opposition, indicate our support for the original motion that has been moved by the member for Mount Gambier and our opposition to the amendment that has been moved by the Minister for Education.

We know that the pandemic has had a serious effect on the lives of many South Australians, and that is particularly true when it comes to the mental health effects of the pandemic. We know that it is true when it comes to people's employment, people's livelihoods, people's uncertainty and people's anxieties. We know that it has certainly destabilised a lot of families, and we know that the isolation during various parts of last year have taken a toll on people. We need to make sure that our response as a government, as the Parliament of South Australia, keeps in touch with the fact of those increasing needs.

This is an area where the needs were already exceeding the available resources and the available help for people in need. Now we have had an additional burden but have not kept pace with that. Sadly, on a per capita basis we have seen the lowest level of support for COVID mental health effects of any state or territory around the country, and that is clearly unacceptable. It clearly means that we will undoubtedly face more pressure from the mental health effects of this pandemic if we do not take those steps to help people earlier on. That ultimately impacts upon our communities,



our social services and our hospitals, through ramping and overburdened emergency departments, because people have nowhere else to turn for help.

Even before this happened, we saw cuts to mental health services in the community. They were designed to help people stay out of hospital and stay healthy, yet we saw a 25 per cent cut taking place to those services. Now there is additional need, and we are not seeing the services keep pace with that additional need.

As per the motion from the member for Mount Gambier, this only becomes exacerbated when we are looking at regional South Australia. Frankly, there are many, many parts of regional South Australia that do not really have any mental health services available at all. The regional centres that do are clearly overstretched, clearly overburdened and do not have the appropriate resources to care for the people in their area.

That is why this motion to highlight these those issues and to ask the government to commit to a plan and to fund a plan to address those issues is so important. What we are seeing from the government, though, is that they are not listening to that advice. They are saying that we should amend this motion not to commit additional funding, not to address these significant concerns in regional South Australia, but to give the government a big pat on the back and say how great they are for all the great work they are doing.

That is the response this minister wants us to pass as a parliament today. He wants us to acknowledge 'the Marshall and Morrison governments' combined approximate \$100 million investment towards new mental health initiatives and services in South Australia and welcomes the implementation of the Mental Health Services Plan 2020-2025 and the Rural Health Workforce Strategy'.

Let's just pick that apart. Firstly, in this amendment they acknowledge that clearly there is not enough state government funding going in for them to pat themselves on the back. They are having to acknowledge federal government funding to make up this supposed \$100 million of funding. Clearly, there is not enough help from the state government.

Secondly, they mention the implementation of the Mental Health Services Plan. This Mental Health Services Plan would have to be one of the most unique plans that a state government has ever come up with, in that we have a plan but then we have the government's response to the plan. This is not actually their plan. What they are doing is only in their response to the plan. They are not actually implementing all the measures in the plan; they are only implementing what was in their response to the plan. What a bizarre situation that the government releases a plan and they are not actually committing to implementing that plan.

This amendment by the Minister for Education is not actually correct because they are not implementing that Mental Health Services Plan. They have plucked only a couple of components from it and funded and supported those, but the vast majority of the other features in that plan that was developed by experts are being ignored or put in the too-hard basket or are going to get dusty on the shelf. They are not being paid attention to by this government whatsoever.

That is why the motion from the member for Mount Gambier is so important—because there is more work that needs to happen. There is more funding that needs to go in, and the government is clearly not acknowledging that. There is more help that needs to happen because of COVID, there is more help needed for regional areas and, frankly, as has been talked about in a number of different reports over many years, including the recent Productivity Commission report, there is the missing middle in our mental health services.

That is where there are primary health services in terms of access to psychologists through GPs and the Better Access program and there are acute mental health services through our tertiary hospitals, but we have a missing middle, in that there are not enough support services between those two to keep people out of hospital and to keep them healthy in the community.

That is what we have seen the funding being eroded from in the past two years under this state government. I refer to those services that were in the community that you could well argue should have been expanded but they have actually been reducing on the misnomer that this is all being picked up by the NDIS, which frankly is absolutely not happening whatsoever. So there are more people who cannot get access to those services now and it is exacerbating that problem.

Adding to that, the acute services that we have available in the city—and, clearly, you only have to turn on the news to see the ramping situation outside our hospitals to know that they are significantly overburdened. Look at what happened in terms of a patient this week spending 88 hours stuck in an emergency department waiting for a bed who in all likelihood would have been a mental health patient.

They are clearly overburdened but, as the member for Mount Gambier would know very well, as the member for Frome would know very well, as the member for Giles would know very well, those services do not exist in regional South Australia to the same extent, and sometimes not at all. I know, Deputy Speaker, your electorate is another electorate where there are significant gaps in major regional centres.

There needs to be significant work to address those issues. It obviously involves government funding and initiatives but it also involves significant work in relation to attracting and retaining the workforce in those areas, because clearly those workforce shortages are one of the key reasons there are great difficulties in regional areas getting access to those services.

It means that people do not get help early when they could do, it means that ultimately their situation gets worse and, potentially, they may need to come to the city to go into acute settings. Sadly, some of them may commit suicide, which is an unfortunate reality of the sad state of mental health in South Australia, but that does occur more than we would want it to.

So let's support what the member for Mount Gambier is proposing today. Let's make sure that we commit the funding and support that is necessary and make sure that we address, not only what is a particular need for COVID right now but what has been a need in regional areas that is now being exacerbated by that additional demand that the community clearly wants us to do better on.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:07):** I rise to support the amended motion and recognise the mover of the original motion, the member for Mount Gambier, and the absolute need for support for the amended motion, which reads:

That this house—

- (a) recognises the significant effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of South Australians;
- (b) ensures regional South Australians, with the unique challenges of living in rural and remote areas, are a strong focus of future planning and funding commitments; and
- (c) acknowledges the Marshall and Morrison governments' combined approximate \$100 million investment towards new mental health initiatives and services in South Australia and welcomes the implementation of the Mental Health Services Plan 2020-2025 and the Rural Health Workforce Strategy.

In my electorate, I am well aware of issues of mental health that come up and I want to acknowledge the vital work that Headspace do in my electorate. They are based in Murray Bridge at the old railway station and I know that they are based in other areas around South Australia. This is a concentration on youth mental health, which is absolutely vital especially in this digital age.

It is sad when you hear examples of quite young children, in many cases, and youth who feel bullied on social media. People do not realise the pain they inflict on people through social media. Sometimes people decide it is too much. I feel strongly for the families of these children. I cannot speak for those who have passed—I guess I can, but I cannot speak to them. I am so sad that it got to a stage where, because of some form of online bullying, in the main, they took their own lives—a terrible situation. These things are not broadcast, but you do hear about them from time to time.

It is interesting to hear the member for Kaurua express his support for regional health, when all they did when they were in power—and he was a health adviser—was shut the Repat and instigate Transforming Health, which was a complete disaster, with \$500 million wasted on the EPAS reporting program. To be preached to by people who would not even know where the regions are, I find interesting, to say the least.

I would like to acknowledge the regional health services that are happening in regional areas. Certainly there is support in mental health areas. I am very proud that late last year, along with the minister, the Hon. Stephen Wade, I opened the new emergency department in Murray Bridge, which

is so vital, especially in this day and age when all sorts of incidents come in, with people having psychotic episodes and or road accidents.

We have the motorsport park at Taillem Bend, and that makes its own contribution to emergency department admissions, just by the nature of it. It is all part of the nature of a growing community. At the moment, you cannot get a rental in Murray Bridge. We have 22,000 people, and our biggest industry, Thomas Foods meatworks, has been closed since it burnt down on 3 January 2018. We will need up to 2,000 workers from the end of next year onwards as that new meatworks comes into play.

It is great to see this burgeoning area. It means that not only are people coming to the regions to live, because it is a better place to be than living in the city, but also that there are so many opportunities in the regions, whether in agriculture, small industry, medium industry, some of the bigger industries or value-add industries. Obviously there is a lot of value-adding in the regions in the food industries. There is plenty in my area with the mushroom farm, the Big River Pork pig abattoir, and the Thomas Foods facility for cattle and sheep, which is on the way as we speak.

It was a proud moment to open that new emergency centre, and it was very pleasing to run into Dr Peter Rischbieth, who works there with Bridge Clinic. He came and saw me on Saturday when we were at the Murray Bridge races—another great event that happens in the community. He just wanted to thank me for how well the emergency department was working, because finally they have a functional space with about nine treatment rooms, where people can be segregated and families can be together. There are quiet rooms. There are designated rooms for staff. It is an A1 facility compared with the old facility they had there, which basically had curtains between the three emergency beds and the two resuscitation beds, which were in the same room. It is good to see.

I note the call for more mental health services in the regions. There are units, and I think there are six beds each in the Riverland, Mount Gambier and Whyalla. There is always a call to get more help around Murray Bridge. I also note our closeness to regional beds based in the city. That does not mean we should not have regional beds there, and I will be interested in the rollout of the mental health plan in the next few years to see what focus is put on getting mental health beds into Murray Bridge, servicing not just the areas around Murray Bridge but the areas the Murray Bridge health service looks after, which are the Mallee, the Upper South-East, up around the river at Mannum and also out more towards the north-west around Sedan, Cambrai and that area. As you go up the road, Murray Bridge is operating, there is Mount Barker and then you get to the city.

COVID-19 has certainly impacted on border communities probably as much as anywhere. It has been difficult, and the member for Mount Gambier knows this only too well, as do the members for Chaffey and MacKillop. It is tough when we as country MPs know exactly how our border communities work. We know that you need people from across the border to make our communities work on our border, and it works both ways.

While I am speaking about that, I want to acknowledge the Victorian Cross Border Commissioner, who keeps us in touch with what is going on on the Victorian side. It is almost like North Korea and South Korea at the moment with razor wire and pill boxes. It is not quite like that but sometimes it feels like that. You have to wake up and work out, 'What are we doing with Victoria today or what are they doing with us?'

I note that people turn up at the border. I know my brother turned up in a truck the other day and they said, 'Where's your ET form?' He said, 'What?' I will credit the police with what they are doing on the border because this is a tough time, and this does impact on people's mental health, especially those who have had to travel across the border daily for their work. To the police's credit, they fixed him up with his form online and away he went.

It has been tough. When you look at my border community of Pinnaroo and Murrayville, I think seven biosecurity inspectors live in Murrayville, including their boss. You have plenty of health people, nurses, people running their own private health clinics, teachers and mechanics working in dealerships such as Emmetts and Ronco Motors. There has been a huge impact on border communities. We must keep progressing so that we always get better outcomes for border communities and I do not mean just people on our side but also those on the adjacent Victorian side. I note that things have improved in recent times, which is really good.

I fully support this amended motion. Health is one of those things you would have to be a fool to say we could always fully fund because it is virtually impossible. It takes 30 per cent of our state budget, but we must strive to make sure that those dollars go further and further to get the right outcomes for South Australians, especially in regional areas.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome) (12:17):** I thank everybody for their participation in this. It is with great pride that I rise to speak on the member for Mount Gambier's motion. I notice that the Minister for Education has moved an amendment, which I understand the member for Mount Gambier is agreeable to.

Regarding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have not seen the real end of it at this particular point. I think this is an issue that the world is not really addressing properly at the moment but certainly in Australia, in South Australia in particular, we have done extremely well. As I said earlier, I do not think we have seen the real impact at this particular point. I think the big wall is going to come in about another two or three months' time with the real impact of the realisation of people with no jobs and the financial impact on those in the community not being able to provide food, housing and things like that.

This is exactly why I previously submitted that this house establish a select committee to discuss the same issue the member for Mount Gambier put forward today, but this motion for a select committee was adjourned by the government at that particular point, and from hereon in we need to concentrate on the member for Mount Gambier's motion.

This pandemic has had a very dramatic impact on the economic performance of many industries, small and large across Australia. We in South Australia have performed very well due to not only the health directions we have been complying with but also, very importantly, the community's dedication and compliance in doing everything possible to reduce and potentially remove this horrible disease from our communities.

Our communities need to take credit for lots of stuff out there, because we have complied with everything and we have done everything: the social distancing, the wearing of the masks, the restrictions in hospitality and things like that. Again, sometimes we do not give enough credit to our communities for doing exactly the right thing to adhere to the health requirements.

In my travels across all regional South Australia in particular, I talk to people across all divides. There is currently positivity from those in particular who have employment, but there are many out there who either have had their employment removed or reduced or have much uncertainty about their own future.

I mentioned previously in another speech that the federal government has done a very good job with JobKeeper for those whose employment has been impacted by COVID-19, but there are those out there who are not eligible for JobKeeper and have to survive on JobSeeker. This assistance packaging, JobSeeker, has been drastically reduced. In particular, JobSeeker has been virtually returned to the original pre-COVID payment, which equates to just over \$45 per day.

I ask any member of this house and anyone in the general public to comply and survive on \$45 per day. Whilst you might be able to do that just buying food and things like that, that would be with no bills coming in, but the rent has to be paid, the car cannot fall apart and overheads still come in. Again, we have to be realistic about that issue: \$45 a day or thereabouts is not going to be sustainable, and going forward there is going to be a lot of impact on the mental health of those people.

From memory, the federal government recently reviewed this payment and increased it with assistance of just \$3.25 per day. Again, we have a lot of media saying this is good and things like that, but \$3.25 a day is absolutely an insult to those people in terms of their existence. These people are trying to live a reasonable, decent life and at the same time having to apply for more positions, which entails them spending more money on petrol and also, when applying for positions, the dress code for potential employment has to be very good. If you do not have the best of clothes, and you go in there wearing your jeans or dilapidated clothing, you do not get an opportunity to reach the finals of that particular job application, even though you may be the very best person for that job.

Whilst I agree there are many people on JobSeeker who may not put in a real attempt to get a job, there are numerous people out there—and I mean numerous—who make every attempt to get employment. There are several communities, particularly in rural and regional South Australia, where there are definitely virtually no chances of employment, which requires these people to travel to a location where employment may be available.

We must remember that many of these people may not have a vehicle to travel in or that there is no transport for them to get to their locations specifically for training in TAFE, which the government is now reducing dramatically, or to report and get a potential prospective employer to sign the documentation.

With all these issues, I do not think we have reached the wall at this particular point. They will come to a head when there is a real realisation that there is virtually no direction or opportunities for these people. We must always remember that these issues are being experienced by adults, and where they are being experienced by the adults the children also see these tensions, and this in turn has a very dramatic impact on the health and wellbeing of those children.

Whilst I know that governments state that there is money in budgets, etc., we must always remember that there are basically no people out there—trained people in particular and particularly in regional South Australia—to actually assist and/or actually see these people to walk them through the very dramatic direction they are experiencing. I believe we will see many more drastic results, particularly in mental health, such as complete breakdowns and, unfortunately, as I think the member for Mount Gambier indicated, perhaps people attempting to take their lives.

I have spoken previously in this house about mental health and the stigma of mental health affecting men in particular. I have taken the challenge: I have been open about the fact that I have had an anxiety issue over many years. I do not hide that. I think we have to get the information out there. I lost a brother to mental health issues because there was not anybody. He lived in Melbourne, and he could not get help. That is the other issue: we need to take that stigma out of it and have these people able to talk to somebody, not on Zoom and not on the telephone. I believe that there will be many more drastic results, particularly with mental health and complete breakdowns and, unfortunately, there will be more suicide attempts.

Parts of the member's motion call for a strong focus planning and funding opportunities. There could not be any more importance than this, and I congratulate the member for Mount Gambier on doing this. I have spoken previously in this house about this and I have spoken to the Minister for Health. I have taken the challenge of the stigma of mental health, on men in particular, to raise funds for a Lifeline Connect Centre in Port Pirie. I raised just over \$21,000 for that, and it will go a small way towards doing it. The Connect Centre will hopefully have some trained counsellors for people to talk to.

I have spoken to the Minister for Health, and we have also had some forums in Port Pirie. We have three clinics in Port Pirie. When people have an issue with anxiety and things like that, they need to see a medical practitioner. In Port Pirie we have three clinics. We have a shortage of doctors compared with the federal proponent; we are supposed to have 17, but we have nine doctors in our community, so we are very, very short. I have personally seen the waiting list of each clinic, and there are approximately 130 to 150 per day who are not able to get in to see a doctor.

Those people may be suffering from an anxiety issue, they may want to talk to someone and get some medication. So where do they go? They go to the A&E. The A&Es are struggling. They are being overwhelmed at the moment. We need to really look at training more people and we need to be able to get those people out into the regional areas. I noticed the Minister for Education indicated there is \$100 million extra from the federal government for, I think he said, South Australia. I stand to be corrected.

**Mr Bell:** It is South Australia.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** It is for South Australia. From my quick calculations, that equates to around \$58 per day for each person in South Australia. Whilst it is welcome, we need to get more money out there. We need to train people in regional areas. I encourage the state government and federal government to look at every opportunity to get those people out in there in the regions so these people can actually talk to them, not on the telephone, not on Zoom, but get there and

personally talk to them and see them directly so they can see the anxiety in their body language and in their emotions.

Again, I commend the member for Mount Gambier for bringing this motion to the house. I understand he is going to accept the amendment of the Minister for Education. I certainly encourage the state government to activate this as quickly as possible.

**Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (12:27):** It a great privilege to speak to and support the motion brought by the member for Mount Gambier, with the amendment of the Minister for Education, representing our Minister for Health. I thank the member for Mount Gambier for bringing this motion to the house. He and I both know that we have worked together solidly for nearly 12 months, supporting the Limestone Coast and our cross-border community through this difficult period of the pandemic and border closures.

It should not surprise anyone in this house and no-one should be unaware of the depth and breadth of what the closure of the border has meant for those who are living on the border both in South Australia and Victoria and also those who live further away from the border. They may not be what we call our cross-border community, but they are people who have family, business, education and health outcomes either side of the border.

Our electoral offices—the one in Mount Gambier and the one for MacKillop in Naracoorte have worked closely together in supporting this community in its wide breadth of issues, absorbing all the general anxiety, stress and concern that has been put into this region due to protecting our state. Obviously and without a doubt, some of the best management systems have been put in place for the management of COVID, and we now have the privileges in this state, being free of the disease and the pandemic, and our freedoms that we have seen thus far compared to other jurisdictions in Australia and around the world.

Coming back to the motion of support that the member for Mount Gambier highlights, there is also the fact that we are highlighting, from the government's perspective, our 2020-25 plan in the amendment, where we acknowledge the Marshall and Morrison governments' combined approximate \$100 million investment towards new mental health initiatives and services in South Australia and welcomes the implementation of the Mental Health Services Plan 2020-2025 for the Rural Health Workforce Strategy. This is so important in regard to what has happened over the last 12 months. I got up because I wanted to say something in support of the member for Mount Gambier's motion.

I think the issues are still bubbling away and I want to give some home experiences of taking phone calls and listening to stories that are deeply distressing on the other side and that are given to members who are on the border. I expect that this can be extrapolated right up the border between Victoria and South Australia, and the member for Hammond and on to the member for Chaffey. We have experienced those sorts of issues, and we are trying to navigate the best possible outcomes to relieve the stresses that these border closures have put on our communities.

When the border closures happened, some things were noted earlier on, and there are a couple of descriptions. We learnt that a husband and wife, a couple, were known to live in Victoria but South Australia was known to be their home where they did all their general shopping and met their sporting needs and their community club needs. They were supported in every way, shape and fashion coming into South Australia, but suddenly they were denied that option because of our border closures. Again, obviously we know they were closed because we wanted to protect South Australians, but that did not help the situation the couple found themselves in.

We found married couples, who might have been together for 50-odd years, could not even talk to each other as a husband and wife unit as they had done over the last 50 years because of the stresses they were going through. They could not get to their Probus club. They could not get to their golf club and participate with their friends and family in South Australia. They found it really difficult even coming into South Australia because sometimes they were ostracised because of their Victorian numberplates, or because perhaps they should have had a mask on when they needed to go into a hospital because they were Victorian, even though South Australians did not have to wear one in a South Australian hospital.

All these elements made a whole process of a line in the sand that had never needed to be addressed before as it was during this pandemic management. We took the brunt of this and we tried to find solutions and answers as best we possibly could for these constituents. They were not my constituents, in the sense that they voted for me, but they represented and stood in my community and supported my community of MacKillop, and no doubt they would have done the same thing if they were in the member for Mount Gambier's area as well. The member for Mount Gambier looks after a major regional centre, and major regional centres like Mount Gambier have Victorians come in to utilise the services within that city. This sort of blockade really put the wind up a lot of people along the border.

Another matter raised with me by a constituent really hit home. A gentleman who lived in Naracoorte who wanted to get back to his farm and family, his children back in Victoria where his family farm was, said, 'It wasn't until the border was closed that I really had an understanding of world turmoil where you see boundaries and borders, such as those between Palestine and Israel, where people are willing to fight to the death for the right to be able to go where they think they should be or ought to be. I now have a better understanding of their fight and their willingness to lose their life over such restrictions.'

He said that he had never comprehended that turmoil in Palestine and Israel until he saw the Victorian border being closed and not being able to go and see his asset, be it the family farm or be it his son, who was looking after the business and who was perhaps helping to look after him. In other words, it may have been paying him some sort of dividend in his retirement, as he was living in Naracoorte. When that comprehension was explained to me as the sitting member for MacKillop, I tried to find answers and work with our health authorities to navigate a way that he could go about his daily life in a better way. This whole issue about the border closure, COVID and mental anxiety comes back to asking how our hospitals and medical facilities are looking after our regions.

We have already heard and we know that there is a lack of GPs in the regions. We know that if you want to make an appointment for a general check-up—you may not be suffering any ailments but you want a general check-up—there might be a four-week wait or there might be a two-month wait because there is a backlog and a shortage of GPs. We know that the hospitals and towns are using locums to try to fill this gap, and we know that is a difficult area and we are still trying to find solutions.

However, if you think about the mental health issues and stress, and the difficulty of going to see your local GP if you want to talk about these sorts of issues—you might not want to explain everything that is going on over the phone—you can then understand that you are not going to get the next appointment with a mental health expert in this area and everything is delayed. As we heard in the speech from the member for Mount Gambier, when you start delaying mental health solutions, finding the right people for the right answers, then it becomes worse and worse. It roller-coasts down and snowballs; ultimately, people may contemplate and even go through with taking their own life because of these shortfalls. This is a real issue.

We have heard about the pandemic being a bit of a reset button for society, and we are talking about recognising our local tourism events, we are talking about recognising our local peer groups, our local families, staying at home, being well connected and enjoying things local. One of the other outcomes from this whole pandemic would be a real recognition of understanding regional health, its shortfalls and lack of mental health facilities and specialists and the like, and being able to pick up what the mental health issues are out in our regions.

They are not just because of COVID; they have been roller-coasting on for many years prior to this. It is one of these things that society in general, right around regional Australia, is learning to combat and find solutions to, because in regional South Australia there are many elements that our city-centric population—I think more than three-quarters of Australia's population live in a town of more than 100,000 people—sometimes forgets about, and may not understand all the dynamics they have to work through, as we become more urbanised in Australia than ever before.

This is one of the great challenges at all levels of government—local, state and federal—trying to work out solutions to these mental health issues and combating the problems that are already out there. The COVID issues that have come up have highlighted those issues. We impose these types of restrictions, lock down people, lock down couples who are in marriages or partnerships

that perhaps have some underlying elements that all rise to the surface. That is why this motion and its amendment are well worth supporting. I thank the member for Mount Gambier for raising this.

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (12:37):** I rise to support the motion in its original form. It is an excellent motion that certainly highlights some of the real challenges in regional South Australia when it comes to accessing services.

A number of members have commented on the lack of GPs in regional South Australia. Initially, that started in some of the smaller communities some years back, and it has now spread to larger communities in regional South Australia. In places like Whyalla, Port Augusta and Port Pirie, we have a lack of GPs and not enough GPs to service the need.

A lot of money has been spent in different ways trying to increase the GP services in country South Australia—GPs are often the first point of contact when it comes to mental health issues—but many of the commitments that have been entered into have had only a peripheral effect. Some years ago there was an increase in GP numbers, but there is a serious misallocation when it comes to GPs in this state, and indeed in other states, a misallocation that sees a concentration in the capital cities, especially in the more salubrious parts of our capital cities.

We know that both mental health impacts and physical health impacts in regional communities are in general worse than in the city, so we have this strange relationship where we have this lack of services in the places they are needed the most. We are struggling to get enough GPs in country South Australia, and that might get worse unless some real action is taken.

When it comes to some of the basic mental health services, I believe there is only one resident psychiatrist in the whole of regional South Australia, and that is in Whyalla. I am not even sure if that person is still a resident psychiatrist. There was one in Port Lincoln some years ago, but I think that person has moved on and was there for coincidental reasons, not there particularly to be a psychiatrist in that very beautiful community.

We have very few psychologists who are resident in regional South Australia. Psychologists do a lot of the heavy lifting when it comes to mental health services, along with the community mental health teams, the trained nurses and social workers who work for those teams. It is very difficult to get psychologists in regional South Australia. My daughter will become a psychologist in the very near future, and she does work in the region.

Even though there have been massive other cutbacks to mental health services and health services in general, one of the good initiatives of the current federal government has been the Headspace model for young people in a number of regional communities. Port Lincoln has Headspace, as do Whyalla and Port Augusta; Port Pirie does not. I am not sure, but I would expect that Mount Gambier would have a Headspace service. But that only focuses on young people, and young people with very tight criteria in relation to mental health services.

When it comes to some of the acute mental health episodes that people can experience—a psychotic episode—one of the really tragic things was to see, say, in a community like Whyalla, people bundled into a paddy wagon who had to be taken to Adelaide to access the acute mental health services. A number of people have commented that Labor did not do anything for the regions. They certainly did for some of the communities, because it was under Labor, when we came to power, that an acute psychiatric facility was put in at Whyalla Hospital. There are six beds there and, as I said, I think there is still a resident psychiatrist there, but the visiting psychiatrists who come to regional communities have very long waiting lists indeed. There is clearly demand there, and that demand is not being met.

I note that in my community we have community mental health beds, and those are still being funded by the state government, but when Whyalla was going through the steel crisis and we lost over 1,000 direct jobs and had all the anxieties surrounding going into administration, the federal Liberal government decided to walk away from that partnership with the state and pull \$10 million in funding from the community mental health beds in Whyalla. It was the state Labor government, especially given the situation in Whyalla at the time, that stepped in to do the right thing by our community.



I do not know how we address the issue of getting more professionals to come and live in regional South Australia. Clearly, you can put incentives in place, but I reckon, when it comes to those services that are using Medicare provider numbers, we have to do some fundamental reform at a federal level. Other countries see an allocation of GPs and other medical services on the basis of need and population ratios.

We do not have that in Australia. That is why we have a whole heap of GPs where they are not necessarily needed in the city and a lack out there in the country. We should be looking at a model where Medicare provider numbers are provided on the basis of population ratio and health needs. I think that would start to address some of the shortages that we experience in regional South Australia, plus there are other things that we can do.

The member for Frome touched on an important point about unemployment, the pittance an unemployed person has to live on and the issues that come with that, the stigma associated with being unemployed. We know that the unemployed suffer in greater numbers from a range of mental health conditions. When you look at regional communities, the unemployment rate in some is really good, but in a place like Port Pirie the latest figure is an 11.25 per cent unemployment rate. That is significantly above the state average, which is the highest in the country at the moment.

When you look at Port Augusta, it is 10.6 per cent, and Whyalla is 9.5 per cent. Hopefully, that is going to improve as time goes on, but they are high levels of unemployment that do have an impact on mental health conditions in our communities. Anything we can do in terms of funding and support to get more professionals out into our communities is incredibly important. Employment is not a panacea for mental health conditions—there is a whole raft of mental health conditions that are independent of that—but it is a contributing factor in those communities with high rates of unemployment.

I could touch upon some of the really remote parts of our state, where the services are just not there. When you look at some of the Aboriginal communities in our state, such as the APY lands, once again appalling figures came out the other day. The average life expectancy in the APY lands is 52 years. There are suburbs in Adelaide where the average life expectancy is over 80 years. That gap, which we all acknowledge, is horrendous.

There are complex social needs there. Health services are only part of it, but if we do not have decent primary health services for both physical ailments and mental ailments, people in regional communities, and especially in some of our remote communities, will continue to suffer. There is even a lack of basic counselling services, not psychologists. It could be social workers or it could be other trained people. There is even a lack of basic counselling services for drug use and alcohol use, which contribute to mental health issues. There is a real lack in country South Australia, and it is something that we do need to seriously turn our minds to and address.

#### *Parliamentary Procedure*

#### **VISITORS**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before I call the next speaker, I would like to acknowledge the presence in the Speaker's gallery of the former member for Ashford, the Hon. Steph Key. It is nice to see you, Steph. Welcome.

#### *Motions*

#### **REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Debate resumed.

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:47):** I would like to make a contribution and thank the member for Mount Gambier for bringing this motion to the house, but I support the Minister for Education's amendment to the motion. It is an important motion because we know that COVID has changed the world forever. Here in South Australia, the regions have been significantly impacted, particularly those regions impacted not only by having border communities but by what it means to the general society in the regions, already being isolated. We know that has had a significant impact.

What it has shown us is that the most vulnerable are those who have been the most impacted. The elderly, by and large, have been very scared, very timid, when it comes to venturing outside their homes. In many cases, I visited some of those elderly people to have a conversation

with them, just to ask them if they were okay. In other instances, I have seen people going to chemists to pick up scripts for those people, making sure they have had food dropped off and making sure they were okay.

The underlying issue has been mental health. We have heard many of those opposite talking about mental health issues and the lack of support, but there was never any coming forward with support for those mental health issues in their 16 years of government. What we are seeing now is that a Marshall-Morrison coalition has put \$100 million on the table, and they are addressing some of those issues with mental health not caused on a day-to-day basis but exacerbated by the impacts of COVID.

Along the way, we have seen many communities, particularly in the regions, that have supported one another. We know that the impacts of businesses closing and financial strain have led to some of those mental health issues. More importantly, there has been a wide range of unknown impacts on the economy and the health and wellbeing of small regional communities. It has showed us that our health services have been stretched to the absolute nth degree. I want to commend SA Health and the South Australian government for the work they have done—working together to keep South Australia safe—because we are one of the safest states in the safest nation on the globe.

I also want to pay tribute to some of the mental health services that have been almost exhausted coming through the COVID pandemic: Headspace in the Riverland, ac.care, Life Without Barriers and, of course, the SA Health mental health facility at the Riverland General Hospital. They have been stretched to the limit and have had issues with staffing numbers, but we know that that is the case in every regional health centre, whether it is a hospital, a medical facility or an outreach program. It has been the case for such a long time.

We are seeing a moving dynamic, with health professionals wanting to go to the city to specialise in areas or to extend or expand their careers. I think we need to acknowledge that that has been one of the underlying issues when living in the regions, particularly with mental health through this COVID pandemic. Of course, there are challenges when living in a border community. I think a number of MPs on this side have expressed their concern about the impacts that the pandemic has had on their communities. It is about an adjustment. It is about humans understanding what needed to happen, what we had to do to keep our communities safe and what we had to do to keep COVID out of South Australia.

By and large, with all the angst that has come with the border closures and the COVID restrictions in general, I think we have handled it pretty well. I commend those communities who have had to adjust. They have had to go through some hardship, but they have got through it and have worked pretty well. What I would say is that we have got through it and now we must move on. We still have to make sure that we put everything necessary in place.

We looked at the impacts of itinerant workforces that come into seasonal jobs. I know a number of MPs who have had issues, whether it be in the red meat industry or in Chaffey with horticulture. We have seen significant strain in being able to get the numbers necessary to harvest, to process, to pack, to put into markets and to make sure our economy is robust.

We continue to support the economy. The Marshall Liberal government is putting every mechanism in place so that we can actually get a workforce into South Australia and so that we can pick our produce. We do not want to see elements of commodities falling on the ground, and we do not want to see anyone lose a dollar in any way, shape or form. We want a good, robust economy. That helps to alleviate the mental strain on people, whether it be horticulturalists and farmers, whether it be processors and packers or whether it be the spin-off service industries that rely heavily on the primary production areas to keep our economy ticking along.

Normally, the underlying factor in maintaining good mental health is people having security and certainty, being able to go out and put food on the table and having the services that they rightfully expect to have. The health impacts have been very widely documented, but I must say that South Australia has performed extremely well when it comes to the impacts of the pandemic, not only in the regional communities.

The pandemic has shown us that we are resilient, we are able to adapt and we are able to support our communities, whether it be going through a health crisis, an isolation crisis or a mental

health issue. Any of us who are country MPs know that in many instances we become social workers. We talk to our communities, we listen, we knock on doors and we have people come up to us and say, 'By the way, I think the chap who lives next door to me is doing it tough. Do you think you could give us some help or give him some support?'

In many instances, we might go and knock on their door to offer them some help or support to pick up a prescription and get it filled out at the local chemist, or go up there and pick up a couple of shopping bags of food so that those people do have food and do not have to go out and feel vulnerable in an environment that is seriously questioning them, whether they are elderly or whether they have mental health issues. It is about a community coming together in some of these regional centres.

I think this is a motion worthy of commending and the amended version is the version that I will support. I think the member for Mount Gambier, in his wisdom, is going to support the amended motion and I thank him for bringing it to the house.

**Ms LUETHEN (King) (12:55):** I rise to support the amended motion and thank both the member for Mount Gambier and the member for Morialta for raising this motion today. Mental health services are certainly a key concern for people living in King. The negative effects of drought and bushfires, in addition to COVID-19, on the mental health and wellbeing of South Australians are significant and this is particularly evident for those living in the regional areas of the state.

Recent data reported that the Rural and Remote Mental Health Service indicated a 23 per cent increase in calls to the Emergency Triage and Liaison Service phone line and a 17 per cent increase in presentations to community mental health services from January 2019 to December 2020. The continued demand and uptake of mental health services across all age groups throughout COVID-19 highlights the impact that the pandemic is having on the mental health and wellbeing of the South Australian community.

The Marshall Liberal government has responded to the needs of regional South Australians by providing funding to increase clinical staffing in the Rural and Remote Mental Health Service, the Emergency Triage and Liaison Office and the older persons mental health rapid inreach service. The increased demand is closely being monitored and this funding will be maintained while the need remains.

Evidence suggests that care close to home improves outcomes for all consumers of health services and we will see more of that. Reducing travel to Adelaide for regional consumers is a key benefit enabling greater family and carer involvement and support. Within regional mental health, three integrated mental health units, each with six beds, are located in Whyalla, the Riverland and Mount Gambier, and these mental health units have supported evidence-based care and provided a vital expansion of country-wide acute mental health services. This model of regional inpatient care has also reduced the pressure on metropolitan-based services.

Country mental health consumers continue to receive the specialist clinical support they need through multidisciplinary community mental health teams, including assessment, treatment and coordination of care. The service is provided across the life continuum, with special services for youth, adult and older persons.

The rate of suicide by South Australians living in regional areas compared with metropolitan areas continues to be of concern. Wellbeing SA is now responsible for the implementation of the South Australian Suicide Prevention Strategy, which supports existing suicide prevention. As I mentioned at the outset, this is a key concern for people living in my electorate and thinking about people across the country, and that is why I support the amended motion.

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (12:58):** I would like to thank all speakers on this bill and close the debate.

Amendment carried; motion as amended carried.

*Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.*

*Petitions***BRIGHTON ROAD**

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens):** Presented a petition signed by 107 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to provide the community with a comprehensive business case for proposed roadworks on Brighton Road.

**MAWSON LAKES SCHOOL BRIDGE**

**Mr BROWN (Playford):** Presented a petition signed by 59 residents of the Mawson Lakes School community requesting the house to urge the government to provide the \$170,000 contribution necessary to enable the construction of the Mawson Lakes School Bridge.

*Parliamentary Procedure***ANSWERS TABLED**

**The SPEAKER:** I direct that the written answer to a question be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

*Parliamentary Committees***LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (14:05):** Having joined this committee just yesterday, I have much pleasure in bringing up the 24<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Subordinate Legislation.

Report received.

**Mr TRELOAR:** I bring up the 25<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Subordinate Legislation.

Report received and read.

*Question Time***REVIEW OF HARASSMENT IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT WORKPLACE**

**Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:09):** My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier referred the serious criminal incidents highlighted in the Acting Equal Opportunity Commissioner's report into parliament tabled yesterday to South Australian police?

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning and Local Government) (14:09):** The member has inquired as to the action in relation to a report which you tabled, sir, in the parliament, and I indicate two things: firstly, the recommendations therein are for the consideration of the parliament, and that will no doubt occur in due course.

There is no finding or recommendation by Ms Strickland as to the criminality and/or recommendation to refer matters to the police. I would remind members, who might recollect that they were invited via a survey under this procedure to make a contribution for consideration by the commission in this matter, that information was expected to be confidential.

I note from the report that, I think, there were four people who conducted interviews with the commissioner, and also two further who put written submissions in which are affiliated with the allegations of misconduct, and they are matters, of course, entirely for the commissioner if she were to have the view to refer either to her commission and/or any other appropriate authority.

That is not a matter for recommendation with this bald information. The statistical information that has been accumulated I think has been valuable. I thank the Premier for the data analytics unit in the Premier's department and the assistance they gave to deal with the appreciation and interpretation of the data from these surveys, but I just remind members that there is no recommendation or finding that supports the referral of any of these matters by anyone to the police.

**REVIEW OF HARASSMENT IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT WORKPLACE**

**Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:11):** My question is, again, to the Premier. Is the Premier aware of any of the circumstances regarding the incident in which it is

alleged a worker within parliament was subject to a sexual assault when a hand was placed up her skirt?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:12):** No, and further to the Attorney's answer to the previous question can I just say, obviously, we received this report yesterday. The contents of this report were very concerning, and they should be very concerning to every single person in this parliament.

Of course, it was the government who supported the Equal Opportunity Commission to conduct this inquiry and to provide this parliament with this report, and we are very grateful to the acting equal opportunity commissioner, Emily Strickland, for preparing this report. My understanding is that resources were made available to make sure that this could occur.

I think we have raised standards in this parliament over a period of time, but what this report makes very, very clear is that there is still much more work to be done and we are committed to doing that work, particularly with regard to the question that the Leader of the Opposition asked in his previous question about referring matters to police.

Ultimately, this is a matter for the people who make the allegations. As the Attorney pointed out yesterday in the house, I think with great clarity, people should be supported in that in any way that they can, but ultimately this would be a matter for those people to take up with the police or any other body.

#### REVIEW OF HARASSMENT IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT WORKPLACE

**Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:13):** My question is to the Premier. Is the Premier aware of any of the circumstances regarding the incident of indecent exposure revealed in the report of the acting equal opportunity commissioner tabled yesterday?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:13):** The same as the previous answer: no, I am not aware of that.

#### STATE ECONOMY

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee) (14:13):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier explain to the house why South Australia continues to record the worst economic performance in the nation? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** South Australia has the lowest quarterly state final demand growth in the nation. South Australia currently has the highest unemployment rate in the nation, and South Australia has recorded the lowest economic growth in the nation for the most recent financial year.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:14):** I thank the member for his excellent question. As per usual, the opposition love to talk down the state and they love to cherry-pick individual statistics, which, quite frankly, don't—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —bear any relationship to exactly and precisely what is going on.

*Mr Malinauskas interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The leader!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** As the member would be more than aware, in the December quarter last year we actually had a very serious situation in South Australia.

*Mr Brown interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Playford!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** In fact, it was such a significant incident with regard to the Parafield cluster that we had to close down the entire economy for three full days. Of course, there

were very significant restrictions during that period as well. When we look at the statistics that were contained within that, we know that in the September quarter South Australia had 6.7 per cent growth. I think this was the highest in the entire nation. Those opposite failed to point that out. In fact, when we look at the December quarter—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —last year compared to the December quarter for the year before—

*The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Lee!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —which would be, I think, a fair comparison, we were actually balanced. So before COVID and after COVID, exactly the same state final demand figures. I think in some ways it goes to the heart of what's going on here. On this side of the house, we are wanting to back businesses in South Australia, we want to back employment in South Australia and we want to grow our economy. We are doing that through lowering taxes, supporting people with a good, comprehensive strategy to address the coronavirus. Those opposite want to find opportunities to talk down the state at every single opportunity. Quite frankly—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —I think the people of South Australia are finding it more and more negative. That is why now no longer see the Leader of the Opposition in the media anymore; he has vacated the joint. He is sending out the two deputies here—no, sorry, not you; these two deputies here—who are out there, doing all the grubby work, all the negative work. The fact of the matter is—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will resume his seat.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members on my right!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! When the interjections—

*Mr Malinauskas interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The leader will cease interjecting. The member for West Torrens rises on a point of order.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Standing order 98: 22 members are enjoying a lot of debate, sir.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The Premier has the call.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** I've just got some information. I would like to update the house. In fact, in its December quarter, state final demand in South Australia rose by 0.6 per cent, on top of a massive rise in the September quarter. They hate good news. They absolutely hate good news. When we look at those figures—

*Mr Malinauskas interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The leader!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —when we look at those, what happened in Victoria compared to—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will resume his seat for a moment.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for West Torrens is called to order and warned.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members on my left and members on my right, the member for Lee has asked the Premier a question. The Premier is entitled to be heard in silence in answering the question. I am listening intently to that answer. The Premier has the call.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** Those opposite were asking, 'What about Victoria? What about New South Wales?' In fact, I have some statistics for you. When we compare the December quarter last year with the December quarter of the previous year, South Australia is unchanged. What is the situation in Victoria? It is a decline of 3.4 per cent. In New South Wales, it is a decline of 0.7 per cent. In fact, the gross domestic final demand for the entire nation is down by 0.3 per cent.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** South Australia is completely and utterly unchanged. Of course, those opposite are comparing the situation December to September. As I pointed out, South Australia for the September quarter was doing comparatively well to the entire country, in fact the entire world, with a 6.7 per cent surge. Most people would get pretty excited about those statistics but not those opposite. They hate good news. They love to talk down the state. Keep up that work. Keep it up all the way to the next election, because what the people of South Australia want is to see this state do well.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Before I call the leader, I call to order the member for Schubert, I call to order the member for Chaffey, I call to order the member for Cheltenham, I call to order and warn the member for Playford, I call to order the member for Ramsay, I call to order the member for Lee, I call to order the leader and I call to order the Minister for Education, and I remind members on both sides that the member asking the question is entitled to be heard in silence and the minister in answering the question is entitled to be heard in silence.

#### STATE ECONOMY

**Mr MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Leader of the Opposition) (14:20):** My supplementary question is to the Premier. Does the Premier expect the people of this state to believe that having the lowest participation rate on the mainland while having the highest unemployment rate in the country is good news?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:20):** I hope these questions keep coming thick and fast because it gives me an opportunity to talk about how well this state is doing. We know that the ABS statistics move around. We know that.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** The ABS give a warning about the volatility with regard to the figures at the moment. In fact, they are not even providing the trend data at the moment. If they actually took five minutes—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members on my left!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —to read what is actually—

*The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Lee!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —going on with those statistics, they would know a lot more about exactly and precisely what is happening. But a very good indicator of what is happening in terms of jobs and in terms of wages comes out on a fortnightly basis from the ABS with the national payroll data. This is all the pay-as-you-go data from the entire country. So instead of just a survey of 1,700 people with 400 people being added on and 400 people being taken off each year and then extrapolating that across \$1.7 million, you've got every single pay-as-you-go piece of data in the state, in the nation, delivered every two weeks. What does that highly accurate data show? I can't believe they haven't raised this. I can't believe—

*The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Lee!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —they haven't come in here to congratulate the people of South Australia, the businesses in South Australia and, indeed, a supportive government for delivering what we see in these statistics. The figures are out today. I can't believe the—

*The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Torrens!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —current leader has asked this question. Payroll jobs in South Australia for the last two weeks—are you ready for this?—grew 0.5 per cent against the nation of only 0.1 per cent, so five times faster than the nation. In terms of payroll wages—

*Mr Knoll interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Schubert!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —for the two-week period, up a whopping 2.4 per cent.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** Some might say, 'Well, look, that's a statistical anomaly,' so why don't we go back and look at the statistics from before the coronavirus to right about now, the last two weeks. Let's see what it shows. Are you ready?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** Are you excited?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** I'm a little bit excited too.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the minister!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** Let's take a look at this: South Australia has had the largest jobs growth of all the states. We've got more people, 0.7 of a per cent increase—0.7 of a per cent increase.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** We've also, importantly—

*Mr Malinauskas interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the leader!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** You can't just look at jobs, because many people have lost—

*Mr Malinauskas interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The leader will cease interjecting.



**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** Many people have lost hours. They might have kept their jobs but they have had reduced hours, so it is also important to look at whether there has been an increase or a decrease in total wages paid for that period. I am just going to refer to my notes here: we've also had the highest total wages growth of all states—1.5 per cent up.

This is what happens when you put the people of South Australia first. This is what happens when you don't talk down the state. This is what happens when you manage a pandemic and you actually manage the health crisis—you get an economic benefit as well. We've already seen consumer confidence is up, business confidence is up, investor confidence is up and, as these ABS statistics show, so are jobs and wages.

My strong advice to my friends opposite is for them to stop talking down our great state. The people of South Australia have worked very, very hard over the last 12 months and they have a mighty challenge in front of them, another 12 months to roll out that vaccine. But let me say, they have done a great job. It's a pity that those opposite can't get on board.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Before I call the member for Newland, I warn the member for Schubert, I call to order the member for Hammond, I call to order the member for Wright, I warn the member for Lee and I warn the member for West Torrens for a second time.

### COVID-19 VACCINE

**Dr HARVEY (Newland) (14:24):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier please update the house on how the Marshall Liberal government is securing greater community confidence, particularly through the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:24):** I thank the member for Newland for his excellent question. As a former research scientist at the University of Adelaide, in fact a postdoctoral research scientist, he knows all about how important it is to have a very successful vaccination program here in South Australia. We thank him for his work prior to coming to this house, and I think it shows the diversity and the strength and the depth of the team on our side of the house.

*The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for West Torrens will cease interjecting.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** The people of South Australia have worked shoulder to shoulder to fight this pandemic, and now—

*The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Lee!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —we are basically rolling up our sleeves and having the first jabs in what will be a very, very important next 12 months for our state. The COVID recovery efforts are going extraordinarily well. As I reported to this house yesterday, that is now starting to be reflected in business confidence and also consumer confidence. In fact, what we know is that business confidence in South Australia is currently the highest that it's been for 15 years—a 15-year high in terms of business confidence.

Many other parts of the world are struggling with the coronavirus; in fact, their business confidence is the lowest it's been for 15 years, 20 years, or maybe 100 years, but because we have done well with the coronavirus this has essentially got our business confidence high. What we also know is that our consumer confidence is at a high of more than a decade. This is great because as people feel more confident, some of the savings that have been accumulated over the pandemic period so far will be basically pushed back into the economy, creating a further wave of economic activity in our state.

Last week was an historic week for our state with a rollout, the start of the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine, which will be, as I have said previously in this house, the biggest peacetime logistical exercise in the history of our nation. In line with the expert medical advice and following approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration, the first doses of the vaccine have already been administered by the Royal Adelaide Hospital and the Flinders Medical Centre clinics which have been set up.

Currently, many thousands of those people who are on the frontline and also those people who are living in our residential aged-care facilities and also for people who are in a disability facility, they have had their first doses, and this is very, very important. The message on this one is very, very clear: it is safe, it's effective and, importantly, we know that it is both free and voluntary. But it is absolutely necessary for us to make sure that this is a very successful rollout of the vaccine.

As the Chief Public Health Officer, Professor Nicola Spurrier, said, the safe and effective vaccines will enable us to take the COVID-19 fight to another level. They will be a game changer in our response and will increase our confidence, and that is exactly and precisely what is going to happen.

What we do know is that yesterday we received another freezer out at the Lyell McEwin Hospital. This will actually be able to host 180,000 doses, which will again be very, very important. We know that the third clinic is now opening its doors at the Women's and Children's Hospital here in South Australia, and today we are expecting into South Australia the arrival of 20,000 doses of the vaccine, strengthening our ability to continue to vaccinate our frontline health and quarantine workers.

We have had questions also about what's happening in regional South Australia. We are setting up vaccination hubs, which we have already announced, at the Riverland General Hospital in Berri, the Mount Gambier hospital, the Whyalla Hospital, the Port Pirie hospital, the Port Augusta Hospital, and they will run clinics out from there. My strong message to all South Australians is: get vaccinated when it's your turn, to help build a fantastic and strong response to the COVID-19 pandemic here in South Australia.

### CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee) (14:29):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier explain why South Australia recorded the worst decline in the nation of the value of construction work done? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** The total value of construction work in South Australia was down 9.6 per cent for the most recent December quarter and down 9.2 per cent for the year, the largest declines in the nation. The total value of engineering construction work was down 14 per cent for the December quarter and down 13 per cent for the year, the largest decline in the nation, and the total value of building work in South Australia was down 5 per cent for the December quarter and also for the year, the worst of any state bar Western Australia.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:29):** The Labor opposition continues to cherrypick the statistics and talk down the state. I have not met one single person in the construction sector right across the state who isn't telling me how well they are going at the moment. I haven't met one single person in the sector who isn't very grateful that they now have a government in South Australia that is creating the conditions conducive to growing their business in this state, whether it be lowering payroll tax here in South Australia, lowering land tax in South Australia, lowering the emergency services levy in South Australia or—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —massively, massively investing in skills in South Australia—

*The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Lee will cease interjecting.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —a \$288 million investment in delivering the skills we need for the future. They also love the fact that we are delivering a \$16.7 billion pipeline of projects in South Australia, whether that be in terms of our roads projects, both here in metropolitan Adelaide or right across regional South Australia, or whether that be upgrading our hospitals in South Australia or upgrading our schools in South Australia with a massive \$1.3 billion build.

What I know is that the people in the construction sector are finding it very good to have that clarity about the forward pipeline and also about the commitments that have been made in the budget. Of course, we know the December quarter was a difficult quarter for South Australia—

*The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Lee!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —because we had the Parafield cluster and, whilst those opposite want to snigger and snipe from the side, this was a very dangerous situation. I want to thank every single person who worked very cooperatively. Small sacrifices at the individual level and the collective level kept our state safe. We made a decision that we would go in hard and early, and in South Australia this meant there was a significant hit to many individuals and businesses and more broadly across the community, but we came out of that very quickly.

It will have an effect on that December quarter but, as I said, the trajectory in terms of construction jobs in South Australia is extraordinarily good, and that's why we are heavily investing in skills to make sure we have that skills requirement going into the future. Of course, it is a delicate balancing act, and one of the things we have been very concerned about in government is thinking about what sort of level of stimulus could actually result in some construction inflation in South Australia. This is a very genuine concern.

We have already seen construction inflation in other parts of the country, so it is a matter of trying to keep a steady flow of work that matches the skill and supply side of the economy, and I have every confidence that that is exactly and precisely what we are doing.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Before I call the member for Lee, I warn the Minister for Education, I warn for a second time the member for Playford, I warn for a second time the member for Lee and I warn the leader.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee) (14:33):** My question is to the Premier. Does the Premier accept that delays to major projects under his government are contributing to the state's economic malaise? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members on my right! The Premier is called to order.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** The government has delayed the Women's and Children's Hospital project, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital upgrade project, the Main South Road duplication project, the Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre project, the North-South Corridor upgrade, the Hove level crossing project, the Torrens Road level crossing project, the Fullarton Road-Cross Road intersection project and the Magill Road-Portrush Road intersection project, together worth billions of dollars and thousands of jobs to South Australians.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Interjections from my right will cease. The Minister for Education has a point of order.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Point of order, sir: firstly, arguing that there was 'malaise' taking place is argument in the question, and seeking leave to insert explanation doesn't shrive it of the fact that it was argument in the first place. Secondly, the explanation was full of argument, too, and a lack of any fact also.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The point of order is pursuant to standing order 97. The member for Lee sought and obtained leave to introduce facts and described a number of matters that were asserted as having been delayed. For present purposes, I am content to treat the interpolation of those matters as fact, and I will give the Premier the opportunity to answer the question.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:35):** I thank the member for his question. It is an important question because, as those opposite know, we have a \$16.7 billion building project at the moment. From time to time, there are projects that move forward and there are projects that move backwards. I was only out with the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport last week when we were looking very closely at the Regency to Pym project. Actually, what happened was it was coming in earlier than planned and under budget. That wasn't on the list.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** I almost find it impossible to believe. They look through everything to find the bad news.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Lee will cease interjecting.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** 'Where's the bad news? I'm looking for the bad news.' The boss is out there whipping them harder: 'Find some more bad news.' People don't want bad news. They want their projects delivered and they want a government that is going to build—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —what matters—\$16.7 billion. They are humiliated that they didn't get on and do this work when they were in government.

*The Hon. S.C. Mullighan interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Lee will cease interjecting.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** Now they want to talk it down. Well, it's completely and utterly unacceptable. Let me tell you, when we came to government, the best way I can describe what we had from those opposite was 'hand to mouth, hand to mouth'. What we have tried to do since coming to government is first of all set up an infrastructure body in South Australia, Infrastructure SA, which is already delivering—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —fantastic information and resources to us. We have the entire department focused on—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will resume his seat. The member for Playford will leave for 20 minutes in accordance with standing order 137A. The member for Lee will leave for 20 minutes in accordance with standing order 137A.

*The honourable members for Playford and Lee having withdrawn from the chamber:*

**The SPEAKER:** I remind all members that the minister, in answering the question, is entitled to be heard in silence. The Premier has the call.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** We are very proud of the work we have done to put the planning in place so we can deliver projects on time and on budget. That wasn't being done before. Take a look at one of the biggest projects, one of the most important projects to the people out in Gawler—the Gawler line electrification. This was a project that was promised, taken off, promised, taken off. Actually, we have put it back on, but the work wasn't done prior to coming to government. We still committed to it because it's an important project for the people who have been out in Gawler waiting for that important project for a long period of time. It's a priority project.

What you will see with the investments we are now making into the Department for Infrastructure and Transport is a lot of early works being done in terms of those planning and design

studies. We have separately funded that work, which is being done. It was a recommendation that came from Tony Shepherd and the board of Infrastructure Australia. Don't forget we have an excellent independent board looking at all those projects, which we are putting in place going forward.

Part of that is making sure we have the right selection process around those projects that we select, not pet projects around marginal seats and electoral cycles, like we saw for a long period of time with the previous government. We are making sure we've got a robust methodology for selecting those projects. Importantly, we are doing that design work ahead of time—not hand to mouth, but doing that planning work. That is reflected in the Infrastructure Australia priority lists, which were published only—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the leader, and the member for Wright!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —last week. South Australia had six new projects put onto the high-priority or priority lists, which is the largest number South Australia has had in any previous report over the last five years. We are very proud of that, but that takes work. That takes time. We have rolled up our sleeves, we have done that work since coming to government and we are going to continue to do it into the future.

### EXPORT PROGRAMS

**Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:39):** My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Can the minister advise how the Marshall Liberal government is securing business and consumer confidence by delivering programs to support our export industries?

**The Hon. S.J.R. PATTERSON (Morphett—Member of the Executive Council, Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:39):** Thank you to the member for MacKillop. It was great to visit the member for MacKillop just last week. I went down to his fantastic region, the Limestone Coast, to meet with some key export industries to understand the challenges they are having, both COVID-related and also some market access issues.

Obviously, some of those key export industries are important to your region, member for MacKillop: the rock lobster and also the timber and wine, of course. It was great to also visit the member for Mount Gambier and to meet with some of the key industries there as well. The message around that is it is really important that as a government we help them. What is important to the regions is certainly important to this government.

As I mentioned, I met with the rock lobster industry there—the fishers themselves and the producers and exporters—just to understand from a whole supply chain region what the issues are. I then went on to some key timber industries there, McDonnell and Sons and then also Timberlink, just to see the money they are investing into a really futuristic, state-of-the-art sawmill. The opportunities they have selling into the domestic market here are going to be really important for them going forward.

I also went to Wynns Coonawarra Estate to meet with the Limestone Coast Grape and Wine Council, which is very important, and the Coonawarra Vignerons. That covers not just the Coonawarra but other wine districts like the Limestone Coast, Padthaway, Wrattobully, Mount Gambier, Robe, and those important regions.

It was really emphasised how important it is that as a government we work with industry and those industry bodies but also be hand in glove with the federal government as well. Yes, there are challenges, certainly with COVID and market access. It was quite clear they see the way forward is market expansion. As a government, we have been working really hard on that. It is really important they go into other markets but, of course, that will take time. In the short term, getting into the domestic market is certainly very important to them.

They were really complimentary about how South Australians really looked to support them over the Christmas festive season, whether that was wine or whether that was rock lobster at the shops. There has been a fantastic take-up for those. Even the South Australian Wine Industry Association has said now is the time to continue the momentum and get South Australians really engaged.

I am proud to say that we are launching a campaign this week in unison with Showcase SA. Steve and Kelly are people who talk up the state, not like those opposite. They talk up the state and they are going to really encourage all South Australians to buy local but, importantly, buy direct, whether that is at the cellar door or whether that is online as that is where they get maximum benefit.

They will be rolling out electronic messaging and a digital campaign and working off the really well-known I Choose SA brand. Of course, they are doing it in unison with industry. We have worked with wine companies to let them know and to involve them with this. We have had 70 new wineries sign up to the I Choose SA business directory, which is fantastic. They are now there not only for this campaign but permanently as well. That is going to help them going forward

We know we have fantastic wines here in South Australia. There are 200 cellar doors within an hour of Adelaide and there are 340 cellar doors all up. As South Australians, if we can get to cellar doors, not only does it help the wineries; it helps the regions. We were there visiting and went to DiGiorgio wines. I thank Frank. We bought some wine at the cellar door—that helps Frank. That is showing the way that is really good for South Australians. That is jobs for the wineries and jobs in the regions for the restaurants and the cafes. I encourage all to get on board—#IChooseSAWine, #BuyLocal, #BuyDirect.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members on my right and members on my left!

#### **AMBULANCE RAMPING**

**Mr PICTON (Karna) (14:43):** My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier personally meet with representatives of paramedics over the next week to agree to a solution to end the current ramping and ambulance resources crisis?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:44):** I thank the member for his question. Ramping is a very important issue. As I stated yesterday in the parliament and I have stated I think almost every day for the last week, there is no simple solution to the issue that exists within the South Australian emergency departments at the moment. In fact, there is a suite of things that need to work together to alleviate the situation and ambulances are certainly and unequivocally a part of that. We have to make sure that we are adequately providing those resources to our ambulances, whether that be personnel, whether it be budget or whether it be of course the ambulances themselves.

Ambulance officers—the paramedics in South Australia—do an outstanding job. We very much appreciate what they do. They are clearly at the moment conducting their enterprise bargaining agreement and we have processes in place for that. But one of the things that will help to alleviate the situation that the member referred to in his question is the opening of the Urgent Mental Health Care Centre—

**Mr Picton:** Will you meet with the paramedics?

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Karna!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —which has just opened in South Australia today. This has been a real issue and one that has significantly exacerbated the situation in our emergency departments in South Australia. We know that we have around 27,000 mental health presentations to our EDs each year. We know that about 12,000 of those do not require the patient who has presented at the ED to be admitted to the hospital. So, in a national first—the first of eight that are going to be rolled out across the country—we have established today the Urgent Mental Health Care Centre right here in the centre of Adelaide.

What we know is that this is a facility which has been co-designed with people who have lived experience in this particular area. We know that this is a facility which will take the pressure off our emergency departments across metropolitan Adelaide. We note that this new facility is located at 215 Grenfell Street, Adelaide. It's open from 12 o'clock in the afternoon right through to 12 o'clock in the morning, seven days per week. Initially, it is open for referrals from the SA Ambulance Service of course, but also South Australia Police and the emergency mental health phone line—

**Mr PICTON:** Point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Kurna rises on a point of order.

**Mr PICTON:** The Premier was asked a very specific question as to whether he would meet with representatives of paramedics.

**An honourable member:** What number?

**Mr PICTON:** It's standing order 98. This is debate and I ask that he be referred back to the question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I listened carefully to the question. The question contained, as I understood it, two limbs, one of which was a characterisation of the present circumstances. In the context of the question as a whole, the Premier is entitled to provide a response to that aspect of the question as well as the aspect of the question that the member for Kurna draws attention to. I remind the Premier of the specific aspects of the question. The Premier has the call.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** As I was saying in my answer, I am happy to reiterate that we very much value the work of South Australian ambulance officers in South Australia. There is an enterprise bargaining agreement that is in place at the moment and we have processes in place for ambulance officers and their union to meet. My understanding is that there have been regular meetings. There has been a meeting this week looking at aspects and we hope to move to a speedy resolution of the situation that currently exists in South Australia. But also, as part of the question, there was a focus on what we are basically doing in terms of—

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** Such a coward.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** Sorry, sir. I take offence to the comments made by the member for West Torrens.

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier might resume his seat.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Sorry, sir. I apologise for calling the Premier a coward for not meeting ambulance officers.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for West Torrens has withdrawn and apologised.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** I invite the member for West Torrens to withdraw.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** I apologise and withdraw for calling the Premier a coward for not meeting ambulance officers.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for West Torrens has withdrawn.

*Ms Cook interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Hurtle Vale!

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Chaffey! The Premier has the call.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** In fact, it takes courage, it actually takes a lot of courage to fix up the mess that we inherited from the previous government. I don't think there is a person—

**Mr Malinauskas:** Double ramping: how is that fixing it up?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** I hear the former Minister for Health shouting across the chamber. He should hang his head in shame.

*Mr Malinauskas interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the leader!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** We as the incoming government had to inherit the mess that he was presiding over in cabinet at the time of the last election. Watch him reverse out of that situation

because he always wants to say, 'I was only there for four or five or six months.' He was in cabinet the entire time!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier has the call.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** The reality is that it does take courage to fix the issues associated with ramping in South Australia, and that's exactly and precisely what we are doing.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** I remind honourable members of the capacity to extend time where an answer has been interrupted in the circumstances. I am conscious of having occupied a certain amount of time myself in considering and ruling upon a point of order in the course of that answer. The member for Kaurana with a supplementary question.

### SA AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr PICTON (Kaurana) (14:50):** Will the Premier meet with ambulance officers this week?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:50):** I refer the member to my previous answer, which I think was extraordinarily clear.

### AMBULANCE RAMPING

**Mr PICTON (Kaurana) (14:50):** My question is to the Premier. By when will the Premier ensure ramping at our public hospitals ends?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:50):** This is a very important question because there is a huge amount of work which needs to be done to undo the mess we inherited from the previous government.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** Those opposite say, 'Three years.' Well, let me tell you, I don't think there is a single South Australian who supported Transforming Health. It was a complete and utter unmitigated disaster.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** I have not seen one person opposite the entire time say, 'I was responsible for Transforming Health and we're going to reinstitute it at the next election.' If it was such a great policy, why aren't they out championing it?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** No, I have never seen anybody backpedal so quickly. I have never, ever seen anyone backpedal so quickly.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will resume his seat. The member for West Torrens on a point of order.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Standing order 98: this is debate, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order. I will move along. Is there a member seeking the call? The member for Kaurana.

### AMBULANCE RAMPING

**Mr PICTON (Kaurana) (14:51):** My question is to the Premier. Will there still be ramping by the end of your fourth year in office?



**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (14:51):** We are working extraordinarily hard at the moment to undo the mess that was created by those opposite. There is no simple solution, as I pointed out, to what is occurring. We have to work on a number of fronts. Part of that is providing alternative pathways to divert people when there is a better treatment methodology for them—for example, the Priority Care Centres or the Urgent Mental Health Care facilities that have opened in the centre of the city today. This will take enormous pressure off our emergency departments.

But we have to do more than that. We have to make sure that the patient flow through the hospital is as efficient as possible. We have to make sure that people, when they are ready to leave, maybe to go to an aged-care facility or another residential facility, are facilitated to do that. And that is exactly and precisely what we are doing.

The third area we've got to focus on is the ambulances in South Australia to make sure that we have the right resources in place. Can I tell you, I have some statistics that I think may be of use to the house. Since July 2018 right through to June 30 last year, in that two-year period, which, if you like, reflects us coming to government, we know that South Australian ambulance staffing increased by 12.6 per cent, an additional 187 full-time equivalents in that area.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the leader!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** The current budget is also very important. The current budget provides for a further 5.1 per cent this year, which will be a further 76 full-time equivalents here in South Australia. We have increased the South Australia Ambulance Service's budget by 25 per cent since Labor's last budget in government, from \$250.5 million per year to a whopping \$313.2 million.

So we have been putting adequate resources in, but we always have to make sure that we are looking very carefully at those resources so that we do have the adequate resourcing in terms of personnel, in terms of the overall budget, but, importantly, in terms of the equipment that our paramedics and ambulance officers are provided with. We are very proud of what we have achieved so far in health, but don't forget that we are managing a global pandemic. This has been unequivocally the focus of just about every other health system in the world.

Whilst we have been managing the health system in South Australia we have also been pushing ahead with very significant reforms. One of those areas of reform is around the issue of expanding the capacity of the emergency departments in South Australia. This is in great contrast with what happened when we came to government where the emergency departments were being scaled down or in some cases closed. It beggars belief that the entire Repat Hospital was closed and flogged off by those opposite.

**Mrs Power:** Shameful, incredible!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** It is shameful. The member for Elder says that it is shameful, and she is exactly and precisely right, and so are the people of South Australia. I still remember very well the veterans who camped on the steps of parliament. Did those opposite take any notice of that? Not a bit. So, by contrast to closing the Repat, downgrading the emergency departments, we are embarking upon—

*Ms Cook interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Hurtle Vale!

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL:** —a massive expansion at the Flinders Medical Centre. It will be the largest emergency department in the entire state, as well as a massive expansion at the Lyell McEwin, an upgrade at Modbury and a brand-new emergency department at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Of course, not everything has been delivered, but I can tell you one thing: we will not be going back to Transforming Health, but we will be pushing ahead with fixing the problem that we inherited from those opposite.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Before I call the member for Hammond, I warn the member for Schubert for a second time, I call to order the member for Hurtle Vale, I warn the member for Wright, I call to order the member for Kaurana, I warn the member for Ramsay, I call to order the Minister for Trade and Investment, and I call to order the Minister for Energy and Mining.

### CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:56):** My question is to the Minister for Innovation and Skills. Can the minister update the house on how the Marshall Liberal government is growing confidence within the construction industry in the state through trade construction skills training?

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley—Minister for Innovation and Skills) (14:56):** I thank the member for Hammond for his question, who I note is a very good bush carpenter himself. I am surprised that some of those structures he has made on the farm are still standing—but they are.

The Marshall Liberal government's \$4 billion stimulus has delivered critical support to the South Australian economy, with our state among the nation's strongest performers in terms of economic performance during the COVID pandemic. South Australia is the only state to achieve an increase in apprenticeships and traineeships over the last financial year, including a 7.7 per cent increase in construction trade commencements, and this is despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Marshall government's pandemic and economic management and our stimulus measures have all seen a high demand for skilled workers in the construction industry. South Australia's construction industry has recorded strong growth, with payroll jobs showing a 5.1 per cent increase from April to December 2020, and this equates to 3,000 new jobs in the construction industry. It is one of the top industries requiring new trades for 2021, with an estimated 1,200 to 1,600 new workers needed in the state by the end of this year.

The Marshall Liberal government is delivering a skills-led recovery from COVID-19, getting more people into skilled careers and meeting industry needs. This week, of course, the Department for Innovation and Skills announced an extension to the popular GTO (Group Training Organisation) Boost, which gives host employers a \$5,200 discount for taking on an apprentice as a host employer in their business. It has been very successful and very popular with employers, particularly those who are trying the GTO system for the first time.

The \$200 million Skilling South Australia initiative, a partnership with the Morrison government, is delivering results, achieving 33,000 new apprenticeship and traineeship commencements since we launched the initiative. We have funded more than 160 Skilling South Australia projects, bespoke co-designed with business and industry, to boost apprenticeship numbers across a variety of industries.

In fact, 700 participants working in 32 Skilling South Australia projects worth \$6 million are supporting the building and construction sector, including the MBA's Building Pathways Project developed in partnership with the non-government training provider Carey Training. Other projects include the non-government RTO Civil Train—Women in Civil project, to address the under-representation of women in the civil construction sector, and a career path for Indigenous ex-offenders.

A partnership with the Department for Correctional Services and Carey Training is offering around 15 ex-offenders the opportunity to enter the construction industry through pre-apprenticeship training that develops skills in steel framing. Again, it is a brand-new trade that didn't exist under the previous government. We have responded to industry needs, and we now have an apprenticeship in steel frame training. There is training in civil construction—another brand-new apprenticeship under this government—concrete and general construction.

I was pleased to see the figures presented to me by MBA CEO, Will Frogley, last week that showed South Australia was leading the nation as the only state to have more people working in the construction industry now than at the same time last year.

### SA AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr PICTON (Kaurna) (15:00):** My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier read the SA Ambulance 'Safety Learning System incident review: ambulance delays' July 2020 to November 2020 report that was released by the government last week? Has the Premier ensured that all recommendations have been implemented?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:00):** I thank the member for the question. Obviously, the report itself is publicly available, but in relation to the recommendations, the—

**Mr Picton:** Do you know if the Premier has read it?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Sorry?

**Mr Picton:** Has the Premier read it? That was my question.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister will not respond to interjections. Interjections on my left will cease. The minister has the call.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** As I was saying, in relation to the recommendations, I will get a detailed answer from the Minister for Health and bring it back to the house.

### SA AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr PICTON (Kaurua) (15:01):** My question is to the Premier. In relation to the SA Ambulance 'Safety Learning System incident review: ambulance delays' report that was released, what is the Premier's response to the case of a 15-year-old girl who threatened suicide, who waited 12 hours and 47 minutes for an ambulance at the end of last year? With your leave and that of the house, I will explain.

**The SPEAKER:** Leave is sought. I note that a certain amount of fact might have been introduced prior to leave having been sought. Nevertheless, leave is sought. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

**Mr PICTON:** The SA Ambulance report released last month identifies a 15-year-old female whose mother called for help on 9 November 2020. She did not receive an ambulance dispatched to her house for 12 hours and 47 minutes, despite the fact that she was threatening to strangle herself with clothing around her neck. Ambulances were dispatched and diverted on at least two occasions between the initial call at 7.24pm and when the ambulance eventually arrived the next morning at 8.11am.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:02):** Every death is a tragedy—the incident the member refers to, no less than that. This is a very serious issue on which the government commissioned a report to shine a light on some of the challenges here, and we are working very hard to address those issues.

The Minister for Health and his entire department and all the staff in SA Health, SA Ambulance, are dedicating their lives to improving this situation. Obviously, in relation to the recommendations in the report, I have taken that question on notice, and I will bring back an answer to the house, as I committed to in relation to the previous question in relation to the responses to those recommendations. But every death is a tragedy and highlights the importance of the work towards the report.

### SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

**Ms LUETHEN (King) (15:03):** My question is to the Minister for Education. Can the minister advise the house how the Marshall Liberal government is planning for the future by delivering a \$1.3 billion school infrastructure program across South Australia, particularly in the electorate of King?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:03):** I thank the member for King for her question. I know the passion that she has for education. I have seen on the ground in her electorate as recently as last week when I was visiting schools in her electorate, talking to teachers, talking to children and leaders at schools and preschools about the work that is done in those schools, the work the education department is doing in those schools and indeed the engagement the member for King has with those schools and preschools. A number of them are very pleased in particular about the work the Marshall Liberal government has done during this period of the coronavirus pandemic where we have introduced—

*The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for West Torrens!

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —new grants to every preschool in South Australia—\$20,000 last year, \$30,000 this year—to enhance their infrastructure and to do urgent maintenance tasks. A number of them have had these tasks on their list for years and years and years but had never had the flexibility in their budgets to be able to address them. Indeed, those preschools, whether they were doing nature play areas or fences or kitchen upgrades or tiling or roofing or verandah extensions or, indeed, as at one of the preschools that we visited with the member for King last week, all those things all at once, did so because of the support that has been given through the pandemic, through these two rounds of grants to all of our preschools.

Also, all our schools have benefited from those maintenance grants of between \$20,000 and \$100,000, and there have been extended maintenance grants—\$25 million worth of grants earlier last year—for schools that had had projects on the department's waiting list for some time but the annual program of minor works had never been sufficient to cover it.

Indeed, Salisbury East High School was one of the schools that the member for King and I visited again last week, and they have benefited from hundreds of thousands of dollars of grants in that space and are able to address some of those urgent maintenance tasks which were not funded for year upon year upon year upon year. That work is now able to be underway and I am really, really grateful to have had the opportunity to spend time with staff and students and the new principal at that school.

Of course, there are significant maintenance projects around South Australia—\$1.3 billion worth of work. We welcomed in late 2017, towards the end of the 16 years that Labor was in power, the commitment of about \$700 million, mostly as a result of the sale of the lands titles office, some of it going through the forward years of the education and infrastructure budget and, of course, \$15 million they identified from their commitment to flog off the land at the Rostrevor campus of Norwood Morialta High School that they put into the budget papers but never told anybody about.

We nevertheless welcomed those investments and we are following through with those investments, indeed with the exception of the \$15 million that the Labor Party was going to gain from flogging off the land of the Rostrevor campus of the Norwood Morialta High School that they put into the budget but never told anyone about. We have reversed that decision while we investigate what are the future needs—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members on my left!

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —for the education department in the eastern suburbs and that work and that consideration is underway. One of the things that the member for King and I learnt last week at the Salisbury Heights Preschool was indeed the value that the preschools—we know many schools around South Australia have benefited from the investment we made to take South Australia's school internet from the slowest in the mainland to the fastest in the nation, a really important project announced at Glenelg Primary School between the member for Morphett and myself—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —and the Premier in late 2018. We have expanded it to all preschools. Preschools have particularly identified the value of that during COVID in the relationship they have with their parents in sharing the students' learning. It is just another example of why the investment in high-speed internet, the investment in construction and maintenance is benefitting our schools and helping us to deliver a world-class education for all South Australian children.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**REVIEW OF HARASSMENT IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT WORKPLACE**

**Dr CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:07):** My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier read the report from the equal opportunity commissioner tabled yesterday?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (15:07):** Yes.

**SA AMBULANCE SERVICE**

**Mr PICTON (Kaurna) (15:08):** My question is to the Premier. What is the Premier's response to a case late last year of a pregnant victim of assault where SA Police had to take them to hospital because an ambulance didn't turn up? With your leave and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr PICTON:** The SA Ambulance 'Safety Learning System incident review: ambulance delays' report reveals that there was a case of a 22-year-old female who was four weeks pregnant and was punched in the stomach. After a 35-minute wait, an ambulance did not come, and SA Police had to take that patient to the hospital themselves in a patrol car instead of waiting further for an ambulance.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:08):** I thank the member for the question. Obviously, any incident of the nature that the member identifies, any assault, is appalling and, of course, every sympathy on a human level goes to the victim of any such crime.

In relation to the government response through the services that we provide, I refer the member to my previous answer in which I outlined the important work that the government has done to shine a light on some of the challenges through commissioning consideration of the report that the member has identified. Again, as per the previous answer, I will bring back an answer to the house in relation to the recommendations from the Minister for Health as the member sought about three questions ago.

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Florey, I warn for a second time the member for Wright.

**HOTEL QUARANTINE FEES**

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:09):** My question is to the Premier. How many South Australians returning from overseas have sought and been approved for and subsequently received a waiver of hotel quarantine fees? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Ms BEDFORD:** Since July 2020, the government has required returning residents to bear the cost of hotel quarantine, some \$3,000 per individual and an additional \$1,000 per adult and \$500 for each child. Returning South Australians, already under financial stress from enormous return airfare prices, are struggling to meet this additional cost and have applied for compassionate relief on hardship grounds. I understand a large number of these applications are yet to even be processed.

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (15:10):** I thank the member for Florey for her question. She's quite right: in the early days of the repatriation program Australians were not required to pay for the hotel quarantine. They were asked to pay for their own air flight back, but there was some assistance that was provided, not by state governments but by the federal government. A decision was made at national cabinet for the states to pass on, if you like, a uniform cost to bringing people back that would meet most of the cost, or certainly some of the cost, of the full repatriation cost borne by the individual states. We think that this was fair.

When we consider people coming back into South Australia, for example, probably 93 per cent of the people who come into our quarantine hotels are coming from another state, and so we think it's only fair that we should bill people coming from other states into South Australia. I'm sure other states feel the same way about having South Australians go into their jurisdiction. I'm not au fait with exactly how many people have applied for an exemption to this money.

I do know that there are some generous payment terms which have been offered. Some people want to pay that money up-front, or some people want to pay the money that is due when they leave the quarantine hotel, and some people go on to a payment plan, recognising that it is a significant expense. I am happy to get further details for the member and to come back to the house.

#### **HOTEL QUARANTINE FEES**

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:12):** Supplementary, Mr Speaker: I have a constituent, Premier, who I am told is the only person who has actually been recommended to have a waiver, and his application is sitting in a pile and has been since November of last year. If he's the only person who has been approved for a waiver, why can't he just be paid?

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan—Premier) (15:12):** If the member is happy to pass on those details, it is a question which I am more than happy to follow up. Quite frankly, I think the Minister for Health would be very happy to follow up. As I said, we know that this is a significant expense but, having said that, it is also a very significant expense to our state to bring people back, so we are not looking at providing exemptions for every single person that's coming through our hotel quarantine arrangements.

We understand that there are many people, Australian citizens in particular, who are stranded overseas, and we want to play our part. There are some who think that these people should be processed overseas or in some far-flung part of our nation. We think we need to play our role in the national repatriation. We think that's the fair, just and reasonable thing to do, but we do ask for compensation toward some of the costs that we incur. As I said previously, I'm more than happy to follow up on a specific application for a waiver that the member would have details on so long as, of course, that person is happy for those details to be passed on to me.

#### **RIVERLAND QUARANTINE FACILITY**

**Mr DULUK (Waite) (15:13):** My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Can the minister please inform the house as to when approval will be given by the government for the use of an appropriate quarantine facility in the Riverland for Pacific Island workers who seek to enter South Australia for the upcoming citrus season?

**The Hon. D.K.B. BASHAM (Finniss—Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development) (15:14):** I thank the member for his important question. It's certainly a very challenging time, particularly for the citrus growers as we head into the picking season going into the next few months.

We are very much conscious of the needs of the workforce. As a government we have been doing many things to assist the horticultural industry, in particular, to make sure they are able to have the workforce they need. Thankfully, to this point in time we have been able to meet their needs. We have been able to get people out there working to make sure the fruit is being picked, that it has been picked.

We continue to go down that path. We are working with the federal government, which has the ability to get \$6,000 grants to people to relocate to those regions to take up the opportunity to work in those regional areas. In relation to trying to find an avenue to get the Pacific Island workers in, it is very much a collaborative approach we are taking to work with both the federal government and the industry to make sure we meet their needs. It is certainly very challenging, and we have to work with Health and the police to make sure it is safe to do so.

We are very conscious of those needs and very conscious of making sure that South Australia is protected in this space, of making sure we are not putting anyone at risk if we do go down the path of proving a facility out in the regions, of making sure we are able to meet the needs of those who need the workforce but also to meet the needs of the regional communities themselves.

We continue to go down the path, looking at the different options and trying to establish a particular path to get these workers in. We are constantly and furiously working to try to get these workers in as soon as possible. It is a difficult situation, but we have to put the health of South Australians first and we need to listen to health advice. We will continue to work with Health and with the police to make sure we are able to deliver for those regional communities.

**REGIONAL POLICING REVIEW**

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:16):** My question is to the Minister for Police. Has the minister considered the recommendations of the regional policing review? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr BELL:** The regional policing review consultation paper, which was released under freedom of information, has proposed the potential closure of single-person police stations. One of these police stations, the Port Macdonnell Police Station, is in my electorate of Mount Gambier.

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services) (15:17):** I thank the member for Mount Gambier for the question and also for his interest in this area. I am actually meeting with the SA Police commissioner today, and I will certainly seek an update from him in that regard.

Obviously this government has, in the past, appointed Mr Duggan AM, QC to undertake an independent review into frontline policing. The review focused on identifying time and also productivity efficiencies to streamline operations and reduce administrative burdens in relation to frontline policing. I am certainly not aware of any intention whatsoever to close any police station, I make that very clear.

While I'm at it, I would like to take the opportunity to commend the tremendous work of SA Police, and thank them for what they have done in keeping South Australians safe during what has been a very, very challenging time, a time when you consider that SAPOL, across the board, on some days has more than 600 police officers actually drawn to assist with the COVID response. Whether it is on our borders or in our medi-hotels or conducting compliance checks, they have done an exceptional job.

That is why, since coming into government, we have made sure that despite the millions and millions of dollars of cuts we inherited from the former government, we have got on with the job of making—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister has the call.

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA:** We have got on with the job of making sure we provide over \$170 million in new funding to South Australia Police. We have got on with the job of making sure we do things like beginning to unveil stab-resistant, bullet-resistant vests. Those opposite had 16 years. Did they get the vests done? Did you get it done? No, you didn't. I have signed the contract, \$8½ million, for 800 this year and 2,200 the following year. We have also got on with the job of making sure we deliver things like \$800,000 in directly funding Crime Stoppers.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA:** Did they get a cent out of the former government? Not one cent—the only jurisdiction, state government, that didn't directly fund Crime Stoppers.

*Mr Odenwalder interjecting:*

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA:** The member for Elizabeth wants to whinge and whine and harp on about it. We've got on with the job. We are making sure we provide eyes and ears—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Members on my right!

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA:** —to SAPOL to assist them, to make sure they continue to keep us safe. We know that the crime rate across the board is dropping. It's 15.1 per cent lower than it was 10 years ago but, saying that, there is always more to be done.

I will continue to talk to SAPOL. Whilst it is an operational matter, I'm certainly not aware of any intention in regard to that. I tell you what: I have been down to the member for Mount Gambier's

electorate. It's a beautiful electorate. Next time I'm down there, I will make sure I also engage with him. I'm more than happy to take up his concerns.

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Frome, I warn the member for Chaffey.

#### TAFE SA

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Frome) (15:21):** My question is to the Minister for Education. Can the minister please update us on the outcomes of TAFE's recent—I think they were about six months ago—regional consultation sessions on the future direction of TAFE SA, and can he also advise where is the promised regional strategy that was mentioned in these sessions?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:21):** I thank the member. The member is aware—I think he may even have had a meeting with the Chief Executive of TAFE SA around that time—that the TAFE SA chief executive reports to me through the TAFE SA board. I will ask them the specific question the member has raised and bring back an answer for the member.

#### FUEL PRICING

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:21):** My question is to the Attorney-General. Why has the price of unleaded petrol spiked way above the now regular price cycle increase to being as high as \$1.639 per litre at many outlets throughout Adelaide? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Ms BEDFORD:** South Australians have unfortunately had to become very used to price rises to within the \$1.50s, but we are now seeing them within the \$1.60s. I know my constituents would like to know what is being done to stop that and how your real-time fuel pricing app will help, if it all—if at all.

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning and Local Government) (15:22):** In relation to the initial question, if I may, I think I would probably be given the Nobel Prize if I were actually able to answer why petrol variations occur in the world. But can I say—as the member well knows, who has been very active in the consideration of cost-of-living initiatives of the government and in the debates in relation to the mandatory fuel aggregation and data publication legislation—the successful tenderer was announced before Christmas.

The aggregation commenced on 19 February, I think it was. Before the end of the month, we are expecting the commencement of the aggregation data benefits; that is, everyone's data will be in and available for access so that consumers can identify where their best price is in what geographical location. All retailers are required mandatorily to provide that data. There is a very significant fine, as the member knows, if that isn't uploaded within 30 minutes of a change. We are very proud of that initiative.

As the member is very clear in the understanding of this, having had very significant participation and contribution in the debate—and I thank her for that—we will be reviewing that after two years to consider what further action needs to be done in this space. We are very pleased that is coming to fruition. I can't assist the member's constituents as to why there is a fluctuation in price. That is something that is symptomatic all around Australia.

During the course of this debate, I was informed that South Australia apparently has one of the lowest petrol prices in the country. Nevertheless, we are hoping this initiative will arm the constituents in the member's electorate and generally be able to access the best price at any time.

#### *Grievance Debate*

#### STATE BUDGET

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee) (15:25):** It was 2½ years ago that the Premier and his Treasurer stood in this place and delivered their first budget. At the last election, this government inherited an economy that was growing at 2.3 per cent per annum and an unemployment rate of



5.6 per cent, both figures comparing very favourably with national economic growth and national employment statistics.

Today, 2½ years later, 2½ years after that day when the Treasurer stood here and proudly told this place that he was cutting 29 job creation and support programs across government, what have we seen? We have seen our employment growth fall from 2.3 per cent first to 1.4 per cent and then, in the most recent financial year, to minus 1.4 per cent, the worst economic growth in the nation. Less than two weeks ago, unemployment statistics were released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics showing that under this government we once again have the highest unemployment rate in the nation. Since March 2020, moments before the coronavirus pandemic hit our shores, 16,000 jobs have been lost here in South Australia.

Of course, it is not the only bad statistic we have had in recent times. Along with that increase in our unemployment rate to 7.1 per cent, we also have the highest youth unemployment rate. We have the lowest participation rate in mainland Australia, which means fewer people are even bothering to engage in the workforce here in South Australia. Thousands of people have simply given up looking for work under the Marshall Liberal government. It is an extraordinary record.

How does the Premier defend this record? The Premier stands here and tells this place that all will be well and that the government is committed to a \$16.7 billion infrastructure program. That is the best description: they have committed to it. They are not actually rolling it out; all they have done is announce it. We know under this government there is delay after delay after delay of these infrastructure projects, these projects that are meant to deliver the economic activity and the thousands of jobs the South Australian economy needs to get back on track.

What are those delayed projects? The Women's and Children's Hospital; The Queen Elizabeth Hospital upgrade, which the member for Cheltenham, the member for Port Adelaide and I have been waiting for this government to start on for three years; the Main South Road duplication; the Premier's own pet project, the Aboriginal Art and Cultures Centre; the North-South Corridor upgrade, with the alleged \$9.7 billion commitment from this government, which does not start until 2024, more than three years down the track; and the Hove level crossing, being managed in the way that only the member for Gibson could possibly manage a project—and that is manifestly incompetently.

The Torrens Road level crossing project still has not started. The Fullarton Road-Cross Road upgrade project, which looks set to raze the gatehouse at Urrbrae, still has not started, nor has the pet project of the federal member for Sturt, the completely invisible former Chief of Staff to the current Premier, James Stevens. That has not started yet either. These are billions of dollars worth of work committed to by this government, yet they cannot seem to get a shovel in the ground.

Of course, you do not have to take my word for it. It is the government's own budget papers that point out the delays to these billions of dollars worth of projects. What does the construction data show, the national metric that shows how much construction activity is actually happening across South Australia and across the nation? It shows the largest contraction of all states and territories in the nation not just for construction data collectively but for engineering construction work—that work being done on major projects—and also building work done, including on residential properties.

The Premier says it is all okay. The payroll data tells a completely different story. The Premier might like to be reminded that South Australia has one in 11 workers currently receiving JobKeeper. One in 11 is a frightening statistic, particularly when you remember the warnings that we get from national economists that our economy is already heavily reliant on the public sector and on healthcare industries. We should be inoculated from the worst impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on our economy and on our workforce due to that over-reliance on the public sector and health industries, but the data says that we are not.

This government is failing to lead the economic recovery this state needs. We have been well served by Nicola Spurrier and Grant Stevens on the health response to the COVID pandemic. We are being let down by the Premier and his Treasurer on the economic response.

Time expired.

### AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

**Ms LUETHEN (King) (15:30):** Today, I would like to acknowledge in this chamber the contribution made by a number of special people in my community whose contribution to the King electorate and the broader community was acknowledged at the recent Australia Day award ceremonies in 2021. These awards are an opportunity for the community to nominate and acknowledge the outstanding contribution a number of individuals and groups have made in our community. The people who won the awards were certainly well deserving.

I would like to start off with congratulations to David George, who has been named as our 2021 Outstanding Citizen of the Year in the City of Tea Tree Gully. Mr George has dedicated his life to community service and helping others. He received the award at the City of Tea Tree Gully Citizenship and Australia Day Award Ceremony. Mr George was the first principal of Golden Grove High School, where he played a crucial role in establishing one of our wonderful local high schools, developing young people and establishing a unit for children with disabilities that still operates today.

At 80 years old, Mr George still leads a maintenance project group to maintain a local church facility and nearby community service centre. He and his wife also lead a group of about 20 people to connect seniors who otherwise might be at risk of isolation. I am delighted to run into Mr George year after year at every year 12 graduation at Golden Grove High School.

Also a finalist in this category was much-loved community member John Adams, who is the President of the South Australian Districts Netball Association. John brings much-needed passion and skills to his role and has helped the Golden Grove courts develop year after year into a top sporting facility where over 26 clubs play with in excess of 4,000 netball players. We see 395,000 visits to the court each calendar year. John's leadership is greatly valued. Sue Jackson and Andy O'Donohue were recognised for their amazing contribution to BlazeAid. What a tough choice for the City of Tea Tree Gully councillors to make.

The Outstanding Community Group of the Year Award went to the Kiwanis Club of Modbury. Amongst many other wonderful projects, the group has helped maintain and repair bikes and wheelchairs for students with disabilities at Modbury Special School for several years now. Their involvement with the school has extended to supporting senior students by attending their graduations and providing them with positive role models as they move on to the next stage of their lives. They do outstanding work to improve the lives of others in our community.

At the City of Playford Australia Day Awards, we recognised Citizen of the Year, Raelene Wlochowicz. Raelene is the founder of Playford Women's Shed, which provides a safe environment for socially isolated and vulnerable women to meet, build new skills, increase their confidence and develop community connections. The Playford Women's Shed is the first of its kind in South Australia and was opened in early 2020.

They also recognised Community Group of the Year, Midway Road Community House. Midway Road Community House provides a safe and welcoming atmosphere, where community members of all ages and backgrounds can access a range of recreational, leisure, information, advocacy and support services. It was an absolute pleasure to see Salisbury East High School student Sharif Sharifullah become an Australian at the City of Playford on the same day.

At the 2021 City of Salisbury Australia Day Awards, the 2021 Young Citizen of the Year was Zahra Bayani, who only arrived in Australia in January 2017. Zahra is an ambassador for the South Australian Migration Museum, the Australian Refugee Association, volunteers as an event responder or first aider at public events for St John Ambulance, and is the president of the Global Peace Rotaract Club of Thebarton Senior College. In addition, she has received the Minister for Education's Award for Leadership in Languages and Culture for 2020. How inspiring this young woman is.

The 2021 Citizen of the Year at the City of Salisbury was Uncle Frank Wanganeen. Born in Point Pearce, Frank is a passionate advocate for reconciliation and has played an important role as a mover and shaker in the Aboriginal community through his work with councils and committees. What amazing and inspiring people make up our wonderful local community! We are so lucky. These people and organisations are kind, generous and inspiring, and it would be helpful for others in our community to reflect on their example and put love, kindness and compassion for a fellow human being ahead of any differences of opinion.

I will just reflect as I close on the last sitting week. I was really a little surprised but incredibly heartened by the thoughtful and respectful debate in this place as the Termination of Pregnancy Bill was considered. There were many different views and many different electorates were covered, but the bill was debated respectfully over 22 hours—the best way for us to find common ground and an outcome in the best interests of South Australia.

### HEALTH SERVICES

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:36):** Today, I would like to bring to the attention of the house two case studies that reflect the reality and experience of people in our health and wellbeing system in South Australia. It is fine for the government members here to spend time congratulating themselves on what a wonderful job they are doing, but when you hear the case studies and the examples—real examples on the ground—it does paint a very different picture from what we are told in this place.

One of the examples I would like to highlight today is about an elderly lady, an 82-year-old woman who is a patient at the Gawler Health Service. Sadly, she has a terminal illness and has been in and out of hospital for quite some time over the last five to six months. You would think that a person of that age and that condition would receive the best care possible in our state, but she has not, and I will give you the example of what has happened to this lady.

At the outset, I would like to say that this is not a reflection on the staff who work in our Gawler Health Service, because they can only do the best they can with the resources they are given. It must be extremely frustrating for those nurses and other staff in our hospitals who cannot do their job properly or to the standard they would like because of the lack of resources.

In this case, the patient, the daughter of Mrs Morgan (I have been given permission to use her name) raised the matter with me because she went to visit her mother in the hospital at night after she had been admitted just recently. What her mother was served for dinner was not fit for human consumption—it was absolutely disgraceful. It was two pieces of bread with some cheese in between and was so hard that the daughter could almost break the plate on which it came. This is a person who is in her 80s who was unable to eat that food.

Sadly, this is not an isolated case. The daughter, Ms Anne Foster, asked me to share her Facebook entry on my social media and to make sure the message got out, and a number of other examples have been brought to my attention as well. As a number of people interacting with my Facebook account have said, the government has been cutting back on the cost of meals as this is the easiest way to cut costs in hospitals.

In fact, the staff at the hospital have told the patients and told Ms Foster that the best way to cut costs is to reduce meals so that they only get one what you might call 'hot meal' a day, and that is reserved for lunchtime, and at night-time the patients in this hospital will basically just get a sandwich. That is not satisfactory. People in our health and wellbeing system deserve better. When dear Ms Foster tried to raise the matter, she was given very poor responses, and again this is not the staff but the way our health system is being managed.

Another part of our health system that is very important is our ambulance service. Just recently, I raised some examples of our ambulance service in Gawler, which is under-resourced. Another example has come to my attention about the lack of resourcing for ambulance services. We have one unit in the town. It is a growing community, and when that unit is carrying somebody from one hospital to another hospital, or from an incident to a hospital, particularly to the Lyell McEwin Hospital where they have to ramp up, our town lacks an ambulance service, and it can go for hours.

Another example has been brought to my attention, and I will read from the message this mother has sent to me:

Hi Tony, I'm a little concerned about the emergency services and resources. My son had a nasty turn with his epilepsy on the weekend. He was distressed and in excruciating pain. We thought it would be faster to go to the hospital than wait for an ambulance as we live around the corner. When I got to the hospital—

they had to transfer the patient, the child—

they called an ambulance. This was around 10.30pm. At 2am in the morning SAAS called and said they wouldn't get to us until after 5am and I was then asked to transport my son down to the [Women's and Children's Hospital] and if I had an issue to pull over and call for an ambulance.

This is the reality of people's experience in my community of our health and wellbeing system. First, they get poorly treated in our hospitals, not because the staff do not do the job properly but because of lack of resources. Secondly, with respect to our ambulance services and our paramedics, I have spoken to a number of paramedics in my community who are concerned about not being able to do their job properly and service the community because of lack of resources. Our community deserves better from this government.

Time expired.

### CHAFFEY ELECTORATE

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:41):** I would like to speak about some of the achievements that people in the electorate of Chaffey were a part of over the weekend. It was great to be down at Clare for the South Australian Country Press Awards, where the guest speaker was the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael McCormack. As a previous newspaper journalist or editor, he gave great insights into what it was like to work at country newspapers.

There was even better news in that *The Murray Pioneer*, the local Riverland newspaper, headed up by the Taylor Group of Newspapers, was awarded the best newspaper for 2020 with a circulation of over 4,000. Congratulations to both Jane and Paul, the editors at the newspaper, on a huge achievement and honour for the *Pioneer* team. As we know, local newspapers play a vital role in the fabric of country communities—giving them the news, giving them the information—and it was just a great night.

On the way home from Clare, I attended another great achievement when I called into Morgan to celebrate 40 years of Meals on Wheels. It was a great achievement by a group of volunteers who go above and beyond. We know that Morgan is a small Riverland community. The volunteers go to the Cadell Training Centre to gather their food for the deliveries. That band of volunteers delivers those meals not just up a street: they have to travel significant distances to drop off those meals.

Through these uncertain times during COVID-19, they have done an outstanding job, not only delivering the meals but also stopping for conversation and to check on people to make sure that they are alright. I think it is just an outstanding service that they provide, so I commend and congratulate all those people. As I said, Meals on Wheels was celebrating its 40-year anniversary.

I then ventured up to Loxton, first of all to celebrate the Loxton Mardi Gras. Many people say to me, 'Well, Mardi Gras at Loxton.' It is not the Mardi Gras that many people would relate to as in the Sydney Mardi Gras. The Loxton Mardi Gras is an event, a street parade, that has been held over a number of years.

We celebrated the 64<sup>th</sup> Mardi Gras on the weekend, and it is a festival to raise money for community projects. The definition of Mardi Gras is that Mardi means Tuesday and Gras means grand. The event had around 60 floats, and it was fantastic fun to see the COVID-19 compliant event. It was held at the No. 2 oval. We could not do the street parade, but everyone came out. The Loxton community rallied together, the Riverland community came to watch and it really was a significant event.

The original Mardi Gras, back 64 Mardi Gras ago, was to raise money for the town pool. The Harry Tickle Memorial Swimming Pool is still standing the test of time. It is there in its grand stature, and it just shows that this Mardi Gras event is there for a great reason and a great community purpose. Since its inception, it has raised over \$1 million for the community.

This year, Rosy McConnell was crowned the 2021 Community Ambassador and 2021 Charity Ambassador. Sally Wendland was named the 2021 Mardi Gras Senior Ambassador. Trinny Nitschke was named the 2021 Loxton Mardi Gras Junior Ambassador representative. It was great to see these young junior ambassadors getting around. There are eight of them—actually seven of them, as one of them was a representative from last year—and they get around the community, raising money together in a group, selling raffle tickets. They have now made lifelong

friends, as they told me. It is just a great experience for them to be community minded and to be there for great community spirit.

Also I would like to commend the committee. As I made my presentation there on Saturday, it was great to acknowledge Peter and Carla Magarey—Peter and Carla have been great historians in Loxton, so congratulations to them—Chris and Sandy Sheahan, Liz Dymmott and Nola Schulz.

I would also like to congratulate the winners of Nippy's Loxton Gift, a great athletics event and the second biggest running event in the state. Deng Bulabek was the men's winner, Mikayla Round was the women's winner and Dylan Boyce was the junior winner. Dylan was an outstanding talent, and I am sure that he will be one of these athletics talents for the future. It was a great weekend, the Riverland celebrated and they were proud of their achievements. It is just a great acknowledgement of community spirit in the Riverland.

#### MAWSON ELECTORATE

**The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL (Mawson) (15:46):** The people of McLaren Vale celebrated very loudly and very proudly last Thursday when the Environment Protection Authority came to the sensible decision not to allow the dumping of PFAS in the McLaren Vale wine region. Food, wine and tourism is worth \$800 million to the McLaren Vale area. It employs thousands of people across hundreds of businesses, some small, some medium and some big. The threat to our area was one that led to a 10-month fight, from when an ad appeared in the small print in the local newspaper through to last Thursday.

I want to thank a few people in the house today. In particular, I want to thank David Gill, from Willunga, and Dudley Brown, who has Inkwell Wines and a lovely boutique hotel in McLaren Vale. Both of these gentlemen, by the way, were on our steering committee that brought in character preservation legislation a decade or so ago, which protects our wonderful area of McLaren Vale from urban sprawl. It means that the land that is devoted to agriculture in between McLaren Vale, McLaren Flat, Willunga and Aldinga cannot be built on with subdivisions. We are very proud of what we have achieved in the past, but we know to remain ever vigilant to the threats that could hit our local area.

Dudley contacted me about this ad in the paper in the middle of lockdown, in mid-April last year. We had just come off the terrible, devastating bushfires on Kangaroo Island and we had been trying to help people through COVID. When David and Dudley contacted me, I thought, 'Surely this isn't a fight that we have to have in 2020 to stop this deadly PFAS being dumped in one of the world's premium food and wine regions.' It was bad enough that people unwittingly put it all over parts of Australia where firefighting foam was sprayed, in places like RAAF bases not only here in South Australia but also in other states.

It was bad enough that they did that through ignorance, but to then scrape that off these RAAF bases from around Australia and bring it to a premium food and wine production area in my local area and dump all that was unconscionable. You could not believe that people would even contemplate doing it and yet that was the proposal. The EPA were saying, 'Well, there is a dump there already, so just something else in there couldn't hurt.' With all the language the EPA used for the past 10 months, it looked like they were likely to approve it.

They refused to hold a community meeting. It was left for me to do that and we had 348 people turn up to that meeting in October last year. The EPA blamed COVID. At the same time, in fact, in the same week that the Liberal Women's Council of South Australia could hold a meeting back in July for up to 600 people, the EPA was saying, 'We couldn't possibly have a meeting.' It turned out that the EPA actually wanted to divide and conquer. They wanted people in our local area to make an appointment to come along with the EPA and the proponent, Southern Waste ResourceCo, would sit there and tell these people how good PFAS was going to be for their local area.

The way our system works is that we are all elected in here—47 of us in this house, 22 in the other house—and we take our pay packets to do the right thing by the people who elect us. We are here to provide checks and balances to the bureaucracy, so if the bureaucracy is doing the wrong thing, like threatening to poison our local area, then it is up to us to step in. I had a quiet chat with the Premier during the last sitting week. We were just sitting over here and had a very cordial discussion. I said, 'You've got the chance here to step in and be a hero, to overrule the EPA and say

that this is not the right thing.' The Premier said, 'I don't get involved in the decision-making. If I did that, I would never get any work done.'

It is everyone's responsibility who is elected in here to overrule bad decisions. The Premier could have got behind the bill that I brought in here in November last year, but every member of the Liberal Party voted against it. That bill would have banned the dumping of PFAS anywhere in the metropolitan area, within 50 kilometres of primary production land and within five kilometres of any town and city in South Australia. I think that is very sensible legislation to protect all of us in South Australia.

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** Point of order: the member is now reflecting on a vote of the house. I ask that you bring him back to the substance of the speech.

**The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL:** You can live with the way you voted, Vickie.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Also, Attorney, the member for Mawson's time has expired, so he has taken his seat.

### ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING STRATEGY

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Minister for Education) (15:52):** I am really pleased to be part of a government that after 16 years of Labor has taken the opportunities that have come our way with coming to government in March 2018 to really drive reform across a range of social areas, a range of economic areas in South Australia. In the education portfolio, one of the key policies that we took to the last election was our entrepreneurial learning strategy.

We were very keen to see our young people given the skills and capabilities when they come out of school to not just be potentially able to get into a job—although we did want to make sure that vocational training and education is at the highest possible standard—but also have the skills and capabilities to make a job, to start their own business, to be entrepreneurs, to start an opportunity that resonates with the state of South Australia and the foundations on which we are built as an entrepreneurial state, a place where people who have a great idea and are willing to put some of their own skin in the game can have a go and do well.

Throughout 2018, on coming to government we did a lot of work on refining what this entrepreneurial learning strategy would look like. We identified a process whereby schools were able to identify if they wanted to be one of our entrepreneurial specialist schools, schools that would have dedicated infrastructure and staffing positions focused on delivering entrepreneurial learning as a lighthouse for the rest of the state at the highest possible level.

The five schools that were selected through the quality of their pitches were Seaton High School, Banksia Park International High School in the member for Newland's electorate, Mount Gambier High School in the member for Mount Gambier's electorate, Murray Bridge High School in the member for Hammond's electorate and Heathfield High School in the Speaker's own electorate.

The fact is entrepreneurial learning empowers young people not just to own their own business but to own their own future, to determine the capacity within which whatever organisation they may be a part of can see its own future. It strengthens the economy when our young people have the confidence to take their get up and go and apply it in a way that leads to great economic outcomes. It helps us become a more prosperous and interconnected society.

The work of the specialist schools includes the support they give to their own students and they also have been working together collaboratively to develop their own entrepreneurial subjects within the SACE framework. They have been building the capacity of other schools within their secondary alliances and across the state and they have been working with South Australian statewide business leaders, business leaders in their local communities and entrepreneurs on programs for their students.

I am pleased to advise the house that last year, in 2020, there were more than 2,000 enrolments in entrepreneurial subjects and programs across these five schools. These schools have been engaging industry successfully and they have been engaging with employers in the design, development and delivery of these entrepreneurial learning projects and activities. One

example of the fantastic work our specialist schools are leading is in the member for Newland's electorate at the Banksia Park International High School. Their year 12 information processing and publishing class has helped to redevelop a local business's branding.

Students worked closely with local Adelaide business Ambertrace Developments and the Polaris Business and Innovation Centre in Mawson Lakes. One of the students has since accepted a job with Ambertrace Developments as a graphic designer and has commenced graphic design at Adelaide University while undertaking that work. This local business success has prompted multiple other businesses to approach the schools seeking to work with students, including Impresa, which is a bespoke QR code business. It is a great example of students working with local businesses and gaining skills.

The member for Mount Gambier I am sure will be very interested that students in his electorate at Mount Gambier High have been using entrepreneurial thinking to address a local problem, the introduced European carp. The students organised the Holy Carp competition, an interschool fishing competition. Over 100 students from different schools across the region attended. The Mount Gambier High students completed every step, working with council, organising COVID-safe plans, organising sponsorship and getting other schools involved. I cannot wait to see what those students are going to do next. They are hoping to run a similar program in 2021 and so much more.

To further embed entrepreneurial capabilities, the five schools are collaborating with the SACE Board on a project to develop capabilities relating to an entrepreneurial mindset. The scope of the project included the testing of these capabilities in our entrepreneurial schools in semester 2 in 2020. There are many more things happening at these five schools in the months and years ahead. I look forward to keeping the house updated on the development of this outstanding program delivered as a result of the Marshall Liberal government's delivery on our election commitments.

#### ROYAL AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey) (15:57):** I would like to talk about the wider implications of intrusions, both small and large, into democracy. Democracy is a fragile thing. There are numerous examples of the big global challenges to democracy—for instance, in Hong Kong and Myanmar—not only in the broad political form but also in the way it is translated in both public and private institutions. We here in Australia are not as immune from these forces being raged upon us as we may first think.

While of course not immediately comparable with the more extreme international renditions of antidemocratic forces, here in South Australia we need to look no further for a potted example of such antidemocratic and corporate forces than towards an iconic institution like the RAA—the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia—and I quote from Stuart Nicol's history *Rebel on Wheels* from 2003. South Australia's motor history started when the first motorised tricycle arrived in 1898. The RAA itself was born in 1903, with a foundation membership of 20. In 1905, there were 120 cars in South Australia and, by 1907, 429 cars, with 150 members of the RAA.

At one stage, I am informed, the RAA was one of the largest organisations of its kind in the world and held in enormously high regard by all South Australians. The RAA has moved from its initial long-revered service provision in roadside assistance, roadside signs, maps for holidays and recommendations for holiday accommodation as well as car crash repairs and insurance. It moved early and seamlessly into international travel and is now well presented in all kinds of insurance, personal loans, trade assist and solar and battery storage programs.

The RAA's recent departure from providing home security monitoring has been brought to my attention because people who thought they were supporting an iconic South Australian company and South Australian jobs find they are now supporting jobs that seem to have been outsourced to a company run in Victoria and owned by a firm in the United States of America.

After interaction with the RAA over the recent Fuel Watch Bill I began to look closer at the RAA after approaches by several constituents. This led to questions being raised in their Zoom AGM, and now there will be a general meeting of members held on Monday 29 March at 1.30pm at the West Adelaide Football Club in Richmond.

A look at the proposed changes the RAA board wants reveals the trajectory of the RAA towards a much more corporate-focused organisation, leaving its democratic tradition of a completely RAA member-elected board behind. Contained in the RAA omnibus of constitutional

changes are significant reductions in the ability of RAA members to democratically elect board members.

The RAA board wants to be granted the right to directly appoint up to three of the nine directors without being directly elected by RAA members and without being required to be eligible RAA members. It is true the board can currently appoint a director for a casual vacancy but, under the current constitution, that director would have to face election at the end of their term of office and has to be an eligible member.

More concerning are the proposed changes to the RAA constitution which, in part, allow the RAA to decide who is a fit and proper person to receive RAA board endorsement in an election for a board position. The RAA board, through its proposed nominations committee, would design, construct and implement the total process of filtering potential RAA member nominations for RAA board endorsement and decide, with its own means, who is worthy of endorsement by the RAA board. That endorsement criteria is not then compulsorily made public. Again, worryingly, the proposed omnibus changes, if passed, would also allow for the extension of the RAA board president's tenure to increase to five years.

There is a further constitutional change proposed about communications to RAA members, substituting printed material for electronic material. While this may seem a quite benign change and one that seemingly fits into the 21<sup>st</sup> century landscape, it has the potential to create a further democratic impediment to RAA board information and documents being accessed by members who do not have, or who cannot have, for many reasons, access to electronic communications.

These types of changes to democratic processes, whether in the political sphere or company boardrooms, have far greater implications to the lives of South Australians than might at first be imagined. How do we, as citizens, make change to improve our everyday lives if the mechanisms in society that grant us that ability are truncated and put into the hands of a few? I would argue the RAA's proposed changes to the club's constitution do just that, and that we, as RAA members and more broadly, will be democratically worse off as a result.

I urge all RAA members to read the proposed changes posted to them and which I received on 1 March. If you have friends and family who are RAA members, I urge you to discuss with them the forthcoming meeting and the direction the RAA is being taken in. Could this move see more of the RAA's employments be outsourced? This would just mean a reduction in the entitlements and conditions of employment and the service that RAA members enjoy.

### MENTAL HEALTH

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (16:02):** I rise to make some further comment on a notice of motion made today. Quite interestingly, I noticed in my pigeonhole afterwards that the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists have just written to all state MPs and put together the SA State Parliament Budget submission 2021-22, prioritising South Australia's mental health.

I guess the reason I thought it was timely to draw members' attention to this submission was because it hits on a number of the themes we were talking about today, the overarching theme being a mental health system that works. It has three broad themes—matching capacity to demand, treating people where they live and a just forensic health system—with certain recommendations. I implore all MPs to open the package in their pigeonhole and have a read. With regard to 'Matching capacity to demand', the recommendations are:

- Immediately implement proposals for acute behavioural assessment units, and drug and alcohol clinicians embedded into mainstream mental health services.
- Fund SA Health to implement the proposed new statewide supply and demand workforce modelling process—

which is exactly what we were talking about in private members' motions today—

including development of a dedicated psychiatry workforce strategy, at an estimated cost here of about \$400,000.

- Commit funding for South Australia's mental health system to reach its full 2025 capacity targets.

Under 'Treating people where they live', the recommendations continue:



- Increase the resources and capacity available to regional and rural Community Mental Health Teams and the Rural and Remote Mental Health Service.
- Expand the capacity for CAMHS to provide mental health support for children and adolescents living in regional and rural South Australia and commit to permanent funding for the CAMHS service to the APY Lands.
- Prioritise regional SA for Specialist Dementia Care Program funding.
- Fund and establish an Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Centre, emphasising local and culturally-safe clinical services.

Very quickly, the part that I went to was 'Treating people where they live' because I think it is very relevant for regional South Australia. I will take a couple of quotes:

While South Australia's mental health system needs widespread, systematic reforms, some areas are particularly in need of attention.

Repeated reports and plans have highlighted the crisis in mental health services in rural and remote Australia. Adverse outcomes for mental health, such as rates of suicide and self-harm, are significantly higher in rural and remote areas.

While there is no single measure which can solve this issue, a shortage of psychiatrists working in rural and remote regions is a definite contributing factor. In major cities, there are around 15 psychiatrists per 100,000 people, with that rate dropping to only 1.4 in some remote areas.

In today's *Advertiser*, under the headline 'National-first Urgent Mental Health Care Centre opens in Adelaide CBD', the article reads:

A 'living room'-style mental health crisis treatment service for thousands of patients who would otherwise end up stuck in hospital emergency departments has opened in Adelaide as the first of eight planned across the [region].

The \$14m Urgent Mental Health Care Centre...in Grenfell Street is part of a \$114.5m trial funded by the Federal Government and will give adults access to a range of mental health...services in a calm atmosphere, operating from midday to midnight.

There were more than 25,700 mental health presentations to EDs in Adelaide last year but about half of these did not need to be admitted to hospital—the new centre will focus on care for these cases.

That is the point I am trying to make. There seems to be increased additional service for Adelaide in the CBD, and I do acknowledge that is where the majority of South Australians live, but as a parliament we have to implore the government for a change of focus to regional areas or an increased focus on regional areas. Whilst I commend this initiative for the CBD of Adelaide, I would love to see similar initiatives rolled out in regional South Australia and support for early intervention.

### *Bills*

## **STATUTES AMENDMENT (COMMUNITY AND STRATA TITLES) BILL**

### *Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning and Local Government) (16:07):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Community Titles Act 1996 and the Strata Titles Act 1988. Read a first time.

### *Second Reading*

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning and Local Government) (16:08):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Statutes Amendment (Community and Strata Titles) Bill 2021. The bill will make changes to the Community Titles Act 1996 and the Strata Titles Act 1988, which govern the creation and management of community and strata-titled properties respectively. These changes to the community and strata titles legislation will implement recommendations made in the 81<sup>st</sup> report of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee of this parliament, titled Strata Titles, as well as additional changes requested by interested parties in consultation on the bill and also subsequently in letters received from members of the public and others.

May I say that was a report commenced back in March 2015. I think two members of that committee have now retired and one is about to. I just want to place on the record my appreciation

for that report. It did ultimately report in March 2018 and the report was signed and received by the then Speaker Atkinson later that year. All good things come to those who wait.

Part of the terms of reference of the ERD Committee's inquiry into strata titles regulation was to review the legislation changes that were made to the community and strata titles legislation in 2013. Several of the changes in this bill will build on those changes, in some cases to tighten provisions to ensure they have the intended effect.

Several other changes in the bill are designed to achieve greater consistency between the Community Titles Act and the Strata Titles Act, noting that the Strata Titles Act generally governs strata title developments established before the commencement of the Community Titles Act in 1996. The Community Titles Act in turn governs new community and strata divisions and community corporations established after that time. This move to consistency wherever possible between the two acts will make it easier for body corporate managers who assist with the management of community and strata corporations.

The bill will support a key priority of the government's justice agenda in keeping the law and our policies current and relevant. In summary, this bill will make the following changes to the Community Titles Act and the Strata Titles Act:

1. Amend the Community Titles Act section 78D and Strata Titles Act section 27D to address the practice of re-invoicing by body corporate managers by requiring that a body corporate manager must clearly disclose the amount of any fee or commission being charged to the corporation for arranging a contract with another service provider.

2. Amend the Community Titles Act and Strata Titles Act to make it clear that the caps on fees that apply to corporations also apply to a manager providing information and copy documents on behalf of the corporation to an owner or prospective owner under Strata Titles Act section 41 and Community Titles Act section 139.

3. Amend the Community Titles Act and Strata Titles Act to require the plan of division for a community or strata titles scheme to be supplied to owners or prospective purchasers under the Community Titles Act section 139 and Strata Titles Act section 41 as part of strata and community title property searches.

4. Amend the Strata Titles Act section 33(5) for consistency with the Community Titles Act by adopting the formula for achieving a quorum at general meetings of corporations contained in the Community Titles Act section 83.

5. Amend the Community Titles Act and Strata Titles Act to require the statement of expenditure (or 'sinking fund plan') required to be prepared and reviewed by corporations under the Community Titles Act section 113 and Strata Titles Act section 33A to be supplied to the owners or prospective purchasers under the Community Titles Act section 139 and Strata Titles Act section 41 as part of strata and community property searches.

6. Amend the Community Titles Act and Strata Titles Act to increase the prescribed minimum amount of mandatory public liability insurance that must be held by a corporation under Strata Titles Act section 31(2) and Community Titles Act section 104(2) from \$10 million to \$20 million.

7. Amend the Community Titles Act and Strata Titles Act to ensure that the pamphlet required under Community Titles Act section 78B and Strata Titles Act section 27B explaining owners' rights under a proposed contract with a body corporate manager (including to inspect corporation documents held by the manager, to apply to the Magistrates Court to resolve disputes and the rights to terminate the contract) be required to be supplied to owners rather than merely being made available for inspection prior to a meeting at which it is proposed to vote to appoint the manager.

8. Amend Strata Titles Act section 34 for consistency with Community Titles Act section 84 to provide that an owner in arrears may not vote at strata corporation meetings.

9. Amend the Community Titles Act and Strata Titles Act to address the problem of inquorate corporation meetings by adopting an approach recently introduced in Western Australia,

whereby a quorum may be declared from those present after 30 minutes of the appointed time for a duly convened meeting, avoiding the need to adjourn and reconvene the meeting at a later date.

10. Amend the Strata Titles Act, for consistency with the Community Titles Act, to adopt the Community Titles Act position on which officers can call a general meeting of the corporation.

11. Amend the Strata Titles Act, for consistency with the Community Titles Act, to adopt the Community Titles Act position on who may vote at a corporation meeting if there is more than one owner of a lot and they disagree. Under the Strata Titles Act, currently the first named person on the certificate of title may vote, whereas neither votes under Community Titles Act section 84(7). The Strata Titles Act position is arbitrary and body corporate managers prefer the Community Titles Act position.

12. Amend the Community Titles Act to increase the threshold for mandatory audits for community titled corporations to align the Community Titles Act more closely to the Victorian approach to audits, such that self-managed community corporations will be required to have their accounts audited where contributions exceed \$100,000 per year or there are over 100 lots in the group. Other community titled groups can still resolve to have their accounts audited if they wish after balancing perceived risk against audit costs. The requirements for body corporate manager trust accounts to be audited are unchanged.

13. Amend the Community Titles Act and Strata Titles Act to remove the requirement for corporations to have a common seal, consistent with changes previously made under the Corporations Law.

14. Amend the Community Titles Act to extend the prescribed time for lodgements of amendments to by-laws with the Registrar-General from 14 to 21 days since 14 days has proved difficult to achieve and to create discretionary powers for the Registrar-General to dispense with the requirement for the consent of certain parties to minor prescribed technical amendments of, or to correct clear errors in, a scheme description for a staged development. This will improve efficiency and reduce the significant costs that can arise from the need to obtain consents from a broad range of parties to minor changes to the scheme description.

15. Amend the Community Titles Act to explicitly empower a community corporation to make by-laws to regulate smoking of tobacco and related products on the shared common property and to prevent smoke drift from private lots onto other lots or common property. A community corporation will be able to vote by special resolution to vary its by-laws to regulate smoking in this way. This particular amendment is included at the urging of the Heart Foundation in South Australia, supported by Drug and Alcohol Services SA in SA Health. It follows equivalent reforms in New South Wales in 2016 and also recently passed in Victoria.

I commend the bill to members and I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted into *Hansard* without my reading the same.

Leave granted.

#### EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

##### Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of *Community Titles Act 1996*

4—Amendment of section 12—First by-laws

This clause makes a minor technical amendment.

5—Amendment of section 32—Persons whose consents are required

This clause amends section 32 to give the Registrar-General power to dispense with certain consents required under the section in specified circumstances.

6—Amendment of section 34—By-laws

This clause allows by-laws to regulate or prohibit smoking in the common property or the drifting of tobacco smoke from one lot to another or to the common property.

7—Amendment of section 39—Variation of by-laws

This clause extends the time within which a copy of varied by-laws must be lodged with the Registrar-General from 14 days to 21 days.

8—Amendment of section 73—Execution of documents

This clause removes the requirement for a community corporation to have a common seal and provides for the execution of documents by the corporation without a common seal and the signing of contracts on behalf of the corporation.

9—Amendment of section 78B—Body corporate managers

This clause amends section 78B to require that a pamphlet setting out the role of the body corporate manager and the rights of the community corporation and its members, (including any matters prescribed by regulation) be served on each member of the corporation at least 5 clear days before the date of the meeting at which the corporation is to consider whether or not to enter into a contract with the body corporate manager. The clause also includes an interpretative provision specifying that all fees and commissions payable by the corporation are considered part of the body corporate manager's remuneration.

10—Amendment of section 78D—Offences

This clause creates a new offence for a delegate who charges an undisclosed fee or commission to the corporation in respect of the performance of delegated functions or powers. The penalty is a maximum fine of \$500.

11—Amendment of section 80—Business at first statutory general meeting

This is consequential to clause 8.

12—Amendment of section 83—Procedure at meetings

This clause amends the general meeting quorum requirement to provide that a quorum is determined by dividing the number of persons who are entitled to attend the meeting and exercise the voting power in respect of a lot by 2, disregarding any fraction and adding 1. In addition it is provided that if a quorum is not present after 30 minutes from the meeting's scheduled starting time, the persons entitled to vote who are present are taken to constitute a quorum.

13—Amendment of section 104—Other insurance by community corporation

This clause increases the minimum amount of mandatory public liability insurance from \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000.

14—Amendment of section 113—Statement of expenditure etc

The statement of expenditure presented at the annual general meeting must set out proposed expenditure (other than recurrent expenditure) for the period prescribed by the regulations, which currently cannot exceed 5 years. This clause deletes that 5 year limitation.

15—Amendment of section 138—Audit

This clause reduces the number of community corporations that will be required to have their annual statement of accounts audited.

16—Amendment of section 139—Information to be provided by corporation

This clause adds to the list of material that is available on application by or on behalf of an owner or prospective owner or a registered mortgagee or prospective mortgagee. The section will now also allow for provision of a copy of the plan of community division and a copy of the most recent statement under section 113 (the statement of expenditure). The clause also amends the offence provision in subsection (3) to ensure it can also be committed by a person who is acting on behalf of a community corporation.

17—Amendment of section 155—Service

This clause makes a minor amendment to the service provision which will ensure it also applies to the pamphlet that will be required to be served under the proposed changes to section 78B.

Part 3—Amendment of *Strata Titles Act 1988*

18—Amendment of section 16—Amalgamation of adjacent sites

This is consequential to clause 21.

19—Amendment of section 17—Cancellation

This is consequential to clause 21.

## 20—Amendment of section 18—Name of strata corporation

This is consequential to clause 21.

## 21—Substitution of section 24

This clause provides that a strata corporation may (but is not required to) have a common seal and provides for the execution of documents by the corporation without a common seal and the signing of contracts on behalf of the corporation.

## 22—Amendment of section 27B—Body corporate managers

This clause amends section 27B to require that a pamphlet setting out the role of the body corporate manager and the rights of the strata corporation and its members, (including any matters prescribed by regulation) be served on each member at least 5 clear days before the date of the meeting at which the corporation is to consider whether or not to enter into a contract with the body corporate manager. The clause also includes an interpretative provision specifying that all fees and commissions payable by the corporation are considered part of the body corporate manager's remuneration.

## 23—Amendment of section 27D—Offences

This clause creates a new offence for a delegate who charges an undisclosed fee or commission to the corporation in respect of the performance of delegated functions or powers. The penalty is a maximum fine of \$500.

## 24—Amendment of section 31—Other insurance by strata corporation

This clause increases the minimum amount of mandatory public liability insurance from \$5,000,000 to \$20,000,000.

## 25—Amendment of section 33—Holding of general meetings

This clause allows the presiding officer or treasurer to convene a general meeting (in addition to the existing categories of people who can do so).

The clause also amends the general meeting quorum requirement to match the new provision in section 83 of the *Community Titles Act 1996*.

## 26—Amendment of section 33A—Statement of expenditure etc

The statement of expenditure presented at the annual general meeting must set out proposed expenditure (other than recurrent expenditure) for the period prescribed by the regulations, which currently cannot exceed 5 years. This clause deletes that 5 year limitation.

## 27—Amendment of section 34—Voting at general meetings

This clause amends section 34(3)(b) to provide that, where there are 2 or more unit holders in respect of the same unit and they do not agree on how to exercise a vote, then none of them is entitled to vote.

The clause also amends section 34(7) to make it consistent with section 84(14) of the *Community Titles Act 1996* by ensuring that an owner who is in arrears cannot exercise voting rights.

## 28—Amendment of section 41—Information to be furnished

This clause adds to the list of material that is available on application by or on behalf of an owner or prospective owner or a registered mortgagee or prospective mortgagee. The section will now also allow for provision of a copy of the strata plan and a copy of the most recent statement under section 33A (the statement of expenditure). The clause also amends the offence provision in subsection (2a) to ensure it can also be committed by a person who is acting on behalf of a strata corporation.

## 29—Amendment of section 49—Service

This clause amends the service provision to make it consistent with the provision under section 155 of the *Community Titles Act 1996* (consequentially to the amendment in clause 22).

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Odenwalder.

**CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (CAUSING DEATH BY USE OF MOTOR VEHICLE)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 3 February 2021.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (16:19):** I rise to speak on the Criminal Law Consolidation (Causing Death by Use of Motor Vehicle) Amendment Bill. I indicate that I am the lead speaker for the opposition in this place and also indicate for clarity that I will be supporting the provisions of this

bill within this place. I cannot speak for the actions of my colleagues in the other place. They are reserving their right to have a look at it, as they like to do, but I am happy to support it, at least at this stage.

Members will know that I am passionate about road safety and about public safety generally. When I graduated from the Police Academy in the last century, my intention was to pursue a career as something glamorous like a detective or something perhaps a bit more cerebral, like a prosecutor. But by the time I finished at the police, I had a very strong respect for the road traffic police, the traffic section. They do an extraordinarily hard job. They work very, very hard, and are much maligned and I just want to put on the record my respect for every single person who works for the traffic section of South Australia Police.

**The Hon. L.W.K. Bignell:** I thought you would have been in the mountie division.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** I tried for the dogs, but the former Speaker wanted to get rid of the dogs. I am very proud of the previous government's record on road safety and public safety generally. Some of the reforms and improvements brought in by the previous government include:

- the Graduated Licensing Scheme for young drivers;
- static and mobile driver testing for alcohol and drugs;
- the Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Scheme;
- the introduction of a 50-kilometre default speed limit in urban areas. I am a very strong advocate for that, and, as far as I am concerned, the slower vehicles go in our suburban areas the better;
- higher penalties for a whole range of driving offences, such as escaping police pursuits and those types of offences;
- a network of safety cameras at high-risk intersections;
- point-to-point speed cameras in regional areas to enforce average speed limits over long distances;
- blackspot programs to improve sites with poor crash histories;
- infrastructure safety programs such as shoulder sealing; and
- legislation to impound vehicles and crush the vehicles of hoon drivers.

In earlier terms, the Labor government reduced the legal blood alcohol limit from .08 to .05 and implemented a whole range of other safety measures around the alcohol and drug testing regimes. By contrast, until indeed yesterday, this government's contribution to road safety has been largely to axe the Motor Accident Commission and replace it with a very difficult to understand process. As far as I can see, the police obviously do their job in terms of enforcing road traffic—

**The Hon. V.A. Chapman:** You got rid of the Motor Accident Commission.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** The government has replaced it with a very confusing system whereby South Australia Police and the Department for Transport share the responsibilities previously undertaken by the independent Motor Accident Commission. SAPOL, of course, continue to do their very good work on road safety. The department do whatever they are funded to do in terms of making our roads safer, but in terms of the overall strategic and promotional aspects of road safety, I think that something has given way. We have seen that reflected in the increases in road trauma recently, despite the decrease in traffic movements brought about by the COVID pandemic.

Another thing they have done is belatedly come to the party on motorcycle licensing, but they still stubbornly refuse to meet with the Motorcycle Reference Group and to reconvene the Motorcycle Reference Group to get a holistic approach to motorcycle road safety. The Motorcycle Riders Association and all of the road safety experts, including CASR, the RAA the Ulysses Club and other groups of riders, are calling for a holistic approach to motorcycle road safety, particularly in the face of some horrendous figures we have seen over the last few years.

A third of the deaths we have seen on our roads this year—not to mention the incidental road trauma—have been motorcyclists. The current government's stubborn refusal to meet and reconvene with the Motorcycle Reference Group is a source of confusion, not just to me but to the motorcycle groups.

As I said, we do cautiously welcome the bill, particularly in this place. I will not be hindering its passage. This bill amends section 19A of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, dealing with causing death by the use of a vehicle. Again, thanks to the Rann government, the maximum penalties under this legislation are already very high. For the first basic offence, there is a maximum prison term of 15 years with a 10-year licence disqualification, although of course the court can impose any disqualification period it sees fit.

For any subsequent offences or a first aggravated offence, the maximum penalty increases to life in prison, along with an uncapped licence ban. Then section 5AA lays out the circumstances in which offences may be aggravated. These may include committing the offence while street racing, while trying to escape police, or having a high blood alcohol concentration, among other factors.

Despite these very heavy maximum penalties, a potential gap was identified where alleged offenders may continue to drive while on bail, or while police were considering whether to lay charges. In response to this, the bill proposes to amend the act to impose an immediate loss of licence in two circumstances. The first is where a person is charged with causing death by dangerous driving, which is proposed under new section 19AE of the act. The second is where police reasonably believe that a person has caused death by dangerous driving, and this is proposed under a new section 19AF.

Both these new sections further provide that where a person does not have a licence they are disqualified from gaining or holding a licence. These provisions are balanced, of course, by the ability of a court to end the suspension or the disqualification where exceptional circumstances exist, and that the court order would not result in a substantial risk to public safety.

I note just in closing that there are some stakeholders, including lawyers, who have expressed concern about some of the unintended consequences arising from this bill. Concerns have been raised about circumstances where police suspicion may be misplaced and the person then experiences massive disruption and costs in seeking to have the ban or suspension overturned.

Labor, of course, acknowledges these concerns but, as always in my mind and in the mind of the Labor opposition, public safety is absolutely paramount. There will be questions, of course, for the Attorney in this place, but particularly in the other place where we have a longer time to consider, during this amendment process, but I will not be hindering it in this place.

Some of these questions that we will get to, hopefully sooner rather than later, will cover dealing with situations where a person is subject to an erroneous application of the law, and the ever present question of police training on the use of their discretionary powers. There is a whole book we could read out on what those discretionary powers might mean in terms of the application of this law. For now, of course, Labor is always focused on road safety and focused on public safety in a way that this government has yet to prove itself to be. I commend this bill to the house.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:26):** I rise to make a contribution to the Criminal Law Consolidation (Causing Death by Use of Motor Vehicle) Amendment Bill. It is a very, very serious subject. I have been aware over the years in my electorate of some terrible outcomes with respect to people who have been killed in a motor vehicle accident. That is a terrible tragedy, an absolute tragedy, and then there is the other side of it: how do we deal with the offender at the time?

What I can say is that it is an absolute tragedy that someone loses their life but there is also another situation going on with the alleged offender as well. Notwithstanding that, we need to make sure that people can live their lives in the safest way possible and put the appropriate legislative framework in place so that we get the right outcomes across the community.

The background to this bill is that there was a strong media campaign in the local papers and the Road to Justice campaign, which called for a mandatory 10-year minimum term for the offence of aggravated causing death by dangerous driving, an end to suspended sentences for death by dangerous driving with penalties to be served either in custody or in home detention, and also an end to the 93 per cent sentencing discount—created by plea-bargaining—for charges of death by dangerous driving down to aggravated driving without due care.

Also called for was a minimum five-year licence disqualification on top of the mandatory 10-year disqualification for each life taken in a crash. There was also a call for alleged killers to be banned from the roads while on bail, and also a call for the employment of specialist victim support officers to assist families, particularly children, of people killed in road crashes during the court process.

The primary death by dangerous driving offence is found in section 19A(1) of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 (CLCA), which relates to the unlawful killing of another person as a result of culpable, reckless or negligent driving. The maximum penalty for a first offence is imprisonment for 15 years and mandatory licence disqualification for at least 10 years. The maximum penalty for a first offence, which is an aggravated offence, or for a subsequent offence is imprisonment for life and mandatory licence disqualification for at least 10 years.

In some circumstances, a lesser charge may be proceeded with, such as section 45(1) of the Road Traffic Act 1961, which provides that it is an offence to drive without due care or attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons using the road. Causing death is an aggravating factor and carries a maximum penalty of imprisonment for 12 months and mandatory licence disqualification of not less than six months.

In respect of the proposal around mandatory minimum sentencing, it is deemed that it is not appropriate for this offence. Mandatory sentences fail to take into account all the circumstances of the offence and the severity of the offending. There is a difference between inattentive driving and driving recklessly at speed while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Similarly, we do not support the proposal to remove the ability of the court to impose suspended sentences for death by dangerous driving.

A court may only suspend a sentence of imprisonment pursuant to section 96(1) of the Sentencing Act 2017 if it thinks that good reasons exist for doing so. The question of whether 'good reasons' exist involves a weighing of competing factors such as the objective seriousness of the offending, the personal circumstances of the defendant (including any criminal antecedents), the defendant's prospects for rehabilitation and the need for general and personal deterrence. The primary purpose of sentencing is the protection of the community. In the last five years, only seven of 44 defendants had suspended sentences imposed. In certain circumstances, the court must in any event be persuaded that exceptional circumstances exist for that sentence to be suspended.

The media campaign, the Road to Justice campaign, has called for an end to the 93 per cent sentencing discount that they consider arises when a death by dangerous driving as an offence is plea-bargained down to an offence of aggravated driving without due care. We believe that this statement does not reflect the fact that plea-bargaining includes multiple considerations, not least being whether the more serious charge is supported by the evidence that is presented and whether or not it is in the best interests of victims and their families to be subjected to a drawn-out and traumatic court process that may not result in a conviction. Indeed, the Director of Public Prosecutions wrote to the media regarding this.

Guideline 2 from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions' statement of prosecution policies specifies the relevant factors: whether the sentence is likely to be imposed for the negotiated charges would be appropriate for the criminal conduct involved, the desirability of a prompt and certain resolution, the defendant's criminal history, the strength of the prosecution case and the views of investigating police and victims. South Australia already has a significantly longer period of mandatory licence disqualification—10 years—than other jurisdictions. In New South Wales, a licence is disqualified for three years for a first offence; in Victoria and Western Australia, the minimum period is two years; and for Queensland it is for 12 months.

We do not consider it necessary as a government to further invest in specialist victim support officers. The Attorney-General's Department already provides the following supports to persons affected by road trauma, including funding to the Road Trauma Support Team since 2005, funding to Relationships Australia South Australia to provide trauma-informed therapeutic counselling to victims of crime, and the Witness Assistance Scheme in the ODPP provides liaison and support to both victims and witnesses in complex prosecutions throughout the court process.



Also, the Commissioner for Victims' Rights provides ongoing support to victims through the criminal justice process, and persons who are affected by road trauma can access general legal advice via the Legal Services Commission and community legal centres, which are funded by the Attorney-General's Department under the National Legal Assistance Partnership 2020-25.

The media campaign probably did not give a great overview of the knowledge and awareness of the services that are currently available, so the Attorney-General's Department will certainly do more to work with the Commissioner for Victims' Rights to further promote the Road Trauma Support Team and other services that are currently available to victims of road trauma.

This bill inserts new section 19AE in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act to impose an immediate licence suspension or disqualification when a person is charged with causing death by dangerous driving. This will ensure that all offenders who are charged with this offence are prevented from driving, not only those who are arrested. Under section 19AE(4), a court may lift the suspension or disqualification if satisfied, on the basis of evidence given on oath on behalf of the person, that the suspension or disqualification would result in severe and unusual hardship to the person, or a dependant of that person, and the person does not pose a substantial risk to other members of the public.

The bill also inserts new section 19AF in the CLC Act. Section 19AF provides that a police officer who reasonably believes a person has committed an offence against section 19A(1) may give the person a notice immediately suspending their licence or disqualifying them from holding or obtaining a driver's licence. This provision will ensure that police are empowered to protect road users immediately after an accident causing death takes place and where a charge is not issued immediately. This may be appropriate where further evidence is required in respect of the circumstances and cause of the accident before a charge is issued.

In cases where a person is arrested and immediately charged with an offence of causing death by dangerous driving, bail authorities already have the power to ensure that a person not drive a motor vehicle as part of the conditions of a bail agreement. There is a presumption against granting bail in relation to a person charged with an offence under section 19A(1) if that offence was committed in the course of attempting to escape police pursuit. This means that, unless the applicant can show the existence of special circumstances justifying their release on bail, they will be remanded in custody pending the outcome of those charges.

This shows that we as a government are taking serious action against people who are found to have caused death by dangerous driving. As someone who does around 60,000 kilometres a year, I witness lots of different driving habits and lots of different roads. In saying that, I am a firm fan of our campaign to bring the initial eight highways, but hopefully a lot more than eight, across South Australia back to the standards of 110 km/h.

Just digressing slightly from the direct impact of this bill, it has been hard to convince communities when there are roads like the Browns Well Highway and the Ngarkat Highway. Basically, Pinnaroo is in the middle. It goes through to Loxton one way and down to Bordertown in the member for MacKillop's area in the other. Yes, those narrow roads used to be able to be travelled on up to 110 km/h. What has changed? Obviously, the guidelines around what roads can be rated at 110 km/h.

I am very proud to be part of a government that is investing about \$72 million into those eight roads. I would like to put on the record that, in the case of the Browns Well and Ngarkat highways, the two roads between Loxton and Bordertown with Pinnaroo in the middle, they are taking about \$42 million of that because there is a linear length of 200 kilometres of shoulder sealing being done. Thankfully, they found that nasty little piece about 20 kilometres towards Loxton, out Pinnaroo, so we found \$5 million extra to invest. I am very pleased that we as a government have found that extra \$5 million. I am told that it is coming together very well.

At a public meeting on a whole range of events before the last election that Pinnaroo, which was very well attended by locals, I managed to talk to some people about how it ever got constructed over this crab-hole country, this amount of road several kilometres long outside of Pinnaroo. They said it just was not built right when it was put there in the sixties, I think, under contract. So thankfully an age-old problem will be fixed.

I have mentioned in this house before that some ambulance officers from Pinnaroo said, 'Right, we are going to take you for a ride out in the ambulance and see how you go as the local member on a rush through towards Loxton in an ambulance.' What they told me afterwards was that usually if they have someone who needs an emergency hip operation or something, and they are in the ambulance, they back off to about 60 km/h. But, no, they strapped me in tight, put me in the ambulance, a pseudo patient, and they did not back off from 100 km/h. Yes, the suspension was tested, but that was the whole plan to show me what was going on. I was well aware of that because I had driven over it multiple times, but it is pleasing to see those roads being taken up to speed.

As life goes on, we are going to have better outcomes in the future. I will forever campaign, as long as I am in here, to duplicate the Dukes Highway all the way to the border. Work has not been done on the Dukes Highway for the last 40 years, since Swanport Bridge was opened in 1979. Even back then, I was surprised, when I drove up to it as a young bloke at 17, that it was a single-lane bridge each way. That is all part of the road work safety that is going on.

We must have this work going in light of road trains and B-doubles, B-triples, B-quads and AB-doubles all accessing a lot of these roads in the freight task. People say we have all these large trucks on the road, and they are still not matching some of the combinations, I do not think. They have been carrying a 100-tonne weights on top of their truck weights in Western Australia for many years now. That all has to be managed.

As far as road safety is concerned, those big trucks—road trains, B-triples, B-quads and AB-doubles, which are a semitrailer and a B-double on the back—cannot go down the freeway and come out at Glen Osmond, which is a good thing for the freight task. It is efficient for truck operators to take those extra kilometres, head out around Murray Bridge and out towards Halfway House Road, and go around on the Sturt Highway back into Adelaide through the top.

We need to do what we can to keep people safe on our roads in general. Obviously we have strict drink-driving laws, and I have seen the direct effect of someone I know well who did cause death by dangerous driving. It was a real tragedy. Someone innocent was killed through no fault of their own, just by being where they were they were taken out. It is a terrible thing for the family of the person who was killed—a terrible thing.

We must keep educating people that if it is not safe to drive then do not drive. I stress that to my boys. When they are driving somewhere I usually let them take my ute, and I say, 'Throw your swag in the back, and where you have your first beer is where you sleep.' That is the rule of dad, especially on P-plates, which are for three years now, I think. It has worked so far, and my son tells me he does not drive—there is only one driving; the other one is on learners, so he does not drive—when he has had a beer.

We need to keep up that education process because the best thing in terms of working against death by dangerous driving is for it not to happen at all. The more we can do then the more we are literally saving lives and saving the grief of someone who has caused death by dangerous driving—which is also another issue to be dealt with here, and rightly so. It needs to be dealt with in a hard manner and a just manner by the courts. I commend the bill.

**Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (16:46):** Today I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the Criminal Law Consolidation (Causing Death by Use of Motor Vehicle) Amendment Bill. Road safety is a vitally important issue for all road users in our state, and we have a system of education and awareness-building to support the best efforts of our road users to be the best and most responsible users they can be. Unfortunately, we also have road users who make the choice, on occasion, to drive in a dangerous and reckless manner, and this can have devastating consequences for other road users, their families and loved ones.

All deaths on our roads are tragic, but deaths on our roads due to dangerous and reckless driving are unspeakably hard to deal with, and we need to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to ensure that drivers involved in these incidents are not allowed to continue to drive. This bill introduces measures to impose an immediate ban on driving for those who unlawfully kill another as a result of dangerous driving.

The changes brought by this bill address a current but limited shortcoming of our statutory framework. They address the concerns of families impacted by fatalities who have raised concerns

about the potential for a dangerous driver who has caused a fatality to be able to continue to stay on the road. These changes will ensure that those who are charged with dangerous driving, regardless of whether they are arrested or not, will automatically have their licence suspended or be disqualified.

Some of the strong changes we have put in include a mandatory 10-year minimum term for the offence of aggravated causing death by dangerous driving. Another one is the end of suspended sentences for death by dangerous driving, with penalties to be served either in custody or home detention, and an end to the 93 per cent sentencing discount created by plea-bargaining charges of death by dangerous changing to aggravated driving without due care.

Another one is a minimum five-year licence disqualification on top of the mandatory 10-year disqualification for each life taken in a crash. Alleged killers are to be banned from the roads while on bail, and another one is the employment of specialist victim support officers to assist families, particularly with children, of people killed in road crashes during court processes.

It is important to describe what has gone on over the last 10 or 20 years with our road laws, where we have gone since I first started driving, and the things that have taken place. First of all, through the nineties I was an apprentice down at Port Adelaide and driving across Adelaide. The first cause of it was what we call ram raids. We saw stolen vehicles being used to drive into shopfronts. They would take out the possessions, steal them and run off in another vehicle if the first vehicle was incapable of driving any further. There would be another vehicle ready to go.

The instant solution to that at the time was to put bollards in front of these shops to protect them from being ram raided. That was a new frontier of development and ingenuity to save people's possessions, businesses and the like. The other one that comes into play, which we have seen recently in probably the last five or 10 years, is when vehicles are used in almost terrorist-like activity. In malls and walking places, we now see large cement bollards being put in place because of vehicles that could be stolen or not even owned by the occupants being used to mow down innocent victims.

The reason I bring this up is that, as tragic and serious as these offences are, there is not much difference between someone who deliberately goes out, steals a vehicle and acts in a terrorist way, which we have perhaps seen overseas more than in Australia, and a person who is driving absolutely recklessly. One example I give was in Melbourne. A vehicle was stolen in the city streets in the centre of Melbourne. He was hoon driving, trying to take out victims, driving down footpaths and these sorts of things.

Once a driver gets to this sort of situation and uses a vehicle in that manner, there really is a question of how you control and maintain law and order and achieve what I think is the ultimate goal of government: to protect the innocent and those who are hardworking, obliging and trying to do their absolute best to fulfil and meet society's requirements and needs. I remember that some victims of these sorts of accidents were nurses and perhaps even doctors. They were hit and mowed down. I think it was in London. We see vehicles, stolen trucks and those sorts of things in such incidents.

It causes horrific turmoil in society. You can be going about your daily business, going to work, even just getting some exercise near the roads, and someone in a vehicle is driving in a reckless and dangerous way and perhaps in a deliberate way, as in some of these nasty terrorist-type incidents. Ultimately, there is no difference.

If you are in charge of a vehicle and you are totally intoxicated, or perhaps you have even lost your licence previously for other due reckless issues, one then has to question why you should be allowed to go out, take the reins of a vehicle again and then be caught driving in a manner that puts other people's lives at risk.

It is totally unacceptable, and I think society is looking for strong leadership and strong consequences. I think this is where this bill is heading, trying to save the innocent from people who perhaps have an irresponsible outlook on life. I refer to what my counterpart from Hammond just said. Back in the eighties, seventies and earlier, one of the goals of leaving school—perhaps you had not even done year 12 but had gone out to get a trade—was to own your first car. It was almost like a rite of licence to life. A lot of times, these cars were described as being to attract the opposite sex. They were appealing.

**Mr Pederick:** What did you drive?

**Mr McBRIDE:** I did not get the choice of V8 cars with multiple exhaust systems to impress anyone, I can assure you, but there were a lot of males who obviously opted for those sorts of antics. We do not see it today as much as we used to because I think society is trying to teach that there is more to life than just getting your car, mobility and success in life. It all comes back to a culture of respect that roads and cars are a form of transport, and the form of transport is to take people from A to B in a safe and meaningful manner.

In today's terms it is quite obvious that, with the demands of financial pressures, people's goals and aspirations have changed. Prior to COVID, an 18 year old or 19 year old coming out of year 12 had ambitions of travelling overseas for a year off, what they call a gap year. They may not even own a car these days, I would imagine, and probably do not even care for it when they leave school. The first thing is to get a plane ticket and be a backpacker around Europe. I think these goals and changes in life around what a vehicle actually is have done a full circle to really respecting the use of transport and the need for transport.

When we see in the news at times a car stolen by teenagers, sometimes even under the age of 16, recklessly driving throughout the local streets of Adelaide streets and then, for all the wrong reasons, causing an accident and causing the death of an innocent—perhaps another passing vehicle or even just people walking on the street—it really puts a shiver up the spine of the public in general.

Again, the public looks to our police force, our law enforcers, and the government to have strong laws in place to do all we can to deter the young and perhaps reckless. Perhaps they are irresponsible or perhaps naive. Perhaps they are disenfranchised in some way or perhaps they have had a tough life. This is not an answer or a means to an end.

These sorts of strong deterrents of gaol term and detention are probably the only means to stop and try to harness these wayward people who think that the vehicle is some sort of thrill toy, or death toy for those on an ambition to cause maximum havoc. Perhaps some people even use them as a release valve for all their tension and difficulties in life. I hope these sorts of laws we are putting in place actually have the outcome that is intended.

I fear and I hope it does not turn out that we catch innocent people who are perhaps in a hurry to get somewhere, do not abide by the speed limit and get done for the wrong reasons. This is really to do with those who are well and truly outside the law. I hope there is some discretion or it is quite obvious to police and law enforcers that there is a clear divide, a black and white line, between someone who is actually driving in this really reckless manner to cause death by dangerous driving and what I would call busy people not showing as much due care to the speed limit as they sometimes should and in a hurry to get from A to B, as some of us have been caught out sometimes doing.

Another issue is education, as the member for Hammond alluded to. Our L-plate and P-plate provisional licence system is there to educate our young drivers coming through the system of the privilege and responsibility it is to have a licence and the due care required when you have that licence to do everything to protect yourself as well as others on the road.

He alluded to the consumption of alcohol and the great difficulty that he and I know, because we do not have public transport out in the country, of how important it is that our young and those who are on their Ps and Ls, where zero alcohol is the limit, know that other options have to be found once alcohol has been consumed. That individual driving home is no longer an option and other options are found.

This is one of the things that we try to educate. I know through the football clubs and sporting clubs that most nights, when we have the best player announcements after all that has gone on during the day's events, there is often a reminder to everyone in those football and netball clubs to look out for one another, to back each other up, and to make sure that if you see someone who is drinking that they are offered a ride home and that there is an alternative to them getting in their own car, driving illegally and perhaps causing themselves or anyone else injury or death.

Another thing I think is really important around this whole scenario of licences, protecting life and the strengthening of these laws we are looking at here today is defensive driving. It is one of the things I think there is still an opportunity for out there in society today. Our cars are so modern, with features like Bluetooth. Air conditioning was a privilege in cars back in the eighties when I first bought

my car. Everything on the steering wheel is remote controlled. I still think that we can be distracted too easily in our vehicles.

Defensive driving is ensuring that when you are going to do anything in your car—that can be anything from grabbing a drink to setting the air conditioning to a warmer or cooler temperature—you do it in the right place and that you do not cause any accident to anyone else. There is nothing worse than being distracted picking up a drink or changing the air conditioner or music when you have a 40-tonne B-double coming towards you. It is really not highlighted that there is no point sitting on the middle dividing line of any road as a car is coming towards you because if you both do it you are both going to collide. However, as obvious as this sounds, it is not highlighted in the system.

I was taught in the country on dirt roads, which have a maximum speed limit of 100 km/h (I think all dirt roads do), that you always go over to the left-hand side of the road just in case someone else who is coming on the other side over a blind hill is in the middle of the road. You are always in this defensive driving mode and trying to outsmart the other driver, who may not be thinking no-one is coming around that blind corner or blind bend.

I think those sorts of options and those sorts of lessons need to be highlighted on a yearly basis as a reminder to all road users that we are looking out for each other and that we want to be responsible. We all want to be able to get from A to B safely without causing any injury or death to ourselves so that the next day comes as easy as that day.

It is interesting that hoon driving might be caught up by these tougher, stronger laws, and we have car crushing now. Hoon driving is probably a hangover of the sixties, seventies and eighties, when the car and the keys were some sort of licence to life. It is a prefabricated thought process of making it when you had a V8 car.

These days, racing car tracks and airstrips are sometimes used as a playground for cars in an authorised manner and are monitored and matched with law enforcers. Those sorts of options were not around back in the eighties and nineties that I remember. They are today, and I hope that is where people—

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** You're too young to remember the eighties and nineties.

**Mr McBRIDE:** As you might be. I think that the changed culture towards cars has been a good change. Another thing that I think is sad about our road laws today is that our cars have never been as safe as they are today. In the seventies, our speed limit was 70 miles an hour before we went to metric, and 70 miles an hour is faster than 110 km/h. These cars were the Holden Kingswoods of the day.

If we look at modern technology today, we have air bags, automatic braking systems and warning systems in cars, yet we are going slower than ever and all our roads are slower. I wonder why we have not given the opportunity to the public to show us that they are capable of doing a speed limit of 130 km/h as an option and why those options are not considered as a privilege because the public can drive to those speeds without causing accidents and the roads are safe enough to endure those speeds.

Those are the sorts of options I think we should be looking at because I can tell you that they are happening in other places around the world. In fact, they used to happen in the Northern Territory, where there were roads without a speed limit at all. In fact, I think when they brought the speed limit in on one of these roads the crash rate or the incidents went up because people were going to sleep at the wheel.

There are some options there that I think are worth considering. We should be participating in responsible driving, and we want good driving outcomes. We also need to reward our population when they do the right thing but obviously catch those who do not do the right thing. I will sum up by saying that I think tougher laws in these areas will be a good thing. I hope that they are not abused. I hope that society recognises this is done for the protection of society. I commend the provisions of the bill to the house.

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services) (17:03):** I also rise to speak to the bill. As we have been told, the primary death by dangerous driving offence is found in section 19A of the Criminal Law Consolidation

Act 1935 (CLCA), which relates to the unlawful killing of another person as a result of culpable, reckless or negligent driving.

The maximum penalty for a first offence is imprisonment for 15 years and mandatory licence disqualification for at least 10 years. The maximum penalty for a first offence which is an aggravated offence, or for a subsequent offence, is imprisonment for life and mandatory licence disqualification for at least 10 years.

In some instances, a lesser charge may be proceeded with, such as section 45(1) of the Road Traffic Act 1961, which provides that it is an offence to drive without due care or attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons using the road. Causing death is an aggravating factor and carries a maximum penalty of imprisonment for 12 months and mandatory licence disqualification of not less than six months.

These will be the toughest or equal toughest of these sorts of penalties in the country. However, after what has been a thorough examination of the law, we have identified a gap that needs to be fixed to continue to improve safety on our roads.

This bill imposes an immediate licence suspension or disqualification when a person is charged with causing death by dangerous driving. This will ensure that all offenders who are charged with this offence are prevented from driving, not only those who are arrested or those who are bailed and may continue to keep driving until they are found guilty. In other circumstances at the extreme end, police may issue an instant on-the-spot licence disqualification. Our government is confident that these changes are certainly the right response to make our roads safer.

We have zero tolerance for hoon drivers when they do the wrong thing. They put themselves and other road users at risk with what is reckless, dangerous, stupid and selfish behaviour. Irresponsible behaviour certainly has no place on our roads, and I urge all road users to think about their choices behind the wheel. I also encourage anyone who witnesses dangerous driving or riding to report it to South Australia Police.

We have delivered on our 2018 election promise to establish what is a very good Traffic Watch app, which provides another means for people to report hoon driving, boosting the capability of SAPOL to respond. SAPOL also undertake a range of operations and activities to stamp out dangerous behaviour. Recently, Operation Rubber was an enormous success in targeting hoon trail bike riders in Adelaide's northern suburbs.

I know the member for King has been a huge advocate for cracking down on this type of behaviour in her community, so I am pleased to share how successful Operation Rubber was. The operation ran from 13 November to 19 December last year and saw 10 people arrested, eight people reported, three vehicles impounded, 40 vehicles issued with defect notices and 27 expiation notices issued. It is very clear that police will certainly not tolerate reckless, dangerous and selfish behaviour on our roads.

As a government, we are ensuring that SAPOL has the tools and the resources it needs to keep our community safe. I will also reiterate that since coming into government we have invested more than \$170 million in additional funding for SAPOL, as well as the first ever direct funding for Crime Stoppers from a South Australian government. Do not forget, the public are able to report these alleged crimes if they see them. They can call Crime Stoppers and also report those situations. There is no doubt this government is certainly doing what it can to stamp out hoon and dangerous driving and to make sure we keep South Australians safe on the road.

This bill certainly strengthens our laws so that dangerous road users are prevented from causing further harm. I believe it will also further enhance the preventative effect of our strong laws. Anybody who thinks they can do as they please on our roads needs to be aware of the very serious consequences of their actions. They will be prevented from driving on our roads and they will be brought before the courts, and I am confident that if they do the wrong thing they will face some of the toughest penalties in Australia. I commend the Attorney-General for bringing this bill forward and I commend the bill to the house.

**Dr HARVEY (Newland) (17:08):** I rise today to make a contribution to the Criminal Law Consolidation (Causing Death by Use of Motor Vehicle) Amendment Bill 2021 debate. Driving should

be an experience that is pleasant at best and innocuous at worst. Being transported from one place to another in the comfort and safety of a car is something that to many is a right.

It is with great sadness that, in certain circumstances, when a driver goes behind the wheel and drives, be it due to recklessness, inebriation due to the consumption of drugs or alcohol, or perhaps inattentiveness, a person dies. It is, of course, a serious offence. It brings with it unexplainable sorrow and grief, with victim's families and friends asking themselves about why it was their loved one was taken so abruptly, so devastatingly.

I understand the sentiments of the Road to Justice campaign. It is a campaign that seeks to bring justice into a situation where a victim was unjustly taken away by the actions of a selfish or negligent individual. Also, I think what really drives some of the strongest emotions from the broader community in these tragedies is that it really could happen to anyone and in an instant, at any time, the lives of those people are changed forever.

Any death on the road due to dangerous driving is a death too many. I fear, though, that while campaigns, such as Road to Justice, are well intentioned they do not actually offer solutions that accurately reflect the current law, and that is why I rise to speak in favour of this bill.

Currently, section 19A(1) of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 outlines the offence of primary death by dangerous driving. The unlawful killing under this section must have been as a result of culpable, reckless or negligent driving. The maximum penalty for a first offence is imprisonment for 15 years and a mandatory licence disqualification for at least 10 years. The penalty for an aggravated offence or a subsequent offence is a maximum of imprisonment for life and mandatory licence disqualification for at least 10 years.

I must note that in some circumstances a lesser charge can be proceeded with, such as section 45(1) of the Road Traffic Act, which provides that it is an offence to drive without due care or attention without reasonable consideration for other persons using the road. Causing death is an aggravating factor and carries a maximum penalty of imprisonment for 12 months and mandatory licence disqualification for not less than six months. With that said, I would like to speak to some of my objections to a number of proposals in the campaign.

Firstly, if the law were to be changed to allow for mandatory sentences it would fail to take into account all circumstances of the offence and the severity of the offending. In other words, it does not allow for the assessment of an offence that could have been due to inattentive driving—for example, screaming kids in the back of the car—as opposed to an offence due to driving recklessly while having consumed alcohol or drugs shortly before.

Mandatory sentencing has its role in some offences that are straightforward that do not require a certain type of assessing, but in circumstances of a death due to dangerous driving it is my opinion that it is far too nuanced to simply apply a sentence without regard to anything else.

Another proposal that has been put forward is the abolition of the 93 per cent sentencing discount, which is purported to occur when a plea is bargained down to an offence of aggravated driving without due care. I fear that this does not reflect the complexities of the current plea-bargaining system, in particular about whether there is enough evidence for a more serious charge, or perhaps the consideration of the interests of victims and families to be subjected to drawn out legal procedures that would invariably traumatise and therefore be harmful to their wellbeing.

The bill before the house in my opinion tackles the scourge of death by dangerous driving but also is realistic about the circumstances that are attached to such offences, things that I have already noted. The immediate suspension or disqualification when a person is charged with this offence, as outlined in section 19AE, ensures that, even though the accused will have their day in court and may be found guilty or acquitted, more people cannot be harmed or injured as a result of the accused's driving.

The further authority given to police officers who have a reasonable belief that a person has committed an offence against section 19A(1) may give the person a notice immediately suspending their licence or disqualifying them from holding or obtaining a driver's licence.

To members who may be wary of giving further authority to the police, or imposing an order to disqualify someone from driving without an actual conviction next to their name, I would remind the house that there are already provisions for authorities to order a person not drive a vehicle as

part of bail conditions imposed. This would therefore be a variance of that already existing practice, reflecting it to better suit the offence in question.

It is important that we get this right. Deaths by dangerous driving are horrid occurrences, and if this bill can prevent any more deaths we would know that we have done our jobs in this place. We cannot fail victims, victims' families, victims' friends, and indeed victims themselves, who rely upon us to ensure that the law can protect them. I do believe that this bill can help in bringing justice. It is a step in the right direction, and I commend the Attorney-General for her work in this area. I commend this bill to the house.

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning and Local Government) (17:14):** I welcome the contributions of members who have spoken on this bill and the indication of the opposition of their support thereof, although it is qualified with the possibility of amendments in another place.

*The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** Sorry?

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** Or here.

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** He has already said not here. If you were listening, member for West Torrens, he has already indicated that will not be the case. I am happy to accept the member's indication. In any event, I would seek that the bill be read a second time.

Bill read a second time.

*Committee Stage*

In committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** I will put the member for West Torrens' mind to rest. I will not be moving any amendments during this committee stage, and we will get through this as quickly as possible. I do have a couple of questions on clause 2. Firstly, is there a rough estimate of the commencement date in the Attorney's mind?

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** I do not have an estimated date at this stage. I indicate that court rules will need to be made. For the member's information, the Chief Magistrate put an extensive submission in relation to the matters of the draft bill. All of her suggested amendments have been incorporated, but there is quite a significant role in relation to the court's handling of these matters.

In the circumstance where court rules need to be made, I cannot impose any time frame on the courts to do that, but obviously we would have the usual regulation. I am expecting that there would need to be some regulations changed in respect of the Department for Transport submission. Rules and regulations will need to be drafted to go with this, and/or amendments to our current regulations. I would hope that this could be done as soon as possible.

When an area of weakness in any legislation is identified and it relates not necessarily to the sentencing but in relation, for example, to the capacity to be able to clamp and/or issue on-the-spot licence suspensions, we would like these things to be operational as soon as possible. I cannot anticipate that there will be any great complexity with these amendments, in that some very novel regulatory framework will be needed, but there is a process to be undertaken.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** The Attorney answered my second question, helpfully, so I will move on.

Clause passed.

Clause 3 passed.

Clause 4.



**Mr ODENWALDER:** Clauses 4 and 5 are very similar, and some of the questions that arise here may also relate to clause 5, so if you have anything to add that is different about clause 5 I would appreciate it. I know that the Attorney's office and the department have provided some written answers to some of the questions after the briefing last week, but it might be of value to put some of these things on the public record. You would have already traversed these already. When the bill refers to appealing to a court to overturn the immediate loss of licence, which court exactly will accept the application, what are the expected costs and who will bear those costs?

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** While I am getting the particulars of that so it can be placed on the record, I indicate that there is no clause 5 for the benefit of the member so if you do not have the same bill as we have—

**The CHAIR:** You are quite right, Attorney: there is no clause 5, but clause 4 is very long.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** Clause 4 is essentially in two parts that are very similar, I should say. I am sorry.

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** The bill does not specify in which court the application must be made, as the process would differ depending on the circumstances. It is expected that prior to committal for trial or sentence, a person would generally apply in the Magistrates Court, and after the matter is committed for trial or sentence in the District Court the person would generally apply to the District Court. This detail would usually be left for the court rules.

There are existing court rules with respect to where a person should apply for bail, and similar rules will be expected to provide guidance as to where they should apply to lift suspension or disqualification. For example, a person needs permission to apply for bail in the Magistrates Court if the application relates to charges laid in other courts or where the defendant has been committed for trial or sentence in a higher court.

Similarly, permission is required to apply for bail in the District Court where the information is laid in the Supreme Court, or where it is laid in the Magistrates Court and the defendant has not been committed for trial or sentence in the District Court. The member might recall that not that long ago we changed the law to enable other courts to hear bail applications to save the need to always have to return to the original court. So it depends on where those applications are made as to where there might be some review.

The Courts Administration Authority has confirmed the matter would be heard in the criminal jurisdiction. I think that would be well known to the member. Will there be an application fee? The Courts Administration Authority has confirmed the application will not attract a fee and there will be no charge for similar applications to lift a suspension or disqualification, for example, under section 47IAB of the Road Traffic Act 1961.

Finally, can a hearing under 19AE(6) or section 19AF(6) create an application for party to party costs? I think that was your question. I am advised that costs are not awarded in criminal matters in the higher courts. The Criminal Procedure Act 1921 empowers the Magistrates Court to award such costs in criminal matters as it thinks fit, subject to some exceptions. Section 189B provides that costs will not be awarded against a party to proceedings for a major indictable offence unless the court is satisfied the court has unreasonably obstructed the proceedings. I hope that covers the matter.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** Thank you, Attorney. It has more than covered it. My second question on this clause is: are police able to revoke an immediate loss of licence that is applied in some sort of error of whatever sort—some kind of administrative mistake or error? Can police revoke the immediate loss of licence without a bailing authority or without a court, and by what process can they do that?

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** In short, no. I think there has been some recent case law on that, or there has been some interpretation on that in any event. However, once the commissioner has determined that the matter is not to proceed, it automatically lifts. Let's say there was some error in the application of this licence suspension—

*Mr Odenwalder interjecting:*

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** Yes, the wrong name, the wrong car, the wrong something, in a sense of the circumstances. The simple way of remedying that would be not to proceed with the

charge, so then it would automatically lapse. There would not need to be some cumbersome process to go through: it would all be automatic.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** To clarify, if I could have a supplementary because it is a long clause.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, so this is clarification.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** There is no ability for a police officer on a roadside, for instance, at that immediate loss point, to realise the mistake and reverse that decision? It has to go through the charging process and then the police decide not to proceed with that charge; is that what you are saying?

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** Of course, you can decide not to charge on the roadside, if you are using that example—that is, it has become clear that in fact there has been an error.

**Mr Odenwalder:** The hand-held does not work.

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** Correct.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** My next question is: what additional training or policy changes will be required where police may impose significant restrictions on a person based on suspicion and nothing more? How will this minimise the chance of two almost identical cases being handled differently?

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** I am advised that the police are well versed in this field. They may have training as part of their normal training. This is not a new concept. It is applicable in other laws. It is not a new concept that they need to learn to deal with if there is a reasonable suspicion. It is not anticipated that there needs to be further training, bearing in mind that we are talking about those who are working in the road traffic division and they should be familiar with it.

I am sure if there is any deficiency we will seek advice on it, but to date we have not received any indication. I received a submission from the police commissioner in relation to this legislation supporting the same. There is nothing in the submission that raises any concern about that.

**The CHAIR:** Final question on clause 4.

**Mr ODENWALDER:** Thank you, sir, for your indulgence. Can you just outline, Attorney, where, either in this act or other acts, police have similar discretionary powers with regard to automatic disqualification or suspension? Just to clarify, it is regarding the immediate loss or suspension of licence without regard to a bailing authority or a court.

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN:** Are there any circumstances in which a licence can be disqualified before conviction? Yes, under section 47IAA police are empowered to impose an immediate licence disqualification or suspension for certain drink-driving offences. The court can lift the suspension if there is a reasonable prospect the person will be acquitted or prosecution authorities have not laid a charge within a reasonable time frame. That addresses the matter we previously discussed.

Under section 45B, police may also impose licence disqualification or suspension if giving the person an expiation notice for excessive speed. A disqualification suspension is cancelled if a person elects to be prosecuted.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. V.A. CHAPMAN (Bragg—Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Planning and Local Government) (17:30):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Again, I acknowledge all speakers and thank those who have contributed to the development of this bill.

Bill read a third time and passed.

At 17:31 the house adjourned until Thursday 4 March 2021 at 11:00.

*Answers to Questions***AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT**

In reply to **Ms HILDYARD (Reynell)** (3 February 2021).

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON (Adelaide—Minister for Child Protection):** I have been advised:

For the final quarter of the 2019-20 financial year (1 April to 30 June 2020), non-government organisations (NGO) contracted to provide family-based care were required to report against a range of carer-related key performance indicators (KPIs).

For NGO agreements of this type, 89 per cent were achieved to at least a 95 per cent compliance level.

COVID-19 impacted performance against some KPIs for this reporting period.