

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

### Wednesday, 7 September 2022

The **SPEAKER (Hon. D.R. Cregan)** took the chair at 10:32.

The **SPEAKER**: Honourable members, we acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of this country throughout Australia and their connection to land and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to elders both past and present.

The **SPEAKER** read prayers.

#### *Bills*

### CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS REDUCTION (TARGETS) AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 6 July 2022.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:33)**: I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....	26
Noes.....	15
Majority .....	11

#### AYES

Andrews, S.E.  
Boyer, B.I.  
Champion, N.D.  
Cook, N.F.  
Hood, L.P.  
Koutsantonis, A.  
Mullighan, S.C.  
Piccolo, A.  
Szakacs, J.K.

Bettison, Z.L.  
Brock, G.G.  
Clancy, N.P.  
Fulbrook, J.P.  
Hughes, E.J.  
Malinauskas, P.B.  
Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)  
Picton, C.J.  
Wortley, D.J.

Bignell, L.W.K.  
Brown, M.E.  
Close, S.E.  
Hildyard, K.A.  
Hutchesson, C.L.  
Michaels, A.  
Pearce, R.K.  
Savvas, O.M.

#### NOES

Basham, D.K.B.  
Cowdrey, M.J.  
Patterson, S.J.R.  
Pratt, P.K.  
Teague, J.B.

Batty, J.A.  
Ellis, F.J.  
Pederick, A.S.  
Speirs, D.J.  
Telfer, S.J.

Bell, T.S.  
Hurn, A.M.  
Pisoni, D.G. (teller)  
Tarzia, V.A.  
Whetstone, T.J.

#### PAIRS

Thompson, E.L.  
Gardner, J.A.W.

Stinson, J.M.

Marshall, S.S.

Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

**STATUTES AMENDMENT (JUSTICE MEASURES) BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 1 June 2022.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:40):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....	26
Noes.....	16
Majority .....	10

**AYES**

Andrews, S.E.	Bettison, Z.L.	Bignell, L.W.K.
Boyer, B.I.	Brock, G.G.	Brown, M.E.
Champion, N.D.	Clancy, N.P.	Close, S.E.
Cook, N.F.	Fulbrook, J.P.	Hildyard, K.A.
Hood, L.P.	Hughes, E.J.	Hutchesson, C.L.
Koutsantonis, A.	Malinauskas, P.B.	Michaels, A.
Mullighan, S.C.	Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)	Pearce, R.K.
Piccolo, A.	Picton, C.J.	Savvas, O.M.
Szakacs, J.K.	Wortley, D.J.	

**NOES**

Basham, D.K.B.	Batty, J.A.	Bell, T.S.
Cowdrey, M.J.	Ellis, F.J.	Gardner, J.A.W.
Hurn, A.M.	McBride, P.N.	Patterson, S.J.R.
Pederick, A.S.	Pisoni, D.G. (teller)	Pratt, P.K.
Tarzia, V.A.	Teague, J.B.	Telfer, S.J.
Whetstone, T.J.		

**PAIRS**

Thompson, E.L.	Stinson, J.M.	Marshall, S.S.
Speirs, D.J.		

Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

**ABORIGINAL REPRESENTATIVE BODY BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 6 July 2022.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:45):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....	25
Noes.....	15
Majority .....	10

## AYES

Andrews, S.E.	Bettison, Z.L.	Bignell, L.W.K.
Boyer, B.I.	Brock, G.G.	Brown, M.E.
Champion, N.D.	Clancy, N.P.	Cook, N.F.
Fulbrook, J.P.	Hildyard, K.A.	Hood, L.P.
Hughes, E.J.	Hutchesson, C.L.	Koutsantonis, A.
Malinauskas, P.B.	Michaels, A.	Mullighan, S.C.
Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)	Pearce, R.K.	Piccolo, A.
Picton, C.J.	Savvas, O.M.	Szakacs, J.K.
Wortley, D.J.		

## NOES

Basham, D.K.B.	Batty, J.A.	Bell, T.S.
Ellis, F.J.	Gardner, J.A.W.	Hurn, A.M.
McBride, P.N.	Patterson, S.J.R.	Pederick, A.S.
Pisoni, D.G. (teller)	Pratt, P.K.	Tarzia, V.A.
Teague, J.B.	Telfer, S.J.	Whetstone, T.J.

## PAIRS

Thompson, E.L.	Speirs, D.J.	Stinson, J.M.
Marshall, S.S.	Close, S.E.	Cowdrey, M.J.

Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (MINISTERIAL DIARIES) AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Second Reading*

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (10:50):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I indicate that it is a bill received from the Legislative Council, a bill introduced in the other place by the Hon. Robert Simms MLC. I indicate, as my colleague in the other place the Hon. Michelle Lensink MLC did back in July, that the opposition will support the bill and that is in particular circumstances in which this new government has got off to the worst possible start that one might imagine.

Members in this place will find it hard to forget the front page of *The Advertiser* on about 4 May and the new Premier being labelled as a 'dark-age dictator' for his want of the removal of transparency measures and the introduction of elements of a secret state as early as the first day of sitting in May. Members will recall on that occasion that the opportunity to continue what had been meritorious sessional order arrangements for the timely answering of questions on notice was and remains inexplicably not continued by this new government in coming to power.

South Australians have become now well acquainted with the approach that the Malinauskas Labor government takes when it comes to transparency. It is against this background that measures of this kind are an opportunity for the Malinauskas Labor government to begin to see the error of its ways and to make amends in supporting legislation of this kind at this time so as to rebut what has become very clearly characterising this government's approach towards transparency.

The bill will introduce a proactive regime of disclosure for what is already routinely available in response to an FOI request. What it will do that is new is it will require the proactive disclosure of ministerial diaries within seven days following the end of each month and on a routine basis. It is not new, as the Attorney-General in the other place conceded. This is a measure that in one form or another is in place in other jurisdictions in the country, notably the ACT and Queensland, and we know that the provision of ministerial diaries is something that has been uncontroversially done in

response to FOI applications in this state over a long period of time. The ACT is otherwise the most akin to this particular form of disclosure insofar as the proactive arrangements are concerned.

Clearly, these are measures that enhance the capacity of the opposition to keep the government to account and, in turn, as I said in my opening remarks in support of the bill, they are an opportunity for South Australians to see that the government is interested in making sure that South Australians in a reasonable and timely way can see what their executive is up to and, in turn, for their representatives in this place, in this parliament—and members now on government benches have been vocal in their words in relation to the sanctity and supremacy of parliament in times gone by—what we see now will be an opportunity for them to demonstrate by deeds that parliament is in fact serious about keeping oversight of the executive and doing so in a timely way.

We know that the subject matter of this disclosure is already something that is routinely provided in response to request and has been done already under this new government, so it will not come as any surprise in that respect. Retorts in relation to the sensitivity of subject matter, the nature of meetings and the particular engagements that may be sensitive from time to time in a ministerial diary are not new and do not present any novel barrier to the proactive provision of that material. That is about the extent of the government's expressed reluctance to support this process as elucidated by the Attorney in the other place.

The other aspect that is alluded to in the government's indication in the other place about its attitude to the bill is the perceived work or the nature of the task that is involved in providing the proactive disclosure. Of course, there is an administrative task and, from an ad hoc one to a comprehensive one, we will see the disclosure of those diaries in a routine way.

I would have expected that when anything is adopted as a routine, it carries a burden and also, by systematising the approach, the opportunity to provide efficiencies, normality and, I am confident, a capacity for that disclosure to be done without creating an insurmountable burden on the executive. So far so good in those other jurisdictions; indeed, no difficulty in particular has been identified as having emerged. Given that this is one of those areas in which we have the benefit of practice elsewhere, that is worthwhile noting.

The second aspect of the bill—and one might foreshadow or see implied in the government's response in the other place some concern about the administrative burden from a resourcing and review point of view—is the work of the Ombudsman and I would expect, in particularly rare cases, the SACAT in reviewing and determining disputes in relation to the disclosure.

As my friend in the other place the Hon. Michelle Lensink MLC observed, it is appropriate that there be consideration of appropriate resources and routines to the Ombudsman and to the SACAT, to the extent that that process of consideration and determination of differences of opinion about what should be disclosed and in what form ought to be provided. So that is noted and, again, there is nothing particularly new there. For those who are concerned with it, that is provided for at what will be sections 8B and 8C respectively of new part 1A.

I just say again: they are very faint sources of resistance indeed, if we are to take the Attorney as the source of a comprehensive view from the government's side about this bill. They are very faint and very limited sources of reluctance to what might otherwise—and perhaps with the benefit of these words, and others perhaps more eloquently expressed—be a source of inspiration for the government in this place to see in this an opportunity to see the error of their ways in the early days, to see that the flourish of enthusiasm in the early days of government about charting a course on one's own terms can be measured and tempered and a reasonableness can return; in turn, the confidence of the South Australian community might be attracted by a change of heart.

I am not predicting it, because there has been a pretty clear indication from the Attorney in the other place, but there it is. It is an opportunity for the government to make amends and to say, 'Do you know what? It is a good idea. It is actually a good way forward. We do live in a modern age in which the provision of information in a timely way can be done much more conveniently than might have been the case in days gone by. Do you know what? We can display our credentials, and what they're saying about us being a bunch of folks who are committed to secrecy and the avoidance of transparency—well, that's all wrong. No, we want to chart a new course and this is a way for us to do it.'

I look forward to those reflections on the government's side. It is one of those opportunities that arises, given the bicameral nature of our parliament. We have had an expression in the other place, the bill has nonetheless prevailed and here we are in the place where the important work of holding the executive to account in large part takes place. It is the house of government. It is not beyond the wit of government members—it should not be beyond the wit of government members—to take this opportunity to reflect and to think, 'Do you know what? They're all right and we need to really see the error of our ways and get behind this bill and the process of transparency it would enshrine in the relatively modest and straightforward way that it does.'

With those words, it is really over to the government. We may see that a further spotlight is shone in the coming days, weeks and months by means of the subject matter of this bill. If that happens, well that is a good thing, and if the government comes around to supporting this bill and the steps it will take, well, that is a good thing too. There we are: we will have a demonstrated that we can act proactively towards transparency. With those words, I commend this bill to the house and look forward to those further contributions to the debate, particularly from the government side.

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:04):** I move:

That debate be adjourned.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....	25
Noes.....	15
Majority .....	10

AYES

Andrews, S.E.	Bettison, Z.L.	Bignell, L.W.K.
Boyer, B.I.	Brock, G.G.	Brown, M.E.
Champion, N.D.	Clancy, N.P.	Cook, N.F.
Fulbrook, J.P.	Hildyard, K.A.	Hood, L.P.
Hughes, E.J.	Hutchesson, C.L.	Koutsantonis, A.
Malinauskas, P.B.	Michaels, A.	Mullighan, S.C.
Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)	Pearce, R.K.	Piccolo, A.
Picton, C.J.	Savvas, O.M.	Szakacs, J.K.
Wortley, D.J.		

NOES

Basham, D.K.B.	Batty, J.A.	Bell, T.S.
Cowdrey, M.J.	Ellis, F.J.	Gardner, J.A.W. (teller)
Hurn, A.M.	McBride, P.N.	Patterson, S.J.R.
Pederick, A.S.	Pisoni, D.G.	Pratt, P.K.
Tarzia, V.A.	Teague, J.B.	Whetstone, T.J.

PAIRS

Thompson, E.L.	Speirs, D.J.	Close, S.E.
Marshall, S.S.	Stinson, J.M.	Telfer, S.J.

Motion thus carried; debate adjourned.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Heysen, not to charge you but out of common interest and out of respect to your knowledge as former Speaker as well, I have taken a moment to consult standing order 192 in relation to postponement as against adjournment and 238 in relation to second readings. I do not profess to have had that knowledge myself. I have only had the benefit of the Clerk's advice.

*Motions***HOMELESSNESS WEEK**

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (11:09):** I move:

That this house—

- (a) acknowledges that Homelessness Week occurred from 1 to 7 August 2022;
- (b) recognises the plight of those facing homelessness and the particular vulnerability of rough sleepers;
- (c) congratulates the Malinauskas Labor government on its 2022 election commitment of \$6 million to the Hutt St Centre, St Vincent de Paul (Vinnies) and Catherine House to improve homelessness services in South Australia; and
- (d) congratulates the Malinauskas Labor government on its election commitment to invest more than \$180 million in new funding into the South Australian Housing Trust.

About 18 months ago, as we prepared to head into a very cold and wet winter, the former Marshall Liberal government made devastating cuts to some of our most respected homelessness organisations: the Hutt St Centre, Catherine House and Vinnies. In response the community banded together. We knocked on doors. We encouraged locals to tie orange ribbons on their front fences and gates in solidarity with these organisations. We collected signatures on petitions, calling on the Marshall Liberal government to have a heart and reverse these cruel cuts.

Fast-forward a year and a half later, and this is a clear example of why elections matter. Upon coming into government, the Malinauskas Labor government returned \$6 million to the Hutt St Centre, St Vincent de Paul (Vinnies) and Catherine House to improve homelessness services in South Australia.

In April this year I was so incredibly proud to be joined by the Premier and the human services minister at the Hutt St Centre to make this significant and important announcement. We were joined by one very incredible woman: her name was Losa. At 19, Losa fled domestic violence. She was battling cancer, trauma and mental health issues. She did not think she would make it, but then she found Catherine House, and now Losa is thriving and inspiring others.

Behind these three organisations are hundreds and hundreds of stories like Losa's, and it is why the Malinauskas Labor government is committed to increasing investment in housing and homelessness to increase housing supply, access and supports for vulnerable South Australians. The state government's public housing improvement program will see more than \$177 million invested in public housing, including 400 new public housing properties to be constructed; 50 of these homes will be co-located with support services, which we know is incredibly vital. We will upgrade 350 vacant properties to make them available for families in need, and will improve the supplies and amenities of 3,000 tenanted public housing homes.

Housing SA has also recently partnered with Carrington Cottages and provided a grant of around \$1.2 million to purchase a vacant backpacker hostel that closed during the COVID-19 pandemic. This new initiative will provide extra accommodation in the city for people facing homelessness. We will also work with a new federal Labor government that is establishing a \$10 billion housing futures fund to deliver 30,000 social and affordable homes over five years. For those who cannot access social housing, Housing SA offers financial assistance that can save eligible applicants up to \$3,150 on the up-front costs of accessing private rental.

In regard to this motion, I want to thank the human services minister, Nat Cook, for her tireless efforts when it comes to our most vulnerable South Australians and moving people from homelessness to homefulness. She is incredibly tireless in her efforts, and we are so incredibly grateful to have her as part of our team. I commend this motion to the house.

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (11:14):** I rise to speak to the motion in support and recognition of Homelessness Week in the month of August and seek to amend it. I move to amend the motion as follows:

Delete paragraphs (c) and (d) and insert in lieu:

- (c) commends the Marshall Liberal government on creating a better functioning homelessness system in South Australia.

So the motion will read:

That this house—

- (a) acknowledges that Homelessness Week occurred from 1 to 7 August 2022;
- (b) recognises the plight of those facing homelessness and the particular vulnerability of rough sleepers; and
- (c) commends the Marshall Liberal government on creating a better functioning homelessness system in South Australia.

In speaking to this motion, I note that we mark the significance of this social plight in the heart of winter. In fact, during the first week of August, a Code Blue was issued for metro Adelaide and for my region of Clare, as well as for the Riverland, Limestone Coast, Kangaroo Island, Port Lincoln and Kadina.

Any two combined conditions will trigger the calling of a Code Blue, whether that be significant rainfall, gusty damaging winds or prolonged cold conditions, where the average night-time temperature is set to drop below 5° for five or more days. This afternoon, in fact, heavy rain and thunderstorms are expected for the metro area, and if your prized possessions are a backpack and a sleeping bag then finding somewhere dry and undercover to sleep is essential but not at all easy. Sleeping rough, guarding your spot, wondering where a meal is going to come from and getting access to a doctor or a dentist are just a few of the many hardship issues a homeless person faces on an hourly basis.

It is very important that those of us privileged to have guaranteed shelter and housing do not lose sight of our homeless community and bring attention to their situation, with a mind to implementing public policy and investment in services that will ease their limited and temporary living conditions. Homelessness Week aims to raise awareness of the impact of homelessness on Australia via national and local community events, including providing information on the importance of housing as a solution and educating communities on how they can make a difference.

The Hutt St Centre's Walk a Mile in My Boots challenge takes place in Homelessness Week and aims to raise funds that help to provide essentials for people sleeping rough this winter and every winter. We know that South Australians get behind this opportunity to fundraise, participate and be alert to the confronting statistics on those who are homeless and sleep rough. Homelessness SA held its annual memorial service on 5 August to remember those people who have died whilst experiencing homelessness. It is a very sobering aspect to this chronic issue.

When forming government in March 2018, the Marshall Liberal government was determined to create a better functioning homelessness system in South Australia. We unashamedly wanted to ensure that people were safe and able to sustain long-term housing, that they were rapidly rehoused to reduce the length of time they were homeless and that they did not experience repeat homelessness. This led to the establishment of an Australian-first alliance model that more effectively and efficiently delivered targeted and tailored services to people who were experiencing homelessness across the state.

The Marshall Liberal government established a special \$20 million fund over 10 years to pilot the homelessness prevention initiatives. The first \$2.3 million was awarded to Kids Under Cover to provide 51 fully relocatable studios to young people at risk of homelessness. It is no surprise that the overall number of people needing to access a homelessness service did not increase during our four years of government. The Marshall Liberal government undertook extensive consultation and system redesign to fix the mess that Labor had left behind. We have taken the lead in Australia by being the first to adopt an alliance approach to homelessness that will better deliver services and outcomes for South Australians. Our approach has been recognised by the Institute of Global Homelessness.

Thanks to the Marshall Liberal government, South Australia is set to become the second Vanguard state in the world after we signed the new statewide commitment, which will remain in effect until 31 December 2025. The signing of Vanguard reaffirmed our commitment to combating and ending homelessness. However, we know that there is a current housing crisis in South Australia

that we cannot shy away from and that is ever present in my electorate of Frome. I am frequently contacted by families and single parents who are in need of immediate support. In particular, I thank the essential service provided by the Uniting Country SA Clare office.

It is very difficult to capture the true statistics of the number of people who are living in housing uncertainty. They are couch surfing, living with family, in temporary arrangements and possibly vulnerable as a tenant should their lease not be renewed. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people are not living how they would choose to even if they have the means.

With the growing number of South Australians falling victim to the rental crisis, the opposition developed a suite of potential initiatives to keep more families in private rentals and out of homelessness. The Liberal's 10-point plan is a detailed policy framework that, in summary, focuses on reducing rental bond time frames, simplifies application processes, addresses long-term stays in motels, and provides and continues the former Liberal government's extension of the domestic violence crisis accommodation program.

Homelessness is something that can happen to anyone. Often, all it takes is one change in circumstances, be it income or employment, that can trigger it. Together, we must work towards ending homelessness. I commend the amended motion to the house.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (11:20):** I was just going to deliver a nice speech, but I might have to place some corrections on the record. It may be no surprise to you but, in advance, we will not be supporting the amendment to the motion. There is something that comes quickly to mind that is perhaps relevant: the one-way expressway was also a first. That did not make it a good thing. It was poorly implemented, poorly delivered.

I think what history will tell us is that the alliances are a very good idea, and I have no problem at all with encouraging and facilitating homelessness services and housing providers to work together to do good work. But, honestly, the alliance system had only one competitive tender that happened, and that was the alliance that put the southern region in conjunction with the metropolitan area CBD locations.

There was one competitive tender that happened for the alliance model, which saw Catherine House, Vinnies, and the Hutt St Centre knocked out and defunded. What that led to—in conjunction with a rushed, poorly thought-out, not funded crossover plan of six weeks, where one set of services was to leave, exit completely, and then the new alliance model put in place—was six weeks of chaos.

We saw for months and months ineffective and absent outreach services happening. We saw for months and months, during the COVID pandemic, people not knowing where to go for help. We saw hundreds of people left floundering and unsupported. The only reason that homelessness services are actually effective at all at the moment in the CBD is because of the subcontracting of the services that were cut. This new alliance went in place without crisis beds written into it. There was nowhere for people to go. There was nowhere for people to get support, to get a bed for the night and to get those wraparound services provided.

Very quickly that was acknowledged and realised by the service providers—not by the Marshall government at the time, but by the service providers who have had to get together and cobble together a system where people can exit homelessness into temporary homelessness, and then homelessness in the end. None of that was happening under the Marshall Liberal government plan.

It might surprise you to know that this service was put in place with a complete absence of any outcomes framework—a complete absence. How do you measure the effectiveness of a service without an outcomes framework? Since coming into government we have made sure that is being developed: an outcomes framework to measure what is happening and to help build on the strength that is already in place. It is mind-blowing that this was not happening.

We see a range of things come into this chamber—with, I believe, all good intention from the member for Frome—but with this, the words that are coming out of her mouth in relation to this speech and also grievances in the past, talking about things that are actually not the case, she is



being completely misled and 'puppeted' by somebody in another chamber. They are completely inaccurate, and the member for Frome deserves better than that.

I think she is decent, and she has shown over decades that she has a commitment to social justice through her work before here as well as the political roles she has undertaken, but I would warn her and caution her that she is being fed a load of rubbish by somebody who is trying to use her as a political puppet in this chamber. She should double-check the facts before she brings them in here. It would be a real shame to see her continually trip over like this. Get the facts right.

What we can talk about now is what we have done since coming into government, a range of things. I thank the member for Adelaide for her advocacy and campaigning around the defunding of Vinnies, Catherine House and Hutt St, absolutely intrinsically linked organisations with the respect of pretty much the entire South Australian community; everybody has heard of these organisations. Thank you so much to the member for Adelaide for the really great work that has led to these commitments being put in place.

Knowing the problem with the transition of homelessness services, and with the very deep connections I have continued to maintain for many years with homelessness providers, listening to them through opposition and now, I made sure that as soon as I was able I went out with the outreach teams. I visited the great team at the Millers Court Westcare Centre, met with people there, and popped into the site where people access Fred's Van. I talked to people about how they find out about Code Blue, and went out with the outreach team now in place going through the parklands and moving around the CBD, making sure they connect deeply with people and understand their journey to where they are now so that they can try to do something to help people in the future.

I visited the Hutt St Centre more than once to actually watch the process when someone turns up there looking for assistance in what is often a very desperate situation, and also look to see what they can now provide, more long term, in terms of their Aspire program, because we have reinvested that \$2 million for them over the next four years.

The Foundry is an SYC-operated centre for young people where they are not only able to get a hot meal but also where they can go to a quiet room to help moderate themselves, have a sleep there when The Foundry is open for them. They can have the use of a PC and can get some support to get their CVs together. The Foundry really is an excellent opportunity for young people to engage with expert providers.

I have also been out and visited the Anglicare Kurralta Park supported accommodation tenancy, where a number of young people live in a 16 one-bedroom apartment block at Kurralta Park. It has been beautifully renovated and began as a pilot program about a year ago to assist young care leavers. I spoke to a young woman there who is expecting her first child and, given the wraparound support she has received by Believe Housing and Anglicare, she is now very confident that, as she moves out into something more suitable, she will be able to start life with her new family and do a great job as a mum. This is breaking generational cycles, which is so, so important.

The annual homelessness memorial service in August was a time to reflect on people who have died lonely and cold on the streets. It is a shocking indictment on civilised society that this still happens, so we will do all we can to bring those numbers down.

It was fantastic to participate again in the Walk a Mile in My Boots challenge. We did that separately. The member for Adelaide and I—who else came with us? There were a few people with us that day. We went to Adelaide High.

**Ms Hood:** Emily.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Yes, Emily Bourke, that's right, the MLC from the other place. We participated with Botanic High on their Walk a Mile. I do not know whether these kids do geography or maths, but that was not a mile. That was about 1.8, you are welcome.

Apart from that, there have been many visits to some fantastic providers of food: the Adelaide Day Centre and the Hutt St Centre. We participated in the soup kitchen fundraiser for Hutt St and Catherine House at the East End Cellars with other people. It was just fantastic. I thank so much the

people involved in the homelessness services and doing the best they can to give people a place to call home.

I think there was one comment as well by the member for Frome, where she said that the numbers did not increase under the then Marshall Liberal government. Yes, they have blown out of the water on the Zero Project numbers for the By Name List in the CBD, but nationally the homelessness numbers have not come out since 2016, so unless she has some sort of jingly belt and a crystal ball I have no idea how she knows that the homelessness figures have not gone up, because all I see are datasets showing an increased presentation to homelessness services across the state.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (11:31):** I rise to speak in support of the motion and make it very clear that I oppose the amendment. I will speak to the amendment first before I get to the area where I want to support the motion, but I also raise an example of where some really bad practice by a local council is impeding our efforts to improve housing in this country, particularly in my community.

As indicated, I will be supporting the motion because I think the motion itself outlines what this government is trying to do to address the homelessness issue and housing generally. The amendment talks about the wonderful things the Liberal government did. I will speak for my electorate, on the basis of my electorate. I do not know what happens elsewhere, but I can certainly talk about what happened in my electorate.

I remember attending a meeting, a consultation in the Barossa, where there were discussions about how the former minister wanted to introduce a new housing strategy. I got a glossy publication after that process, all these wonderful words, and the only thing missing from the strategy was actually saying, 'This is what we are going to do to make this thing better.' There was a whole range of parenthoods statements and it all looked very glossy, but it did not commit to one additional house—not one additional house. That was the Liberal Party's housing strategy to address homelessness.

As the current minister said, yes, the new alliance system appears to be working okay, but they can only hand out or help to put people in homes that exist, and the Marshall Liberal government did nothing to improve or address that issue in terms of additional housing. In fact, if the presentations to my office are an indication, it got much worse during that period. Still, sadly, probably the number one issue in my electorate is people coming to my office who are homeless for a whole range of reasons and in some really dire circumstances.

One thing the Liberal Marshall government did do in my electorate to help the homelessness service was close the local Housing SA office. That was quite an achievement, to actually close down a service to help people who are homeless or seeking a home. That is one thing the Liberal government did do. They closed it, and they closed it at a time when we did not have train services either, so the people who are the most vulnerable in our community have to find some way to get to Elizabeth, which is the closest office. In fact, on one occasion I happened to be outside the Housing SA office which had closed and a mother was there with her children. They had walked right across the town to come to this office for service and it did not exist—it did not exist.

When you made inquiries about it, they said, 'Well, it's about COVID.' There was a whole period when everything could be blamed on COVID. Then COVID ended, but the office has not reopened under their time. So we did something practical and gave an opportunity to one of the homelessness services to provide an outreach service through my electorate office; they come there regularly. People can stay in Gawler and access homelessness services through my electorate office—and, sadly, they are very busy.

Why is homelessness and rough sleeping important? Having a home is core to who we are as human beings. It is in addition to the issues around safety, etc. We all define ourselves, if you like, by where we live, the home we live in, etc. It is a place central to our being. It is a place where we obviously spend time with our families and our friends, and it is a place where we feel safe. It is a place where we belong and interact with our communities. When you do not have a home, you do not have place to spend time with family, you do not have a place to spend time with friends and you do not have a place that you call safe.

What I do know about the rough sleepers in Gawler—and, sadly, it is the worst I have ever seen it. Ten years ago we had none and we now have about 45 to 50 people in Gawler alone who are rough sleepers. Some of them come from outside the Town of Gawler because it is safer to sleep rough in Gawler than in other communities near us where they do not feel safe. It is interesting to note that they sleep during the daytime because that is when it is safer to sleep because they can be seen; at night-time, when you are sleeping rough, your safety is compromised.

And you do not belong: you cannot access services or the simple things. You cannot have showers, you cannot wash your clothing—all those basic things we take for granted homeless people do not have. So, when I hear comments like those from one of the former speakers about what a wonderful job they did, that was not the reality in my electorate. That was not the reality in my electorate. The other reality was that during COVID we were able to find and resolve the homelessness issue for the City of Adelaide, but not in the suburbs or country areas. The government of the day forgot about the suburbs and forgot about the country areas.

It is very important that, as some of the speakers have said, we need to work together to resolve the housing crisis in this nation. I would have thought that every government agency, planning authority and instrumentality would be doing their bit to make sure there are no barriers to getting people into a home. Sadly, that is not the case with my council, the Gawler council. I will give an example. I had to appear before them twice recently to argue on behalf of seven homebuyers who had their titles held up for over 18 months by the council's dispute with the developer—18 months.

It is actually quite disgraceful. I will explain why it is disgraceful. It has added almost half a million dollars to the cost for these homebuyers in terms of contract renewals and additional rent, and also some of them lost their first HomeBuilder grant as well—almost half a million dollars. Even if you do not take into account the additional money they had to borrow to pay off their loans, it is quite a disgraceful amount.

They had a dispute with the developer, and I must confess that developers do not have a good name, generally speaking, but on this occasion the homebuyers sided with the developer. They could see what the council was doing. The council was trying to extract or renegotiate unilaterally an agreement about contributions which had been signed by the parties. They thought they would hold these seven homebuyers to ransom, hoping that they would turn onto the homebuyers to fork out more money to the council.

Last week, the council accepted an offer from the developer. That offer was the same, financially, as was put to them 12 months ago—the same offer. The only thing that changed the council's mind was political pressure placed by the homebuyers, myself and other people who advocated on their behalf. It is absolutely appalling behaviour that a council could do such a thing. Not only has it had an impact on these seven homebuyers (and I explained how) but it means that there are seven people who are renting when they do not have to rent who could have made space for another seven people who could be renting.

There is, if you like, a whole chain of damage and pain caused by this council decision to not do that. We all make mistakes. The previous government made mistakes, I make mistakes; I probably make one every day, the reality is, but the worst thing is that the council had the hide to say they had done nothing wrong. They could not understand why, on the one hand, they had accepted an offer just last week, which was the same financial offer as 12 months ago, and caused pain to the seven homebuyers to the tune of over half a million dollars. They saw nothing wrong with it.

What has this dispute done? It is not a victimless decision made by council. It has not privatised the hardship for these things; it is in fact cost shifting. It has also robbed these people of the joy and excitement of building their first home. Building a home is a pretty tough gig at the best of times. When you get a council that holds up your project by 12 to 18 months and costs you tens of thousands of dollars more, it does take off the gloss of moving into a new home. There are a whole range of direct and indirect costs.

These are real people who have experienced real pain from this council's inability to resolve an issue with a developer who was a willing party. It is interesting to note that when the lawyers for the council went to the developer recently and asked, 'Is the previous offer from some time ago still on the table?' the developer said yes and the matter was resolved. We should all be doing our bit to

make sure we get people into homes as quickly as we can, and, for this reason alone, come these elections, I think the people of Gawler deserve a better council.

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (11:41):** I rise to support the motion on homelessness moved by the member for Adelaide. It is a motion that highlights some of the Malinauskas government's commitment towards addressing homelessness here in South Australia. Today, we know that a Code Blue has been declared across parts of South Australia. This means thunderstorms, heavy rain and strong winds. Most of us only experience this firsthand running between a car and the workplace or picking up children from child care or school. A Code Blue is triggered when the weather bureau forecasts such bad weather, and we know people sleeping rough will need support from today until this front passes, which is expected to be Friday morning.

We do see the homeless on our streets. We know that they are sleeping rough. Sometimes we see a blanket shoved into the corner crevices of buildings and doorways as we rush about on our business. We know that women are far more likely to be sleeping on someone's couch, sleeping in their car, scared and frightened about their safety, or are in an unsafe relationship because they have nowhere to go.

Over the years, I have had women parked out the front of my office, sleeping that way, with nowhere to go. We do not see as many women experiencing homelessness publicly; therefore, it is not always out there as a problem. While more needs to be done to address homelessness generally, we need to stop forgetting about women's homelessness just because it cannot be seen. We need a plan. What can we do to address this important issue?

The Malinauskas government is addressing this issue in a number of ways. The first is a commitment of \$6 million in this is budget allocated to the Hutt St Centre, St Vincent de Paul (Vinnies) and Catherine House to improve their services for those who need it. The commitment to invest \$180 million in new funding to the South Australian Housing Trust can only mean better outcomes for its clients, for the people in South Australia who have no other option. It is something that we need to do to secure their future.

Homelessness is not something South Australia is dealing with alone. A major report, presented by Homelessness Australia on 1 August, showed that since 2021 rents in Australia have increased by 13.2 per cent, with rents in some locations increasing more than 25 per cent in a year. Simply, more than 100,000 people came to homelessness services last financial year needing long-term housing and only 3.4 per cent of them were able to be found a home.

Seventy-five thousand people across the nation who were homeless and needing help were turned away by services, which did not have the staff or resources needed to respond. When income support was increased under COVID relief in June 2020, homelessness numbers dropped and rent stress among households receiving rent assistance fell.

First Nations Australians are nearly 10 times more likely to be without a home than other Australians. Last financial year, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population represented only 3 per cent of the entire Australian populace but 28 per cent of specialist homelessness services users. Those numbers just do not add up.

While most of us are concerned about the increase in cost of living or interest rate rises, we need to think of those who simply do not have a place to call home, people who do not have anywhere to go at the end of the day. In closing, I would like to acknowledge the Code Blue volunteers who will be away from their homes today helping the most vulnerable in our community over the next 72 hours.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Torrens. I share your sentiments and concerns.

Amendment negated; motion carried.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

*A quorum having been formed:*

#### REGIONAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:48):** I move:

That this house commends the Marshall Liberal government for recognising the importance of regional South Australia and its communities, noting their contribution to our economy worth more than \$29 billion per year, through—

- (a) investing \$3 billion across more than 1,000 regional projects;
- (b) upgrading hospitals, doubling country cancer services and upgrading about 4,800 kilometres of regional roads; and
- (c) implementing the Our Regions Matter blueprint following extensive consultation with regional communities about what is needed to improve opportunities for the 29 per cent of South Australia's population living and working outside the metropolitan community.

The regions are the powerhouse of this state's economy. I have lived and worked right across South Australia, whether it is in my hometown area around Coomandook, Coonalpyn, Peake and the Mallee, the Upper South-East, the South-East working in the shearing sheds or up at the top of the Strzelecki Track and the Cooper Basin working in the gas fields for a couple of years. I have certainly also travelled over most of the state. It is a powerhouse of our state and the production, whether it is in the agriculture field, the mining field and the services that go along with serving those industries in our communities, I commend them all.

The Our Regions Matter blueprint focused on five key areas to drive growth: regional voice, regional connectivity; regional leadership and skills; regional services; and regional investment. Never before in this state's history has there been so much investment in regional roads: investment in building and improving regional roads, sealing road shoulders, widening lanes, installing guide posts and resurfacing in these areas.

We announced the construction of a \$202 million bypass at Truro in partnership with the federal government. This will be a major uplift for the freight industry and for travellers throughout the state, especially on the South Eastern Freeway. In my travels, I have already noticed a marked reduction in the amount of heavy freight coming down the South Eastern Freeway into the city. We know of some of the issues that very occasionally happen at the bottom of the hill. It does not seem to matter whether you have 43 warning signs in place or whether you have two arrester beds in place, the odd person seems to think they are beyond the law and creates chaos at the bottom of the hill, the entrance to Adelaide at the Glen Osmond Road, Cross Road and Portrush Road intersection.

Connected to that is the northern freight bypass, where the heavy freight combinations go through Murray Bridge and head up towards Mannum, up through Sedan and Sanderston, up to the Halfway House. We, along with the federal government, invested \$12 million on upgrades there for the connection into the Sturt Highway because anything above a B-double has to go that way to come into Adelaide. You have all the combinations, whether that be B-triples, B-quads, AB-doubles, road trains and I heard about two B-doubles the other day and I think that is called an AB-quad. There is certainly plenty of uplift for this work and I commend the investment in this bypass.

There is also \$87½ million to upgrade the Sturt Highway between Renmark and Gawler—more work on that northern route. There is upgrading and sealing of the Strzelecki Track, with stage 1 complete and the first 50 kilometres open to traffic. I witnessed that myself a few weeks ago. I was keen to travel up the Strzelecki again before it was completely sealed. There are still over 400 kilometres to go, but it is nice to see that first 50 kilometres from Moomba South to Merty Station have been done.

I noted the work that I had witnessed a couple of years ago to the Adventure Way, close to 29 kilometres between Innamincka and the Queensland border, where we invested \$6 million in that project. It is very pleasing to see that upgrade to the Strzelecki Track, which will see access not just for the oil and gas industry but for our vital pastoral industry in that region. In line with that project, we are progressing with the following works:

- the \$189 million stage 2 of the Strzelecki Track project. The whole project was around \$215 million;
- undertaking a \$250 million upgrade of the Princes Highway from the Victorian border to Tailern Bend, which is another great project, with much work needed on that road;

- building an overpass at the intersection of Copper Coast Highway and Augusta Highway, Port Wakefield, which I witnessed the other day, heading over to the West Coast;
- completing the Penola Northern Bypass, ensuring freight and heavy vehicles completely bypass the Penola township;
- delivering a \$6 million upgrade to Kroemer's Crossing in Tanunda, installing a roundabout to improve safety for all road users and allowing for easier freight access to surrounding businesses;
- delivering an \$82.2 million partnership with the federal government to upgrade Horrocks Highway between Wilmington and Gawler, improving safety, connectivity and freight efficiency;
- investing \$40 million in Kangaroo Island road upgrades, including upgrading the Playford Highway west of Kingscote and Hog Bay Road;
- delivering a \$125 million upgrade of the Eyre Highway, Tod Highway, Birdseye Highway and Lincoln Highway;
- completing an \$11 million Dublin saleyard access upgrade project to support our state's livestock industry by providing direct access for large freight vehicles to the South Australian Livestock Exchange, which will allow road trains and other large combinations;
- delivering a \$52½ million upgrade of the Barrier Highway between Cockburn and Burra, with approximately 305 kilometres of highway passing through the townships of Olary, Yunta, Hallett and Mount Bryan;
- together with the federal government, investing \$560 million to deliver the Fleurieu Connections Main South Road and Victor Harbor Road duplication project;
- investing \$36 million to upgrade Old Murray Bridge, which obviously is a very important route for locals and tourists through the township of Murray Bridge and a linkage between east and west—it is interesting to note that they did car counts the other day and they found that more traffic went over the old bridge in Murray Bridge than over the Swanport Bridge, so it is a very good link between the east and west sides of Murray Bridge;
- initiating the duplication of the Joy Baluch AM Bridge in Port Augusta, with construction well underway—I saw it again the other day, and construction is expected to be completed this year; and
- in my area, on the Mannum-Murray Bridge road, we invested \$14 million in the Thomas Foods International access road in partnership with the federal government.

In regard to health across the regions, we invested in upgrading facilities and services at regional hospitals in Murray Bridge, Victor Harbor and Yorketown. I am very proud to see \$7 million invested in the new emergency department at Murray Bridge. There is a new emergency department at Mount Barker hospital, a massive expansion of the Gawler hospital emergency department and progress on a new Barossa hospital. It has been a long time coming, and may it keep going.

There are expanded renal dialysis services at Mount Gambier and Ceduna hospitals and double the number of medium complexity country units, with expanded units in Victor Harbor, the Riverland and Port Lincoln. We introduced more flexible arrangements through the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme for those who need to travel long distances for medical treatment, which is a great asset for people who live further out.

In regard to primary industries, we provided grants of up to \$75,000 per producer for those affected by the 2019-20 bushfires, delivered a \$21 million drought support program and ensured farmers still had access to seasonal workers despite COVID-19. We gave farmers on the mainland the option to grow genetically modified crops by lifting the moratorium Labor imposed in 2004, and I would like to acknowledge the work of the Labor member for Giles, Eddie Hughes.

We delivered on our promise to hire two additional wild dog trappers as well as combining with industry on the \$25 million dog fence replacement of 1,600 kilometres of dog fence throughout South Australia. We invested in eradicating feral pigs on Kangaroo Island and invested more than \$70 million to protect jobs and businesses by addressing fruit fly outbreaks.

In education, we built a new high school in Whyalla, a \$100 million project that was part of our record \$1½ billion investment to build and upgrade schools across the state. I want to acknowledge the \$30 million-plus that was built in my electorate, whether it was \$20 million in Murray Bridge, whether it was \$3½ million in Mannum, a couple of million dollars in Strathalbyn, a couple of million dollars coming to Langhorne Creek or \$5 million into Murray Bridge North School.

We also established a \$10 million fund to address mobile blackspots across South Australia, enabling us to leverage another \$10 million in funding from the federal government and telecommunications providers. This was vital work because, after 16 years of the previous Labor government where one regional mobile tower was built, we put in 54. I note that there are still many blackspots across the regions—about 400—but we made a fair go at it.

**Mr Whetstone:** Fifty-nine.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Fifty-nine, I am corrected. I also want to speak about another road project that was a \$77 million policy bid from the Liberal Party that we completed—eight country roads. Bringing country roads back to 110 km/h is something dear to my heart. This includes the Andamooka Road, which is from Andamooka to Olympic Dam, and the Cleve Road, which is from Cleve to Kimba. I have travelled multiple times on that recently.

It includes the Goyder Highway, which is Crystal Brook to Gulnare, the Riddoch Highway, which is Mount Gambier to Port MacDonnell, the Ngarkat Highway, which is Pinnaroo to Bordertown, and the Browns Well Highway, which is Loxton to Pinnaroo. The total length of those two roads, which at the time linked Chaffey, Hammond and MacKillop, is 200 kilometres. There was shoulder sealing work and a massive uplift for heavy freight and the community to travel on those roads. It also includes Clay Wells Road, which is Southern Ports Highway to Callendale, and Carpenter Rocks Road, which is Carpenter Rocks to Mount Gambier.

I am very proud of what we did as a government in the four years we were in government, delivering services across the state, whether they were transport services, whether they were health services, whether they were education services or other services, such as mobile phone towers, for instance, to help open up communities and give people access to those vital links so they can communicate and run their businesses.

It was such a privilege, even in my electorate, to see over \$214 million of identified projects invested in across the board. We saw grant funding assist people like Parilla Premium Potatoes. It was fantastic to see their \$50 million build the other day with their new packing shed at Parilla. I really want to commend what the Marshall Liberal government did for the regions. We are still here for the regions in opposition, but I am really pleased about the projects that we built, about the projects that we finished and about all the projects we initiated to support regional communities across South Australia.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (12:03):** As the minister representing the Minister for Primary Industries in this house, I rise to speak on the member's motion. He might be surprised to hear that I am speaking to oppose the motion, but it is not because I do not think that there were some activities undertaken in regional areas over the last four years. I am the first one to acknowledge that there were, just as there were the four years before that and the four years before that and the four years before that because it has been the history of governments here in South Australia to invest in the regions. For those opposite and the previous Marshall Liberal government to pretend that they were the first ones to stumble on the fact of the existence of regional communities is a joke—an absolute joke.

**Mr Whetstone:** How much did you put into PIRSA? Your budget for PIRSA? Your budget?

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** I hear the complaints from the member for Chaffey and he does not need to take it from me, as he can take it from his electors because they voted accordingly at the recent state election. They gave him a reminder that it starts with your local community. What you might do in executive government is a little bonus on top of that. He is well warned by his constituents that he needs to put his ear closer to the ground in his community, because the swing that he had against him is a demonstration of how he turned his back on his community.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** I do not lay the same charge at the feet of the member for Hammond. I have a lot of respect for the member for Hammond. I do not think anyone in this place could accuse the member for Hammond of not genuinely being from a regional community, believing in that regional community and doing his best to serve that regional community.

In fact, when I was fortunate enough in the last term of the last Labor government, the member for Hammond put a couple of proposals to me and I was happy to support them because I knew he was genuine about them and I knew that his community wanted them and he delivered accordingly. That is the member for Hammond in my experience.

I cannot say that for all his colleagues in the previous Marshall Liberal government. Let's have a look at what their first minister for regions did and that was tell this place that he did not believe in country cabinet. He thought it was unnecessary. He did not believe in the merits of taking the entire executive government leadership out to regional communities so that those communities could have direct, personal, firsthand access to decision-makers in executive government. He thought it was a waste of time. That was the view from the member for Chaffey and his colleagues opposite. We always kept up country cabinet meetings. In fact, we kept up shadow country cabinet meetings and what happened?

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Member for Chaffey, you have a chance to make your own contribution if you wish.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** The first thing they did legislatively that impacted the regions was their mining bill that not even their own caucus completely agreed with. For the first time in recent modern political memory we had a substantial number of the government of the day crossing the floor to vote with the opposition and independent MPs against a government's own legislation. That is how the previous government recognised regional communities. It is just extraordinary.

I will admit that there have been some significant regional projects which were carried out under the previous four years but, please, let us not claim that they were initiatives of the former Liberal government because in some cases they simply were not. The contracts signed and the funding provided for the Joy Baluch Bridge were under the previous Labor government, not the former Liberal government. It is the same with the Whyalla High School. To try to claim that this was a Liberal Party initiative is a joke and to try and claim that there was a Liberal Party initiative for \$1.5 billion of investment across schools across South Australia is also a joke, because more than two-thirds of that was provided for by the former Labor government.

All of those activities, all of that spending, all of those improvements in those areas were not initiatives of the previous Liberal government. They just happened to turn up there in a shirt and tie with a pair of scissors to cut ribbons. That is not recognising regional communities, that is being there for the good times when it suits them. That is the approach from the member for Chaffey and some of those opposite.

I think, electorally, the results speak for themselves. I liked the former member for Stuart. I thought he was an honourable and decent man, but I think his community reflected on the performance of the previous Marshall government and voted accordingly. I think it is a shame that he does not have some other capacity to serve this parliament or the community of South Australia because I thought his approach to public service and to the parliament was a worthwhile one and, in some respects, a rare one: very up-front, very honest, very calm and reasonable to deal with. But he suffered at the hands of a broad-based regional constituency that felt that they had been let down by the previous Marshall Liberal government.



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

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** The member for Mawson gives the example of Kangaroo Island. This was an extraordinary result where we had what was previously one of the jewels in the crown of the Liberal Party—a regional seat, sometimes incorporating various parts of the Fleurieu Peninsula and peri-urban southern suburbs of Adelaide—vote overwhelmingly in favour of a local member who had done the hard yards to represent them.

I have to say, as much as I have enjoyed the contributions by the member for Light and the new member for Schubert about their passion for areas including the Barossa, please do not try to claim that the previous Marshall Liberal government actually did something about a new Barossa hospital. Putting \$5 million at the end of the forward estimates to purchase a piece of land—

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Order on my left!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** —does not constitute building a new hospital. That is a joke—a joke. That is not doing anything to provide additional health services to the Barossa or the community.

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Member for Schubert!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** The member for Schubert says, 'You had 16 years and what did you do?' Well, do you know what we did? Do you know what we did, or in fact do you know what I will say we did not do? We did not sell the local community a pup by pretending—

**Mrs Hurn:** You did zero. You did zero.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** The member for Schubert is warned.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** —that they were building a hospital, which they have not done anything towards. Buying a piece of land is different from building a new hospital. You want to know what building a new hospital in a regional area looks like? Try committing \$220 million to a new Mount Barker hospital. So you might be proud of your ED upgrade; what that community actually needs is a new entire hospital, and guess who is delivering it?

*Members interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** The member for Chaffey is warned!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** In the middle of a conservative health seat, guess who is delivering it? A Labor government, because that is a government that recognises regional communities—not those who pay lip-service and read roll calls of projects that were already baked into funding allocations from departments.

So spare me the rhetoric about the Marshall Liberal government finally recognising a regional community, because those opposite have failed their constituencies. It is no coincidence that regional communities are leaving them in droves when it comes to electoral support. Previous safe seats, 15 per cent plus, are now less than 5 per cent. They only have to look in the mirror to understand why: because they pay them lip-service. They do not do the hard work to better represent them.

We went around and announced not only new beds in regional communities but also new ambulances and ambulance crews to provide the health services across South Australia—not just one new hospital in Mount Barker but from Mount Gambier all the way up through the Mid North, through Yorke Peninsula, all the way around to Port Lincoln. This is an investment in health services, because that is what those communities have been crying out for.

What did the former Minister for Regional Affairs say? 'You don't need to talk to cabinet. You don't need access to the decision-makers of government. We don't think that that's important.' Well, the results speak for themselves and those opposite have only themselves to blame.

**Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (12:13):** It was a very, very interesting speech just finished by the member for Lee and I will comment later. I rise today in support of the member for Hammond's

motion to commend the Marshall Liberal government for recognising the importance of regional South Australia and its communities, noting their contribution to the economy is worth more than \$29 billion per year.

Regional South Australia is vitally important to our state's economy. I am pleased to continue to take any opportunity to highlight this fact in this place. I would particularly like to reflect on my electorate, which is a strong contributor to our state's gross domestic product (GDP). It is a strong contributor to the agriculture and processing sectors, with serious contributions made to GDP through dryland agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry sectors.

The broader Limestone Coast comprises a diverse and dynamic community over 21,000 square kilometres. In 2021 the region had an estimated population of 67,371. In the Limestone Coast, agriculture, forestry and fishing are the largest employers, generating over 5 ½ thousand FTE jobs in 2020-21. However, employment is steadily evolving, with employment growth in tourism and service industries such as education, health care and aged care.

The recently released census data underscores the significant role and contribution of employment in the regions. In 2020-21 the Limestone Coast region contributed 18.6 per cent of regional South Australia's employment and 16.9 per cent of its value added. In the year ending June 2021 there were 31,915 jobs located in the Limestone Coast and more than 7,500 local businesses, and 33,304 residents were employed.

The Limestone Coast provides employment to farmers and farmhands, viticulturalists, vineyard workers and winemakers, commodity processing workers, allied businesses and workers that provide services and supplies and repairs, educators and health workers. It is a melting pot of opportunity and a region I am extremely proud of and never tire of talking about.

I am pleased to emphasise what the Marshall Liberal government achieved during its time in government specifically for my region. We had the added challenge of COVID, an unprecedented situation that weighed heavily on the state, and, given the location of MacKillop, the border communities in particular. Despite this, we kept our economy strong through grants and support to help keep businesses afloat.

We delivered on roads, upgrading and improving safety that in my electorate led to the return of 110 km/h speed limits on the Ngarkat Highway and the Clay Wells Road, as mentioned by the member for Hammond. We completed the northern section of the Penola bypass, ensuring freight and heavy vehicles completely bypass this important tourist town. We spent millions of dollars on the Dukes and Princes highways, improving safety for the many vehicles that travel these busy highways.

We have invested in our hospitals: \$3.1 million at the Naracoorte hospital to upgrade their surgical theatre and sterilising area, and \$2 million in Bordertown's new community health building. We revitalised Kingston's main street. We invested in schools to transition year 7 to high school. We implemented a \$5 million investment in Naracoorte High School and \$4 million in Kingston Community School.

During COVID, we allocated \$100,000 of stimulus funding to individual schools across the state and \$30,000 to kindergartens across the state. We invested in the Balharry kindergarten at Lucindale to the value of \$500,000 and upgraded school buildings at Lucindale. I was recently invited to attend the opening of the buildings at Lucindale, and they really are fantastic learning spaces for the students and teachers of this community.

Reliable mobile phone coverage in the region is not just a convenience; it is an essential part of life, a business tool and a safety measure. We established a \$10 million fund to address mobile blackspots across South Australia. In MacKillop, we have delivered mobile phone towers at Keilira, Tower Road, Legges Lane and Avenue Range. This is an ongoing challenge, and I will continue to advocate for towers at Furner and Sherwood.

While in government, we invested heavily in our sporting infrastructure. This is particularly important in our regions, where sport connects communities. The Naracoorte Sports Centre received \$214,550 to upgrade their courts, and \$275,000 was granted to the Tintinara Oval and Recreation Association for their clubroom upgrades; \$153,000 to the Kalangadoo War Memorial Park and

Community Sports Club; \$108,000 followed by another \$96,000 for the McLaughlin Park Oval at Millicent; \$160,000 for the Kybybolite football club for lighting; \$445,000 for the Mundulla football club; \$230,000 for the Bordertown football club; \$99,000 for the Tailem Bend Netball Club; and \$120,000 for lighting at Mount Burr. The list goes on. There are dozens of other sporting clubs in my electorate who also benefited from smaller grants for programs, funding and equipment.

We invested in our jetties with a \$5 million upgrade at Beachport and improvements for the Meningie jetty. We invested in the CFS, with new or upgraded CFS trucks and sheds. We can be proud of our achievements over the past four years.

I know that in my electorate there are still challenges that need to be addressed. I will continue to work hard to advocate for access to avoidable housing, addressing coastal erosion and more mobile phone towers. The importance of and strength of our regions should never be underestimated: 29 per cent of South Australia's population lives and works outside the metropolitan area.

Regions are the economic powerhouse that drive prosperity for the whole state. I am proud to say that my electorate is part of that powerhouse. I want to raise a couple of other points: most interestingly that, just prior to speaking to this bill, we were speaking about Homelessness Week, which sits between 1 and 7 August. A number of speakers in this house talked about homelessness and social housing. One thing that really would help the regions right now is affordable housing. Why do we need affordable housing?

First, it needs to be affordable for those who can afford this housing, not only to attract and house the workers we so desperately need in the regions. It is recognised that social housing has bottlenecked, with no movement through the social housing network. That is because there is a lack of affordable housing for social housing tenants to move on to when they come to better times, more financial means, and leave. We need to make available these social houses for the homelessness that was spoken about in the prior bill.

I hope this new Malinauskas Labor government recognises that, to solve the homelessness, it is not just about building social housing, but we need affordable housing right across the state, in particular in the regions, because we want to see the population grow and we want to see workers in this affordable housing, and we also want to see people move and transition out of social housing into affordable housing, which will solve the issues. I hope this new Labor government recognises and sees this.

It is very interesting that I heard the member for Lee talk about the Marshall government and what it perhaps could have done or done better, and we are addressing that in opposition now as a result of the election back in March. It was really fascinating to hear—and I can tell you that the 30,000 new residents in Mount Barker really will appreciate this new \$220 million hospital—that the member for Lee considers Mount Barker regional. I do not understand it, I am sorry.

I know that Mount Barker is beyond the Tollgate and that you have to go through the tunnels and up the South Eastern Freeway, but I think that most people in Mount Barker would probably find themselves connected very strongly to the city of Adelaide. I think people moved into Mount Barker after the investment in the tunnels and the upgrade of the South Eastern Freeway, giving them greater access to Adelaide, and would also consider themselves metropolitan Adelaide rather than regional Adelaide living in Mount Barker.

We need greater investment in our regional hospitals, and I think the member for Lee says they are doing this through Mount Barker. I have to say that I appreciate two things: the Marshall Liberal government did spend I think \$3½ million upgrading the Naracoorte hospital. The new Malinauskas government is allocating another \$8 million to this hospital. It really will be interesting to see what this brings to the Naracoorte hospital, but I need to tell you that they still run around with buckets in the corridors when it is raining, because the roof leaks.

I can tell you that if you go into this hospital you will note that a lot of the fixtures and wares of the hospital make it look like the 1960s era rather than 2022. That hospital will not be alone. If I go to other hospitals around my electorate and probably around other regions, we do not want to be left out or left alone. I commend this motion to the house.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (12:23):** I rise to speak against this motion, and I will explain why. It is not that I do not acknowledge—and I will acknowledge first-up—the importance of the regions to the state's economy and to society generally. I do acknowledge that. The reason I speak against the motion is that the motion implies that the Marshall Liberal government was the first one to find the regions and to notice that the regions were there and do something for them. That is just not true. The regions were supported by the previous Labor government in a whole range of ways. In fact, a number of the projects for which the Liberal Party did the ribbon cutting were previously funded by the Labor government, and I will go into some of those details.

It was interesting to hear the member for MacKillop speak in defence of the Marshall Liberal government. It was interesting, as he spent most of the last four years of the previous government distancing himself from the party as much as he could. At every opportunity, either in the media or in this chamber, he distanced himself—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Actually, my margin went up.

**An honourable member:** So did mine.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Did it really? By 11 per cent? No, right, thank you.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Order! It is disorderly to respond to interjections, member for Light.

**An honourable member:** The member for Lee didn't know his numbers; that's a bit of a worry.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Don't worry, I know my numbers. The member for MacKillop had a whole range of reasons. In fact, he crossed the floor on a number of occasions to vote against—

**Mr Whetstone:** Are we talking regions or politics?

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Mr Speaker, if the member for Chaffey wants to make a contribution, he can do that later. Perhaps he could grant me the courtesy—

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Order! Just get back to your contribution, member for Light.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As I said, the member for MacKillop spent most of his last term distancing himself from the Liberal Party as much as he could. In fact, there was speculation that he would run as an Independent; that is how far his commentary—

**Mr Whetstone:** Concentrate on the regions only.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** He is a regional member; it's quite relevant. He is a regional member and what he says and does is quite relevant.

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Yes, I am a real embarrassment. I have held my—

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Member for Chaffey, you are warned for the second time. I want to hear your contribution, so please do not make me throw you out.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** I have actually held my seat for five elections, mate, which once was a Liberal seat, you might want to remember. I will have to repeat myself, Mr Acting Speaker, because I was interrupted.

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Go your hardest, mate, go your hardest. It was interesting to hear in his contribution today how he defended the Marshall Liberal government, when he spent most of his time, when they were in government, actually distancing himself from the government of the day. Putting that aside, he is not alone there: there are a few other Liberal Party members, and some ex-members, who did the same thing, and I can understand why. I can understand why because,

deep in his heart, the member for MacKillop knows that the Liberal Party, the Liberal government, did not look after the regions at all.

I can clearly remember a very passionate speech in this chamber about how the Marshall Liberal government responded to the COVID pandemic and how it was impacting on his electorate and the South-East. I would not say it was a supportive passionate speech; it was quite critical of the Marshall Liberal government, particularly for all those border communities. It was about their inability to acknowledge the importance of the regions and how they interact with other states. Their response to that was appalling, and he actually said so in this chamber, and how it was impacting on regional people. However, I am glad to see that the member for MacKillop has been re-educated and reformed and now sees things in a different light.

Let's go through some of the things they mentioned regarding education and the year 7 contribution. Well, that is true: they did move year 7 to high school. What happened in a lot of schools, though—and the schools in my electorate were the same—was that they had to redirect funding, which had been provided by the previous Labor government, to accommodate the additional year 7s, rather than put it into other valuable projects for the high school students. That is the reality. Most schools had to reallocate funding to accommodate the new year 7 groups in high school, which meant—

*Ms Pratt interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Member for Frome, you are warned.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** —that other facilities could not be built. If you talk to the governing councils in some of those regional areas and in my electorate, you will hear how they were annoyed that the \$10 million provided by the previous Labor government had to then go to fund a Liberal idea, rather than upgrade the existing facilities to ensure that secondary students got the quality education they should get in conjunction with the good teachers they have.

Then we come to the Barossa hospital—that is a wonderful item. Again, as the member for Lee said, no, we did not build a new Barossa hospital; that is correct. Nor did we, on a number of occasions, mislead the Barossa people that we would do so. The previous Labor government made it very clear what the preconditions of building a new Barossa hospital were, and some in the community did not like that. We were open about that.

What the Liberal government did for the last four years was give the impression that they were doing something when they actually did nothing. They had a report, and their first report said that they needed a second report. That second report is not even finished yet, and all they committed, funding wise, was a few million dollars to buy some land at the end of the forward estimates—at the end of the forward estimates.

It is interesting, because one of the landowners who had been approached has recently approached me and told me that his land was considered by the government, and now it is not being considered anymore.

**Mrs Hurn:** Because your government is delaying it again.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Oh, that's right.

*Mrs Hurn interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** You just keep saying that—

*Mrs Hurn interjecting:*

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Member for Schubert!

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** You just keep telling people that because one day they actually might believe you. The reality is that they did nothing. For four years they did nothing except a commissioner's report and then a commissioner's report into a report. That is what the Marshall Liberal government did in relation to the regions. They did not lay one brick for the new Barossa hospital. A number of the projects for which the Marshall Liberal government did the ribbon-cutting,

as mentioned by the member for Lee, were things that were funded and committed to by the previous Labor government.

This government has committed \$100 million to the South-East, which I am sure the member for MacKillop appreciates. He is nodding positively so he does appreciate that. It is also interesting to note that members—I should say 'opposite' but I cannot say that—alongside me said that country cabinets were a waste of time, a waste of money. Well, I can tell you that country people do not think that. We held shadow cabinets when we were in opposition, and we continue that process now.

Also, regional people do appreciate the opportunity to talk to ministers directly, not when they just fly in and fly out. They also appreciate the opportunity to speak to key decision-makers in government. They do appreciate that, and it is a commitment we have made to make sure that we fully understand the regional people.

The Liberal opposition clearly did not view the election results in terms of how regional people saw their performance, because I think the election results are a pretty good indicator of what regional people think predominantly of their Liberal Party members. If you read the Moriarty report into the review about why the Liberal Party failed at the last election it makes interesting reading in terms of how these Liberal Party members think about—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** I know you referred to them yesterday as geriatrics who are not to be taken into account, but they are your party members.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** I don't know. I don't have a Liberal Party membership—never will. Let's look at the results of what people think, and not what the Liberal Party echo chamber thinks. What do the people on the ground think in these regional areas? In Flinders, sadly, there was a swing against the Liberal Party of 23.1 per cent.

**Mr Telfer:** You got 11 per cent of the vote.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** The reality is that there was a swing against the Liberal Party of 23.1 per cent, okay. In Frome, there was a 10 per cent swing to the Labor Party; in Hammond, an 11.7 per cent swing to the Labor Party. The Finniss one is important. Sorry about this, but the Finniss one is important because he was the former minister for agriculture, fisheries, regional development etc. There was a swing against the Liberal Party in Frome as well.

**An honourable member:** What was the swing in Finniss?

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** In Finniss, the swing was 13.7 per cent.

**Mr Basham:** This is a load of rubbish!

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Sorry?

**Mr Basham:** It's a load of rubbish. That is not the swing.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Order!

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** I am happy for you to stand up and correct me.

*Mr Basham interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** Okay. When you look at what other people think, what the voters think, which is more important than what we think in here, at the end of the day, clearly, vote-wise the Liberal Party had a poor showing in the regional areas.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** There is a point of order from the member for Finniss.

**Mr BASHAM:** The member's time has expired.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** You did not need a point of order for that, member for Finniss. The member for Chaffey.

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:33):** Sir, I appreciate your protection through my contribution. I do rise to support the member for Hammond's—

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** You will receive the same protection as every other member has received.

**Mr WHETSTONE:** —thank you, sir—excellent motion to recognise the importance of the regions in South Australia, but I am gobsmacked at the last two government representatives who have stood up and just politicised their contributions to the regions of South Australia. I think that every South Australian should understand how bad those presentations were. The member for Light's presentation was factually incorrect at every corner. The member for Lee's contribution was just a city boy trying to be a country boy, let me tell you.

I do want to talk about the importance of the regions. I want to talk about not only exactly what the regions mean to the state's economy but also what the regions mean to the state's character. South Australia is a great state, and it has a number of great regions—not only for work, not only to visit, but also to live. Over the former term of the Marshall Liberal government, we saw initiatives and policies that were implemented into the regions, and we did much good work.

I would like to acknowledge that there were a number of obstacles while in government at that time. Not only were we dealing with drought, we were dealing with the pandemic, we were dealing with a number of biosecurity issues and we were dealing with instability, particularly on the global stage. We were also dealing with some uncertainty with the federal Coalition government.

If I get back to the importance of the regions here in South Australia, the investment that was put into regional South Australia, I think, was second to none. Yes, there were some that were poorly implemented. As the member for Lee has said many times, 'It was us. It was us. It was us.' Well, that is the rotation of governments—in and out of government. Sometimes you get to cut the ribbons of a former government's initiative, but I am sure that the current government are cutting some of those ribbons on the initiatives of the former Marshall Liberal government. That is the way it works, so we will not get too precious about some of those projects.

I do want to acknowledge some of the great work. The Regional Growth Fund was a great initiative to support business to accelerate the opportunities for investment into some of those private businesses—and we spent all our regional growth money, unlike the former government which never put through a formal process. At the end of the day, when the Marshall Liberal government came in, there were significant projects that were never realised. I think that is a very sad state, particularly for the complexity of regional business.

The Mobile Phone Black Spot Program is something that the former government never acknowledged, but we saw fit to put in a \$10 million contribution and use that money to leverage not only the federal government, not only local government, but also the telcos, and we put 59 towers into the system in South Australia. The former government almost put nothing, but I do not want to focus on what they did not do, I want to focus on what we as a government did do.

Regional roads: a \$3 billion investment into regional roads that had been left to rack and ruin. I know that in my electorate we saw the upgrade of the Browns Well Highway. The member for Light, I think he was responsible for reducing the speed limit instead of fixing up the roads and making them safer, just like the other eight highways around the state. We need to look at the investment, the productivity gain that we gave those South Australians—those transport operators, those primary producers, the tourism industry that benefited from that significant upgrade.

We also put significant investment into emergency services, in not only vehicle investment but the infrastructure around emergency services, particularly dealing with the number of fires that we had over that time. The pandemic stimulus money that was put out there, I think, not only went to regions; it went to all of South Australia, and it had a significant impact on the confidence in the regions of South Australia. We saw that particularly in tourism, in those regional investment opportunities in health and in education, where it really did give payday to the fabric of a regional community.

We have to understand that regional communities are small and they rely on those institutions—a good hospital, a good school. Making sure you have good roads, safe roads, and

making sure that businesses have a competitive opportunity, is also very important. I would like some of my other colleagues to have a contribution into regional South Australia.

The Marshall Liberal government was not perfect. The current government is not perfect, but I think the Marshall Liberal government's contribution over that four years was not recognised. We left South Australia in a better place than when we started, when we came into government. We gave every South Australian the opportunity to live in a state that was better prepared for a pandemic, it was better prepared for natural disasters and it was better prepared just in a rounding off term. I think it is all very fair for the current government to criticise the former government, but I can assure you that at the heart of this party regional South Australia is a very firm focus.

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (12:39):** I rise to support the motion from the member for Hammond, and recognise that there are so many opportunities for our state that can be driven by our regions. We need to get the policy decisions right from the state government level to maximise those opportunities. As is often the way in this place, I am a strong advocate for regional South Australia, regions that contribute so much and industries that put \$29 billion into the state's economy.

I want to especially recognise paragraph (c) of the motion moved by the member for Hammond regarding the Our Regions Matter blueprint, and speak about the extensive consultation process that was followed. I would like to recognise Mr Mark Sutton, the chair of the South Australian Regional Development Strategy consultative committee, who travelled right across our state with some 15 different visits to cities and towns, hearing directly from local community leaders, business leaders, local government and many others about the challenges, opportunities and potential future of their communities.

In my previous role as president of the Local Government Association of South Australia I was privileged to be a member of this consultative group, as well as Infrastructure SA CEO, Jeremy Conway; Maree Wauchope; Royal Flying Doctor Service SA CEO, Tony Vaughan; and the late great Bill Spurr. As indicated, this was a wideranging consultation process, and it really was exciting for us, as a volunteer committee, to hear about the exciting opportunities from across every region of our wonderful state: from the Limestone Coast to the Riverland, the Fleurieu, Yorke Peninsula, the Adelaide Hills, the Barossa, the Spencer Gulf and Eyre Peninsula, indeed every corner of our state.

Taking all this into account, a comprehensive blueprint was developed with a vision to maximise these opportunities. We must move on from the Adelaide-centric mentality of South Australia and look at positive policy opportunities that maximise our regions' potential, encourage people to live in our regions, and incentivise business to establish and grow in our regional industries.

The five areas highlighted by the regional blueprint are so important for our regions. Firstly, regional voice: we need to ensure that the government is listening directly to regional communities and leaders so they properly understand their needs and opportunities—not just tokenism, but real understanding, really listening to our regional voice.

Regional connectivity is all about ensuring investment in appropriate infrastructure for our regional communities, and this starts with a road network that is appropriately invested in. In Flinders, the last four years has seen unprecedented investment into our highway road network, which was so needed for so long after years of neglect. If you drive down Eyre Highway now, it is a wider and safer roadway with important shoulder sealing works being done. It is likewise on Tod Highway, the main connector road through the middle of Eyre Peninsula, and Birdseye Highway, which runs east-west from Cowell to Cleve to Lock to Elliston.

Regional connections are vital, and that is why regional connectivity was highlighted within this blueprint process. Regional connectivity also means digital connectivity and, as has already been spoken about, I have been so encouraged by the significant investment in partnership between the former Liberal federal and state governments into the mobile phone Black Spot Program. This work is incredibly important for families and businesses in regional communities, and I encourage the current government to continue it.

Regional leadership and skills was the third point highlighted by the blueprint, recognising that enabling and strengthening skills and capacity within regional communities is vital for the long-term sustainability of our communities, enabling those there to be better and the young ones in



our communities to stay in our communities. This is so important, which is why the investment in education and skills within our regions is incredibly vital. I will be urging the education minister to continue to consider our regional communities.

Regional services was the fourth point, and these are so important for the long-term future of our regional communities. Most important for my community are our regional health services. Without proper investment into regional health services our communities will not last; without appropriate investment these communities are going to be isolated, and there will be community members who cannot continue to live in those communities. In the end, we will have a less vibrant and unsustainable community.

Regional health delivery is so important. We cannot rely on those in our communities who live outside the metropolitan Adelaide area having to come into the Royal Adelaide Hospital for their medical services.

The fifth point made in the regional blueprint was regional investment. This is not just about government investment. Private investment is vital as well. There need to be partnerships across levels of government and with private investment to truly realise the incredible potential of regional South Australia. Opportunity is knocking at the door for our state. We need a proactive government that is willing to open that door and put positive policies in place for our region.

We also need government to get out of the way at times. We need to get the basics right in our regional communities. We need a regional health system that is appropriate to the needs of our community and not one that is designed by bureaucrats in Adelaide. We need a Department for Primary Industries and Regions that is willing to put positive measures in place and not put in regulation and red tape just for the sake of it.

We need a Department for Infrastructure and Transport that has a vision for the future of our whole state, not just a metrocentric one. We need departments of housing and planning that are willing to partner with local government and private industry to deliver appropriate housing that suits the needs of our communities and to properly plan for the positive future of our regions, which we can deliver. I could go on. There is a clear role for our state government to play. We need a government with a vision for our regions, and we need those decision-makers to properly recognise this, from ministers all the way up to the Premier.

**Mrs HURN (Schubert) (12:46):** I rise in support of this motion moved by the member for Hammond and acknowledge him as a really strong advocate for our regions, not only as a parliamentarian but also as a gun shearer in his time. I would particularly like to thank and echo all the contributions that have been made by those on this side of the chamber. I, too, would like to express my deep disappointment at the contribution of those opposite. In fact, I would say that their contributions show exactly how out of touch they are with regional South Australia. They have dedicated their entire contribution to talking about politics, and that is exactly what regional South Australia hates.

The Liberal Party has long recognised, invested in and fought for the regions in South Australia. That was particularly replicated under the former Marshall Liberal government, where regional South Australia was the very happy beneficiary of a massive \$3 billion worth of investment across more than 1,000 projects. That is quite extraordinary when you compare that to the track record of the last 16 years of the Labor government. Local communities in my electorate of Schubert saw unprecedented investment, whether that was in regional roads, sporting clubs, local schools, tourism projects, emergency service upgrades and many more. This was an investment that was never seen before.

As someone who is very proudly from a generational farming family, like many families in Schubert, the contribution of our regions certainly is not lost on me. For almost 200 years in South Australia, people have moved to our regions with dreams of opportunity and prosperity. We know that our regions are primarily responsible for our clothes, not to mention, of course, our delicious food and wine. I have said before in this place that without our farmers and our regions we would all be hungry, naked and sober.

When you look at it in that perspective, it is actually quite startling when you see how many people struggle with agricultural literacy. It is quite fascinating that there are people who still believe that chocolate milk comes from brown cows. There are Australian kids who believe that cotton is an animal product, have no idea that bacon comes from a pig and are convinced that yoghurt grows on trees. I say to the education minister that he has a lot of work to do, as we all do.

If you ask somebody where the food is from, do not be shocked by the reply, because it is often 'from the shops'. Seemingly, there is a mind blank about how it grows and how it gets to the shop, and I think that shows an enormous disconnect with our food chain, about how our produce gets from paddock to plate.

Of course, while I can see the humour in many of these comments, it is a sign that we must do more to really educate the next generation to ensure that they understand that grapes are grown on vines that produce some of the best wine in the nation, that the apricots used in their jam do grow on trees, that bread is from wheat, that milk, surprisingly, comes from cows, and that the wool from a sheep does make our clothes.

These industries represent quite a massive contribution to our economy, generating \$29 billion per year to our state, and not only that, but they really do underpin thousands and thousands of jobs right across South Australia, including in my electorate of Schubert, from pickers to shearers, to pruners and even those who are working on the bottling line.

It is important to know this because, if you cast your eyes back over centuries, accessibility to food has long been such a pivotal element in conflicts and struggles, and I suspect that it really will be for many centuries to come because without our regions there are no farmers and without our farmers there is no food and no food security, and without food security there is no security. That is why our regions are so important. They are the ballast for our farming pursuits that really sustain the globe and we must do everything we can to allow them to thrive and to prosper, for government to get out of the way and to build the infrastructure that they need to grow.

That is why I am so proud to be in the chamber today as so many members are reflecting on the investments made by the former Marshall Liberal government. There is always more that we can be doing for our regions and our regional communities. I am a really proud regional member in this state parliament with the privilege of representing what I know to be the very best electorate in this state and, indeed, the nation.

I look forward to working with all colleagues not just on this side of the house but with those opposite to make sure that regional South Australia can flourish, it can thrive and that not a cent is wasted when we are investing in the regions and in agriculture in South Australia. The proof is in the pudding and the returns speak for themselves.

**Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (12:52):** The regions of South Australia are so important to South Australia, and the Marshall Liberal government certainly recognised that in the amount of investment that it put towards those regions. I had the privilege of serving as the minister responsible for primary industries and regional development for about 20 months and certainly one of the proudest things I have ever done in my life was to represent the people of the regions.

As we look around this chamber, we can see the history that is in front of us—the carpet with the wheat and the grapes—and how important the regions were to our state in the past and now into the future. We need to make sure that we invest in these regional areas, and that is what the Marshall Liberal government did.

I guess what I was really disappointed about was the Treasurer's remarks in his contribution to this motion. He, looking at the motion that is on the paper, decided that we were not acknowledging what other governments in the past have spent in the regions. That just shows the paranoia they have that they do not invest in the regions, because it does not actually state anything like that. It was just talking about the Marshall Liberal government's time and its investment in the regions, which has been quite clear.

We have seen significant investments. The member for Hammond mentioned Parilla potatoes, a fantastic business and a fantastic investment in that region. Parilla is not one of the most prosperous areas of South Australia, but it had a \$50 million investment spent there. Then, as a

business, understanding that they needed workers, they invested in housing as well for those workers—a credit to that business. That is what we want to see—businesses supporting the regions—and we are there to support people who are prepared to support the regions.

Quite clearly, I have seen great investment in my electorate over those four years. About \$125 million was spent in Finniss, in those regions, from the state government during that time. Yes, some of that was earmarked under the previous government—I totally acknowledge that—but, likewise, there is some of it that has not been delivered as yet that is also budgeted to be done.

Recently, we saw the Minister for Education had the privilege of opening the Goolwa Secondary College. Certainly, probably my proudest achievement was to get that secondary college opened in a town the size of Goolwa, about 15,000 people, which did not have a high school. It was the largest town in the state that did not have a high school by a country mile. To get that opened and see the work that has been done there and the privilege those kids now have of attending a world-class high school is fantastic.

It is a credit to the principal there, Rebecca Moore, for the culture she is establishing in that high school. This is going to change Goolwa as a community to have that ability for those students to not just do their primary school there but do their high school and remain in the town. Up until now, we have seen kids have to leave town to finish their education. Sadly, that develops a culture of leaving town. We will see Goolwa continue to go from strength to strength.

There have been other significant investments also in Finniss, particularly around tourism. The obvious one is the Granite Island Causeway, an icon of South Australia. Unfortunately, time had taken its toll on the wooden structure and talking with the workers who have been working on the demolition of the old causeway, it was certainly in worse condition than was thought, rather than what people were saying that it could be saved.

There were sections of the timbers underneath the decking, the next layer down, and, as they pulled the decking off, they crumbled into sawdust. White ants had actually destroyed all structure within those timbers. It was a real challenge to pull that causeway down. Also, they are in the process of reinstating bits at either end. They have done the mainland side nearly completely now. They basically had to replace most of the timbers in that besides those that were replaced back in 2012. We have seen a significant need to improve that.

That \$143 million to deliver that causeway has placed it there for another hundred-plus years of access across to the island for people to enjoy that walk. It intrigues me that I have never been down there alone, including at 3 o'clock in the morning; there is always someone else walking on that causeway. It is quite incredible the amount of use it gets.

We have also seen other investments in Finniss. At the Hotel Elliot in Port Elliot, they are in the process of building a tourist conference and wedding venue alongside the hotel. They received half a million dollars funding from the Marshall Liberal government and is due to be opened relatively soon. It is a great investment.

Right at the moment, in Victor Harbor we are seeing them working on the Ocean Street upgrade. We are seeing the wonderful work that the Victor Harbor council are doing, 50 per cent funded by the state government, money that was given to them by the Marshall Liberal government of about \$3½ million to upgrade the southern end of Ocean Street.

Great credit to the workers on the site at the moment; they are doing a great job of getting that delivered on time—in fact, ahead of time. The first section of road that was due to be open mid-September has already been reopened. It is great to see that work being done, even in the wet conditions that they have had to deal with over the month of August in particular.

Getting back to my disappointment about the comments made by the Treasurer. The regions are so important. We must never criticise investment in those regions. We must always promote that investment. It is important that we make sure we continue to see the regions be a powerhouse of South Australia. This parliament has been built, including the walls themselves, on agriculture as much as anything. It is important that we continue to see that investment and make sure that we are able to deliver for our communities in the regions.

I am looking forward to the Treasurer making sure that the money that is spent in those regions continues to be the same as what it was under the Marshall Liberal government. I would be surprised if that is the case. I am looking forward to the fact that over the next four years that could be the sort of money they are going to invest in the regions, but I very much doubt it. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

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

*Parliamentary Procedure*

### **ANSWERS TABLED**

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

*Ministerial Statement*

### **VET QUALITY AUDIT BLITZ**

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:00):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** The Malinauskas Labor government is unequivocal on the need to support skills and training and the benefits it delivers for individuals, communities and our economy. We are focused on ensuring that South Australians have access to quality training and that our training system is geared to respond to meet current and future skills needs. South Australia's vocational education and training system must always be of the highest integrity.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption's recent report, 'Received or deceived? Managing and monitoring the conduct of government contractors', contained some concerning findings. The report was publicly released in June this year.

The ICAC investigation found that a registered training organisation had historically been involved in subsidy manipulation through false reporting. The provider has not been named by the ICAC. While there was no finding that any public officers were involved in the subsidy manipulation, the report did find room for improvement in how the department ascertains whether subsidies are payable. I note that the department had already acted to improve processes and therefore ICAC did not provide any recommendations.

As the Minister for Training and Skills, I have zero tolerance for the misuse of any training subsidies. In light of this report, I want to make sure that every funded training provider in South Australia is doing the right thing. I have asked my department to instigate a quality audit blitz on all funded RTOs to provide increased assurance to South Australians. This includes TAFE and non-TAFE providers. We have increased the number of compliance officers to undertake this intensive program, which will commence in October 2022.

We will be working with all 158 providers to seek evidence-based assurances of the integrity of their training subsidy claims. This is a timely course of action. All South Australians must have confidence in our vocational training system. Our state must always have a training system of the highest quality or there will be serious consequences for our economy, individuals and the broader community. This quality blitz will provide that insurance.

We will not hesitate to act if any providers are found to be inappropriately claiming training subsidies. Every cent of funding for training is taxpayers' money and we have no tolerance for its misuse. This blitz will strengthen confidence in the quality and integrity of our training system.

*Parliamentary Committees*

### **LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE: PLANNING REFORM PETITION**

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Planning) (14:03):** I seek the leave of the house

to explain my response in respect of the report of the Legislative Review Committee of the Legislative Council petition No. 2 of 2020, Planning Reform.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION:** I inform the house that I have recently responded to the Legislative Council petition No. 2 of 2020 on planning reform. Specifically, as requested by the committee, I have responded as Minister for Planning or as the lead minister to the recommendations of the report.

I can confirm that the government has indeed listened to the concerns raised by the 13,928 community members who signed the petition. The government is responding to the petition, delivering on election promises, including the commitment to undertake an implementation review of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 and the Planning and Design Code.

With the aid of the expert panel, we will ensure that planning decisions encourage a more livable, competitive and sustainable long-term growth strategy for Greater Adelaide and our regions.

On 5 August this year, I announced the formation of the expert panel, which comprises the planning industry's best and brightest minds with decades of experience. The panel, led by presiding member, John Stimson, includes Cate Hart, Andrew McKeegan and Lisa Teburea. Together, they have first-class expertise in the key areas of heritage, sustainability, environmental management, infrastructure, stakeholder engagement, local government, policy and legislation.

I have recently provided the panel with a copy of the full report of the Legislative Review Committee. The expert panel will consider the recommendations made by the committee as part of their review. The scope of the review includes concerns raised in the petition. Infill policy and regulations surrounding trees, character, heritage and car parking will be amongst the items considered. The submissions are open to the public until 16 December 2020. All members in this place should encourage their local communities to have their voices heard.

The ePlanning system and PlanSA website will also be considered by the panel with a view to ensuring that they are both user-friendly and accessible to the community. At the completion of the review, the expert panel will make recommendations to me as minister on how the planning system can be improved. I would welcome those in the chamber to provide their support and their advice.

As I advised the committee in my response, the PDI Act and regulations permit the Planning and Development Fund to be used for public work or a purpose that promotes or complements the state planning policy. I can inform the house that over the last 10 years the fund, through the Open Space Grant Program, has contributed \$170 million to local community projects that have created or developed open and green space.

I further advised the committee in my response that the state government has made an election commitment for 10 per cent of the fund every year to be offered to councils to buy land for the creation of pocket parks. This will balance the spaces lost as more dense housing is built. In addition to prioritising projects that actively green neighbourhoods, this government is committed to reducing tree loss, particularly of our significant and regulated trees. Recent action by the government has helped to safeguard our tree heritage.

Two regulated grey box trees, which the suburb of Black Forest was named after, were recently saved. The trees are hundreds of years old and of profound cultural importance. The land the trees occupy will be realigned to form part of the Forest Avenue Reserve to be enjoyed by Black Forest Primary School and the wider community. A solution was also found to save a pair of century-old London plane trees on the Lot Fourteen site, which was also driven by this government's intervention.

This government will continue to protect our trees and take necessary steps to ensure our tree loss regulation meets Australian best practice. We recognise there is an opportunity to improve on the effectiveness of the Urban Tree Canopy Offset Fund. This fund was established under the act and designed to contribute to the improve tree canopy across metropolitan Adelaide. The

government is seeking an enhanced understanding of tree canopy coverage and the policy responsiveness in the planning system, particularly as it relates to climate change.

This government is acutely aware of the challenges climate change presents and the importance of ensuring the planning systems have in-built climate resilience. The State Planning Commission has recently undertaken an open space and trees review, which has produced two independent reports looking to increase the state's tree canopy. These reports have been provided to the expert panel for consideration and are available to the public on the PlanSA website.

A large part of what makes Adelaide a desirable place to live is the heritage and character of our suburbs. I have advised the committee that heritage protection within the planning system will be a key area of review for the expert panel. I have also recently appointed Ms Stephanie Johnston to the State Planning Commission. Ms Johnston has significant experience in planning and urban development, specialising in heritage assessment and management.

The commission will undertake significant work over the next 24 months, including the delivery of the state's comprehensive regional planning program. This work requires a new 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide and the preparation of six regional plans for every region in South Australia. The plans will deliver a clear path for our state's growth. We must develop a long-term vision of what we want South Australia to look like in 30 years to ensure that the bad planning decisions of the past do not hamper our good decisions today or tomorrow.

To ensure that we retain our uniqueness and plan for suburbs that are livable, sustainable and of high amenity, we must balance growth with appropriate protection of the things we value. Achieving this balance will ensure that Adelaide continues to be admired around the world for its ability to grow while retaining its ring of Parklands, its heritage and its character. As I advised the committee in my response, we have heard the views of the many thousands of people who have signed the petition. We have heard their views and we are taking action.

#### LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

**Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (14:10):** I bring up the 12<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Subordinate Legislation.

Report received.

**Mr FULBROOK:** I bring up the 13<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Subordinate Legislation.

Report received and read.

#### *Question Time*

#### CONSTRUCTION, FORESTRY, MINING AND ENERGY UNION

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:14):** My question is to the Premier. How does the Premier respond to claims that he has normalised domestic violence and bully tactics by taking weeks to return the CFMEU donation? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

**The SPEAKER:** Leave is sought; is leave granted?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Point of order, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** There is a point of order. I will hear the point of order under 134. The minister on a point of order.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Sir, standing order 97: questions are not to involve argument. That question proposed facts within the body of the question and it was also deeply offensive.

**The SPEAKER:** Keeping closely in mind standing order 97, I will give the member the opportunity to rephrase.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question obviously is to the Premier. Why did the Premier take weeks to return the CFMEU donation? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Point of order, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** I will hear the point of order under 134.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Sir, again, standing order 97: questions involving facts. The leader mentioned 'weeks', which includes facts. I would ask the member to use his vast experience to write the question in an orderly way.

**The SPEAKER:** I will give the leader one final opportunity to rephrase.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** My question is to the Premier. How long did it take the Premier to return the CFMEU donation? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will provide further explanation.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** On 7 August in *The Advertiser*, Ms Emma Walters described the Premier's behaviour as, and I quote:

...a normalisation of domestic violence, bully tactics and coercive control where it becomes quietly acceptable.

She pointed out that he only takes action on domestic violence when it becomes a political issue.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:16):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Domestic violence is a serious subject, and that deserves a serious response in a policy sense. As a government, our record is certainly very clear in the actions that we are willing to take to stamp out domestic violence. I know that the member for Reynell, the responsible minister, has a suite of policies that we took to the election, including acting strongly and decisively with respect to coercive control.

We will be a government that acts with respect to stamping out domestic violence. With respect to the member's CFMEU question, I think that the Leader of the Opposition is a little bit better than this. The Leader of the Opposition knows all too well that the receipt of a donation from the Australian Labor Party is not something I am responsible for.

Nonetheless, as distinct from others who have occupied this responsibility of Premier of the house, I expect the Labor Party to uphold basic standards. When I asked the Labor Party to return the donation to the CFMEU, they did precisely that.

#### **CONSTRUCTION, FORESTRY, MINING AND ENERGY UNION**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:17):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier rule out having John Setka's CFMEU as part of her left-wing plus faction of the Labor Party given the takeover of the SA branch by militant—

**The SPEAKER:** Leader, please be seated. There is a point of order, and I anticipate it may be on—

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Standing order 96, sir: the minister is not responsible for the internal workings of the Australian Labor Party.

**The SPEAKER:** I will listen carefully—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister is nevertheless responsible for matters that are closely related to public affairs, but in this instance I am going to uphold the point of order and turn again to the leader.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Deputy Premier. Does the Deputy Premier support the involvement of the CFMEU and the governing party of the State of South Australia?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (14:18):** I support the right of workers to unionise, and I support the right

of workers who are in a dangerous profession in particular to organise in a way that helps protect their occupational health and safety.

There is a decision made by some unions to affiliate to the Labor Party, and that decision is a matter for the Labor Party properly to consider. I for one not only welcome the fact that unions have long been a part of the Labor Party but I am a fervent supporter of that continuing long into the future.

### **CONSTRUCTION, FORESTRY, MINING AND ENERGY UNION**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:19):** My supplementary is to the Premier. Does the Premier support the involvement of the CFMEU in the governing party of South Australia?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** I would hear a point of order, but I see the Premier.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:19):** The people who are responsible for the running of the state are the parliamentary Labor Party. We are in government. We lead a government that has very strong values, a set of policies, and we are delivering on them. I would have thought that the Leader of the Opposition, after eight weeks off, would have a little bit more to ask than this.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for West Torrens, order! I see the member for Frome. The member for Frome has the call.

### **DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE**

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:20):** Given the Premier's recent reference to the member for Reynell, my question is to the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Does the minister regret that the Labor Party accepted the \$125,000 donation from the Victorian branch of the CFMEU and does she believe that it should have been donated to a domestic violence charity?

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:20):** I thank the member for her question. I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak about the government's policy and actions in relation to domestic violence. As the Premier said, it's an area that I am deeply passionate about and that I have been deeply passionate about for my whole life. I know that there are other members in this house and indeed in the other house who are equally passionate about this topic and about doing what we can to further prevent and end domestic violence.

I will speak about our policy that we took to the election in a moment, but I did want to say that I think it's so wrong to politicise domestic violence in the way that it has been this afternoon and in the way that it has been over recent weeks. It is such an incredibly serious issue, and it requires deeply thoughtful public debate backed up by clear actions.

Before I speak about the actions that we are taking, I want to reflect for a moment that it was incredibly disappointing when we were in opposition when we urged the government to reverse its decision to cut \$1.2 million from Catherine House, which provides a really important service and crisis accommodation to women, including women who have experienced domestic violence.

It was equally upsetting when we urged the then government to reverse its decision to cut \$800,000 of funding from the Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service, which provides incredibly important support to women when they are experiencing domestic violence and going through one of the most difficult moments in that journey at a time when they actually confront what has happened to them and seek support in that court process. It was incredibly disappointing.

It was also disappointing when, for pretty much the entirety of the time, or close to it, that we were in opposition, I urged—urged—those opposite to back my bill to rid our roads of Wicked Campers and their absolutely disgraceful slogans that incite violence and disrespect toward women.



It was just awful that you wouldn't back that in an early fashion. Nonetheless, what I can speak about are the actions that we are taking toward that journey that we must all be on together to prevent and end domestic violence.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Point of order, sir.

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** One of the issues that was—

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, I will hear the point of order under 134 from the member for Morialta.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We are three minutes in. Under standing order 98, the question was about the CFMEU and John Setka's wife's points that she made.

**The SPEAKER:** There has been a—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I'm listening carefully. The questions that have been put so far have been introduced on the basis that broadly they relate to public affairs. I observe that—

*The Hon. N.F. Cook interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hurtle Vale is called to order. I observe that there must be, it seems to me, some necessary connection between the minister's portfolio and the subject matter of public affairs that is being raised. I will listen carefully. I understand the minister is giving some context.

**The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD:** I will turn to just some of the actions we are taking on that journey that, as I said, I would hope we are all on, to work towards preventing and ending domestic violence. I want to talk a little bit first of all about our planned legislative agenda.

One of the bills that I introduced from opposition was a bill to criminalise coercive control. Unfortunately, that sat on the *Notice Paper* for a very, very long time, despite efforts to progress that really important piece of legislation. Eventually, there was another bill that was introduced, but it was very late in the parliamentary term, so it never progressed. We have been really clear in our election commitments that we will consult very deeply with our community about legislation to criminalise coercive control and introduce that legislation and progress that legislation.

I am happy to fill the member in on other aspects of our domestic violence policy, because it is vast and it is representative of our commitment to prevent and end domestic violence and to work with our community to do so.

#### WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:26):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. Can the minister confirm that all of her staff have had up-to-date working with children checks? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Ms PRATT:** The minister has undertaken many visits to schools, childcare centres and child-safe environments, and the public has a right to know whether the minister keeps meticulous, up-to-date records of her staff's working with children checks.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:26):** Thanks very much. I will get an absolutely specific answer back to the house with respect to any of the updates that are required.

**The Hon. D.G. Pisoni:** You don't know?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is called to order. The minister has the call.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I can confirm that the most recent staff member coming on board—we asked for that to happen at the very start of the office being formed—has secured their working with children clearance. I certainly have mine.

In terms of working with children clearances, these are really necessary when people are being left alone with children in an isolated capacity. They're actually not essential for all workers who do all jobs just in the presence of children. They are absolutely essential when people are doing a job in isolation without the supervision of a trained person. To clarify, there has been no occasion when anyone from my office has been left by themselves with children in any environment or capacity in the nature of their work.

**Ms PRATT:** Supplementary, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Frome on a supplementary, and I do caution that a supplementary ought to be to the same minister.

#### WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:27):** Yes, to the same minister: seeking clarification that the minister has taken that on notice.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:28):** Yes, I think I said to you that I would be able to provide you with information as to what clearances are done or necessary or in place. I will get you a full—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Settle, petal, seriously.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I will get you information regarding that, but also I am very happy to provide you a briefing in relation to what and who is required to have a working with children check in addition to that.

#### ELECTION COMMITMENTS

**Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (14:28):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister inform the house of the Malinauskas government's approach to infrastructure election commitments, and can the minister comment on any alternative approaches?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:28):** Buckle up. Yes, sir, I can. Our approach is simple: we engage with local communities, we listen to local communities, we carefully consider the views of local communities and then we attempt to swiftly deliver.

An example of this is the consultation on the Adelaide Aquatic Centre. We promised to commence consultation within 100 days of our election, and we did so. Now we have a location. An overwhelming majority of the people we consulted with from the local community chose the site. They had a say. We started the conversation with the public, we considered the valuable feedback, we made a decision that confirmed the location aligned with the public's anticipation of where that infrastructure would be built.

Contrast that with an alternative approach: the basketball stadium—a project no-one thought of, no-one wanted and, of course, according to a leaked report I have received from internal Liberal Party submissions prepared by long-time Liberal Party members, it was not explained effectively to the public.

Contrast that with another of our election commitments, where we had paused the James Road-Old Belair Road infrastructure projects those opposite sought to impose on the good people of Waite without adequate and considerate consultation. We are undertaking that consultation with the local member of parliament to hear what their views are.

We don't propose infrastructure without consulting on it. We don't announce a centrepiece policy like, I don't know, GlobeLink—a proposal that the very industry it was set to serve opposed. A proposal that the Liberal Party members' report states was, and I quote, 'supposed to be fully costed', but, despite those claims that it had a very good business case that existed prior to the election, a government-commissioned KPMG report found that the benefits of GlobeLink were 'limited'.

Of course, and I quote from this report, 'the cancellation of this election commitment cost the Marshall government economic credibility very early on in their term of office'. Yes, it did. Then we come to my favourite piece of infrastructure—Majors Road.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** I was convinced in the lead-up to the 2018 election that this was something we had missed. After I saw the Facebook video of someone young, energetic, with a slightly different temperament from the one he has today, out there arguing without one reference to any Disney character at all the importance of the Majors Road on/off ramp and it being his number one priority—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Number one priority. I think you listened to your Treasurer and worked out that you couldn't get what you wanted. In contrast, the leaked Liberal report talking about the Hove level crossing, it got sent to a lot of concerned Liberals. A lot of concerned Liberals have it. It notes, 'To announce a solution with such fanfare and then cancel it really rankled the people in the southern suburbs.' It goes further to say:

People felt unable to trust the Marshall Liberal government, and it certainly contributed to the big swing against the Liberal Party in the seat of Gibson, which was once considered a safe Liberal seat.

I can go on—the right-hand turn to trams, abandoned; GlobeLink, abandoned; Hove level crossing, abandoned; demolishing the Waite Gatehouse: why would they bother to do this?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is a point of order, which may be 98 or rather—

**Mr TEAGUE:** It's just time.

**The SPEAKER:** Time has expired. Very well.

#### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (14:33):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. Why did the minister's office not release all the documents, and pages within the documents, that the minister had agreed to release under FOI on 5 August? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

**The SPEAKER:** There is a point of order, member for Heysen, which I will hear under 134 from the member for West Torrens.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Standing order 97: such questions should not involve argument. The shadow minister has asserted facts within the question, which involve an argument, which is unparliamentary.

**The SPEAKER:** I am not certain about the facts necessarily giving rise to argument but, if I heard correctly, member for Heysen, the question was phrased: why hasn't the minister done X? I will give the member for Heysen an opportunity to rephrase.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Perhaps omitting the first word, Mr Speaker: did the minister's office not release all the documents, and pages within documents, that the minister had agreed to release under FOI on 5 August? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr TEAGUE:** On 5 August, the minister approved nine documents to be released to the shadow minister under FOI. Later that day, however, the minister's office only provided eight documents, and some pages within documents that were approved for release were not released.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:34):** I understand we have actually released the documents in question as part of it. The shadow minister has lodged an appeal, and I will await the outcome of it.

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (14:34):** My question is again to the Minister for Human Services. Did the minister's office only release the previously withheld documents in the hours after the Ombudsman became engaged? If so, why? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr TEAGUE:** The shadow minister's office followed up with the minister's office on 11 and 16 August to seek a copy of the documents that were incorrectly withheld on 5 August. On 23 August, the Ombudsman contacted the minister's office. The documents were released within two hours of that contact.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:35):** If it is the exact one that I'm referring to which you are referring to, the documents were contained within the FOI, potentially attached to another page. When the shadow minister made an inquiry, I believe the documents had been provided, but the shadow minister has also lodged an appeal and we will see what happens with the outcome.

### COST OF LIVING

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (14:35):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise the house what measures the government is taking to ease cost-of-living pressures and some of the challenges facing South Australian households?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:36):** Soon after coming to office it became apparent to all those on this side of the house that inflation was a very substantial challenge that the nation, and indeed the state, was facing in a way that has a material impact on people's household budgets. Inflation isn't an esoteric statistic. Often we talk about—

*The Hon. D.G. Pisoni interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is called to order.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** We often talk about macro-economic statistics and we focus on the unemployment number. That, of course, is important, but the truth is that unemployment affects those who are unemployed, whereas inflation has the unfavourable characteristic of affecting everybody. No-one is immune from the impacts of inflation, and with inflation going to some of the highest levels we have seen in recent history, certainly around the Western world—and we are talking about 10 per cent now in the United Kingdom—that is a big deal.

As a government, we have been determined to act and do everything we reasonably can to make sure that the burden of inflation and cost of living going up is diminished, with a particular orientation towards helping out those who can least afford the impacts of inflation. We have done substantial things, including in the most recent state budget doubling the Cost of Living Concession to a number that has never been seen in the history of our state to over \$400. We have brought forward, to the tune of eight months, the benefit of that that applies to renters. That program used to be disjointed in terms of the timing of the rollout of those figures.

To the credit of members of the opposition, they announced a policy in the election to introduce a discount on the materials and services fee charged of \$100. We saw the merit of that policy and immediately matched it. Now, having formed government, we have the ability to implement it, which of course has now been done. We have done other things in respect of supporting those organisations that are at the front line of delivering services to those people who might be affected as a consequence of the cost-of-living crisis.

However, there is always more you can do, and sometimes it is not just about the actions that government takes. Sometimes it's about the actions the parliament can take to prevent an unreasonable impost upon members of the community. One such example could be the impost of paid parking, the introduction of paid parking upon tens of thousands of people in the north-eastern suburbs of Adelaide.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is a point of order, which I will hear from the member for Morialta.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Point of order, sir: it has been held as a convention for a long time that ministers not refer to debates currently before the house in question time or at any other time in the house, other than while the matter is under debate as an order of the day.

**The SPEAKER:** I will listen carefully and keep the convention in mind.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** I am relieved that at the election a group of people were elected to represent the north-eastern suburbs of Adelaide who understand these challenges. They understand the impacts that the cost-of-living burden can have on people. New members from the seat of King, from the seat of Newland, our existing members in the seat of Torrens, in the seat of Florey, in the seat of Wright—these are people who understand that action is often required to prevent an unfair impost to be introduced upon thousands and thousands of people.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Morialta, this point of order is raised very close to the conclusion of the question. I will hear it but I may also on indulgence provide extra time to the Premier.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Sir, I note that the time has stopped on the Premier's clock, so that saves that problem.

**The SPEAKER:** Perhaps.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Standing order 98: the Premier is debating and is actually not responding to the substance of the question, unless he is contravening the rule around reflections on current issues on the *Notice Paper*.

**The SPEAKER:** I am not sure I agree. I will hear the Premier.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think it's important that the people of South Australia, particularly members of the community from the north-eastern suburbs, know that the member for Newland, the member for King, the member for Wright, the member for Florey, the member for Torrens will be utterly relentless in campaigning on cost-of-living issues. They know what matters to their constituents and they will be out there day and night, morning, lunch time, campaigning on the ground, talking to people. One such location that is a beacon of activity in terms of consumer behaviour is, of course, Westfield Tea Tree Plaza. We are going to be out there talking to people about the issues that matter and make sure that their interests are protected economically.

**The SPEAKER:** I see the member for Heysen.

#### MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (14:41):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. Does the minister have confidence in the ability of her office to meet its administrative and legislative obligations? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr TEAGUE:** On 3 June, a political newsletter from the minister was sent out to all DHS staff. On 14 June, the minister described this as 'an error'. On 5 September, the opposition was advised by the Ombudsman that documents were mistakenly determined as outside the scope of an FOI request due to 'human error'. There appears to be a pattern of either deliberate political obstruction or pure incompetence.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

#### STATE ECONOMY

**S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (14:42):** My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer update the house on recent economic data releases as they relate to the South Australian economy?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:42):** I thank the member for Gibson for this question. Of course, the member would know having represented professional workers how important the performance of the economy is for the wellbeing of South Australians.

Today, the Australian Bureau of Statistics released their latest Australian National Accounts data and the news was good for both the national economy and the South Australian economy. From a national perspective, gross domestic product grew by 0.9 per cent for the June quarter, 3.9 per cent annually. While that has fallen short of the most recent forecasts in the last commonwealth budget, which projected growth of 4.25 per cent, in the face of rising inflation and rising interest rates it is still an impressive performance.

Pleasingly, it has also delivered good news for the performance of the South Australian economy, with the highest quarterly growth in state final demand for the last 12 months in the June quarter—1.5 per cent growth in the June quarter—and it's the first quarter, of course, since the recent state election and the election of the Malinauskas Labor government. This increase in the June quarter has been driven by an increase in household consumption, new business investment, dwelling investment and government consumption as well.

It's interesting that when you look at the state final demand results for the most recent June quarter, according to the NAB Monthly Business Survey, which was also taken straight after the recent state election, there was a boost in business confidence in South Australia by 14 index points upwards—14 index points upwards—immediately after the March state election. These are good news figures and show that not only do economic conditions remain strong and resilient in South Australia but it's particularly pleasing to see them do so following March.

There are other encouraging signs. Retail trade was up 15.6 per cent annually. South Australia's overseas goods exports for the year to June 2022 totalled \$14.7 billion, up 15 per cent or \$2 billion on the previous 12 months. We also recorded our largest month of overseas goods export value since records began in 1988—\$2 billion for the month of June.

Building approvals are up in South Australia by 19 per cent in July. South Australia's domestic visitor economy is back to 97 per cent of 2019 levels, pointing to a nearly complete recovery of that important industry since the pandemic. We continue to record near record-low unemployment and record full-time employment figures. These are really positive statistics about the strength of the South Australian economy.

But we shouldn't be complacent because, as the Premier outlined, with rising inflation and the ratcheting up of the cash rate by the RBA, that is putting extraordinary pressures on households and businesses in a way we haven't seen for many years across the country and also here in South Australia. It makes the challenge absolutely clear at each level of government, national and state, that there needs to be continued support for the domestic and state economies. That is a challenge that we are determined to rise to—continue providing the support to economic growth and jobs that our state needs.

#### **HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER**

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:46):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. Who gave final approval for the distribution of the political newsletter that was sent to all DHS staff?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:46):** In terms of the wording of the newsletter, I approved the wording of the newsletter. To be clear, the newsletter that was intended for the electorate office was sent out to the department. That was an error. It was realised within a very short space of time and an apology was issued. I think we have actually executed this or prosecuted this before. The song, *Road to Nowhere* comes to mind.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Florey! Member for Mawson!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** The staff member feels completely unwell about it and has been supported through this whole period of time. In fact, I can give you advance notice so that you can start trawling through stuff: we are doing another newsletter. We are about to do another newsletter

celebrating six months of extraordinary announcements, six months of many, many visits to many sites, engagement with stakeholders and meetings with constituents.

I think there are a few things that have come up as a common thread: 'Wow! You actually use the main lift and don't go up the back lift of the office to hide from people,' or, 'Wow! You actually have me in your office for a meeting. With the last minister, we had to sit in the boardroom across 10 feet of table. Wow! We've met with you twice already. This is crazy. I barely even saw the other minister.'

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** 'We have had to turn people away from coming to the forums because so many people—

*Mr Tarzia interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Hartley!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** —want to come and actually—

*Mr Tarzia interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Hartley is called to order.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** —be listened to by someone who actually cares about what's going on. Hang on, I've never had so many conversations with the minister who is so engaged and so committed to delivering on excellent—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** —social policy. Ok, wow!

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

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Morialta!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** 'You've been to more places in six months than the other minister went to in four years. Wow! You are making such a difference.' I tell you what, member for Frome, I will send you the newsletter in advance so you can have a look at it and celebrate with me. How's that?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** You're welcome.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

#### HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:49):** Supplementary: my question is to the Minister for Human Services—and I look forward to that email. Will that email be prepared by departmental services?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:49):** Goodness me! How it happens—and I actually hope you never get to learn how it happens—is you compile that with a range of people behind the scenes, very good people doing the work. Then, that email for the staff gets sent to the office and they distribute it to the department. With all going according to plan—if the planets align and it's not like a third half of a fourth phase moon on some planet and all the things go weird—the right one will go to the electorate office and out to the electorate to also share in all the joy and happiness that is good government delivering great policy and changing the lives of people one conversation at a time, and one newsletter at a time.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:50):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. Why did the South Australian Housing Authority refuse to send the minister's newsletter to SAHA staff on 3 June?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:50):** I don't have a response to that at all. I've got no idea. Don't care.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:50):** Supplementary: on 3 June, it was released under FOI that the South Australian Housing Authority did refuse to send out the political newsletter—

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Point of order, sir.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There's a point of order.

**Ms PRATT:** —that was then distributed—

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Frome, I will hear the point of order. I apologise to the member for Morialta: earlier, I didn't hear him appealing to me. There was a bit of a clamour in the chamber. It was my mistake on the point of order. A point of order from the member for West Torrens.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** The member for Frome is introducing a detailed explanation without seeking the leave of the house, sir. Perhaps she should seek the leave of the house before her question, otherwise it's full of argument.

**The SPEAKER:** I will take an alternative approach. I will allow the member for Frome to rephrase the question.

**Ms PRATT:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, I appreciate your indulgence. My question is to the Minister for Human Services. When did the minister's office become aware that the South Australian Housing Authority refused to send the political newsletter? With your leave, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Ms PRATT:** Emails released under FOI revealed that the South Australian Housing Authority staff refused to send out the political newsletter that was then distributed to all DHS staff.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:51):** I think you have just asked and answered. The good people of SAHA, who also are very pleased that we have a new government in town that's actually listening to them or working with them, contacted, I understand, our office on reading the newsletter and realising that there was political content in there. I understand that that potentially was the flag, the very first alert, that somebody human with a pulse, a real person, had made a real human error and feels terrible about it. You can keep going on and on about it—and you will—but you are wasting your time. They made a terrible mistake. They feel awful, and continuing to prosecute the error of one person is not going to get you anywhere.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Continue on. Gee, there are a lot of men over there, aren't there? A cacophony of blokes. I have already explained that one person feels terrible. I understand that the response from SAHA, when that incorrect newsletter was sent, was, 'This has political undertones' or something to that effect, and that's when the message went to DHS. DHS issued the apology for us, and—

**Mrs Hurn:** Junior staffer.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** —end of story.



**The SPEAKER:** Member for Schubert!

### **DESALINATION PLANT**

**Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (14:52):** My question is to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. Can the minister explain the process that resulted in the recent nomination of Sleaford west as the preferred site for the Eyre desalination plant by the local site selection committee and any implications for the cost of the project?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (14:53):** I thank the member for his question. Members of this house may well be aware of the history of this issue. There is a critical need to provide an independent water source for Eyre Peninsula. Uley South basin currently provides over three quarters of the drinking water supply for the Eyre region, with most of the remainder coming from the River Murray.

The Uley South basin and its bore field is the last remaining major productive groundwater source on Eyre Peninsula and it's therefore very important to the region, and its health is constantly monitored by SA Water. That monitoring has made it clear that the basin is under serious pressure and that augmentation of supply is urgent; in fact, initially, the identification was that it would become urgent in the summer of 2023-24. Fortunately, we have had some rain, and that has pushed that out to around December 2025.

In 2018, SA Water's board approved construction of a desalination plant. In August 2019, three years ago, the former Liberal government granted approval for a new saltwater desalination plant at the cost of nearly \$100 million. This original site was in Sleaford Bay, but after further work by SA Water, geological conditions suggested that this would be a challenging site to build on and would involve additional costs. This resulted in an alternative preferred site being announced in October 2021, the site at Billy Lights Point, with first water expected in 2023.

However, as many people will know if they have paid attention to regional media in particular, there was local pushback about this and many concerns from locals, so the former minister announced a 12-month pause, and he established an independent site selection committee that was led by the former MP Peter Treloar. I think all of us can attest to the quality of Peter and his work. I have met several times with Peter Treloar. I have recently met with representatives of the group, including Peter, and I believe and I have conveyed to them that they have done good and diligent work to look at the options available.

They have identified a new site at Sleaford west, a finding announced only a few weeks ago, and this is because of a process that was established by my predecessor in this portfolio. This site has not yet had full geological testing done, although SA Water is working on that at present. Initial estimates of the cost of the construction on this site are that it could be around \$100 million more than the original site approved by the former government.

Here we are, being challenged in the media by the former minister, saying that I am dithering: following a process established by a previous minister, who put a 12-month pause and set up a committee with no sense of where the additional money would come from. The committee has duly done its work and presented it to me, and this is being characterised as dithering.

The real challenge is how this is going to be funded. The real challenge is: is there any likelihood, any prospect, of additional funding being sourced for another site? It could be suggested that what the previous minister did was push a difficult decision past the election, establish a process that would raise people's hopes, establish a process that involved—

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Point of order, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, there is a point of order, which I will hear under 134.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** At this stage, this is pure debate. It's a rhetorical device, it's personal and it's irrelevant to the question that was asked.

**The Hon. D.J. Speirs:** And it's dithering.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! An appeal has been made to a number of standing orders. I will listen carefully. I will ask the Deputy Premier to come back to the substance of the question.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The question of how this is to be funded is a serious one. This is one of the projects that I have inherited from the previous government, established as a process. A halt was put on a decision that had previously been made. A process was established that has now been received that suggested an alternative site, being Sleaford west, germane to the question. But no process was established for how additional funding would be sourced—none whatsoever. The gall of the former minister, accusing us of dithering when he himself established the process that has taken time, is extraordinary.

#### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:58):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. Does the minister consider it appropriate for a member of the public or a third party to use the resources of the Public Service to distribute messages on behalf of the minister? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Ms PRATT:** On Thursday 2 June, the Department of Human Services and South Australian Housing Authority staff were supplied with a draft ministerial newsletter to format and distribute by an individual using a private email address. This person has been described in documents released under FOI as being in the position of a 'relief electoral officer' and also an 'almost comms person'.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:59):** My understanding is that at times people have difficulties when they are working from home. So, when it does become difficult to log onto any kind of mainframe or remote server, I think it is quite appropriate to continue doing your work. In that case, I understand that a Gmail account was used to continue doing work and continue to be able to work effectively from home. At the time that this work was being undertaken—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Cool your chops—really!

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

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** I think that at this particular time we were still under those periods when there were quite elevated numbers of COVID. I don't have to give you the information but, if you gave a toss about the person who has a particularly vulnerable child in their home, this is someone we wanted to keep at work but lower the risk of them contracting COVID, so they worked from home. This is what happens. I have had to resort to using a non-government email for things that aren't sensitive.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Oh, my God, a Gmail account!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** In terms of—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Have you never had the fact that—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Can I finish?

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** A cacophony of nonsense.

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Chaffey!

*The Hon. D.J. Speirs interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The leader is called to order.

*The Hon. S.S. Marshall interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Dunstan! The minister has the call.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Did I finish the sentence? Did I tell you when I use it?

*Mr Tarzia interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** In order to communicate sometimes—

*Mr Tarzia interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Hartley is warned for a second time.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** —I think we all use other email accounts. We don't—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Did I say I was doing ministerial work? I didn't say—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** No, I did not say that.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The minister will not respond to interjections.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** Gee whiz, Batman! It doesn't take much to get you excited, does it?

**The SPEAKER:** The minister has the call. Minister, I bring you to the substance of the question.

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** To be honest, it's so long ago I have lost track of it. I think this particular case—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** It's like some really awful cartoon that's going on. When people have to work from home and have things that have to be done in the course of time, if it's not of a nature that is personal and private to any constituent or individual, I don't have a problem. She kept the work going and it happened. It was about to go out, obviously, and be distributed. It wasn't of a sensitive nature. Sadly, given—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.F. COOK:** —that, as I say, we have prosecuted this over and over again, the individual has said how terrible she feels, and I have supported her. She does a great job. I have great respect for her and for her capacity to do work under very challenging situations. I will continue to support her and, yes, she will continue to do an excellent job, but thanks for your concerns, really, sincerely.

#### PRIVATE EMAIL ACCOUNTS

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:02):** The supplementary question is to the Minister for Human Services. Given that the minister has identified that the staff member in question used private email with the agreement of the minister, and the

minister in that answer also referred to her own use of private email in the course of her work activities, have all those emails from her—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —and/or the staff member—

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Point of order, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I will hear the point of order under 134 from the member for West Torrens.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Standing order 134, sir—

*Mr Tarzia interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Hartley is warned for a final time. The member for West Torrens.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Standing order 97, 'nor may a Member offer any facts except by leave of the House'. The shadow minister is attempting to insert facts as a matter of course in his question, which is unparliamentary.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** May I reword?

**The SPEAKER:** Very well. The member for Morialta.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** My supplementary question is this: has the minister satisfied herself that any emails referred to in her previous answer, or any other emails sent from private email accounts in the course of her duties or the duties of her office staff, have been kept in accordance with the State Records Act and made available to the manager of State Records? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will seek to explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** As described by the Minister for Health in a media release of 31 July 2018, we are reminded that former ICAC commissioner Bruce Lander said in his annual report:

It has come to my attention that at least in some government offices, personal email accounts might be used to convey official information between public officers, rather than through official government email facilities... It is a matter of concern that public officers would seek to circumvent a legislative scheme designed to enhance transparency in government decision making. Such conduct might, at the least, amount to misconduct in public administration and be the subject of investigation and potential disciplinary action.

**The SPEAKER:** I see the—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I see the minister.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:04):** It seems to me that the opposition is attempting to impugn on a member a course of action that she has not in any way informed the house of. It seems to me that if the opposition have an accusation to make, let them make it. Let them make it. This fishing expedition after yesterday's big catch—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —seems to me to be a ploy of the opposition.

*Mrs Hurn interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Schubert!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** If the opposition have evidence of anything that is close to resembling their question, then let us see it—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —otherwise, I would have suspected that, over the course of the last six weeks, there might be some substantive questions to ask the ministers about the transition to year 7, about the state of the budget, about how our election commitments are being delivered, about infrastructure, about the north-south corridor or about energy. Instead, we are getting a series of questions based on Disney characters and a series of emails that have been answered previously. It's not our fault—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —that members opposite took holidays for the last six weeks.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The leader is called to order. Order! I'm anxious to turn to the member for Narungga. The member for Narungga has the call.

#### **WALLAROO HOSPITAL**

**Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:06):** I have a question for the Minister for Health. Can the minister inform my constituents how many instances there have been of Code Yellow at Wallaroo Hospital and whether that has resulted in any instances of ambulance ramping in the last three months alone and whether those statistics might finally trigger significant investment in our major hospital?

*Mrs Hurn interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Schubert, order! The minister has the call.

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:06):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I also thank the member for Narungga for a question that is actually relevant and important to the people of South Australia because this is—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON:** —a very important subject not only in terms of—

**The Hon. D.G. Pisoni:** Putin doesn't believe in state records.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Unley!

*Mrs Hurn interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON:** Mr Speaker, they are not interested in hearing about Wallaroo Hospital in the Liberal Party, clearly.

*Members interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON:** This is a very important question, particularly in terms of that critical regional level of service at Wallaroo Hospital but also, as the member was suggesting, in terms of flow-on impacts to the broader health services as well. I have briefly made contact with the chief executive, Mr Roger Kirchner, of the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network. He has provided some preliminary advice, at least, that he is not aware of any Code Yellows being called at Wallaroo Hospital, but I will certainly get further checking and updating of that and, if there is additional information to provide, I certainly will provide that to the member.

But we do know that our regional health services, both at Wallaroo and across the board, are under pressure. We do know that at Wallaroo in particular we have significant workforce issues as well, and this is an issue that has been raised with me by a number of GPs in that health region, where there hasn't been the close collaboration, I think it's fair to say, between the hospitals and the GPs. That is something I am very eager to change because we need to work with our general practitioners, who do an incredible job across regional South Australia.

There is some excellent work happening in various parts of regional South Australia, certainly in the Riverland and Murray Coorong local hospital network, with leadership from Paul Worley, who runs the excellent school in the Riverland. It is doing excellent work in terms of training up the next generation of rural generalists, but we need to do work in terms of making that across the board, and I think that there is much more work that we need to do.

I know the member, who is very quick to raise a whole range of issues in terms of his electorate with me and I thank him for doing that, has also raised with me that, with the connections between the GPs and the hospitals, there is the potential that we could improve that and there is a willingness from GPs to work closer with the hospital. I am certainly following that up with the board.

We are going up next week to hold our country cabinet because we as a government believe that we should be holding cabinet meetings in regional South Australia. We will be holding cabinet meetings in Port Pirie and Port Augusta. While in Port Pirie, I will be meeting with the board of the health network that covers Wallaroo Hospital as well and raising these issues with them because the more services we can provide in your local community, the fewer people who have to travel to Adelaide for those services and the less pressure on the rest of the system.

We have already made significant commitments in terms of improving the regional health services. That's why the Premier was very quick when we made our announcement from opposition that we would cancel the \$662 million basketball stadium from the then government and that we would quarantine at least \$100 million of that into regional health services. We're now delivering that. Of course, I know the member is certainly excited that extra, additional ambulance services will be provided in his electorate, based out of Wallaroo, to help address some of these issues.

Of course, we know that we need additional work in our hospitals to make sure people can flow through and get the care they need. I will come back if there is further information I can provide to the member, but certainly I look forward to continuing to work with him to improve those local health services.

### KORDAMENTHA REPORT

**Ms CLANCY (Elder) (15:10):** My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Can the minister update the house regarding any engagement with interstate corporate liquidators over the past five years?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:11):** Another excellent question of importance to the people of South Australia from the member for Elder. While I can confirm that there haven't been corporate liquidators appointed certainly since March this year, unfortunately that was not true for the four years prior to that, because the former government did appoint KordaMentha, who are an interstate firm noted for their work in terms of liquidations and corporate administrations of companies—

**Mrs Hurn:** Why aren't you talking about ramping?

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON:** —not just to come in and consult in terms of the running of the Central Adelaide Local Health Network but to actually put them in charge of running it.

People might recall that two partners from KordaMentha were appointed as executives in the health service. It's completely unheard of before, I think, probably anywhere else in Australia—particularly not in South Australia—that that would happen. This was, of course, at great expense to

the taxpayer. Now that we're in government, I have been provided with the details in terms of what this cost over that period of time.

**Mrs Hurn:** Where are the ramping stats?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Schubert is warned for a final time.

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON:** There were certainly a number of contracts, I think 10 separate contracts, that were between 2018 and 2021—10 separate contracts between the government and KordaMentha—and that totalled \$33.3 million of taxpayers' funds.

*The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON:** That's right: \$33.3 million of taxpayers' money went to KordaMentha. We found out during the procurement process for KordaMentha that their economic contribution to the state was measured and recorded as part of that procurement process and was recorded as nil—a nil economic contribution because their entire staff, none of whom were based here in South Australia, flew in at the start of the week and flew out at the end of the week. Some of those staff, the contracts reveal, were paid up to \$6,492 per day, which is nice work if you can get it.

Of course, this has been noted by many people, and it was noted in a report which has been released recently and which has come to my attention. This is a leaked report, of course, from the Liberal Party's internal review. It noted—and I'm not referring to the bit that speaks generously about myself, because I'm too modest to refer to that, but I'm referring to the section that says:

The appointment of KordaMentha at a cost of many millions of dollars was never explained satisfactorily to the public. The perception was, why did the state need a duplication of bureaucracy to run the health sector?

That's a very good question: why did we? The existing bureaucracy was still there, but we brought in, at a cost of \$33 million, an entire other bureaucracy to put in place over the top of it. In fact, if it hadn't been for COVID, it would have been much more that was spent on the contract as well because a suspension in one of the contracts stopped the total number of contracts going out to \$48.6 million that would have been spent on KordaMentha during that process.

In addition, there were also private lawyers who were engaged as part of the process, at an additional \$1.8 million, which would have tipped it over \$50 million cost to the state that was contracted. Of course, the issues in terms of the finances are still there but of course some consultants from interstate have made a significant amount of money in the process.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Before I take us to grievances, I observe that standing order 127 concerns digression and personal reflection on members. I draw the house's particular attention to:

2. [Members are not to] impute improper motives to any other Member,
3. or make personal reflections on any other Member.

These are matters I will keep closely in mind for future question times.

*Grievance Debate*

## MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:15):** Ministerial standards and accountability are very important in this place. Standards and accountability are something the opposition takes very seriously, and the Ministerial Code of Conduct should not just be a set of words that the Premier of the day uses in order to describe a set of principles. It should be something that every minister lives and breathes. It should be the expectation that when they wake up in the morning, when they go to bed at night and at every moment that they are conducting their business they will abide by it.

There are a range of legislated and policy directed standards that are expected of everybody who is given the honour, the singular and unusual honour, of being a minister of the Crown in the great state of South Australia. You take an oath that you will uphold these standards. The Minister

for Human Services has some questions to answer, particularly as to whether she has engaged in conduct that has been described earlier in question time.

The questions that the minister herself sought to denigrate throughout question time, sought to identify that she did not take seriously, and indeed seems to impute motives to members of the opposition who were simply seeking to ask questions about whether the standards of this house, of the government, and the expectations of the people of South Australia, were being met.

Those characterisations—using terms like 'petal' to describe opposition members asking a question—are beneath any minister. I think that it behoves the Premier to indeed reflect on his minister's conduct because for months we have been asking about the set of circumstances that a minister would find appropriate to send a political email, a self-confessed identified political email, to thousands of public servants throughout South Australia.

The gravity of that mistake has been downplayed at every turn by the minister, although it has been admitted as a mistake—until today in question time when the minister sought to revel in her own glory, describing her greatness and how she gets stopped all the time by public servants allegedly under her employ to tell her how good she is. Never before in the field of human endeavour, never before in South Australia's long and rich and coloured history has a minister been so loved by the people whose employment depends upon her favour.

Today was an extraordinary performance. As has been pointed out, there are members of the Labor benches on the back, a long way away, so far away that their interjections can barely be heard from those down in front, who loved today. He is still smiling. He has enjoyed it very much. He is excited about the opportunities that—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** But there was a very serious—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Take your seat; there is a point of order.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The leader—

**The Hon. D.J. Speirs:** Yes?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** —will not shout across the chamber.

**The Hon. D.J. Speirs:** I just wanted to invite him to the front bench.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The leader will not respond to my directive. Okay?

**The Hon. D.J. Speirs:** It would be nice. Wow!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Does the leader wish to remain?

**The Hon. D.J. Speirs:** I don't mind.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay, I can facilitate that. The member for Florey.

**Mr BROWN:** Sir, I would ask the member to withdraw 'impute improper motives' to me. I certainly was not laughing about the minister. I might be laughing at that clown over there, but no-one else.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay. The member will continue.

**Mr BROWN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I withdraw the word 'clown'.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member—

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There is a serious amount that has come up today from the minister's own mouth, and it appears that she does not realise it. In 2018, it was very clear that when the Hon. Stephen Wade received an email to his personal account that he did not indeed seek,



members of the then opposition, now the government—the Premier, the member for West Torrens, and indeed the health minister—asked questions in this place about that very fact.

The then shadow minister for health put out a press release saying that the minister had questions to answer. I remind the house that this was in response to the minister having been in receipt of an email that was sent to his personal email account that he then identified for State Records. The shadow minister for health said, at the time:

It is a startling revelation that a state government minister has set up his own private email server. The ICAC Commissioner has previously given very strong warnings about conducting business on private email accounts. There are many questions that the minister must answer. Can the minister demonstrate that he has never used this account to conduct government business? What security measures are in place on the private email server? How do we know that information has not been compromised? I don't think the minister has any other choice but to hand over his private server to the Manager of State Records to ensure that there has not been a breach of any regulations, laws or security.

That is the standard that the Minister for Health—indeed the Premier and the member for West Torrens, by their also having questions in the House of Assembly—applied to the then minister for health just for having unknowingly been in receipt of an email.

This minister has had a political email sent out to public servants in, we would argue, contravention of the ministerial code of ethics. She has admitted that it was generated from a private email server. During the course of question time she has admitted that it was sent out, sent to the department for work business, on a private email.

I look forward to reading the *Hansard*. As far as I could hear, as far as those on this side of the house could hear, the minister seemed to state that she herself thought it was reasonable practice for government business to be conducted, whether by ministerial staff or, from what I heard, the minister herself (I stand to be corrected) using a private email.

That would be a direct violation of the standards set by the government when they were in opposition. It raises serious questions about abuse of the State Records Act, and it is in opposition to the former ICAC commissioner's statement. The minister has serious questions to answer. Today she has shown herself to be unworthy of the title.

### FRIENDSHIP FORCE

**The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel) (15:21):** I wish to acknowledge and raise in the house the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mount Barker and Districts Friendship Force. Mount Barker was the first Friendship Force club formed in Australia in 1982. Since that time, the Mount Barker chapter has played an integral role in assisting the formation of other clubs in South Australia and interstate.

Friendship Force operates through the philosophy that every friendship formed across the barriers of nationality, language, religion or politics improves relations between countries in material ways. Members may know that Friendship Force International was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992.

Presently, the Mount Barker and Districts Friendship Force has approximately 40 members, ranging from Reynella to Strathalbyn and as far north as Charleston. There are currently over 300 clubs worldwide with thousands of members. Of course, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Friendship Force's outbound and inbound travel exchanges. Thankfully, in September this year the Force plans to welcome a Canadian club as part of the two international inbound journeys they host annually. I know the Force is very pleased to begin travelling and meeting together again, while also continuing with local social programs.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the current president, Jan de Weerd, and all members for their ongoing commitment to building friendships and peace, improving cultural understanding, and celebrating a shared humanity. I also wish, on this significant occasion, to record, in particular, the names of the chapter's foundation members: J.T. Connolly, R. Schubert, A. Gamblin, N. Marston, T. Hunt, R. Male, J. Geir, R. Byrne, E. Grove, H. Franklin, J. Day and P.J. Marston. Their foresight was considerable. At a time of increasing global tension and conflict, Friendship Force's objectives are especially prescient.

**PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

**The Hon. S.S. MARSHALL (Dunstan) (15:23):** I rise to acknowledge the appointment by Her Majesty The Queen of the 56<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the Rt Hon. Liz Truss, who was recently elected as the leader of the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom. I offer my personal congratulations to her and bring the house's attention to the great friendship she has had with South Australia in recent times.

Before I do that, I will point out that she previously served in the Johnson government in the role of Secretary of State for International Trade and was, indeed, President of the Board of Trade under Prime Minister Boris Johnson. In that role, she worked alongside the Hon. Simon Birmingham, the then Minister for Trade and Investment in Australia, to negotiate the fundamentals of the most comprehensive free trade agreement in the history of Australia.

Ultimately, that free trade agreement was signed by Anne-Marie Trevelyan, the secretary for international trade, and the Hon. Dan Tehan, our federal minister. In fact, we had a role in that historic agreement being signed because it was signed here in South Australia alongside that other wonderful great institution between England and Australia, and that is the Adelaide Ashes test. So it was wonderful to be present at that, but I do acknowledge the work that then foreign secretary Truss had played in that important negotiation.

One of the major reasons why, as foreign secretary, she travelled to Australia in January of this year was to attend the AUKMIN conference. The AUKMIN conference is held between the foreign secretaries and the defence secretaries between Australia and the United Kingdom. There has probably never been a more important time for those AUKMIN discussions. They took place in Sydney. It is important to note that the only other state that was visited by then foreign secretary Truss in January this year was South Australia. It was a great honour to host her visit here. She visited Osborne to inspect the site where the frigates are being assembled and built now by BAE.

We also note that she attended Lot Fourteen. At Lot Fourteen, then foreign secretary Truss signed an historic agreement, an MOU between South Australia and the United Kingdom. To me, this was very logical because Lot Fourteen is focused on critical areas of importance between the United Kingdom and Australia—defence, space, cyber and quantum. In fact, these are the very issues that are bound up in that document, that agreement, that treaty that was organised and signed off by our former Prime Minister, the Hon. Scott Morrison; Boris Johnson, then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; and President Biden of the United States.

I look forward to continuing to work on the strong ties that we have with the United Kingdom. We now have a friend, a very strong friend, a continuing friendship, between South Australia and the United Kingdom. I note that on that visit that was held here she was accompanied by Her Excellency Vicki Treadell, the High Commissioner from the United Kingdom to Australia, and our own High Commissioner to the Court of St James's in the Hon. George Brandis, who was here accompanying Liz Truss on that important visit. Liz Truss was also met on that occasion by Professor Don Markwell, who was her tutor at Oxford, and it was a happy reunion between those two.

What I point out is the strong and enduring friendship and relationship between the new Prime Minister and South Australia. In the increasingly hostile and complex geopolitical landscape that we are all living in, Liz Truss is a true beacon—somebody who stands up for conservative values and the rule of law. She has had a very strong and bold stance against the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Russia. We congratulate her on the strong stance she has taken and we wish her all the very best for all that lies ahead for her in her important role as the 56<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

**PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

**The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL (Mawson) (15:28):** I, too, rise to congratulate Liz Truss on her appointment as the Prime Minister of the UK and look forward to our government reaching out to her to help us deal with the crisis that is facing the wine industry at the moment. We have been hit by tariff increases of 116 per cent to 232 per cent in China, which has really damaged the wine sector. In the UK, we are facing a proposal for a change to the taxation regime over there which would do further damage to South Australia's wine industry. I was in London a few weeks ago. I met with the

Deputy High Commissioner and other people at the High Commission who are involved in this, as well as people from the wine sector and those who are involved in lobbying the government.

Obviously, it was in a period when we did not know who the Prime Minister of the UK was going to be and we did not know what the cabinet make-up was going to look like. Now we have that certainty, we will be reaching out and doing everything we can, as a state government, to make sure that those in power in the UK know the damage that this increase in taxation on wine would do to our workers and our businesses in South Australia.

I thank the Treasurer, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Trade and other members of our frontbench who have been working closely with the industry. We have been in a holding pattern for the past few weeks because of this uncertainty about who would win the leadership of the Conservative Party. Now that we know who has those roles, we will be reaching out to them and, alongside the federal government, doing everything we can to put forward our story.

In the area that I represent, the seat of Mawson, we have wineries in McLaren Vale, in the Kangaroo Island wine region and on Fleurieu Peninsula around Yankalilla as well. We have thousands of people employed in the food, wine and tourism sector. We have hundreds of businesses, and they all rely on exports to make sure that the money keeps coming in and that, importantly, the wine keeps going out. After two excellent seasons, we have a glut of Australian wine and we need to be doing everything we possibly can.

Exports are down 26 per cent year on year, import costs have doubled in the past year and it is up to everyone to make sure that we replace as much of that huge China market as we can. You cannot just go out and find another China market or other countries that will pay the sorts of prices and import the volumes China used to take up from Australia. It was an unbelievable boost to our wine sector in Australia. What we need to do is make sure that in other markets we are doing everything we possibly can.

Last month, I was in Toronto to meet with the President and CEO of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, Mr George Soleas, and also the Vice President of Merchandising, Abhay Garg. It was disappointing to hear that they do not hear from Wine Australia. Wine Australia has two important roles: one is research and one is building new markets and trade. If they are not out there selling to people overseas, then that is a disgrace.

The Liquor Control Board of Ontario is a monopoly owned by the state government, the provincial government of Ontario. They are the second biggest buyer of liquor in the world, and they are telling me they hear from Napa Valley, from Italy, from Argentina, from Chile, from all these places, but they do not hear from Australia. In Ontario, last year Australian wine sales dropped 15 per cent. That is at a time when we should be out there trying to grow wine sales by 15 per cent.

My message to Wine Australia is, 'Get off your backsides, get out and do the work that you are paid well to do. You are funded by the taxpayers of Australia.' This is a huge industry, a very important industry for people like the member for Chaffey and his constituents and the member for Schubert and other members in here who represent wine regions. It is a crying shame to see what has happened because of the China fallout. We are going to see companies fall over, and we are going to see grapes left to rot next vintage if we do not do something about it. Wine Australia really needs to get off its backside, get out there and do the work that the taxpayers expect them to do.

#### **WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY**

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:33):** I rise today to speak about a very important day, World Suicide Prevention Day, on 10 September, and 9 September is R U OK? Day, which is another great initiative for mental health and suicide prevention. I would like to speak today about some statistics and give an understanding of the impacts that mental health and suicide have on the global population and, more importantly, what that means to us in South Australia.

Suicide Prevention Day is observed in over 60 countries. It is about reducing the stigma surrounding suicide and the impacts of mental health. We know that governments continue to look at suicide policies and promote mental health policy. Sadly, in Australia 65,000 people a year attempt suicide. Everyone has a role to play in preventing suicide on Suicide Prevention Day and every day. As a state and as community leaders, we need to be out there to better understand the impact on

communities and families that suicide and mental health is having. Mental health and suicide prevention start at a grassroots level, and we need to acknowledge the impact mental health issues are having.

Nearly 50 per cent of Australians know somebody who has been impacted by suicide, which is the leading cause of death of South Australians between the ages of 15 and 44. That is an alarming statistic. South Australia has the third highest rate of suicide in Australia per capita, with 234 lives unfortunately lost in 2020. Of the nine suicides on a daily basis, seven are men. That is another alarming statistic. In regional South Australia, statistics show that people are two times more likely to die by suicide. Over the last eight years, 555 lives have been lost to suicide.

Sadly, I have had to walk in on a situation where a person has suicided. I have walked in on a situation where a friend suicided, and it is something that sticks in the conscience forever. In the responsibility as shadow minister for mental health, suicide prevention and substance abuse, it is critical that we as representatives of our communities, state MPs, continue to support government policies, policies that are there for the betterment of people in our state, both in our electorates and our communities.

What I would like to say is that men are disproportionately at greater risk. The efforts and initiatives we saw over the former days of the Marshall Liberal government included instituting legislation to establish a whole of community and a whole of government approach to suicide prevention. We also promoted the Zero Suicide initiative, which was a great initiative. It is important this current government, rather than having front headline statements, gets on and addresses the policy shortcomings they are currently dealing with.

There are a couple of great initiatives. While we were in government, we reintroduced the FaB Scout mentoring program. It is about community leaders, community businesspeople having the ability to knock on the door and go into homes, understand the pressures on that family or individual, have a cup of tea and talk about the issues, recognising, if there is a problem, to open up that door to health experts so that we can help those people and potentially help save a life.

Another great initiative that I spoke to in this place yesterday is the Vocal Locals program. It is a great initiative that has been an experiment in the past two months in the Riverland through the Loxton community. The local project coordinator, John Gladigau, a local farmer and playwright, has played a great role. The project lead, Dr Kate Gunn, is a clinical psychologist, Department of Rural Health, UniSA, and she is also the founder of ifarmwell. It is an outstanding initiative that gives some training and some level of expertise to participants.

They are wellbeing coached by Tanya Lehman and research assistant, Dale Woodford. They have done an outstanding job in giving those people capability. The 10 participants are Mark DeCaux, Stephen May, Chloe Oldman, Travis Flight, Tim Paschke, Leanne Kaesler, Brenton Kroehn, Darren Letton, Peri McIntosh and Sam Hentschke. I thank them for their concerted effort in addressing and highlighting the importance of suicide prevention, particularly the mental health impacts it has not only on day-to-day lives but also on country communities at large.

#### **GAWLER SHOW**

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:35):** Today, I wish to bring to the house's attention the annual Gawler Show held a few weeks ago. The Gawler Show is the biggest show outside the Adelaide Royal Show and is held over two days. This year, about 35,000 people attended over the two days, which is a huge number of people. I must congratulate Claire Forgie, the president of the Gawler Show society committee, and also all the volunteers and judges who made the event such a success, including the various service clubs that help out in some way, either at the gates or providing parking services. There are a whole range of activities where they support the event, as does the Gawler council.

The attendance was probably boosted by two factors. One is that this was the first post-COVID show to be held. No show was held in 2020. In 2021, there was a modified show that capped numbers, which made it much smaller and a much more expensive event to hold. Also, the weather was ideal for the show. It was very pleasant weather, which made it really easy for families to come out and come to the show. My understanding is that about 17,000 people came on Saturday

and 18,000 came on Sunday. Sunday was a bit more popular for the families. Perhaps a lot of parents still work on Saturdays, and so mum, dad and the kids came out on Sunday.

The Gawler Show obviously attracts a lot of people from Gawler, but I would say that it attracts a lot of people from the northern suburbs of Adelaide and also from greater South Australia, probably in equal numbers. It does that because the Gawler Show is a great alternative to the Royal Show for families. It costs less than going to the Royal Show, but it is also more accessible; in other words, the cost to get there is not as much and the cost to get in is not as much, but it also is not as big as the Royal Adelaide Show and is therefore more manageable, particularly for families with really young children. The Royal Show is much too big for that.

The last 'normal' show, for want of a better word, was held in 2019. The show society also this year upgraded to its new ticketing system, where you can pre-purchase tickets. One of the things about pre-purchasing tickets is that you do not queue at the gate to get in, and that made it much easier for people to come in, as tickets were scanned. Apparently, 25 per cent of the tickets were purchased online before the event itself, which made it much easier for families to get in through the gates because there was less queueing.

There were a whole range of activities at the Gawler Show, including woodchopping, medieval re-enactments, pony rides and a kids circus. The Agricultural Learning Centre is very popular, where they have a range of smaller animals and a number of people explain what the animals are, what they do and the produce, etc., so it has a very important educational outcome. The shows are becoming more important in terms of education because an increasing number of students and kids, as was mentioned earlier today, are not aware of where a lot of things come from, such as milk and a whole range of other products. Unfortunately, they think they come from cartons in supermarkets, so there is a much more important educational role, and certainly the Gawler Show promotes the educational component, which is really good.

Sideshow alley was popular again amongst the youngsters, and the rides were really busy. The show also had a village green, with seating areas for families where they could eat, drink, etc. and watch some of the activities and various demonstrations, and there were also a number of free activities. Saturday night was the return of the fireworks. One of the major sponsors of the show is Taylor & Forgie. Kittle motors provides a car for the raffle to raise funds for the show. It is a really important community event. There were over 3,000 entries for various competitions around animals, cooking, floristry, textiles, art, etc.

The show was officially opened by Sophie Thomson, who is a well-known gardening expert on the ABC, from memory. Congratulations to the Rural Ambassador, James Krieg, who has a demonstration dairy farm at Kangaroo Flat, and also to the Young Rural Ambassador, MacKenzie Wilson. You cannot underestimate the importance of country shows. They are part of our Australian culture. They help communicate a whole range of things to city-based people, and they are a leading event in most rural communities. They promote innovation and, for many of us, they have a lot of childhood memories.

### *Bills*

## **RAIL SAFETY NATIONAL LAW (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:44):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012. Read a first time.

### *Second Reading*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:45):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation and explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

I am pleased to introduce the Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2022. This Bill amends the Rail Safety National Law which is contained in the Schedule to the *Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012*.

South Australia is the lead legislator for the Rail Safety National Law. This means that if the Bill passes both Houses of this Parliament, and has commenced in operation, the amendments to the National Law will apply in all Australian States and Territories, except for Western Australia. The amendments to the National Law will not apply in Western Australia until they are adopted there by way of mirror legislation.

Under the Rail Safety National Law, rail transport operators are responsible for ensuring that rail safety workers have the competence to undertake rail safety work in relation to their railway operations. An assessment of a rail safety worker's competence includes an assessment of the worker's competence in accordance with any applicable qualifications or units of competence recognised under the *Australian Qualifications Framework*.

The National Law provides that a certificate of competence that has purportedly been issued under the Framework to a rail safety worker, and that certifies the worker has certain qualifications or units of competence, is evidence that the worker has those qualifications or units of competence.

There have been incidents where rail safety workers have altered certificates of competence and provided the altered certificates to rail transport operators. The Bill amends the Rail Safety National Law to address this behaviour.

Under the amended National Law, it will be an offence for a rail safety worker to provide a document or information:

- that is false or misleading in a material particular; or
- that omits any matter or thing without which the document or information is misleading,

for the purposes of an assessment of the worker's competency to carry out rail safety work. A person found guilty of this offence will face a maximum penalty of \$10,000.

The Bill also inserts a section into the National Law which provides the National Rail Safety Regulator with a new power to grant exemptions. The new power enables the Regulator to exempt all rail transport operators, or rail transport operators of a class, from section 114 of the National Law, in the event of an emergency.

Section 114 requires rail transport operators to prepare and implement a health and fitness program for rail safety workers. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, access to non-urgent medical services was limited, and this affected the ability of rail transport operators to meet the requirements of section 114.

While the Regulator currently has the power to grant rail transport operators an exemption from section 114, this power only allows the Regulator to grant exemptions to individual operators, on application. The narrow scope of the Regulator's power meant that at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator had to work with each State and Territory to arrange for the responsible Minister in each jurisdiction to grant operators an exemption from section 114.

The Regulator's new power means that, in the event of a future emergency, the Regulator will be able to grant an exemption from section 114 to all rail transport operators, across all jurisdictions, at the same time. Like the section of the National Law that gives responsible Ministers an exemption power, the new section will limit the period of time for which exemptions can be granted to three months, will allow exemptions to be granted subject to conditions, and will allow for the variation and cancellation of exemptions.

It will be an offence for a rail transport operator to breach a condition placed on an exemption from section 114, without reasonable excuse. If an operator is prosecuted, it will be up to the operator to show that they had a reasonable excuse for breaching the condition. An operator found guilty of this offence will be subject to a maximum penalty of \$100,000 if they are a body corporate, or \$20,000 if they are an individual.

The amendments to the Rail Safety National Law that I have just outlined were approved by the responsible Ministers at the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting held on 11 February 2022. As South Australia is the lead legislator for the National Law, the Parliamentary Counsel drafted the Bill on behalf of the Australasian Parliamentary Counsel's Committee.

I commend the Bill to the House and seek leave to have the Explanation of Clauses inserted into *Hansard* without my reading it.

#### EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

## 3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Rail Safety National Law*

## 4—Amendment of section 42—National Rail Safety Register

This clause makes an amendment to the requirement that details of exemptions are to be included on the National Rail Safety Register. This is a consequential amendment to broaden the reference to exemptions to ensure it will cover Regulator exemptions granted under proposed new section 203A.

## 5—Amendment of section 117—Assessment of competence

This clause provides that it is an offence for a person to provide a document or information in relation to the assessment by a rail transport operator of that person's competence for carrying out rail safety work that is false or misleading in a material particular, or omits something, without which, the document or information is misleading. This is required as the general offence under section 226 of the Law for providing false and misleading information given in compliance with the Law does not apply where there is no obligation under the Law for a person to provide that information to a rail transport operator.

## 6—Amendment of section 203—Ministerial exemptions

This amendment is consequential on proposed new section 203A to ensure there is consistency with the provision regarding the grant of Ministerial exemptions.

## 7—Insertion of Part 6 Division 1A

This provision inserts proposed Division 1A (and section 203A).

Division 1A—Exemptions granted by Regulator in event of emergency

203A—Exemptions granted by Regulator in event of emergency

This clause provides for the ability of the Regulator to grant exemptions in the event of an emergency to the requirement under section 114 of the Law for a rail transport operator to prepare and implement a health and fitness program for rail safety workers who carry out rail safety work for the operator. For the purposes of the clause, *emergency* is defined to mean an event or circumstance that is declared to be an emergency or disaster by the Commonwealth or a State or Territory, or a Commonwealth, State or Territory authority that is responsible for managing responses to emergencies or disasters.

Similar to Ministerial exemptions under section 203 of the Law, an exemption under this provision may be granted subject to conditions and for a specified period, which cannot exceed 3 months. An exemption may be varied (but not so as to extend the operation of the exemption for a period that exceeds the maximum of 3 months) or cancelled, as may any conditions of the exemption. It is an offence for a rail transport operator to breach a condition of an exemption without reasonable excuse.

Exemptions of the Regulator under this clause are made by notice in the South Australian Government Gazette and must also be published on the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator's website.

## 8—Amendment of heading to Part 6 Division 2

This amendment is consequential on proposed new section 203A to distinguish between exemptions of the Regulator granted under that section and those granted by the Regulator on application under Part 6 Division 2 of the Law.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Patterson.

**NATIONAL ELECTRICITY LAW (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) (CONSUMER DATA RIGHT)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:46):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996. Read a first time.

*Second Reading*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:46):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation and explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

The energy sector is constantly evolving, including the range of energy products and services available to consumers. This range includes products and services such as solar PV panels and battery storage, energy efficiency audits and electricity plans.

In order for consumers to maximise the benefit they receive from the market, it is important that they have the necessary access to their information so they can easily compare these products and services.

In some cases, consumers may wish to have their information provided to a trusted third party to undertake such comparison for them. Consumers should be confident that this can be done in a safe and secure manner.

In 2017, the Commonwealth Government announced the introduction of a Consumer Data Right regime in Australia, initially in the banking, energy, and telecommunications sectors. This was in response to several government reviews which recommended that Australia develop rights for consumers to access and transfer their information in a usable format.

In 2019 the Commonwealth implemented the Consumer Data Right through changes to the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth)* (Competition and Consumer Act). Under the Act, the Commonwealth Treasurer has the power to designate sectors and datasets under the Consumer Data Right.

The Consumer Data Right provides residential and small business consumers with the right to efficiently and conveniently access specified data about them held by businesses. It also authorises the secure disclosure of that data to accredited data recipients on their behalf.

Accredited data recipients are businesses that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has accredited to receive a consumer's data from a data holder – only after the consumer has given their consent.

In 2020, the Commonwealth Treasurer made the energy sector designation instrument, specifying the data sets and energy data holders to which the Consumer Data Right applies.

The Consumer Data Right Energy data includes data such as generic and tailored tariff data, Distributed Energy Resource Register data (including details on batteries and solar panel installations), billing data, customer provided data and metering data.

In the energy sector, the Consumer Data Right will enable consumers to access a broad range of their energy data and authorise accredited data recipients to access this data on their behalf.

By giving consumers more control over their data and allowing them to share it with accredited data recipients, the Consumer Data Right for energy will allow them to identify better deals on energy products and services.

Energy retailers are the primary energy data holders for the Consumer Data Right for Energy. The Australia Energy Market Operator is the secondary energy data holder.

In 2021, the Commonwealth implemented the Consumer Data Right for Energy through amendments to the Consumer Data Right Rules, made under the Competition and Consumer Act. This included establishing a peer-to-peer data sharing model for the energy sector.

Under the peer-to-peer model, a consumer can direct a data holder to provide their Consumer Data Right Energy data to an accredited data recipient, in a compliant format.

Energy retailers, as primary data holders, are responsible for disclosing all requested Consumer Data Right data to the accredited data recipient. This means that where a retailer receives a Consumer Data Right request that captures data held by the Australian Energy Market Operator (being the secondary data holder), the retailer must request the data from the market operator.

When an accredited data recipient receives a consumer's Consumer Data Right energy data, they will use it for the purpose that the consumer has requested. These purposes may include tariff comparison, energy efficiency audits and sizing of PV and battery storage.

As access to energy data has traditionally been governed under the National Electricity Law and the National Electricity Rules, Energy Ministers have agreed on amendments to this framework to support implementation of the Consumer Data Right for Energy.

The *National Electricity Law (South Australia) (Consumer Data Right) Amendment Bill 2022* I present to you today, seeks to implement these amendments, by making changes to the National Electricity Law to:

- add Consumer Data Right functions to the Australian Energy Market Operator's statutory functions, allowing it to perform these functions and to recover the costs of its Consumer Data Right obligations from energy market participants through participant fees.



- allow South Australia's Energy Minister, using the minister-initiated rules power, to make the National Electricity Rules amendments. This will ensure consistency between the Consumer Data Right Rules and the National Electricity Rules, removing barriers to the smooth functioning of the Consumer Data Right for Energy, and will ensure data can be provided (as per Consumer Data Right requirements) without breaching the National Electricity Rules.
- give the Australian Energy Market Commission, as rule maker under the national energy laws, the head of power to amend the National Electricity Rules for any future changes required.

I commend the bill to the Chamber.

#### EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

###### 2—Commencement

###### 3—Amendment provision

These clauses are formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of National Electricity Law

###### 4—Amendment of section 2—Definitions

Certain definitions are inserted for the purposes of the measure.

###### 5—Amendment of section 49—AEMO's statutory functions

Provision is made conferring any functions of a data holder under the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* of the Commonwealth for CDR data relating to a designated energy sector on AEMO. The other amendment is technical.

###### 6—Insertion of section 90AB

New section 90AB is proposed to be inserted:

90AB—South Australian Minister to make initial Rules relating to consumer data right and further Rules relating to disclosure of data

The South Australian Minister is authorised to make the initial Rules relating to consumer data right and further Rules relating to the disclosure of data.

###### 7—Amendment of Schedule 1—Subject matter for the National Electricity Rules

An additional subject matter on which National Electricity Rules may be made is inserted into Schedule 1 of the Law.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Patterson.

### STATUTES AMENDMENT (NATIONAL ENERGY LAWS) (GAS PIPELINES) BILL

#### *Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:47):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996, the National Energy Retail Law (South Australia) Act 2011 and the National Gas (South Australia) Act 2008. Read a first time.

#### *Second Reading*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:48):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation and explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

Government is amending national energy legislation to provide for the implementation of a simpler regulatory framework that will continue to support the safe, reliable and efficient use of and investment in gas pipelines. This

amended framework will promote more effective competition and facilitate better access to pipelines, greater price transparency, and improvements to the negotiation framework and dispute resolution mechanisms.

The gas pipeline regulatory framework has undergone a series of reviews and refinements since it was first implemented 25 years ago. Most recently, reviews by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) and Dr Michael Vertigan from 2015 to 2018 focussed on whether the regulatory framework acts as an effective constraint on the market power of pipeline service providers.

On the basis of these reviews, Energy Ministers agreed to a new information disclosure and arbitration framework (referred to as 'Part 23') that was introduced in August 2017. Part 23 applies to previously unregulated or 'non-scheme' pipelines that are providing third party access. Energy Ministers also agreed to a package of reforms to strengthen regulation of 'scheme' pipelines.

Despite these improvements, other potential issues were identified by the AEMC which were beyond the scope of its review. To address these issues, Energy Ministers tasked officials to develop a Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) in 2018 to examine the tests used to apply pipeline regulation as well as the different forms of regulation and governance arrangements.

In May 2021, after an extensive consultation process that included the release of a consultation RIS in late 2019, Energy Ministers agreed a package of reforms to improve gas pipeline regulation. The reforms will deliver a simpler regulatory framework that will continue to support the safe, reliable and efficient use of and investment in gas pipelines, while also:

- posing a more effective constraint on exercises of market power by pipeline service providers;
- facilitating better access to pipelines that would not otherwise provide such access, while also minimising the cost and risks associated with regulation where there are no third party users;
- providing greater support for commercial negotiations between shippers and service providers through more transparency, including greater price transparency, and improvements to the negotiation framework and dispute resolution mechanisms; and
- streamlining the governance arrangements.

In March 2022, Energy Ministers agreed to the final package of gas pipeline regulatory amendments. The package of reforms is expected to deliver significant benefits to the Australian economy through reduced costs, improved pipeline access and more effective competition in gas transportation.

The Statutes Amendment (National Energy Laws) (Gas Pipelines) Bill 2022 includes changes to the National Gas Law (NGL), National Electricity Law (NEL), National Energy Retail Law (NERL) and National Gas (South Australia) Regulations. The reforms will apply in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory, and the Northern Territory.

The Bill expands the scope of economic regulation by requiring all transmission and distribution pipeline service providers to provide third party access, if such access is sought. To allow third party access to all pipelines, the Bill removes the existing coverage framework. Pipelines will be classified as either a scheme pipeline, subject to the stronger form of regulation based on the existing full regulation category, or a non-scheme pipeline, subject to the lighter commercially oriented form of regulation based on a strengthened Part 23.

All pipelines will be subject to requirements to publish prescribed transparency information and to comply with a single negotiation framework, ring-fencing and associate contract arrangements, a prohibition on bundling services, and dynamic market power measures (applying to all pipelines except the Declared Transmission System). Exemptions from ring-fencing, associate contract arrangements and the requirement to publish prescribed transparency information will be available to pipelines that meet certain eligibility criteria in accordance with the NGR.

The existing form of regulation test (with some minor modifications) will be used to determine whether a pipeline is deemed a scheme pipeline or whether a scheme pipeline should instead become a non-scheme pipeline. To overcome the information asymmetries that the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) is likely to face when applying the form of regulation test, it will be able to draw an adverse inference that a pipeline should be subject to the stronger form of regulation. The AER's ability to exercise this power will be limited to where the service provider does not provide the information requested within the period specified by the AER. The AER will be required to report on when it has used this power.

The Bill will provide for a greenfields incentive determination, which will be available to service providers prior to the commissioning of a new pipeline. The incentive will replace the existing competitive tender process and 15 year no coverage determination. The incentive will be available where the AER is satisfied that the form of regulation factors or competition to develop the pipeline (whether formal or informal) will, or is likely to pose, an effective constraint on the exercise of market power over the incentive period. The incentive will provide the pipeline with an exemption from being subject to the stronger form of regulation, but not the lighter form of regulation. The default incentive period will be 15-years, with the AER having the discretion to grant a shorter period.

The Bill will also allow pipelines with a greenfields incentive determination to apply for a price protection determination, which an arbitrator would be required to give effect to if an access dispute arises during the operative

period of the determination. The operative period cannot be longer than the greenfields incentive period (no more than 15 years). This determination will be available where the AER is satisfied that:

- the pipeline has been developed as a result of a competitive process (either formal or informal) and the prices and non-price terms and conditions will be made available to prospective users during the operative period of the price protection have been set as a result of that process; or
- one or more of the form of regulation factors effectively constrained the exercise of market power by the service provider when the price and non-price terms and conditions that will be made available to prospective users were determined and the making of the determination will, or is likely to, contribute to the achievement of the National Gas Objective.

The Bill provides for scheme pipelines to continue being subject to the regulatory-oriented dispute resolution mechanism but will be strengthened by stipulating the matters the dispute resolution body is to have regard to, fast tracking the process and specifying the material to be published following a decision. Non-scheme pipelines will be subject to the same commercially-oriented access dispute mechanism that currently applies under Part 23.

The credibility of the threat of small shippers triggering a dispute on scheme and non-scheme pipelines will be strengthened and a definition of a small shipper will be included.

The Bill will confer responsibility for form of regulation decisions, greenfields incentive determinations and greenfields price protection determinations, pipeline classification decisions, and exemption decisions from prescribed transparency information and the ring fencing and associate contract arrangements to the AER.

In addition to the new powers conferred to the AER, the Bill will require the AER to publish a regulatory determinations and elections guide. The AER will also be required to actively monitor the behaviour of service providers and compliance with their obligations under the NGL and NGR and will be able to initiate its own assessment of the form of regulation that should apply to a pipeline.

The Bill provides for the South Australian Minister responsible for Energy to make amendments to National Gas Rules (NGR) that will implement the gas pipeline reforms. Once the amendments have been made, the Minister will have no power to make any further amendments.

I commend this Bill to members.

#### EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

###### 2—Commencement

###### 3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of *National Electricity Law*

###### 4—Amendment of section 2—Definitions

The deletion of 2 definitions is related to the amendments to the *National Gas Law*.

###### 5—Amendment of section 16—Manner in which AER performs AER economic regulatory functions or powers

The 2 definitions deleted in section 2 are relocated to section 16.

##### Part 3—Amendment of *National Energy Retail Law*

###### 6—Amendment of section 2—Interpretation

###### 7—Amendment of section 88—Requirement for authorisation or exemption

###### 8—Amendment of section 137—RoLR notice—direction for gas

These amendments are consequential.

##### Part 4—Amendment of *National Gas (South Australia) Act 2008*

###### 9—Amendment of section 9—Interpretation of some expressions in *National Gas (South Australia) Law and National Gas (South Australia) Regulations*

###### 10—Amendment of section 14—Conferral of powers on Commonwealth Minister and Commonwealth bodies to act in this State

These amendments are technical or consequential.

###### 11—Repeal of section 18

Section 18 is repealed.

Part 5—Amendment of *National Gas Law*

12—Amendment of section 2—Definitions

Various amendments are made to the definitions section for the purposes of the measure.

13—Amendment of section 3—Meaning of civil penalty provision

Certain amendments are made to the section relating to the meaning of a civil penalty provision for the purposes of the measure.

14—Amendment of section 4—Meaning of conduct provision

Certain amendments are made to the section relating to the meaning of a conduct provision for the purposes of the measure.

15—Amendment of section 5—Meaning of prospective user

16—Amendment of section 8—Meaning of service provider

These amendments are consequential.

17—Insertion of section 8AAB

New section 8AAB is inserted:

8AAB—Meaning of small shipper

Provision is made in relation to the meaning of a small shipper.

18—Amendment of section 8A—Nominated distributors

19—Amendment of section 9—Passive owners of scheme pipelines deemed to provide or intend to provide pipeline services

20—Amendment of section 13—Pipeline classification criterion

21—Repeal of sections 14 and 15

22—Amendment of section 16—Form of regulation factors

23—Amendment of section 17—Effect of separate and consolidated access arrangements in certain cases

These amendments are consequential.

24—Substitution of sections 18 and 19

New sections 18 and 19 are inserted:

18—Certain extensions to, or expansion of the capacity of, pipelines to be taken to be part of a scheme pipeline

Provision is made for certain extensions or expansions of capacity of pipelines to be taken as being part of a scheme pipeline.

19—Expansions of the capacity of non-scheme pipelines to be taken to be part of non-scheme pipeline

Provision is made for expansions of capacity of non-scheme pipelines to be taken to be part of the non-scheme pipeline.

25—Amendment of section 22—Ministers of participating jurisdictions

This amendment is consequential.

26—Amendment of heading to Chapter 1, Part 3, Division 2—Revenue and pricing principles

An amendment is made to the Division heading for the purposes of the measure.

27—Amendment of section 24—Revenue and pricing principles

This amendment is consequential.

28—Amendment of section 27—Functions and powers of the AER

This amendment gives the AER various additional powers for the purposes of the measure, and makes a consequential amendment.

29—Amendment of section 28—Manner in which AER must perform or exercise AER economic regulatory functions or powers

This amendment adds new definitions for the purposes of the section, and makes a consequential amendment.

30—Amendment of section 30C—Rate of return instrument is binding on AER and covered pipeline service providers

31—Amendment of section 30E—Content of rate of return instrument

32—Amendment of section 30Q—Application of instrument

These amendments are consequential.

33—Amendment of section 43—Definitions

Various amendments are made to the definitions section for the purposes of the measure.

34—Amendment of section 44—Meaning of contributing service 35—Amendment of section 45—Meaning of general regulatory information order

36—Amendment of section 46—Meaning of regulatory information notice 37—Amendment of section 48—Service and making of regulatory information instruments

38—Amendment of section 49—Additional matters to be considered for related provider regulatory information instruments

39—Amendment of section 52—Opportunity to be heard before regulatory information notice is served

40—Amendment of section 53—Form and content of regulatory information instrument

41—Amendment of section 54—Further provision about the information that may be described in a regulatory information instrument

42—Amendment of section 59—Assumptions where there is non-compliance with regulatory information instrument

These amendments are consequential

43—Insertion of Chapter 2, Part 1, Division 4A

New Chapter 2, Part 1, Division 4A is inserted: , and details the AER's reporting requirements.

Division 4A—Monitoring service providers

63A—AER must monitor service providers' behaviour

Provision is made for the AER power to monitor various matters regarding service providers.

63B—AER must report to MCE

The AER is required to report to the MCE.

44—Amendment of heading to Chapter 2, Part 1, Division 5—Service provider performance reports

This clause amends the heading of Chapter 2, Part 1, Division 5 to specify it relates to scheme pipelines. In addition, the heading to section 64 is similarly amended.

45—Insertion of Chapter 2, Part 1, Division 5A

New Chapter 2, Part 1, Division 5A is inserted:

Division 5A—Compliance and performance

64A—References in this Division to service providers

Provision is made in relation to terms used in the division.

64B—Compliance audits by AER

Proposed section 64B gives the AER power to conduct compliance audits of service providers, or alternatively to arrange for them to be done on the AER's behalf.

64C—Compliance audits by service providers

Proposed section 64C requires service providers to conduct compliance audits.

64D—Carrying out of compliance audits

Proposed section 64D requires compliance audits to be carried out in such a way that follows the AER compliance procedures and guidelines.

64E—Cost of compliance audits

Proposed section 64E outlines where the cost of a compliance audit will lie.

## 64F—AER Compliance Procedures and Guidelines

Proposed section 64F requires the AER to make the AER compliance procedures and guidelines.

## 46—Substitution of section 83A

New section 83A is substituted:

## 83A—Information and transparency requirements relating to compression service facilities and storage facilities

Provision is made for Rules to be made in support of certain aspects of the measure.

## 83AA—Publication of information relating to compression service facilities and storage facilities

A person required by Rules made under the proposed section 83A to publish information must do so in accordance with the Rules.

## 47—Repeal of section 88

Section 88 is repealed.

## 48—Repeal of Chapter 2, Part 4

Chapter 2, Part 4 is repealed.

## 49—Amendment of section 91BH—General principles governing determinations

This amendment is consequential.

## 50—Amendment of section 91KA—Supply interruption or disconnection in compliance with AEMO's direction

This amendment deletes the definition of *distribution pipeline* specific to section 91KA.

## 51—Amendment of section 91LA—Retail market participation

This amendment removes non-scheme pipeline users from the list of person's who can be classified within the Rules as a participant in a regulated retail gas market.

## 52—Substitution of Chapter 3

New chapter 3 is substituted, which details the regulatory framework for pipelines.

## Chapter 3—Regulatory framework for pipelines

## Part 1—Scheme pipeline determinations and scheme pipeline elections

## Division 1—Scheme pipeline determinations

## 92—AER may make scheme pipeline determination

Provision is made for the AER to determine that a non-scheme pipeline is a scheme pipeline.

## 93—Requirements for making, or not making, a scheme pipeline determination

A scheme pipeline determination, or a decision not to make a scheme pipeline determination must be made in accordance with these requirements.

## 94—Effect of scheme pipeline determination

Pipelines subject to scheme pipeline determinations become scheme pipelines when the determination takes effect, and continue to be scheme pipelines while the determination remains in effect.

## Division 2—Scheme pipeline elections

## 95—Scheme pipeline elections

Provision is made for non-scheme pipelines to elect to be dealt with as scheme pipelines.

## 96—Effect of scheme pipeline elections

Provision is made for when scheme pipeline elections take effect, and their effect.

## Part 2—Scheme pipeline revocation determinations

## 97—AER may make scheme pipeline revocation determination

Provision is made for the AER, on its own initiative, or on the application of any person, to make a scheme pipeline revocation determination in relation to scheme pipelines that are not designated pipelines.

## 98—Requirements for making, or not making, a scheme pipeline revocation determination

A scheme pipeline revocation determination must be made in accordance with these requirements.

99—Effect of scheme pipeline revocation determination

Pipelines that are subject to scheme pipeline revocation determinations cease to be scheme pipelines when the determination takes effect.

Part 3—Greenfields incentive determinations and greenfields price protection determinations

Division 1—Greenfields incentive determinations

100—AER may make greenfields incentive determination

Provision is made for the AER to, on the application of the service provider for a greenfields pipeline project, make a determination that the relevant pipeline cannot become a scheme pipeline for the operative period of the determination.

101—Requirements for making, or not making, a greenfields incentive determination

Provision is made for the requirements for the AER to make, or not make, a greenfields incentive determination under section 100.

102—Effect of greenfields incentive determination

Provision is made as to what the effect of a greenfields incentive determination is.

103—Requirement for conformity between pipeline description and pipeline as constructed

Greenfields incentive determinations may only apply to pipelines which do not materially differ from the pipeline as described in the relevant description.

104—Power of AER to amend pipeline description

Provision is made for the AER to amend a pipeline description, on application by the service provider for a pipeline to which a greenfields incentive determination applies.

Division 2—Early termination of greenfields incentive determination

105—Greenfields incentive determination may lapse

Greenfields incentive determinations in respect of a pipeline lapse if the relevant pipeline is not commissioned within a certain period after the determination takes effect.

106—Revocation by consent

Provision is made for the revocation by the AER of a greenfields incentive determination by consent of the service provider.

107—Revocation for misrepresentation

Provision is made for the revocation by the AER of a greenfields incentive determination due to the various faults on the part of the applicant.

108—Exhaustive provision for termination of greenfields incentive determination

Provision is made regarding how the termination or revocation of a greenfields incentive determination takes effect.

Division 3—Greenfields price protection determinations

109—AER may make greenfields price protection determination

Provision is made for the AER to make a greenfields price protection determination.

110—Requirements for making, or not making, a greenfields price protection determination

Provision is made regarding the requirements for making, or not making, a greenfields incentive determination.

111—Effect of greenfields price protection determination

Provision is made regarding the effect of a greenfields price protection determination.

Part 4—Principles governing the making of particular determinations

112—Principles governing the making of particular determinations

Provision is made regarding the principles for making scheme pipeline determinations, scheme pipeline revocation determinations and greenfields incentive determinations.

Part 5—Access arrangements for scheme pipelines

Division 1—Submissions generally

113—Submission of access arrangement or revisions to applicable access arrangement

Scheme pipeline service providers must submit access arrangements or variations to applicable access arrangements, to the AER for approval in accordance with the Rules.

Division 2—Provisions relating to applicable access arrangements

114—Protection of certain pre-existing contractual rights

Provision is made such that applicable access arrangements will not deprive certain protected contractual rights.

115—Service provider may enter into agreement for access different from applicable access arrangement

Provision is made such that service providers may enter into agreements with users for access to pipeline services that are different from an applicable access arrangement for the relevant pipeline service.

116—Applicable access arrangements continue to apply regardless of who provides pipeline service

Access arrangements apply to pipeline services provided by scheme pipelines regardless of who provides the pipeline service.

Part 6—Classification and reclassification of pipelines

Division 1—Classification of pipelines

117—Application for classification of pipeline

Provision is made for service providers to apply to the AER for the classification of a pipeline.

Division 2—Reclassification of pipelines

118—Reclassification of pipelines

Provision is made for the AER, on its own initiative or on the application of a service provider, to decide to reclassify a pipeline.

Division 3—Provisions relating to classification and reclassification decisions

119—Requirements for making classification or reclassification decisions

Provision is made for what the AER must have regard to when making a decision under section 117 or 118.

120—Effect of classification decision or reclassification decision

Provision is made for the effect of classification or reclassification decisions.

Part 7—AER reviews into designated pipelines

121—AER reviews

Provision is made for the MCE to request a review by the AER as to whether a given pipeline should continue to be a designated pipeline.

53—Amendment of heading to Chapter 4

The heading of Chapter 4 is amended to reflect that the chapter now applies to both scheme and non-scheme pipelines.

54—Insertion of Chapter 4 Part A1

New Chapter 4, Part A1 is inserted

Part A1—Preliminary

130—Application of this Chapter

This section provides information as to the application of the Chapter.

55—Amendment of heading to Chapter 4, Part 1

The heading of Chapter 4, Part 1 is amended to reflect that the part now applies to both scheme and non-scheme pipelines.

56—Amendment of section 131—Service provider must be legal entity of a specified kind to provide pipeline services by covered pipeline



This amendment is consequential

57—Repeal of section 132

Section 132 is repealed.

58—Amendment of section 133—Preventing or hindering access

This amendment is consequential

59—Repeal of section 134

Section 134 is repealed.

60—Substitution of section 135

New section 135 is substituted:

135—Service provider must comply with queuing requirements

Provision is made requiring service providers to comply with queuing requirements imposed by an applicable access arrangement or the Rules.

61—Substitution of section 136

New section 136 is substituted:

136—Compliance with pipeline interconnection principles

Provision is made to require service providers comply with principles specified in the Rules.

136A—Prohibition against increasing charges to subsidise particular development

Provision is made to prohibit charging users to subsidise extension or expansion of capacity of the pipeline without a specific exemption.

136B—Prohibition on bundling of services

Provision is made to prohibit bundling services.

136C—Service providers must publish prescribed transparency information

Provision is made relating to the publishing of transparency information.

62—Amendment of section 137—Definitions

This amendment deletes the definition of compliance date, and makes a consequential amendment to the definition of related business.

63—Amendment of section 138—Meaning of marketing staff

This amendment makes a consequential change to multiple subsections, and additionally amends the text of an example within the provision.

64—Amendment of section 139—Carrying on of related businesses prohibited 65—Amendment of section 140—Marketing staff and the taking part in related businesses

66—Amendment of section 141—Accounts that must be prepared, maintained and kept

67—Amendment of section 143—AER ring fencing determinations 68—Amendment of section 144—AER to have regard to likely compliance costs of additional ring fencing requirements

These amendments are consequential.

69—Amendment of section 145—Types of ring fencing requirements that may be specified in an AER ring fencing determination

This amendment makes a consequential change to the text of Section 145, and additionally makes consequential amendments to the text of the Examples within in the provision.

70—Repeal of Chapter 4, Part 2, Division 4

Chapter 4, Part 2 Division 4 is repealed

71—Redesignation of Chapter 4, Part 2, Division 5

This amendment redesignates division 5 to division 4, consequential to the repeal of the current division 4.

72—Amendment of section 147—Service provider must not enter into or give effect to associate contracts that have anti-competitive effect

73—Amendment of section 148—Service provider must not enter into or give effect to associate contracts inconsistent with competitive parity rule

These amendments are consequential.

74—Insertion of Chapter 4, Part 2, Division 5 and Chapter 4, Parts 3 and 4

New Chapter 4, Part 2, Division 5 and Chapter 4, Parts 3 and 4 are inserted.

Division 5—Exemptions from particular requirements

148A—Exemptions from particular requirements

Provision is made for the Rules to make provisions regarding exemptions from the requirements made by some sections of the measure.

Part 3—Negotiation of access

148B—Definition

Provision is made for definitions for the purposes of the part.

148C—Access proposals

Provision is made for there to be Rules governing access to relevant pipeline services.

148D—Duty to negotiate in good faith

Proposed section 148D requires good faith negotiations by users or prospective users and service providers when access is sought.

Part 4—AER reviews about application of this Chapter

148E—AER reviews about application of this Chapter

Proposed section 148E gives the MCE the power to request the AER conduct a review into the application of the Chapter, and outlines the requirements and details of what such a review must be.

75—Substitution of Chapters 5 to 6A

New Chapter 5 is inserted, and Chapter 6A is repealed.

Chapter 5—Access disputes

Part 1—Interpretation and application

149—Definitions

This section provides various definitions for the purposes of the Chapter.

150—Application of this Chapter to disputes arising under the Rules

This section outlines that the provisions in the Chapter applicable to determining an access dispute apply to any dispute arising from the a provision of the Rules specified in the Rules for the purposes of this section, subject to any modification of the provisions in the Chapter specified by the Rules.

151—Chapter does not limit how disputes about access may be raised or dealt with

This section makes it clear that the Chapter does not limit how disputes about access to pipeline services can be raised or otherwise dealt with.

Part 2—Notice of access dispute and other provisions

Division 1—Notice of access dispute

152—Notice of access dispute

Provision is made as to how notice of an access dispute may be given in relation to either a scheme or a non-scheme pipeline.

153—Withdrawal of notice

Provision is made as to how a notice given under section 152 may be withdrawn.

Division 2—Parties to an access dispute

154—Parties to an access dispute

Provision is made as to who constitutes a party to an access dispute in various circumstances.

Part 3—Alternative dispute resolution for access disputes

Division 1—Alternative dispute resolution for scheme pipeline access disputes

155—Dispute resolution body may require parties to engage in alternative dispute resolution

This section allows the dispute resolution body to require the parties engaged in an access dispute relating to a scheme pipeline to attempt some form of alternate dispute resolution.

Division 2—Mediation of access disputes involving small shippers

156—Small shipper may elect to have access dispute mediated

This section allows a small shipper party to an access dispute to elect for the dispute to be resolved through mediation.

157—Appointment of mediator

Provision is made for the appointment of a mediator for the purposes of section 156.

158—Party's lawyer may be present at mediation

This section allows for the lawyer for a party to mediation to be present at the mediation.

Part 4—Arbitration of non-scheme pipeline access disputes

159—Reference of non-scheme pipeline access dispute to arbitration

This section requires the AER to refer access disputes relating to non-scheme pipelines to arbitration.

160—Appointment of arbitrator

Provision is made for the appointment of an arbitrator for the purposes of section 159.

Part 5—Access determination

Division 1—Determination of access disputes generally

161—Determination of access dispute

Provision is made for the determination of access disputes.

162—Matters to be taken into account for access disputes

This section requires that the relevant adjudicator, when making an access determination, must take into account any matters specified by the Rules for the purposes of this section.

163—Restrictions on access determinations

This section outlines restricts access determinations from having various effects.

164—Access determinations and part contributions of capital to fund installations or the construction of new facilities

This section allows adjudicators in access disputes to take into account capital contributions or construction of facilities for the pipeline the subject of the dispute, as well as making provision for the Rules to specify the matters to be addressed by the adjudicator, and the content of the determination.

Division 2—Particular provisions relating to scheme pipeline access disputes

165—Access determination must give effect to applicable access arrangement

This section requires that in making access determinations, a dispute resolution body must give effect to applicable access arrangements.

166—Rules may allow determination that varies applicable access arrangement for installation of a new facility

Provision is made for the Rules to do various things in relation to access determinations and applicable access arrangements.

Part 6—Variation of access determinations

167—Variation of access determination—scheme pipeline disputes

This section allows the relevant dispute resolution body to vary an access determination made in relation to a scheme pipeline access dispute on the application of any party to the determination, subject to not being able to vary a final determination if any party objects.

168—Variation of access determination—non-scheme pipeline disputes

This section allows for an access determination in an access dispute regarding non-scheme pipelines to be varied where all parties agree to the variation.

Part 7—Termination of access dispute

169—Relevant adjudicator may terminate access dispute in particular circumstances

Provision is made for the relevant adjudicator to terminate an access dispute.

Part 8—Compliance with access determinations

170—Compliance with access determination

Provision is made for the application of access determinations in respect of scheme and non-scheme pipelines.

171—Subsequent service providers bound by access determinations

This section establishes that an access determination is binding on any subsequent service provider as though they were a party to the access dispute at the time the determination was made.

Part 9—Access dispute hearing procedure

172—Part applies subject to any modifications prescribed by the Regulations

This section establishes that the part applies subject to modification by the Regulations.

173—Fast track resolution process—scheme pipeline access disputes

Provision is made for scheme pipeline access disputes to be dealt with by a fast track resolution process established by the Rules.

174—Hearing to be in private

This section establishes that, subject to the agreement of the parties, dispute hearings are to be in private.

175—Right to representation

This section establishes that parties to a dispute hearing may appear in person, or be represented by another person.

176—Procedure of relevant adjudicator

Provision is made for the procedure to be followed by the relevant adjudicator in conducting the access dispute.

177—Particular powers of relevant adjudicator in a hearing

This section gives the relevant adjudicator in an access dispute various powers.

178—Role of a dispute resolution expert

Provision is made for the role of a dispute resolution expert in an access dispute.

179—Disclosure of information

This section gives the relevant adjudicator for an access dispute the power to give orders to a person to not divulge or communicate information given to the person in the course of the access dispute without the permission of the adjudicator.

180—Power to take evidence on oath or affirmation

This section gives the relevant adjudicator power to take evidence on oath or affirmation.

181—Failing to attend as a witness

This section requires a person, who is served as per the Regulations, a summons to appear as a witness at a dispute hearing for an access dispute to attend the dispute hearing, unless they have a reasonable excuse for failing to do so.

182—Failing to answer questions etc

This section requires a witness at a dispute hearing for an access dispute for an access dispute to be sworn or make an affirmation, and to answer questions or produce documents as required, without reasonable excuse.

183—Intimidation etc

This section prohibits the intimidation of people who intend to produce, or have produced documents, or who are intending to appear or have appeared as a witness, in a dispute hearing.

#### 184—Particular powers of a relevant adjudicator in a hearing

This section gives the relevant adjudicator in a dispute hearing the power to not share with the another party parts of documents which one party has informed the adjudicator contain confidential information.

#### Part 10—Costs

##### Division 1—Scheme pipeline access disputes

#### 185—Costs—scheme pipeline access disputes

Provision is made in relation to the determination and apportionment of costs incurred in a dispute hearing.

#### 186—Outstanding costs are a debt due to party awarded the costs—scheme pipelines

Provision is made in relation to the nature and recovery of costs that are payable under section 185(4) or (5).

#### 187—Regulations about the costs to be paid by parties to access dispute—scheme pipelines

Provision is made for the regulations to provide for the dispute resolution body to charge parties its costs in an access dispute, and to apportion those costs between parties.

##### Division 2—Non-scheme pipeline disputes

#### 188—Costs of arbitration of non-scheme pipeline disputes

Provision is made for how costs are to be determined in relation to the arbitration of a non-scheme pipeline dispute.

##### Division 3—Mediation of access disputes involving small shippers

#### 189—Costs of mediation of access disputes involving small shippers

Provision is made regarding how costs are determined in an access dispute involving small shippers which is referred to mediation.

#### Part 11—Joint access dispute hearings—scheme pipeline disputes

##### 190—Definition

Provision is made for the definition of a term for the purposes of the Part.

##### 191—Joint dispute hearing

Provision is made for the application of the section.

##### 192—Consulting the parties

Provision is made for the dispute resolution body to consult the parties prior to making a decision, and to be required to invite and consider any submissions made by the parties in regards to what the dispute resolution body proposes to do.

##### 193—Constitution and procedure of dispute resolution body for joint dispute hearings

Part 9 applies to the joint dispute hearing in a corresponding way to the way in which it applies to a particular dispute hearing.

##### 194—Record of proceedings etc

Provision is made for the dispute resolution body to have regard to various materials for the purpose of the dispute hearing.

#### Part 12—Miscellaneous matters

##### 195—Correction of access determinations for clerical mistakes etc

Provision is made for the relevant adjudicator for an access determination to, subject to the Rules, correct certain types of errors in the access determination.

##### 196—User's existing capacity rights during an access dispute

Provision is made such that existing rights of a user to use the capacity a pipeline must not be altered during an access dispute by the service provider, except with the user's consent.

76—Amendment of section 231—AER proceedings for breaches of this Law, Regulations or the Rules that are not offences

This amendment corrects a minor grammatical error, and additionally makes an amendment to the note found in section 242 of the National Law.

77—Amendment of section 271—Enforcement of access determinations 78—Amendment of section 292—AEMC must take into account form of regulation factors in certain cases

79—Amendment of section 293—AEMC must take into account revenue and pricing principles in certain cases

These amendments are consequential.

80—Insertion of section 294FB

New section 294FB is inserted

294FB—South Australian Minister to make initial Rules relating to pipeline regulation

This section gives the South Australian Minister the power to make Rules for certain things for the purposes of the measure.

81—Amendment of section 294G—South Australian Minister may make Rules on recommendation of MCE and Energy Security Board

82—Amendment of section 324—Authorised disclosure of information given to the AER in confidence

These amendments are consequential

83—Repeal of Chapter 10, Part 1

Chapter 10, Part 1 is repealed

84—Substitution of Chapter 10, Part 2, Division 2

New Chapter 10, Part 2, Division 2 is inserted:

Division 2—Disclosure of confidential information held by AEMC

330—Confidentiality of information

Provision is made for the confidentiality of information held by AEMC.

85—Amendment of section 332—Failure to make a decision under this Law or the Rules within time does not invalidate the decision

This amendment removes the NCC as a defined regulator scheme decision maker for the purposes of the section.

86—Substitution of section 333

New Section 333 is substituted:

333—Withdrawal of applications relating to particular determinations or classification

Provision is made for the withdrawal of applications for a relevant decision.

87—Repeal of sections 334 and 335

Sections 334 and 335 are repealed.

88—Substitution of Schedule 1

New Schedule 1 is substituted:

Schedule 1—Subject matter for the National Gas Rules

Provision is made for the subject matter the National Gas Rules may cover.

89—Amendment of Schedule 2—Miscellaneous provisions relating to interpretation

Various consequential amendments are made to Schedule 2 for the purpose of the measure.

90—Amendment of Schedule 3—Savings and transitionals

Transitional provisions are inserted into Schedule 3 for the purposes of the measure.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Patterson.

**GENE TECHNOLOGY (ADOPTION OF COMMONWEALTH AMENDMENTS) AMENDMENT  
BILL***Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:49):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Gene Technology Act 2001. Read a first time.

*Second Reading*

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:49):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation and explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

The Bill before the House today seeks to amend the *Gene Technology Act 2001* to adopt future amendments to the Commonwealth gene technology legislation by regulation.

The Bill intends to prevent any future instances where there are inconsistencies between the South Australian legislation and the National Gene Technology Scheme.

The National Gene Technology Scheme is administered in each Australian jurisdiction through their respective laws, and each jurisdiction is committed to mirroring the legislation of the Commonwealth to ensure consistency.

Currently, South Australia must undertake a full legislative process every time that there is an amendment to the Commonwealth legislation. This process allows for inconsistencies between the regulatory requirements of South Australia and the Commonwealth.

Applying an adoption by regulation process to the South Australian gene technology legislation would mean that future changes to the commonwealth legislation would be considered by the South Australian government as amendment of act regulations.

This will provide the opportunity to adopt, not adopt, or adopt with modification, any changes to the Commonwealth gene technology laws.

Parliament would still retain the right to review and disallow the regulations, with changes only able to be made to the Commonwealth legislation after consideration by the Gene Technology Forum, of which I am the South Australian representative, and following full public consultation.

This process allows for objectionable amendments to be disallowed and ensures that scrutiny is still able to be applied by this Parliament.

The *Gene Technology (Adoption of Commonwealth Amendments) Amendment Bill 2022* will ensure that regulatory requirements remain consistent, and intends to support clinicians, researchers, industry, transport companies and farmers who deal with gene technology by ensuring that we are aligned with the rest of the nation.

Aligning state and national gene technology provisions will improve consistency and help support innovation, as well as ensure that South Australia is in line with the nation.

I note that a similar Bill was introduced late in the last Parliament, and received bipartisan support. I look forward to this piece of legislation receiving similar support.

I commend the Bill to Members and I seek leave to have the detailed explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

## EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

## Part 1—Preliminary

## 1—Short title

This clause is formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Gene Technology Act 2001*

## 2—Insertion of section 5A

This clause inserts new section 5A which provides that the Governor may, by regulation, amend the *Gene Technology Act 2001* to give effect to an amendment to the *Gene Technology Act 2000* of the Commonwealth made by the Commonwealth Parliament. The Governor must be satisfied that an amendment that corresponds, or substantially corresponds, to the Commonwealth amendment should be made to the *Gene Technology Act 2001*.

In making a regulation under proposed new section 5A, the Governor may make any additional provision considered by the Governor to be necessary to ensure that the Commonwealth amendment has proper effect under the law of South Australia.

A regulation made under proposed new section 5A may take effect from the day of the commencement of the Commonwealth amendment, including a day that is earlier than the day of the regulation's publication in the Gazette.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Patterson.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DEFAULTING COUNCIL) AMENDMENT BILL

### *Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (15:50):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Local Government Act 1999. Read a first time.

### *Second Reading*

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (15:50):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation and explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

The Local Government (Defaulting Council) Amendment Bill 2022 (the Bill) will amend the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Local Government Act) to extend the period of administration in the District Council of Coober Pedy until the local government periodic elections due to be held in 2026. It will also cause the periodic election for the Council, for which voting closes in November 2022, to cease to be held.

On 24 January 2019, the then Governor, His Excellency, the Hon Hieu Van Le AC, issued a proclamation declaring the District Council of Coober Pedy (the Council) to be a defaulting council pursuant to section 273(5) of the Act and appointed Mr Timothy Robert Sandford Jackson to be the administrator of the affairs of the Council.

This proclamation was made on the basis of a 2018 report by the South Australian Ombudsman, which demonstrated serious failings and irregularities in the conduct of affairs at the Council, particularly in relation to the Council's negotiation of a power purchasing agreement with EDL Pty Ltd.

The Ombudsman was of the view that this process demonstrated 'one of the most serious examples of maladministration in public administration' that he had observed since the relevant provisions of the *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2021*, as in place at that time, were enacted.

Subsequently, the Ombudsman's findings were supported by a lengthy examination of the Council by the Auditor-General that was released on 4 December 2018. The Auditor-General also identified significant failings and deficiencies in the Council's financial management and position.

Members may also recall that in November 2019, Parliament passed a Bill to amend the Local Government Act to extend the period of the Council's administration. At that time, all council administrations were limited by the Local Government Act to a maximum period of 12 months. Given that the decision to place a council in administration must always be based on serious failings or irregularities at a council, this was considered to be insufficient time for all administrations to put a council to rights and was extended to 24 months in all cases.

However, at that time, the very difficult circumstances in Coober Pedy were also recognised, with administration at this Council extended for the whole council term – that is, until November 2022.

These circumstances largely arise from the Council's role – which is unique amongst all South Australian councils – to provide not only what are usually considered to be municipal services (roads, waste management and the like), but also essential services – water, wastewater, and electricity retail services. This has meant that the long history of mismanagement at the Council, as demonstrated by the Ombudsman and the Auditor-General, has had an enormous impact on all services in the town. In turn, this has meant that resolving these issues is not a straightforward matter.

While I commend the Council's Administrator, Mr Tim Jackson, for the commitment he has shown since his appointment in 2019 to turn things around for the Council and the community, and recognise the significant improvements in the Council's financial governance and administration, the reality is that there is a long way to go. The Council cannot yet be considered to be financially sustainable. The essential services in the town, particularly the water service, cannot yet be regarded as running securely and efficiently for the future.



I can assure members that the Government is committed to finding a solution that will work for Coober Pedy in the long term. It will take time, however, to determine how one of our most remote communities can best be supported through local governance and services that best fit its needs.

The extension of the administration will allow for this time. I should note that while this Bill will set a maximum time for the administration for a further four years, the administration may end sooner than this if matters are resolved.

The Bill also recognises that for the administration to be continued, the election process that is now underway for all councils, including the District Council of Coober Pedy, must be stopped. Recognising the importance of local government elections in all communities, putting this before Parliament is not a decision that has been made likely. However, as I have described, it is necessary.

I also recognise that the consideration of this Bill coincides with the first steps in the 2022 election process that is now underway, as nominations for Council closed on 6 September.

I am advised that there have been two nominations for Council. I recognise that if this Bill passes, the election of these two people will not take effect but commend those that have nominated for the commitment to their community that has prompted their nomination. I trust that this commitment will also be demonstrated through support for the town's administrator, if the administration is extended as this Bill proposes.

I commend the Bill to Members.

#### EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

This clause is formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of *Local Government Act 1999*

###### 2—Amendment of section 273—Action on report

This clause amends section 273 of the principal Act to change when the District Council of Coober Pedy ceases to be a defaulting council under Chapter 13 Part 3 Division 1 of the principal Act to the conclusion of the periodic elections due to be held in 2026 (unless a proclamation under section 273(16) is made before that time).

##### Schedule 1—Transitional provision

###### 1—Periodic election

This clause sets out a transitional provision that provides that the periodic election in the District Council of Coober Pedy for which voting closes in November 2022 will cease to be held from the commencement of the provision and anything done for the purposes of the election will be taken to be void and of no effect.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Telfer.

### PLEBISCITE (SOUTH EAST COUNCIL AMALGAMATION) BILL

#### *Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (15:52):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to provide for plebiscites in the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to ascertain the level of support for the examination of an amalgamation of those councils to form a single council, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

#### *Standing Orders Suspension*

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (15:52):** I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable the bill to be taken through all stages without delay.

**The SPEAKER:** Count the house; an absolute majority is required.

*An absolute majority of the whole number of members being present:*

**The SPEAKER:** An absolute majority is present. I have been reminded that we will put the question that standing orders be suspended so as to enable the bill to pass through all remaining stages without delay. The standing orders suspension has been moved. I will call again for a seconder.

**An honourable member:** Yes, sir.

Motion carried.

*Second Reading*

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (15:53):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Plebiscite (South East Council Amalgamation) Bill 2022. This bill proposes that a plebiscite be held in both the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to seek the views of the electors in these communities about whether they support an investigation into the potential amalgamation of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier.

The bill also proposes that these plebiscites be undertaken by the Electoral Commission of South Australia to coincide with the upcoming council elections. The question to be put to electors is: 'Do you support the examination of an amalgamation of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to form a single council?'

The possible amalgamation of these two councils has been a point of discussion in the South-East and in local government circles for some time, certainly since the amalgamation processes that were undertaken in South Australia in the late 1990s that resulted in the creation of our current 68 councils.

While many councils amalgamated at this time, including the District Council of Mount Gambier and the District Council of Port MacDonnell, the City of Mount Gambier was left untouched. It remains as an island city, completely surrounded by its hinterland, with two councils, two elected member bodies and two administrations to lead and service what many would consider to be a single community. This is a unique situation in South Australia.

This question was raised consistently with cabinet members at the recent country cabinet in Mount Gambier. The member for Mount Gambier has made strong representations to the government that the amalgamation of these two councils should be actively considered. While the government agrees that this is an idea that should be taken seriously and properly investigated, our strong view is that the people who would be most affected by an amalgamation should have a say as to whether or not an investigation into it should take place. That is why we propose these plebiscites.

To be clear, these plebiscites are not triggers for a proposal to be put to the boundaries commission. They will inform the government's decision on whether or not this should occur. If there is a positive response from the community in the plebiscites, the government's next step will be to refer the proposals to the South Australian local government boundaries reform commission, which will then use the process laid out in the Local Government Act 1999 to independently and thoroughly explore the proposal.

On receipt of a proposal, the commission makes an assessment as to whether an inquiry should be undertaken to consider the merits of the proposal. In making this assessment, the commission considers the proposal in the context of the objectives of the Local Government Act 1999; the roles, functions and objectives of councils under the Local Government Act; and the principles laid out in section 26 of that act that outline what is expected of the services, capacity, representation and functioning of councils.

The inquiry itself is undertaken in accordance with the act and the commission's own guidelines, and comprises an investigation into the significance and impact of the proposal. This includes a full analysis of the proposal on the affected councils and their communities. It also involves significant community engagement.

At the end of its inquiry, the commission will report to me, as the Minister for Local Government, with any recommendations for boundary changes that, in the commission's view, are in the best interests of these communities. This report will be made public at that time and I will seek the views of the member for Flinders at that particular time. In addition to this process under the act, it is also considered appropriate that the South Australian Productivity Commission inquire into the

economic benefits or costs of amalgamating the two councils to further inform the commission's inquiry.

All voters for South Australian councils will have their ballot papers posted to them in October, and the voters in these two councils will have an additional vote to cast to indicate their views on this proposal. The state government will then carefully analyse and consider what the community has said through the plebiscites before a decision is made about whether or not to take the next step of referring the matter to the commission.

The government encourage the people of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to participate in these plebiscites, which have the potential to help resolve a question that has been asked and speculated on for many years in the South-East of our state.

I commend the bill to the house and seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

#### EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

##### 1—Short title

The short title is the *Plebiscite (South East Council Amalgamation) Act 2022*.

##### 2—Plebiscites

Provision is made for a proposition to be submitted to electors at plebiscites in accordance with the section as to whether they support the examination of an amalgamation of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to form a single council.

The *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* (including regulations made under that Act) is applied to the plebiscites as if they were polls held under that Act, subject to exclusions and modifications under Schedule 1 (and any exclusions and modifications under regulations).

Certain dates are fixed for the purposes of the plebiscites.

##### 3—Regulations

Provision is made for the Governor to make regulations.

##### Schedule 1—Exclusions and modifications of *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* and *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 2010*

The exclusions and modifications of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* and the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 2010* are specified for the purposes of the plebiscites.

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (15:58):** I rise to indicate I am the lead opposition speaker on the Plebiscite (South East Council Amalgamation) Bill 2022. This has been a surprising bill to have to work through this sitting week, and I cannot help feeling that it is ill thought-out and rushed legislation. It was introduced on the very same day that nominations closed for the local government council elections, meaning that voting papers will be going out in just a few weeks' time. If this is not policy on the run, then I do not know what is.

I was disappointed to hear that the members of the councils, such as the mayors, councillors and staff, did not have any insight into what the government was planning. How is this listening to the people, when they did not even have a clue what was being planned? I have been speaking to many members of the community in Mount Gambier and Grant especially over the last 24 to 36 hours, as you can imagine, when you are surprised by a piece of legislation that directly impacts your community.

These conversations are built on the many existing relationships I have with community members down there. There are none that are positive about this process. They feel once again like they are being set up as guinea pigs for the advantage of the rest of the state, just like Labor did with the communities previously with the forward sale of their forest assets a number of years ago. Why have the Premier, the Labor Party and the Minister for Local Government not been open with the people of the South-East?

The dates of the local government elections are fixed. We know when they are going to be. No-one was surprised by these dates. Why, then, is the government introducing this legislation now,

at the last minute? Because it certainly seems like all indications are, as I have said, that this is a thought bubble, a poorly planned process, which has the potential to undermine the opportunity for council boundary change opportunities in the future.

A thought bubble plebiscite with scant detail that creates more uncertainty for the good people of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier, if it is unsuccessful, means that any future proposal, to quote the Premier, would be 'dead for a generation'. We have a Premier who is foisting a process onto the South-East community with little regard as to what impact it might have on that community. We have a lame duck Minister for Local Government I am incredibly disappointed by. He is either complicit or compliant.

There is already a clear process, as has been highlighted, for looking at local government boundaries. The South Australian Local Government Boundaries Commission is the independent body that assesses and investigates council boundary change proposals and makes recommendations to the minister. There are a number of ways this investigation can be triggered: firstly, by resolution of either house of parliament, or by the minister himself, or by a council or councils or, lastly, by the prescribed percentage of a number of eligible electors, that being the members of the community who are going to be impacted by that decision.

So this begs the question: why have the councils or communities of either the City of Mount Gambier or the District Council of Grant not put forward a proposal to the independent Local Government Boundaries Commission already? I can only assume that this is probably because these communities are not ready or prepared for this to happen.

If the local government minister believes that this process is flawed, then adjust the legislation. If the minister believes this process is not properly resourced, then advocate for the Treasurer to allocate more funding—in other words, just do your job. Why should the communities of the South-East be used as a test case once again? Where is the justification?

The Premier speaks about a 'peculiar situation', which is what he describes as a 'doughnutted council' when it comes to the arrangements with Grant and Mount Gambier, and we have heard the local government minister use similar language. This scenario is not unique to just these two councils. It is simply a case of a growth council—being Mount Gambier—being constricted by a surrounding council—being Grant. This circumstance happens in a number of different areas in our state. In fact, some of these communities have already put forward proposals for the boundaries commission to consider.

So the question must be: why not enable these communities, who are already looking at their council boundaries, instead of picking on those in the South-East, who seemingly are not yet ready for that process? If not that, why not include other communities within such a process? Why is this the Plebiscite (South East Council Amalgamation) Bill? Why not enable community involvement for other councils, ones that have already put forward proposals? Why? Because this bill was rushed. It is not thought out, it is non-strategic, it is a thought bubble.

Just two weeks ago, the Deputy Premier and environment minister made the decision to cancel the election of members of the landscape boards, which were legislated to be in the same election process as the local government elections. Her justification? Apparently concerns from the Electoral Commission around its workload and having elections for landscape boards at the same time as local government elections. Only two weeks later, this does not seem to be a concern. Adding more obligation and process onto the Electoral Commission in the middle of local government elections does not seem to be a concern when it suits a political narrative. How hypocritical, how pathetic.

Additionally, there is no insight into how much additional funding, if any, the state government is contributing to the cost of the ballot. One can presume that this ham-fisted, half-baked proposal we are debating today has been recklessly rushed through to try to save money by a minister who does not really know what is going on. I guess they assume that a ballot across the council area is not cheap, so, 'Let's try to pigeonhole this one in with the council elections.' Indeed, there is a financial obligation on councils that they have to budget for every four years, and councils and the ratepayers have to carry that cost.

One could rightly assume that because the state government is using this ballot for its own political games it would be helping to foot the cost. We do not know that from the bill we are debating; there is no clarity for ratepayers in Mount Gambier and Grant. The bill itself is shorter than the speech I am reading. Indeed, seemingly we could have a scenario where the government is forcing councils and communities to cover the cost of a ballot they do not want and have not asked for, one that could leave them more financially disadvantaged and, in the end, one that is no better than a glorified SurveyMonkey.

Why is the minister not showing the leadership that should have come with the position and salary he is privileged to have and have the aptitude to give this process a proper time for consideration free from the political noise which would inherently be within a community during a local council election? Is the Premier or the Minister for Local Government deliberately foisting this process onto the good people of the South-East at a time when there will be uncertainty and confusion about what outcome could be driven by different results?

The uncertainty is exacerbated by a poorly formed bill that gives no detail as to what the intention of the government is with whatever results come from a vote. What can the people of Grant expect from a vote? Will their perspective be appropriately recognised? Will the perspective of the larger Mount Gambier council population supersede the smaller population of the District Council of Grant? Is there an expectation that there will need to be a majority support from each council individually, or are the votes going to be collated to be counted? Is there a threshold for the percentage of the vote that must come in to provide enough direction, given that local government elections are not compulsory?

None of these questions has an answer. The people of the South-East are left in the dark. 'Trust us,' the Premier says to them. 'Trust us,' says the Minister for Local Government, 'We know best. Leave it with us. This is the process we need. We know best.' For them to be trying to rush the bill through in this short time frame should be a point of shame to the minister. He should be showing more respect to the communities and the councils of the Limestone Coast.

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (16:08):** There are a couple of things to put on the record in the really quite peculiar circumstances in which we find ourselves this afternoon. We have a short bill that is going to be jammed through this place: all stages in one go, a full bore suspension of standing orders, circumstances of urgency and all the rest of it. That is at a time when we are in the second sitting day after so many weeks away from the place that people can barely remember what the place looked like when we were last here and a government agenda so empty that we are not turning beyond about half a page in order to navigate through it.

Yet this bill has been presented almost (and I say 'almost' advisedly) out of the blue. It is a good thing, as the member for Flinders observed, that it runs to all of 2½ pages because none of us—with the exception of (and I will come to it in a minute) myself and the member for Flinders—have had anything more than a moment's opportunity to look at it, let alone consider the subject matter it is proposed we traverse.

I was pleased to hear that the minister, in his remarks in the second reading just now, gave us the assurance that if this bill passes through the place it will lead us to a part 2 process under the Local Government Act. We might all be relieved to hear that, because no-one would be surprised in the context of this piece of legislative adventurism to hear that somehow the result of this might also abrogate the part 2 process should it provide whatever level of evidence somebody might wish to rely upon, the result of the plebiscite having been run.

It is always interesting to engage in processes that will further elucidate a case for taking a step, or not, to proceeding with reform and in what form. In these peculiar circumstances that affect people, electors, living within local government areas, one might expect to see perhaps a petition coming along to this parliament or some sort of expression of will through those elected members of local councils, indeed the councils themselves, and that is precisely what part 2 provides for in the commission process. Indeed, it provides for the minister of the day to bring such a proposal to the commission or for the parliament to move that way.

So I will concede straightaway, accept and embrace that there is a role for this state parliament in considering what measures might be applied to local government boundaries, to the

possibility of amalgamation, to the creation of new councils and so on. There is that role. I will listen very carefully in that sense. I think the member for Mount Gambier in particular has an important voice to this parliament in this particular circumstance.

Here we are with this bill, presented after what has been this extraordinarily long break away from this parliament. The member for Flinders and I in our respective portfolio capacities were afforded a briefing in relation to the bill and an opportunity to engage in some back and forth about its effects and so on in about the middle part of the afternoon yesterday. So the member for Flinders and I have that much advantage over the rest of the members of the parliament, and I think it is fair to say that the two of us have done our best to grapple with the concept that is in mind.

I think neither of us is entirely unfamiliar with the notion that from time to time questions might come along that are worthy of consideration, but nowhere near rising to the heights of a piece of legislation proposed to be run through this place, at no notice and out of the blue after a long break, and against the background of no or nearly no indication of what has brought it about.

So it is really quite unsatisfactory for this minister and this government to be conducting themselves in the way they are in this space. I think without more—and there was not any evidence of it in the minister's second reading explanation just now—it risks contaminating any subsequent process in terms of a reflection by those who are required to participate in it on the way in which it was jammed in front of them.

If it comes to an outcome where there is some equivocal voice expressed by one or both of the council areas as a result of this, the question will be legitimately asked, 'How reliable an expression of a view of these residents is that and how good a foundation in evidence is this for proceeding further?'

I do not hear the minister say that there is a predestined consequence, including any predestined part 2 consequence, that will flow from this and I do not hear the minister say, 'Well, we know that the result we are expecting is X or Y and that's against a background of a whole lot of lead-up and so this is just firming up our case.' That is unsurprising because nobody has heard it talked about at all until yesterday afternoon.

Here we are in the state parliament, on the second day of sitting, back after a really long break, with a new government with not a lot else to talk about. Could it not have brought this to our attention any time sooner than yesterday? I am afraid to say that there are really scant grounds that have been presented by the minister for what is a really thoroughgoing proposal to legislate specifically in order to acquire some information that may or may not lead to a section 28 proposal being put to the commission in due course.

If we are to proceed fairly shortly through the committee stage—and I think we are—to analyse what is going on and to have an opportunity to ask the minister about these things, I just foreshadow that I would be interested to know what thought has been given to the appropriate source of any subsequent reference that might be made. Who does the minister envisage might be the party to approach the commission under section 28? Is the minister committed to doing that? Is the minister giving us some indication of a desire to bring a question before the parliament subsequent to any such plebiscite? These are all things that are unknown, and they are certainly unknown on the face of the bill and they are no more informed with the benefit of the second reading explanation.

It is not a matter for me to stand here and talk about the particular whys and wherefores of the process that is going to be provided for in the bill. It is really only to emphasise, and to do so for the purposes of the record, what exactly has happened over now a little more than 24 hours to get to this point and sound a note of caution about the importance of respecting regional communities from the point of view of this parliament, highlighting that, far from jamming through some legislation with a view to this particular discrete outcome, it would do us all a great service to have had at least some framework ahead of this time.

There we are. That is as far as we have come. There will be an opportunity in a few minutes to ask some more particular questions and I look forward to that opportunity.

**Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (16:19):** I rise to make a brief contribution to the bill. I will only be five minutes and then cede to the newest member of this house. I want to put on record a few

points. First of all, my position is firmly against forced amalgamations. Therefore, in terms of moving forward with this bill, it has long been a topic of conversation in our community around the idea of amalgamations. I am sure that processes will be examined throughout the parliamentary process, as they should be, and that learnings will develop and come out of this process going forward with either this piece of legislation or others.

I want to come back to the essence of this bill. It is a very simple question, and it is part of the plebiscite: 'Do you support the examination of an amalgamation between the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to form a single council?' The point, 'Do you support the examination of' is a really important one. For years, when people talked about benefits or disadvantages of a hypothetical amalgamation of these two councils, it was really based on somebody's opinion. It was based on what they think may be the benefits of that amalgamation.

We have never got into the point of having the books opened, having community consultation and what that might look like, and one of the reasons is that it comes at a huge expense. This process is tipped to cost about \$400,000. In my mind, it makes sense to ask the community whether or not they even want to examine this. If they do not want to examine it, I can tell you right here, right now, I will not support any amalgamation of the two councils. It is a very first step. If people do not want to examine it, why would you spend any money going into the deeper understandings of cost-benefit analysis, community consultations, what the opportunities may or may not be? It is a very important step to ask the people whether or not they even want to consider this examination in the first place.

If it comes back no, I think it is pretty obvious. If it comes back, 'Yes, we want to examine the possibility or the options for an amalgamation of these two councils,' then that enacts a whole series of work that needs to be done in terms of the Productivity Commission looking at both councils: where the savings may be made, what the benefits are, what the negatives would be, community consultation, bringing the community together so that these things can be put forward, but, more importantly, the community's voice can be heard.

Even if it is, 'Yes, we want to examine this,' it is not a *fait accompli* that it is going to happen. If the Productivity Commission comes back and says, 'Well, listen, the benefits are marginal; both operate quite efficiently, quite separately. There's little duplication because they are dealing with different types of roads: one is more looking at gravel and grading and others are looking at bitumen. So there are limited benefits,' in my mind, we would not go any further. Even if it is a yes and the Productivity Commission comes back and says it has limited benefits, it would still be a no as far as I am concerned.

We could also have situation where it is a yes, and the Productivity Commission comes back and says, 'Yes, there are savings, and here they are detailed and outlined in a thoughtful and well-presented way, but the community consultation is overwhelmingly negative.' In my mind, we would not progress past that position either. In terms of debating this bill, if the community wants to examine what the options could be, all that is is the enacting of a spend of money to find out the facts and for the community to then decide whether or not they want to continue down that path.

I thought it was really important to put on the record that this is not voting for an amalgamation of two councils: all this is saying is, 'Do you want to examine it?' Quite often, and this is true of many situations, the loudest voice always seems to be the one that sits in your ear. The thing I like about this process is it is going to all ratepayers who get a vote and have their chance to vote. Do I know what the numbers are going to be? No, I do not. However, in terms of a democratic process, what is wrong with just asking the question and then having the community feed back what their desires are?

It might be that it does not go any further than asking the question. I think I have spelt out that this is not a *fait accompli*. There is no predetermined outcome for this, certainly not as far as I am concerned. I am quite supportive of asking the question to see if the community supports the examination of an amalgamation of the two councils.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (16:26):** I will make a very brief contribution to this debate in support of the bill. Firstly, I would like to contrast the discussion to date. On the one hand, the opposition has been very alarmist and read all sorts of things into this bill, compared with the local member for this area, who has provided a very thoughtful consideration of what he sees are the

benefits of this process. If I were going to rely on anybody's contribution, I think the local member's contribution would outweigh those on my right.

There are a couple of things that need to be mentioned, which I think the opposition spokesperson talked about. He spoke about the cost in comparing this to the landscape boards. The difference between this and the landscape board elections, which were deferred by the minister, is quite simple: this is going to two council areas. The ballot paper is the same. It goes to two identical things, which the Electoral Commissioner would be involved in anyway.

The difference with the landscape boards is that they have different boundaries, different electoral rolls, etc., so there are a whole range of different processes. It is a separate process. They cannot be compared. They are like chalk and cheese. It is disappointing that the member who represents the opposition voice for local government did not understand that basic difference.

All this proposal does, as the member for Mount Gambier said, is provide a process for examination. The outcome of this process is important because it could empower both the councils and the community to act. I think that is important. That is something we have not thought about. This process could empower the community to inform its councils and, for those councils who are a bit reluctant to do anything, if it is a yes vote they go ahead and do it, and if it is a no vote it empowers the councils to say no and the communities to say no. It is an empowering process.

Despite what the member for Heysen has said, it is respectful of that local community. Nothing could be more respectful than asking the people directly for their views, their values, etc. At the moment, in reality because of the costs involved in the processes, the councils are the only people who have a say. My council is involved in a process at the moment that cost heaps of money, and I am not even sure if people actually support it because we have never been asked. We just have not been asked by our council.

Something I think is probably a good thing is that, as a side benefit, it could increase the number of people who go to vote in this election too. I think this will energise that community and encourage them to vote, which again will help those candidates who are running for this election and who are successful. It will help empower them to make the necessary decisions after the election because they can use the result of the plebiscite to say yes, we should continue, or no, people do not want it. Again, it is an empowering process.

It is an act of leadership to engage with the community and give them a say in the direction the community should go. It is giving people a voice to be heard when often they are not heard at all, and you get a chance to be heard at the very first stage of any process, and that is very important. Normally, people are asked to comment at the end of the process, when a lot of decisions have already been made, and it is often tick-a-box consultation. This plebiscite is actually consulting the community at the first steps before anything else happens.

What is also very important, and something the member for Heysen tried to muddy the waters about, is that this bill in no way abrogates the need for a second process under the existing Local Government Act. That process would go ahead, and there are a number of checks and balances in that process in itself. This is in addition to that. This gives the whole community an additional opportunity to have their voice heard.

Also what we could find out from this process is: does this actually inform us about how, perhaps, future processes could be held? There are some valuable lessons to be learnt from this process as well. It is not a new issue. It might be a new issue for the member for Heysen and it might be a new issue for the member for Flinders, but in the South-East this is not a new issue. This issue has been talked about in the South-East for decades, so it is not new. It might be new for the members of the opposition, but certainly it is not new for the community down there.

The other reason it is being held now is simple: to minimise the cost to the taxpayer. There is already an existing process in terms of the Electoral Commissioner. We piggyback that process, keep the costs down and we make sure that people are aware of it and get involved. With those few words, I would certainly encourage support for this bill.

Debate adjourned.



*Members***MEMBER FOR BRAGG**

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Bragg, I remind the house that this is the member's first speech and that the member should be accorded normal courtesies and respect afforded to new members on this most important and happy occasion. The member for Bragg.

**Mr BATTY (Bragg) (16:31):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is a great honour to be elected to serve my local community in the Parliament of South Australia. It is a privilege to represent the people of Bragg, an area that is my home, an area that I love. What is there not to love for the 37,000 people who call Bragg—spanning from the eastern suburbs to the Adelaide Hills—home?

It has some of the best schools in the state, including exceptional primary schools like Rose Park, Linden Park, and Burnside primary. It has some of the best parks in the state: Hazelwood Park, Tusmore Park and Cleland National Park to name but a few. It has some of the best shopping in the state, anchored by Burnside Village and strip shopping along Kensington, Greenhill, Glen Osmond and Portrush roads. It has some of the best clubs in the state like Rotary, Lions and Probus, and hugely successful local sporting and community clubs. It has the best pub in the state, The Feathers, and the best winery in the world, Penfolds Magill Estate.

This area has also always been served by some of the best members of parliament in the state. The electorate was first established in 1970 and has been represented exclusively by premiers and deputy premiers. I appreciate the very big shoes I have to fill in becoming just the fourth member for Bragg. This electorate rightly expects a hardworking local member who gets results, and I will strive every day to not let them down.

I want to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge my predecessor as the member for Bragg, the Hon. Vickie Chapman. Vickie gave an exceptional two decades of service to our local community, our parliament and our state—even if she did, in her own words, 'ruffle some feathers' along the way! She is someone I have known for most of that period since I first joined the Liberal Party some 16 years ago.

The party has always been an important part of my life and, in many ways Vickie Chapman, along with several other senior leaders in the party, has defined that experience. It has been a privilege to watch, support and learn from her leadership. She served the people of Bragg with distinction and leaves an enormous legacy as our state's first female Deputy Premier and first female Attorney-General. Vickie, thank you for your service, and I wish you every success as you return to your equally exceptional career in the law.

In her valedictory speech, the former member for Bragg referred to a list that she would leave on her desk for the next member, which apparently outlined the priorities of the people of Bragg. Unfortunately, the former member also took that desk with her on her way out. But, like all residents of Bragg, she had the opportunity to share with me what matters most to her for our local area, including the need for a new primary school, a new shed for the Burnside CFS and improved infrastructure for Cleland National Park. These are all things that I will immediately fight for in this place.

To that list of local priorities, I would add improving freight routes so we can get trucks off our local roads—we had yet another terrifying reminder of the consequences of failing to act on this just last month—protecting our unique history and heritage in the eastern suburbs, ensuring our local clubs have the infrastructure they need and continuing to promote a culture of acceptance and inclusivity in our ever-changing local community, including among new migrants from China, India and so many other parts of the world that add to our rich cultural diversity.

Many members use this speech as an opportunity to tell their story. Each of us arrives at this place via a different journey from different places with different lived experiences and influenced and impacted by different people and events. The truth is my story is not particularly interesting. There is no tale of extreme tragedy, no symbolic moment and no personal epiphany, and I do not intend to manufacture one today because what I do have is a perfectly common story. Sure, it is one that involves a degree of privilege, but not the silver spoon often used to portray a privately educated

eastern suburbs boy. In fact, it has been more of a rusty cutlery set. It is a story about hard work, sacrifice and making the most of opportunities offered by this great state.

My maternal great-grandparents' connection to South Australia began in the 1950s, when they migrated from Holland via New South Wales, along with my young grandmother. They set up their first home in Leabrook, now in the heart of Bragg. Sadly, our amateur family historians are indeed rather amateur and the best explanation I have had for the move is that they were searching for a better life and, if this is the case, they found it. Entrepreneurial and enterprising, they ran a deli on Gawler Place for the better part of two decades. My grandmother grew up in this deli, which I am told was the lifeblood of her community, before herself engaging in tough work as a cleaner (an industry where she eventually ran her own business) while raising my mother and aunty.

My father, on the other hand, is a first-generation arrival to Australia. He came as a child with his family after my grandfather was offered promotion in his work as a sales manager, with the only catch being that the job was some 16,000 kilometres from his home in England. He stopped in at Australia House on the Strand, a building I subsequently worked in some 50 years later, to pick up some black and white brochures about this foreign country before taking a risk and making the move with his family.

Fast-forward a little and here in Adelaide my sister, Charlotte, and I were raised in a pretty conventional working-class family. My father worked as a salesman at Le Cornu Furniture and my mother as an administration assistant at Business SA. Again, it was the personification of hard and humble work, the means by which my parents could provide for their family.

In 2016, dad was made redundant when Le Cornu closed. Unskilled 60-year-old workers are generally not attractive prospects in a competitive job market, but dad's first instinct was not to wallow and it certainly was not to look to the government for help. He, like his own father and many before him, took a risk: he started his own small business selling commercial furniture and, along with my mother, continues that enterprise today. I am so proud of them. They have strength, they have kindness and they have determination.

One thing they did not have was the benefit of education. While neither of them finished secondary school, both were determined for me and my sister to benefit from the wealth of opportunity that education unlocks. This was not always easy, and I know just how hard they worked and how much they sacrificed to send us to school. They forwent the luxuries of life and at times their own financial security; however, they do describe it as the best investment they ever made.

As the grateful beneficiary of that investment, I believe that education is not only good in and of itself but is also perhaps the greatest tool for social mobility. I was the first person in my family to ever attend university, where I studied law and economics. This led me to work as a commercial lawyer here in Adelaide, in diplomacy at the Australian High Commission in London and now the greatest honour of serving in our state's parliament.

I tell this story for two reasons. First, it describes a constituency in South Australia that I, and indeed all members, represent. While the term 'middle class' is slightly misplaced in the Australian context, there is a large constituency of ordinary South Australians working hard in their own way to make a better life for themselves and their family, contribute to their community and create more opportunities for the next generation. These people will be at the forefront of my decision-making in this place. They will not be forgotten by me.

Secondly, it is a story that illustrates Liberal principles that will guide me during my time in parliament. Our party is rooted firmly in principles—constant principles that have been enunciated for over a century. In 1912, Alfred Deakin outlined his Liberal Party's vision for Australia. He said:

It means the full calling forth of all the powers, abilities, qualities and characters of the people of Australia...each of its citizens, living his or her own life, and doing the best for himself and herself...

Just over 40 years later, Robert Menzies set out our beliefs in similar but more expansive terms in his We Believe statement. These beliefs are my beliefs. I believe in the individual. I believe in institutions and the rule of law. I believe in free and competitive enterprise. I believe in social justice and in religious and racial tolerance. Another 40 years down the track, John Howard again set out these unchanged principles. He said:

We believe, above all, in the supremacy and the sovereignty of the individual. We believe that the family unit is the bedrock of our society. We believe in the work ethic. We believe in rewarding hard work and achievement.

Another 20-odd years down the track, these Liberal values continue to guide us today. Some, however, noticed that I emblazoned my election posters with the descriptor 'new generation Liberal' and queried what this meant in light of generations of timeless Liberal values. First and foremost, it means that I am a Liberal.

Liberalism is the force that made our country and our state what it is today. I have a deeply held belief in the values that underpin our party, of which I have been a member my entire adult life. Secondly, it means that our party needs to evolve to remain relevant. This is not a new concept. Indeed, another of Menzies' commandments in 1954 was that 'we believe that liberalism means flexibility and progress'. Howard said in 1996 that Australian liberalism has always been evolving and developing and always will be.

We are constantly relating liberalism's enduring values to the circumstances of our time, and our own time presents a constituency that I referred to earlier: everyday, hardworking South Australians who will galvanise around new issues. We must be alive to this. We must listen to our local communities. We must seek to empathise with them and we must represent their concerns and their views.

Whether it be the views of those South Australians my age and younger, like the 22-year-old constituent I met at the Glenunga ALDI supermarket who was most concerned with finding a decent job, resigned to the fact that she would never be able to afford to buy her own home and, above all, wanted to see action on protecting our environment. A new generation Liberal shares these concerns. Or the 70 year old I doorknocked in Beaumont who was worried that an ambulance might not show up for him in a time of need, concerned about transitioning into aged care and anxious as to whether he would be able to afford to keep his heater on this winter. A new generation Liberal shares these concerns.

Clearly, the challenges our state faces today are many and varied. In my view, and speaking as an economics graduate, the biggest of them is economic malaise. The previous government fostered an economy led by initiatives such as Lot Fourteen—an innovation precinct of which I am sure the likes of Sir William and Sir Lawrence Bragg would be proud—that was open and outward-looking, retained our best and brightest and attracted new investment. Our economy was growing at a faster rate than at any time in the previous 30 years. I thank and acknowledge my friend the member for Dunstan for the work that you did to transform our state's economic outlook during your time as Premier.

We cannot afford to stop. Currently, our state has the highest unemployment rate in the country. Business confidence is in freefall. Union thugs are seizing control of construction sites, and we are in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis. We should address these challenges, not by pandering to populism or by headline hunting but instead by reference to liberal principles.

First, South Australia must be an open and outward looking economy. There is a danger that regions around the world will continue a retreat into self-isolation sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some 175 years after the repeal of the Corn Laws in Britain, it is critical that we keep making the case for open economies and free trade in goods and services, because doing so leads to job creation and to income growth.

During my time working at the Australian High Commission in London, the Australia-UK Free Trade Agreement was signed. Indeed, it was signed right here in Adelaide. I am very proud to have worked with a team, led by my friend and mentor George Brandis, that secured what was not only Britain's first post-Brexit new trade deal but the most ambitious that Australia has ever signed beyond our partnership with New Zealand.

South Australia should seek to capitalise on this deal and those that will follow. Already South Australian companies like Nova Systems and Pickstar are well established in UK markets while UK companies such as Mott MacDonald and Laing O'Rourke are investing in our state. Opportunities abound, and we must continue our global outlook to sell to the world and attract capital and talent from beyond our borders.

Secondly, we must have policies that allow the private sector to thrive. Government should, so far as possible, stay out of the way of enterprising people. When my father started his small business, he did not expect help from government, but nor should he expect obstruction. Any regulatory changes we make in this place should consider the cost of compliance for business and individuals in South Australia. We should consider the cost of tax reform in the same way. Our narrow tax base, more often than not, relies on unstable, inefficient or inequitable taxes, including payroll tax (a tax on jobs), stamp duty (a tax on the efficient transfer of property), and land tax (where our rate is still significantly higher than some other states).

If we get these policies right, and create an open economy where the private sector can thrive, we will be left with an environment that will produce the jobs of the future, including highly skilled jobs in industries such as defence and space. We should work to ensure we have the skills base to meet growing demand in these industries.

Another potential growth industry is clean energy. Protecting our environment is clearly an important priority for those of my generation. I am very proud to have been part of the Australian delegation to the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow last year, just as I am proud of the previous government's work in this area, led by the now Leader of the Opposition.

This is an issue that should also be viewed through the lens of economics and indeed energy security. We need to focus on affordable and reliable energy for South Australian families and businesses. This is not mutually exclusive with also making the most of the economic opportunities that the energy transition presents. Just as the world has always looked to Australia to supply it with coal and gas, it will start to look to Australia to supply it with clean energy, whether that be renewables, hydrogen, or even next generation nuclear technology. Why should South Australia not position itself to be at the forefront of these emerging and growing industries?

Just as hard and humble work was the means by which my parents could provide for their family, a strong South Australian economy is not an end in itself. It is the means by which we provide the exceptional services and infrastructure expected by the people of our state—our schools, our hospitals, our roads, and our recreational spaces.

In our quest for a strong economy, we should also not lose sight of government's role to care for and provide a safety net for those who need it. Our policymaking should always be injected with a dose of compassion. Both my former boss Christopher Pyne, in his valedictory speech, and the Premier, in his maiden speech in the other place, referred to the same Franklin Roosevelt quote:

The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

I accept this important test. Our economic strength should be a means to a social dividend and greater opportunities.

No-one arrives here without the support of many others. First and foremost, I again thank the people of Bragg for placing their trust in me to be their next representative. And I will never forget that is exactly what I am—their representative. I will strive every day to represent their views and their interests here and deliver results for our community.

Political campaigns only happen with the help of volunteers who believe in you and what you are fighting for. This is true of all campaigns, especially ones like we just ran at the by-election, where we wanted to listen to thousands of people in a very short time frame. I am incredibly grateful for the literally hundreds of volunteers who helped in our short-run race: people like our Liberal Party Bragg SEC President Annabel Wilkins, Vice President Jen Melick, and the presidents of our two local branches Harvey Jones and Ingo Block, and people like the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow cabinet. I was so appreciative that we had nearly the entire fresh, new Liberal team out supporting this campaign and contributing to its success.

Also, there are people like the friends, family and Liberal Party members who jumped on board and gave a little or a lot. There are far too many to mention, but I do want to acknowledge the group of 20 and 30-somethings who ran this campaign from the very beginning: people like Jack Newton, Esther Tonkin, Luka Rinaldi, Alisha Dhillon, Sam Hooper, Charlotte Batty, Sam de Cure and, from further afield, Tom Schinckel, Zachary August, Reuben Bolaffi, Eddie Higginson and Jack

Cranwell. There are many more, and you all know who you are. Together, this group of young people achieved something truly special, and I know that each of you have very bright futures in this party and beyond.

While the campaign may have been only 27 days, today has been a lot longer in the making. On a professional level, I want to thank the many leaders I have worked with in the law, in diplomacy and in politics who have taught me so much and given me so many opportunities. Personally, I want to again thank and acknowledge my family: my parents, Yvonne and Andrew, and my sister, Charlotte, as well as the McGuinness, Thomas and Gower families. I could not have done this without you.

Finally, as with everything in my life, the last word must go to my wife, Charlotte. The timing of all this was somewhat unexpected; notwithstanding this, you offered me unwavering and unconditional support, help and counsel, just as you have done for the last 14 years of our life together, and I am so appreciative. While I am sure you are going to be one of my most pesky constituents, I cannot wait to share this journey with you.

It is a journey on which I will be guided by the principles and values I have outlined today. It is a journey on which I will always remember the constituency I am here to serve. It is a journey where, working together, we can make a real difference. That is a privilege for which I again thank the people of Bragg. Thank you.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

#### *Bills*

### **PLEBISCITE (SOUTH EAST COUNCIL AMALGAMATION) BILL**

#### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:55):** I rise to make a brief contribution to the Plebiscite (South East Council Amalgamation) Bill 2022, which involves the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier in organising a plebiscite for the good people of those two council regions to vote on whether they amalgamate those two councils.

Council amalgamations have had varied success over time. In my home council, the Coorong District Council, many years ago when the amalgamations happened in the round that reduced the councils to the 68 we have now in South Australia, we saw the amalgamations of the District Council of Meningie, the District Council of Coonalpyn Downs Council and the District Council of Peake.

Generally, it has been reasonably successful, but then it depends on the administration. It can depend on the councillors, obviously, and it can very much depend on the CEO and the mayor. In regard to the council that was created at that time many years ago, it has had a pretty reasonable run of mayors and chief executive officers. But I was disappointed, and that is being polite, prior to this current council when Councillor Mayor Neville Jaensch was the Mayor of the Coorong council and he did not seem to have any vision south of the motorsport park at Tailern Bend. Because I live at Coomandook, that affected me significantly, as it did many other people of the council district.

The council runs now down from Tailern Bend up near the weighbridges on the Princes Highway—people would be aware of those—down past Tintinara, obviously encompassing Meningie and out through the Mallee, with its boundary on the Southern Mallee District Council around Jabuk on the eastern side of Peake.

As the local member, but more as a concerned ratepayer, before the last council elections four years ago there were many meetings run in the area, and I chaired a lot of them, regarding what was happening, or more accurately what was not happening, in regard to what we call one of the main jobs that council should do, which is looking after our roads. At those meetings I witnessed 500 people, and some of those would have been multiple attendees, I will say that, and there were a couple of meetings I could not get to for various reasons. There was a lot of angst.

We saw a change of council, we saw my good friend Mayor Paul Simmons come in, and I wish him all success in this next council election. I note there are many people standing for election in the Coorong District Council, and I applaud that, that we have so many people standing.

I note in some other council areas some people were elected because they were the only candidate and in some areas there were not enough candidates. That would cause issues. I guess it is a by-election. Things have been righted and I applaud that.

You do have to have a good attitude, especially when you have a bigger council, because there is a lot of push and pull about what areas you look after. In the case of the Coorong council, there is a lot of push around Tailem Bend, and Wellington East is a very big community on the eastern side of the River Murray. I think it is the second biggest community in the Coorong council. Whether it is elected members or whether it is the administration, they have to be cognisant of what everyone wants.

For a long time, even when this came up for discussion on the radio this week, it did seem that roads, rates and rubbish were the main things councils looked after, but councils look after a lot of other things. Some people would say there is duplication with state services, some would say there is duplication with federal issues and some would say there is duplication with international issues.

The people on the ground paying their rates, which are going up every year, want to see action on the ground. They want to see their libraries work, they want to see their roads graded and they want to see their rubbish picked up. We now have the three bin service in Coorong council, and my back road, Parkin Hall Road, is on the run for the three bin system. I only use the recycling bin and the rubbish bin, and it is a very handy service to have. It will be very interesting to see how these council elections go.

Furthering the debate around the bill in question, I really question the Malinauskas Labor government putting its will onto the local people who did not know this was coming. The councillors did not know this was coming and the mayors did not know this was coming.

When I was elected in 2006, the former member for Croydon, the former Attorney-General, the former Speaker, Michael Atkinson, on budget day (which was in September that year because it was an election year) announced on the front page of *The Advertiser* that Murray Bridge was going to host the new men's prison and the new women's prison—two prisons to be built there and a \$550 million project.

Again, as the new local member, I had not been advised, the mayor had not been advised and no-one in the system had been advised. What happened after that was that there were public meetings and there were protests. The Public Service Association was involved. The prison officers rebelled because they wanted to stay working where they were. Obviously, we have a medium-security prison in Mobilong but, as far as the men's prison goes, this would have been the Yatala replacement. Well, long story short, it all fell over.

It was a very interesting time because on one side I could see the benefits of the employment, because I see the benefits of the employment that Mobilong brings, the prison there at the moment, but people were concerned about where the prerelease was going to happen and what families may move into the district. There were a whole lot of problems, and in the end, because it had come from a level of no consultation, it fell over. I gave many speeches on it. I could see the benefits but, because of the way it was rough shod over the community, I could see the many reasons why it should not happen, and that is why it did not happen in the end.

Certainly, with regard to communities—and probably more so the far-flung communities of our state, including the communities of the West Coast, with over 700 kilometres to get to Port Lincoln in the good member for Flinders' seat, or around 440 kilometres to go down to Mount Gambier—the good people of those far-flung regional areas do not like being told what to do by anyone. That is why you will sometimes see some interesting electoral results and sometimes other decisions made, but they certainly do not like being dictated to. They are a long way from the hustle and bustle of the city. They have a great place to live, work and play, and they do not want to be told what to do.

To me, this has landed at their feet out of the blue. We have had an eight-week break from the parliament—and we have had plenty else to do, mind you—yet there has not been any consultation over the eight weeks that this was coming and, all of a sudden, the Premier has thrust this into the limelight this week. It has to be barrelled through this house, going beyond the normal conventions of giving us a couple of weeks to look at the legislation, form a proper opinion and get some feedback from stakeholders. In the end, we have had to rush it.

I commend a shadow, the member for Flinders, for the rushed work he has done and the brief consultations he has had a chance to do, and I thank the rest of the team for getting organised for this debate. In winding up these comments, you have to be careful what you wish for, especially when you deal with the far-flung communities of this state. If this proposal to have a plebiscite does get up, I think a lot of people will vote it down on that basis because they will feel they have been dictated to. We will have quite a few questions on this, and I look forward to the debate.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (17:06):** I rise to speak on the Plebiscite (South East Council Amalgamation) Bill, obviously in support of the bill. I must say that I am surprised that the opposition has been so quick to take the opportunity to oppose the bill, to complain about the fact of the existence of the bill and to complain about the way in which the bill has been brought about.

I am the first to admit, as has the minister, as has the Premier, that we have sought to bring this bill on quickly to give as much notice and time for the process not just to be organised and executed to allow the people of the South-East to have their say but also to enable as much time as possible after the winter recess for people to consider their position, particularly those who have the opportunity to cast their vote in the plebiscite.

I do not blame the member for Flinders for this because he was not around in the last session of parliament, but for those who were to complain about a bill being brought on swiftly without being briefed with a week's or several weeks' notice I find extraordinary. It was almost the custom and practice of the previous government, particularly some ministers within that government, to not even confirm to the previous Labor opposition whether a particular bill was going to be introduced in the coming sitting week but only offer a briefing sometimes on the day that the bill was being introduced and, no, that was not exclusively with regard to COVID legislation. Sometimes it was, yes, absolutely, but it was not exclusively the case.

The first thing I would say is spare us the crocodile tears about process because it is not like we have dropped *War and Peace* before the parliament. This is a brief bill, readily understood.

*Mr Telfer interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Well, at least, by some it is readily understood. Of course, we look forward to the committee process and are happy to provide answers about the contents and the intention of the bill. The moaning from those opposite about their inability to adequately consider their position on the bill before it is brought on for consideration, I find a little rich. All the bill does is provide those people in the South-East with the opportunity to have their say.

Contrary to some of the remarks we have just had from the member for Hammond and also from the member for Flinders, no-one is being told what to do; rather, they are being asked what they want. You could not think of a more polar opposite intention and outcome from this bill from what is being alleged by those opposite. Rather than engage in some of the more, I find, strange personal attacks on the minister we saw from the member for Flinders, including, 'If you don't like how the councils down there operate, go to the Treasurer and ask for more money'—what? It is just remarkable. It is absolutely remarkable.

*Mr Telfer interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Flinders!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** I am more than happy to hear your point of order, or if you have a matter of privilege that you want to put before the house, stand up and I will relinquish the call. But until that happens, I will keep going because I thought it was a hollow interjection. It is just

remarkable that rather than provide some considered thought and debate on the contents of what has been put before us, we get these slights and we get these personal reflections on the minister.

The Minister for Local Government is of course well within his purview to be providing a segment of the community with the opportunity to have their say about the construct of local government that affects them in their local area. Contrary to what the member for Flinders says, there are not too many 'doughnut arrangements' of major regional centres occurring around South Australia, and that is why this one is indeed unique.

I cannot think of too many other major regional centres (in fact, the second largest city in the state) surrounded by a regional council, let alone having that regional council surrounding the major regional centre have such infrastructure that it is responsible for like an airport, for example—not a common circumstance and something that has been topical for the community of the South-East for some time.

I am not sure who the member for Flinders consulted when he conducted his consultations as he told us previously. I see that the member for Barker in the federal parliament has come out and complained about this, which I have to say for the rest of us should be a big endorsement. If the member for Barker does not want it, you usually think that it is probably a good thing for the rest of the community. Maybe it was someone else, but if it was Tony Pasin complaining about it, well, that usually swings the needle in favour of the proposition.

Rather than the assertion of people being dictated to by the government, of having something foisted on them, it has been made absolutely clear both in the bill and in the explanation that has been given by the minister and the Premier that that is the last thing that is happening. They are given every opportunity to have their say and, if their say is overwhelmingly or even by majority that this is not to proceed, then it will not. So the whip hand is not held by a government: it is held by the community. That is not being dictated to. The member for Flinders can shake his head all he likes, but that is the proposition that is before us.

Really, the issue now is: what do the member for Flinders and his colleagues think about this? Do they think that the people of the South-East deserve the opportunity to have their say or not? If their view is that the people of the South-East do not deserve the opportunity to have their say, by all means oppose the bill. It is not a lengthy bill. You cannot misconstrue it by saying, 'Well, part 1 is different from part 3', or, 'Part 4 is different from part 6.' It is a succinct bill that only seeks to give the people of the South-East their say.

This is the test for those opposite: do you have confidence in the people of the South-East or do you not? Do you think they deserve the opportunity to have their voice heard or do you not? I have to say that the contributions to the debate so far seem to be that they do not think the people of the South-East deserve to have their say.

On the same day that we have had a debate in this place about recognising regional communities, I have to say it does not look like the current Liberal opposition is listening to regional communities or is prepared in the future to allow them to be heard. From yesterday, when this was announced, Tuesday 6 September, through to the date that is nominated in this bill, 10 November, is some 66 days. That is plenty of time for people on either side of the debate to have their say, to try to persuade people who live in the South-East that their view is the right view and that the opposing view is the wrong view as it should operate and, even better, happening in parallel with a local government election.

What better environment to have this issue fleshed out than when community interest is already heightened, if not at its peak, about how local government can best represent a constituency. That is all we have done here today. I think it is pretty clear: you either back this bill and recognise that the people of the South-East deserve their say, or you can take what appears to be the view of those opposite that the people of the South-East do not deserve to be heard.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you might make your own reflection on whether you think that sort of approach from the South Australian Liberal Party is closely aligned with the South Australian Liberal Party's electoral success in Mount Gambier, for example. You might form your own judgements about that. Those people are not worth listening to, and so how do those people vote? Well, not for the



South Australian Liberal Party. That might be your conclusion. I have to say that it is starting to become mine. If that is—

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

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** To the member for Morialta, who I think is seeking to school me on electoral results, I am happy to have that discussion about Mount Gambier, about his seat or about a whole range of other seats, because I think that the people of South Australia like to think that their elected representatives are interested in what they have to say, are interested in what their concerns are, are interested in a genuine opportunity to be heard and see whether the structures of government can better reflect their needs and whether there are opportunities for improvements or whether there are not.

Do you know what? Maybe they will say that there is not a better opportunity and that the current arrangement should stand; if they say that, fine. But do you know what? At least they have been given the opportunity to have that voice heard—

**Mr Telfer:** Why stop there? Give it to everyone.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** If that does not sit so comfortably with the member for Flinders, or if his interjection is correct, 'Why stop there? Let's give it to everyone,' we are back to 1995 in the member for Flinders' view where the card table is now to be tipped over and it is on for young and old when it comes to councils and reformation and amalgamation. If the former head of the Local Government Association thinks the time is ripe for consolidation of councils, well, let him make the case, because that is his interjection: 'Why stop there?' I think they are the words that he used, 'Why stop there?' In that case, he has another choice: it is either to oppose this or to amend it.

If he wants to see the people of Eyre Peninsula, for example, given the opportunity to get rid of, say, the Tumby Bay District Council, that seems to be of interest to the member for Flinders. How quickly one forgets, it seems. How quickly one forgets. We are open to that. I am sure the learned member for Hammond will instruct the member for Flinders how best to contact parliamentary counsel and get them working on amendments posthaste.

So now the challenge for the member for Flinders and his colleagues is: do you think that the people of the South-East deserve to have a voice and have it listened to on this issue or not? Or if there is a new contention from the member for Flinders that 'Why stop here? This needs to be done across the entire state', we look forward to seeing those amendments.

I have to say that I was not expecting this to be such a fruity debate, but I am glad that the member for Flinders has brought the allspice because it sounds like we might be hearing a new policy position on local government reform from those opposite. I commend the bill to the house.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:21):** I enjoy the speeches of the member for Lee. They are a delightful pantomime that never ceases to entertain.

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

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Vaudeville and pantomime, they are both separate forms of art. I am sure the member for Lee is deeply familiar with them both. I have to say there were some what you would call—I am sure the member for Lee from his high school debating would remember the technical term—straw man arguments: the idea that you characterise your opponent's views in a certain way and then describe them as bad people for maintaining a question mark over a proposition that indeed the member for Lee had not heard of, if we are to believe, until about 13 days ago. The idea that the member for Lee puts forward in a range of points in his pantomime, or his vaudeville as he prefers to characterise himself, is indeed problematic.

I think that it is worth pausing for a moment and addressing some of the points he makes. The member for Lee asks the house to spare him the crocodile tears from people concerned about process. He said those words, 'Spare us the crocodile tears regarding process.' I remind the member for Lee and the house that the opposition has not even sought today to block the suspension of standing orders to allow this debate to happen.

In the previous term of parliament on those occasions, which I would characterise as the exception or rare, where there was a bill that was necessary to be moved quickly, there was firstly invariably an excuse, a reason, a cause for why there had been some urgency to the matter. Secondly, the immediate response of the Labor Party, when such a proposition was put forward, with the exception of certain measures in relation to COVID-19, was crocodile tears. It was screams of outrage from the member for Lee and the member for West Torrens and indeed many others that it was the worst contravention of human rights since the Great Reform Act of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had been passed.

I remember the member for West Torrens saying in the last term of parliament—I have just grabbed the quote—not even in relation specifically to the suspension of standing orders but a contravention of the practice of a bill laying on the table for 10 days to enable consultation, that:

The reason we have this practice and procedure in this parliament is that we are able to read that legislation, understand it, go away and consult on the legislation, talk to stakeholders about that legislation, get advice on potential amendments we may or may not wish to move and be briefed by the government on the intent of the legislation. That is the way the normal practice of reform occurs in this parliament and it has for decades.

I am not weeping crocodile tears, I am just concerned about hypocrisy and, presented by those opposite, the gnashing of teeth, the wailing, the moaning and indeed the crocodile tears that we heard for four years when there was an occasional removal from the standard practices of the place.

We have had the response this year of irregularity, of nonstandard practice, to the point where if you look on the *Notice Paper*—the government business program that is currently on the interwebs on the parliament's website—listed for today is the Criminal Law Consolidation (Human Remains) Amendment Bill continuation and completion of debate.

I am not arguing. We did not seek to oppose the suspension of standing orders. When the notice of government business was presented to us at 4.40pm on Friday last and it contained an amendment to the standing orders, which we dealt with yesterday, the Russian assets bill, the human remains bill and the national energy laws bill—and nothing else—we certainly turned up this week prepared to debate those.

The government gave us a new agenda for this week at 12.04 on Monday, which added extra bills. It added the shopping centre parking areas bill and noted the government's identification (and we are grateful for the identification) of a time for the maiden speech, which was also provided last week. They also added the national energy laws and the electric vehicle levy bill. That was fine. We remain prepared to debate those bills. They have been on the *Notice Paper* for some time and the opposition has positions. We have speakers ready to go. Until today, and indeed yesterday, there were verbal updates that this debate would happen and we appreciate that verbal update. It is helpful to know that and it informs us when considering opposing the suspension of standing orders.

However, today at 11.44 the next iteration of the weekly program came out, adding in the motion from the Minister for Sport, which was initially introduced as a private member's motion but then became government business. It includes tomorrow the defaulting council bill, which I think the member introduced a couple of hours ago, and indeed this bill that we are debating now.

The point I make is that the government, over the course of the last five months and a couple of weeks, has not just done this in exceptional circumstances but they are making it a regularity of practice. I am not weeping crocodile tears. We did not oppose the amendment. We are not going to seek to do as the member for West Torrens did and the member for Lee did and the member for Kaurna did on so many bills during the last term of parliament, to give 15-minute speeches at every opportunity, three times a clause throughout the entirety of a bill. The filibuster is not what is going on here.

We are making some observations on a bill that we got yesterday and I am not sure that members of the Labor party room got it any earlier—certainly not before caucus yesterday morning. The media says it was decided at the Show on Monday night. The member for Lee said in his speech that the timing and the urgency of this debate was partly to give people in the South-East as much opportunity as possible to consider the proposition prior to voting on it. He said that there were 60-something days, nearly 10 weeks, for them to do so from it being announced earlier this week until they are asked to vote.

Of course, it would have given them more time to consider the proposition, and it would have given council more time to give advice on the proposition, had the government identified this bill of such important priority that it takes precedence over every other bill of the house, all of the other ones that they have listed. It takes precedence over private parking, which the Premier talked about in question time today. It takes precedence over everything else. It is so important that the government did not think it was worth giving them more than 66 days' notice by letting them know earlier in the year. I have some questions that we will get to in the committee stage.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Morialta, I have been very patient. We have a question before us. The content in your debate is more for suspension, whether to suspend or not, which I appreciate. I am happy to give you some latitude, but I would ask you to get to the substance of the bill itself. That is what we are doing. We are debating the second reading.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I appreciate your counsel, sir. I identify that I have been cautious to say that, far from talking about the suspension, we did not oppose the suspension. I am talking about the merits of this bill and the decisions that will inform people putting a view on this bill today. It may well be that the government chooses to adjourn the bill, having considered the fact that some consultation with communities and councils about amendments to the bill may or may not be of merit. I suspect the government will not because that is not the way the Labor caucus operates.

I also identify that the entirety of my speech has largely been reflective of the member for Lee's speech, and I did not notice any attempt from the opposition to stymie his opportunity to do so. We were enjoying his 'vaudeville', as he describes it.

The member for Lee said that this bill is important now to give people as much time as possible to inform a vote. My view is that considering it for another 10 days would also do so, but the Legislative Council will form their own view on that, and I am sure that each of them will be reading *Hansard* intently. The member for Lee said that it was almost the custom and practice under the previous government to not even confirm to the opposition whether a particular bill was to be introduced ahead of a given sitting week, providing briefings and so forth. Again, I do not think that was correct. I think it is far more apt a description of this government's approach—not in every aspect.

As I was saying, we have some questions that there will be the opportunity to ask in the committee stage should the government proceed through the second reading this afternoon. I will give the member for Stuart a heads up on what some of these questions are.

This bill purports to be about a plebiscite—it is even in the title—yet we are talking about providing ballot papers to go out with the local government election. Traditionally, a plebiscite, its identification and purpose, is to get everyone voting. Is it a plebiscite when we have voluntary voting and a limited number of people return? Is the government looking for an absolute majority of constituents, residents in the subject areas, or is the government looking for a majority only of those who choose to vote? Is an absent vote or somebody who chooses not to vote in their local government elections at this time a no vote, or is it just removed from the process whatsoever?

Some do not feel moved to vote in council elections, and this is not an unusual experience in South Australian council elections. Sir, I am sure you will recall some councils have very good turnouts. I have no doubt yours did, too, when they were drawn to vote for you, sir, and I am sure that they fell away dramatically when you were no longer on the ballot paper. It is possible that not every council has that level of turnout and that there will be different levels of turnout.

Can I ask the minister to reflect on the question of whether the boundaries adjustment commission will, after this plebiscite that is being interposed in the process, then undertake the other community consultation that the act requires them to do when considering council alignments, adjustments and amalgamations.

We have proposed boundary adjustments in my electorate of Morialta. The Campbelltown council and the Adelaide Hills Council have been discussing this for several years. I have a number of residents in the Hills part of Rostrevor, in the older parts of Woodforde that have been there for some time and the new development at Woodforde for whom this is a very live issue and they have very strong feelings about this, and they look forward to that community consultation should an investigation take place, which may happen early next year.

That community consultation which is to happen, according to the current legislation, and which is happening in relation to any other boundary adjustments that are underway, is in my view the most important part of the process because it is the first time after years of discussion when there is a formal process for those members of the community to have their voices heard. I hope that the boundaries commission will put a very heavy stake on that community consultation.

I do not consider it my job as the MP to tell members of the community which way they should inform the commission of their views. They are well in their rights, and they are certainly more than capable of presenting that case to the commission themselves. I know they will, and I will pass on to the commission the feedback from those who have chosen to give it to me in the form that it comes in.

That consultation is what happens in any council area. When the member for Lee says that in voting against this bill or in not supporting this bill anyone is therefore not wanting people to have their say, I make the point that by my reading of this bill, were it to pass and were a plebiscite to be supported by a local community, it would only then trigger the investigation where there would be another round of community consultation, which would also inform the process as to whether a boundary amalgamation is to emerge.

To my knowledge, the legislation as it operates has not gone through the process of the community consultation in one of these before. To my memory, the legislation was reformed in 2017, or possibly 2016, and the ones in Gawler and Campbelltown are possibly going to be the first cases where it gets to the community consultation phase. To my mind, it is tremendously important that that community consultation is done extremely well and seriously and that it takes into account the views of residents and electors.

This process, which abbreviates all the leading points to whether or not an investigation happens and which is proposed for this council area alone by the Minister for Local Government and the government, poses some serious questions to that subsequent community consultation process: firstly, whether the government proposes to have it leapfrog in front of other community consultations that may need to be run and, secondly, whether or not that community consultation will be taken seriously.

It will be a difficult proposition for the boundaries commission to undertake an investigation, to do all the research work into the details of how local government reform in this case will play out. Having had a plebiscite that says yes—should it do so—the commission will then have to do the investigation, presumably funded by the government, and part of that has to be community consultation. That second community consultation will need to be informed by all the information that has come in through the actual investigation itself.

The challenges after Brexit come to mind. If you have a plebiscite that is non-binding but that raises expectations to the level where it is almost impossible for the subsequent investigatory work to come up with an accepted different proposition, then that is a very serious problem. I do not know if this is something that formed part of the discussion in cabinet or caucus before the Labor Party proposed to bring this on urgently. It is the sort of thing that Labor members may have reflected on had the bill been introduced and given 10 days on the table; instead, the government proposes to deal with this all today.

I encourage them to reflect on that consideration, to give some serious questioning to laying out the process. It strikes me that the simple bill, as the member for Lee identified, might possibly have some unintended consequences. As Labor members reflect on that, it really bears the house's consideration: what effect does this bill have on the local government elections in Grant and Mount Gambier? It may be none, but I would be stunned if there were not some people with a point of view who might like to furnish our colleagues in the Legislative Council with that point of view in the coming days.

As I understand it, there are to be separate plebiscites in Grant and Mount Gambier. What is the effect if one council area votes no and the residents in the other council area vote yes? Voluntary voting means that it is not a majority of people in any case, but if a majority of those who vote across the two combined councils were to be more in favour than against what is the government

going to do with that piece of information? What is the boundaries commission going to do with that piece of information?

I feel as if the Minister for Local Government has been sold a bit of a pup by the government. We do not know the circumstances of how this bill came to pass. It is hard to imagine it came up from even those in the community of Mount Gambier who have been talking about potential amalgamations because, according to information in the public domain today, it blindsided heads of local government in the area.

It is my view that the Premier has sought to rush this legislation through the parliament without proper consultation. It is my view that the Premier and the government have not explained where this idea came from, why there was no consultation and why members of parliament have now been denied the opportunity to seek information and to consult with residents and stakeholders. I trust, I expect, that members of the Legislative Council will be given that opportunity, and I am pleased about that.

The Premier has not explained why he did not tell the mayors of the councils in the South-East why he wants them to merge ahead of going through with this. It is a reckless blindside on those councils and on the parliament.

As I said, my time is approaching an end, and I do not propose to go on at great length during the committee stage, as some members opposite—not the minister—did during the last term. We have some questions, and I have even foreshadowed some to the minister. He can reflect on some of them in the second reading reply, which will abbreviate some time. We will go through the committee stage; we are not going to seek to draw it out any longer than is necessary for the parliament's duty.

The opposition in seeking to, not as the member for Lee said oppose the bill, instead reserve our right on the bill for some of that consideration to take place, it may well be that there are answers to these questions that are posed, and indeed in the Legislative Council we will certainly be putting forward with our votes a strong position that is reflective of the wants, the needs, the desires of people in the South-East and around the state.

I think that the straw man argument constructed by the member for Lee, that not forming a position in the house is a bit asinine, to be true, given that the bill arrived to us a day ago. I do not think the minister would characterise it in the way the member for Lee did because the minister does not resort to vaudeville or pantomime or whatever else the member for Lee would like to characterise his speeches in. But I do think that by going through this process in the way that it has, the minister is mistaken.

Nevertheless, I am sure the bill will go through the house. We are aware of the numbers in the house. I look forward to some answers to questions. I look forward to further consultation with communities and stakeholders ahead of the Legislative Council's consideration of the same.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (17:40):** First-up, let me thank every member in this house for their contribution. I know that there are different views on this, but let's just go back. The discussion started, as has been in the media and a press release, from a country cabinet earlier this year with the new government. Unfortunately, I was not there because I had COVID, but this is the information I have.

I want to thank the member for Flinders for his very passionate discussion and debate on this. I look forward to the questions in committee. The member for Heysen absolutely had some good points. The member for Mount Gambier is the one we should be looking towards. He is the member who has to answer to his community and he is getting this information from there. Also, I thank the member for Light and the member for Hammond for their contributions, and I thank the member for Lee and the member for Morialta.

This is not telling people what to do. This is asking people what their thoughts are. We will go through this in the committee stage. Personally, I think this is democracy. Too often we see lots of legislation come through and things happening in parliaments across Australia. Sometimes the

people themselves do not have an opportunity. In this case here, we are only asking people whether they support the further investigation of amalgamation.

The council elections are coming up and I know that there are quite a few councils that do not have the number of candidates to fulfill those particular positions in the election. There are also a couple of positions for mayor that are not going to be fulfilled, so we have to go out for supplementary elections. I have always had a concern about the lack of local government elections, the number of people coming outside voting for this.

I would encourage the residents of both Grant and Mount Gambier to come out in force and express their concerns and views on whether this should go to the next stage. If it comes back and it is in the positive, then in fact as the member for Mount Gambier indicated it will go to the next stage with the boundaries commission. They have an independent process to go through. Also, if the communities of Grant and Mount Gambier come back and this is negative, this is not in support, then I have made it quite clear: this is not going to go any further.

A couple of members have indicated we should have more time to go to the councils. I do not believe councils themselves should make that decision because councils themselves, and we have all been in those positions, sometimes do not want to lose anything at all. I am asking people through this bill if they want to go to the next stage of looking at the opportunity to investigate it—only to investigate it.

It has been brought up here about the bill being rushed. I can remember very clearly in the last parliament that there were some bills rushed because of COVID.

**The Hon. D.G. Pisoni:** Name them.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I do not have those, member for Unley, but—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** No—and there were also many bills that were guillotined by the previous Attorney in this house.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The members on my left will have a chance to speak.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** Irrespective, there were some bills that were guillotined and so therefore that stifled the debate. I have some concerns about the outcome of concessions with council elections and I hope this encourages those people. We only have to look at the nominations across all regional South Australia. In particular, there are a lot of areas on the West Coast that do not have nominations for those particular vacancies.

Will this have any impact on local government elections? I think it will. I think it will encourage people to come out and voice their concerns. Also, it will not only give an opportunity for people to actually come out not only to say whether they want to investigate the potential to go further with this but it may give the opportunity for some of the elected members or candidates to get a far better turnout by their community.

At the end of the day, we have this before us. I am looking forward to the committee stage. I am happy to take members' contributions on board. I am looking forward to the shadow minister and members asking questions in the committee stage. I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

*Committee Stage*

In committee.

Clause 1.

**Mr TELFER:** Has the minister sought advice as to the cost for a plebiscite process from ECSA, run separately from the local government elections?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised that the Electoral Commission of South Australia has advised that it would be in the vicinity of \$75,000.

**Mr TELFER:** Total?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** In total.

**Mr TELFER:** Did the minister consult directly with the leadership of the two councils involved before making an announcement?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised that should be a question for the Premier. I made attempts to contact both councils once the bill was introduced into the house. I could not do anything before, as you would understand. I then spoke to the LGA and also the president of the LGA.

**Mr TELFER:** For clarification, the question was: did the minister consult directly with the leadership of the two councils involved before making an announcement? Just a yes or no is fine.

**The CHAIR:** I think the minister answered that.

**Mr TELFER:** No, he did not.

**The CHAIR:** I heard him. Minister?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** As I said, I made the attempt to contact the two mayors. I personally contacted them—I could not get hold of one—once the bill was introduced into the parliament. I could not make any comments until such time it was introduced into the parliament.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Just reflecting on the minister's answer to the first question in relation to the cost of the plebiscite outside of elections, can the minister confirm the cost of doing the plebiscite in the way proposed?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I have been advised that for the plebiscite to be done with the Electoral Commission outside is about \$25,000 as part of the election process as we are proposing to go through, with the ballot papers going out.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Can I ask a question of clarification. Perhaps the minister could combine the two because I am not sure. What he just said, that I heard, was that it was \$25,000 to do it outside the process. I am not sure if the minister meant inside the process. Is he saying that it is \$75,000 if we were to do this in 12 months' time but \$25,000 if he is to do it at the end of this year? Is that what the minister is saying?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I have been advised that if it is part of the local government election process it is in the vicinity of \$25,000. I have also been advised that if it is separate in, say, 12 months' or whatever it may be, it could be in the vicinity of \$70,000 to \$75,000.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** To be very clear, the cost benefit to the South Australian people of going through this abbreviated process is \$45,000 to potentially \$50,000. That is the outcome of the bill. It will save \$50,000 rather than having it on another occasion.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** That is not the only reason. If we do it with the local government elections at the moment, we have up to, I think, 10 November for people to return their plebiscite papers with the ballot papers, etc. It is in the vicinity of \$25,000. If we go on a separate process, it is about \$70,000 to \$75,000, in that vicinity. But the other thing is that this is more simple for the voters of Grant and Mount Gambier to have their say at the same time as they have the opportunity to elect their next candidates—mayors, etc.—for the next four years.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Has the minister been advised on any costs or other circumstances relating to the elections in Grant and Mount Gambier at this year's council elections that will be impacted should this legislation pass? I am specifically referring to things like whether the anticipated cost of running the council election as part of this process is to be impacted by having a different approach, whether there is an education campaign addressing the council question. I am thinking of a question that many people living in those council areas will be asking: 'If we vote yes to this, then does that make our ballot papers for the Grant council or the Mount Gambier council redundant?'

Is the minister proposing to have an education campaign to ensure that people know that this plebiscite does not have any binding impact and may not lead to any outcome in particular, so they have to or, indeed, they do not have to, but they should consider filling out their other forms? What consideration has been given to the nature of the local government campaign in Grant and Mount Gambier that will be different should this legislation pass and are there any potential costs that have been identified associated with that?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised that, if this bill passes, the plebiscite itself will include a brief overview of the question to assist voters to determine how they wish to vote. This will also provide a link to the Office of Local Government website that will include more information to assist voters, including questions. This will be available as soon as the bill passes, if it does pass. Certainly, this is only an indication to whether we proceed. The communities of both Grant and Mount Gambier want to investigate the opportunities going forward because then that has to go to the boundaries commission and so forth.

**Mr TELFER:** For clarification on that, are there going to be any additional documentations included with the voting pack that gets sent out to individual voters? For instance, in the local government elections there is the voting slip and there is also information on the individual candidates. Is there going to be any additional paperwork included with the very simple, apparently, proposition that has been put in the legislation?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I thank the member for his question. I have been advised that the information will be out there. On the piece of paper, on one side will be the question: do you support, or are you in favour, of further investigation? It will also be in a different colour to the ballot papers. The electors themselves have the opportunity to return both the ballot paper and the plebiscite slip of paper, or they could return the plebiscite paper without the ballot paper. So they have the opportunity. They could send one back, both or neither.

**Mr PEDERICK:** For some clarity around the process, minister, if a yes vote does get up, I know it is a little bit hypothetical, but I think it is something vital that we need to know. You have already identified that there are issues. There are going to be extra elections now, supplementary elections, because some spots have not been filled in councils across the state.

What work has been done in the modelling of where this plebiscite goes for a yes vote? Does it mean that the voting that happens for both the Mount Gambier council and the Grant council becomes redundant because there will be a supplementary election, or is a yes vote only going to impact, if it all goes through the processes, on four years' time? The main thing is to get clarity for the people in the community on whether this annuls whatever vote happens this time and then it goes to the supercouncil of the South-East, if you get what I mean.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I thank the member for his question. This plebiscite is if the majority are in favour of the further investigation. As for whoever is elected in November this year, it will not have any impact on them. I am advised that they will continue to be the elected members for those two councils. The boundaries commission will then have more consultation, more communication and things like that.

I know the member for Mount Gambier does not want this rushed. We are not going to get an answer from the plebiscite until November, and then it has to be collated back in. The elected members, whoever they may be, are then identified and elected. At that stage, the results from the plebiscite will be analysed, and then the decision will be made. If we refer it to the boundaries reform commission, they may not take it any further either.

**Mr PEDERICK:** I still do not have full clarity. From what I am picking up, it could mean a supplementary election if it goes through those processes, the boundary commission process and all of that. The simple question I ask is: whatever happens, do the elected members of the two councils, Mount Gambier and Grant, stand for four years or, if this gets up, will there be a supplementary election?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** Thank you to the member. There are a lot of ifs here. If it comes back positive and it goes to the electoral boundaries commission, they will analyse that, then they will come back and make the decision about which way it goes from there. That is what I am advised.



The other thing is that, as I said, this is not going to be rushed. The member for Mount Gambier does not want us to rush, but we need to get it in there so that the people have the opportunity to vote in the local government election in November this year.

*Sitting suspended from 18:00 to 19:30.*

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Minister, I understand this bill is going to end up with an application to the Local Government Boundaries Commission. Are you able to advise the house on how many applications there have been for boundary changes over the last 10 years and how many of those have been successful over that period?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Point of order: I do not think the question has any relevance to the clause in question.

**The CHAIR:** I tend to agree. Member, would you like to find a new question?

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Sorry, but it is very relevant. This is a referendum about consulting, about sending the merger of the Grant council and the Mount Gambier council off to the Local Government Boundaries Commission for review.

**The CHAIR:** No, that is not correct. It certainly does not cover clause 1 and I have been quite—

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** It is the title of the bill. It is what the bill is all about.

**The CHAIR:** The member for Unley will resume his seat. The bill is quite clear in its limitations. They have been raised by members already. That question, in my view, is not relevant. I am happy for you to ask other questions relevant to the bill and also relevant to that clause. If you do not have any more questions on that clause, I am happy to move to clause 2.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Has the minister been briefed on what the voter turnout is expected to be for the plebiscite and whether it will be different from the plebiscite for the local government elections?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** Certainly, I am not a magician and if I could predict how many people are going to turn out to vote, I would get my X-Lotto numbers in tomorrow. No, I have no idea. It is up to the people who come out and vote because, as you all know, voting is not compulsory. It is voluntary and we need to promote that as much as we can. So, no, I have no idea and I do not think anyone else has either.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Have there been occasions previously when there have been plebiscites that have been addressed at the same time as local government elections which you can refer to for historical advice?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I thank the member for his question. I do not have that information. I have not heard of that, but certainly I am prepared to take that on notice. This is very rare, I have been advised, but certainly if there is anything like that, I am happy to come back to the house.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Perhaps, minister, to ask it a slightly different way—and this is a matter that got some air time in the course of the second reading debate, both in the course of remarks that I was foreshadowing and in the contribution of the member for Mount Gambier—insofar as the bill provides for a plebiscite that is going to feed into potentially a part 2 process, does it envisage any particular form of initiation of that part 2 process? Is the minister able to give an indication at all about what form of part 2 initiation is envisaged here?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised that the bill itself does not lead to going to the boundaries reform commission. This is the short title we are talking about still. I am advised that the bill itself does not actually say that the bill will be referred to the boundaries reform commission.

**Mr TELFER:** There is a lot of detail we need to get our heads around. The title of the bill is Plebiscite (South East Council Amalgamation) Bill 2022. The *Collins Dictionary* definition of 'plebiscite' is a vote of all members of a country or region in which they say whether they agree or disagree with a particular policy. I highlight 'all members of a region'. It really comes down to how is it a plebiscite by definition when voting is not compulsory? Thus, if a number of people do not

participate but are eligible to participate in a vote, is a value put on an absent vote? Is it a yes or a no, or will this be something that you do not take into account?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised that, if the bill is passed, it will be run as a poll under the Local Government Act.

**Mr TELFER:** The Local Government (Elections) Act? Should I be considering an amendment to change the name of this bill to the poll act 2022 or the survey act to more properly define exactly what the parameters are?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised that the way this will be run is if you look further down under clause 2, Plebiscites, where subclause 3 states:

(3) Subject to the modifications and exclusions specified in Schedule 1...

(a) the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 (including regulations made under the Act)...

That is referring to how it will be run.

Clause passed.

Clause 2.

**Mr TELFER:** Is there a definition within the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 for a plebiscite?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I thank the member for that. This is a standalone bill. I am advised that it will be run down exactly as it is under section 3(a) under the Local Government (Elections) Act. This is a standalone bill; that is what defines the plebiscite.

**Mr TELFER:** Minister, is there a threshold for a percentage of the vote which must come in to provide enough direction, given that local government elections are not compulsory? Is there an expectation from you, as the minister, of what would be a legitimate percentage of the vote coming in to garner a proper perspective on what you believe the good people of Mount Gambier or the District Council of Grant want?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** No. Election voting is not compulsory, so therefore I cannot—sorry, just repeat the question again.

**Mr TELFER:** My question was: is there an expectation from you, as minister, that the results of the plebiscite will need to get to a certain threshold of a percentage of vote—

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** Are you saying it is invalid if it is not at a certain threshold?

**Mr TELFER:** No, I am asking because there is not the detail within—

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** But if the council only gets a 30 per cent turnout, is it valid or invalid?

**Mr TELFER:** I am asking you, minister, is there a threshold for your plebiscite that you believe would give enough of a robust answer? This comes back down to the percentage of vote which is remaining, the ones who have not voted. Are they going to be given a value, yes or no?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** There is no single result, no single number, that will automatically result in any action. The government will carefully consider the results of the plebiscite. It will consider how voters across both councils voted, how voters in each council voted and, in the case of the District Council of Grant, how voters in each of the three wards voted. It will consider the voter turnout across both councils, in each council and, in the case of the District Council of Grant, in each of its three wards.

**Mr TELFER:** To follow on from that, minister, is there any work which can be done or any expectation which can be articulated to the good people of Grant and Mount Gambier through the process, which would give them more certainty as to what the result of the process might be? I am trying to understand if there is going to be a separation between the results coming in from the District Council of Grant, which obviously is a smaller population, versus the results coming in from the City

of Mount Gambier council—whether they are going to be accumulated together for a direction or whether they are going to be looked at in their entirety as individual councils.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I just want to repeat: there is no single result, no single number, that will automatically result in this action. The government will carefully consider the results of the plebiscite, including how voters turn out and across and in both councils voted, how voters in each council voted and, in the case of the District Council of Grant, how voters in each of the three wards voted. There are three wards there; we will take that into account.

But as to voter turnout across both councils and in each council and, in the case of the District Council of Grant, in each of the three wards, I am, as you would be—you are an ex-mayor; you were President of the Local Government Association—disappointed with the turnout in local government elections, full stop. What we have to do, all of us, is encourage people to actually get out there and vote, because it is not compulsory. I do not want to make it compulsory.

We need to encourage local members of parliament in each of those areas to also get out. Councils get to promote it, and they are doing that. We need to try to encourage people to vote because it is not compulsory at this particular point. I have just given that answer again.

**Mr TELFER:** So, for clarification, the thresholds will be decided after you see the results come in from the plebiscite, as to what decision you will make in reaction to it.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I have been advised that there is no threshold. We will analyse the results when they come in, and what we will do is have a look at it. I can give you my word that that is what we will be doing. At the end of the day, let's encourage people to get out there and have a say on the opportunity to go in this next direction.

First-up, let's encourage people to vote in local council elections. I tried to encourage people to nominate and, as you know as the shadow minister and as an ex-mayor, in some areas positions have not been filled. In this house, we have to promote it out there. I will be doing the same and encouraging many people in Grant and in Mount Gambier to complete ballot papers and also the attached plebiscite, which will give the indication of whether, going forward, they want to continue in the direction of investigating the opportunity.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** This question relates to the actual question being asked: do you support the examination of the amalgamation of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to form a single council? Who will be doing the examination?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised that it is 'if'. Everything is 'if'. If it comes in as a yes, the government will then refer that to the Local Government Boundaries Commission, going forward, and the Productivity Commission. The thing is that this is an if. We do not know what the voter turnout is going to be; people may not even vote. So we have to get that information out.

This bill is giving those people an opportunity to express their views. There are two things: encouraging them to vote, because it is an issue that has an impact on the future direction of both councils, and giving them the opportunity to make the decision—not the councillors themselves and not the councils. This is to give those people their voice. What we all should be looking at is the people's voice: whatever they are concerned about and whatever their views are, whether it is in local government or in the state parliament.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Is the Local Government Boundaries Commission the only body that can actually examine applications for boundary changes for local government?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised that that is the formal job of the Local Government Boundaries Commission. If the Productivity Commission supports it, they will go forward from there. There is a long way to go at this particular point. We have to get the people to actually vote first—that is the first thing—and then see how it comes in from there.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** But my question is: is the Local Government Boundaries Commission the only body that is authorised, under legislation, to make changes to council boundaries?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised yes, but they will make the recommendations to the minister to instigate those changes.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** My question is, then: how many applications have been before the Local Government Boundaries Commission over the last 10 years? How many applications have been granted over that same period?

**The CHAIR:** There is a point of order. Minister, you have a point of order?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Yes; this is not relevant to the current clause before us.

**The CHAIR:** Is the minister able to answer, or do you need to take that on notice?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** No, I do not have that here. As the Minister for Infrastructure has indicated, I do not see where it relates to this clause. However, I will take it on notice and bring something back, if I can get that information.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Has the minister given any thought, or taken any advice prior to presenting this bill to the house, to the potential problem of one level of government effectively applying a process that coincides with a process for the election of another level of government, and the influence that might have on that electoral process? Has the commission had anything to say about that, and have you sought any assistance in that regard, insofar as any risk that one might have an influence over the other and any impact therefore on the reliability of the outcome in both cases?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** An interesting question, but quite frankly I give the voters of Grant and Mount Gambier far more credit than it appears anyone is giving them at the moment. We will go out to the people of Grant and the people of Mount Gambier. They are the people who can have the influence on which direction this next move will go—whether it goes into an investigation of a potential amalgamation or not—so let's give credit to those people. They know what they want. They are the ones who live in the area. We do not live in the area. Let them make the decision of their destiny.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Taking into account that response to my question, I might make it really clear that there is no shortage of credit—certainly on this side of the house—for regional electors, those who live in all corners of the state. Let's be clear about that. The point is about the probity of the process, advice that has or has not been sought by the minister in relation to what I have described as a somewhat unusual process, for better or worse.

I can understand the case that has been put is that this is an opportunity, it is a convenient opportunity. Perhaps it involves some cost saving. I do not know if it has been elucidated what that might involve, but there is a convenient opportunity to bring these two events, this novel idea, to coincide with what we know is a scheduled council process.

It also conveniently—and again it might be meritoriously, I do not know—coincides with a time at which the two councils themselves are going into a period of caretaker, so they are less engaged in the process of advocacy themselves for this particular outcome one way or the other. They are going to find themselves in a process that is not of their making.

I stress that that has absolutely nothing to do with credit or the lack thereof for either elected members—the individual councils and the leaders of the councils—or their electors. It is neither here nor there. It is a question that goes to the objective probity of the process. If you want to point to any precedents that might set South Australians' minds at rest about this, then fantastic, but the point is that where we have seen plebiscites, referenda, questions that might coincide with elections, the normal thing is that it is the same level of government putting the same question to the same voters who are voting in the same context.

This is not about making some sort of point. This is clearly an occasion on which the state is coming along and saying, for the purposes presumably of informing its own consideration of what it is entitled to do, possibly under part 2 of the act later: 'What you are going to have imposed on you is a double process on this election day.' Have you taken any advice about that? Do you have anything to say about the probity or novelty of that process? Just because the point has been made, let's not take any more cheap shots about credit for people who live in the regions.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** This is a legal procedure.

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** Members will not interject.

*Mr Teague interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** Member for Heysen!

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** Minister! The member for Heysen!

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** I will kick both of you out in a second.

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** I am warning both of you. Next time you—

*Mr Teague interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** Member for Heysen!

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** I ask him to withdraw and apologise immediately for accusing me of having the propensity to mislead the house.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Point of order: I will not do that, and I will cite the member's most recent misleading of the house insofar as it affected me directly. I did not take the step of proceeding to a Privileges Committee in that regard, and the minister was quick to get on his feet and withdraw and apologise in that case, but it was an egregious misleading of the house.

*The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**Mr TEAGUE:** I accepted your withdrawal and apology and what I am now faced with is a freewheeling—

*The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**Mr TEAGUE:** —interjection about what I have observed about your motives.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Heysen—

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** I do not need your advice.

**Mr TEAGUE:** This is outrageous.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Heysen, can you please take your seat. I will suspend this session if this continues and report it to the Speaker, and I will ask him to name both of you if that continues. Have I made myself clear? Member for Heysen, have I made myself clear?

*Mr Teague interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I am in the process of addressing the point of order.

**The CHAIR:** Resume your seat, please. The minister will not intervene.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Yes, sir.

**The CHAIR:** The next person to talk out of order, I will suspend the session. Member for Flinders, do you have a question?

**Mr TELFER:** I have an additional question here on clause 2. Minister, in taking into account the commentary around the process and the value of the democratic process that each of the individual councils can have, what do you suppose a vote in the negative from one council and a vote in the positive from the other council may mean for any future steps?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** Through the Chair, very interesting behaviour. I will just go back to what I read before. I will be taking it that government will carefully consider the results of the plebiscite, considering how voters across both councils voted—I understand where you are coming from, member for Flinders—and, in the case of the District Council of Grant, how voters in each of the three wards voted, because some of those wards are on the periphery of the area; and the voter turnout across both councils and in each council, and in the case of the district council in each of the three wards. I cannot be any clearer than that, I do not think.

At the end of the day, we are talking about a lot of hypotheticals at this particular point. I would hope that we get a 90 per cent turnout from both councils at this particular point. I want to promote this. Whilst it is a bone of contention with some people, we are giving people a choice in their destiny, which way they want to go, for both councils, both members.

We talked about councils being in caretaker mode. At the moment, the councillors there: they are in caretaker mode. Those elected members who are currently there in caretaker mode have the opportunity to vote, as do the non-elected members as well as the candidates. Everybody who is on the electoral roll, and certain businesses that are on the electoral roll, have the opportunity to express their concerns, their views on the future direction of the South-East, of that particular area, the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier. We need to give those people an opportunity to express their views, not our views.

**Mr TELFER:** I certainly appreciate that. I would aim for 100 per cent voter turnout because that way there would be a lot of clarity and a lot less uncertainty about the proportion of people who came out to vote. However, even if there were 100 per cent voter turnout, there are still scenarios that I believe the good people of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier would be uncertain about, because whether it is one of the three wards or whether it is one council or the other, there is a high likelihood they will be voting a different way to their neighbour.

Because there is not the clarity of what the outcome might be within this piece of legislation, I am trying to provide some clarity for the good people of Grant and Mount Gambier. If it is not provided in this process, I would hope it is communicated to the people what the expectations of the government are going to be depending on what the result might be; what actions might come from a yes or no. That is what I am trying to provide clarification about for the good voters in the South-East.

**The CHAIR:** I will take that as a statement rather than a question. The question was—

**Mr TELFER:** Sorry, Mr Chair—

**The CHAIR:** You asked a question. Are you going to ask the same question?

**Mr TELFER:** No, absolutely not.

**The CHAIR:** It was not clear to me what the question was.

**Mr TELFER:** I might get the same answer but I am not asking the same question, Mr Chair.

**The CHAIR:** So the question is?

**Mr TELFER:** The question is: minister, even with 100 per cent turnout, will you be providing the voters in this plebiscite with any certainty as to what the actions might be depending on a vote one way or the other?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am also hoping it will be 100 per cent, but I never see 100 per cent on anything. If there is 100 per cent turnout, people will vote one way or the other. Some people may not even vote, or they may vote in the council election but elect not to fill in the plebiscite form, which will be very separate from the voting paper; it is a different colour. It could be that they may not want to vote because they do not like any of the candidates, but they might have a view on the potential direction going forward, or to investigate the potential opportunity for amalgamation. We will take all that on board; there are a lot of scenarios there, but we will take everything on board that we can.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Will the plebiscite ballot papers be voted collectively? In other words, will the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier all be in a pile and vote collectively, or will they be voted in such a manner that you have to determine the total votes and the yes and no votes for each council?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** As per electing councillors or mayors for those two councils, in Grant there is the mayor plus the wards and they will be counted as that. The City of Mount Gambier is for a mayor and councillors, and they will be counted separately. So both will be counted individually.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** I am not talking about the mayoral elections or the council elections. I am talking about the plebiscite election. Will you be in a position after the count to report to the people of the South-East how many votes there were in the District Council of Grant and in the City of Mount Gambier separately? Mount Gambier, for example, has a much bigger population than Grant. Supplementary to that, will it be a majority of the combined vote, or will it need to be a majority of voters in Grant and a majority of voters in Mount Gambier in order for the inquiry to begin?

**The CHAIR:** That is two questions. The minister answered the first question about whether the votes will be counted separately from each area and, secondly, if the combined votes, how you are going to respond to that. That is the member's last question as well.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** As per any normal local government elections, the votes for each will be counted separately, as will the plebiscite votes for each of the councils including the plebiscites that are coming in—to my information—from each of the wards and the same with the City of Mount Gambier. We will then publish the results, as the Electoral Commissioner would do for the ward councillors and the mayor for each of them: the District Council of Grant and also Mount Gambier.

**The CHAIR:** Can you just repeat the second part?

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** My second question was: will the majority be a majority of the combined votes, or will the majority require a majority of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier? Will both those local government communities require a majority for the process to begin?

**The CHAIR:** The minister has already answered that question.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** Do you want me to reinforce it again?

**The CHAIR:** It is up to you, but that has been asked now two or three times. It is up to you if you want to answer it or not.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I have already answered that question.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Heysen, this is your third question.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Perhaps before I ask my third question, I was just wondering in all the excitement, now that the minister has had a bit of time to think about it, is there an answer to my first question?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** What was your first question?

**Mr TEAGUE:** The question I stress is in circumstances where we have had limited time to analyse the bill, so it is a matter of curiosity in relation to responsibility for a process where we are legislating here in this parliament to apply a plebiscite that will coincide with a council election. Has the minister sought advice from the commission or elsewhere in relation to any problem or otherwise that that might create in terms of the probity of either process? That was the first question. I think I have managed to repeat it faithfully enough.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I thought that in this case, in this house, we made the decisions. We are sovereign. We make the decisions here and this is a legal bill going through. If you do not want to support it, then you vote against it. There have been plebiscites going out with voting papers before. We make the decision in this chamber, and if this bill does not get passed then we do not proceed with it.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Perhaps moving into my third question, if I may?

**The CHAIR:** I will be lenient and this will be your last one.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Forgive me if I am catching up on this front. Given that answer, has there been any consultation or feedback sought from either of the two councils pre-caretaker or otherwise at any time and prior to the development of the process?

**The CHAIR:** That question was asked a bit earlier by another member.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** Let me finish. I am happy for people to disagree, but let me finish my bit first, okay? The question was asked as to what communication the minister had had with both mayors and the CEOs of the councils prior to this happening. The minister has already answered that and indicated what communication he has had with the councils about this bill. He has answered that. Unless this question is a bit different and you want to go further, that is fine. If it is the same question, I will rule it out of order because it has been asked. You have already answered it once.

**Mr TEAGUE:** I am conscious that we are at clause 2 now.

**The CHAIR:** You cannot ask the same question on different clauses.

**Mr TEAGUE:** No, sorry, I was clumsy about that. I am conscious that we are at clause 2 and therefore my question is in the context particularly of clause 2 and the examination that is provided for clause 2(2). I think perhaps I am wanting to draw a distinction between a previous question, which is, 'Has the minister talked to the councils, the mayors?' and I would be amazed if the minister has not done that, but I do not mean that. I mean: have the minister and his department consulted with either of the councils or both of them about this proposition and, if so, what has the result of that consultation been?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am not too sure how I can reinforce this. We are asking the community of the South-East, the District Council of Grant, including the three wards. Those people there have a right to decide their destiny, including the currently elected members and the mayor, who are in caretaker mode—the same with the City of Mount Gambier. If we go to the council and ask them, we will know what the answer would be for that: 'We don't want to have any discussion regarding this opportunity.' That is normal. This is the best way of using democracy. We are asking the people themselves whether they want to have an investigation into the potential—and let me read that again: 'Do you support—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** We are consulting with the whole community of the District Council of Grant, the City of Mount Gambier and the businesses that are on the electoral roll there. We are asking: 'Do you support the examination of an amalgamation of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to form a single council?' I do not see how we can go out for better consultation than with the community members themselves. They are the ones who have to make the decision on their final destiny.

**The CHAIR:** The member has asked his question and the minister has answered the question. You may not like the answer, but he has answered your question, okay? As far as I can tell, every member on this side has asked their three questions each on this clause.

Clause passed.

Clause 3.

**Mr TELFER:** I appreciated some clarity on your expectation of what the results might be. Speaking about the regulations, there is obviously no detail here. Are you presuming that within the regulations of this act itself, you will be providing any more clarity as to what the expectations might be of the government as to what a result might drive, depending on the different scenarios that may come? Are you going to be providing more definition for the members of the community down there?

**The CHAIR:** Just take your seat for a second, minister. Can you just summarise that question again for me?

**Mr TELFER:** I can do my best, thank you, Mr Chair. After providing some verbal clarity here to the committee, within the regulations, are you going to be providing some of that clarity or



commentary to provide more certainty for people when they are trying to look through the details of this bill?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I will stand by my previous answers. We do not anticipate making any regulations.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** This clause refers to the close of the voters roll. Is there any provision made for businesses that—

**The CHAIR:** Member for Unley, we are dealing with clause 3, which deals with regulations.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Yes, thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Because where your question was going did not seem related.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Will there be anything in the regulations to allow those businesses that must register for every election to be on the supplementary roll, which were not motivated to vote for the council elections but wished to have a say on the plebiscite, the ability to register on the supplementary roll so they can participate in the plebiscite?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I have been advised that, and we should all know this, there are frameworks in place now for people to nominate onto the supplementary roll.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** It is closed.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** Everything is closed. The fact is, as I indicated a minute ago, we do not at this stage anticipate making regulations. Under clause 2, and I do not want to go back, there is a framework in place for everybody to nominate before council elections. This is going to be in collaboration with the local government elections, in the same envelope but a different colour from the voting paper.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** This is not a council election; this is a plebiscite. This is a different process altogether that is happening at the same time as the council election. The point I am making is, I know there are businesses that are not necessarily motivated to register at every election to be on the supplementary roll. However, a matter such as a council amalgamation may be a motivating factor for those businesses and they now do not have the opportunity to actually participate in this plebiscite. What will you do about that?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** From my experience, most businesspeople are residents in that community, so therefore they are already on the electoral roll and if they are not—

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** There are landlords as well. All the landlords live there too, do they?

**The CHAIR:** Member for Unley, you have asked your question. Give the minister an opportunity to answer.

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** And there is the framework in place for all of this. The time frame is for council elections and if, for argument's sake, they have not nominated at the close of the electoral roll and the nominations, it is unfortunate.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Will those who are already on the supplementary roll and also on the electoral roll get two ballot papers for the plebiscite?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised, no, they will only get one.

**The Hon. D.G. PISONI:** Just to clarify that: what if they are on the electoral roll in one council district and on the supplementary roll in another council district? Will they then get two ballot papers for the plebiscite?

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK:** I am advised, yes, they will get a vote in both.

Clause passed.

Schedule and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (20:19):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

At 20:20 the house adjourned until Thursday 8 September 2022 at 11:00.

*Estimates Replies***COMMONWEALTH EMPLOYER INCENTIVES**

In reply to **the Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):**

The Australian government's Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System (AAIS), introduced on 1 July 2022, provides a tiered wage subsidy to employers who take on apprentices and trainees in a range of priority occupations. There are two traineeship pathways in South Australia aligned to the Certificate III in Individual Support and both qualify as priority occupations.

There are several variables that impact on each trainee's eligibility and subsequent funding that will go to employers under the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive Scheme. Subsidies are assessed on a case-by-case basis depending on the individual circumstances of the eligible trainee.

Australian Apprenticeship Support Network providers contracted by the Australian government can provide advice on how much federal funding will go to employers offering traineeships in this area.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

Between 22 March 2022 and 30 June 2022, no administrative units were created, abolished or transferred to another department.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

Since 22 March 2022, no executive appointments were made.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

Since 22 March 2022, no executive positions were abolished.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

No termination payments were made.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

No consultants and contractors were engaged fitting these criteria.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

No consultants and contractors were engaged fitting these criteria.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

The budgeted expenditure on goods and services for the financial year 2022-23 and each of the years of the forward estimates period is as follows:

	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000
Total goods and services	51	52	53	55

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

No FTEs are budgeted to provide communication and promotion activities in 2022-23 and each year of the forward estimates.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee:

There is no budgeted cost for this advertising.

**CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised:

CDSIRC administers no grant programs or funds.

**COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

Between 22 March 2022 and 30 June 2022, the following administrative units were created, abolished or transferred to another department: nil.

**COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

Since 22 March 2022, nil executive appointments were made.

**COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

Since 22 March 2022, there were nil executive positions abolished.

**COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

The total value of the termination payments was nil which excludes the value of accrued leave entitlements.

#### COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

As required by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC013—Annual Reporting Requirements for 2021-22 information relating to expenditure on consultants and contractors including the vendor, total cost and nature of work undertaken, will be detailed in annual reports published by agencies.

Name of consultant / contractor / service supplier	Method of appointment	Reason for engagement	Total costs (GST inclusive)
Arney Chong Consulting	Contract agreement	Research and design services for the Commissioner's Inquiry	\$20,000
Arney Chong Consulting	Contract agreement	Research and analysis services for the Commissioner's Inquiry (stage 1)	\$50,000

#### COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

The estimated total cost for engagement of consultants and contractors in 2022-23 is \$317, 600

The following is a summary of external consultants that have been engaged at a total estimated cost above \$10,000, the nature of work undertaken, and the estimated cost for 2022-23.

Consultancies	Purpose	Total Estimated Cost
Arney Chong Consultancy	Commissioner's Inquiry into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principal (ATSICPP) – Data, Policy and Research	\$120 000
Garry Goldsmith – Wiri Miya Aboriginal Corporation	Facilitate Community Engagement Forums for the Commissioner's Inquiry into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle. The Inquiry will consider how the Principle is applied in the removal and placement of Aboriginal children.	\$17 600
Chad Jacobi Edmund Barton Chambers	Assistance with legal counsel for the Commissioner's Inquiry in to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principal	\$100 000

The following is a summary of external contractors that have been engaged at a total estimated cost above \$10,000, the nature of work undertaken, and the estimated cost for 2022-23.

Contractors	Purpose	Total Estimated Cost
Manuel Communications – HaelCo	Assistance with the communications and media support for the Commissioner's Inquiry into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principal (ATSICPP)	\$15 000
Print Junction	Promotional, Marketing materials and Printing of reports, flyers, pamphlets	\$15 000

#### COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

The budgeted expenditure on goods and services for the financial year 2022-23 and each of the years of the forward estimates period is as follows:

	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000
Total goods and services	\$272 000	\$277 000	\$278 000	\$286 000

#### COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

Table 1 shows the total budgeted FTE to provide communication and promotion activities for 2022-23 and the forward estimates:

Table 1: FTE employed in communication and promotion activities

Unit/Branch		2022-23 Budget	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget
CACYP	FTE	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
	\$m	\$66 000	\$67 000	\$68 000	\$69 000
TOTAL	FTE	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
	\$m	\$66 000	\$67 000	\$68 000	\$69 000

#### COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that for the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

As an open and transparent government, marketing communications activity reports and annual media expenditure details are proactively disclosed. The reports list all marketing campaigns over the cost of \$50,000 and budgeted expenditure for approved campaigns and are disclosed on the DPC website:

<https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/about-the-department/accountability/government-marketing-advertising-expenditure>

#### COMMISSIONER FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In reply to **Mr BASHAM (Finniss)** (22 June 2022). (Estimates Committee A)

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills):** I have been advised that the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People:

The following table provides the requested information on grant program/funds under my responsibility for the 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years—*Controlled*:

Grant program/fund name	Purpose of grant program/fund	2022-23 Estimate \$000	2023-24 Estimate \$000	2024-25 Estimate \$000	2025-26 Estimate \$000
Portfolio Name (e.g.Premier and Cabinet, Arts etc)					
CACYP Youth Development Grant	Leadership and cultural development for Aboriginal children and young people	\$50 000	\$50 000	\$50 000	\$50 000