

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

### Tuesday, 26 September 2023

**The SPEAKER (Hon. D.R. Cregan)** took the chair at 11:00.

**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*

### APPROPRIATION BILL 2023

#### *Estimates Committees*

Adjourned debate on motion:

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

(Continued from 12 September 2023.)

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (11:01):** I thank honourable members for their forbearance in holding over these two bills until now, but in particular I thank members for participating in the debate of the Appropriation Bill, including, of course, the estimates committees, which people dedicate an enormous amount of time to.

I listened with some interest to some of the contributions people have made, in particular with respect not only to the budget and what initiatives or budget settings are included within the state budget but to the contributions members have taken the opportunity to make with regard to their own particular electorates. Once again, can I also say to the house that I think it is another important opportunity for members to be able to do that and to have the capacity to, perhaps beyond the time constraints a member may be experiencing in the course of a grievance debate, have a more fulsome opportunity to ruminate over issues that have some relevance to their electorate.

Beyond that, there have been a number of contributions about the utility of the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill and, of course, members will have a broad range of views about that. Yes, it is extremely time consuming, particularly for members participating in the committees and also for the many officers throughout government agencies who prepare materials for ministers. The committee process of the Appropriation Bill is also very time consuming for parliamentary staff. However, I do firmly believe there is a role for estimates committees each year in our parliamentary process. It is important for the house to have the opportunity to question ministers and conduct what is one of the key opportunities for the parliament to hold the executive to account.

So to those members in particular who participated in those committees I thank them for the time and effort they have put in, as well as all staff, particularly within my department of course, who put so much effort into participating in the estimates committee process and also, moreover, in the broader budget effort. It is an extraordinary effort for one agency to pull together a state budget and ensure that the government of the day has the capacity not only to execute whatever priorities that government has but to remain fully briefed and fully up to speed with all the financial transactions and also the policy machinations within those agencies. I have placed on the record my thanks to all those staff as well. I do not have any further comments to issue, so I will conclude my remarks there.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (11:05):** I move:

That the remainder of the bill be agreed to.

Motion carried.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (11:06):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

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

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 12 September 2023.)

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (11:06):** On this occasion, it would be remiss of me to miss the opportunity to recognise and celebrate the sixth occasion on which the Glenelg Tigers have achieved the ultimate in the SANFL, defeating the Double Blues on Sunday afternoon. As a proud Bays supporter—albeit as someone who grew up with the Bays, and I cannot claim to have been there in the bulk of the 21<sup>st</sup> century—it is the time of one's life that is perhaps most memorable, in terms of the dreams and aspirations that one takes through the balance of life.

I want to recognise all the players and, of course, the club's leadership who have brought them to this most significant of occasions on Sunday afternoon—a very happy day indeed. Because they might not be particularly singled out in other ways just at this time, I want to make special mention of Rob Gillies and his fellow board members but Rob in particular, who is an example of someone who really exemplifies that character of community contribution.

In the same way, I want to mention 'Super' Peter Carey, who is well known to all of us. If you are looking for a childhood hero who then carries through a lifetime of legacy, look no further than Peter Carey. I still have the Ross Faulkner football from the testimonial dinner for Peter Carey on his retirement. It was a very special occasion indeed for me to go along with dad to the testimonial dinner back in the day. The football is signed by all those eighties legends from Glenelg, many of whom have now gone on, and indeed generations have—the Maynards, the Seebohms, Scott Salisbury, and many of the Stringers are well known—but none better than Peter Carey. I recognise him, his life's work and his contribution to so much in our community beyond football.

The fact that the SANFL has continued to thrive and to show the best of South Australian football on the great stage, on Adelaide Oval in the sunshine on a late September afternoon, in this age that is increasingly so headed us with a focus towards the national stage and the AFL, is a testament to all those who are involved in the league across the board. When we reflect, as we do, on this occasion about those responsibilities that we have towards the state's budget and what we will do to ensure that the range of necessary provision is made in all sorts of public ways, it is good that we look at what is still being achieved by the SANFL.

To bookend it on this morning after the AFL's biggest night, in many ways, when we celebrate Kyby's own Lachie Neale winning the Brownlow for the second time, it was well that the chair of the AFL at the end of that night, in celebrating Lachie Neale's great achievement, recognised those at the grassroots in the South-East, in Lachie Neale's case, but grassroots football that we know is the source of those great champions who make their way. Lachie Neale is no better example of a grassroots footballer who did the hard work in order to keep pursuing his dreams and, from Kyby via WA to Brisbane, he is still South Australia's own and we are all very proud of him.

We here, when we are making decisions about the provision for sports and activities for young people throughout the state, ought to bear in mind that, whether it is with a view directly to funding the work of SANFL clubs or whether it is with a view to celebrating those who go to the very highest levels in the AFL and nationally, it starts with strength in the grassroots.

For me, it is always about the Hills and my local area. The Hills Football League is at the core of footy for me and for the nearly thousand square kilometres of Heysen. I know there have been some struggles in recent weeks, as well as victories; I am not going to single out any of them today. We know that we have great Hills clubs, and the strength of the women's and the men's game

is something that we all work to continue to foster, as well as, of course, the possibilities for the kids via the Moddies programs.

Perhaps if I might just mention one, it is that through all the range of challenges—we know it is always difficult to get enough volunteers, it is difficult to raise money and it is always a challenge to make sure that the best of facilities are available—it is a really good thing for me to see that the children who are participating in Moddies, often taking advantage of facilities that might have improved lights or better change rooms that make it possible for families to bring the children along, are thriving.

Whether it is from Bridgewater or Maccy or Meadows or Hahndorf or Mount Lofty or Echunga or any other one of the other great Hills clubs, it is because of the work that is being done at that very early level that leads to the possibility that one of those Hills kids might eventually make their way to playing in an SANFL grand final and, what do you know, maybe one of them might find their way into the AFL and, like Lachie Neale, take out that highest individual honour that we were all so proud to see last night.

For now, we will all look ahead and I am sure a lot of us will be spending some time having a look at the AFL grand final on the weekend. I hope, as the reminder that Glenelg's great win on the weekend showed us, that we can keep in mind that great legacy of Aussie Rules strength that has come out of South Australia since the very early days. I wish the teams that are yet to play in this grand final season all the very best, and I congratulate once again the mighty Tigers. Carn the Bays!

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (11:15):** I will continue the theme that the member for Heysen has given us this morning. I, too, want to pay tribute to the Glenelg Football Club, because they are a great institution that I was once a part of as a junior footballer. I was a very proud participant down at the Bay.

Back in those days, I attended Paringa Park Primary School, which is a Somerton primary school, a state school. I went to school with some of the quite notable players who went on to greatness, and no more so than the Kernahan brothers. I went to school with Gary, who was always considered the best footballer in the family—even over Harry, the father. There was Gary and there was Stephen and there was also the younger brother, whose name escapes me right about now. They were always great mentors, particularly Harry, back in those days of running out onto the Bay oval to represent the club.

One of my fondest memories as a spectator then was in 1973, when most people in this place were not even born. I attended Adelaide Oval to watch Glenelg knock off North Adelaide. I will never forget sitting on one of the old timber benches there, watching that grand final. Of course, Studley Cornes—Graham Cornes as most people know him—took a screamer in the forward pocket and kicked a goal, and that was the clincher that got the Bays up.

As the member for Heysen has said, we have celebrated a lot of grand finals over the course of the last few weeks, none more so than on the weekend when we saw the A-grade get up, again at Adelaide Oval. I think there were 24 points in it, and it was just a great moment for a great club. The club has had to work pretty hard for its wins over the years, and to have six successful grand final outings really does sink deep into what is taken for granted in some instances but what I see down at the Bay.

Darren Reeves, who is the current A-grade coach, was installed only at Christmas time, but he has done an outstanding job. I was quite moved when after their win he noted that he has never seen his father cry. He did see his father cry for the very first time with that win. I also want to pay tribute to the B-grade, because they also got up down at the Bay. It would have been a very Mad Monday yesterday, noting the As and Bs got up.

I would also like to pay tribute to the board members at the Bay footy club. Obviously, 'Super' Carey is one of those and so is Catherine Sayer, who has been there for six years. She was the CEO of Food South Australia, but she has now moved on. What a way to go to, to see Catherine at her final game as board member down at the Bay—a fitting tribute for dedication and great work.

I also want to pay tribute to Neil Kerley, a great South Australian. He was a constituent of mine in Chaffey. He and Barb spent the majority of their time at Walker Flat, and he was the 'mayor'

there. He was a great motivator, he was a great doer, no more so than for his beloved Swan Reach Golf Club. If you wanted to get anything done down in that neck of the woods, you would go and speak to Neil first and he would give it a clear pathway, whether it was an upgrade at the golf club or getting things done at Walker Flat or just being a great community person.

I must say, some of those childhood memories were really reignited after yesterday's win. It has been quite a busy time the last couple of Saturdays and Sundays with footy. The electorate of Chaffey encompasses quite a few footy leagues, and the Riverland Football League has seen a really competitive season this year. I went to a number of games. My role as the local member is to make sure that I get to see every team for at least one home game. Most people say that is not really supporting the league, but there were 16 teams in three leagues that I had to support, as well as soccer and other codes.

What I saw at the grand final within the RFL was that Barmera-Monash got up over the Renmark Rovers. It was a great feat. On the day, Barmera-Monash definitely wanted the ball more than Renmark. Renmark were going for their third grand final win, but they just did not have it on the day; nevertheless, it was a good game. It was a very low-scoring game but we saw Barmera-Monash get up, as did a number of their junior teams. I think there were three junior teams that got up. Again, it would have been a very robust Sunday and Monday after that win.

The independent league, the Murray Valley Football Netball League, also had their grand final, but this time we moved to Wunkar. Wunkar has a pretty good deck considering it is out in the Mallee. We saw Sedan Cambrai playing Brown's Well, but my beloved Brown's Well Bombers just could not get the job done on the day. Well done to Sedan Cambrai for the great work they did in coming together and securing the grand final win.

This weekend just gone I was also able to go to a number of grand finals. I have been a great parent supporter of the Prince Alfred Old Collegians Football Club. We saw a number of games played at Norwood Oval, where the first game was the PAC C-grade. My partner is the very proud mother of Tom Brinsley, who has been captain of the A-grade for a number of years, but he is starting to weary with injury and is now a great leader in the C-grade. They managed to get up over Sacred Heart, and it was a great win for the Reds and really did start the theme of the day. In the A-grade, we saw the Reds get up and perform extremely well, as they have over the last number of seasons, so it was a fitting tribute for the As to get up.

Then I travelled to Lyndoch for another grand final, to see South Gawler up against Nuriootpa, the Blues versus the Tigers. I was there to support a cohort of family friends, the Bentley brothers, Scott and James, who are captain and vice-captain at Nuri. They are boys from Port Pirie, but they are engineers living and working in Adelaide who have a passion for their football, probably second only to that of their father and mother, who travel great distances to give their boys support. We got to the quite picturesque backdrop at Lyndoch to see South Gawler get up over Nuri, and it was a very seesaw event. I think the lead changed a number of times, but South Gawler managed to get the chocolates on the day.

This shows that country footy is alive and well. Not only are we seeing some good footy in the AFL and SANFL but the country footy leagues seem to attract a great standard of footy. We saw over 30,000 people at the SANFL grand final. We saw a packed house at Waikerie to watch the RFL grand final, as we did at Wunkar to see Sedan Cambrai get up over Brown's Well. Even at Lyndoch, we saw great numbers of people supporting the country footy code. It really does show that it is alive and well.

In my capacity as a local member, I am able to travel to a lot of the country footy venues, making sure that we get a good standard of footy. They are country lads in most cases; there are some who are jetsetted in from afar to come and play for those footy codes. We are seeing a great standard of footy. It gives hope to our juniors rising through the ranks that they are playing a good standard of footy. They have a good volunteer base, and I think that is really important, particularly for regional sporting codes. Whether it is footy, whether it is the netball season that is currently underway or whatever sporting code it is, it is really important that we have that volunteer base that continues to underpin successful clubs, successful town sporting codes.

I think it has never been more important that we have those volunteers continue to come through the ranks. We all know in this place that it is becoming harder and harder to secure volunteers. The volunteer base is getting older, so it is really important that we have the younger ones step up. They need to raise their hand and go to support a sporting code, and none more so than those codes when they get to a grand final.

It shows that town, that team, that they have good support behind them, raising the capacity for that town to showcase what they do so well. What I must say is that all the country footy finals were supported by great footy clubs. When we get back to those clubs, it is pretty important that those clubs put on a show. They support their teams and they make sure that those teams have a great support base and that the volunteers are recognised for their great work over the course of the season.

It cannot be overstated that, without a big, strong community volunteer base, you do not really have a footy club or a sporting club code. It cannot be overstated how important it is that we have good volunteers and young volunteers coming up through the ranks as well as the younger teams, making sure that they do their communities proud, and no more so than what we have just experienced at a number of the grand finals I have attended in the last couple of weeks.

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (11:28):** I rise on this budget measures bill. Certainly, one aspect of any budget is the contribution to sporting clubs because they are so very important to our community. It is worth saying that one of those great sporting clubs in the electorate of Morphett is, of course, the Glenelg Football Club, who had a fantastic day last Sunday, two days ago, with not only the senior men's league team winning but also the senior reserves team winning as well. It capped off really a fantastic season for the club.

Of course, the season started off with the women's team getting their season underway back in February. What is great about the Glenelg Football Club is the synergies in place between the men's and women's programs. The leaders of both the men's and women's teams go through leadership programs together, and there is really a sense of camaraderie between those two. In other clubs, I have seen basically two streams working in silos, but what has been magnificent with the Glenelg footy club is how they have embraced women's football and sought to grow it at a grassroots level as well.

The women's team started off the season. They just missed out on finals, going down to Sturt in the last minor round game, and whichever of those teams won that game—it happened to be Unley—got through to the finals. There is great rivalry between Sturt and Glenelg at both the women's and men's level.

Certainly from the men's perspective, the season was a really strong one, with both the reserves and the senior men's team winning through to the grand final, but at the same time through the season winning also the Stanley Lewis Trophy, which basically recognises consistency across all grades, so it takes into account wins in the junior teams, wins in the men's teams and wins in the women's teams. That was the first bit of silverware for the club to win that one across all grades. Of course, when it gets to the finals, yes, the minor rounds are important, but it is like a whole new campaign.

The men's program really played terrifically in the finals. The men's team finished top of the ladder at the end of the minor round, and they did this under adverse circumstances. Their new coach came in only in January this year and basically had to set about new strategies, making sure the team was working together, so it is a massive credit to not only the senior coach but also the fitness staff, who would have been doing the preseason already through October to December.

As it turned out, Glenelg won through to the grand final by winning the second semifinal against Adelaide Crows, their state league side, so that gave them two weeks to prepare, two weeks to get their bodies right, for the ultimate game that happened last Sunday. In the lead-up to that, it gave the club time to prepare and certainly it was great to see a lot of supporters come down to watch the final training session. The main final training session was on the Thursday prior to the grand final, and there was the captain's run on the Friday as well. It was great going to the club and seeing so many of the supporters coming to watch the training session.

Amongst them were many former players as well, and one of the club's legends, Peter Carey, was there. It was great talking to him. He played against Sturt in grand finals in 1974, which was the last time Sturt and Glenelg met in a grand final. Peter described the game and how, during that season, Glenelg during the minor round had won the chocolates against Sturt and went into the grand final very confident, but anything could have happened in the grand final in 1974, and it ended up that Sturt won.

Since then, Glenelg has not played Sturt in a grand final—until last Sunday. There was a fair bit of nervousness amongst many of the former players who played in the era of the late 1960s and the 1970s, because not only did Sturt beat them in 1974 but also beat them in two of the preceding finals as well—certainly in 1969 and potentially 1970 as well.

In terms of the day itself, it started off with the reserves having a pretty even game against Sturt. In fact, Sturt was up at three-quarter time by about nine points and looked as if they could potentially come away with a win, but Glenelg had a fantastic final quarter, scoring four goals and holding Glenelg to only one goal.

That said, in the dying minute Sturt had a great opportunity to go forward and kick the winning goal. A diving Sturt player just missed taking a mark and the ball spilled out and was grabbed by one of his teammates, who tried to get a dribble kick through to the goal and it was saved on the line for a rush behind instead of a goal. Ultimately, that would be the last time that Sturt scored in the game and allowed the Glenelg reserves team to run out victorious.

Next, of course, was what most of the crowd was there for. It was quite a big crowd—33,000-plus—and it was great to see the usual Crows or Port colours at Adelaide Oval replaced with the yellow and black for the Tigers and the double blues for Sturt, and the cheer squads at each end cheering their teams.

Ultimately, Glenelg played a fantastic game, you would have to say, from the first bounce, led by the opening goal by the winner of the Jack Oatey Medal, Hosie, who kicked a fantastic snap from the boundary. Glenelg was never headed for the whole game. There were times when Sturt looked to come back. In the third quarter, they mounted a challenge and got to within four goals.

You would have to say the rub of the green went Glenelg's way. There was a goal by Glenelg where they kicked it from about 80 metres out to a pack 20 metres from goal, and the ball cleared the whole pack and continued bouncing on and ran through for a goal. While the game is never dead, at that stage you really did think that Glenelg was going to go on to become the eventual winners.

I give bit of a shout-out to one of the Sturt players, Will Coombas, whom I coached in school football. He is a great mark, a great kick. He kicked a goal on the day, which was from outside 50 and a reasonably skilful kick to be able to get that goal. He is an important part of the Sturt defence and all credit to him for his efforts.

As I said, Glenelg ended up winning the grand final and of course proceeded to go back to Brighton Road, where the team could celebrate with so many supporters. There were fantastic scenes at Glenelg, with quite a few thousand there to see the team presented and get the accolades they deserve. Even though they are semi-professional, you would have to say that their training regime takes a lot of time for them to do what they do. They have great skills and great fitness and they were certainly worthy winners of this year's SANFL premiership.

Congratulations to all the players, especially their captain, Max Proud, who is going to be retiring, and also to the coaching staff. Importantly also, congratulations to the support staff, the president at the club, all the board and the staff who also work tirelessly to keep the club going not only throughout the football season but also in the off-season. Congratulations to the Glenelg Football Club on a fantastic season.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (11:38):** I thank members opposite for their contributions. I grudgingly admit that it is important to reflect at some length on the success that the Glenelg Football Club had on the weekend. I wholeheartedly, though, endorse the sentiments of the member for Heysen, recognising particular luminaries of the Glenelg Football Club. I have very fond memories of going to football games, both at Alberton Oval and at Football Park, and seeing Peter Carey play. If Peter Carey was not an imposing enough figure on any other oval, he was particularly

imposing at Football Park because of the ever so slightly domed surface of that playing surface, which only served to accentuate his height.

By the time I really started paying attention to SANFL football I was about 10 years old, and that was in 1988, which of course was the first of a run of almost consecutive premierships for the Port Adelaide Magpies—six won in a period of I think eight years. That was so five minutes ago for the purposes of this contribution.

Those days, I would say particularly the late 1980s and early 1990s, are in my memory the glory days of the SANFL when those teams of Port Adelaide Magpies, Sturt, Glenelg and Norwood—particularly those four, and maybe in fits and spurts North Adelaide—really were very strong football clubs. You could go to a minor round game and still sometimes, particularly if it was a game between any of Norwood, Glenelg, Port and Sturt, you could expect a crowd of well over 10,000 often, even 20,000 for a minor round game.

Of course, being a Port Adelaide supporter I went to many grand finals at Football Park and there were in the high 40s nudging 50,000 people there—really wonderful days of the SANFL. Many of those people who were mentioned in the contributions of the member for Heysen, the member for Morphett and the member for Chaffey are responsible for delivering the current day success of the Glenelg Football Club, and I think that should be recognised and celebrated.

Perhaps now we reflect on the SANFL and the games there as being a slightly less corporatised brand of football we can feel a little closer to that is a little bit more accessible and a little bit more affordable for South Australian families to go to see. That is not to detract from what the AFL does, and the participation and performance of the Adelaide Crows and Port Power, but the SANFL for a lot of reasons will always remain very important to many South Australians and in particular South Australian football lovers.

So I echo the sentiments of those three members opposite for their contributions, and I should also recognise in particular the member for Morphett being the local member for the Glenelg Football Club and quite comfortably the most experienced footballer out of House of Assembly members. There is no question about that. Thank goodness we do not have these sporting fixtures amongst MPs anymore, lest we all be humiliated by the member for Morphett.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Yes, a self-confessed pretty average footballer, the member for Croydon. I thank members for their contributions and their attention to the budget measures bill. Sometimes there is not even a budget measures bill; sometimes state budgets do not require any legislative change. But when there is legislative change, members, in my experience, have always been not only particularly attentive to what the government of the day is trying to do but have engaged quite closely in the process, and there is no exception with this bill.

In particular, I think the most significant change—not the only change but the most significant change—is the change to the First Home and Housing Construction Grants Act and also the Stamp Duties Act to give effect to the government's policy to abolish stamp duty for first-home buyers who are building a new home or buying land with a view to build a new home up to a threshold of \$650,000 for their house and land, or \$400,000 for land.

All of us across all of our electorates, no matter where we are in South Australia, know that our constituents are experiencing the sharpest edges of a housing crisis at the moment, and this is yet another initiative by the Malinauskas government to provide safe, secure and affordable housing for South Australians. As I have said, since we first announced this measure, for many young South Australians in particular, the idea of home ownership never felt further out of their reach, and I think in many ways this is putting home ownership, particularly for those young South Australians, back within their grasp.

The statistics that we have seen reported since the government handed down its budget, particularly from the Housing Industry Association nationally, showing the huge spike in the number of homes that are being committed to or being constructed shows that measures like these, if they are well calibrated and targeted, can make a real difference to people getting into housing, and that is a good thing.

The other amendments, of course, are perhaps not quite so significant. In particular, I should point out that there is a small amendment to the Land Tax Act, which will give effect to a measure which was actually announced by the previous Liberal government, and that is to provide a land tax exemption for build-to-rent properties.

This is a measure consistent with moves in other states and territories to try to better incentivise the investment in housing for people to rent, and we hope that this a success. This is a relatively new area of initiative and incentive for governments of all political persuasions around the country to try to better incentivise that. We hope that this makes some progress towards getting more housing constructed and, in this case, housing constructed for people to rent at affordable levels.

Of course, we reiterate our willingness and appetite to work with the commonwealth government to pursue the Housing Australia Future Fund initiatives, which are a significant contributor to the federal government's target of 1.2 million additional homes to be built between 2024 and 2029. I think the most euphemistic way I could describe that ambition is as a stretch target for the nation's housing construction industry.

It will require a significant step up in the number of dwellings being built across all parts of the country, but particularly here in South Australia. That means that, while the federal government has money on the table, there is a significant corresponding responsibility for state governments, local governments and the housing construction industry to do their bit in order to realise that ambition. I reiterate that this government is absolutely committed to doing all we can to see that ambition through to fruition.

With those brief remarks, can I once again thank members for their consideration of the bill, for their close attention to what the bill seeks to achieve, and also some of the other matters that have been canvassed, particularly in this morning's debate reflecting on the success of the SANFL as a competition and the Glenelg Football Club in the most recent season as premiers.

Bill read a second time.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (11:49):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

**HYDROGEN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 14 September 2023.)

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:50):** When it comes to renewable energy generation and storage South Australia already has the world's attention. Today, South Australia is a recognised world leader in the global transition to renewable energy generation. Thanks to forward-thinking Labor governments we have been recognised in this way since a few years ago.

We made some of our most significant global headlines with the project known as the big battery, the Hornsdale Power Reserve. It is a 150 megawatt, 194 megawatt-hour grid-connected energy storage system co-located with the Hornsdale Wind Farm in the Mid North of our state near Jamestown. I give this explanation despite being certain that everyone in this place would be quite familiar with the project.

Members will recall that the original installation in 2017 was the largest lithium ion battery in the world at the time. Its purpose was, of course, to increase grid stability during adverse weather events because, back in 2017, there was no grid-scale storage in South Australia. Grid-scale storage was regarded as a thing of the future. The market was not ready to invest in grid-scale storage, but our state required greater energy security. We needed that infrastructure and, luckily, a future-focused state Labor government delivered it.



In addition to that security and in light of the global attention the project received—aided not insignificantly by the public profile of the chief executive officer of the company that won the contract to build it—the attention garnered by the project helped to increase awareness for people here in our state, in our nation and around the world of the ways in which energy generation and storage were already changing, and the future potential to change further.

The global clean energy transformation has gained considerable momentum since 2017, as well as gaining significantly increased public awareness and support. The performance of the Hornsdale Power Reserve in these intervening years, and the outcomes that have arisen from its implementation, have sustained some attention in the global media and have contributed to the global reputation that we now enjoy as a leader in clean energy. Positioning South Australia as a pioneering jurisdiction for renewable energy was a great move from a number of perspectives by state Labor governments, and it is particularly remarkable how quickly it has been accomplished.

Historically, all of our state's energy came from coal and gas. Into the 2000s, South Australia obtained 100 per cent of our electricity supply from fossil fuels, with about 30 per cent being imported from coal generators interstate as of 2002. We had only about 2 per cent of renewable wind and solar generation in our electricity generation mix in 2007. The bold and ambitious policies and actions of the Rann government and the Weatherill government in the years since have resulted in a spectacular shift to renewables. We set ambitious targets and then we got on with outperforming them. Only two years later, in 2009, 20 per cent of South Australia's electricity came from wind power.

In 2023, South Australia is powered by solar and wind, backed up by gas. We generate around 70 per cent of our electricity from renewable sources. By 2025-26, we are projected to reach the 85 per cent mark, and we are on track to achieve a target of 100 per cent net renewable energy by 2030. In 2022, we had 180 days where the state was powered exclusively by renewable energy. Let us be very clear about how remarkable that is: from 2 per cent renewable generation in 2007 to periods of 100 per cent renewable generation in 2022. That is a period of only 15 years.

South Australia also has the first power system in the world where rooftop solar is capable, at certain times, of not only meeting but exceeding the entire state's electricity demand. In executing such a rapid clean energy transition by international standards, South Australia has performed extraordinarily impressively, and the world has taken notice. I need not point out that most of this has happened in spite of the Liberal Party's efforts, particularly at the federal level, to talk down renewables, to try to convince the community that the sky was going to fall in and to hinder our nation's transition to the inevitable renewable energy future: a future that most reasonable people would rightly see as an economic imperative in addition to being an environmental imperative.

Looking around at what is happening globally, the Liberals have roundly lost their battle against progress. With the right leadership, our nation and the world will keep getting on with the future while they may choose to continue to demean themselves with their regressive bleating. The Malinauskas Labor government is proud to build upon the work of the Rann and Weatherill governments in boldly pursuing clean energy generation, energy independence for our state and its people and opportunity to lead the world in a new way.

The potential of hydrogen is very significant. It is very well recognised globally, and South Australia is once again attracting the world's notice. The International Energy Agency in a 2019 report on hydrogen identified that unclear regulatory frameworks represent an obstacle to the realisation of the great opportunities hydrogen offers. The bill now before us seeks to extend South Australia's leadership on clean energy by establishing the first legislative framework in Australia for the coordinated rollout of a hydrogen industry.

South Australia has a very strong opportunity in the coincident solar and wind resources that are found in our state, particularly to the north-west of Port Augusta and Whyalla. We are in an excellent position to lead the world in a way that will translate not just to energy independence for our state, and not just to responsible global citizenship in terms of clean energy generation, but to substantial benefit for our state in the form of export opportunities.

The Malinauskas Labor government is positioning South Australia to become a world-class low-cost green hydrogen supplier. It is very clear that the world is headed for a new wave of

large-scale hydrogen and renewable energy development. The opportunities are ours to seize, and jurisdictions in our region and around the world will be watching eagerly the progress that we make.

This change in the scale and complexity of the hydrogen and renewable energy sector demands a comprehensive framework that takes broad considerations into account: the needs of our environment, of our communities, of our landowners and, more broadly, of our state's strategic and economic ambitions. This bill paves the way towards ensuring that the development of our hydrogen industry and the further development of our renewable energy sectors will deliver benefits for all South Australians, for the environment and for our First Nations communities.

Providing a consistent framework across the state will facilitate efficient development and regulation of the growing sector as well as providing certainty for the sector and for those investing in it. The bill introduces a transparent, efficient and consultative licensing and regulatory framework that will extend across the life cycle of large-scale renewable energy and hydrogen projects.

This bill applies to both freehold land and government-owned land and state waters. Hydrogen and renewable energy activities on all land types will come under this proposed legislation. A statewide licensing and regulatory framework across every land type will ensure responsible development, facilitate consistent monitoring and deliver community and investor certainty and clarity.

On freehold land, proponents will need to secure access to land through direct agreement with landowners. Freehold landowners will continue to be in control of who can enter their land and under what conditions. The identification of priority areas on Crown land will determine where renewable energy projects can best be hosted and where project proponents will be able to compete for licences and land tenure. Competitive allocation of licences to proponents for Crown land will mean that South Australia only hosts projects that are willing to coexist with current land uses as well as delivering important community and environmental benefits.

The bill introduces the concept of release areas, consisting of designated land, being pastoral land, state waters and prescribed Crown land. Only following a consultation process involving government agencies, native title holders, other stakeholders impacted and, if applicable, an assessment by the responsible minister and the ministers responsible for the Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989 and the Harbours and Navigation Act 1993, will designated areas be declared a release area.

Through the granting of access to designated land for renewable energy projects, this legislation makes provision for the state to charge appropriate rent in exchange for the use of such land, rent which will be used to share economic benefits across the broader South Australian community.

The scope of regulated activities provided for in the bill will enable our state to adapt quickly to the future composition of the emerging industries by providing flexibility as to what types of associated infrastructure are able to be licensed and regulated under the framework. Five licence types will be created for projects in the generation of renewable energy or hydrogen, covering all stages of project development, from the early research and feasibility stage through to the construction, operation and closure of facilities.

These five types of licence include the renewable energy feasibility licence, the renewable energy infrastructure licence, the renewable energy research licence, the hydrogen generation licence and the associated infrastructure licence. Each licence type was thoroughly explicated by the minister in his second reading contribution. We know that a very important consideration to local communities and to our state as a whole is any potential environmental impact of projects in hydrogen and renewable energies. It is a keen consideration as well for the Malinauskas Labor government.

This bill proposes to regulate and conduct hydrogen and renewable energy development in a responsible and ecologically sustainable manner that seeks to minimise its impact on our state's native vegetation, our biodiversity, our waterways and our parks. The framework proposes to make no change to existing environmental legislation nor the way in which it is administered.

An environmental impact assessment process, which I understand is similar to those already in operation in South Australia, is incorporated into the licensing process to ensure that activities

authorised under this framework are managed in such a way as to minimise environmental impacts. Importantly, this includes ensuring that Aboriginal heritage is protected in accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988.

The environmental impact assessments will include a statement of environmental objectives that will be provided to the minister for public consultation and approval alongside an environmental impact report. The same stage of the process requires provisions for the end of the project's life, meaning that the project proponent must ensure appropriate decommissioning of infrastructure and the proper rehabilitation of impacted land and waters. The submission of an environmental impact report and the approval of a statement of environmental objectives must occur before a licence is granted to a project proponent to ensure the public have had the opportunity to have their say on a project proposal before the minister makes a decision.

In relation to land that is the subject of a native title determination or is within a registered native title claim, licences will not be granted unless the registered native title holders or claimants have consented to that grant in an Indigenous land use agreement under the commonwealth Native Title Act 1993. To provide flexibility for native title groups, provisions do enable a less formal type of agreement to be negotiated only at the request of a native title group. The government will develop guidelines to support leading practice engagement and negotiations with South Australia's First Nations communities.

We know that opportunities for renewable energy development exist in some of South Australia's most highly prospective regions for minerals, as well as in primary industries regions that are both economically and culturally significant to our state. This means that we need to take care to ensure that the interests of landowners and pastoralists are considered and protected.

The bill seeks to ensure that hydrogen and renewable energy projects can be developed in such a way as to promote coexistence as far as possible with other interests, including through access agreements, mechanisms for dispute resolution, provisions for notice of entry and compensation, and consultation with landowners to ensure impacts on existing uses are minimised.

The bill also seeks to enhance pastoralists' rights relative to rights that now exist under the Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989 by providing improved access agreement conditions and strengthening dispute resolution mechanisms. The bill establishes the principle that licensees must work to minimise detriment to the interests of the pastoralists and damage to the land.

Licensees must enter into an access agreement with affected pastoralists before any activities are able to commence. The agreement must address access to the licence area and the infrastructure that will be developed within the licence area during all phases, including exploration, construction, installation, operation and decommissioning of infrastructure. Access agreements must also address compensation that is payable to the pastoralists resulting from entry to and use of their lease.

While the bill sets out basic requirements for access agreements, it does not limit what can be agreed. Pastoralists may negotiate with licensees on other matters as they prefer. To further support landowners and pastoralists, the independent Landowner Information Service, funded by government, will be extended to cover renewable energy sector activities. The service will help landowners and pastoralists understand technical and legal information and support them to make informed decisions.

The bill also introduces a notice of entry mechanism for resource tenements. Resource tenements will have the right to object to entry if a renewable energy project will cause material diminishment of their existing rights. The intention and the expectation is that licensees and resource tenement holders will work together to find the path to successful coexistence of authorised activities and existing operations.

It is the intention that material diminishment will be measured against advanced activities, such as advanced exploration, existing mining or production leases, and work program commitments. The existence of a resource tenement is not enough to meet the definition of material diminishment. It is expected that licensees and resource tenements will come to agreement on the

manner in which activities and operations will be undertaken, such that there will be no material diminishment of those operations.

I now move to the important subject of the consultation that has been undertaken in relation to this bill. The development of this bill has been informed by genuine consultation processes, beginning early in development on both a comprehensive issues paper released in late 2022 and a resultant draft bill released in May 2023. The government received nearly 200 submissions during consultation.

The advice of First Nations people was sought very early on the design of the reforms. Two South Australian Aboriginal renewable energy forums in Port Augusta were held in November 2022 and March 2023 to understand the issues and challenges of Aboriginal groups and to discuss opportunities to work together on the development of renewable energy.

For the pastoral community, a regional visit, a dedicated workshop and a follow-up online session were delivered to support genuine, quality engagement between the government and this significant stakeholder group on the draft bill. Eighteen information sessions were conducted across South Australia's regions during consultation. Two webinars were held and recorded, with over 200 recognised attendees, and a further approximately 300 views of the recordings. Dozens of meetings were held with key stakeholder groups and individuals, offering the chance to hear directly from government about the proposal and to ask questions.

While the bill is before us now, the conversations with our community and with interested groups are ongoing. The government will continue to work with stakeholders and rights holders on the development of associated regulations as well as on identifying the first release areas in which project proponents will compete for tender under the framework. The bill also includes review provisions, requiring that a review be initiated five years after the commencement of the act and also requiring that reviews be repeated every five years thereafter.

The Malinauskas Labor government is a government that sees opportunity and seizes opportunity. We understand the potential of hydrogen and of the opportunities offered by the ongoing evolution of the global renewable energy transformation, which will only continue to accelerate in the years ahead. We are determined to further extend our leadership in this area. We are superbly positioned to do so. We have the will, and we invite and empower the expertise, and we have a record of success in leading already.

We know that renewable energy generation is a clear environmental imperative around the globe. What can be underestimated or misunderstood, particularly by conservative governments and conservative thinkers, is the economic opportunity and indeed the economic inevitability of the global shift to renewable energy generation and storage. The South Australian community deserves to benefit to the maximum possible extent from the opportunities that we recognise are available to our state and that we recognise South Australia is ideally positioned to seize.

This government is working to prepare for the attraction of significant, high-quality investment in hydrogen and further investment in renewable energies. We have so much to gain, and our global reputation has us already on an excellent footing as we embark upon the next chapter in our history of leadership in renewable energy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Energy's office for supplying me with information to make a contribution today. I am pleased to commend the bill to the house.

**Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (12:07):** I am very happy to speak in support of this bill. I do not think anyone here can recall a time when South Australia has stood on the cusp of such extraordinary investment. We often hear terms like 'once in a generation' bandied around, but I think this would be an understatement. With a pipeline of works of \$20 billion predicted in the near future, a new wave of large-scale hydrogen and renewable energy development sits on the horizon. But for us to realise this ambition some heavy lifting must be done, and this is where the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill comes in.

This 92-page effort seeks to debug our legislative framework to ensure processes are streamlined so we can build on South Australia's global leadership in decarbonisation. It also builds significant momentum around red-tape reduction. I know it is very easy to chastise governments and

label an operating framework as being shrouded in red tape. In my eyes, if a rule or regulation upholds a community standard, then it does not deserve this label.

Given the great lengths that have gone into community consultation on this bill, including huge efforts made to preserve standards and environmental management, access to land and respect for Aboriginal South Australians, I am pleased to put on record that this transformative bill ticks all the necessary boxes. We have before us a new act that will facilitate and regulate the generation of hydrogen and renewable energy in South Australia and its coastal waters.

It will do this by establishing a one-stop shop or, as Minister Koutsantonis puts it, a 'one window to government' approach. This will coordinate the expanding hydrogen and renewable energy industries that are emerging across South Australia. Some may say that in a state where 70 per cent of our energy needs already come from renewable sources we are already seeing this expansion, but the reality is that we have not seen anything yet and that, if we play our cards right, the best is yet to come.

We started with our Hydrogen Jobs Plan, and now another piece of the puzzle is confidently placed with the passage of this important piece of legislation. Today, we bring segments of six acts into one, which will minimise red tape for prospective investors and, in doing so, provide certainty to the business world. This primes us to take full advantage of the world realigning its energy supply needs.

While I think we have passed the debate on whether climate change is real or not, markets themselves have essentially decided to accept it as a reality. Given this, we could continue arguing all we like and waste energy there or we can focus on absorbing our share of the \$9.4 trillion in investment expected by 2050 to develop a global supply chain for green energy.

While the opportunities may seem abundant, this is not something that will arrive at our doorstep simply by sitting still. We need a first-class approach, and the good news is that we have an operating model already in place that is serving us well and that is ripe for adoption. Our 'one window to government' approach is currently used to license and regulate the mineral and energy resource sectors in South Australia. It has been well received, not just by investors but also in other jurisdictions, and I would expect similar bills to emerge in other parliaments across the country as they play catch-up with how we do things here.

No matter what they do, there are few places in the world that can lay claim to an abundance of both sunshine and wind. Granted, there are places that have more wind and sun than we do, but it is more often the case that they have one or the other—seldom both. By coupling both with the will to succeed, we have caught the attention of the rest of the world, hungry for a cleaner source of energy.

It therefore did not happen by chance that our Premier delivered the opening keynote address at the World Hydrogen Summit in Rotterdam. Our actions have attracted the attention of the world, and they are keen to find out what is happening in our backyard. As even more investors pay attention, they are going to see a jurisdiction that is welcoming and an easy place to conduct business.

Looking at some of the specifics of the bill, it is worth highlighting its universal application. Laws will apply to both freehold and government-owned land as well as in state waters, which irons out any potential ambiguity, with all stakeholders clear that one act covers all hydrogen and renewable energy activities across our state no matter where you tread—or, indeed, float.

While it is favourable to incoming investment, the bill is also clear in enshrining the rights of landowners. It is important that we attract new industries, but it is also vital that we do not kill the old ones that have been the mainstay of our existence. That is why on freehold land proponents will need to secure access to land through direct agreement with landowners, therefore preserving the current arrangements. Given so many green energy projects can coexist with the operations of existing industries, I hope this sends a clear signal to existing South Australian businesses that this act also helps facilitate coexistence, with the potential to add significant value to their existing operations.

While we are not turning our back on existing private enterprise, this bill also gives scope for the state to generate some of its own income to provide much-needed services and infrastructure. This framework makes it clear to proponents that, in exchange for the privilege of access to designated Crown land for the purpose of generating renewable energy, the state government is within its right to charge appropriate rent for the land.

On top of this, I welcome the establishment of the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Fund. Object (e) of the bill facilitates economic prosperity and benefits for the state. Given the establishment of the fund, I understand it will deliver social and communal benefit and can be used for purposes related to this and other objects of the act, including object (d). This section aims to increase economic, environmental and social benefits for Aboriginal South Australians, and also affords protection and preservation of their heritage along with respecting native title.

Primarily, I have stated how important this bill will be to the operation of business, but I also wish to make it clear that it does not come at the expense of the environmental standards expected by our broader community. The bill and supporting documents make it clear that this new framework will not alter the existing environmental and natural resources legislation or the way it is administered in relation to establishing a large-scale green energy project. As reinforced in the bill's objectives, this includes ensuring Aboriginal heritage is protected in accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act.

I understand that five types of licence will be created because of this legislation and relate to key stages of a renewable energy project. I imagine, as the debate continues, this will be examined in further detail and I would imagine the opposition may choose to seek further information, should they choose to go into committee. With that in mind, I want to commend this bill for both its thoroughness and simplicity, with licences covering the early research and feasibility stage right through to the construction, operation and closure of facilities.

Drawing specifically on the decommissioning of facilities, I think it is important to accept that despite the best of intentions every green energy project will at some point reach the end of its useful life. I am sure South Australia is not alone in the drawn-out process with industries that have reached the end of their operations. We have seen this with Port Stanvac and the gasworks. While this legislation helps ensure the impact of new industries will be kinder to our people and soil, it is vital we bolt down what our expectations are right from the start.

In mentioning community expectations, and what we hope to enhance both socially and environmentally from this piece of legislation, I feel at this point there is a correlation between good policy and good business. While we are getting the social and environmental mix right, it is timely to reiterate that the certainty it generates provides a workable set of boundaries for investment to also rally around.

On the very last day of the last millennium, I understand only 2 per cent of our energy was created through renewable sources. This coincided roughly with a deeply unpopular privatisation of our electricity assets. I was 20 at the time and I know I was not alone on this side of the chamber in being worried about what would happen next. With the forces of globalisation gathering speed, we were rightly concerned this would weaken the competitive base of the many products that we were manufacturing locally.

While there have been green shoots, and it is fantastic that we do have our lowest unemployment rate on record, the last two decades have been transformative and at times uncomfortable, to put it politely. The handling of our electricity assets into private hands has meant that economically we have not always been the masters of our own destiny. This is despite the purchase of backup generators by the Weatherill government, which were unfortunately sold off by many of those who sit opposite me in the chamber.

Despite this setback, we are now at a point where the Hydrogen Jobs Plan will deliver a significant and meaningful component of our power generating assets being put back into public hands. We are doing this through the construction of a 250-megawatt electrolyser, 250 megawatts of power generation powered by the electrolyzers, and hydrogen storage for 3,600 tonnes of hydrogen, the equivalent of two months' of hydrogen consumption for power generation.

Given its transformative significance, I can imagine there will be many in this room who will want to sell it at the first opportunity. On a slight segue, I lay down the challenge to those opposite to rule that out when their next member speaks to this bill. While we are steadfast in our position that these facilities should belong to all South Australians, we are not anti the private sector also reaping a stake in our investment. This is where the bill comes in.

As I wrote this speech, I had the welcome interruption of having to walk and pick up my son from school. With all sorts of jargon swirling in my head, I looked around at all the parents and asked myself, 'What does this all mean for them?' In short, it means a lot. Like so many people in my community, I have rooftop solar. This is significant, for I understand that Salisbury Downs, one of the suburbs I represent, has the highest concentration of rooftop solar in South Australia.

I am often stopped and asked what we are doing about the measly returns we are getting for the surplus energy that we feed back into the grid. In short, I tell them that we are out there transforming it into a commodity that everybody wants. It is not the easiest conversation to have and not helped when I struggle to get my tongue around the pronunciation of 'electrolyser'. This bill is an important piece of the puzzle we are laying in the hope we can increase the return to mums and dads in my electorate who need more than 6¢ a kilowatt hour to feel their investment in solar has been worth their sacrifice.

The more players we can attract in South Australia, the hungrier the appetite will be for our green energy, be it generated by wind or at a solar farm or from the rooftop of one of my constituents. South Australians are sick of promises of lower energy bills. We have made it clear that we will not do this, but we are clear that the Hydrogen Jobs Plan and bills like this before us today are the trigger point to increase global demand for South Australian sun and wind generated electricity.

Back in my days in the Northern Territory, it seemed to be a catchcry of the Chief Minister that everything he did was about jobs, jobs, jobs. I cannot see this program being anything different. As I looked around the schoolyard that afternoon, it was easy to envisage that the kids running around me will play a pivotal role in transforming South Australia into an energy powerhouse. Some of their parents are doing this already but, given there is \$20 billion of investment in the pipeline, it is not too difficult to imagine that these children will be forging a career in what comes next.

Just outside my electorate is Tindo Solar, Australia's only panel manufacturer. I am sure the member for Florey would agree that they are now well placed to generate a significant number of extra jobs as their skills and products come under increasing demand. I also have the RAW Group, with their operations depot proudly within my community of Parafield Gardens. RAW is a 100 per cent Aboriginal owned and managed company, generating meaningful partnerships with industry leaders to increase Aboriginal workforce participation and inclusion.

This includes companies like Fulton Hogan, Lendlease and Hansen Yuncken in areas such as traffic management and civil construction. As investment into green energy continues, I would expect to see a dynamic CE like Allan Jones at the forefront creating hundreds of meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal South Australians.

Just before I finish, I want to thank both the Premier and Minister Koutsantonis for driving this vision all the way to the treasury bench. Their work is exemplary and they will be remembered fondly for what they are doing on this front. I also wish to pass on my thanks to the many people who helped contribute to this bill through public consultation and the development of it into legislation. When the community pulls together we all win, and there is a diverse range of groups from different walks of life who have worked hard to make this happen.

There are a lot of moving pieces behind this bill. What is clear is that it delivers a framework to enhance investment opportunities in South Australia. It does it in a manner that offers certainty, without compromising many of the key elements we cherish as South Australians. We are doing this not only to meet demand from a hungry global market seeking an abundant supply of clean energy but also to rise to this occasion and, in the process, create prosperity for all of us to enjoy.

In appreciation of its clear and worthy intentions and the effort gone into making this all work, I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (12:23):** I, too, rise to speak in support of this bill. I recall a few years ago having the incredible opportunity of being in Jamestown the night that we switched on the big battery. All the eyes of the world were on South Australia and all the eyes of the world are once again turning to South Australia to be a leader in the renewable energies field.

Just yesterday, our Prime Minister and our Premier stood together to announce that we had finalised a grant agreement to develop Port Bonython Hydrogen Hub near Whyalla, which will create regional jobs and bring Australia another step closer to becoming a renewable energy superpower. Together, both governments are investing \$100 million to develop infrastructure at Port Bonython and prepare it to become South Australia's first large-scale export terminal for hydrogen.

This Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill has the potential to transform the renewable energy sector in South Australia and provide so much opportunity for our state. Our state's existing energy frameworks have been working relatively well, so much so that we have been able to reach more than 70 per cent renewable energy and continue to be on track in the renewable energy sphere. However, it is clear that South Australians and the rest of the world are eager for even more renewable energy development, now with a focus on large-scale hydrogen production.

When we introduced our Hydrogen Jobs Plan prior to the last state election, the feedback I received in my own community was overwhelmingly positive. Back in 2021, as the Labor candidate for Adelaide I hosted a booked-out community forum in North Adelaide for local Adelaide residents to provide their comments about a potential hydrogen future for South Australia. The feedback was clear: my community has been waiting for something as bold, innovative and forward thinking as South Australia's Labor's hydrogen agenda. It is a plan that takes action on climate change. It will decarbonise our economy through creating greener, cheaper energy to support South Australian industry and businesses to grow. We made this commitment; we secured a mandate and now we are delivering.

As we work towards this new wave of large-scale hydrogen production, our laws must regulate this shift appropriately. The change in pace, scale and complexity of the hydrogen industry demands a single framework that considers and encapsulates every part of the process from beginning to end. This framework must adequately consider environmental needs, as well as the needs of landowners and communities. In addition to this, the state's economic and strategic ambitions must also be realised.

This bill introduces the one consistent framework needed for a large-scale hydrogen industry. It will provide investor certainty, economies of scale and efficient development of the growing hydrogen sector, including regulation.

This bill will introduce new licensing arrangements and impact assessments for projects across all land types. This will enable regulation of the whole project life cycle and discourage land banking activities. We will also see the capture of resources data on Crown land, freehold land and state waters. There will be a pre-competitive identification of priority areas on Crown land, which will determine where we can sustainably host renewable energy projects, as well as determine where project proponents will compete for licences and land tenure.

This competitive allocation of licences will be subject to transparent selection criteria. This will ensure we only host projects willing to embrace coexistence with current land uses that will deliver community and environmental benefits. However, these benefits will only come to fruition if our large-scale hydrogen sector has an environmentally sustainable development framework, including land protection and restoration, where there are financial assurance requirements to ensure land is rehabilitated and returned to pre-existing conditions. It is important that we ensure development occurs in the context of ecologically sustainable practices for circular economy outcomes.

In addition, this bill allows for well-resourced and effective regulation, including full cost recovery for government services through licence fees and charges, with fit-for-purpose compliance and enforcement powers. It also provides for a financial mechanism to share the future benefit of the value associated with access to the state's natural resources, which will derive benefits for the entire state.



It is these elements of the framework, along with pursuing multiple land use outcomes, that will provide fair outcomes for all landowners, communities and others with pre-existing land rights. Under this legislation, landowner rights would be enhanced to ensure sustainable coexistence of industries into the future. Licensees will need to enter into access agreement if on Crown land or have consent and approval from the landowner if on freehold land and this must occur before any activities on the land occur. Similarly, a native title agreement must be reached if the project is to be on native title land.

This bill supports the expansion of the Landowner Information Service, which will improve dispute resolution mechanisms and increase landowner support. This is in conjunction with various access arrangements, which will undoubtedly facilitate negotiation and open up conversations around multiuse and collaborative uses of land.

Early engagement with landowners is key to finding the most suitable land to host renewable energy projects so that hydrogen development can be sustainable and complementary to the existing industry. This bill will further assist in unlocking the state's pipeline for renewable energy projects. As promised prior to the last state election, our government's hydrogen agenda will increase supply of reliable, affordable and clean renewable energy. With a current estimated capital development investment of approximately \$21 billion in renewables, this bill will set up our state for success.

I congratulate all those who have worked on the drafting of this bill, from the comprehensive issues paper that was released late last year to a draft bill released in May of this year. In particular, I want to acknowledge the work of our Minister for Energy, Tom Koutsantonis. I was privileged to work for the minister for a number of years, both in his role as Minister for Energy and as Treasurer. I learnt enormous depth of knowledge from the minister in regard to the energy industry and was very privileged to be part of some significant reforms.

The government has been listening to feedback and providing opportunities for community consultation right from the beginning. Almost from inception, the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been sought and heard regarding the design of this important framework. In fact, the state has hosted two South Australian Aboriginal Renewable Energy Forums—in Port Augusta late last year and March this year—to truly listen and understand the relevant issues and challenges impacting Aboriginal communities. Here, there was an open discussion on the opportunities to work together in the development of the renewable energy sector.

In addition, a total of 18 information sessions were conducted across South Australia's regions during the consultation period, which is no easy feat. I congratulate all those involved in organising those sessions as well as dozens of meetings, with key stakeholder groups, individuals impacted and those interested all asking questions on this important proposal. I once again applaud all involved in the consultation process.

Those who have shared their views and provided their feedback and those who have listened and implemented these suggestions have created a really strong and solid regulatory framework, but the work does not stop there. Our government continues to work to develop the associated regulations in consultation with the relevant stakeholders and rights holders to take the first step in identifying the first release areas to go out for competitive tender. Review provisions are of course included in this bill as well, so we can see how the framework goes after its implementation and have a review in five years after the commencement of the act and every five years after that.

As we are coming towards a referendum soon, I think on this issue as well it is important to be on the right side of history, and I do believe that our government, the Malinauskas government, along with the federal Albanese government, is on the right side of history. I believe we are leaving no stone unturned in looking at ways in which we can address climate change and decarbonise our economy, not just for the current generation but for future generations as well.

As a mother of two young children, I do not believe that any parent can stand in this chamber and say that they did not do absolutely everything that they could to address the climate crisis, to do everything that they could to increase renewable energies and deliver cheaper, more affordable and greener energy—again, not just for families across our state right now but to ensure that we have a cleaner, greener future for our children, our grandchildren and their grandchildren.

Our state is ready and willing to expand our renewable energy sector through large-scale hydrogen, and this bill will ensure responsible development and operation. With those comments, I commend the bill to the house.

**Mrs PEARCE (King) (12:33):** I rise to speak to the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill. I do so because it helps to support an incredible opportunity for our state. This bill represents our nation's first legislative framework designed to give direction and a coordinated approach to our hydrogen and renewable energy industries.

Currently, as a state, we have consistently displayed to the country what is possible when it comes to renewable energy, having achieved over 70 per cent renewable energy in South Australia with the existing frameworks that have been set up to serve our state well thus far.

With the pressing need to adapt to the changing community expectations, combined with the scale of the work ahead of us, we now require a single end-to-end framework that considers the needs of the environment, landowners, communities and our state's strategic and economic ambitions. The passing of this bill before us today provides for that consistent framework throughout South Australia. It will give certainty to inventories and provide for economies of scale as well as the efficient development and regulation of this growing sector of the economy, one which is not expected to slow down any time soon.

At the turn of the century, renewable energy provided just 2 per cent of the overall energy mix—now we are at 70 per cent. With our aim to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050 and respond to the growing threat that the climate emergency presents, we need to act quickly and set in place clear pathways to achieve this goal.

We are lucky that we have abundant wind and solar resources and vast lands and water to match. We are in a wonderful place to capitalise on this, but it will take more than just luck. To capitalise on the more than \$20 billion of projects in capital development and to undertake projects with such complexity, we need a single end-to-end framework that considers the needs of all stakeholders.

This bill represents six acts being merged into one. The Electricity Act 1996, the Landscape South Australia Act 2019, the Gas Act 1997, the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Act 2000, the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016, and the Harbors and Navigation Act 1993 will all be merged into the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Act 2023.

While other countries, such as the USA, have the power to stimulate their efforts to decarbonise through measures such as their Inflation Reduction Act through uncapped, open-ended subsidies to produce green hydrogen and the storage of renewable energy, we can compete in other ways, such as this monumental change to streamline how large-scale hydrogen and renewable energy developments are undertaken here in South Australia. It will be a one-stop shop which will facilitate a straightforward, government-led approach to large-scale hydrogen and renewable energy development in South Australia and which will also support our government's Hydrogen Jobs Plan.

But how did we arrive at this bill before us today? Well, it was not without a comprehensive consultation, that is for sure. Having come to government just last year, we got to work straightaway and by late 2022 we had an extensive issues paper released and a draft bill by May 2023 that received close to 200 submissions throughout its consultation.

We made sure that, throughout this process, advice from First Nations people was sought on these reforms. We hosted two South Australian Aboriginal Renewable Energy Forums—in Port Augusta in November 2022 and March 2023—to get insight into any potential challenges and issues and to understand where the opportunities are to work collectively together and ensure the success of the development of renewable energy projects.

For our pastoralists, we held dedicated workshops, followed up by online webinars to ensure quality engagement with the pastoral community was undertaken on this draft bill. Throughout the engagement, we held a total of 18 information sessions across the regions, held and recorded two online webinars which received a follow-up of 300 views, held dozens of meetings with key stakeholder groups to hear directly their feedback on the proposals put to them and to answer any questions that they may have had.

But engagement will not end there with the passing of this bill, as we intend to continue the conversation with stakeholders and rights holders to ensure that regulations which follow the bill work for everyone and to bring everyone along with us on this monumental opportunity for the state and also move forward with them to identify first release areas for a comprehensive tender under the framework. From there, with the bill also including review provisions, it will also be required that a review be initiated at five years following the commencement of the act and then every five years thereafter.

Throughout my time engaging with industry about the technical colleges our government will be building, I heard from stakeholders across many different industries who were excited for the opportunities that the hydrogen and renewable energy projects in the pipeline present, particularly in the Upper Spencer Gulf. This excitement, held by many stakeholders and community members in the Upper Spencer Gulf, is understandable when you, in the words of the Premier, understand that the opportunities present are akin to finding oil in Saudi Arabia or finding gold in Victoria.

Our regions are incredibly important to our state and the communities which make up our regions are an integral part of our state's overall economy. Our investment in the five new technical colleges, with two to be in our regions, represents our understanding of the importance of not only skilling up young South Australians in regional communities with the skills they will need but, just as importantly, setting up pathways to secure and sustainable employment following their school years so that young people can remain in the regions they have a connection to. Growing up in the regions has meant for a long time that if you want to find employment or access further study, you often had to pack up and head towards Adelaide, which is what I had to do following high school.

Last year, when I visited Pirie for the Global Maintenance Upper Spencer Gulf conference to engage with over 400 attendees and industry reps about the technical colleges, I was pleased to see that the feedback received was supportive and highlighted the need for such a project to ensure that there is a sustainable pipeline of workers from the regions so that the big plans we, along with industry, have for the Upper Spencer Gulf can succeed. The benefits flow through to the community—opportunity for workers on planned projects and benefits for the local economy that will follow.

Having just finalised the grant agreement to develop the Port Bonython Hydrogen Hub outside Whyalla, we are on our way to securing our role as a renewable energy superpower. The Port Bonython hub has been a major hub for oil exports throughout the last few decades, with the facility worth billions of dollars to the South Australian economy. It is expected that it could still be worth billions more as we start to see more investment in South Australia's renewable energy industries.

With the state and federal governments both investing \$100 million into developing infrastructure at the port, it will become our state's first large-scale export terminal for hydrogen, with the expectation being that we will see the development host projects worth up to \$13 billion and generating around 1.8 million tonnes of hydrogen by 2030.

With the world seeking to meet the challenges and opportunities present in the task to decarbonise, the hydrogen we produce here in South Australia will become a highly sought-after global commodity, with green hydrogen putting Australia on the path to becoming a renewable energy superpower and playing a critical role in our local clean energy transformation, such as through the production of green steel. With such an abundance of land, water, solar, and wind resources, we are in a prime spot here in South Australia to place among the top in the world as a low-cost hydrogen supplier.

The bill before us today will introduce precompetitive identification of priority areas on Crown land, which will help to determine where we can sustainably host our renewable projects, with proponents to compete for licences and land tenure. Subject to a transparent selection, applicants will then compete for licences on Crown land and state waters, ensuring that those who are looking to host projects will do so in coexistence with current land users and deliver community and environmental benefits through their projects.

Additionally, this will see the introduction of new licensing arrangements and impact assessments for projects across all land types, enabling regulation of the whole project life cycle,

avoiding land banking activities and facilitating the capture of resource data across Crown and freehold land as well as state waters.

Ensuring the environmental sustainability of the project is incredibly important, and that is why this bill has within it a framework that will place the development in context of ecologically sustainable practices and circular economy outcomes. Importantly, this contains a financial mechanism so that we can all share in the future benefit of the value associated with accessing our state's natural resources.

With major components of our state's Hydrogen Jobs Plan to come under the licensing contained in the hydrogen and renewable energy act, this bill before us has been designed to encompass all hydrogen generation, power plants, and the necessary transmission and pipeline infrastructure and storage facilities.

As we take the next steps towards advancing even more clean energy technology in South Australia, building on our rich history of being at the forefront of implementing and gaining the benefits of many of these innovations, our Hydrogen Jobs Plan is set to see South Australia secure a world-leading green hydrogen facility.

This is part of the Malinauskas government's commitment to build the facilities that will see the delivery of more jobs for South Australia, enhanced grid stability and proof of hydrogen production and generation at such scale, while unlocking the rich pipeline of the renewable energy development and the associated manufacturing opportunities. The opportunities flowing from those projects will in turn support South Australian jobs and bring further economic benefit, not only to our state as a whole but to our regional communities, who are once again benefiting the whole of South Australia through their invaluable input to our economy.

We were the first with the big battery up there in the Mid North, we lead the country with regard to rooftop solar, we have proven to the country the power of renewables time and time again and today we begin the next step to prove to the world the power of hydrogen energy. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

**Ms SAVVAS (Newland) (12:44):** I do think it would be remiss of me to stand here today and talk about hydrogen without mentioning our big announcement yesterday in conjunction with the Albanese federal government. In conjunction with the federal government we are investing \$100 million to develop critical infrastructure at Port Bonython, to prepare it to become South Australia's first large-scale hydrogen export terminal. We know that the Spencer Gulf is the right place to do so. They have abundant solar and wind resources, available land and the ability to grow.

This critical new investment is about making not just Australia a global leader but also South Australia, and we will continue to become a global leader in green hydrogen in what is becoming an increasingly competitive market. This is a very important moment for regional South Australia. The development of the Port Bonython Hydrogen Hub will increase regional jobs and move us closer to becoming a superpower in renewable energy.

Today, we are here specifically to discuss our Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill. We have long existed as a leader in this space, and although there are existing frameworks that have played a significant role in getting us to reach over 70 per cent renewable energy in this state, the time is very much ripe for us to lead the way in large-scale hydrogen investment. This is a large body of work and requires a complex framework that considers in depth, not only the ambitions of the project itself but the needs of the environment that surrounds it.

We need to protect communities and ensure that places like the Spencer Gulf are properly prepared for the mammoth task ahead. That is just what this important bill does. Having one consistent framework will provide that certainty, not just to those in regional communities but to investors, as well as ensuring that the efficient development and regulation of the sector continues to exist as the industry expands.

The bill is specific to large-scale hydrogen and renewable projects and does not supersede the need for other bodies of work in related portfolios—for example, the development of houses in those areas where the industry will grow. I think that is an important point, as well, to talk about all of

the different moving parts here in South Australia that will contribute to the growth of that industry. I would like to touch briefly on what was mentioned by the member for King a moment ago, and that is the expansion of our technical colleges.

I met with someone earlier this week who was discussing the growth of technical colleges across South Australia. She is very much a leader in my local community in vocational training. She said to me that she was yet to find a South Australian who thought that closing down technical colleges or the previous model of vocational and technical training was a good idea. I found that to be a really interesting point.

I see so much benefit in expanding the opportunities for students to take on vocational pathways. Doing so at a high school level, a level that the government is investing in, benefits not only jobs across our state but of course our young people, particularly those who may not be typically academically driven. In my time at high school it was basically suggested to us that if you did not pursue a university pathway there were no other pathways.

Even when I went on to start university, despite having been told that and given that narrative for such a long time at school, we were told on our first day of university, my first day of law school, that we had enough people sitting in first year law across South Australia to replace the entire Australian profession times three. Despite the fact that we had all been pushed very much into doing law degrees and pursuing university-based training, we were also told the second we got to university that none of us would get a job.

I think that is actually something that we need to take on as a government and something we need to take very seriously—the fact that we are training so many individuals in South Australia without there being actual pathways for them to enter, just leaving them with a HECS debt. For so many of my friends, most of them who were required to move interstate to take on those jobs, I think they value the fact that the narrative is changing and that there will be opportunities for students to pursue other pathways, both at school and after school.

I can see very much a place in those technical colleges to increase the jobs of the future and for a lot of those students to play a really pivotal role in the hydrogen sector. It has been a very large body of work to get to this place and, like all bills of its kind, it is important to consult with relevant stakeholders. In late 2022, a comprehensive issues paper was released.

The government received almost 200 submissions throughout consultation, including those from relevant Aboriginal groups who provided advice on the designs. The government held two renewable energy forums in Port Augusta not only to understand the particular concerns of Aboriginal people but to take advice and guidance on the development of the renewable energy designs. That, of course, is a key feature in everything that we try to do as a government, not just to go and consult but to take advice, particularly for those individuals who have been living here for tens of thousands of years on this land, taking the advice that directly impacts people, particularly on their traditional lands.

Including those two forums, there was a total of 18 information sessions across the regions during that consultation phase. The figures were quite immense, from what I was reading. I think there were about 200 people at one of the major ones and then another 300 who went on to watch it online afterwards, so it was an accessible style of forum but also clearly very well attended, and the submissions were immense.

Following on from that consultation, we are able to come today with the bill, and we are able to put forward a lot of the things that were raised with us during that consultation period. The bill will seek to do the following. Firstly, it will identify priority areas on Crown land to determine where future renewable energy projects can be sustainably delivered. It will allow for the competitive allocation of licences to both Crown land and state waters. There are lots of benefits to that, but it is done in order to deliver both community and environmental benefits in conjunction with the current uses of that land.

It will allow for new licensee arrangements and impact assessments in order to enable proper regulation of the whole project, and this is a project that does require important and regular regulation. It will ensure the development is environmentally and ecologically sustainable, another key goal, of

course, of everything that we do as a government. It will ensure strong and effective regulation through multiple measures, things like full cost recovery for government services as well as financial assurance requirements to ensure the rehabilitation of the land involved in that project.

It will ensure that there are multiple land use outcomes, and it will drive continued benefits for our state through not only the jobs and economic benefits but the resources themselves. Of course, there will also be continued benefits for the students in our state, perhaps the little ones who are just starting school this year who may end up in a wonderful career in hydrogen or perhaps working on the subs in some years' time. I think it is really exciting when you speak to young people to know the breadth of opportunities that we will have in South Australia for them to pursue, such a wide array of employment opportunities later in life.

As we move forward in this process, we will continue to work with stakeholders to develop the relevant regulations and also to appropriately identify the first release areas in the tender process. The bill also, as always, includes review provisions so that this can adapt as we move forward with our hydrogen plan, noting that there will be a lot of changes and things that we will learn as we go and, of course, the development of future technologies that our next generations will be building as we do so. I am very much happy today to commend the bill, as I always am when supporting jobs, economic growth, education opportunities and development in this state.

**The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (12:53):** I rise to speak on the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill 2023. Often when we arrive in this place, we deal with important pieces of legislation that are critical in managing the state, but there are also occasions when pieces of legislation can make generational change for the state's future. I wholeheartedly believe this is one of those pieces of legislation that will not just set our course to carbon neutrality but also make an economic contribution that sets us up for global leadership.

As a state, we have already led the nation, indeed the world, in the uptake of renewable energy. This was a course set by the former Rann government and later continued by the Weatherill government, which I was a proud member of and served in cabinet. The time has come to really drive home the work of previous Labor governments that indeed shifts our focus to delivering dispatchable energy created through the renewable energy pioneered by those governments. It also provides an opportunity to unlock further investments in renewable energy.

This is, of course, set by our election commitment on hydrogen, our \$593 million Hydrogen Jobs Plan. During the election campaign it was clear that only one side of politics had a clear agenda on energy. What was even more clear was that there was only one side of politics that had a clear agenda on energy that was carbon neutral and had the ability to create an industry that not only benefited our state's manufacturing base but also created a world-leading industry.

The state government is unapologetic in its ambition to reach net zero by 2050. We are committed to this because it is the right thing to do. Future generations of South Australians want this and deserve to live in a future that is environmentally sustainable. Also, we do this for our farmers and our river communities because the variability of even slight temperature changes to our environment can cause significant devastation. As a state, we want to be able to produce things on the land and proudly manufacture high-quality products, but to do things the state needs energy. South Australia, like the rest of the world, wants energy, but in a decarbonised form.

As the Premier continually states, South Australia has a unique coincidence of wind and solar like no other place in the world. We are indeed in a position where we can further exploit this unique occurrence. South Australia has already made significant moves in the uptake of wind generation as well as solar generation. In fact, we have had many periods of time when the entire energy market in South Australia has been made up entirely of our own renewable energy, but this is variable and we also rely on dispatchable energy sources from within South Australia and from the national grid.

There are times when we are producing so much energy from our renewable resources that it exceeds demand and, essentially, we have to switch off that generation, and that is not an ideal situation. What this government is doing with this Hydrogen Jobs Plan is that, when renewable generation exceeds demand, we use that excess to create green hydrogen. This is the game changer

for our state. We set out how we are going to do this: by building 250-megawatt electrolyzers to soak excess wind and solar generation to produce this green hydrogen.

The green hydrogen we will produce will benefit our domestic needs through storage and use and even present an opportunity for exports in the future. The 200-megawatt generator we will build will allow us to use that stored green hydrogen to produce electricity when our current renewable energy capacity does not meet demand. We also believe this can help re-industrialise South Australia, something we have a great reputation for and we have been known as a state for manufacturing for a long, long time. While we still continue to do advance manufacturing, we want to be able to do that more and more into the future in a decarbonised world.

Manufacturers will also be able to use this input to create products that are more environmentally sustainable. A great example of this is the moves by GFG in Whyalla to create green steel, as they phase out their coke ovens and blast furnace by installing a \$1.8 billion tonne per annum direct reduction plant. This move will mean in the coming years that the plant will look to create their green steel through the use of green hydrogen.

Hydrogen will also create further opportunities to increase renewable energy generation, as now, instead of essentially turning off renewable energy production, we open the tap. The opportunity has the potential to unlock an additional \$20 billion in renewable energy projects that are in the pipeline. Additional renewable capacity will help provide further feed-in for green hydrogen-producing electrolyzers.

As already we are a world leader in renewable energy, this sets us up as a world leader in green hydrogen. As the Prime Minister said yesterday, by 2050 Australia's hydrogen industries are projected to generate \$50 billion in gross domestic product and create more than 16,000 jobs in regional Australia. The industry is also expected to create an additional 13,000 jobs from the construction of renewable infrastructure to power the hydrogen production. This is the future and this is why we are taking strong leadership. We are positioning ourselves to be the hub of hydrogen and to export South Australian hydrogen to the world.

I am very excited for this announcement about the Bonython hydrogen hub, and this has put increased interest in investment in our state. I know that investors will see the opportunity at hand and look to exploit this. When I have represented the state overseas we know that people are wanting to have access to hydrogen and are looking at South Australia as a leader. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

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

**CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (CRIMINAL ORGANISATIONS - PRESCRIBED PLACES)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Assent*

Her Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

**STATUTES AMENDMENT (NATIONAL ENERGY LAWS) (EMISSIONS REDUCTION  
OBJECTIVES) BILL**

*Assent*

Her Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

**STATUTES AMENDMENT (ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO) (NO 4) BILL**

*Assent*

Her Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

*Petitions***FREDERICK ROAD, WEST LAKES**

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer):** Presented a petition signed by 1,454 residents of South Australia requesting the house to urge the government to reject any proposed code amendment to be applied to the land located at 100 and 101 Frederick Road, West Lakes, that disregards the community's concerns about environmental and planning issues.

*Parliamentary Procedure***ANSWERS TABLED**

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

**PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

Auditor-General—

Report 6 of 2023—Modernising SA public sector audit and strengthening audit independence [Ordered to be published]

Report 7 of 2023—Access to Cabinet documents [Ordered to be published]

Independent Commission Against Corruption—Response to Inspector's Review of the investigation and prosecution of Mr John Hanlon—Report—September 2023

Judicial Conduct Commissioner—Annual Report 2022-23

By the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport (Hon. A. Koutsantonis) on behalf of the Minister for Local Government (Hon. G.G. Brock)—

Local Council By-Laws—

City of Prospect—No. 7—Amendment By-law

City of Unley—No. 6—Local Government Land Amendment

By the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs (Hon. A. Michaels)—

Retail and Commercial Leases Act 1995—Disputes Lodged—Report

Regulations made under the following Acts—

Liquor Licensing—Fees Notice—No. 4

Lotteries—Fees Notice—No. 2

By the Minister for Planning (Hon. N.D. Champion)—

Regulations made under the following Acts—

Planning, Development and Infrastructure—General—Schedule 13

**VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the leader, can we please acknowledge in the chamber I see students from Gleeson College, and I understand they are year 11 legal studies students. Welcome to parliament. We are delighted to have you with us as guests of, as I understand it, the member for King.

*Parliamentary Committees***PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (14:05):** I bring up the 41<sup>st</sup> report of the committee, entitled Pimpala Primary School Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.



**Mr BROWN:** I bring up the 42<sup>nd</sup> report of the committee, entitled Thebarton Aquatic Centre Refurbishment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

**Mr BROWN:** I bring up the 43<sup>rd</sup> report of the committee, entitled Nailsworth Primary School Redevelopment.

Report received and ordered to be published.

**Mr BROWN:** I bring up the 44<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Margaret Tobin Centre: Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit Expansion.

Report received and ordered to be published.

#### **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (14:06):** I bring up the 46<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled 'Inquiry into the impact of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) on South Australians living with disability who have complex needs and are, or are at risk of, residing for long periods in inappropriate accommodation'.

Report received.

#### *Question Time*

#### **GENERAL PRACTITIONER PAYROLL TAX**

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS (Black—Leader of the Opposition) (14:07):** My question is to the Premier. How does the Premier respond to comments made by representative bodies on behalf of GPs in South Australia? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** A Royal Australian College of General Practitioners poll found that 97 per cent of general practices will not be able to absorb the government's new payroll tax and that the tax would likely lead to patients paying around \$15 out of pocket more per consultation.

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

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is a point of order from the member for West Torrens.

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** Standing order 97: the member is attempting to introduce facts that he claims are facts into the question, and he should not do so.

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

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Morialta wishes to address the Chair on the same point of order.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The leader of the house may have missed that the house gave the leader leave to do just that.

**The SPEAKER:** That may be. The swiftest path to resolve the point of order is to give the leader the opportunity to ask the question again. It may be that there is a revised version of the purported facts which can be introduced with leave.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** My question is to the Premier. How does the Premier respond to comments made by representative bodies on behalf of GPs in South Australia? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS:** A Royal Australian College of General Practitioners poll found that 97 per cent of general practices will not be able to absorb the government's new payroll tax and that

the tax would likely lead to patients paying around \$15 out of pocket more per consult, to more general practice closures and to an increase in emergency wait times.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:09):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question and his engagement on this issue. I guess in summary what I could say up-front is the government's immediate response is to maintain our commitment to working with representatives of general practitioners to resolve this issue.

For several months now, I have been directly engaged with the Royal Australian College of GPs, their South Australian representative, to try to get a common understanding of this issue for them because I do think that still to this day amongst some GPs and amongst some representatives there is a misapprehension about what this issue is and what it may mean to general practitioners and also to their clinics.

Perhaps if I could provide just a brief bit of background so that members can be advised what sits behind this issue, in 2009 the Payroll Tax Act came into effect. That was basically a rewriting of the payroll tax legislation that did, amongst other things, a number of measures to ensure that states and territories had the same basis for levying payroll tax. States and territories, of course, still change their payroll tax rate and perhaps tax-free thresholds, but the basis on which payroll tax is levied was harmonised in the lead-up to that bill coming into effect on 1 July 2009.

This is not a new tax. This is something that has been required for employees working in businesses subject to payroll tax to pay for nearly 15 years. What has more recently come to light is that there have been a number of medical practices interstate that have tested the contractor provisions, as they are referred to, of the Payroll Tax Act to see whether practitioners within medical practices are liable for payroll tax, and that's been resolved on both occasions—firstly in New South Wales and then in Victoria—in favour of the state taxation authorities in those jurisdictions.

That has, I guess, reaffirmed the understanding amongst state revenue officers that payroll tax is to be applied to the wages of medical practitioners across these practices, and of course it has become clear that there are a number—in many cases, a large number, depending on the different jurisdictions—that haven't been paying these payroll tax arrangements.

The normal course of events would be that a revenue office—RevenueSA here in South Australia—would go back and review an organisation's payroll tax liabilities for the last five years, and if they deem noncompliance they would be charged those five years of back taxes and usually with penalty and interest. Of course, you can imagine—not just the pressure nationally that health services are under, but also GPs, and also the fact that we have just been through COVID over recent years—that would be a fairly unreasonable and onerous burden to place on GP practices.

In the early discussions with the royal college, I made the commitment that they won't be subject to that sort of regime. I also said that of course it would be unreasonable very quickly to impose it from day one or, perhaps for the benefit of a financial year, from 1 July this year, so we have also forgone applying it in this current financial year. We have continued discussions with the royal college about how we can bring GPs not only into a position where they understand what payroll tax is, and how it might apply to their specific arrangements, but also how they can start paying their tax, and we have set an implementation date from 1 July 2024.

#### **GENERAL PRACTITIONER PAYROLL TAX**

**Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:13):** My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. What impact will proposed GP payroll tax changes have on emergency departments and ramping in South Australia? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mrs HURN:** The AMA has stated that as a result of the new GP payroll tax treatment that 'if practices are forced to close, patients will have no choice but to look to emergency departments for treatment and care' they need.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:13):** Well, I guess I reiterate: there are no payroll tax changes. There's no legislative change. There's no regulatory change. Nothing changes, except for the realisation that a number of—

**Mr Cowdrey:** Nothing to see here. Nothing has changed.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Well, I'm glad that the member for Colton is finally engaging on the issue. It's the first syllable we have heard from him as shadow treasurer about this.

**Mr Cowdrey:** I asked you a question about this seven months ago.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** It has always been left up to the true front bench members—

**Mr Cowdrey:** Nothing to see here.

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

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** It has always been left up to the true front bench of those opposite, not the member for Colton. As I was explaining to those who have steadfastly remained ignorant on this issue—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Morialta! The Treasurer has the call.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Such are the burdens of majority. Yes, I understand that, deputy leader. As I was explaining to those opposite, this is not a new impost. This is not a result of taxation changes. This is about assisting a group to come into compliance with their longstanding tax obligations.

I have had a lengthy discussion with the AMA, including their president, Dr John Williams, and what became clear to me, amongst other things during the course of that discussion, is that there is a lot of misapprehension and a misunderstanding about what payroll tax is, how it's applied, and what the impact of that would be on a GP, let alone a broader practice.

That is why we have been spending months working through the representative organisation for GPs, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, to discuss and mutually understand the issue and then design a process by which they have plenty of time and a runway of activity in order to manage this issue, so that those sorts of issues that some people in the AMA are worried about don't come to fruition.

*Members interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** I don't accept the fact that the characterisations of this, from time to time, by some people in the profession are accurate. Let me give you an example. During the course of that discussion, there was a concern that the payroll tax might apply to all of the billables of a practice, all of the money that gets paid either by a patient and/or by the Medicare Benefits Schedule.

That is simply wrong. That is not the case. That is not how payroll tax is applied. It's not applied to the revenue of a business. It's not applied to the turnover of a business. It's not applied to the operational expenses of a business. Instead, it's only applied to the eligible wages of a business and, even then, it doesn't apply to all of the wages. It only applies to the wages above the payroll tax tax-free threshold.

Once you understand that it doesn't apply in the way in which many GPs have immediately understood payroll tax to apply to them, then you can understand why the contention that GPs will immediately resign or retire or close their practices is unlikely to eventuate—because the conception about how the tax applies does not marry up to how the legislation is drafted and how it will apply to their business.

**GENERAL PRACTITIONER PAYROLL TAX**

**Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:17):** My question is to the Treasurer. Have any GP practices previously paid payroll tax on contractor GPs in South Australia and, if so, how many?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:17):** In the course of this series of discussions that I had with the royal college going back some months we sought some information from RevenueSA about what the current situation was with practices meeting their tax obligations. As members would readily imagine, we are all familiar with GP practices, but there are many other medical practices that we also have here in South Australia. What I'm advised is that there are many, many medical practices which are paying payroll tax. They are registered for—

**The Hon. V.A. Tarzia:** On the contractor GPs.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Treasurer.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Thank you. If I get the opportunity to answer the question that has been asked, the member for Colton might find it informative. There are many medical practices which are registered for GP—for payroll tax with—

**The Hon. V.A. Tarzia:** GP tax. You nearly said it yourself. You said no new taxes.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer has the call. The member for Hartley is warned.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** He's providing a fulsome understanding to the house why he's not on that front bench.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Morialta is warned. The Treasurer has the call.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** There are many medical practices which are registered for payroll tax, which are declaring wages subject to paying payroll tax and are paying payroll tax. That also extends to general practice medical practices. The advice I have from RevenueSA is that there are more than 100 GP practices which are registered for and paying payroll taxes. This drives the consideration that I have as Treasurer and that RevenueSA has that not only do we have a responsibility under legislation to be levying the taxes that the parliament has agreed to, we also have to do it fairly and equitably. When we have a group of medical practices which are already registered for, declaring wages and paying payroll tax, and we also have—

**The Hon. V.A. Tarzia:** Now you sound like Rob Lucas.

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

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** You signed up to him, and look where he got you.

*Members interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Not only do we have medical practices, both general practice and non-general practice, which are registered for payroll tax but are also paying payroll tax, we've got a responsibility to make sure that while we have already made, and have been prepared to make, significant concessions to general practitioners to give them plenty of time, plenty of notice and plenty of assistance to come into compliance, we cannot continue on a two-stream taxation regime in perpetuity.

We can't continue to foster an environment where we've got many South Australians—many South Australian practices, many South Australian workers—who are obliged to pay payroll tax and continue to pay their payroll tax obligations while another group isn't. We need to make sure that we've got a consistent application of this as soon as is reasonably practicable, and that is what I have been working with the royal college towards.

I welcome the more recent involvement of the AMA in this issue because they, of course, also have a view. They don't just represent general practitioners; they represent many other medical

practitioners, many of whom are also paying payroll tax. Of course, you would expect that they would understand that, if we are going to apply rules, it's got to be done fairly and consistently.

### GENERAL PRACTITIONER PAYROLL TAX

**Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:21):** My question is again to the Treasurer. Has the Treasurer received any advice or modelling regarding extra revenue the new treatment of payroll tax on contractor GPs will generate and, if so, how much?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:21):** No, I don't believe I have received any of that modelling. In fact, the advice that has been provided to me by Treasury is that not only have they not undertaken any modelling but it's very difficult for them to undertake any modelling. While I have pointed out to the house that we've got many medical practices, and in particular general practitioner medical practices, that are registered for and paying payroll tax, there is no set of assumptions—

*Mr Cowdrey interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Colton!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** —that exists, to my knowledge, within Treasury or RevenueSA to understand the number of general practice medical practices which are not registered for payroll tax and are above the tax-free threshold, understanding how many of those practices have GPs and how many have other workers—whether they are nurse practitioners, receptionists and other people who might work in their practice—how many employees that is, to give an estimate of what the taxable wages could be and hence what the payroll tax liability could be.

I can understand the basis of the question, because it is not the first time it has been raised with me. It has been raised by both the royal college and the AMA, but we don't have an estimate. This is not a move which is designed to garner more revenue. This is about making sure that we are applying the legislated payroll tax in an even-handed and consistent manner for those people who are obliged to pay it.

We have given very significant concessions to date to make sure that we've got as smooth a process to bring general practitioners who are not meeting their payroll tax obligations into compliance over a longer period of time. I have committed and demonstrated to the royal college that I will work with them through that process. We are making RevenueSA staff and Treasury staff available to conduct information sessions and what have you to provide direct information to general practitioners about how all of this works, what the time frames are.

In fact, the other thing I should point out is that in the most recent meeting I had with the royal college only last week we said that we would be prepared to provide that amnesty from payroll tax obligations for the entirety of this current financial year out to 30 June next year on the basis that general practitioners who believe they may be liable for this tax would come forward and register with RevenueSA to start that important engagement process so they can understand how payroll tax works and what it might mean for their business.

The royal college made it clear to me on Wednesday that they wanted some more time for that registration process. We had provided the first three months of this financial year and they have asked for an extra two months. I said to them that I would be happy to extend that period of time. They made that request to me on Wednesday and I have said that I was open-minded about that. I'm going back to them to confirm that.

The AMA said something similar to me. They weren't specific about what time frame they wanted. But if the royal college, directly representative of general practitioners, thinks that an extra two months is helpful, of course we are happy to provide that. The more time and the more effort that we can put into this process to help these general practitioners come into compliance the better. The government is not seeking to be unreasonable. We are trying to help them meet these longstanding obligations and I remain committed to doing that.

### PREMIER'S TRADE MISSION

**Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (14:25):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the house on his recent trade mission to Singapore and China?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:26):** I thank the member for Davenport for her question. I know the member for Davenport cares greatly about jobs in our state. The member for Davenport has an appreciation for the fact that China is indeed South Australia's largest trading partner and has been for some time.

I am also familiar with the fact that the member for Davenport, like other members in this house, including the member for Mawson, as I am sure is the case for the member for Chaffey, along with the member for Schubert, recognises that China is a particularly important trading partner when it comes to the viticulture sector, along with the aquaculture sector represented by the member for Mount Gambier, the member for MacKillop and the member for Flinders, amongst others. I could start listing every member.

It is true to say that the lack of stability between the Australia-China relationship that has had to be endured over the course of the last few years has undoubtedly had a disproportionate impact on South Australian jobs more than any other jurisdiction in the country. South Australia being one of the most productive producers of wine in the country, along with high-quality seafood, along with barley and other materials that were subject to tariffs, the impact has been real.

I recall something that has stuck with me when I spent a bit of time in the member for Chaffey's electorate during the course of summer in and around the floods—that I probably spoke to as many people concerned about the price of grapes as they were concerned about the flooding event at the time. I found that rather instructive. Here was a decision being taken in another hemisphere but was having an immediate First World impact on good hardworking South Australians. It is not just the big guys; it's often the smaller players who get the hardest hit in these circumstances, and I am particularly thinking of the growers.

We do have a responsibility as a government, as this parliament does more broadly, to capitalise on any opportunity that comes our way to address those challenges. The more recent stabilisation of the relationship between Australia and China does present a possibility that tariffs could yet be eased, in the same form they have for barley, for wine and for seafood. Anything that the South Australian state government can do to grease those wheels of momentum is something that we want to actively engage in.

It is also true that international student entry that dried up during the course of the pandemic is now starting to reflow to South Australia in a material way that is absolutely essential not just to our universities, not just to the research and development funding that then provides, not just to the soft diplomacy effort that international students bring but also to the labour and the engagement that are so critical to our state.

To be in China with just under 40 delegates representing those respective sectors having a full-frontal full-court press on the Chinese government advocating our claim was extremely useful. More than that, I was able to be party to a number of meetings where relationships were being re-established and potentially grown to ensure that the trade opportunity remains vibrant, real and material.

We desperately await and anticipate the Prime Minister's visit to China later this year, when we cross our fingers that we might see a change in position from the Chinese government, but we thank them for the hospitality they showed the whole delegation and look forward to fruitful engagement and negotiations over the weeks ahead.

### POLICE MOUNTED OPERATIONS UNIT

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:30):** My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. Can the minister advise what work, if any, has commenced at Gepps Cross for SAPOL's mounted division?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:30):** I rise to respond to this question because the Premier asked me to try to coordinate the work that has been done between

Renewal SA and also the Minister for Planning and the Minister for Police and the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, which are the three different agencies that would have—

*Members interjecting:*

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

*Mr Patterson interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Morphett is warned.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Taylor! Member for Colton!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** It's a serious question. I'm prepared to give it a serious answer. I don't think the member for Flinders is joking around when he asks this. This is an issue of some interest to him. Gepps Cross, as a site, has been selected. It was one of two sites the government announced it was undertaking investigations into. It was between West Beach and Gepps Cross. They are almost equidistant to one another in their proximity to the GPO and, as it turned out, the Airport has some other plans that it's interested in pursuing. We were also—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** I know that those opposite were propositioned when they were in government for a wave park. Wave parks and basketball stadiums, if that's their—

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** Don't forget the sky walk. That was a big deal. That went well— a big winner.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** And the sky walk. They were the economic panacea for the state under those opposite. I get it.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** But our priority here has been providing a home for the police greys that will suit the needs of the Mounted Operations Unit for decades to come—for decades to come—and Gepps Cross has been landed on. My understanding is that ground clearing works and site levelling have already been started and we look forward to major construction getting underway as quickly as practicable.

### THEBARTON POLICE BARRACKS

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:32):** My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. What is the date that the government requires SAPOL to be vacated from the Thebarton Barracks site?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:33):** That is actually a question that relates more to the new Women's and Children's Hospital project because, of course, this government took the view that we needed a women's and children's hospital that was fit for the future that would meet the needs of our state and the women and children of our state for many decades into the future.

While we have been working very hard to accelerate the Women's and Children's Hospital project on coming to government in March 2022, in approximately six months we were able to get enough advice and make a decision to select a site that was going to meet the needs of a new women's and children's hospital that would actually have extra overnight paediatric beds and not only have enough beds—

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

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Cheltenham! The member for Morialta under 134.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Standing order 98: the scope of the question was extremely narrow, asking for a date by which the mounted barracks would have to vacate.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! We are early in the Treasurer's answer. Speakers have upheld the right of ministers or other members to answer a question as they see fit, provided the answer conforms to standing orders—that is, that it responds to the substance of the question. I will listen carefully.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** As I was saying, in roughly six months after getting elected we were able to make a decision for the benefit of the state that we were going to build a much bigger and better located new Women's and Children's Hospital that would meet the needs of women and children in this state well into the future. Then, in roughly a further six months, we had identified and started work on getting the new mounted operations barracks to start construction out at Gepps Cross.

Compare that to two other dates: 2019, when the previous government got a business case for a new women's and children's hospital—

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

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** —and then sat on it for 30 months without making a decision—

**The SPEAKER:** Order, Treasurer!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Morialta under 134.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Standing order 98 requires the minister to answer the substance of the question and not debate the matter more broadly. The question was very narrow; its substance is yet to be dealt with. The minister is debating.

**The SPEAKER:** Of course, an answer is more likely to reply to the substance of the question where it ventilates matters that lie close to the heart or the pith of the question, and I think we are coming to its pith.

**The Hon. J.A.W. Gardner:** He's talking about 2019, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** I am listening carefully and the Treasurer has the call.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Lest my answer be pithy, sir, I will do my best. I have demonstrated the extraordinary progress this government has already made in a relatively short period of time, particularly compared with the Women's and Children's Hospital project languishing for 30 months under those opposite after they got the business case in 2019.

My understanding is that there is a date in the second quarter of calendar year 2024, but let me take it on notice and come back to you with something more specific.

#### **QANTAS CHAIRMAN'S LOUNGE MEMBERSHIP**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:36):** My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Is the minister a member of the Qantas Chairman's Lounge?

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Planning) (14:36):** Yes, I am.

#### **QANTAS CHAIRMAN'S LOUNGE MEMBERSHIP**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:36):** My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Has the minister made use of his privileges in the Qantas Chairman's Lounge during either official or unofficial travel since the election and, if so, on how many occasions?



*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Planning) (14:37):** Yes, I have. I will get you the exact number of occasions, if you like, related to the flights I take.

#### **QANTAS CHAIRMAN'S LOUNGE MEMBERSHIP**

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:37):** My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Has the minister accepted any other gifts from Qantas?

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Planning) (14:37):** No, I have not.

#### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**Ms CLANCY (Elder) (14:37):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. How is the Malinauskas Labor government—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Elder has the call. Order!

**Ms CLANCY:** My question is to the Minister for Human Services. How is the Malinauskas Labor government supporting housing for women?

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (14:37):** I thank the member for Elder for the question. It's terrific to have young women leaders around the table to be able to advocate on behalf of people in their constituency as well as more broadly. The question is also really well timed after the recent announcements about the Housing Australia Future Fund that will support thousands of social and affordable homes in South Australia.

Safe, stable, affordable long-term housing is a foundation for wellbeing, especially for those who have experienced family violence. Many in our community face big barriers in our housing market: people living in institutional care, those experiencing homelessness, people with disability and, at a really fast rate—in fact, the fastest growing rate—women who are ageing or have survived family violence.

It was with great pleasure that I joined my colleague the Minister for Women and Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence earlier this month to break ground on a fantastic new housing development specifically for women. The YWCA are developing a new building on Hutt Street with help from the state government. The development is a partnership between them, HomeStart Finance, the South Australian Housing Authority and the Office for Women, and it includes a \$5 million interest-free loan.

This is this company's first affordable housing development in South Australia, and we are absolutely thrilled to welcome them into the space. They have been doing great work here for decades, and they have significant experience in housing interstate. I would like to thank Charlotte Dillon, the General Manager for Community Housing in YWCA Australia, who joined us at the event, and as well Aunty Suzanne, who performed a heartwarming Welcome to Country.

I often talk to women in complex situations, and I listen to communities about what matters to them and what is needed to help keep women and children safe. The YWCA have clearly been doing the same and have responded with this project. The development is incredible. It is a \$15.7 million apartment complex, providing 24 long-term rentals for women and children survivors of domestic and family violence. The homes will be classified as affordable and rented at around a quarter below market rates.

The YWCA have been supporting South Australian women through their various services for over 140 years, and this new housing development is the beginning of a new chapter in their work in South Australia. The new homes will provide a place to breathe, recover and achieve longer term housing and family goals. This development builds on our other work in social and affordable

housing, obviously including the state government's commitment of an extra \$232.7 million for public housing, the \$135.8 million secured from the commonwealth for public and community housing recently and also our work to improve both home purchase support and private rental regulation.

For women specifically, we have also committed major upgrades for 45 public housing properties so they can specifically cater to the security needs of survivors of family violence, with the recent budget including around \$7 million to ensure a dedicated domestic and family violence and perpetrator response program continues for another four years. This is incredibly important work and something that I am absolutely proud to talk about.

#### REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:41):** My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Has the minister taken steps to update his member's register of interests since he was called out by *The Advertiser* yesterday, and will the minister now apologise to the house for the breach?

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Planning) (14:41):** I certainly do apologise to the house, and I—

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

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of Government Business on a point of order under 134.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Standing order 97, sir: the shadow minister has introduced purported facts to this matter, and it is unparliamentary.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I understand that the Leader of Government Business is referring to the phrase 'caught out'. It may be that the question can be put again quite simply.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Has the minister taken steps to update his register of interests, and would he like to take this opportunity to give an apology to the house?

**The SPEAKER:** Before the minister answers, I observe that Speakers Atkinson and Tarzia have permitted questions in relation to a register of interests, which is tabled in the house.

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION:** I took steps yesterday, obviously, to update the register, and I do take this opportunity to apologise to the house.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Chaffey.

**Mr WHETSTONE:** Thank you.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr WHETSTONE:** Build a bridge.

#### QANTAS

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:42):** My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Minister, have you had any meetings with Qantas executive, board members or staff in your role as Minister for Trade and Investment?

**The SPEAKER:** Before the minister answers, there was a contribution made by the member for Chaffey there. In fact, I did not hear it, so I am going to permit the question, but I observe that if there are words spoken in the chamber to which a member objects, the standing orders provide a very clear answer. Since I did not hear it, the minister.

**The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Planning) (14:43):** I will take it on notice and check my diary, but from memory, no. I will check.

**CAMDEN PARK SINKHOLE**

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:43):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the government fix the sinkhole in Camden Park and, if so, when? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr PATTERSON:** The sinkhole, which appeared almost three weeks ago on 6 September, has caused extensive sewage flooding in my local community. Local resident Caitlin Penny said she came home from the grocery store around 10am on that Wednesday to find her home surrounded by sewage.

**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) (14:44):** I thank the member for his question. It's a very reasonable question, given the inconvenience for members of his constituency. It has been taking some time to replace that sewer break. Part of the challenge is due to the unstable ground conditions with a whole lot of groundwater infiltration and a number of other underground services to be dealing with. So it's not just, obviously, the SA Water sewerage pipe but other utilities are in there as well.

As has been mentioned, this started on 6 September and SA Water worked to ensure that the area was safe, disinfecting the areas, including the footpath and the road, and since then has been working through as quickly as possible. The leader may remember, when he was minister, a very significant similar kind of break that occurred in his own electorate, I believe in Cove Road, which took similarly quite a number of weeks to fix up.

From this week, SA Water is extending the excavation area and installing barriers to help prevent soil movement around the pipe. The traffic management remains unchanged, with detours in place between Deeds Road and Fitzroy Avenue, which will be familiar to the member. There will be no disruption to sewer services for SA Water's local customers. The time frame is dependent on weather conditions and also any further technical constraints if any further challenges become apparent, and SA Water is continuing to keep residents and businesses updated.

There was of course the challenge of some individuals being more affected than others, and as always SA Water works with individual customers to rectify any implications for them. SA Water apologises for the inconvenience that this is causing customers and assures me and the public that they are working as fast as possible.

**CAMDEN PARK SINKHOLE**

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:46):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the government provide compensation to businesses at Camden Park and, if not, why not? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr PATTERSON:** The sinkhole is causing chaos for local businesses in my electorate, forcing some to temporarily close, including Tyrepower, which estimates they will lose thousands of dollars.

**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) (14:46):** The advice I have is that SA Water has been working with each of the affected customers, organising initial clean-up, obviously, and working with insurers, and intends to and is covering all out-of-pocket expenses. The extent to which that strays into then compensation is something that I will inquire of SA Water.

**HAHNDORF BYPASS**

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (14:47):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister advise the house what, if any, works are being undertaken along River Road near Hahndorf and at Mylor and, if so, at what cost? With your leave, sir, and that of the house I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr TEAGUE:** On 12 September, the minister stated in the house 'any maintenance work that we do on that road will go through the appropriate planning approvals'. The next day, 13 September, residents are being hand-delivered notices by DIT confirming the, quote, 'upgrade' works were to commence on 14 September. Currently on River Road, a local government road, local residents are observing three teams of workers undertaking what appear to be significant works.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:47):** We are tree trimming. We are tree trimming and we will be shoulder sealing. I notice that a lot of residents have complained about there not being adequate shoulders on the road; we are fixing that. A lot of residents have complained that there can't be vehicles that can stay in their lanes because of trees having their branches over the roadways, so we are tree trimming.

We are doing everything we should be doing, and we are making sure that the works are being done in advance so we can complete our commitment of taking trucks off the main street of Hahndorf. As to the cost, I don't have an accurate number for the cost as yet, but I understand it's under \$2 million. But I will check and get back to the house with a more accurate number so the member can go back to his constituents with an appropriate report.

#### WHYALLA STEELWORKS

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (14:48):** My question is to the Minister for Energy and Mining. Can the minister update the house on recent announcements about re-industrialising the Upper Spencer Gulf?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:49):** Yes, Whyalla is not wiped out. It is not wiped out. In fact, Whyalla has a bright—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Sing it? No. No, I won't. I won't be singing it. The member for Giles has been a great custodian of the pressure he has applied to state and federal governments to remember that there is an industrial heart in South Australia. That industrial heart at its centre is Whyalla. Whyalla is an important part of the nation's industrial heartbeat. It is the last place in the country where we manufacture rail line. As a country, that strategic capability must be preserved.

There have been many calls that Whyalla is to be wiped out because of decarbonisation or because of other policies, yet that town has stuck with the plan. That town has stuck by the transition to decarbonise. That town has worked hard to maintain the steelworks, to maintain their heritage. Yesterday, I had the pleasure of accompanying our Prime Minister and the Premier to the Whyalla Steelworks, where we officiated over the closure of the coke ovens. That was a significant time line in Whyalla's history.

Whyalla has been built on the back of the first iron ore exports out of this country and, of course, out of making structured steel in those coke ovens. Their closure on 15 September does bring the close to an era. It represents the evolution of green iron and steel technologies that will allow South Australia and this country to harness the strategic competitiveness of our abundant and world-class renewable and important magnetite resources.

It is important to remember that Australia's iron and steel industries were born here in South Australia. We are their custodians. Our state was the first jurisdiction to mine iron ore and we were one of the first to produce steel. The steel industry supports over 10,000 jobs in South Australia and 100,000 nationally, and generates \$29 billion in revenue. Globally, the demand for steel is not going anywhere. I expect it will remain a key building block in our homes, at our workplaces and in our cars. There is no substitute for steel.

When the coke ovens reached the end of their useful life, GFG was presented with a choice: reinvest in old technology or retool for a green re-industrialisation. The closure is the first step in their plan to expand mining operations for South Australia's world-class magnetite deposits and build new

infrastructure that supports decarbonised industrial processes, processes that could substitute coke and coal with natural gas, renewable energy and hydrogen.

I make very clear to the house that it is a policy of the South Australian government that the steelworks and the mines remain integrated. There will be no separation of the steelworks and those mines. They are linked, they are symbiotic, and this government will not engage in any policy that decouples the iron ore mines from the steelworks. They are linked; they are one. Anyone can export iron ore.

I am genuinely excited for what stands to be next for the region. Alas, I have run out of time to go into detail, but I think the member for Giles has had a satisfactory explanation into this end of an era. I look forward to the next beginning of this new era.

### COVID-19 MANDATORY VACCINATION

**Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (14:53):** I have a question for the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Can the minister advise if there are plans from the government to lift the COVID-19 vaccination requirements for frontline health workers in South Australia? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr ELLIS:** I recently contacted the minister on behalf of a constituent who had elected not to have a vaccination and who was unable to return to her job as a nurse. Since that time, Queensland Health has repealed all mandatory COVID vaccination requirements for its health workers, and I wondered whether the South Australian government had plans for the same.

**The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Karna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:53):** Thank you very much to the member for Narungga for his question and his advocacy on behalf of his constituents. As members will know, previously there were directions in place under the Emergency Management Act and the State Coordinator.

A number of directions were put in place for employees who had to undertake the COVID-19 vaccination to work in particular industries. That was a wide range of industries that happened at that time, and a number of those ended over the period before we ended the emergency management arrangements and even before we transitioned to those being under the Public Health Act.

We then as a parliament transitioned a number of those to the Public Health Act for a period of six months, and then, at the conclusion of that, none of those declarations and directions were in place covering particular industries. However, at that time, obviously many industries or businesses decided to take their own decisions in relation to workplace policies for occupational health and safety reasons to have directions for their own staff in place.

One of those was SA Health, which has had a vaccination policy for its staff for a very long time covering a variety of different vaccinations that staff should have. A review of that process was done led by Professor Spurrier, but obviously overseen as well by the chief executive, that updated that policy and added COVID-19 as part of that decision and that policy that was in place in relation to staff who work for SA Health. There are some health businesses that have similar policies in place; there are some that do not.

These policies are always under review by the Chief Public Health Officer, by the chief executive, and we will continue to get the public health advice on that. It's not something that we as ministers make decisions about. This is a decision that ultimately will be made by the chief executive based on advice from the Chief Public Health Officer. I understand that the majority of jurisdictions, particularly the larger jurisdictions in Australia, still have similar policies in place in relation to public health employees in states like Victoria and New South Wales. We will continue to monitor that, and I will continue to update members if there are changes that are made.

### NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR TUNNEL

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley) (14:56):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Did the minister meet with the Spanish company Acciona in February of this year and, if so, why?

*Members interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:56):** Yes, I did meet with Acciona, and I have met with WeBuild and I have met with a number of companies, and I have met with them on the basis that I wanted to make sure that I could see works that they were doing in other jurisdictions because they were potential bidders for the north-south corridor. I sought probity advice before I met with anyone who may be a potential bidder. I sought advice about what I could, should or shouldn't say. I followed that advice at all times. I had meetings with my chief executive, as I should, and I met with people who have built tunnels.

I also point out I will continue to meet with people who build tunnels. Why? We haven't built tunnels in South Australia before and I want to make sure we get this right. I don't want to see another one-way expressway. I want to make sure we get this right. So yes, I did—I met with Acciona and I met with WeBuild—and I will continue to meet with people who are involved in this, but I do so on the basis of probity advice always.

### STATE ECONOMY

**Mr BROWN (Florey) (14:58):** My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer update the house on the state of the South Australian economy?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer) (14:58):** It gives me great pleasure to provide a further update on the truly remarkable performance of the South Australian economy. As we know, business investment has reached record levels in South Australia, supporting our labour force and preparing the state to deliver the significant body of work that this government has ahead of it.

Recent national accounts data from the ABS showed that business investment in South Australia reached a record \$16.7 billion in the 2022-23 financial year. This is an almost 30 per cent increase above pre-COVID levels—the fastest growth rate of all states over this period. Since the 2022 election, business investment has grown by 13 per cent, again the fastest growth in the nation.

Record levels of business investment helped South Australia in recording the equal-strongest growth in the state final demand in the country during the most recent June quarter. South Australia's state final demand growth in the June quarter topped the nation at 1.3 per cent for the quarter, well above the national average of 0.7 per cent—of course, not just nation-leading growth in state final demand and business investment, but we have seen South Australia's labour force reach another record.

South Australia's unemployment rate is at the lowest it's been since monthly records began more than 45 years ago: it sits at 3.6 per cent. This puts our unemployment rate at the equal second lowest in the country and below the national average of 3.7 per cent—an extraordinary achievement for the state's economy. It is an uncommon feat for a state consistently plagued by unemployment above the national average for the last four decades to achieve this fantastic result.

Our relative economic strength across these metrics has been recognised in a number of recent economic reports. Most recently, the ANZ bank's Stateometer has described the South Australian economy as 'the standout performer in the June quarter'. South Australia was also ranked first in the nation in multiple other reports, including the Business Council of Australia's Regulation Rumble, as outlined by the Premier last week, ranking South Australia as the best place in the country to do business.

The ANZ/Property Council survey for the June quarter showed that the South Australian property industry's confidence was the equal highest in the country here in South Australia, and the Housing Industry Association's most recent Housing Scorecard ranked South Australia in first place amongst all the states and territories for residential building conditions.

These are remarkable achievements for the South Australian economy and something that all South Australians should be proud of. It comes at a time when there are gathering global and national economic headwinds. I am pleased to say that as this state—along with all the other states and territories around the nation—confronts those global and national economic headwinds, we do so from perhaps the strongest position the state's economy has ever been in.

It just goes to show that when you've got a strongly led government providing confidence and leadership to the state's economy, then the economy responds, and I am very confident the Malinauskas Labor government will continue to deliver on this.

#### **NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR TUNNEL**

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley) (15:02):** My question again is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Has Acciona been involved in any tender process with his department and, if so, from when?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:02):** Acciona delivered the remainder of the Gawler electrification and they are obviously involved in Majors Road, but I can safely say this: no-one from Acciona has been to my house. Can members opposite, all of you, say that? Can everyone say that no-one from Acciona was invited to their house for a party?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

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

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Because I've got some great stories I could tell you about some Acciona executives—

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Torrens, there is a—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member for West Torrens, there is a point of order—

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** —at a certain backbencher's house while they held a higher office.

**The SPEAKER:** —to my left which I will take. The Leader of Government Business will be seated.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Chaffey, order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Morialta under 134.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Two standing orders, sir: standing order 98—absolutely no provocation for that debate—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —and, secondly, his obstruction. By not listening to a single word you were saying just then amounts to obstruction.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I am listening carefully. I have standing order 98. The minister has the call.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** If my young friend has an accusation, I ask him to make it. Make it. Parliamentary privilege affords the loyal opposition—

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

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Torrens, there is a point of order 134.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The minister, despite what he is inferring or implying, is debating. The question was direct and straightforward and non-provocative.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Well, there is some force in the—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! We are getting into the dusk of question time. There is some liveliness.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I have the question. There is some force in the member for Morialta's submissions to me. I will listen carefully. We have standing order 98. Minister, you have the call.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Acciona have won contracts with this government. They have delivered contracts under the previous government. Acciona have been a longstanding participant in Australian tenders. They have partnered with an Australian company. They have operations based here in Australia—in Melbourne, South Australia and, I understand, elsewhere as well. They have won numerous contracts. But no Acciona official has been to a party at my house, not once.

#### FINDON TECHNICAL COLLEGE

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:04):** My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. How many students have enrolled in the technical college at Findon High School for 2024, and are any of those students currently enrolled at Findon High School this year?

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:05):** I am very pleased to get the opportunity to talk about our technical colleges. Perhaps I could remind members of the house a little bit about the five that we are building, and then I'm very happy to answer the member for Morialta's question about the number of enrolments specifically at the Findon site because I have received some positive news about that just in the last 24 hours.

We are building five tech colleges: Mount Gambier and Port Augusta are the two regional offerings, The Heights School in the north-eastern suburbs, Tonsley Innovation Precinct and, of course, the one to which the member for Morialta refers at Findon, which will be the first to open, in the member for Cheltenham's seat. He has been there on many occasions and is very proud of it, I know, as has the Premier. That will open in January 2024 for the school year there.

The capacity of Findon Technical College, separate to Findon secondary school itself, in its first year of operation—keeping in mind that these tech colleges are for years 10 to 12 students, but in the first year we will only be having years 10 and 11 students which, of course, makes sense, and the year after it will be full with years 10, 11 and 12. The capacity for the first year is 120, and as of yesterday we have 80 enrolments at Findon, which is a very considerable jump in enrolments since it was last criticised by some opposite.

**The Hon. J.A.W. Gardner:** You were supposed to have 120 by August.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. B.I. BOYER:** I can reassure both the member for Morialta—who no doubt will be very pleased to receive this news—and other members of this place that we are now very confident



that the technical college will be full on its first day of operation in January next year, which will mean 120 students will be there. I think that would be a remarkable achievement in many respects.

This is a new thing. We haven't really been building new bricks-and-mortar technical colleges like this in South Australia, or indeed around Australia, for a very long time. We know the demand is there, and we have seen a huge jump in enrolments just over the last few weeks, now being at 80, and we are looking forward to having a full Findon Technical College for the start of the 2024 school year.

#### *Grievance Debate*

#### **HAHNDORF TRUCK DIVERSION**

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (15:07):** If it was not enough that there was not any consultation before the announcement on 24 August by this government that there would be long and heavy trucks diverted down River Road, if it was not enough that there was no consultation about that proposal, and if it was not enough that there was then no notice, subsequently, to residents of River Road and we are left to hear it on social media about what is going on, in this ad hoc way—social media as recently as moments and hours ago saying, 'It looks like the corner of River Road and Strath Road is going to be widened into three lanes, judging by the white marks'—we have just heard from the minister in question time now in response to questions about the nature of the works and the cost of those works, 'Oh, well, I think we're doing some trimming,' and, tellingly, the minister says, 'I think they might come in around \$2 million.'

Remember, folks, we were told a few weeks ago, 'This is going to be the diversion, the interim diversion for Hahndorf traffic, and it's going to cost about \$30 million or \$40 million and it's going to be the interim solution,' and the minister was caught out because he was not able to reconcile the point about, 'Well, if the road is safe, why are you spending \$30 million or \$40 million on it?'

But the question that is now to be asked of the minister is: why are you weaselling around with numbers like \$2 million, if not to avoid the necessary scrutiny that comes with a project, project funding and, as those members who have participated in the Public Works Committee know, the necessary scrutiny of that committee over works that are to be done in an orderly way by government?

What we have seen over a period of weeks is that the minister has gone from one announcement, one thought bubble, to another, plucking a dollar figure out of the air and contrary to a report, to a reference to works having been addressed in previous documents when they have not been, to now just weaselling around on the nature of works that are to be done on River Road.

This leaves the sincere and serious residents of River Road and the local community dismayed. We hear from those who resort to Facebook about works that are being observed one day to the next. A local veterinarian has been moved to write to the Deputy Premier about the environmental impact, based on her professional opinion that this road is not safe for vehicle movements of vehicles carrying livestock, as recently as recent days. Dr Walter copies the Premier, copies the minister, copies the department in a plaintive cry to add to the voices of those who now for more than a month have been saying, 'Stop this right now.'

It took me about 30 seconds in a truck for it to become immediately obvious that this was a wrong decision and for me to call on the Premier to step in and to call it off. I maintain the call. I took the unusual step of contacting the Premier directly as a courtesy and saying, 'You have this responsibility. You have been let down by your minister, and it is incumbent on you as the Leader of the Government to step in where a wrong decision has been made.' So far, the Premier has not done it. I call on the Premier to do that today.

We hear it from residents who really need to be celebrated for their heroism. It takes great courage and stamina to speak truth to power. We have seen it in Emma Smith, who so boldly went to find the Premier when the Premier failed to accept the invitation of local residents to come and see what riding in a truck on River Road was all about. Let me tell the house that this is real, that this is sincere.

Emma Smith is as about as capable an advocate as you can get, but she writes to me as recently as today to say, 'Here I am, sitting here holding back on the very real emotion of what it feels like to be a resident violated in these circumstances and feeling physically sick about the capacity of the government to make a call like this, absent any evidence, and then refuse to respond to the rational, meaningful and orderly response of the local community.' I urge the government to step up, cancel the proposed plan and start listening to the evidence and start listening to the residents.

### WHYALLA STEELWORKS

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (15:12):** Before getting onto the Prime Minister's and the Premier's visit to Whyalla yesterday, I want to mark the passing of part of our industrial history, not just of this state but of the nation, with the closure of the coke ovens on 15 September in Whyalla after 55 years and 55 days of operation. It was a very special occasion on Friday 15 September. Unfortunately, I had a range of other commitments and so could not get there. It was one of those days when there was sadness but also anticipation.

I am proud of the fact that three generations of my family have worked in the steelworks, including myself. Indeed, one of my sons now works at the steelworks as a tradie, as a leading hand fitter. The coke ovens were somewhat personal to me, though I never worked there. It is a tough place to work—it is hot, there are fumes, there is dust—but for many years my mum worked as a cleaner at the coke ovens.

As a young lad, not long after I got my licence sometimes when my dad could not pick up my mum I would go down there and pick her up and she would often be black from the coke. Being a cleaner in a coke oven is a Sisyphean task—it never ends; it goes on and on and on. But strangely enough, she enjoyed working there. She enjoyed the company. One of the things about the people who worked there, in that toughest of environments, was the high degree, mostly, of camaraderie, so it was for a lot of people a special place to work. Many, many people have worked there over the years.

For many years, I have been the chair of the Environment Consultation Group in Whyalla that brings together the steelworks, the community representatives and the EPA. The coke ovens used to be one of those places that would get fairly regular attention and not for the usual reasons you would think—atmospheric emissions, even though there was some of that. I am told there were some partial solutions applied, but for many years the coke ovens discharged ammonia into False Bay, and ammonia acts as—well, it is—a fertiliser.

It caused very significant epiphyte growth on seagrass beds. The coke ovens were largely responsible for the destruction or degradation of 20 square kilometres of seagrass beds in False Bay. In more recent years, over the last couple of decades, work did happen to reduce that with the introduction of reed beds and other elements to reduce the ammonia discharge and that did have an impact.

We are in transition at Whyalla and there are going to be a number of steps and the closure of the coke ovens is one of those steps. There is going to be a very significant, close to half a billion dollars, investment in an electric arc furnace, an electric arc furnace that can be run in conjunction with renewables. Eventually, we will see the closure of the blast furnace. At some point, the blast furnace is going to need a major reline if it is going to continue, and that is a very costly process.

The way forward, the transition, is an electric arc furnace but then to use the enormous magnetite resource on our doorstep we need to make that move to direct reduction iron-making in Whyalla. That will open up a whole new future in relation to, potentially, iron briquettes, ongoing intermediate steel product and finished product, but product that will then be green, assuming that we have hydrogen commercially available at scale as the replacement for coking coal when it is used as a reductant and an energy source.

I congratulate all those people who over the years have worked at the coke ovens. It has served us well, but it is now time to look at a new future, a greener future and a future where we add value to our mineral resources.

### HARTLEY ELECTORATE

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley) (15:18):** I rise today to speak about some outstanding achievements in and around my local electorate. Firstly, I want to take this opportunity to talk about Team Propulsion from Charles Campbell College. I want to offer my heartfelt congratulations to Team Propulsion from Charles Campbell College, located in the electorate at Paradise.

These talented students have actually achieved remarkable success in the F1 Schools World Finals that were recently held in Singapore. Team Propulsion have been honoured with the prestigious Best Engineered Car Award and also they secured an impressive second place overall. Their dedication to research development earned them a well-deserved nomination and commendation. They achieved a commendable third place in the Fastest Car category as well.

Congratulations to the young people who were involved in this. It is great to see them going from strength to strength. They are so passionate about this area. I would like to extend my congratulations to the team members: Kuan, Noah, Hoorad, AJ, Juliana, Samuels and Joe. Your hard work, your dedication and countless hours of effort reflect positively not only on your school but also on our state. Congratulations to the students at Charles Campbell. You should be extremely proud of your outstanding achievement.

I also want to take this opportunity to talk about some local premierships that were won on the weekend. I would like to extend my congratulations to the Rostrevor Old Collegians Football Club C2 team for taking out the premiership on the weekend. What an outstanding achievement that was. A big shout-out to the players, coaches and supporters. This past weekend, the C2 team achieved premiership status by winning their grand final against the Henley Sharks. Their victory fills all of us supporters with immense pride.

Then, of course, there is the Rostrevor Old Collegians Soccer Club. The Rostrevor Old Collegians Soccer Club has seven teams, four titles and won division 1 back to back—an absolutely amazing achievement by that club this year. They, of course, play in the Collegiate Soccer League. Special mention goes to the division 4 team, which achieved a remarkable three-peat, securing their third consecutive championship. Div 1A also deserves recognition, as I said, for achieving back-to-back championships. Credit to all of you for your outstanding achievements as well.

I would like to talk a little bit about the Montevergine Festa, the feast that was held on Sunday. It was a real pleasure to share my own birthday with the feast of the Montevergine. What better way would you want to spend your own birthday—sir, you would appreciate this—than with several thousand of your own friends, family and residents. How good is that? They even sang happy birthday to me. That does not always happen in that sort of crowd, but I did enjoy it and may it happen into the future as well hopefully. It is either the Montevergine Feast or the AFL grand final, but I was very happy it was the feast this year.

I express my gratitude and thanks to the dedicated volunteers and organisers of the Montevergine Feast. A special mention to Domenico Zollo, who once again orchestrated a very successful feast. Thousands of people enjoyed the celebration during the day, also ensuring our Italian tradition remains vibrant for people of all generations not just in the eastern suburbs but also across the state. Many traversed distances right across the state. Some came from interstate and some even came from overseas as well, so how good is that?

I cannot forget those dedicated volunteers who were at the stalls early in the morning and into the night, especially of course the zeppole stand. Despite long lines throughout the day and night, the volunteers tirelessly worked hard to help serve the thousands of people who patiently waited until late in the night.

This year actually marked a very important milestone. It was the 68<sup>th</sup> annual Montevergine Feast here in Adelaide and I had the honour of attending the annual mass conducted by Father Eldridge D'Souza. The church was absolutely packed. Many of my parliamentary colleagues joined us as well. It was a really impressive turnout. The mass followed a procession with many parishioners and, of course, all the other festa organisations that participated with their respective standards as well.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all the commercial sponsors because we know that these feasts take tens of thousands of dollars. When we were in government, we certainly did our level best to support the feast and I would like to see that support continue in respective governments. Thank you also to those who supported the feast financially. I look forward to another bigger and better feast next year.

### **SALVATION ARMY EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (15:23):** Last sitting week, I rose to speak about the Salvos Sleepout, which was held in the community I represent in Parafield Gardens. While I am pleased to report that our collective efforts attracted over \$20,000 in donations, on a personal note sleeping rough on bitumen was not easy and it did take a few nights of sleep to catch up on what was lost.

There are still many things I could say about homelessness, but today I want to talk about Major Reno Elms from the Salvation Army Emergency Services in South Australia and the work he and his legion of volunteers provide during crises. I had not met Major Elms prior to the event and was very grateful for the delightful dinner and breakfast he and his exceptional team cooked for us over the weekend. This was done from a well-resourced and rather large portable kitchen, much akin to a stretched food truck, the big difference being nobody sought any payment, with this whole operation running on the goodness of people's hearts.

Each year, the Salvation Army Emergency Services team are there on standby to support South Australians in their time of need. While the Salvos are often associated with providing support and helping with food, warmth and shelter, they are also on the frontline whenever natural disasters strike. We are all well aware that we see our fair share of both bushfire and flooding activity in South Australia. Whenever they are needed, the Salvation Army Emergency Services team is there to provide food and refreshment to emergency service volunteers and communities hit by trauma.

If we look back to recent events such as bushfires on Kangaroo Island and in Cherry Gardens, or the most recent floods affecting the Murray River communities, this team has been there making a massive difference. In fact, I understand a formal arrangement has been in place with the CFS to support their volunteers since 1983. With the predicted forecast of a severe summer ahead of us and the threat of bushfires, it is highly likely this will be a busy summer for all who dare to care.

Major Elms approached me to make a call on his behalf that he needs to build a bigger pool of volunteers for the community—as he put it, reinforcements for a Salvation Army Reserve. His team is keen to meet, train and orientate those who may desire to volunteer and support the Salvos' efforts at a time of crisis. The call is: if ever you have wanted to make a contribution to the community during a natural disaster but for various reasons could not commit to the CFS or SES, then perhaps the Salvos is for you.

No matter where you live in South Australia, your services will be put to good use. You do not need to be religious to be involved; all you need is a desire to help others in their time of need. If this sounds like something that would interest you, please contact Major Elms by calling him on 0488 672 794 or via email: [reno.elms@salvationarmy.org.au](mailto:reno.elms@salvationarmy.org.au).

Supporting the volunteers who support the volunteers are a number of great selfless local businesses. I know they do not seek anything in return, other than the good feeling you get when you make a difference in someone's life, but I am going to give a quick shout-out to a few that Major Elms is particularly grateful for: Nigel Hassall from Unley Meat Wholesalers, my friend Andrew Kemp from Tailors of Distinction, and Mark Trumble from Photographyroom.

A special shout-out also goes to Woolworths for the new supply van and food such as bread and vegetables. It is well worth mentioning that if you own a business and would like to also help out, I am sure your support would also be deeply appreciated by Major Elms. In making this appeal, I hope members can spread the message far and wide. The Salvation Army Emergency Services team has made a huge difference supporting communities and volunteers. With a warm summer ahead, now more than ever they need our help.

### ST BERNARDS/PENFOLD/NEWTON ROADS

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:27):** I am pleased to have the opportunity to discuss a number of traffic issues along St Bernards Road, Newton Road and Penfold Road that border my electorate and the electorate of Vincent Tarzia, the member for Hartley. These are issues that the member for Hartley and I have raised with this house on a number of occasions.

The basis of the issue goes back 12 years to a road management plan that was undertaken by the Department for Transport through 2010 and 2011 (completed in 2011) that made a range of recommendations about improved treatments to this very, very busy road with many challenges for pedestrians and commuters alike. Amongst those recommendations was a signalled intersection on the corner of St Bernards Road and Reid Avenue, a matter for which the member for Hartley and I have been fighting and encouraging transport ministers to implement for the better part of a decade.

Indeed, I bring to the house's attention the *East Torrens Messenger*, as it then was, of 13 August 2014, in which I highlighted at that time that I had asked the state government to have a serious look at this intersection:

The government completed a Draft Road Management Plan in October 2011 and St Bernards Rd was identified as an area needing attention...But the government is still yet to implement any of the suggestions.

That is what I said in 2014. I pay credit indeed to the Chemmart operator Colleen Devitt, who started a petition. I have a copy of it for the house today, with hundreds and hundreds of signatures from people living in both my electorate and, in particular, in the suburb of Hectorville in the member for Hartley's electorate. I know the member for Hartley at the time encouraged people to sign that petition urging the government to undertake works. There was no satisfactory response in 2014.

In 2015, I undertook a survey of people in my electorate and the member for Hartley in his. We had hundreds of responses, with more than 75 per cent support for installation of a short right-turn lane into Reid Avenue. Indeed, when asked about whether they wanted traffic lights, a wider pedestrian refuge or no change at the intersection, traffic lights were supported by over 80 per cent of residents in Morialta, and I think Hartley's results were similar.

I provided that advice to the then Minister for Transport, Stephen Mullighan, now Treasurer. He forwarded it to the then Minister for Road Safety, now Premier, Peter Malinauskas, and the computer said no. The Premier, then the Minister for Road Safety, said that that was not at the threshold to justify the expense of what he indicated at the time was \$1.6 million, so the government would not proceed unless it was able to get funding from the commonwealth.

In 2019, we tried again with the new minister, the Hon. Stephan Knoll. At that time, unfortunately again—and I am sad that this happened under the former Liberal government—he indicated that, 'In regard to the intersection of Reid Avenue and St Bernards Road, I am advised that this section has been assessed and detailed in the RMP. As part of the RMP investigation, a study has been undertaken.' I am paraphrasing here. 'The study determined that there was not an adequate increase to warrant the installation of a dedicated PAC or traffic signals. A pedestrian survey was also undertaken by the department in September 2018, confirming the location does not warrant it.'

He did say, 'However, any proposal to make upgrades to transport infrastructure at this location as part of the RMP would also look at upgrading the pedestrian walk-through at this location.' Further correspondence and meetings with the member for Hartley and I and the Minister for Transport at the time did not get the final outcome then, but obviously that work that former Minister Knoll identified, how they were looking for opportunities, has now seen some good outcome. I am pleased that after a decade of endeavours, we understand that that project is now funded in the coming year. I am pleased about that; however, there are many more.

The last time I spoke to this house about transport issues along St Bernards Road and Penfold Road, in particular I highlighted the enormous new development numbers: the enormity of the growth in student numbers at Morialta Secondary College—170 this year and 1,200 within the next five years—the changes due to Magill Village, the developments at Woodforde, the seminary development at Rostrevor and the significant increasing traffic problems that this whole stretch of road has seen.

I argued then that the government needed to pay attention to this to deliver improvements, and I have now received correspondence from the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis, the transport minister, confirming that, unfortunately, the department will not be proceeding with the indented bus stop outside the college, nor are they interested in improvements to Norton Summit Road and Magill Road. We hope that further work will be undertaken by the department. I urge the minister to insist on further work by the department to improve these intersections and these roads, which are currently a mess.

### **GIBSON ELECTORATE SPORTING CLUBS**

**S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (15:32):** I rise to give a winter wrap-up of the sports season in Gibson this year. I will start, of course, with my own club, Westminster Old Scholars Soccer Club, who field three men's teams and two women's teams. My team, the div 5 team, had our most successful season since I have been playing with them. We came second this season, and I would like to give credit here to our new coach for this season, Soukiie, who has been absolutely fabulous in guiding us. He provides a very clear message to our team and has an awful lot of faith in us. He has seen us rise to our best position yet. Thank you.

I would also like to thank our captain, Ange, who is entirely unflappable both on and off the pitch but has an absolute heart of gold and will do anything for her players. I would like to give a special shout-out to our men's As team, who are promoted at the end of this season to div 1 after a very successful season, and also to the Westminster men's reserves, who have also had an incredibly successful season. A special shout-out to my favourite nephew, Callum, who scored 13 goals this season.

On Saturday, the Marion Rams Football Club had an unprecedented three men's senior teams in grand finals. It was quite an outing, out watching three back-to-back grand finals for the Marion Rams. The day started off well with the men's C-grade winning their game, followed by the men's Bs, who also won their grand final, with a lot of pressure then being on the men's As, who unfortunately could not bring home the flag. It was an extremely successful day for the club, and I give my congratulations to the Marion Rams, which is another club in my electorate full of incredibly good humans.

Another shout-out, too, to the Brighton Table Tennis Club, which on Super Saturday grand finals brought home seven championships—an incredible outcome for our table tennis club. Brighton Bombers Football Club had a really tough season. None of the senior teams made the finals but, importantly, they are maintaining their status in division 1 and that in itself is a great achievement.

I would also like to give a shout-out to Brighton Rugby Union Football Club. Brighton Rugby has a really soft spot in my heart after my years as a child walking down to the club on a Saturday afternoon with my dad to watch his mate Adrian Bolton play. Adrian was a club champion, much revered in that club and remembered fondly to this day. I still enjoy the opportunity to go and support this local rugby club and also, where I can, to help by volunteering behind the bar. I have learnt how to pour a Guinness—it is not as hard as it looks.

It is worth saying that Brighton Rugby Union Football Club is our most successful rugby club in the state, winning 36 premier-grade premierships in the last 71 years—an extraordinary achievement for a club. For the second consecutive year, all grades made the finals series. The under 12s won the trophy with a last-minute try to win 27-26, whilst unfortunately the reverse happened for the under 14s, falling short in the dying seconds of the grand final.

The under 18s won their grand final and that was for the second year in a row, so big congratulations. More excruciatingly tight games followed for the seniors, with the thirds only just losing 27-25. Meanwhile, the premiers, who have won four of the last seven premierships, unfortunately did not bring it home this year.

I would like to take this opportunity as I reflect on the success of the sporting clubs in Gibson to acknowledge all the work that goes on behind the scenes. To the coaches writing training plans week after week, to people cooking sausages to raise some small funds for the club, to parents driving kids to numerous training sessions, washing dirty kit after muddy games, to those behind the

scenes writing grant applications and to all those players playing your guts out for your team, week after week, I support you.

*Bills*

**HYDROGEN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

**The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services) (15:38):**

South Australia has been a leader in renewable energy and this bill is seeking to ensure that we continue to lead Australia in this critical part of our economy and our community. When you drive around the suburbs and country towns of South Australia, you see rooftop solar on homes everywhere. As a community, we have now embraced this as part of our everyday lives.

I am really proud of the South Australian Housing Authority's work with Tesla on the South Australian Virtual Power Plant that has seen panels or batteries placed on around 3,000 homes to this point, and another 4,000 are on the way. We are working to expand that program so that people living in community housing provider residences are also able to join the program.

When I take my regular trips to the Upper Spencer Gulf, I see the Aurora solar thermal tower and its field of mirrors. I drive past solar farms in other regional areas, and the recent Royal Show was a great reminder of how we have turned commercial rooftops into clean energy generators. Our wind farms stretch across the state and majestically line the road to the Upper Spencer Gulf. They have played a key role in getting our state to more than 70 per cent renewable energy, and on many days fully renewable energy.

Whether it is in the Mid North or the bottom tip of Yorke Peninsula around Edithburgh, the new version of windmills are doing their bit for our energy future. Windmills have been an iconic part of the Australian landscape for generations. It was all about turning wind in the air into flowing water from the ground in the old days, but now it is about turning wind into flowing electrons. We are now embarking on the next phase of this journey, which will see hydrogen become another foundation of our energy transition.

Change is not easy, and that is why the government has a key role to play in making sure that we have the right regulatory frameworks in place. These will ensure industry has the confidence to invest and the community has confidence that change will lead to a better world for our children and for generations to come.

My colleague the Minister for Energy and Mining has been working on our hydrogen plan for years, and this bill is a testament to this vision for a future that supports industry, the environment and local communities. After a huge amount of work in opposition, the work continued in government with extensive consultation to make sure that we do get this right. A comprehensive issues paper was released in late 2022 and a draft bill released for consultation in May 2023. Almost 200 submissions were received throughout the consultation. It showed the level of community interest in this generational change.

Our government has a deep commitment to work with Aboriginal communities, and our consultation included two Aboriginal renewable energy forums in Port Augusta in November 2022 and March 2023. This helped us to understand the issues and challenges impacting Aboriginal groups and to discuss opportunities to work together on the development of renewable energy.

I have been to the Upper Spencer Gulf more than half a dozen times since the election last year. We have held one of our fantastic country cabinets in the region, and the communities have welcomed the opportunity to share their thoughts and know they are being listened to. A regional visit, dedicated workshop and follow-up online webinar were delivered for the pastoral community to support quality engagement on the draft bill.

Eighteen information sessions have been conducted across South Australia's regions during consultation. There have also been two online webinars for those who could not travel and those who wanted to talk in person to the government. These webinars had over 200 attendees and

recordings were viewed hundreds of times later on. Dozens of meetings were held with key stakeholder groups and individuals, providing an opportunity to hear directly about the proposal and to ask any questions of the government.

This is not the end of the conversation with the community. The government will continue to work with stakeholders to develop the associated regulations and to identify the first release areas for competitive tenders under the framework. Similar to other legislation, the bill also includes provisions that require a review to be initiated five years following the commencement of the act, and indeed every five years thereafter.

The bill before us is the nation's first legislative framework designed to provide a coordinated approach to the growing hydrogen and renewable energy industries. South Australia is heading for a new wave of large-scale hydrogen and renewable energy development at a scale not seen before, with more than \$20 billion of projects in development.

The change in scale and complexity demands a single end-to-end framework that considers the needs of the environment, landowners, communities and the state's strategic and economic ambitions. The Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill represents six acts being merged into one, which will minimise red tape for prospective investors, apply to both freehold and government-owned land and support the government's Hydrogen Jobs Plan.

On freehold land, proponents will need to secure access to land through direct agreement with landowners, preserving current arrangements. A new competitive system will be introduced for access to and licences for projects on pastoral lands and also state waters. This enables the government to responsibly assign access to some of the state's most promising areas for renewable energy development.

The declaration of these release areas will only occur after a consultative process involving government agencies, native title holders and other impacted stakeholders. The declaration of a release area will enable a competitive tender process for feasibility licences over the land and waters, with applicants to compete based on transparent selection criteria. This will ensure the state only hosts those projects willing to embrace coexistence with current land uses and deliver community and environmental benefits through their projects.

Five licence types will be created relating to the key stages of renewable energy projects, from the early research and feasibility stage right through to the construction, operation and closure of facilities, which I will describe:

- renewable energy feasibility licence/permit: enables exploration for renewable energy, including construction of monitoring equipment;
- renewable energy infrastructure licence: permits construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of renewable energy infrastructure;
- renewable energy research licence: permits construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of renewable energy infrastructure for the purpose of researching the capabilities of a technology, system or process;
- hydrogen generation licence: permits construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of hydrogen generation facilities; and
- associated infrastructure licence: permits ancillary infrastructure (transmission, roads, water treatment) and associated facilities (hydrogen power plants, ports for hydrogen product export, desalination for hydrogen production).

These proposed measures reflect the Malinauskas government's commitment to the renewable energy transition and to a renewable energy and hydrogen sector that is ecologically sustainable and also responsible. While the bill is specific to hydrogen and renewables, it is fundamentally about our future as a community.

This bill supports the development and growth of new industries and jobs, both directly and indirectly. Most of the jobs that exist in our community today did not exist when our grandparents were born. Communities that do not plan ahead and take control of their future face the very real risk



of falling behind, but the Malinauskas government is taking the opposite approach: we are planning for prosperity in the long term.

We are working toward better early childhood education, a more inclusive community that helps people to live their best lives and a community where more people have stable, affordable housing, all while we build up the industries of the future. That is what good government should be doing—working together as a team to solve the complex challenges in front of all of us.

My electorate may not be high on the agenda for a hydrogen hub, but it stands to gain great benefits from the opportunities and wealth that new industries deliver. The children growing up in the southern suburbs have a better chance of inheriting a clean, green environment, and passing that on to their kids and their grandkids, if we make the transition to renewable energy in a safe way. This is, I am sure, our future.

Developing a hydrogen industry at scale gives us the opportunity to help with cost-of-living pressures. This bill will help to unlock the state's pipeline of renewable energy projects, with estimated capital investments, as I said before, of more than \$20 billion. In simple terms, this means jobs, good jobs, sustainable jobs. Good jobs put food on the table, a roof over heads, and give people the dignity of making choices about how they live their lives.

The bill, and the emerging industry, will help to increase supplies of reliable, affordable, and clean renewable energy. Renewables are often reported as the lowest cost form of energy, and this helps households and businesses everywhere. The bill will also facilitate hydrogen production, which stands to be a cheaper and cleaner form of long duration storage than the New South Wales coal supplies that we presently rely on through interconnectors.

While our minister worked his guts out in opposition to pull the key parts of our hydrogen plan together, those opposite did not manage to put together a plan with the full power and resources of government behind them and he really does deserve great credit for that work that was done.

In government, we announce spending and deliver projects all the time, and sometimes it can be easy to lose sight of the real and lasting impact that we can have on our community. The Attorney-General has often spoken about his perspective on achievements in politics and reflects on his work on voluntary assisted dying and our state's Aboriginal Voice to Parliament. These may be the most important things that he ever achieves and we are achieving them alongside him.

For me, it is about making sure that we create and foster a more inclusive community where people are safe, supported and just that little bit kinder to each other. For the Minister for Energy and Mining, supporting a new industry that drives investment, jobs and a more sustainable world is something he should rightly be proud of, and I am proud that I am working alongside him and proud of him for doing that and more. I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:49):** I rise to make a brief contribution on this bill. I thank the government for a briefing this morning explaining it to me. It was much appreciated and quite informative. Since that time, it has been interesting to follow the debate and listen to the government's speakers singing its praises as well.

I am coming at it from a slightly different perspective, and that is with the experience of dealing with some land access disputes that arose in the course of my time in the previous parliament with respect to mining tenements. Those fears might well transfer across onto this new legislative regime. In bringing that to the attention of the house, I acknowledge that the intent of this bill is clearly to deal with Crown land, pastoral land and leasehold land.

In essence, I do not necessarily have the same dispute with government making use of the land that it theoretically owns for these projects. That is probably within the remit of what it wants to do, but we have heard speakers talk about how this new licensing scheme will become available to proponents who try to make use of it on freehold land. That is where my fear lies: that we—the parliament and, more succinctly, the government—will open ourselves up to a new wave of land access disputes. Just because the cause is arguably more holy than a mine might be, I suspect that the landholders who object to having these new initiatives on their land will be no less despondent about having it forced upon them.

We have heard speakers say—and I paraphrase here; it is not a direct quote, so apologies if I get it slightly wrong—how the existing system will be transferred over and these licences will be able to be applied for in a similar fashion. I would submit to this house that the existing system is not working all that well. It is the source of much chagrin for landowners around the state, and opening up another regulatory scheme for that system to interact with is potentially going to leave this government open to some more angst for landowners. I would like to bring that to the house and, in so doing, observe a couple of things.

On a number of occasions throughout the bill it is referenced that the ERD Court will be the deciding jurisdiction when it comes to disputes and where agreement cannot be reached between proponents and landowners. I would submit to this house that this has not worked when it comes to mining land access disputes and that those who have had cause to interact with it have felt that the ERD Court is very much in favour of the miner and, I suspect, will be very much in favour of these developments when they come before it as well.

For those who wish to maintain incumbent land use, for those who wish to maintain the use that has been on that land for generations, they might well find themselves at the same disadvantage that people in dispute with mining companies have found themselves in previously. It has also been referenced that investigations are taking place with the landowner advisory service. Once again, I would submit that this has not necessarily worked as well as one might have hoped when it was initiated and it will have a similarly, I suspect, unsatisfactory relationship with landowners when and if that is to take place.

The purpose of my contribution, as I said, is to bring to the attention of the house my fear about a new wave of disputes when it comes to land access. Other than that, I commend the government for the initiative and for trying to develop new ways to lower energy costs which are having such a detrimental impact on so many businesses and households around the state. I certainly hope it has that effect and that we have some reprieve for those people paying their bills and that, with the benefit of hindsight, I am proven wrong with my concerns about land access disputes and that it goes far more swimmingly than I predict. With that brief contribution, I look forward to the further debate as this bill progresses.

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (15:54):** I also rise to add a few words in support of the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill. As it says, it is a bill for an act to facilitate and regulate the generation of hydrogen and renewable energy in the state and coastal waters of the state, to make related amendments to the Mining Act 1971, the Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989, the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Act 2000 and the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016, and for other purposes. At the end of the day, it is an attempt to get a coherent legislative and regulatory framework to guide the development of what could be a very major industry in this state.

I am very fortunate to be the member of the electorate that is probably going to be in the epicentre of much of this development. As was indicated by the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday of financial support for an infrastructure upgrade at Port Bonython, \$70 million will come from the federal government, \$30 million from the state government and \$40 million from the private sector.

As people know, Port Bonython has been used as a hydrocarbon export facility going back many, many years now—I think back to around 1980 or 1981—when it started that role with the construction of the gas fractionation plant and the Port Bonython jetty. It is a jetty that is owned by the state. Recently, over the term of the Weatherill government and then the term of the Marshall government, it has undergone some significant maintenance.

I have been an advocate of looking at Whyalla as a hydrogen hub going back quite a few years. I remember in the early days talking about this with some people from the Melbourne Institute. There was virtually no interest. My interest has predominantly, but not only, been because hydrogen is potentially a green source of energy and a reductant for the steel industry. We wrote to 50 companies at the time. I said I could secure the local money, which I did, for a study by the Melbourne Institute. We wrote to 50-odd companies back in 2014, early 2015, and there was no

tangible interest in hydrogen at the time, even though people said theoretically it was all very interesting. How the world has changed.

I think it is probably going to be years before we export hydrogen from the jetty at Port Bonython. It might well be that we do not export hydrogen from that jetty. It might well be that, if we are going to export, we export green ammonia, given that we already have shipping fleets, that it is already handled on a worldwide basis and that it is a lot easier to handle than hydrogen. But who knows? I might be wrong. The Japanese have built one ship to transport hydrogen, and we might well see more in the future.

The interesting thing about the Port Bonython jetty—this is a good while back now—is I had informal conversations with Santos about the capacity of the jetty. At that time, the utilisation rate was I think under 30 per cent. I do not think it has increased in any significant way since then, so you already have an existing jetty that has the potential to be used as an export point.

When the previous government called for expressions of interest in relation to Port Bonython, I think they should have gone a little bit farther afield, because if you are going to export either green ammonia or hydrogen there is no doubt you are going to need some ancillary infrastructure in relatively close proximity to the jetty head.

I was in some discussions with some companies that had expressed, way before COVID, some interest in doing stuff at Whyalla. One of these companies was originally going to do stuff near Port Lincoln. I got into a conversation with that company and said that Whyalla is a far more sensible location. Unbeknownst to me, they indicated at the time, 'Yes, we are actually looking at Whyalla in preference now to near Port Lincoln.'

Our discussion centred on some land where, once again going back many years, a titanium dioxide manufacturing facility was going to go. This is about 20 square kilometres of flat, industrially zoned land, and it was my argument with them—and they fully supported the argument—that it would be the ideal place for the hub betwixt the Port Bonython facility and north of the steelworks but closer to rail and closer to the Cultana substation.

When it comes to hubbing some of these hydrogen proposals, I still believe that that flat land adjacent to the road out to Point Lowly makes a lot of sense, as then you would just run a relatively short pipeline out to the jetty and it would be north of the steelworks. Where it is all going to end up in terms of the hub and what the best configuration is will be for other people to decide. I think we still have seven companies that have expressed interest in the hub.

Invariably, all these companies are very large and most of them are overseas companies, with the exception of FFI, big companies, some working in conjunction with smaller companies. As to the scale of what is being proposed, if this comes to fruition, and what some of these companies are proposing, when it comes to renewable energy projects in this state we are used to thinking in the megawatt range. These companies are talking in the gigawatt range, and their interest is in exporting either hydrogen or green ammonia, whether to Europe, whether to Korea, or whether to Japan. I guess the attraction to this country is its political stability and its massive renewable energy resources.

With a lot of the renewables being talked about, companies are looking at areas to the west of Iron Knob in the unincorporated areas on pastoral land. I listened with interest to what the member for Narungga had to say. I would probably argue that the vast majority of those pastoralists, if we end up with these mega wind farms and mega solar facilities, are going to be seriously droughtproofed because they are going to get an incredibly significant income stream from these facilities, as do some of the farms currently available to wind turbines and solar plants—primarily wind farms.

There is a real opportunity here for pastoralists in our state to benefit, but it has to be done in a strategic fashion. It should not be an ad hoc process, where you get private sector duplication, where you get a bit here and a bit there. It needs to be coordinated, it needs to be strategic and it needs to be done in a way that the state can maximise the benefit for the people of this state. That is why this bill is important.

There has been a lot of consultation around the bill, and other people have mentioned the figures. I went to the first consultation with Aboriginal groups at the golf club in Port Augusta, and the place was full. There were all sorts of groups represented, including traditional owners and others, wanting to provide input and wanting to listen to what was going on. I think it was a good step.

Instead of developing a bill and then going out, feedback was obtained and the bill has been developed. It has been an iterative process, and it will continue to be an iterative process to make sure that we get this right for traditional Aboriginal owners and other groups, for pastoralists and possibly for freehold farmers as well, because I hear that one of the big Danish companies has signed up a whole bunch of farmers to exclusivity agreements on Eyre Peninsula. How all that is going to work out, I do not know.

Certainly, the interest of the company that I have been speaking to has been in those pastoral lands to the west of Iron Knob. The reason for the interest in that area is that it is somewhat an unusual area, in that it has a world-class wind regime and overlaps with world-class solar and, as other people have said, there are not many places in the world where you get that combination. That is a real strength for Australia.

Given the history in my part of the world, I am not a person who counts chickens before they hatch. Indeed, we wait for the chickens to hatch and run around a bit before we count them because, when it comes to the manufacture of at-scale hydrogen or green ammonia, this is now a global competition and South Australia does not have deep pockets. Australia does not have deep pockets. We cannot compete head to head with the Inflation Reduction Act in the United States, where various incentives and carrots are going into their hydrogen production. Because the Inflation Reduction Act is such a game changer, I am waiting for the full suite of initiatives that is going to come out of the European community.

Australia has to be smart and the one thing we do have going for us is that we have serious comparative advantages when it comes to our solar resources and our wind resources. The fact that both exist in this state as world-class resources does give us an advantage. As I said before, the whole issue about sovereign risk also plays into that and the vast tracts of land that we have.

We are not proposing that we do this at Anna Creek Station, but I am just going to use Anna Creek Station as an example. The scale of some of this stuff is vast. One of the previous chief scientists at a national level indicated that, if the hydrogen industry were to match the gas exports that currently occur in Australia, the sort of scale we would be talking about would be renewables that would take up in land mass around about 80 per cent of Anna Creek Station—and Anna Creek Station is just one station in my vast electorate—so there is no shortage of room in the north of this state when it comes to especially solar and, in some areas, the combination of solar and wind. So we can do it, but we have to be smart about it.

An indication of being smart is that we talk about 70 per cent renewables in South Australia. South Australia did not pour millions and millions of dollars into getting that industry. It was smart about it. It tweaked the planning laws, it did a number of other things and it put out the welcome mat in a big way prior to the other states through the Rann years and the Weatherill years and continuing on. As a result, we stole the lead from the other states when it comes to renewables. This bill represents that same sort of smartness in being the first in the nation to have the legislative and regulatory environment for the development of the hydrogen industry.

As people are aware, the Prime Minister was in Whyalla yesterday, along with the Premier, and one of the good things about that is that one of the people leading the transition in the steel industry, Theuns Victor, whom I have known for quite a few years now, gave a presentation. Not everyone is au fait with the ins and outs of the iron and steel industry, but it was an excellent presentation to demonstrate the advantages we have in the Upper Spencer Gulf when it comes to the resource base—both the mineral resource base and the renewable energy resource base—and, in the case of Whyalla, a steelworks and a port. It is not just the port in Whyalla itself, which in some respects is two ports, as there is an inner harbour and an outer harbour, but as the crow flies, not too many kilometres across False Bay, is Port Bonython. So essentially you have three port outlets in Whyalla and its immediate vicinity.

One of the really interesting things about Whyalla is the magnetite resources in the Middleback Ranges. A man by the name of Gavin Hobart (someone else I have known for a long time) is right across the geology of the Middleback Ranges. He is charged with the responsibility of developing the magnetite resources, and it is always good catching up with him to have a discussion about what the JORC reserve is.

The JORC reserve is the highest quality reserve. It is a commercial resource that can be exploited that then feeds into the value of the company. In terms of magnetite, it has gone from 650 million tonnes to now a JORC reserve of 1.5 billion tonnes, with billions of other tonnes of magnetite being looked at to move it onto the JORC scale, so there are billions and billions of tonnes of magnetite on the doorstep of Whyalla.

When we talk about magnetite, it is particularly suited for use with hydrogen, and the Middleback Ranges magnetite is especially suited given its grade and quality. We say there is probably nowhere else in the world where you have massive renewable energy resources, a massive magnetite resource, a steelworks and a port all within a relatively short distance of each other and all with some significant infrastructure in place—that is, water, rail, electricity, all the rest of the industrial-grade infrastructure you need. There are very few places in the world that are like that and the advantages are potentially huge.

If we do want to transition the steel industry, this bill is going to be important. When we get beyond the tonnages that we currently produce in Whyalla—and we have the potential to do that—it might be exported in the form of green iron briquettes. We can do what we have always done: intermediate steel products and finished steel product, all potentially green. If we ultimately use hydrogen, we are talking about large-scale renewable energy projects in the gigawatt range.

As I said before, I do not count my chickens before they hatch, but I see the transition in Whyalla and I see the investment that is going to happen in the electric arc furnace. The deposit has been paid to Danieli, so we are now on the waiting list for those orders to be delivered on. The next step is direct reduction iron-making, which can use syngas as the energy source and reductant agent, and increasing the use of hydrogen so that over time we might well move to close to pure hydrogen in the metallic iron-making process. That totally greens up the process.

What we have to do is be able to demonstrate that we can produce hydrogen at scale—and that is going to be the challenge. When you speak to the steel industry, when you speak to other industries, the threshold is around \$2 a kilo. That is what they are looking at. Every tonne of iron you produce is going to require 90 kilos of hydrogen as a reductant and an energy source. So potentially the future is bright, but there is going to be a lot of hard work getting there.

Time expired.

**Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (16:14):** I rise today to speak in favour of this bill, and what a beautiful day it is today, wouldn't you say? The sun is shining, there is barely a cloud in the sky and the birds are happily chirping away, at least they were at my place this morning. If I could get my solar inverter to talk to my wi-fi, I could tell you how much energy I am exporting to the grid. Sadly, internet up my way is not great, so we will just have to guess that one.

Last week, I had the absolute privilege of visiting Innamincka on a field trip with the Natural Resources Committee, and I say 'privilege' because Innamincka is an incredible place. We flew up there in a very small plane, and to be honest there were moments when we all felt a little squeamish, but a quick look out the window at the amazing scenery and health was restored. When we arrived, it was hot, 36° of dry heat and the wind was blowing a bit of a dust storm.

I had never been that far north before. It is desert in the true definition of the word—sparse vegetation, coolibah trees, some shrubs and not much else—but what a place. A quick shout-out to Michelle at the Innamincka pub for putting us up for the time we were there. But why am I talking about this now? It is not football, I know. The endless sunshine and the wind: it is an important resource that we have here in this state. Because we know that, and because we are here in South Australia and we have the ideal climate, landscape and resources to be a renewable energy superstar, we need to do more.

We know that on days like today and what we had late last week, we can almost power the state on sunshine; in fact, once the weather starts really heating up and the winds blow throughout the storm season, we can produce too much energy for our grid to handle. Since early in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, South Australia has sought to harness its abundance of coincident solar and wind resources to substantially reduce our dependence on traditional energy generation and increase the prevalence of renewable energy, but now we face a bigger problem. It is a good problem, but it is one that sees us sometimes having too much.

Unlike those opposite, though, our government is moving to harness the excess energy that our grid can be overwhelmed by, rather than just reaching in and turning off the solar panels. South Australia currently generates 70 per cent of its energy from renewable sources, but this is not enough. In order to meet our commitment of net zero carbon emissions by 2050, we need to do more, much more. We know that our state is absolutely ready to meet the challenge. We have the resources and we have the government that is ready to do what needs to be done to drive the transition.

The Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill brings together six different acts, creating a national-first legislative framework that will not only minimise red tape for investors but ensure as a state we only look to projects that are willing to embrace coexistence with current land uses and deliver community and environmental benefits. While existing frameworks have served the state well, it is clear the world is headed for a new wave of large-scale hydrogen and renewable energy development, and we need to be ready for it.

This change in scale and complexity demands a single end-to-end framework that can consider the needs of environment, landowners, communities and the state's strategic and economic ambitions. Providing one consistent framework across the state through this bill will provide investor certainty, economies of scale and efficient development and regulation of the growing sector. It will also ensure responsible development, operation and eventual decommissioning of this significant infrastructure.

With the possibility of more than \$20 billion of projects in capital development, including our own hydrogen electrolyser and hydrogen-fuelled power plant and storage facility along with Northern Water, this bill not only seeks to give confidence to international investors who are willing to contribute their capital to growing the industries of the future right here in South Australia but at the same time it gives communities confidence that these projects will be delivered in ways that protect the environment and the interests of community, landholders and native title holders.

Five licence types will be created relating to the key stages of renewable energy projects, from the early research and feasibility stage right through to the construction, operation and closure of facilities. These include:

- the renewable energy feasibility licence/permit, which enables exploration of renewable energy, including construction of monitoring equipment;
- the renewable energy infrastructure licence, which will permit construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of renewable energy infrastructure;
- the renewable energy research licence, permitting construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of renewable energy infrastructure for the purpose of researching the capabilities of a technology, system or process;
- the hydrogen generation licence, which permits construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of hydrogen generation facilities; and
- the associated infrastructure licence, which will permit ancillary infrastructure (transmission, roads, water treatment) and the associated facilities (the hydrogen power plants, the ports for hydrogen product export and desalination for hydrogen production).

The bill has been subject to extensive consultation over the past year, including with native title holders. Ensuring that native title is not only protected but treasured is important. While we were in Innamincka, I had the honour of meeting Rob Singleton. A Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka man (YY

for short), Rob is the Director of the YY Traditional Land Owners Corporation, who provide advice to National Parks regarding the co-management of the Innamincka Regional Reserve.

Rob spoke to us about land management and the work of the nearby Moomba gas plant. He advised that this work is now more aware and considerate of the significance of the land and the sites that hold incredible stories and history. He took us on a walk to visit a sacred site that is especially important to men and boys of his clan. The rock carvings at this site were likely to be at least 15,000 years old. Their significance is priceless, and it is why this bill protects native title and forms an important step in the process.

Projects on native title land will require native title agreement before activities can begin. Where native title exists in relation to an application for a renewable energy feasibility licence, renewable energy infrastructure licence, renewable energy research licence, hydrogen generation licence, associated infrastructure licence and a renewable energy feasibility permit, another important precondition for these licences being granted will be included.

These licence types will not be able to be granted in relation to land where native title exists, or might exist, that is the subject of native title determination or within the registered native title claim unless the registered native title holders or claimants have consented to that grant in an Indigenous land use agreement under the Native Title Act 1993. To provide flexibility for native title groups, provisions enable a less formal type of agreement to be negotiated if valid under the Native Title Act, and only at the request of the native title group.

In keeping with the bill's object to maximise economic opportunities for Aboriginal people, the government will also develop guidelines to support leading practice engagement and negotiations. Additionally, the establishment of a hydrogen and renewable energy fund comprising money that can be used for purposes related to the objects of the act also includes the protection and preservation of native title and Aboriginal heritage in South Australia.

Protection of the environment is also an important part of this bill. Proponents must properly manage and minimise any activities that have actual or potential adverse environmental impacts and manage and minimise risks of significant long-term environmental damage. To demonstrate this requirement, proponents must undertake, consult on and publish an environmental impact assessment. Environmental impact assessments include a statement of environmental objectives setting out measurable environmental objectives, which is provided to the minister for public consultation and approval alongside an environmental impact report.

This bill provides an opportunity for South Australia, but it also has the necessary protections for native title, for the environment and for the communities. Landowner rights have also been enhanced under this bill to ensure the sustainable coexistence of industries into the future. Before any activities on Crown land can begin, licensees will need to enter into an access agreement. Before any activities on freehold land can begin, licensees will need the consent and approval of the landowner.

The bill provides improved dispute resolution mechanisms, landowner support through the expansion of the Landowner Information Service and various access arrangements that will facilitate negotiation and conversation regarding collaborative uses of land. The government will continue to work with all stakeholders and rights holders to develop the associated regulations and to move forward in identifying the first release areas for competitive tender under this framework. The bill also includes review provisions requiring a review to be initiated five years following the commencement of the act and every five years thereafter.

As already mentioned by me and many of my colleagues in this place, SA is set to be a world leader in renewable energy, and this bill goes a long way to establishing a framework that will make it straightforward for investors. We already have huge investment and it is only going to grow with our Hydrogen Jobs Plan. The opportunity for Whyalla to lead the country, if not the world, in this is an incredible outcome for this town and the towns around it, and I look forward to seeing them continue to blossom.

I would like to take this opportunity to bring the conversation about renewables right back to my own electorate where I started this conversation and congratulate the City of Mitcham, who

recently won not one but two national climate awards at the Cities Power Partnership Awards. They won the Community Choice Award and the Renewable Energy Achievement Award for their groundbreaking community renewables program which, as I understand it, is an Australian first.

With over 780 residents already benefiting from the program that is supported by a bulk-buy solar panel and battery project, they are helping to reduce carbon emissions and providing an affordable option for everyone who wishes to have the benefit of solar, not only for their budget but for the environment. A big congratulations to the council and Mayor Heather Holmes-Ross for this achievement and leadership in the renewable sector.

Our state has so many opportunities, and renewables is a big one. We are becoming known worldwide for our commitment to lowering emissions, and that is something we can all be proud of. I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (16:25):** I rise to speak on the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill and indicate that I am the lead speaker for the opposition. Having said that, it is talking about renewable energy and this side of the house also made clear when we were in government, and now with our leader, that we are willing to work hard in this space, supporting renewable energy and also green nitrogen. When we come to this act, of course, we look at it with that lens because we see the opportunities there are in South Australia, which I will speak to later on in my contribution.

At the same time, we recognise that it is looking at rolling out both hydrogen generation and associated activities and also renewable energy over all of the states and trying to bring it into the one bill. We need to make sure that landowners' rights are not overridden as we go through this process because we do need to understand and recognise the long-established rights of landowners, freehold landowners, and also landholders, who include pastoral lessees.

If you look at the pastoral leases in South Australia, they take up a big swathe of the land that we have here. It is land that the government does not have to tend to. That is done by the pastoral lessee and they obviously use that land for food and fibre, running stock and cattle through there. It requires high skill to be able to do that. It is quite arid land and they have to really look after that land as well. They work closely with native title holders to produce a really significant economic impact out of those pastoral leases.

I have been watching the consultation process on this bill, and it has been spoken about by others in this debate. It has been a fulsome process. It has been going since the end of last year and ultimately led to the bill arriving in parliament at the end of the last sitting week, on the Thursday, and here we are, debating it on the next day of sitting.

In terms of the opposition, it is an important role of democracy, of course, that the opposition is given a good opportunity to understand bills and, certainly, to consult with stakeholders as well. Again, I am acknowledging consultation that has been done, but it is important to be able to scrutinise legislation. This is an important piece of legislation and we need to give stakeholders the opportunity to raise those issues with the opposition.

It is a technical bill and the final bill that landed in parliament was 92 pages in length. If we compare that with the draft bill that was consulted on, that was 68 pages, so additional regulations and legislation have been put in. In my brief time talking and consulting with stakeholders, it is apparent they have not had time to understand what the differences are, necessarily, in the legislation. Some of that might actually be there to address their concerns. That is something that, of course, we would want to see in this parliament, but for others maybe their concerns have not been addressed in the legislation and they are keen to understand if it can be addressed in other ways. Hence the need to consult widely.

This, as I said, has come back into parliament quite quickly. That is certainly the right of the government—we understand that—to be able to push their legislation through at the speed that they so wish, but we would like to make sure that it can be scrutinised properly, that there are no unintended consequences and that we get it right.

I have spoken with the minister responsible for this, the Minister for Energy and Mining, about whether we can discuss this at the second reading stage this week in parliament and then look to go into committee, because no doubt there will be questions that have to be asked to try to flesh out



some of those issues from stakeholders. We will look to go into committee in the following parliamentary sitting week. The minister said that he is open to that, and we think that is a good result in terms of being able to give this bill the scrutiny that it needs and to make sure that its passage goes through without unintended consequences.

Having said that, I have also received a briefing from the department yesterday. I thank them for that. It was quite a lengthy briefing, and we did it over two stints—I am still waiting on some information to come back from that, but I have not checked my email in the last hour or so—and I do not have all the information. Under the circumstances, where the government is prepared to go into committee in the following sitting week, we are prepared to make some initial comments to help inform debate and to move it along.

At the outset, I made the point that this side of the house supports renewable energy and clean hydrogen. We certainly understand that there is a role for that, and I think the proof was definitely when the former Liberal government was in government. We continued to look at increasing the amount of renewable energy penetration. On average, I think it went up from about 45 per cent to over 60 per cent in those four years. At the same time, mindful of the fact that, while renewable energy has strengths, there are also real issues around its impact on the grid stability as well.

There was also a lot of time put into making sure the grid stability piece was there as well, just to make sure that in fact there is an orderly transition—you can just let a plethora of intermittent energy come into your system, but if it is unmanaged the consequence is that your system becomes unreliable and causes real issues with other forms of generation, base load generation, that actually contribute heavily to stability—and that this transition occurs with a real mindset on affordability.

As I have said previously in the chamber, that certainly was the case on this side of the house, when we saw prices go down over those four years. I have quoted before that ESCOSA reports show that prices went down \$421 between 2018 and 2021 after seeing a sustained increase on coming into government. Prices before we came into government had gone up by \$477 over the previous four years. Now we are back in the situation where we are seeing prices increase as well. The latest ESCOSA report shows that the prices again are on the increase and have gone up over the last 12 months by a significant amount, upwards of \$200, and that is a real concern.

At the same time, the Australian Energy Regulator released their default market offer, which has seen prices again look to go up. From 1 July, we saw big increases in the average household bill under that default market offer of over \$450. The same thing is happening with businesses as well, which is really concerning. The default market offer for businesses saw price increases of over \$1,300. This is a massive amount—and that is on the average bill.

Talking to businesses, if they are more electricity intensive, those bill increases are even more. We have seen cases of small businesses where their electricity bills have gone up by nearly \$1,000 a month. There has been energy bill relief of \$650, but that is soon gobbled up. The bill relief is there for the first 20 or 25 days of that company's operation, but then after that, for the rest of the 330 days the business operates, it is facing these massive electricity bills.

As we talk about the renewable energy going into this state, it really is incumbent on us to have the price front and centre of our discussions because it impacts people, in a very real sense, at the same time as they are having to go through a cost-of-living crisis. We have seen the compounding effects of inflation, whether on food bills, grocery bills, petrol or fuel, and interest rates as well are causing big rises and taking money out of people's ability to spend. It is a compounding effect, and on this side of the house we are certainly very mindful of that and mindful of having a transition that looks with a keen focus on price so we do not get inequality throughout society, where we have those who are in energy poverty because of the sheer cost.

At the same time, we are also making sure there is equality throughout the state so that the burden of the renewable energy transition does not fall just on the regions, when a lot of the energy consumption in South Australia occurs in the city of Adelaide. By population, it is a massive percentage—1.3 million people here in the city compared with the state's population of around 1.8 million. Again, we want to make sure that an unfair burden does not fall on the regions.

No matter where you go, the regions are also very engaged. They see the benefits of renewable energy and what it can do for their communities: it brings investment into their communities, it brings jobs into their communities and it also helps them in terms of reducing emissions in their communities as well as in the wider state. They are certainly mindful of that, but they are also mindful because they are very lucky that they live in such beautiful environments. They really care for their environment and their biodiversity as well, and they do not want to see that lost as we go through this process.

It really is a complex transition we will have to go through and at a scale that is huge. What we need to move away from is thinking that there is only one silver bullet to solve this. We need to have all technologies available to us that can help move where we want to go in terms of being net zero by 2050. It is incumbent on all of us to look through that—that is, rather than just going down a renewables-only path, we really need to make sure that the energy system is stable, it is reliable, it is resilient and, most importantly, it is affordable as well.

Of course, when those on this side of the house were in government, we realised that one of those technologies in the mix is clean hydrogen. We readily acknowledge that, and in terms of its technological evolution it really is a fuel of the future. We know it has potential, but it is going to take time to develop that potential, and we also have to be mindful that it is not a silver bullet. There are certainly uses for it, especially in those industries that are hard to abate, and there are complexities in terms of transporting it, so we have to be mindful of that in relation to the best technology to use in a certain situation to try to make sure that emissions are abated in a cost-effective manner.

In terms of clean hydrogen technologies, there is green hydrogen, where we use renewable energy via an electrolyser to produce hydrogen. Alternatively, you can provide low-emission hydrogen through natural gas, splitting off the hydrogen, capturing the carbon through that process and putting it underground via sequestration and creating clean hydrogen. Both those opportunities exist in South Australia. In Moomba, Santos provide a significant amount of gas for not only South Australia but Australia. They certainly have the opportunity for carbon capture in some of their old disused gas wells. We have that there, and we also have the opportunities for green hydrogen.

Recognising those opportunities for clean hydrogen, the former Liberal government announced the Hydrogen Action Plan back in September 2019 on how we could capture an opportunity for hydrogen here in South Australia. That included a hydrogen modelling tool as well, which gave investors the ability to look at and work through where prospective areas might be, to do some desktop studies around the opportunities in South Australia and get their interest in what those opportunities were for the state. The plan also looked at 20 other key actions across a number of areas to help scale up hydrogen production, whether it be for domestic consumption, because there are certainly opportunities domestically and maybe longer term for export as well.

Another significant project in terms of green hydrogen, which I talked about before, was opened back in 2020 by the former Liberal government at Hydrogen Park SA in Tonsley—that is, the 1.25 megawatt electrolyser that looks to create hydrogen at Tonsley and then blend it into the natural gas line and send it through to homes in Mitchell Park. That was a good demonstration of what the opportunities are here in South Australia and certainly showed what is possible going forward.

We know there are significant opportunities. I have said in the parliament before that South Australia has a great percentage of Australia's wind and solar generating lands. In a number of these locations, those resources of wind and solar are coincident. There was the opportunity to look to do what was done at Tonsley at a larger scale further north, where a lot of those wind and solar resources are. Of course, Port Bonython is a fantastic location.

We did a lot of work in government trying to bring some globally significant players and suppliers in the industry around the table to participate in the hydrogen hubs program that was running. This looked ultimately to have a bid of \$146.5 million put into it, led by the former Liberal government, to bring together global industry leaders to bid into the federal government's hydrogen hub. In November 2021, that was put in, and ultimately the federal government approved it back in 2022.

Both the state Liberal government at the time and the former federal Liberal government accepted this hydrogen hub as a fantastic opportunity for South Australia, so it was very interesting

that only yesterday we saw Prime Minister Albanese and the Premier fly to Whyalla to effectively announce that they were going to go ahead with this proposal that was announced back in April 2022 by the former Liberal governments. So the question is: what has actually been happening in those last 18 months?

Certainly, what would be hoped to be happening is those big global players that were interested back in 2021 and 2022 are still committing to that because while the bid entailed a \$70 million contribution from the federal government and a \$30 million contribution from the state government—which we heard reannounced yesterday—it also included further funds of \$40 million from those private companies, the globally recognised industry leaders in this space: Santos, Fortescue Future Industries, and Origin Energy.

It also included some significant international companies coming from Japan and Canada, whether that was Chiyoda, ENEOS Corporation, Mitsubishi Corporation or Amp Energy. They also saw the opportunity, as did the former Liberal government, of what this could do. They were backed by significant amounts of funding and the idea was to build this out in stages and to look initially at some Common User Facility at Port Bonython. Focused around the Port Bonython precinct we have the jetty, a massive infrastructure that Santos use for their exports and there is the ability to bolt on to that in terms of the Common User Facility.

As I said, these companies would look to grow and build this out in stages. Potentially, they will bring billions of dollars of investment to the table down the track and have the opportunity to produce a massive amount of green hydrogen through electrolysis, looking to generate up to 1.8 million tonnes of hydrogen per annum. That is what was reannounced yesterday in the press release. It seems that that is looking to be progressed. On this side of the house, we would say that speed needs to quicken up to progress that even further.

There is also the opportunity for hydrogen to be produced from the natural gas at Moomba and be sent down to Port Bonython and, effectively, you would have two sources of hydrogen. This would help in terms of the cost and the competitive curve for that hydrogen, especially with the quantities of natural gas that Moomba produces, to allow that hydrogen to compete with traditional fuels earlier and to look at how that can proceed.

There is terrific opportunity up there, not only in and around Port Bonython but, of course, as has been spoken about in terms of Whyalla, Port Pirie and Port Augusta. The opportunities for Whyalla and the potential for hydrogen were very much on the radar when we were in government. The potential to use magnetite and hydrogen for green steel is certainly a great opportunity for Whyalla. We saw the continued interest in that yesterday and, as has been spoken about by others, that will certainly help going forward.

There was emphasis in terms of the opportunities for hydrogen, knowing that it is going to require massive investment to actually be able to get off the ground, but if that investment is forthcoming it will certainly have a massive impact not only on the Upper Spence Gulf economy but ultimately the state's economy as well. The approach was to work with these big global industry players to try to develop that hydrogen industry.

What we see with this government is more of a 'go it alone' approach. They are looking to spend \$600 million of taxpayer funds on what is an experimental hydrogen power station, which, as their own policy document claims, is only intended to reduce electricity costs for business and, even then, not until 2025. This is really concerning in terms of households that are currently experiencing surging and skyrocketing electricity prices.

When the Premier was asked how the hydrogen power station was going to help households and whether it will bring down their household electricity bills, his response was that it will bring down emissions. At a time when we need to be looking at how we can bring household electricity prices down, this is further cause for concern.

As I said, the costs of bringing these big hydrogen power projects online certainly are significant because of where the industry is at the moment and are still to be worked out. Certainly, that appears to be the case in terms of when the government put out their request for proposals for

this power station, rather than the 3,600 tonnes of liquified hydrogen storage that was their promise at the election.

We see that this has been dropped in favour of a much smaller amount of storage. No doubt that is driven a lot by costs because, while the government's policy document stated that the cost for 3,600 tonnes of liquified hydrogen storage would be only \$31 million, in fact it will probably be at least 10 times that going on the modelling by the CSIRO that is available. These things are costly, and we can see that in terms of how their project is rolling out as we go along.

That was one of the main pillars of their plan. The other one was that it would be a base load combined cycle turbine. There are questions around how that is going to roll out now that we have such reduced storage and certainly whether we are going to see a base load power station as well. It speaks to the fact that this industry is new. It is going to cost a lot of money and certainly the taxpayers of South Australia are having to bear the risk of this. There is certainly great expertise in industry, and no doubt shareholders should be the ones bearing a risk as well. As we go forward, we will certainly be making that case.

The approach on this side of the house was to work with those experienced industry leaders to establish Port Bonython as a domestic and international hydrogen export centre. The other aspect that came out of that as well is signing a memorandum of understanding with the Port of Rotterdam, which was done by the former Liberal government. Of course, the Port of Rotterdam is a massive port that imports energy and gas into Europe. With what has gone on with the war in Ukraine, Europe is having to look for other sources for their energy and the Port of Rotterdam is certainly one of those areas where energy will come in and there is great interest in that regard.

That said, with all the opportunities I spoke about, what was going to drive those big investments would result in investments not only in hydrogen generation but backed by renewable energy infrastructure. A lot of that land was looking to the north to the pastoral districts, which this bill countenances.

Having said that, back in August 2021 the former government looked to regulate hydrogen. It was going to do so through the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Act, which came with the concept of a hydrogen generation licence and looking at regulating hydrogen when it was there for commercial purposes, whether that was for export, manufacturing chemicals, for wholesale distribution or for generating electricity. That was to be regulated if that hydrogen was produced by either electrolysis or re-forming of natural gas.

When you look through the basis of this bill, you can see that work that was done looking to regulate hydrogen generation has been moved across into this bill that we speak about now. We understand, though, that hydrogen at scale relies on significant international investment, and ultimately export markets to go with that international investment. That certainly will take some time to build out at scale. I think we need to be realistic about that.

Hydrogen itself is much less dense than natural gas, so in terms of being able to transport it around, the size and scale of ships that would be required to transport the equivalent amount of energy are a lot bigger and really, at this stage, are certainly not cost-competitive. We need to be mindful of that—certainly we were in government—and look to other ways to encourage the rollout of renewable energy and making sure that the grid is stable.

As I have spoken about previously, another area of focus by the former Liberal government was to fast-track the construction of the South Australia-New South Wales interconnector, which looked to provide 800 megawatts of capacity between those two states. That would have then allowed South Australia as a state to export its excess renewable energy, certainly in times of high generation in South Australia, whether that be by sun or by wind.

It would also have provided stability and reduced the state's separation from the National Electricity Market, which we saw back in November last year when that storm came through and knocked over the Victorian interconnector and the issues that caused here in this state. That is certainly one reason for having the interconnector, to be able to provide that redundancy. It also gives the opportunity for renewable energy to be exported across, which helps to attract investment.

One of those examples I have spoken of before was Neoen's \$3 billion Goyder South project, which had a range of wind, solar and battery capacity. Neoen have said that two-thirds, or \$2 billion, of that investment at the Goyder South project would rely on having the SA-New South Wales interconnector in place. In fact, their managing director said that Project EnergyConnect is vital to unlocking the full potential of Neoen's multi-gigawatt Goyder renewable zone and the significant jobs and investment it represents for South Australia. That was one project.

Of course, there were other projects. I talked about Amp Energy in terms of the Port Bonython Hydrogen Hub. They had a massive project as well, looking at over \$2 billion. All-up, there was significant investment in renewable energy that was either in the planning process or that had been approved.

In terms of where a lot of that renewable energy is at the moment, it is on freehold land. This bill looks at regulating renewable energy and hydrogen generation on both freehold and designated land. We certainly will look at that further on. Those projects I mentioned, and all of the others, have progressed through the existing system, which goes through the planning and development act to get approval. That has seen, as has been spoken about, a rollout of renewables in this state that has about 70 per cent of the state's electricity on average met by renewable energy sources.

The preliminary feedback I have from stakeholders throughout this is that the system is working at the moment, certainly on freehold lands, and they do not want to see a new regime or framework come in that is a backwards step. Part of the consultation process is seeing that that is not the case. At the moment, how it works is that landowners come to an agreement with a renewable energy company that is looking to put wind or solar on their lands. Part of that agreement is being able to access it, of course. Another part is how much the renewable energy company is prepared to pay in terms of either a rent or a lease to get a right of access to the freehold landowner's land.

Once they have that in place, they can then take their proposal through the planning process, which, as I said, is the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act. At that stage, they will pay an application fee in the hundreds of thousands. It is significant, but that is commensurate with the scale of these projects. That then has to go through the proper approval process, making sure the environmental impact is satisfactorily dealt with and that the public consultation is there as well before ultimately a decision to approve or not approve is taken.

What the stakeholders are saying is that, if the approval is to be done through the hydrogen and renewable energy act, they still want the ability for private owners to come to commercial arrangements with these renewable energy companies without government intervention. Certainly, they want the rent paid to them and that to be retained as well, not for the government to try to step in and also claim rent. I am not saying that is the case; I am just setting out what their expectations are.

I will also talk a little bit about what the existing system is in the pastoral districts. At the moment, the pastoral land management act deals with how those pastoral lessees can manage their lands, and it does give consideration to wind farms and solar farms. Having said that, there are none actually in operation at the moment. Taking the process through from start to finish where we actually have an approved wind farm has not occurred, but certainly in terms of the pastoral land management act, it does consider wind farms.

The way it does that is the renewable energy company would have to get rights to access the land of the pastoral lease and also deal with native title, then whatever agreement is made between both the native title holders and the pastoral lessee results in agreements being in place and allows a minister to ultimately go through an approval process. It is stipulated in the pastoral land management act that 95 per cent of payments made by the renewable energy company when they go into the pastoral land fund is paid out to both the pastoral lessee and the native title holder. That is the regime that is in place at the moment prior to this bill, and certainly the pastoral lessees are working with it at the moment. They certainly have questions around that that we can touch on later on.

The system also allows for multiple bidders to effectively come to a pastoral leaseholder should that area of land the pastoral lease is on be able to be highly prospective. Then at least it gives the pastoral leaseholder, the native title holders, the ability to work with different proponents

and ultimately select one prepared to work best with them, whether that is how they would basically get access to the land, the relationship they would have with the leaseholder in terms of road access, management of the water right through to potentially what they would be prepared to pay for having a wind farm there.

Pastoralists welcome the flexibility of being able to have the potential for wind farms or solar farms on their pastoral lease. They are also looking at what can be done from a conservation point as well, seeing opportunities to coexist. They see it as another way to supplement their income and help them, and that then in turn helps in terms of resilience as well. Pastoral land is susceptible to drought, so there are obviously years when there is drought and there are years when there is better times, so income is up and down for the pastoralists. The opportunity to even that out a little bit by having a supplementary income stream such as could be provided by having a wind farm is certainly very attractive for them.

As I have said before, they are certainly happy about and mindful of the fact that the state and the country need to reduce emissions and that they have a role to play, but, equally, it also helps them in terms of their operations and reducing the emissions of their operations. They are looking to coexist with renewable energy companies and renewable energy infrastructure, potentially with hydrogen as well. What they do not want is have their rights diminished to such an extent that they are not afforded the recognition of the important role they have in this state, the important role they have had in building this state and, going forward, the important role they will have to continue that benefit.

That is my understanding of where it is at at the moment. It has helped inform me, in terms of the discussions with stakeholders, and understand where they are at as well. If we talk through the briefing I received from the department and understanding what the bill entails, we can then go through a few other discussion points after that. As has been said by other contributors to this debate, the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill is looking to introduce a new system that will allow the state government after consultation with stakeholders—whether that is native title holders or state government agencies—to explicitly put in the legislation 'declare designated land'. The bill gives a definition of what that designated land is: it is pastoral land, but it is also prescribed Crown land.

The Crown actually owns significant parcels of land. The Minister for Environment is in charge of the department with the biggest landholding within the state—and of course there are other state government agencies—and also state waters, where there is the opportunity for offshore wind and other potential renewable energy opportunities, but principally offshore wind.

These designated land areas can be declared release areas by the minister, of course based upon their suitability for operation of renewable energy infrastructure and hydrogen generation. That definition of designated land, those release areas, excludes freehold land. It also excludes areas in the Arkaroola Protection Area, which is a very important area in the state—very historic and certainly in need of protection—marine sanctuary zones in those state waters and reserves within national parks.

Again, it is important that we look after national parks and that there is that balance, the importance of the biodiversity effect and the environmental importance of these parks compared with the environmental importance of renewable energy. There are also wilderness protection areas. I think it is important from an environmental perspective that there are these exclusion zones.

Certainly, in the initial discussions the pastoralists have concerns that there are no legislative requirements specifically mentioned as part of the consultation process that is envisaged around these release areas, either in the lead-up to them being investigated or ultimately in the decision that they are declared a release area. Also, the Pastoral Board is not consulted as part of the process. In terms of the legislation, it prescribes that the minister is only required to consult with the minister with responsibility for the pastoral land management act, and so we will need to flesh that out, and I will touch on it again a bit later. These are just the initial areas.

Once that release area has been declared, it is the intention of this bill that a competitive tender process will be run, initially for feasibility licences, and this will be based on a selection area. The briefing from the department yesterday said it was aiming at prioritising projects that embrace a multi land-use framework and that provide community and environmental benefits. Of course, that is

worked out through regulations or guidelines, but that is certainly an area stakeholders have talked through around that selection process.

Ultimately, once a release area has been designated the next aspect to it is the licence types of renewable energy and hydrogen infrastructure. Five licence types are to be created for key stages of these renewable energy projects, from the early research and feasibility stage right through to the construction of it, the operation and eventually the closure of facilities.

Just briefly, these licences include the renewable energy feasibility licence and the renewable energy infrastructure licence, which is geared around permitting construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of renewable energy infrastructure. There is the renewable energy research licence, which is geared around giving permits for construction, running operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of renewable energy infrastructure which has the purpose of research, to try to understand new technologies.

Another licence is the associated infrastructure licence, which is around permitting ancillary infrastructure to renewable energy infrastructure, potentially transmission lines, roads, water treatment or associated facilities, such as hydrogen power plants, ports for hydrogen export or even desalination of water for the hydrogen production.

Certainly, that associated infrastructure licence has been added. That is a change from the draft bill to the bill we have before us. There were some questions around that from stakeholders, and we will look to flesh that out in the committee stage but still get feedback from them. The final licence is the hydrogen generation licence, which permits construction, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation of hydrogen generation facilities.

For all intents and purposes, this draws heavily on the concept of a hydrogen generation licence that was put into the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Amendment Bill back in 2021 by the former Liberal government. Ultimately, that did not progress through parliament before the state election, so now we see it drawn in here. It is interesting that in the definitions in the bill generating hydrogen means:

...undertaking operations to create hydrogen (and any compound of hydrogen necessary for its processing, storage or transport) by processes such as electrolysis of water or the reformation of natural gas...

Again, that talks not only to the potential I spoke about previously but also to the fact that, in terms of hydrogen generation, it looks at producing hydrogen not only from renewable sources but also from natural gas, which you would say is a non-renewable source but, by carbon capture, can convert that to clean hydrogen. Both those forms of hydrogen are in the bill, and certainly that gives the state more options and more ability to move forward in this space. I think the feedback from most quarters is that it is a good thing it is in there, and that has continued on from 2021.

Another licence in there that is over and above the standard five licences is what is known as a special enterprise licence. According to the department, this is provided to facilitate the establishment, development or expansion of hydrogen and renewable energy enterprises of major significance to the economy of this state. Importantly, where those other licences were for designated land primarily, the special enterprise licence can be granted in relation to both freehold land and non-freehold land and state waters, and we will touch on that. There are certainly questions that have been raised by stakeholders in this process around that and that we can certainly touch on further.

As I said previously, in terms of freehold land, those freehold landowners and stakeholders involved certainly were keen that the existing regime or the ability to put renewable energy infrastructure on their freehold land principally was maintained in a one-for-one move from the existing regime to what we see here. From what has been explained in the briefing, and what we can see in the bill, it certainly seems that on freehold land renewable energy proponents will need to secure access to land through direct agreement with landowners, which, from what I can understand, will act to preserve the existing arrangements.

Effectively, if the freehold landholders do not want to see a renewable energy project, if they are approached by proponents they do not have to say, 'Yes, we will take it.' The ability is there to say no, and then the process finishes because there can be no licences awarded without a direct agreement in place, and the right to access land, I think, is the way it is worded in the bill. In the case

where freehold landowners are happy for a renewable energy project to go on their land—again for the same reasons I have spoken about the pastoralists—they understand the opportunities there are not only for themselves but for the state in terms of being able to build these out.

How that has worked, in my understanding between what was first countenanced and what has resulted in the initial bill, is that feasibility activities on freehold land are able to continue. They do not need to have a renewable energy feasibility licence to proceed. They can go about initially doing the basic understanding and feasibility on a freehold landowner without having to have the government saying yes via a licence. They can go ahead and do that.

However, should they get to the stage where they want to put up masts and the like, the process at the moment through the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act is that they have to get an application for that and, because these masts are quite tall, they need to have planning approval. Instead of that, the department informs me that is done through a renewable energy feasibility permit, I think it is called—through a permit nonetheless. From that perspective, it is similar to the previous regime.

The other aspect in terms of freehold land is they do not have to be declared in a release. They do not have to be part of a release area to go ahead, so freehold land again allows renewable energy to go ahead, based more upon what private companies are prepared to look at and in a less controlled manner than the government is trying to implement on designated land.

As I have mentioned, for all intents and purposes the existing freehold landowners have the same rights in this bill as before, except for instances where a special enterprise licence can come into effect. What that can mean is that if a minister going through the process declares a renewable energy project or hydrogen generation to be of state significance, there is the ability for that to be a mechanism for this infrastructure to go on freehold land. That is something that I think will draw out concern amongst freehold landowners. We need to consult more with stakeholders around this because this would mean that renewable energy proponents could get access to freehold land via this special enterprise licence. I will touch on that further on in the contribution.

Referring again to freehold landowners being able to come up with commercial agreements with a private company, data collection is not a requirement for freehold land. There were concerns that, through a licensing regime on freehold land, the data being collected would have to be provided to government. That is quite sensitive data and it costs a lot of money for these companies to go through that feasibility stage, so the feedback from the renewable energy industry was that they were opposed to data collection having to be given up to the government during the feasibility stage on freehold land. In terms of dealing with freehold land, we can touch on those concerns again later on.

Pastoralists are tied up in this area of designated land and release areas, and I spoke before on the process there. Once a release area has been declared, there will be a competitive tender. My understanding is that, in terms of consultation with the various stakeholders, landowners and landholders, the pastoralists will hopefully be included in that process. It is not in the legislation itself, but that will be required to be worked through, as will consultation with native title. Certainly, at the other end, once tenders are awarded, there is the opportunity for a licence to be awarded. In the case of this bill, it goes to one proponent via a renewable energy feasibility licence, which provides for one renewable energy company to do the feasibility study.

Again, we talked a little bit about data collection. My understanding from the briefing is that, while that is going on, that data is able to be retained by the renewable energy company and certainly while they hold that licence. I understand it is in the interest of the state to try to get as much data as possible because that helps inform other potential release areas, but there is a balance between the commercial sensitivities and the renewable energy companies putting that time and effort in.

The other aspect is that, because only one company has the renewable energy feasibility licence, ultimately if they decide to go ahead and move to the next stage to have a renewable energy infrastructure licence or hydrogen generation, they have to have had the feasibility first-up, so there is only one company that can go through that. Certainly, pastoralists have concerns. Where previously they could deal with potentially multiple interested parties for their particular pastoral lease, now that only one company has that licence there is therefore a reduced and diminished negotiating potential for the pastoral lessee.



The concerns that have been raised with me initially are that this may result in a reduced leasing fee because of that ability to negotiate. Hopefully, that is not the case, because when the pastoralists are consulted they can have a bit of buy-in in terms of being able to manage that, but that is one of the concerns. They also have some concerns around the rents that could be paid because of that, not only because of the diminished negotiating power but also, as I will touch on later, because of the ability for rent to be collected as part of this bill.

I will touch briefly on state waters as well. The Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Bill considers having release areas and then subsequently licences being available for energy companies to have offshore wind farms in state waters. Mostly this falls within three kilometres of the coastline, but also there are waters within Gulf St Vincent the whole way up basically and also Spencer Gulf, which provide a much more sizeable area in terms of state waters.

I am mindful that release areas will not be able to be declared within existing marine parks and sanctuary zones, but you can see some of the effects of consultation going on now around offshore wind. Even in South Australia, consultation processes are going on at the moment in regard to commonwealth waters and over on the east coast as well. These really are critical marine ecosystems. One great example is the cuttlefish in Upper Spencer Gulf near Port Bonython. They are very sensitive. There are a lot of fisheries there as well.

This is handled in the bill but, based on the consultation, if there are any other concerns they will be fleshed out here. It seems from the feedback we have that offshore wind is potentially not going to come online anywhere near as quickly as the onshore wind. If you are going to have regulation of renewable energy, then it also needs to consider state waters in the bill.

Clause 45, subdivision 9, talks about rent. The idea around rent, and how that plays out, is that once a renewable energy proponent has been provided with access to designated lands they will be required to pay rent to the state government for use of that land. I am emphasising again designated land; freehold land is separate, from what I understand.

The rent that is paid replaces the existing laws in the Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act, where money was to be paid but how that worked is that it went into the Pastoral Land Management Fund and then 95 per cent of that rent was then paid to either the pastoral lessee or the native title holder. The intention was that these amounts would have been negotiated as part of the access agreements with the pastoralist or the Indigenous land use agreement with the native title holder.

Currently, there are no commercial wind or solar farms operating on this pastoral land. That is the intention there. Here we have the framework, where money from those projects went into the Pastoral Land Management Fund and was disbursed and stayed in the region. It does not seem that that is necessarily the case here. It seems that the rent to be collected will be going into general revenue.

Before the election, the government said there were going to be no new taxes; yet, as some stakeholders have said, this is effectively a tax where moneys will be paid directly to the government that was not announced before the election. The feedback I have been getting from stakeholders is that there are concerns around this rent. Potentially, it will come down to what that amount will be. This will be played out in the regulations.

Some of the feedback we have is that if the rent that the government is proposing to charge is too high, and if they are looking to charge rent commensurate with what the freehold landowners charge for their wind and solar farms, that means these renewable energy proponents could say, 'We are paying this much to the government and that means there is less money that potentially can be paid either to the native title holders or to the pastoral lessees, or go into the Pastoral Land Management Fund and effectively stay within that region.'

There are concerns around an economic activity that has been brought about by renewable energy in the regions. We understand that it helps from the state's perspective and an equity perspective, but certainly some of the feedback is about what the ultimate impact on the regions will be, specifically the pastoral districts and the regional communities. There are certainly concerns there that we can flesh out. In terms of the time, I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

**WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY (INDUSTRIAL MANSLAUGHTER) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Introduction and First Reading*

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

**PUBLIC SECTOR (MINISTERIAL TRAVEL REPORTS) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Introduction and First Reading*

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

At 17:36 the house adjourned until Wednesday 27 September 2023 at 10:30.

*Answers to Questions***LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARIES**

In reply to **the Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (3 May 2023).

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs):**

Section 27(2) of the Local Government Act 1999 (the Act), requires the Local Government Boundaries Commission (the commission) to prepare and publish guidelines on a website that detail how it will perform its role in making recommendations on council boundary changes.

Section 27(3)(b) of the act further requires these guidelines to specify requirements relating to consultation, including consultation with the community, councils affected by boundary change proposals and entities that represent the interests of council employees affected by proposals.

Accordingly, the commission has published its Guideline 9 – Engagement and Consultation addressing these requirements. This guideline states that the Commission will design an engagement plan for each general proposal that enables fit-for-purpose engagement and consultation, in accordance with the principles set out in the guideline:

- Engagement is fit for purpose.

The engagement and consultation process matches the significance of the boundary change proposal. It is targeted, flexible, timely and considers any previous engagement and consultation.

- Engagement is genuine.

The commission will make every effort to ensure that councils and communities can participate in boundary change proposals and understand the range of views on boundary change proposals.

- Engagement is inclusive and respectful.

Councils and the community affected by a boundary change proposal will have the opportunity to participate and be heard.

- Engagement is informed and transparent.

The commission will ensure that councils and the community have access to all relevant information on boundary change proposals. When making recommendations, the commission will explain the reasons behind them.

Additionally, when undertaking an inquiry into a boundary change proposal, the commission must consider the principles set out in section 26 of the act and the following matters under section 31(3)(b) of the act:

1. The financial implications and impact on resources that the general proposal is likely to have on any council affected by the general proposal; and
2. The extent of support for the general proposal (in particular) and boundary reform in the area (in a general sense) within the community affected by the general proposal; and
3. The extent of support for the general proposal of any council affected by the general proposal; and
4. The impact on the various rights and interests of any council employees affected by the general proposal; and
5. Any other principles prescribed by the regulations.

While the act does not set out a weighting or level of precedence that applies to engagement on boundary change inquiries, the commission has advised councils affected by recent boundary change proposals that, if inquiries into these proposals proceed, community engagement and consultation will take place in accordance with the principles set out in guideline 9 and be extensive to ensure that the commission is fully informed of all views.

Following the completion of any inquiry, the commission will provide me with a report containing its recommendations on the proposal. The inquiry report must also be released publicly on the commission's website, in accordance with section 31(5) of the act.

My role under the Act is to determine if a proposal for change will proceed or not, based on this report. I will therefore look closely at all matters included in any such report, including the community engagement that the Commission will have undertaken.

**DUKES HIGHWAY**

In reply to **Mr PEDERICK (Hammond)** (3 May 2023).

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs):**

A strategic business case focusing on freight productivity improvements is currently being prepared. It includes the investigation of options for the duplication of Sturt Highway, Dukes Highway and Augusta Highway.

#### **STURT HIGHWAY**

In reply to **Mr PEDERICK (Hammond)** (3 May 2023).

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs):** A strategic business case focusing on freight productivity improvements is currently being prepared. It includes the investigation of options for the duplication of Sturt Highway, Dukes Highway and Augusta Highway.

#### *Estimates Replies*

#### **EFFICIENCY DIVIDEND**

In reply to **Mr COWDREY (Colton)** (29 June 2023). (Estimates Committee B)

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer):** The Malinauskas government did not apply a 1.7 per cent efficiency dividend to agencies.

Across its two budgets, the Malinauskas government has sought to make savings by;

- diverting resources from programs that were not a priority for the government;
- introducing operating efficiencies in non-frontline services, and;
- allocating executive reductions to agencies.

Both previously approved general operating efficiencies applied by the former government, and savings applied by the current government, form a part of an agency's base budget that the chief executive has the responsibility to manage. Additional savings sought by the Malinauskas government now also form agency base budgets across the forward estimates'.

Given previously applied efficiency dividends simply form part of the agency's base budget, there is no specific monitoring of previously applied efficiency dividends other than standard monitoring of the agency's overall financial performance against its approved budget.