

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

### Wednesday, 5 February 2025

**The SPEAKER (Hon. L.W.K. Bignell)** took the chair at 10:30.

**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*

### CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING FUND (APPLICATION OF FUND) AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 27 November 2024.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:32):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....	27
Noes.....	13
Majority .....	14

#### AYES

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

#### NOES

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

#### PAIRS

Malinauskas, P.B.	Pisoni, D.G.
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Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

*Parliamentary Procedure***VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I would like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery today of Wayne Matthew, a former minister in this place. In fact, he is the only minister to ever be responsible for the Y2K bug, so he goes down in history with that rare distinction. He was also the former member for Bright for many years and was my local member when I lived in Hallett Cove in the early 1990s. Welcome, Wayne.

*Bills***SUMMARY OFFENCES (UNLAWFUL SELLING OF KNIVES) AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 13 November 2024.)

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10:38):** I rise to just briefly speak on the bill, in circumstances where the government has indicated it will bring its legislation to the parliament. That is welcome and we support it.

In the particular circumstances of the day's events in Sweden, we have read, terribly, that at least 10 people have lost their lives in Orebro and another dozen have been harmed in what is Sweden's worst mass shooting. It has happened at an adult education place of learning, in circumstances where, as we are told, a person who was not known to police, with no history of crime, has taken a weapon and caused mass casualties.

As is typically the case, the Swedish community and authorities were calm and resolute in their response. I was particularly moved this morning by the words of the priest at the local church in Orebro, who said quite calmly that they have been offering a coffee and a word of calm to the people in the community responding to this terrible tragedy.

It is a reminder to us, if we ever needed it, that violent crime can come and devastate a community at a place and time and nature that no-one would have thought, so vigilance towards ensuring that we are doing all we can to remove access to weapons, obviously those that are capable of causing such catastrophic mass trauma—guns in this case; knives, the subject of this bill—are matters of responsibility. I reflect on those terrible events at Port Arthur that happened just a few weeks after the election of the Howard government back in April 1996. Sometimes it is events that lead to the need for the sort of public galvanising around improvement for safety for community.

In this case this bill, brought to the house by the shadow minister for police, has shone a light on a matter of serious concern for our community. It is good that the government has responded and we look forward to seeing the introduction of that legislation as it has been foreshadowed in the house yesterday. This is a day for serious and sombre reflection around the world about how we tackle violence. Meanwhile, this bill has had its important role to play.

If I just say one thing more about this particular context, we are going to see the start of the arts festival here in South Australia in the coming weeks. The headline opera in the arts festival, *Innocence*, is a Finnish opera with a Swedish, Norwegian and Scandinavian cast. It is about a school shooting and the responsibility that we all must reflect on in terms of what leads to such terrible events.

We have Sweden in our mind today and we can think about what a key performance will bring to us in Adelaide in a few short weeks. It is good that this legislation is coming to the fore and we look forward, as I say, to what the government will introduce in this sitting week.

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:42):** I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....27

Noes.....13  
Majority .....14

AYES

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

NOES

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

PAIRS

Malinauskas, P.B.	Pisoni, D.G.
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Motion thus carried; debate adjourned.

**CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (SEXUAL PREDATION OFFENCES) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 30 October 2024.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:47):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....27  
Noes.....14  
Majority .....13

AYES

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

## NOES

Basham, D.K.B.  
 Cowdrey, M.J.  
 Hurn, A.M.  
 Pratt, P.K.  
 Telfer, S.J.

Batty, J.A.  
 Cregan, D.R.  
 Patterson, S.J.R.  
 Tarzia, V.A.  
 Whetstone, T.J.

Brock, G.G.  
 Gardner, J.A.W.  
 Pederick, A.S.  
 Teague, J.B. (teller)

## PAIRS

Malinauskas, P.B.

Pisoni, D.G.

Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

**PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES (ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE) AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 10 April 2024.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:51):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....27  
 Noes.....14  
 Majority .....13

## AYES

Andrews, S.E.  
 Brown, M.E.  
 Close, S.E.  
 Fulbrook, J.P.  
 Hughes, E.J.  
 Michaels, A.  
 O'Hanlon, C.C.  
 Picton, C.J.  
 Szakacs, J.K.

Bettison, Z.L.  
 Champion, N.D.  
 Cook, N.F.  
 Hildyard, K.A.  
 Hutchesson, C.L.  
 Mullighan, S.C.  
 Pearce, R.K.  
 Savvas, O.M.  
 Thompson, E.L.

Boyer, B.I.  
 Clancy, N.P.  
 Dighton, A.E.  
 Hood, L.P.  
 Koutsantonis, A.  
 Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)  
 Piccolo, A.  
 Stinson, J.M.  
 Wortley, D.J.

## NOES

Basham, D.K.B. (teller)  
 Cowdrey, M.J.  
 Hurn, A.M.  
 Pratt, P.K.  
 Telfer, S.J.

Batty, J.A.  
 Cregan, D.R.  
 Patterson, S.J.R.  
 Tarzia, V.A.  
 Whetstone, T.J.

Brock, G.G.  
 Gardner, J.A.W.  
 Pederick, A.S.  
 Teague, J.B.

## PAIRS

Malinauskas, P.B.

Pisoni, D.G.

Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

**NEW WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL (RELOCATION OF SA POLICE FACILITIES)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 27 September 2023.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:55):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....27  
Noes.....14  
Majority .....13

**AYES**

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

**NOES**

Basham, D.K.B. (teller)	Batty, J.A.	Brock, G.G.
Cowdrey, M.J.	Cregan, D.R.	Gardner, J.A.W.
Hurn, A.M.	Patterson, S.J.R.	Pederick, A.S.
Pratt, P.K.	Tarzia, V.A.	Teague, J.B.
Telfer, S.J.	Whetstone, T.J.	

**PAIRS**

Malinauskas, P.B.	Pisoni, D.G.
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Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

**PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE (ADELAIDE PARK LANDS)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 18 October 2023.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:59):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....25  
Noes.....14  
Majority .....11

## AYES

Andrews, S.E.	Bettison, Z.L.	Boyer, B.I.
Brown, M.E.	Champion, N.D.	Clancy, N.P.
Close, S.E.	Cook, N.F.	Dighton, A.E.
Fulbrook, J.P.	Hildyard, K.A.	Hood, L.P.
Hughes, E.J.	Hutchesson, C.L.	Michaels, A.
Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)	O'Hanlon, C.C.	Pearce, R.K.
Piccolo, A.	Picton, C.J.	Savvas, O.M.
Stinson, J.M.	Szakacs, J.K.	Thompson, E.L.
Wortley, D.J.		

## NOES

Basham, D.K.B. (teller)	Batty, J.A.	Brock, G.G.
Cowdrey, M.J.	Cregan, D.R.	Gardner, J.A.W.
Hurn, A.M.	Patterson, S.J.R.	Pederick, A.S.
Pratt, P.K.	Tarzia, V.A.	Teague, J.B.
Telfer, S.J.	Whetstone, T.J.	

## PAIRS

Malinauskas, P.B.	Pisoni, D.G.
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Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

**CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY COMMISSIONER BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 28 August 2024.)

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:05):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....	25
Noes.....	14
Majority .....	11

## AYES

Andrews, S.E.	Bettison, Z.L.	Boyer, B.I.
Brown, M.E.	Champion, N.D.	Clancy, N.P.
Close, S.E.	Cook, N.F.	Dighton, A.E.
Fulbrook, J.P.	Hildyard, K.A.	Hood, L.P.
Hughes, E.J.	Hutchesson, C.L.	Michaels, A.
Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)	O'Hanlon, C.C.	Pearce, R.K.
Piccolo, A.	Picton, C.J.	Savvas, O.M.
Stinson, J.M.	Szakacs, J.K.	Thompson, E.L.
Wortley, D.J.		

## NOES

Basham, D.K.B. (teller)	Batty, J.A.	Brock, G.G.
Cowdrey, M.J.	Cregan, D.R.	Gardner, J.A.W.
Hurn, A.M.	Patterson, S.J.R.	Pederick, A.S.

Pratt, P.K.  
Telfer, S.J.

Tarzia, V.A.  
Whetstone, T.J.

Teague, J.B.

PAIRS

Malinauskas, P.B.

Pisoni, D.G.

Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

**BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION (TISSUE DONATION STATEMENTS)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:10):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....25  
Noes.....14  
Majority .....11

AYES

Andrews, S.E.  
Brown, M.E.  
Close, S.E.  
Fulbrook, J.P.  
Hughes, E.J.  
Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)  
Piccolo, A.  
Stinson, J.M.  
Wortley, D.J.

Bettison, Z.L.  
Champion, N.D.  
Cook, N.F.  
Hildyard, K.A.  
Hutchesson, C.L.  
O'Hanlon, C.C.  
Picton, C.J.  
Szakacs, J.K.

Boyer, B.I.  
Clancy, N.P.  
Dighton, A.E.  
Hood, L.P.  
Michaels, A.  
Pearce, R.K.  
Savvas, O.M.  
Thompson, E.L.

NOES

Basham, D.K.B. (teller)  
Cowdrey, M.J.  
Hurn, A.M.  
Pratt, P.K.  
Telfer, S.J.

Batty, J.A.  
Cregan, D.R.  
Patterson, S.J.R.  
Tarzia, V.A.  
Whetstone, T.J.

Brock, G.G.  
Gardner, J.A.W.  
Pederick, A.S.  
Teague, J.B.

PAIRS

Malinauskas, P.B.

Pisoni, D.G.

Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

**GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING BILL**

*Second Reading*

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:15):** I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes .....23  
Noes.....14

Majority .....9

## AYES

Andrews, S.E.	Bettison, Z.L.	Brown, M.E.
Champion, N.D.	Clancy, N.P.	Close, S.E.
Cook, N.F.	Dighton, A.E.	Fulbrook, J.P.
Hildyard, K.A.	Hood, L.P.	Hughes, E.J.
Hutchesson, C.L.	Michaels, A.	Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)
O'Hanlon, C.C.	Pearce, R.K.	Piccolo, A.
Picton, C.J.	Savvas, O.M.	Szakacs, J.K.
Thompson, E.L.	Wortley, D.J.	

## NOES

Basham, D.K.B. (teller)	Batty, J.A.	Brock, G.G.
Cowdrey, M.J.	Cregan, D.R.	Gardner, J.A.W.
Hurn, A.M.	Patterson, S.J.R.	Pederick, A.S.
Pratt, P.K.	Tarzia, V.A.	Teague, J.B.
Telfer, S.J.	Whetstone, T.J.	

## PAIRS

Malinauskas, P.B.	Pisoni, D.G.
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Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

*Motions***LUNAR NEW YEAR**

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (11:22):** I move:

That this house—

- (a) notes the Lunar New Year took place on 29 January 2025;
- (b) recognises this is the Year of the Snake, bringing abundance and prosperity; and
- (c) wishes the South Australian Chinese community a safe, happy and successful new year.

I rise to speak about the wonderful celebrations that are occurring across our state and, indeed, my community to celebrate Lunar New Year.

Lunar New Year took place on 29 January, and there are many traditions and customs associated with Lunar New Year, including the colour red—which I very much like wearing—visiting ancestors' graves, displaying lanterns, gifting money and being kind to one another. We also acknowledge that other Asian countries also celebrate Lunar New Year with their own traditions and customs, including Vietnam, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

This year, we welcomed the Year of the Snake, associated with creativity, transformation and strength. People born in the Year of the Snake are believed to be intelligent, intuitive, strong and caring. That might suggest that, indeed, everybody in this parliament might connect with the snake. Lunar New Year also incorporates elements, including wood, water, fire, earth and metal. The 2025 element is wood, making it the Year of the Wood Snake, having last been celebrated in 1965.

The Malinauskas government is proud to continue its funding to assist in the delivery of the beloved Chinatown Adelaide Lunar New Year Street Party, which I cannot wait to attend this weekend. On 8 February, the Chinatown precinct will come alive with dancing, stalls, delicious food offerings, art and celebration. I would like to thank Mr Wayne Chao, president of Chinatown Adelaide South Australia, together with his executive committee and members. They work incredibly hard to promote the history and tradition of Chinese culture here in South Australia.



This event is accessible for all South Australians to participate in and each year the crowds certainly show that. I also acknowledge all the community organisations that have held Lunar New Year events this year. It is such a beautiful and vibrant time of the year, and the Malinauskas government truly values the contributions these organisations make to our state.

As an example, the weekend before last I was able to join Chinese Welfare Services SA at Kingdom Chinese Restaurant in Gouger Street as an early Lunar New Year celebration. I want to acknowledge Vivien and all the people at the association for the wonderful work they do supporting people in the Chinese community. It was a pleasure to attend the event, alongside Independent MLC the Hon. Jing Lee in the other place and her husband, Eddie.

We have so much to celebrate when we look back on the past year as the relationship between South Australia and China continues to strengthen. We recently welcomed back China Southern Airlines to Adelaide and have received two new pandas at Adelaide Zoo—Xing Qiu and Yi Lan—following Wang Wang and Fu Ni's retirement. Last week I had the absolute pleasure of joining supporters of the Adelaide Zoo to wholeheartedly welcome our newest Adelaide residents.

We heard from one of the zookeepers that Xing Qiu and Yi Lan are settling in really well, with their personalities already shining through. Yi Lan is curious and particularly loves her new red hammock—if you hop on the Adelaide Zoo's social media you will see her enjoying her hammock—while Xing Qiu is slightly more cautious and takes time to consider new items in his enclosure. One thing is for certain: he really loves bamboo. I encourage people as part of Lunar New Year celebrations to visit Adelaide Zoo and wish Xing Qiu and Yi Lan a very happy Lunar New Year as they settle into their new home. To everybody across our state, in particular all those in my local community: Xin Nian Kuai Le.

**The SPEAKER:** Let's hope those new pandas are more productive than Wang Wang and Fu Ni, as much as we loved them.

**Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (11:26):** On that note, I rise to commend the motion. Where the member for Adelaide left off, I was proud to attend the official welcome to Xing Qiu and Yi Lan. I can tell you that Yi Lan was heading straight up the nearest tree, which the zoo folks were pretty excited about because it was the fertility tree. You have all these protectors around all the small trees in the enclosure. I pointed to this big one without a protector on it and they said, 'Oh, that's the fertility tree,' and as soon as the door opened Yi Lan was straight up the fertility tree. I have not seen a panda quite so active before. They rested shortly after that.

It is all the more appropriate in the Year of the Wood Snake, because among all those other criteria, as we have been reminded in the last week, the wood snake also represents fertility. It is a wonderful thing that we have seen the new pandas arrive and welcomed the Year of the Wood Snake. Quin Tran at the festival on the weekend made the point about it being the year of fertility in saying, 'That might explain why I have four children.' There were celebrations in all directions over the last week and we know there is a particular celebration for the Chinese community this coming weekend.

I want to reflect briefly on the Zhu-Lin Buddhist Association celebration last week. I was proud to attend and represent the Leader of the Opposition, among thousands of the Chinese community celebrating that very important new year celebration. They do it properly: fireworks at midnight, mid-week, the night before school starts—an extraordinary amount of exuberance and celebration. They are there at that large site, at which building is ongoing, with plans to do more, the building of nursing facilities in the future for that community. It has been 30 years on that site, sustained by volunteer work, the provision of meals every weekend and regular involvement all the way through the year for that community.

It is so special to be able to celebrate this important time of the year together with those of us representing the parliament and the government and, as I say, me there representing the opposition. It was a very significant and happy occasion indeed.

As I have alluded to just now, the Vietnamese Tét Festival for the new year celebrated on the weekend, in if it was not 40° heat it was up there, was just a wonderful, joyous occasion. It is new year, and this year it was also celebrating and commemorating, for those among the Vietnamese

community from a refugee background, 50 years since those refugees started arriving in South Australia, in 1975.

The Premier made this observation and I did in my own way as well—to say that 50 years ago it might have been true to say to those new arrivals, 'Look what Australia is doing and is able to do for you.' We know that beautiful song that has been sung now on significant occasions saying, *Thank you Australia*, but 50 years down the track we can go along and say, 'Thank you, Vietnamese community, for all you have done for Australia and for South Australia.' As we celebrate a new year, we do that very much together because the Chinese community and the Vietnamese community in South Australia are at the core of the fabric of what we claim as proudly South Australia and what characterises those aspects of life that we are proud to call South Australian.

So it was a week of opportunity to say thanks, to celebrate, to welcome in the Year of the Wood Snake. There is more to come, and I look forward to continuing to participate in those celebrations and wish all of our communities, particularly those celebrating this Lunar New Year, a very happy new year and a happy new year ahead.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (11:32):** It is a great pleasure to be able to acknowledge Lunar New Year in this place. To everybody in our Chinese and South Asian community, those who are Mandarin or Cantonese speakers I would say 'Xin nian kuai le' and 'Gong xi fa cai'—happy new year, and may this be a prosperous year, befitting the Year of the Wood Snake, befitting the Year of the Snake. I hope that the resilience, the cleverness and the creativity and for our pandas, as the member for Heysen said, the fertility that the Year of the Snake suggests is truly brought home to all.

It was a great pleasure for me to join the member for Heysen along with a number of other members of parliament—the Hon. Jing Lee, members of the government and members of the broader community—at the Zhu-Lin Buddhist Association temple the other night to bring in the new year. It is an event that I have very much enjoyed going to year after year.

It is funny, because although it is some distance from the Morialta electorate, I have never been there without the experience of somebody from Rostrevor or Athelstone or Newton coming up to me within the first five or 10 minutes of the event and expressing their appreciation that they have come. It is truly something that brings people from the Chinese community in particular and the broader South-East Asian community together, those Buddhist South Australians who have brought so much to our South Australian experience of multiculturalism, who have added so much to our cultural and social fabric and who have helped make South Australia what is in my view the most successful multicultural story pretty much in the world.

There was an expression of joy, welcoming the new year—as we began the school year, as the member for Heysen said. I think the member for Heysen did a great job as the new shadow minister for multicultural affairs in expressing the Liberal Party's strong support. Indeed, it is appropriate that the parliament and the government continue to foster multicultural success stories, especially when the communities are reaching out to the broader South Australian community to share in their expression of their faith, their culture, their history and their values.

I commend all of those from the Zhu-Lin Buddhist Association, who did such a great job in bringing it together; the MCs were fantastic. To the Abbot, the Deputy Abbot and all the assistant abbots, it was very much appreciated. I look forward to next year but, for the moment, we bring in the Year of the Wood Snake in that format.

As the member for Adelaide said, we have the Chinatown street party coming up this Saturday night, and thanks to Wayne Chao and all the volunteers—as they are, in many cases—from the Chinatown Adelaide Association for putting on that event. Can I give everybody the hot tip? If you do not have other plans on Saturday night, get yourself down to Gouger Street, because it is a spectacular celebration. Between the food, the smells, the stalls and the performances it is a wonderful expression of culture right in the heart of Adelaide. It is something I think everyone in South Australia would enjoy.

For those members of parliament who are honoured to be in the formalities—which is certainly a good part of the day—it is important that we express our appreciation to all those members

of the community, all the traders and all the cultural performers, as we should. You do not need to be there from 5pm to 7pm to enjoy that night. It is something that is really important that Chinatown and the traders put on together.

The former Marshall Liberal government supported this work and the work of Chinatown Adelaide very significantly; I remember it was David Ridgway who opened the covering down Moonta Street that has enhanced what can be done. However, we all appreciate the ongoing support that the government continues to provide—that it has provided for a long time and continues to provide—to ensure that street festival can bring the best of multicultural celebrations to anyone who wants to visit.

It is really important that we recognise that the Lunar New Year is a broad celebration for many people of South-East Asian backgrounds. This year is a particularly important year for South Australia's Vietnamese community, and it was a privilege to join the member for Heysen and other members of parliament—and I note from local government as well—at the Vietnamese community's Tet Festival on Saturday afternoon.

As the member for Heysen identified, it was a hot afternoon, but it had also been a hot afternoon the weekend prior when so many volunteers from the Vietnamese community had been putting together, hand stitching, many of the decorations that were around the Vietnamese Community Association's facilities. They made that outside area—which, on a hot day can be a pretty significant heat zone, as a car park—a covered, shaded area that looked like a piece of Vietnam transplanted into Adelaide's north-western suburbs. It was an extraordinary experience to be there on that hot day, yet thousands of people were still making their way to the Tet Festival to enjoy the experience.

To our Vietnamese community in South Australia, 50 years here in Adelaide as a home away from home, on behalf of the Liberal Party—and the member for Heysen did it so well—we also express 'chuc mung nam moi'. It is a great celebration, the Year of the Wood Snake, for the Vietnamese too. The Vietnamese community in South Australia has had a profound influence on the way in which we express ourselves as a multicultural community, and that community's contribution has been expressed in many different ways. The Vietnamese culture has expressed itself not just in Vietnamese events; it is one of those communities whose cuisine, whose outlook, whose efforts—South Australia would be unthinkable without it.

It is still an ongoing trauma for many people in that community that they were wrenched from their homes as a result of war and as a result of an expansionist, dictatorial regime 50 years ago. The experience of those Vietnamese South Australians and their families in the years that followed that upheaval in 1975 was profoundly traumatic. For second and third generations, some of whom have stories told to them of where they have come from, it is important that they have the opportunity to know the stories, know the culture.

Part of their identity as South Australians is as Vietnamese South Australians, and the stories of their heritage going back thousands of years take pride of place for them, but the stories of the reason they came here are also something that is still quite challenging. It is an ongoing disappointment to many, of course, that is difficult for them to explain sometimes, but they do.

There is a Fringe performance coming up celebrating or telling the story of Gerald Ford's sponsored airlift of Vietnamese children to escape the changes that were happening in 1975. I am looking forward to hearing those stories of survival and celebration of a maintenance of culture in mid-February. I think that is a tremendous show; it is called *Fragile: Handle With Care*. I hope that many members will take the opportunity to get along to see that performance.

I want to thank Quin Tran and the members of the Vietnamese community association for the way that they contribute to maintaining their culture so that not just the second and the third but the fourth generations and those that come after can understand the stories of their heritage, can understand what it means to them to be in South Australia, which prompts the community to celebrate with songs like, as the member for Heysen said, *Thank You Australia*, a beautiful expression of the best of what South Australia is, the best of what Australia is. Perhaps it sometimes requires that look from the outside at what our community can be and can give for us to truly appreciate it.

I express my thanks to them and wish all members of this house, all members of our South-East Asian community, and anyone else who celebrates Lunar New Year a prosperous, safe, happy and creative Year of the Snake.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Morialta reminds us again why he is known as the George Donikian of the South Australian parliament. Hansard may appreciate if you could send up the spelling of those Cantonese and other words that you used as part of your speech in the telling of the story of the greetings during the Lunar New Year.

**Mr BATTY (Bragg) (11:41):** I rise briefly to support this motion. Hansard will be pleased to hear that I am not going to attempt to practise my Mandarin or Cantonese, but I do want to take the opportunity to wish all of those celebrating the Lunar New Year across South Australia a very happy, safe and prosperous Lunar New Year.

The Chinese community, of course, celebrates Lunar New Year, as do many others. We have a thriving Chinese community across South Australia. I think nearly 60,000 South Australians have Chinese ancestry. A lot of those people can be found in my own electorate and local community. I think about one in 10 of my local constituents speaks Mandarin or Cantonese at home. They do it a lot better than the member for Morialta.

It has been a pleasure to engage with that community as their local member of parliament over the past few years, as recently as last month at a citizenship ceremony, where we welcomed some of the newest members of our local community. Citizenship ceremonies are very happy occasions. I think it is an enormously important moment in the lives of those people who are becoming new citizens, but I think it is also a really important moment in the life of our state, our country and our local community, because we are all the beneficiaries of these people's lived experiences, their own cultures and their own history.

The Chinese community, of course, is extremely active across the state. It was a pleasure to attend to farewell Wang Wang and Fu Ni at the Adelaide Zoo along with the member for Chaffey last year, and I look forward to visiting our newest pandas. It was also a pleasure to attend the Chinese film festival that took place at the end of last year, the Australia China International Film Festival, which welcomed over 5,000 people to South Australia. It involved the screening of a number of films, a number of workshops and also a number of awards.

I attended the awards ceremony, which was a very big and happy occasion. I want to congratulate all of those who were involved in organising that, in particular the Burnside councillor Andy Xing, who played a key role in helping to put that together. Hopefully, it will continue to be a success in the future.

Last year, I also had the opportunity to participate in the Australia-China Youth Dialogue. I was a delegate to the Australia-China Youth Dialogue in 2023 and had the opportunity to travel to Chengdu in China, which was a really great opportunity to learn a lot more about the contribution of Chinese Australians to our country, to learn more about Chinese culture and, of course, to visit some pandas and to eat a whole lot of hotpot as well. It was a great experience.

What was particularly rewarding was that last year the conference came to Australia, and for the first time it came to Adelaide. It was a pleasure to be able to support some of that program, part of which involved a seminar here at Parliament House, and also a trip to the Barossa, where I had the opportunity to chair a panel about the Australian wine market in China. I want to thank all those involved with the Australia-China Youth Dialogue for putting that conference together and for adding Adelaide to their list of destinations. We hope to welcome them back soon.

Of course, there are a number of upcoming Chinese New Year and Lunar New Year celebrations. We have had many already, and the member for Morialta has mentioned the Chinatown Adelaide Lunar New Year Street Party coming up this weekend. I look forward to going along to Gouger Street and having a lot of fun, eating a lot of food and celebrating the Lunar New Year, just as I look forward to heading along to the Lantern Festival celebrations at the Burnside council in the coming weeks. There is lots going on, and I am very excited about all of it.

I support this motion and once again take the opportunity to wish all those celebrating the Lunar New Year, particularly in my local community, a very happy, safe and prosperous Lunar New Year.

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (11:46):** I, too, rise to speak on this motion. I think it is a really important motion, recognising the Chinese New Year. It has a lot of meaning, not only to those Chinese residents here in South Australia but also in the recognition that China is our largest trading partner. I think it is reciprocal. Obviously, we do have a sister-city relationship with Qingdao. On 29 January it was 'Let the celebrations begin!', as they say. It is 16 days of celebrations to celebrate the Year of the Snake, which is the zodiac sign for this year.

As the member for Bragg mentioned, he and I attended the farewell of Wang Wang and Fu Ni, the pandas at the Adelaide Zoo. I was fortunate enough to visit the Adelaide Zoo just last week. I took my young grandson, Walker Whetstone, who is four years old. He was keen to have a look at these black-and-white bears, and we managed to get along to have a look at them. He was quite taken with Xing Qiu and Yi Lan. One of them was in hiding, I think it was Qiu, while Lan was hiding down the back somewhere. They really are a unique animal; they have that unique characteristic of being black and white.

I noted at the Adelaide Zoo the amount of bamboo that is grown to feed them. Every available space has bamboo growing, and there are many zoo staff cutting down the bamboo at every opportunity to give those new pandas their favourite food and to keep them ready to go for the operation that we hope will take place in the very near future.

Celebrating the Lunar New Year is also a great opportunity for the South Australian economy, whether it is the local economy while we celebrate here or whether it is sending over a lot of our produce. Potentially, anything that is red is ready to go. I guess the barriers of trade, over a long period of time, have caused significant hardship for many of those commodities. But we are back up and running, and it is great to see that we have wine going into China, the majority of which is red wine. We have a lot of horticulture going into China, and the majority of that horticulture is red. Whether it is dragon fruit, stone fruit or grapes, we are seeing a lot of produce going that way.

One of the great products out of our ocean is the rock lobster and I think we are back in business. After speaking to the lobster fishermen they are very, very happy to finally see their produce returning to the tables and the restaurants, not only here but also in China, and it is great to see. Red meat is another product that saw headwinds through the trade barriers or the trade tariffs that were introduced to some of our world's best products. It is great to see those tariffs lifted.

For many of you there are 20 unknown things about the Lunar New Year and I will just give you an understanding of what some of those are. The Lunar New Year is known as the Spring Festival and there is no set date for a Chinese New Year. The day is for praying to the gods and it is also for fighting off the monsters. It is the day the most fireworks in the world are let go—of course, only where it is legal—and it is the longest Chinese holiday of the year.

The festival also causes the largest human migration in the world, and it gives a few stats. Single people hire fake boyfriends and girlfriends to take home as part of the festival. There is no showering, no sweeping or throwing out of garbage allowed during the festival.

Children receive lucky money in red envelopes. Of course, children are always looking for money, but if they come in red envelopes it could mean prosperity. You eat dumplings for every meal on every day during the festival. The Chinese desserts have special meanings and there is wine specifically for the Spring Festival that is made and branded to celebrate. All of the decorations are historically in red and every year has a zodiac. This year, as we said, is the Year of the Snake. It does say that your zodiac year is bad luck. We do not like to see anyone with bad luck, but that is a Chinese tradition.

You grow one year older than the festival, so the festival never ages; it is always upon us on an annual basis. The greeting is Xin Nian Kuai Le and the Chinese New Year ends with the Lantern Festival. So there are many things involved in the Chinese Lunar New Year.

It is a great festival and for many of us here in South Australia Gouger Street is the go-to. The food, the smells, the festivities, the action, the noise and the fireworks going off really make it a

great opportunity just to be a part of the festival and to go down there and experience what the festivities are about. You can enjoy some great traditional food and be a part of the dragons that wander through, the people adoring Gouger Street and some of the restaurants. It is something that I always look forward to, as do many of us here in this chamber as representatives for our local community. Whether we have a responsibility within portfolio areas, it is a sight to behold. It really is a festival that I think everyone should experience and should be a part of.

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (11:53):** I, too, want to support the motion moved by the member for Adelaide that notes the Lunar New Year took place on 29 January this year and recognises it is the Year of the Snake, being abundance and prosperity, and wishes the South Australian Chinese community a safe, happy and successful new year.

I want to knowledge that this year the Chinese New Year celebrations—and, in fact, the Lunar New Year celebrations—have been very obvious out there. There are many ways of saying happy new year in my electorate and in fact in our state of South Australia, and we can hear them in many different tongues within our communities, not just at this time of year but throughout the year. It is this fabulous rich cultural fabric which now makes up South Australia that we all enjoy. The diversity of experience, knowledge, food and language that permeates our neighbourhoods makes us all richer in our own lives.

In addition to the Chinese residents, I particularly want to extend my Lunar New Year wishes to our Vietnamese, Malaysian, Singaporean and Filipino communities and all who celebrate the Lunar New Year here in South Australia.

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (11:55):** I also rise quickly to support this motion. Of course, on the boundary of the electorate of Morphett and previously in the electorate of Morphett is the Plympton International College and they have a fantastic Chinese bilingual program. I look forward to going tomorrow. They have a fantastic performance to sound in the Chinese New Year, the Year of the Snake. I am looking forward to the cultural performances that go with that. I went last year. The member for Morialta is also a frequent visitor to this school.

It is an R-12 school, so you get performances from multiple year levels and they are fantastic. It is all organised. You have to give a lot of credit to the principal, Amy Whyte, for the work she does, and also Joyce Chen who is the leader of the Chinese bilingual and language program at Plympton International. Certainly, the Year of the Dragon, probably of the 12 years, I would have to say is my favourite. Of course, a lot of people are enraptured by dragons. We were present with the classic dragon. You had performers there with the head on one and the backside on another, moving around, with many symbols and lots of noise as well.

It also should be noted that the school provides that fantastic bilingual program and the school itself has set up a sister school relationship with Jinan No. 3 High School in Shandong. I think it was only October last year when a number of the students from that Jinan No. 3 High School came over as part of an MOU signing ceremony and we were able to experience some of their cultural performances and just see the range of cultures coming out of China that is such a worthy benefit of having this sort of relationship. It exposes Australian students to another culture and, similarly, Chinese students to Australian culture.

At that grassroots level, it just shows at the human side how similar all humans are, putting aside political differences. If only that could be a way forward for us that we get along because you can see the dances the Chinese students came up with are quite similar to what we would experience here as well. It is a fantastic school in the electorate of Morphett among many other fantastic schools. I look forward to attending the Year of the Snake ceremony this week.

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (11:58):** I rise briefly to thank the members for Heysen, Morialta, Bragg, Chaffey, Torrens, and Morphett for their contributions and also echo many of their statements in regard to encouraging as many people as possible to come down to Gouger Street this Saturday to celebrate the Lunar New Year with Chinatown Adelaide. The festivities kick off from 6pm. We have lion dances and other performances, firecrackers which are very loud—word of warning—but lots of fun and beautiful food. It will be just an incredible celebration of the beautiful Chinese culture that we have here in South Australia. Once again, thank you very much to all of the members who contributed today and Xin Nian Kuai Le.

Motion carried.

### POWER PRICES

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (12:01):** I move:

That this house—

- (a) notes that South Australian working families and small businesses are still enduring some of the highest power prices in the country under the Malinauskas Labor state government;
- (b) notes that South Australia has the highest quarterly average wholesale cost of electricity in the nation in the third quarter of 2024, up 76 per cent year on year, according to the Australian Energy Regulator;
- (c) notes that electricity prices for South Australian working families have risen by \$798 per year under the Malinauskas state Labor government, according to the Essential Services Commission of South Australia;
- (d) acknowledges that these rises in energy prices have caused intense hardships for South Australian working families and small businesses and have increased the cost-of-living burden;
- (e) condemns the Malinauskas Labor government for having their costly and experimental hydrogen power plant, which will not reduce power prices for South Australian working families and small businesses, as their only energy policy;
- (f) condemns the Malinauskas Labor government for their continued inaction on energy, resulting in sky-high power prices for South Australian working families and small businesses in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis; and
- (g) calls on the Malinauskas Labor government to develop an energy policy that will support South Australian working families and small businesses during this energy and cost-of-living crisis.

South Australian working families and South Australian small businesses are having to endure some of the highest power prices in the nation under the Malinauskas Labor government. This motion is a call for action for this government from this parliament to focus on bringing down power bills for South Australians. I fear this call will go unheeded.

This time last year I moved a similar motion, urging the government to take action on skyrocketing power bills, and I moved that motion because in 2023 South Australia recorded the highest power bill increase in the nation under the watch of the Premier and the Minister for Energy and Mining. Sadly, since then, prices have continued to escalate out of control. This is not surprising. The current government had no plan at the 2022 election to ensure electricity supply was both affordable and reliable.

In addition to that, the Premier has put the same person in charge of South Australia's energy system, a system that has a direct effect on household and business power bills, and the Premier thought that that would work. Unfortunately, now we have South Australian families and businesses who are paying for it.

I spoke at length in parliament about specific examples, such as pensioner Rick Wahlheim, whose bill has surged. There are examples of businesses as well. One that so many know here in South Australia is Drakes, which employs over 6,000 people. Their power prices have surged and that has an impact on grocery bills here in South Australia. They, of course, are specific examples of the pain that is being felt. That pain is highlighted by reports, such as from ESCOSA, which annually provides the average retail household energy bills here in South Australia. It showed that, to June 2024, electricity bills had risen to \$2,621 here in South Australia, the highest ever on record.

Of course, there have been three of these ESCOSA reports handed down under this Malinauskas Labor government and in each of those reports it shows that power bills have gone up for households. In fact, it shows over those three reports that the average power bill for South Australian households under the Malinauskas Labor government has gone up by \$798. That is nearly a 45 per cent increase on household bills. Small businesses have also experienced a 45 per cent increase to their skyrocketing power bills. Of course, these figures are more than statistics: they represent families that are struggling to make ends meet, they represent small businesses that are fighting to survive and also a state economy that is being held back by poor energy policy.

Instead of focusing on plans to bring down power bills, the Malinauskas Labor government is on track to spend \$700 million on their hydrogen plans that they have admitted will not bring down power bills for households or small businesses. Let me reiterate that: it is not aimed at delivering cheaper electricity bills for struggling South Australian households. How do we know this? In parliament previously we have asked the Minister for Energy whether their expensive hydrogen power plant will bring down power bills for South Australian households and, if so, by how much. The minister's response would leave working families alarmed. His response was:

First and foremost, we have always said this is about trying to get an improvement for industrial users. It's commercial and industrial customers we are targeting.

Adding to that, in Budget and Finance we asked the CEO of the Office of Hydrogen Power SA if this power plant would bring down power bills for households. On 23 separate occasions he was asked about this, and all that could be responded was, 'The targeted objective of this power plant is to lower prices for industrial customers.'

As I have also outlined previously in parliament, the Premier and this government have completely changed the nature and scope of what was promised to South Australians prior to the state election regarding their hydrogen plans. Labor have dropped their promise of 3,600 tonnes of liquefied hydrogen storage in order to avoid massive cost blowouts in the order of hundreds of millions of dollars. Instead, their modelling and their request for tender is based on 100 tonnes of hydrogen storage. That is less than 3 per cent of what was promised to the South Australian electorate.

Labor have also given up on their promise to construct a base load combined cycle turbine, instead opting for a peaking open cycle turbine. This change, going from a base load generator to a peaking generator, fundamentally again changes the nature of the project. Labor have also admitted that their plant will not be operational by the end of 2025 as they promised. No doubt this will cause delays and impacts on costs.

We have seen across the world multiple respected bodies, such as the US Department of Energy, S&P Global Commodity Insights, Bloomberg and, in Australia, the CSIRO, show that the cost of electrolyzers which produce the hydrogen has increased significantly since Labor's hydrogen policy was announced in 2021. That is even before there has been a massive jump in construction cost inflation that has occurred in the last three years, surging by over 30 per cent.

The Malinauskas Labor government's costing document from 2021 has been shown to be based on flawed assumptions and the reality is that this hydrogen plant could cost up to \$1 billion with significant delays in its delivery. That is, of course, without including the cost of the transmission line upgrades and also the water pipelines into this facility. But still the government claims that this plant will cost \$593 million.

At the same time, Labor is desperately changing the scope of this project as well, downscoping it, as there is no way that the original project as promised could be delivered for \$593 million. Of the four main promises in their 2021 Hydrogen Jobs Plan, four out of four of those promises are either broken or in serious doubt. This is hugely concerning. Of course, this has major implications in South Australia because we were promised that hydrogen generation will bring down power prices.

It is at the point now where the Malinauskas Labor government have totally changed the commentary about this project. All they want to talk about is green steel, never about their hydrogen power plant and generating electricity. Green steel was never a core focus of their policy when it was announced. All the focus was on electricity generation. In a 20-page document there was only one mention of green steel, but it is clear that the Premier and his hapless minister are moving the goalposts on this, having to make things up as they go as they desperately try to justify spending so much taxpayer money on a project which really is an amorphous blob, changing form whenever the opposition probes on another flaw. This government's focus on green steel is of little comfort to taxpayers who will be funding this when, in this parliament, the Premier has had to admit that green steel is probably two decades away.

Sanjeev Gupta, from GFG, said that the electric arc furnace and direct reduced iron plants to be installed at the Whyalla Steelworks are dependent on increased gas supply to Whyalla. Note:



not increased hydrogen supply or any hydrogen supply. That is because any path to lower emission steel in Australia that can be produced economically and at scale in the next two decades will have to transition from coal to gas, no matter how much the Premier tries to spin a coal to hydrogen transition. Let me reiterate: the opposition on this side of the chamber support any coal to gas transition.

By sheer necessity at the moment we know the trouble at the steelworks trying to get the furnace back online. To keep the steelworks running now, GFG are having to throw all their resources at just getting the steelworks running now on coking coal for the next five years plus rather than spending what is a significant capital investment to try to save the Premier's dreams.

We now have the absurd situation where the Premier is getting increasingly angry at GFG. The opposition certainly has concerns around contractors not being paid and the effect on the town of Whyalla. But is the Premier getting angry at GFG for not paying creditors or is he actually getting angry because it exposes the folly of him being sucked in to allocate massive taxpayer dollars to a green hydrogen dream that is now a green hydrogen nightmare? There is a sucker born every minute but why is it that so many of these suckers have to be on that side of the parliamentary benches, going right to the top, starting with the Premier and the Minister for Energy? I suppose if you think about it, with a timeframe of 20 years, off into the never-never, that gives the Premier more chance to talk about his fantasy.

At the same time, we have the Minister for Energy in this parliament now trying to blame the project delays to their project on GFG's challenges. I remind you again: there was no mention in their 2021 policy that the project could only proceed with GFG. Was it not about providing electricity to industrial customers? But again, the Premier and the energy minister are making it up as they go. They are totally out of their depth.

Remember, just in October last year, we learnt that the Premier's signature hydrogen plan is ultimately a hoax after it was revealed by the opposition that the government has put out a tender to truck in significant amounts of gas for up to two years. How much gas? The tender asks for four hours of gas a day. That is just a massive amount. And worse, rather than supply it through a pipeline, the gas is going to have to be trucked in from another location using a fleet of diesel-powered B-double trucks.

Again, the Premier and the energy minister are making things up as they go but they are refusing to reveal how many B-double trucks are involved. It is absolutely shocking. South Australians were never promised this, were never promised they were going to truck in gas to cover up the Premier's hydrogen hoax. The fact that they are really seeking to prop it up with two years' worth of gas trucked in just begs many questions around what is going on with the electrolyzers. How long will they be delayed and how much will they cost? As I said, the cost of the electrolyzers has gone right up.

Worldwide in the last year, we have seen many businesses pull out. We have seen Fortescue, a champion of hydrogen, pushing that, saying they are going to have to delay their plans to beyond 2030. We have had Origin Energy pull out as well. Their CEO has been quoted as saying that the economics of clean hydrogen projects increasingly fail to stack up. Woodside pulled out of hydrogen in January. Damningly, just this week, we have seen the new Queensland government pull out of the project in central Queensland. It is understood that what was first quoted as a \$12.5 billion plan by 2022 had surged to \$14.7 billion and since then has escalated significantly as well. The Queensland Treasurer is quoted as saying:

It would have required significantly more than \$1 bn in state government funding...We are focused on our energy generators providing affordable, reliable and sustainable power...

That is certainly something that the opposition here also agrees with.

While South Australian families and small businesses are paying the highest power bills on record, now the AER has revealed that wholesale prices for the calendar year 2024 are up by 28 per cent on the calendar year 2023. The Premier is prioritising his green hydrogen plan saying it will be operational by the end of 2025, but instead we are getting gas-powered turbines propped up by a fleet of diesel-fuelled B-double trucks. But, of course, the arrogant Premier thinks that he knows

best, and he knows better. The massive global companies with expertise in energy are having to withdraw, so no wonder South Australians are paying the highest power prices in the nation.

**Mrs PEARCE (King) (12:16):** I rise to oppose this motion. I actually find it quite baffling given it was the former Liberal Olsen government that privatised the electricity market, it was the former Liberal government that—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for King, can you resume your seat. Members on my left—

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Chaffey, I am speaking. Members on my left, your side was heard quietly and respectfully. I expect the same, and the first one to raise a voice will leave the chamber. Member for King, you have the chamber's undivided attention.

**Mrs PEARCE:** Thank you very much. As I was saying, it was also the former Marshall Liberal government that privatised our backup generators and failed to deliver its promised cuts to average electricity bills. The reality is that there continues to be a complete policy vacuum when it comes to the Liberals and energy.

I am more than happy to run through some of the inaccuracies in this motion. I will start with paragraph (a). The premise underlying this claim is incorrect. The Australian Energy Regulator's most recent Annual Retail Markets Report found that South Australian electricity prices were among the lowest in the National Electricity Market. The AER report for 2023-24 recorded South Australian households with average consumption and contracted to the median market offers would pay \$2,231 a year. This was below other states like Tasmania (\$2,748) and New South Wales (\$2,646). In the AER's analysis, Queensland was the only state in which households paid less. The AER did not record equivalent data for Victoria, WA or the NT.

As was highlighted by the minister in question time yesterday, the member for Morphett continues to be fixated on cherrypicking to be able to make an argument. What the member for Morphett fails to highlight is that South Australia was impacted by 27 high-price events in quarter 3 of 2024. The AER makes it clear that during the high-price periods in South Australia, multiple planned network outages also led to constraints limiting flows on the Heywood and Murraylink interconnectors. These limitations impacted South Australia's ability to access low-priced generation.

In some high-price events, the regulator observed a high number of rebids by generators, sometimes leading to high prices and at times reducing forecast high prices. What the member for Morphett has not included in his motion is that compared to quarter 3 in 2024 where South Australia was impacted by these high-price events, we have seen a 60 per cent decrease in prices in quarter 4 of 2024.

It is encouraging to note that South Australia's average wholesale prices have fallen by 32 per cent in the 2023-24 financial year, but in quarter 4 of 2024, South Australia had a record number of negative price intervals due to a combination of better weather, high rooftop solar output and continued increase in generation from renewables. Negative prices led to a quarterly volume weighted average price of \$9 per megawatt hour lower in South Australia.

The Malinauskas Labor government is continuing to stand alongside households and the small business community and recognises that the rising cost of living, including rising energy prices, is hitting everybody's budget. We know it is disproportionately hurting those on low and fixed incomes, which is why we have more than doubled the concession for eligible households. With respect to small business support, the South Australian government is delivering on a \$20 million energy-efficient grants program through round 2 of the Economic Recovery Fund, which is, of course, aimed at driving investment in energy-efficient equipment for small businesses.

The program is providing grants ranging from \$2,500 all the way to \$50,000, matched dollar for dollar for small businesses to be able to invest in more energy-efficient equipment or improvements to be able to reduce and manage energy usage and costs, which will result in ongoing

reduced energy and other operating costs. I am pleased to share that almost 1,400 applications have been received, surpassing \$31 million worth of grants.

The state government recognises the cost pressures that small businesses are facing and has decided to remove the round 2 cap to allow all eligible applications to be considered. The majority of applicants have been from accommodation and food services, the retail trade and manufacturing sectors. Most have applied to invest in solar panels with batteries, replace non-LED lighting systems and invest in more energy-efficient appliances. This is a significant investment from the government to provide tangible energy cost savings for small businesses.

One of the great arguments we have always had with our opponents is that renewable energy is cheaper, it is cleaner and it is the way of the future. What we are attempting to do, as we did with our Hornsdale battery, is to store the overabundance of renewable energy during low-demand periods, such as the middle of the day. Batteries are suitable for short duration, but to get to 100 per cent renewables by 2030, we need a renewable form of long-duration energy storage.

When the Liberals inherited a grid with an oversupply of renewable energy, they put in place a system to turn off mum-and-dad rooftop solar remotely. Rather than just earthing that energy and turning it off or not producing that energy, our plan is to manufacture hydrogen and store it. At times of peak demand you are able to use that stored energy in a gas-fired turbine designed to lower wholesale power prices in the spot market. Those benefits flow through to everyone.

In 2017, Labor commissioned a study into South Australian green hydrogen and established the Hydrogen Roadmap for South Australia. Either the Marshall government were already on autopilot by this stage or they saw merit in our work and contributed to it by publishing the Hydrogen Action Plan in 2019. Fast-forward to today and we see a complete backflip from those opposite—now hydrogen is 'experimental'.

Climate change is real. The release of carbon into the atmosphere by human endeavour is causing the heating of the planet. We need to be able to decarbonise our electricity generation, and we are doing that by embarking on new technologies. We are investing in infrastructure and we are investing in policy work, such as through our recent green paper and upcoming white paper on the energy transition. Members opposite are welcome to get on board.

In contrast, the Malinauskas Labor government has recently embarked on a journey to map out a comprehensive set of energy policies. Policies will include energy efficiency standards for housing, a smooth change to electric vehicles, and ways to ensure that no-one is left behind in the transition to renewable energy.

We are already a global leader in the transition and we have already made considerable progress towards our goal to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, but the government wants to go further and seize the opportunities to make sure that the energy transition delivers maximum benefit to consumers. We want to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and decarbonise our economy. This is because we are proud to play our part in the global effort that is needed to protect our planet for future generations and because it will position South Australia to grow jobs and prosperity as we use our bountiful clean energy to lower household bills and drive industry, giving us a trade advantage in a world which is moving decisively to greener products and services.

We are investing in infrastructure and we are investing in policy work, like through our recent green paper and upcoming white paper on the energy transition. Again, I welcome members opposite to get on board, and with that I oppose the motion.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:25):** I rise to support this motion by the member for Morphett. This motion reads:

That this house—

- (a) notes that South Australian working families and small businesses are still enduring some of the highest power prices in the country under the Malinauskas Labor state government;
- (b) notes that South Australia has the highest quarterly average wholesale cost of electricity in the nation in the third quarter of 2024, up 76 per cent year on year, according to the Australian Energy Regulator;

- (c) notes that electricity prices for South Australian working families have risen by \$798 per year under the Malinauskas state Labor government, according to the Essential Services Commission of South Australia;
- (d) acknowledges that these rises in energy prices have caused intense hardships for South Australian working families and small businesses and have increased the cost-of-living burden;
- (e) condemns the Malinauskas Labor government for having their costly and experimental hydrogen power plant, which will not reduce power prices for South Australian working families and small businesses, as their only energy policy;
- (f) condemns the Malinauskas Labor government for their continued inaction on energy, resulting in sky-high power prices for South Australian working families and small businesses in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis; and
- (g) calls on the Malinauskas Labor government to develop an energy policy that will support South Australian working families and small businesses during this energy and cost-of-living crisis.

Listening to the member for Morphett before, I could not agree more with the words that he said. What we see in this state are some of the highest power prices in the country. It is forcing people to go out of business, it is forcing people to not be able to pay their power bills and it is really having an effect on the cost of living of South Australian families and businesses.

What we have seen in this state from the Labor Party over the years is a continual failure when it comes to power policy. We saw that when the coal plant got knocked down in Port Augusta years ago. The first orders to the contractors were, 'Take the gas axes and the angle grinders to the turbines. We don't want to see them going again,' so there was no coming back. Then we had the total power blackout on 28 September 2016. The whole state went out under the Labor Party—the whole state. It had never been seen before in this state. It was absolutely outrageous.

Then we see this constant drive for heavily subsidised renewable power. The thing is, what Labor have forgotten is you need to have base load to keep that power going. Coal has been demonised, so those plants have shut down or are shutting down across the country. Gas is a vital transition fuel as we move forward. We will need gas for many decades to come.

This is where we are seeing the flaws with this so-called hydrogen power plan for the Upper Spencer Gulf. It simply will not work. Why have I not had any university professor, any engineer, anyone from the mining industry organisations tell me that it will work? Why has Woodside pulled out? Why have Twiggy Forrest and Fortescue pulled out of hydrogen and, most recently, as of this last week, the Queensland government? Because it simply does not work at this scale. It simply does not work.

The whole premise of this so-called green power is based on tens of thousands of solar panels that have not been installed and thousands of wind turbines that have not been installed. The thing is—and this is where the rubber hits the road—there is power loss from generating green power to put in the so-called hydrogen storage. You lose 80 per cent on the transfer, so you only end up with 20 per cent of the power out the other end.

Then we see the real facts of how these turbines are going to work: they are going to be powered by gas for at least four hours a day, or that is the four hours we know about. Where is the gas coming from? There is nothing in the pipeline at Whyalla, so the gas has to be trucked in by B-double diesel trucks. It just does not stack up.

The costs are blowing way out of proportion. It is going to be at least \$1 billion, and climbing. We see the Labor Party and the Malinauskas Labor government and their Minister for Energy and Mining trying to justify the cost and keep it to the budgeted cost of \$593 million by taking storage out of the system and by taking other parts out of the contract to make this hydrogen plan work. It is supposed to be built this year, but I do not even know if there is a peg in the ground yet.

The sad thing is that governments do not have money to pay for these failed experiments; it is taxpayers, the good taxpayers of South Australia, who will pay for this so-called green dream. Well, it is going to literally turn into the biggest green nightmare in this state. In fact, it has already been said to me that this could be the next State Bank disaster for this state. It is just based on ideology, not based on the reality that the gas has to be trucked in with diesel trucks. I can foresee that gas

will be the main generator here, so why not just put the gas turbines next to some gas pipes and make it work properly? Just do it properly. It is just ridiculous that the state is being put through this.

We see Tom Koutsantonis, the minister, trying to put the blame on Sanjeev Gupta. Sanjeev Gupta needs to get on and pay his bills. He needs to pay his contractors and he needs to pay the royalties that have backed up for many months—heading towards 12 months—for this state. No-one else would get let off. I can see what is coming. When this all falls over—and I believe it will, because they are already setting themselves up because they will not answer one straight question about whether the hydrogen power plant will be running in the next decade and when it will be generating this so-called clean energy—the Premier and Minister Koutsantonis will blame it on Sanjeev Gupta.

But then in another breath the minister says that Whyalla is too big to fail—and it is too big to fail. You cannot lay the blame on someone who is at risk of losing that business because of the so-called link between the hydrogen power plant and the steelworks. As the shadow minister, the member for Morphett, indicated there is barely a word in the whole policy document about linking it to the steelworks in South Australia.

The reality is, this is a debt bomb. It is a hydrogen debt bomb for this state. I just cannot believe the arrogance with which the government believe they are smarter than everyone else globally, as the shadow minister has indicated to the house, and everyone else across this country who has said, 'It's too expensive, it will not work or it just won't happen.' Woodside do not know, Fortescue and Twiggy Forrest do not know, the Queensland government do not know, and Origin do not know. Seriously? They do know and that is why they are pulling out.

This is too risky a project because it just will not work. The sooner the Minister for Energy and Mining takes his own advice and admits he is wrong, as he indicates to others—stand up, admit you are wrong and move on—the better it will be not just for Whyalla but for the whole of South Australia.

We can then get on with plans, like those of Peter Dutton and the federal Liberals, in moving ahead with nuclear energy. I would love to see that happen when Peter Dutton wins the next federal election. We need to have real base load supporting our renewable energy systems throughout this state so that we can just get on with life in a practical way and a meaningful way.

**Mr HUGHES (Giles) (12:35):** I thought I had better come down and add a few words. I guess there has been a long history in the Liberal Party, especially at a federal level but also at this level, where that support for Whyalla has not existed, and this goes back over many, many years. The advantage of being around for a long time is you have seen the various iterations of Liberal Party policy when it comes to the steel industry in this country.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Hammond!

**Mr HUGHES:** You can go all the way back to the Button steel plan and the federal intervention in order to secure the steel industry nationally in Australia. At that time, when the Hawke government went to that election, they said, 'Within 100 days we will have a national steel plan,' and that is what they did. What did the Fraser Liberal government say at the time? Absolutely nothing. There was no commitment to the steel industry in this country. They would have been happy to see the steel industry go the way the car industry subsequently went in this country.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Morphett, do you wish to leave the chamber?

**Mr HUGHES:** So there has never been any real commitment to the steel industry in Australia. It has always been that, if something has to be sacrificed on the altar of the free market, irrespective of the consequences, that is what we will do. One of the challenges that the opposition seems to have is that when you shift to new technologies there is always going to be a transition. You are not going to have the pure result in a year or two years; it takes time.

In the real world there actually are projects around the world, especially in Sweden, where the move is to green iron and steelmaking, with the HYBRIT project. A large demonstration plant has

already been established in Sweden. That plant has supplied specialised steel to the car industry in Europe, and it has supplied steel to the aviation industry and a number of other industries. When you look at a timeline, they talk about full-scale production in 2030. So these things do not happen overnight, and Sweden and HYBRIT are the first movers when it comes to doing it globally.

Clearly, in Whyalla we are not going to be going into a hydrogen future overnight. That is going to take time, and we do have to be able to produce hydrogen commercially at scale, but South Australia has some incredibly strong comparative advantages compared to other parts of the world. We will be able to get there, but it is not going to happen overnight and there will be a transition and, especially for industry, gas is an important part of that transition.

We need to be able to deliver gas effectively to Whyalla if the transition is going to be made. If that transition happens, we are not going to be trucking in gas. If you have a direct reduction iron plant in Whyalla, which is the direction that has been flagged, as the replacement for the blast furnace, as a means of adding value to the massive ore resources in the Middleback Ranges, that in combination with an electric arc furnace is the direction we should be going in.

When you look at the real world, at the moment around about 130 million tonnes of iron and subsequently steel is produced by direct reduction iron technologies. There is nothing fanciful about this. These units are essentially off-the-shelf units that you can go out and purchase, and it will need gas as a transition. In that transition, as hydrogen becomes more available commercially at scale, you can bleed hydrogen to add to natural gas. Ultimately, we will get to a point where we can do hydrogen commercially at scale.

A number of projects have been mentioned around the country that, for one reason or another, companies and governments have pulled away from. When you look at those projects, most of them were predicated on the basis of exporting hydrogen overseas—they wanted to export hydrogen overseas—and that has a lot of complexity around it and lots of challenges. The thinking in this state and elsewhere is that if you have the comparative advantages, if you have those renewable energy resources that we have in this state, if you have some of the other advantages that we have in this state, such as billions of tonnes of magnetite on the doorstep of an existing steelworks, that is the way to go. It is to add value to our resources here in this country.

Indeed, I was reading something the other day, and POSCO in South Korea—who occasionally gets mentioned in this place—were looking to outsource their iron and steelmaking to Australia. They were looking at the north-west of Australia, because they realised the export of hydrogen to South Korea had a whole raft of challenges. So it made more sense to do stuff in Australia where you have the mineral resources, where you have the massive renewable energy resources.

It is the absence of vision on the other side that really concerns me. It is always about trying to score points instead of coming to us and asking, 'What is your vision for the Upper Spencer Gulf?' The Dutton nuclear plan, when you look at Port Augusta, is a modular reactor. Look at the levelised cost of electricity or the estimated levelised cost of electricity when it comes to a modular reactor. Commercially, they do not exist at the moment; there is less than a handful around the world. The thing is, you then have to start attacking organisations like ARENA and the CSIRO because they will come out with the levelised cost of electricity.

So the plant that is proposed for Port Augusta—which will never happen—will massively add to our electricity prices in this state, because what you will have to do is attempt to curtail the cheapest form of electricity. You do not have to take my word for it. Look at the CSIRO report; it comes out every year. Look at wholesale generating costs. It is clear that nuclear is not a cheap option in the Australian context. Some other countries long ago sank capital into nuclear. They did not have the same options as we have now, so it is not a sensible policy direction to go in. In Whyalla, we are talking about a transition.

We have those massive magnetite resources in the Middleback Ranges. One good thing that GFG SIMEC has done is establish the JORC reserve in the Middleback Ranges. The JORC reserve estimate is around 1.5 billion or so, but there are probably another two, three or four billion tonnes of magnetite on Whyalla's doorstep. The thing about the magnetite on Whyalla's doorstep is that it is particularly suited to use with direct reduction iron units.

So we could potentially produce iron and steel in Whyalla for generations to come if we get things right. Ultimately, there needs to be that transition to produce iron and steel in a manner that is not going to impact the atmosphere. We have to actually get down to the hard work of determining how it is that we are going to make this transition.

I would be the first person to say that there are challenges. In my community I say that this will not happen overnight, this will be a transition that will take time. That transition initially has to go through natural gas, but we will get there. In the absence of vision we have absolutely nothing. I acknowledge that it is the role of the opposition to critique the government on the question—that is entirely reasonable. But I ask them to get back to some basics.

If the iron and steel industry has a long-term future, it is about making that transition in the iron and steel industry globally to a greener future. That will happen. We talk about power prices for households, and again it is amazing. The federal Liberal government opposes the concessions for electricity.

*Mrs Hurn interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Schubert, you can leave the chamber for 10 minutes.

*Mrs Hurn interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, I have called your name out a number of times.

*The honourable member for Schubert having withdrawn from the chamber:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** With all the interruptions by the opposition, I will allow the member to finish his sentence. You can resume your seat until I call you, member for Frome.

**Mr HUGHES:** As was said by the member for King, there has been a lot of cherrypicking when it comes to electricity data. You can pick certain months, you can pick certain quarters, you can pick a particular year, but it goes up and down. Wholesale prices go up and down. At times South Australia's wholesale prices are significantly less than Queensland and New South Wales. At other times it is higher.

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (12:46):** Mr Deputy Speaker, I appreciate you giving me the call. I rise with fulsome support for the motion as addressed by the member for Morphett. I will speak to the motion in detail shortly, but I think the house would find it refreshing that we have heard from the member for Giles, as we do not hear from him very often on these issues.

**Ms Stinson:** You can't get him to shut up!

**Ms PRATT:** I feel sorry for him because, as the member for Badcoe interjects, what can he possibly say in criticism of the government's own policy—it is only one—on energy. As the chamber is discovering yet again, it will do absolutely nothing to drive down the increasing costs for consumers in South Australia.

The original motion as introduced notes that 'South Australian working families and small businesses are still enduring some of the highest power prices in the country under the Malinauskas Labor state government'. The motion captures the essence of this issue in the following ways: 'that electricity prices for South Australian working families have risen by \$798 per year', and that is according to ESCOSA. It also notes that 'these rises in energy prices have caused intense hardships for South Australian working families' in my electorate and your electorates—there is no avoiding it.

We absolutely condemn the Malinauskas Labor government's initiative for this hydrogen power plant. It is a vanity project that will not reduce power prices by their own words. The opposition stands today in concert; it is a call to action to call out the government's commitment. It is doubling down on its stubbornness to back itself in on an initiative that really, in its transition, to quote the member for Giles, is absolutely equating to rising power prices in our state.

Households are almost \$25,000 worse off per year since Labor came to power in 2022. South Australians certainly are feeling that across all aspects of their households. This is a government that has wrong priorities, a government that is running a false economy, a government that is wasting our money. To go back to 1 July last year, we saw the government's support of the

application of a GP payroll tax. Since 1 July last year South Australian patients have been subject to that additional impost of the payroll tax being applied to GPs and then being passed on through consultation fees.

That really, for some households, has led people to being forced to choose between paying their power bills or paying their healthcare fees or cost-of-living prices like groceries. The reality is that fewer people can afford a pub meal for one, let alone a whole family.

We know that Labor is heavily influenced by national Greens policy, and they are certainly waging a war on the commercial and the domestic use of natural gases. At the state level the Labor government is stuck, because of course they desperately need gas to firm up renewables. Those words come from the minister himself, the member for West Torrens.

What we understand better in detail through the great work of the member for Morphett—and his summary today starts to elucidate exactly what the government is planning for our state—is that this smoke and mirrors theory, this vanity project and this experiment of a hydrogen power plant is being underpinned by natural gas being trucked in. Four hours a day of gas supply is required, coming on B-doubles being fuelled by diesel. It is hypocrisy writ large by this government to double down and back itself in to a project it should walk away from. We do not trust its costings. It has to be calculated at closer to \$700 million as a total project cost, but there is nothing to say it will not get up closer to \$1 billion. They have a track record of poor form on managing major infrastructure projects.

Reflecting all of that, in this very building the CEO of Santos as the guest of the Minister for Energy and Mining, the guest of the member for West Torrens, told us that this world could not function, this planet could not function without plastics, concrete, steel and heating, and all of them rely on gas. There is no hiding from the fact that we are going to be a state, country and planet dependent on gas. The Chamber of Mines and Energy is watching closely, because there is a big question mark over the government's ability to deliver on this vanity project. When it comes to any suggestion, particularly by the Greens, that we move away from gas what is very clear is that no amount of renewables can deliver the industrial base load power required for manufacturing. So I would say they need to go back to their textbooks.

If we bring the cost of doing business and the cost of living back to South Australian businesses and families, of course, just over 12 months ago the situation facing businesses was dire, and it certainly has not improved. The head of the AHA, David Basheer, made public comments, representing one of his own pubs and the industry, that we were likely to see chicken schnitzels, a wholesome family meal, being priced at \$40 for a single serve.

**Mr Telfer:** Shame!

**Ms PRATT:** Shame, indeed. The cost of doing business, including the cost of running gas in the back kitchens that feed the multitudes of South Aussies that love a country pub meal—the government's policy is really putting that at risk. In my own electorate the very pub that was recognised as serving among the best top 10 chicken schnitzels in regional South Australian pubs is the same pub that now finds it has a \$16,000 additional cost to its power bills per quarter. Businesses cannot survive these hikes in power bills, and the government has one policy, and that is an experiment on the West Coast that will not drive down power bills.

My own community certainly have their fortunes tied to the government's decision-making. When I reflect on the Spencer Gulf and all of the communities that are tied to the government's decision-making I do need to come back to health, because it does not look like the government has a plan to support Whyalla in any other way than to fully commit to its vanity project.

Residents know their fortunes are tied to steel and to the decisions that Sanjeev Gupta is making. We know that contractors are sitting around with nothing to do, we know they are not being paid. If I were looking to move to this region, looking at what childcare and housing and health options were available for my family, I certainly would not want to have a wife who was pregnant in the last 12 months where the midwifery services were cancelled, were not available, were diverted because the government is so focused on its project that it cannot concentrate on anything else.



The government, the minister, is quick to jump on a plane and fly over when, tragically, 250 jobs are lost or stood down, but they will not lift a finger for the 500 in my own electorate and area of Two Wells for the tomato virus. This government's priorities are wrong, and we are in a position to prove that every day.

My own community's fortunes are certainly tied to the decision-making of this government when it comes to its policy settings on energy, on the cost of doing business. For every pub in every country town that I represent, for every business, factory, plant or household, I want the government to understand that we are suffering.

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:56):** I rise to support the member for Mawson's motion, because it is an important motion that impacts every South Australian. What we are currently seeing is that this government's whimsical, ideological theme around power generation in South Australia is putting our economy, our family businesses, at risk. It is making South Australia, in some way, a laughing stock within the national economy.

Labor promised that electricity bills would come down by \$275. They have skyrocketed; in fact, they have risen by \$798 per year for an average working family in South Australia. We are paying some of the highest power prices in the country. Families are currently going through hardship around cost of living, and it is all based around the cost of electricity. Many South Australian families are now on payment plans to be able to pay their bills, pay their electricity bills. They cannot afford to put food on the table. People are not turning on heating or cooling in their homes because they are too scared of what it is going to cost.

It really is just an absolute furphy, yet we have a Premier with his ideology of hydrogen for green steel, and we have the local member from Whyalla, the member for Giles, coming in here accusing the opposition of being to blame for some historic event that happened 30 years ago. It is an absolute outrage. This government should hang its head in shame that it is basing this green steel, this hydrogen plant, on ideology that potentially will not stack up.

The member for Whyalla talked about what is happening in Sweden. He cannot tell us what that program is going to cost, he cannot tell us—and the Premier cannot tell us—what sort of product will come out of the hydrogen plant by the end of the year. When will we have green steel? How much more will the taxpayer have to fork out for what is an ideological whim? The energy minister cannot give us any detail—or he will not give us any detail.

As the member for Hammond rightly said, the government is going to be looking for someone to blame, because we know that the current set of circumstances is that we are going to put \$593 million, taxpayer dollars, on the table to start this project kick off. We all know that government projects blow out by 100 per cent, 200 per cent. This one has no bottom in the bucket, so it is a real concern that the taxpayers are going to fund a Labor government's whim or wish or policy on hydrogen to create energy for green steel production at Whyalla.

Whyalla cannot tip over. We understand that, and we do not want Whyalla to tip over, but we can see the writing on the wall. We have a government that is looking for someone to blame for an energy policy that will not stack up. It is an absolute disgrace.

In my electorate some of the large power consumers are consuming power to produce food. At the moment they are installing diesel generators to keep their pumps running so they can pump water to grow food, so they can put food on the table. You have to remember that you cannot eat hydrogen, you cannot eat steel. You have to eat food, and you have to eat it for three meals a day. That is what the people on the farms are doing, paying exorbitant power prices, and that is reflecting on the cost of food. We are getting record power prices coming into those farms, and they have to pass the costs on, so the cost of food is prohibitive.

Debate adjourned.

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

*Parliamentary Procedure***VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** Before we get underway, I would like to welcome the former Deputy Speaker and member for Flinders, Peter Treloar, into parliament today. It is great to see you here, Peter, one of the really nice guys of parliament during the past 16 to 20 years. It was great to have you here. I thought you did a tremendous job, particularly managing those committees on some social conscience issues that went well into the night. I think you did it really well and it is good to see you in here today, Peter. Welcome back.

*Parliament House Matters***FORESTRY INDUSTRY**

**The SPEAKER (14:00):** I would also like to inform the house that parliament will be lit up in green tonight in recognition of all those employed—more than 20,000 people—in the forestry industry. They are celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the forestry industry in South Australia. I know there is a function on in Old Parliament House tonight. I want to thank Nathan Paine and all those people who work in the forestry sector in South Australia for the jobs that you create, and the produce that you create as well.

*Parliamentary Procedure***PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water (Hon. S.E. Close)—

Green Adelaide Board—Annual Report 2023-24

Landscape Board—

Alinytjara Wilurara Annual Report 2023-24

Eyre Peninsula Annual Report 2023-24

Hills and Fleurieu Annual Report 2023-24

Kangaroo Island Annual Report 2023-24

Limestone Coast Annual Report 2023-24

Murraylands and Riverland Annual Report 2023-24

Northern and Yorke Annual Report 2023-24

South Australian Arid Lands Annual Report 2023-24

River Murray in South Australia, Commissioner for—Mr Richard Beasley SC  
Annual Report 2023-24

*Parliamentary Committees***LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (14:09):** I bring up the 56<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, entitled Subordinate Legislation.

Report received.

*Question Time***WHYALLA STEELWORKS**

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:09):** My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier asked the Prime Minister to come to Whyalla to visit the steelworks and, if so, what did he say?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:09):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question because it is on an important subject. Yes, I have spoken to the Prime Minister; in fact, I have spoken to the Prime Minister quite frequently about this issue. I haven't spoken to him in the last 48 hours, but I have indeed been in touch with his staff and I know the minister has been as well.

The Prime Minister, I am very grateful, is fully engaged on the challenges that we have in Whyalla. I think the Prime Minister is well briefed through his own channels within the federal bureaucracy around the importance of steel production for our country coming out of the Whyalla Steelworks. I have to say I have been very grateful for the Prime Minister's personal interest in this subject but also, more broadly, the federal government's interest in this subject across a range of portfolios with this area of policy and the steelworks cuts across a range of portfolios in terms of the deliberations and the discussions that we are having with the commonwealth.

I think top line, though, what is most important here regarding the federal government's perspective—and I hope this is something that enjoys bipartisan support, which I anticipate it would, and I clearly can't speak for the opposition or anyone else, and I wouldn't pretend to do that for the federal opposition either—is that there is an acknowledgement across the nation that steel production is absolutely essential.

We know that the Prime Minister is committed to a Future Made in Australia policy. There is no Future Made in Australia without steel being made in Australia. I think that is top of mind for the Prime Minister and his broader industrial agenda.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** The Leader of the Opposition asks why isn't he in Whyalla? Well, that's because he is in Canberra at Parliament House where parliament is sitting, so that's why he is not there. I am very grateful for the engagement and I anticipate that it will be ongoing.

#### **GFG ALLIANCE**

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:12):** My question again is to the Premier. How much is GFG Alliance in arrears to the state government for royalty payments?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:12):** The Treasurer was on Adelaide radio on Friday, from memory—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** Thursday, sorry—going into a bit of detail on this. The state government is owed a substantial sum of funds, principally through being in arrears with royalty payments. That number is in the order of tens of millions of dollars, and I am more than happy to take the precise number on notice. We are of course wanting to make sure that we release information at an appropriate time, and if it is appropriate for us to disclose this number publicly we would have no reason not to.

#### **GFG ALLIANCE**

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:13):** Supplementary, if I may: when did GFG Alliance last make a royalty payment to the state government?

**The SPEAKER:** That's not a supplementary question; that's a separate question.

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA:** New question, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** I will put you down for three so far.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:13):** My advice is that they are in arrears for the last six months pertaining to the current financial year and not the preceding financial year.

#### **GFG ALLIANCE**

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:13):** Supplementary or new question, if you deem appropriate, sir: is GFG in arrears to the state government with respect to any other state fees or charges, including land tax and payroll tax and, if so, how much?

**The SPEAKER:** That's a new question.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:13):** I am happy to take this because, in a way that hopefully doesn't surprise people given some of my remarks publicly in recent

days and weeks, this is something that I am keeping abreast of on a frequent basis. In fact, I am probably having two or three meetings a day on the subject matter, including one as recently as this morning.

That particular question goes to a piece of information that was discussed at one of my meetings this morning being reported through from the Steel Task Force. There are moneys owed to the state government in terms of royalties in arrears, as you just asked about, and also SA Water arrears, but I am advised that with other payments GFG as a business in this state would pay the state government, such as payroll tax, my advice is that they are up to date on that.

#### **GFG ALLIANCE**

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:14):** Supplementary: will the Premier release the minutes of the Steel Task Force?

**The SPEAKER:** That is a completely separate question. I will move to the member for MacKillop.

#### **IPAVE**

**Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:14):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister explain why the iPAVe 3 road survey vehicle returned to the Limestone Coast? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and the leave of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr McBRIDE:** The iPAVe 3 road survey was undertaken across MacKillop nearly 12 months ago and data from the survey is due in the second quarter of this year. Constituents have reported seeing the vehicle in the region recently, raising concerns the initial survey was not completed and that results will be further delayed.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:15):** Obviously, the connections in the Limestone Coast run pretty deep with the crossbench and nothing slips by them. It shows you why they continue to win those seats as opposed to the legacy members.

The vehicle completed approximately 65 per cent of the survey of the department's sealed road network before it was redeployed to Queensland by the National Transport Research Organisation. I hope the member for MacKillop will be pleased to know that my department has advised me that almost all the roads in the Limestone Coast have been surveyed. The only remaining section of road yet to be surveyed is a 21-kilometre stretch of the Princes Highway from Mount Gambier to Victoria. It's anticipated that that section will be surveyed in late February, early March of this year. IPAVE is now preparing for its next survey on the Eyre Highway, following the completion of its recent survey near Port Augusta.

I am pleased that the department is sending it back to complete the survey after its task was cut short, but in terms of the Limestone Coast and the two parts that the crossbench were very interested in it is almost entirely done, other than that one section between Mount Gambier and Victoria. I think that means that almost the entirety of MacKillop has been completed. I think that should allay some of the concerns of your constituents.

Of course, what concerns me the most about the road conditions in the South-East is the outsourcing of road maintenance by the previous government that has left us in a terrible situation where they attempted to make dramatic savings on the outsourcing. Apparently, the roads in Texas are just fine, but the roads of the South-East are someone else's concern.

I am very concerned about the road maintenance contracts we have in the South-East. The contracts that we were left attempted to make dramatic savings, making huge cuts to the amount that was being spent in the South-East by the previous government. We have seen a dramatic increase in the amount of money we are having to spend on road maintenance in the South-East. Given the lack of rainfall this year, one perverse outcome from the drought might be some better road conditions, but that is not something to celebrate.

What we need is a proper, fit-for-purpose road maintenance contract that is not about trying to save money like members opposite did but actually make sure our roads are in a proper condition for regional communities. It is one thing to get up and talk about how you represent the regions and care about them, it is another thing to take money out of the regions and bring it into the city like members opposite did.

I have to say, if it were not for the crossbench and the Independent members who fight for regional South Australia, regional South Australia have almost no voice, other than obviously the member for Giles, who does an exceptional job.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE

**Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (14:18):** My question is to the Minister for Police. Can the Minister for Police update the house on how the Malinauskas government is investing in our police force to get more police on the beat and is he aware of any commentary on this approach?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:18):** I thank the member for Elizabeth for his question—a former sworn police officer that we are fortunate to have in the state's parliament.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Apparently, the fact of me highlighting a member of parliament is a former sworn police officer is an incentive for those opposite to interject. How indicative of that is their approach to policing here in South Australia. It is regarded by them as a political opportunity rather than a solemn responsibility to community safety—just outrageous.

Today we saw the police commissioner make a significant announcement about boosting frontline policing here in South Australia in both metropolitan areas and also in regional South Australia. He has done that on the basis that this government has substantially stepped up resourcing to South Australia Police since we have been in government.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** The fledgling shadow minister, he himself only recently parachuted into this place, says, 'How's that going?' Well, if you see 70 extra frontline police deployed by the police commissioner today, I think it is going pretty well. I think that is something worth celebrating. If you see 20 more officers dedicated to Operation Measure to combat retail theft in retail shops and bottle shops, I think that is pretty good. If you see a brand-new dedicated task force formed by the police commissioner to tackle youth and street crime, I think that is pretty good.

The reason why is because beyond those two areas we see more resources being dedicated to domestic violence investigations, more resources being dedicated towards regional policing, and more resourcing dedicated towards cyber and financial crimes—all good things.

Like pretty much every other politician on the Liberal and Labor sides of politics, I support the decisions of the police commissioner of the day—unlike the member for Bragg, the first politician from a major party in the last generation to directly criticise a decision of the police commissioner. What does he say? He said on FIVEaa this morning, 'This is smoke and mirrors'—

**Mr BATTY:** Point of order: the minister is debating under 98 at best and he is reflecting on me at worst. He is obsessed with me; he should start obsessing over fixing—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Can I have members on both sides silent? Member for Bragg, I have been observing you during the minister's answer and you have done nothing but provoke and interject. I remind you that interjections are unparliamentary and in breach of the standing orders. If you are going to poke the bear, if the bear decides to give you a little hug back, I am going to let him go for a little bit.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** On FIVEaa the member for Bragg says, 'This is smoke and mirrors from Stephen Mullighan'—not the police commissioner; he gets his facts wrong already. He

says, 'He's shut down two existing task forces tackling youth crime and replaced it with one and given it a new name. There is no boost to police on the frontline.'

What did the police commissioner himself say barely an hour later? He said, 'By creating a task force the function remains the same, but we now have permanently dedicated people undertaking those duties and it means that we no longer have to drag people out of patrol cars to fulfil that function, so it puts more police on the frontline.' Then the member for Bragg went on and said, 'In fact, we have 10 per cent less police today than we did five years ago.' This is blatantly wrong, because today there are 4,537 active full-time sworn staff and at the end of their term they had 4,534—fractionally less. Wrong again. Get your facts right, you amateur.

#### GFG ALLIANCE

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:23):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier detail the contingencies and plans the government has should GFG Alliance enter administration? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA:** The Premier was recently quoted on ABC saying:

We believed it was a prudent measure to start to prepare for all eventualities, and we now have plans for that, not that we're hoping to execute.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:24):** That is a perfectly fair question from the Leader of the Opposition. As I stated on ABC radio and I think I have said in other forums as well, the government has been putting together for some time a range of different plans that may or may not be invoked depending on how things play out at Whyalla. We have been doing that quite deliberately and methodically, and this also goes to the question that the Leader of the Opposition referred to earlier about releasing the minutes of the Steel Task Force.

The work that the Steel Task Force is undertaking on behalf of the government is done through the auspice of cabinet, more specifically our Upper Spencer Gulf cabinet committee, and therefore it is covered by cabinet-in-confidence. That is not being done in such a way to prevent information being disseminated in the public realm, but rather, simply because it is a prudent course of action in terms of internal government process. Beyond that, it would not be wise, on behalf of any government, regardless of its political persuasion, to be planning for things that it doesn't necessarily want to transpire in full public view until such time as it is necessary.

As I have said, while I have also made remarks like the ones that the Leader of the Opposition referred to, it is the government's preference, as I am sure it is everyone's preference, that the first best-case scenario is realised, which is, of course, GFG being in a capacity to pay all of their creditors—of which there are a number—but also being in a position to recapitalise their position in the steelworks and invest in the transformation, which they themselves have publicly said is their ambition.

We are not seeking to undertake any actions that would undermine that effort, but at the same time we are not living in some sort of parallel universe that says that the steelworks isn't facing some challenges under the ownership of GFG. So, no, the short answer to the question from the Leader of the Opposition is that we are not in a position to publicly disclose all of that work. I think it is reasonable for us to disclose the fact that there is an awful amount of work that has been undertaken in this area, because I think that is what the people of South Australia would expect of us, particularly people in the community that the member for Giles represents.

We are not in a position to do that. We are keen and we have actually actively discussed, most recently in a meeting that I had this morning, what more we could put into the public realm that can be accommodated in such a way without compromising the endeavour, or the ambition, which is to make sure that we have a steelworks that is fully functional, up and running, well capitalised and being transformed for its future success.

#### GFG ALLIANCE

**The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:27):** A supplementary, or a new question if you deem it that way: has the government approached other companies to take

over the operation of the steelworks should GFG go into administration and, if so, how many companies and what are the names of those companies?

**The SPEAKER:** That's a separate question.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:27):** The state government has been engaged with other companies who are keen to explore the opportunity around green iron production, what the magnetite resource is we have in the Upper Spencer Gulf and even potential other steelworks, and we have been doing that through our expression of interest process that we commenced last year—right at the beginning of last year, I think it was—through our green iron expression of interest process, which has attracted the interest of a number of companies, both domestically and globally. The government remains engaged with those companies regarding all the opportunities as aforementioned in the Upper Spencer Gulf.

#### STEEL TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:28):** My question is to the Premier. What recommendations, if any, has the Steel Task Force made to the government?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:28):** As I think I covered off in an earlier answer, the Steel Task Force has made a number of recommendations to the state government—in fact, there is a great number. Some of those recommendations have changed, some of them have been amended, some have been rescinded, and then we get new ones on a frequent basis.

The Steel Task Force met this morning. I then received a report back from that meeting this morning through the office of the Chief Executive of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. I know the minister was updated on the Steel Task Force meeting as well. There have been a number of recommendations, and again, for the reasons I mentioned earlier, we are not in a position to publicly disclose those.

#### STEEL TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:29):** Supplementary: will the Premier release the minutes of the Steel Task Force and, if not, why not?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:29):** I don't want to turn this subject into political gamesmanship, but I did very clearly enunciate the reasons why we can't release the minutes of the Steel Task Force, because they are subject to cabinet-in-confidence. But, even if that wasn't the case, it would not be a prudent course of action in any event, for the reasons that I mentioned earlier.

#### FERAL DEER

**Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:29):** My question is to the Minister for Environment. What plans are in place to ensure the roadside deer culling program is conducted safely and without risk to the public. Mr Speaker, with your leave and the leave of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr McBRIDE:** Professional shooters are culling deer in the Limestone Coast over the next few months. There are concerns from constituents that the public has not been given enough information and the program may not be legally compliant.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (14:30):** Thank you very much for the question. I am happy to give an explanation of the way in which this part of the program is being managed and why the community should have confidence that it is being done so safely.

I would note that the questions about this part of the program (the roadside) have come probably from two main directions. One is, as has been articulated by the member, the question of wanting to be assured that safety protocols are being put in place. The other is that there seems to be a consistent underlying question that is coming from people who otherwise are very much a fan

of hunting deer, but hunting in a way that they would like to see go on into the future, and that is antithetical to the approach of this government. Indeed, it was established under the previous government that deer are a pest and need to be eradicated.

So I make no apology for wanting to eradicate deer from South Australia, other than those that have the eartags and are being appropriately fenced and therefore are treated as farmed animals. But it is, as I say, a legitimate question from the perspective of the local member wanting to know how safely this is being done. The reason we need to eradicate the deer is that we have an enormous number of them.

A few years ago it was assessed at about 40,000 deer across South Australia, of which about 18,000 have been eradicated or killed during this process, although of course in the period they are constantly breeding up, so we can't say that we are necessarily quite halfway there. They have done damage in just one recent year with an estimate of reducing agricultural productivity by some \$36 million. They are a clear and present danger to primary producers, and the vast majority of primary producers understand that and are furious with those who are trying to protect deer remaining in the landscape.

Much of this is done through aerial shooting, particularly throughout the South-East or the Limestone Coast of South Australia, but there are deer that are being found in roadside refuges and there is a particular concentration around Kingston South-East. Therefore, a decision has been made to get in on the ground to those roadsides. The program is going to run from 1 February, so a few days ago, through to 30 June. The shooting time is 5pm to 4am, so at a time overnight when there is very little traffic. The location is between Cantara Road to the north and Murrabina Road to the south. So that is the area. They will then identify the particular place, about 10 days per month, where there will be shooting at a particular place in that roadside where there is a concentration of deer that need to be eradicated.

The way in which safety is managed is, first of all, that there needs to be an appropriate amount of information provided. So the landholders are informed once an area has been identified for the next series of shooting. The landowners are asked to tell any staff members or any visitors that that is occurring. There also is roadside signage so that people have advance knowledge that this will be taking place over the next several nights.

Another way of thinking about safety is of course that the right people are doing it, and we have a contractor who is qualified to do this, has the appropriate equipment and is operating under the procedures that are lawful. There is to be no shooting across the road, of course; it is only into where the animals are. I will give the number in case anyone is watching or reading *Hansard*.

**The Hon. A. Koutsantonis:** To volunteer?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Not to volunteer, minister. The landscape board number, if people would like to know more details, is (08) 8429 7550. I think all or at least the vast majority of South Australians understand that this is something that has to happen, is being done professionally and being done carefully.

**The SPEAKER:** We have a very large TV audience. We perhaps should have run that phone number along the bottom of the TV screen. Let's see if this is supplementary.

#### FERAL DEER

**Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:34):** Minister, do you think it's appropriate that high-powered semiautomatic rifles are used for roadside shooting?

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of Government Business has—

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Point of order, sir: standing orders prohibit asking ministers their opinion.

**The SPEAKER:** Maybe you can talk to your team and come back with a question when it's the opposition's turn.

**Mr WHETSTONE:** It's a point of clarification, sir; that is no opinion.



**The SPEAKER:** I will move to the member for Adelaide. The member for Adelaide has the call.

### TRAIN AND TRAM SERVICES

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (14:34):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister update the house on the return of train and tram services to public hands and any alternative views?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:35):** There has been a flurry of activity since the government—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Thank you. It's good to hear our opponents parroting back our messaging. It must be getting through. I can inform the house that there have been alternative views, some of those dating back to as far as December 2022. I just want to read a quote to the house, which I think is telling:

The Opposition has now been informed negotiations—over the 12-year contract worth \$2.1 billion—recently broke down following intervention from Peter Malinauskas' office.

They continue:

Sources say Peter Malinauskas' promise is unworkable and an impossible demand to meet without incurring a huge cost—of up to \$70 million—to taxpayers.

The most telling of all of these quotes is:

The reality is the public transport system works well and trains, trams and buses run on time. If it's not broken, don't fix it.

You've got to ask yourself, 'Who would say that?' It was my young apprentice, the now Leader of the Opposition. In the formative periods of his apprenticeship, he put out a press release saying that the undoing of privatisation was impossible, it would be costly, and 'Why do it?' It goes back again to our point.

His shadow minister was asked by *The Advertiser* if he would rule out privatising these services and again refused to do so. He then gets told by his leader, 'Rule out—we're doing it again.' He then comes out and says, 'No, no, no, we will never privatise these assets.' That then comes to the point: will the Leader of the Opposition now admit it was a mistake? Does he now admit he made an error? Does he now admit he was wrong to vote, support and argue even after they had lost an election that undoing the privatisation was not worth it?

But do you know when it's really bothering them? I will tell you when you know it's really bothering them. After the Premier made remarks in the parliament yesterday, appropriately he shared them with the people of South Australia. Do you know who complained about those remarks?

**The Hon. S.C. Mullighan:** Who would complain?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** The Leader of the Opposition's office—upset that we might be promoting the fact that the government has kept its promise to undo the Leader of the Opposition's privatisation because now we know he didn't want to do it, he thought it was working quite well, he liked it being owned privately, he thought if it's not broken don't fix it, but now he wants you to believe (1) it wasn't a mistake, and (2) he won't do it again if they win. Come on!

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Yes, it is true. It is sometimes a much-used term, but I think the guilty party really does apply to the Leader of the Opposition and his very large team.

### GFG ALLIANCE

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:38):** My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier sought a guarantee from the federal government or the ATO that GFG Alliance are up to date with all of their federal tax and workers' superannuation liabilities?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:38):** No, I have not sought a guarantee on behalf of the federal government regarding federal government liabilities with GFG. That is a matter for the federal government. In terms of the—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** The former shadow treasurer interjects—workers, yes, naturally I have been speaking to the workers and the union—unions, I should say—representing them.

**The Hon. D.G. Pisoni:** So you have inquired if their super is up to date, have you?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** Well, if you get the right to ask a question, get on your feet and ask a question. I have—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is on his final warning. You are the only person to be kicked out all year if you want to make it two days in a row.

**Mr Telfer:** The Deputy Speaker kicked someone out this morning, sir.

**The SPEAKER:** Thanks for keeping me across the stats.

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** I haven't made inquiries regarding the federal government's debts in regard to moneys paid to workers. Yes, I have spoken to workers and also their representatives directly, particularly the AWU. In fact, I had another meeting with the AWU yesterday and then last week I met with an AMWU organiser on the ground in Whyalla. One of the things that is to be noted to GFG's credit, to the extent that an employer deserves credit for this but they are paying their workers' wages, is I have received no advice to suggest that there are any arrears with payments to superannuation funds. That is something I suspect I would have heard about, if it was the case, or certainly would have been advised of by workers representatives. Workers are being paid. In fact, we know that there is also a fair bit of overtime available on site at the moment.

I have heard feedback from many workers at the steelworks itself, particularly workers associated with the blast furnace operations. There is lots of overtime available for workers at the moment, which is ostensibly a good sign because it means that the steelworks is up and running and functioning. But workers are being paid; I'm not aware of any suggestion to the contrary.

#### **GUPTA, MR S.**

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:40):** My question is again to the Premier. Was Sanjeev Gupta consulted before Labor's announcement of its hydrogen power plant in 2021 and, if so, what commitments did he make at the time? With your leave, sir, and that the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr PATTERSON:** The energy minister said on ABC radio on Monday, 'Mr Sanjeev Gupta is pretty much at the centre of our hydrogen ambitions because our hydrogen ambitions are based on the transition of using coke and coal to make iron and steel.'

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:41):** Well, (1) we don't need to seek Mr Gupta's permission for anything and (2)—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Yes. We made our public announcements in 2021 about our plan. Ultimately, we believe that the staging for decarbonisation of iron to becoming green, go through two steps. The first is natural gas, which has considerable savings on carbon emissions for the production of iron and steel, and then ultimately to green hydrogen to make green iron and green steel.

Members opposite might recall that Mr Gupta had announced in 2021 or 2022 that he was planning a 20 megawatt demonstration hydrogen facility himself for his plant because, like BlueScope, like almost every major steel manufacturer around the world, like the trial being

conducted right now in Western Australia for hematite, every major steelmaker in the world is looking to decarbonise their products. Despite what members say about hydrogen, the truth is there are two key components to decarbonising steel: the availability and cost of natural gas, for which members opposite have done us no good favours at all, and the second is hydrogen, which of course they oppose as well.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Just to be clear about this, the first basin that produced gas in this state was the Otway Basin. The second largest basin in this state is the Otway Basin. It is gas rich. Who in this chamber voted to stop the modern day practice to—

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, there's a point of order.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Members opposite, including you.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Standing order 98(a): the minister is debating, including sources of energy. The question was: was Sanjeev Gupta consulted in 2021 and, if so, what commitments did he make? It's a straightforward question and it should be answered.

**The SPEAKER:** I think the minister has been answering the question, but he has been copping a lot of interjections from the people behind you, who continue to interject while you're actually making your point of order. So I think if there's silence on my left while a minister is trying to answer the question then we will probably get a better quality answer.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** While in opposition, we did meet with Mr Gupta and GFG and discussed our plans, but our plans and the plans of Mr Gupta, while aligned in terms of the aspiration to decarbonise the steelmaking facilities in Whyalla—members opposite might also have seen, again, what the government has been doing over the last 12 months through our expression of interest process to see who else is available to progress green iron.

The truth about the Middleback Ranges and the magnetite deposits that are there, according to manufacturers of direct iron reduction facilities like Danieli that have done their own independent studies, is that there is sufficient capacity, if you have the appropriate levels of gas and hydrogen, to do about 15 million tonnes of green iron per year out of the Middleback Ranges, which is a remarkable volume.

The aspirations of GFG were 2½ million tonnes per annum, then a million tonnes per annum, then an electric arc furnace, then a refurbishment. We have seen plan after plan. What the government is looking for is a partner. We don't have that in Mr Gupta and GFG. What we are doing is looking through our expressions of interest of other parties that want to have access to the Middleback Ranges to those magnetite resources to decarbonise this product. What are the first things they ask for? They ask for more gas and they ask for hydrogen—things members opposite oppose. So when you hear the crocodile tears about Whyalla and steelmaking, just remember they opposed the key ingredients that you require to do the very things that everyone is asking for.

#### HYDROGEN POWER PLANT

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:45):** My question is again to the Premier. Is the government's hydrogen plant dependent on the ongoing viability of GFG Alliance?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:46):** The reason we chose Whyalla quite specifically is because of the Middleback Ranges and the massive magnetite resources. As far as we are concerned, we don't want to see another GMH. We don't want to see conservative politicians standing up, daring people to leave. We want to see steelmaking remain in this country.

The thing about Whyalla that makes Whyalla so unique in this country is it is the last manufacturer of long products. What are they? Structural steel and rail lines. We are a continent nation. We cannot be reliant on the importation of rail line and structural steel. We must maintain that sovereign capability here in this country. That is why we want to put hydrogen facilities in Whyalla. That is exactly why we chose Whyalla, but of course there has been one consistent opponent to that

plan. Who is that? The shadow minister who asked the very question. He has been opposing it the whole time.

**The SPEAKER:** The minister will resume his seat. There is a point of order from the deputy leader.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Point of order: standing order 98(a). The question is really clear. This is starting to sound like a fireside chat. The answer needs to be given by the minister.

**The SPEAKER:** Is the minister finished? Okay. The minister is providing the answer, with some context around it. I think it is a subject of great interest to all South Australians, and I think for most of question time it has been pretty well handled by both sides, so we will give the minister a little bit longer with this answer.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** What we want to see is steelmaking continue. If Mr Gupta is unable to continue steelmaking, we have been through iterations in Whyalla of many owners. We want to see steelmaking continue. That is why we are progressing our hydrogen plans. That is why we ultimately aspire to have a hydrogen industry in this state, whether it is the Port Bonython project, whether it is projects on the Eyre Peninsula at Cape Hardy or whether it is based in Whyalla. We believe that the decarbonisation of the Middleback Ranges through beneficiating our ores and adding value to them here in this country is vital to our economic prosperity and that is the aspiration of the Malinauskas government.

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Narungga, I pass on my commiserations. He failed to make *The Advertiser's* list of the 25 best Yorke Peninsula footballers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but I noticed his brother, Giles, was in there this morning. I thought that if this was in the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times*, you probably would have had the Ellis brothers taking out the top three spots. The member for Narungga.

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE

**Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (14:48):** Next year, they might do a list of 26, Mr Speaker, and we will see how I go then. My question is to the Minister for Police. Can the minister confirm that the relocation processes for officers in SA Police have been outsourced to a company in Sydney? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr ELLIS:** A removalist in my electorate was contacted by a company called MoveDynamics from Sydney, inviting him to register for SA Police work. For over 20 years, he has been dealing directly with HR in SA Police and has had no issues. He estimates that if he loses this business, in addition to the extra costs for registering with MoveDynamics it will cost his business between \$140,000 and \$150,000 a year.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:49):** That is a good question because, no, I am not aware of that move at all, and I am not sure what those circumstances are. I am conscious, of course, that there are companies from interstate who want to come to South Australia and do business. Generally speaking, they have been attracted by the strong economic momentum that is underway here in South Australia. Certainly, the minister for housing and for planning would be aware of that—that there are a lot of people coming from other places around the country who want to build homes here in South Australia for the first time.

I should reiterate that this government has substantially changed our procurement policies to require government agencies, as I put it, to look local first to local businesses, when they are seeking suppliers of goods, or in this case services, in either local communities out in the regions or in the metropolitan area. I have long been a proponent—when the government, across all its different departments and agencies, is spending something in the order of \$7 billion, \$8 billion or \$9 billion a year on procuring goods and services—of further shifting the needle away from interstate and overseas suppliers to existing South Australian businesses. If we shift that needle by even 5 per cent, based on those figures of \$7 billion, \$8 billion or \$9 billion, we are talking about an extra \$350 million to \$450 million of work that is going to South Australian businesses.

So I am, at the very least, interested to hear of that circumstance that the member for Narungga mentioned, if not very concerned about it. I am glad he has raised it. Once again, the member for Narungga is doing a great job to represent his local community. I will come back to him and to the house with further particulars on the issue.

#### **FRIENDS OF PARKS AND NATURE GRANTS PROGRAM**

**Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (14:51):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier update the house on the Friends of Parks and Nature Grants Program?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (14:51):** I am delighted to be asked this question by the member for Davenport and to run through, for the chamber's benefit, the latest grants program. Members may recall that, when we came into government, we had a commitment to spend \$3 million over the term of the government to help Friends of Parks do good works in parks and in nature. They have recently changed their name to 'Friends of Parks and Nature', because so many of the friends groups are not actually attached to a park but to a dune and to other public areas.

Before I run through a few of the examples of the really excellent grants that have been given out, I would point out that this isn't just about a bit of money being applied to a particular project, where that is what makes the project happen. The project happens because there are over 5,000 people who are members of these groups. There are 148 groups in Friends of Parks and Nature, and between them they are an enormous part of the success story of our national parks and our nature in public areas. We would not be able to do the good work that is done to protect and restore nature without them.

There are some good examples. Most recently, we granted \$779,000, which is the largest amount annually that has been provided for volunteer-led conservation activities in South Australia's history. Friends of Glenthorne, in the member for Davenport's area and very close, of course, to the member for Black's area—formerly in the seat of Black and now, delightfully, in the seat of Davenport—have got nearly \$13,500 for managing the grassland project, which is largely about restoring grey box and other parts of the biodiversity there.

The member for Waite would be pleased to know that Friends of Shepherds Hill Recreation Park have got nearly \$15,000 for woody weed control. Friends of Blackwood Forest Recreation Park have got \$15,000 for Minno Creek and East-West Creek refurbishment. I recently spent time with Friends of Blackwood Forest Recreation Park. It's where I grew up, and although I live a long way away now and am very proud to represent the seat of Port Adelaide, I have an abiding fondness for the Blackwood area.

Friends of Belair National Park have also received \$5,000 for small bulb weed control and \$15,000 for rapid boneseed control. This control of weeds of course can sound a little tedious, a little dull, but is utterly essential. If you don't get on top of the weeds that have been introduced since Europeans arrived, it is almost impossible to be able to restore nature and to allow the native plants and animals to re-establish.

Friends of Brownhill Creek have also received nearly \$14,000 for on-ground woody weed control. In the seat of King, we have the Friends of Cobbler Creek Recreation Park, who have been very successful with \$30,000 across two projects, one being the continuation of the containment of Coolatai, an invasive grass which is native to Africa, and olive control, and also for the development of a trail head area, Mai Tappa, which is about celebrating Kurna culture and Kurna use of food, particularly for textiles and for eating.

It is worth pointing out that although many of the projects that I have described are about weed control and revegetation, it is also important to note that these Friends of Parks groups are very engaged in educating and bringing areas to life. Of course, the member for Newland will be pleased that \$15,000 has gone into the Friends of Anstey Hill Recreation Park, again for woody weed control, which will help protect a heathwren habitat in Anstey Hill Recreation Park. These are a tribute to the success of our volunteers in our parks and in nature.

**GUPTA, MR S.**

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:56):** My question is to the Premier. Is the state prosperity plan dependent on Mr Sanjeev Gupta?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:56):** No, it is not dependent upon Mr Gupta at all; in fact, I think any proposition that is aimed at the state's prosperity would be unwise to vest all of its hopes and ambitions in one individual man, so no. But of course the steelworks we see as being a critical piece of economic infrastructure for the state of South Australia, and we would very much like the steelworks and the surrounding assets, being an integrated operation, including the magnetite mine, to be up and running at their full potential.

We talk about the steelworks a lot, as we well should because it's so fundamentally important to the nation's economy, but we should also reflect on the mining resource. As the Minister for Mining talked to earlier, this is a high-quality globally significant magnetite resource and its value is not realised if it is in the ground. We want it out of the ground. We want it mined. We want it generating all of the new wealth for our state that it is capable of, which is great for the government because it generates a revenue stream for Treasury.

It's great for the economy more broadly because it delivers new wealth for the state of South Australia and the people engaged in the process, but it's actually good for the world because, not too dissimilarly from copper, magnetite is an important natural resource for the decarbonisation of the global economy. You cannot reach the Paris targets, you cannot reach net zero by 2050, unless you have a program to decarbonise steel production.

As we have said repeatedly, steel production is worth 8 to 10 per cent of global carbon emissions. To decarbonise steel production, we know that one of the most effective and efficient ways to do that is to use magnetite rather than hematite in that process, and we are home to it. Similarly with copper, the copper price continues to improve for global commodity markets. Even notwithstanding some of the challenges we see in global markets at the moment as a result of a bit of policy changing around the world, one of the strong-performing commodities is copper. That is a sign of the fact that the copper is in demand because the world needs a lot more copper because of the electrification that is happening around the world.

That is why, of course, we see BHP's continued and repeated demonstration in recent months and years towards realising the copper potential in our state. It just so happens that the resources that the rest of the world wants and needs we have a significant proportion of in this state. We want to realise that wealth. That means that needs to be mined. That means ideally that shouldn't just be mined: we would love to see them beneficiated in South Australia, which generates more economic opportunity. Does all of that hinge on Mr Gupta alone? No. But the resource that sits under the control of GFG, is that important? Absolutely.

This government—any government—would be wise to contemplate the resources that sit below the ground, which are ultimately owned by the people of South Australia, and that the value of those resources is best realised where government works in collaboration and in partnership with the private sector. You do not want the South Australian government, you do not want a government, being the miner, you do not want the government running the steelworks. That is not desirable. You want people in the private sector who have the skills and the capability, the access to markets globally, to unlock that potential in concert with the government. We see ourselves as being an important custodian of that resource, and that is why we care very much about who owns it.

**GFG ALLIANCE**

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (15:00):** My question is again to the Premier. What is the total extent of GFG's liability to contractors?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (15:00):** GFG has been furnishing the Steel Task Force with information from time to time. We would like to see more of that information. There have been periods—and I have said this in a number of forums, including I think in this one last year, that we have at various points in time been the beneficiary as a government of transparency from GFG, which is commendable, but more recently we would like to see a greater degree of transparency and clarity over the size of the debts that GFG has.

Bear in mind, of course, that GFG is ultimately a private enterprise. It is not a publicly listed company. Their obligations and their duties only stretch so far in a technical sense. Notwithstanding that, we think it would be prudent to receive as much information as we can from GFG. We are turning our minds to how that might be realised. Certainly, we are aware that the moneys owed by GFG, outside of the moneys owed to the South Australian government, are in the order of tens of millions of dollars.

#### GFG ALLIANCE

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (15:01):** Again my question is to the Premier. Has the Premier or his office sent or received any emails, text messages, briefing documents or any other documents to the Hon. Madeleine King MP, the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, the Hon. Ed Husic MP, the Hon. Jim Chalmers MP, the Hon. Anthony Albanese MP or the Steel Task Force in relation to GFG Alliance, Mr Sanjeev Gupta or the Whyalla Steelworks since 1 March 2024?

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:02):** The Treasurer is in regular contact with the commonwealth Treasurer about Whyalla. I am in regular contact with Mr Ed Husic, the appropriate minister. The Premier is in contact with the Prime Minister. Our departments are in contact with each other. The Steel Task Force briefs the commonwealth government. We are as one on this.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** What I think my young friend is trying to do is to say if he FOIs something and he writes the FOI a certain way and no documents come up, therefore the government has done nothing. That is a genius tactic. I remember that in 1997. It was huge back then. It's 2025. We talk to people. We talk to people, we brief people, we prepare cabinet to cabinet. I also remind—

**Mr TEAGUE:** Point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** The minister will resume his seat. There is a point of order.

**Mr TEAGUE:** Standing order 98(a). It was a very specific question to the Premier about communications from the Premier. It might be criticised for how specific it was, but it begs a very specific answer.

**The SPEAKER:** The minister is answering the question. If you can return to that.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** I also remind the shadow minister—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Chaffey and the member for Florey—I am not going to chuck them out—it is a really important subject and I just ask for some quiet so I can hear the answer.

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** These cabinet-to-cabinet discussions are between two cabinets about a very important strategic national asset—a national asset. If we are going to start turning this into a 'who cares about Whyalla more?' debate, no-one wins. But if we want to start doing that, I am happy to compare how many times I have been there compared with the shadow minister for energy and mining. Is that what we will start doing?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS:** Oh, okay. 'No, we won't do it that way; no, that doesn't serve us right.' Do we want to compare how many times Peter Dutton has been to Whyalla compared with how many times Anthony Albanese has been there? Is that what the contest is about, or is it about actually looking after jobs, getting a transformation and making sure Whyalla survives into the future? This isn't about political pointscoreing; this is about people's lives. It is about time you all grew up.

### DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

**Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (15:05):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier please inform the house what drought relief and support his government has given South Australian farmers? With your leave and that of the house, Mr Speaker, I will explain.

Leave granted.

**Mr McBRIDE:** I believe that the South Australian Labor government have about an \$18 million package. I've got good feedback from my constituents that they don't feel they are being looked after or understood. There has been a massive number of suggestions around council rate relief from local government, fodder interest-free loans and others. Is the Premier willing to look at further considerations around these tough seasonal conditions?

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (15:06):** Can I start by thanking the member for MacKillop for his question, because once again in this place he highlights the predicament that many primary producers across South Australia find themselves in.

Just to provide a little bit of context briefly, you might recall that during the course of last year the Victorian government announced a \$12 million, I think it was, drought relief package for regional Victorian primary producers who were suffering similar weather conditions and circumstances to what South Australian primary producers are. The prospect was raised, not only by particularly those members who represent regional constituencies in this parliament but also by members of the community, of whether this state government would put a drought response package together.

The details of that drought response package were announced by my colleague in the other place, Minister Clare Scriven, the Minister for Primary Industries, and the Premier. This is an \$18 million package that includes such measures as providing targeted subsidies for freight of fodder coming in from either other parts of South Australia or other parts of the country to support primary producers, as well as boosting some of those resources to distribute direct financial assistance and grants to primary producers or to those groups representing primary producers, as well as something that I mentioned previously in this place—a kind of necessary response from government to these sorts of measures—and that is stepping up counselling services, including financial counselling, to impacted people because that is the most acute impact that occurs, both the impact on finances and also the impact on mental health that follows.

But if the question then goes on to ask, 'Are we prepared to consider other matters?' then absolutely the answer is yes. I also realised that in the additional context that the member provided to his question, there have been suggestions about other levels of government that can provide support, whether that is the commonwealth government or local government—for example, in council rate relief. I think both of those avenues are just as worth pursuing as asking the necessary and correct question about what this government is doing as well. Indeed, my understanding is that those discussions and representations have continued to occur between this government and those other levels of government.

I am very conscious from the representations that the member for MacKillop, the member for Chaffey, the member for Hammond and others have made that many of their constituents involved in primary production are doing it incredibly tough at the moment.

We have responded in a meaningful way already and, at least in a financial sense, more meaningfully than what the Victorian government had in their package released in the second half of last year. I am very conscious the crisis isn't over for primary producers. We will continue to consult with regional communities, with primary producers, as well as their representatives, about what other measures the state government might undertake to try and ease some of the burden that these primary producers find themselves under.



*Grievance Debate***HYDROGEN POWER PLANT**

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (15:10):** As I have outlined previously in parliament, the Premier has completely changed the nature and the scope of what he promised to South Australians at the election on his hydrogen power plant.

There were four main promises put up in that policy document—the 2021 election promises—and all four of those promises have either been broken or they are at serious risk of being broken and they are in doubt. This is hugely concerning for South Australians.

The costings done at the time, by this now Malinauskas Labor government back in 2021, under questioning from the opposition, have now been shown to be flawed and it is highly likely that this hydrogen power plant could cost upwards of \$1 billion, in addition, with significant delays to the project. Of course, as the government has admitted, this power plant, this significant \$1 billion spending, is not aimed at bringing down power prices for households or small businesses here in South Australia to the point where now we have the Malinauskas Labor government changing their commentary around the reason for this plant, wanting to talk all about green steel, never about their hydrogen power plant. When did you last hear them talk about that? Remember, back in 2021, green steel was never a core focus of their policy when it was announced. All the focus was on electricity generation. In fact, when you trawl through that document of 20 pages, all you find is one mention of green steel in that whole 20-page policy.

It is clear, though, the Premier and his hapless minister are having to now make things up on the go, just to try to justify this massive spending that taxpayers here in South Australia are on the hook for. Really, this project has become an amorphous blob. Every time the opposition probes on one part, on a flaw in the plan, it morphs into another thing. They are making it up as they go.

Of course, we have questioned the Premier in parliament as to when green steel will be produced in Whyalla. It certainly will not be produced by 2030. In the questioning just yesterday, there was obfuscation. Going back before Christmas, the Premier really belled the cat when he revealed, 'You are probably looking at two decades away.' That's of little comfort to taxpayers, knowing that they are spending massive amounts of money now, when their power bills are going through the roof.

Sanjeev Gupta, what has he got to say about this? He said that the electric arc furnace and the direct reduced iron plant are dependent on increased gas supply into Whyalla; not hydrogen, increased gas supply. It is obvious, because any path to low emission steel in Australia has to be produced economically and also at a scale—not just on a spreadsheet, not in a lab—but in a big industrial plant, so in the next two decades the only way you can have a transition is from coal to gas no matter how much this Premier tries to spin a coal to green hydrogen transition.

Let me be clear, the opposition supports a coal to gas transition; it's sensible, it's economic. By sheer necessity at the moment we have talked about the massive problems going on with the steel furnace here and to keep that steelworks going. GFG are throwing all their resources at just getting the furnace going, running on coking coal. They need to do that for probably five-plus years, rather than spending what is a significant, massive capital investment on principally the Premier's green dreams.

In question time today we asked was Sanjeev Gupta consulted about this plan back in 2021, and what we found is they could not really answer it, and then they said GFG had other plans. Now here we have the government, the Premier, the energy minister, despite the four broken promises and all the delays that fall at the feet of this Labor government, trying to blame someone else. What rings true as well, how about the promise on ramping? Blaming other people. They are always blaming other people, this government, never theirs.

The Premier was starting to get angry though because GFG is not realising his great dreams. The problem is he has got sucked into this green dream; it is now turning into a green nightmare. Unfortunately, as the saying goes, there is a sucker born every minute. Why is it that there are so many suckers born in this Malinauskas Labor government to go along with this, led by the Premier and led by the energy minister? It is a real concern for South Australians, who are up for \$1 billion.

We have got energy companies that have pulled out, but the Malinauskas Labor government and the Premier are arrogantly continuing down this path.

### STUART ELECTORATE

**The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (15:15):** Today, I would like to talk about some of the recipients of the Australia Day Awards in my electorate. For Port Augusta, the Citizen of the Year was Libby Harrison. Libby has supported basketball in Port Augusta for many years, being involved in the green shirt program and the winter development basketball initiative. The Event of the Year was the Port Augusta Basketball Carnival. The carnival brought together 68 teams from Port Augusta and the immediate surrounding areas, as far as Yorke Peninsula and the Barossa Valley. The Active Citizenship Award was to Lisa Jarrett. The award recognised Lisa's tireless efforts in organising the Stirling North Community Market, a popular monthly event attended by many locals, and she raised many hundreds of dollars.

The Port Pirie Citizen of the Year was Philip Amato. This award is in recognition of 40 years of unwavering commitment and dedication to the City of Port Pirie. Philip works tirelessly with the Port Pirie Junior Soccer Association and the Virtus Soccer Club, inspiring generations of young athletes and fostering community spirit and camaraderie. Philip has also worked on the committee organising Our Lady of Martyrs' Blessing of the Fleet for many years. The blessing celebrates the legacy of the first Italian immigrants to Port Pirie who arrived in the 1900s.

The Port Pirie Young Citizen of the Year was Jessica Doyle. Jessica organised a community clean-up during Clean Up Australia Day in 2024. She recognised an issue and took proactive steps to make a difference. Jessica's resilience, leadership and compassion shone through when she undertook a 100-kilometre run, raising \$1,500 for homelessness, balancing this tremendous effort with her year 12 studies.

The Port Pirie Event of the Year was the 95<sup>th</sup> Our Lady of Martyrs' Blessing of the Fleet. Our Lady of Martyrs' Blessing of the Fleet is held on the second Sunday of September each year, commencing with the debutante ball on the Saturday evening, and on the Sunday it continues with a solemn high mass celebrating the continuation of the Blessing of the Fleet.

The Redhill Citizen of the Year was Keith Jackson. Born and raised in Redhill, Keith's passion and dedication to the township and its people shines through every aspect of his life. Keith took over the family blacksmith shop 21 years ago after his father passed away, and it now operates as Jackson Engineering, honouring a legacy of 100 years next year.

The Crystal Brook Citizen of the Year is Genevieve Wells. Genevieve's strong involvement with Heart Kids has been successful in securing funding and raising awareness of children with heart conditions, and her passion for young people extends to her involvement with year 12 students by distributing a school leaver guide as they pursue further education. Crystal Brook Junior Citizen of the Year was Keeley Greateorex. Keeley is known for her beautiful singing voice and instrument playing, and she regularly plays at community events. Her involvement in many events in Crystal Brook is renowned, including as a member of the Crystal Brook Hockey Club.

The Event of the Year at Crystal Brook was the Crystal Brook Netball Club Colour Run. This event was organised by the Crystal Brook Netball Club and supported by the Crystal Brook Netball Club committee. It was a resounding success, with over 180 participants from across the region converging on Bowman Park.

The Mount Remarkable Citizen of the Year was Dianne Becker. Dianne was honoured with this award because of the extraordinary contribution she has made to the community of Wirrabara over the past 21 years. Dianne organised the Wirrabara 150 year celebration, which was an inspiration to all and brought the community together to celebrate its rich history. She also did a lot of work on the publication documenting Wirrabara from 1974 to 2024, a priceless contribution that preserves the town's history for future generations.

The Mount Remarkable Citizen of the Year was Susan Girdham. Susan has been named Citizen of the Year for the extraordinary contribution she has made to the Melrose community over the past 30 years, plus her great work with the Community and Melrose Tennis Club. The Young Citizen of the Year was Connor Hogan. Connor was recognised for his excellent achievements in

motorcycling, both in Australia and overseas, as well as his dedication to the Booleroo Centre Swimming Club since 2015. The Mount Remarkable Event of the Year was the Wirrabara 150<sup>th</sup> celebration. This event brought the whole community together in an extraordinary way, creating an event that celebrates the town's history, culture and unity.

Mount Remarkable Active Citizen of the Year was Nikki Atkinson. This award is most deserving and highlights the exceptional dedication to the community and the tireless efforts Nikki puts in to make Wilmington a better place to live. It gives great inspiration to others.

The Citizen of the Year Award went to Ben Van Boekel. Ben has organised the Caltowie Chilled Out 'n' Fired Up Music Festival for a number of years, bringing people from all surrounds to Caltowie. Ben's role in the community is one to be admired. He is actively involved in the local progress association and the Apex club, and has also served as a football coach, CFS volunteer, martial arts instructor and mentor. If that is not enough to be recognised by the community, he is also a business owner. I will continue my contribution on the other winners later on in another grievance.

### NARUNGA ELECTORATE

**Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:20):** There are a few community events about which I feel compelled to inform the house. These start with the wonderful initiative undertaken by the Bute Men's Shed to restore an old train. They have gone out and procured a 400-series Redhen and stored it at the Men's Shed and are now in the throes of trying to reinvigorate it and restore it to its former glory. They managed to pick up this Redhen train carriage from Berri on a handshake agreement and a deposit. They have managed to get it back to Bute with the generosity of the local community assisting with the transport costs, and now have a bit of a five-year plan to try to restore that train carriage.

The train worked extensively on the Adelaide metro network initially and then came to the Copper Coast to serve the Bute to Wallaroo tourism route for quite some years. It is still painted in those blue, red and white colours of the tourism train and it now sits proudly at Bute where the crew will get together. They have started stripping it and then in 2026 they will start prepping it. In 2027 they intend to reline the inside and out, and in 2028 and 2029 they intend to move it to a prominent spot within the town so that it can be shown off in all its glory.

This is a mammoth task for a small Men's Shed to undertake, but they must be commended for giving their members something to strive toward and something to achieve. I popped out there the other day and caught up with Bevan Rose, the president, and treasurer, Greg Dermody, who I must say has been a bit of a driving force in this train initiative, and I look forward to seeing it take shape as I drive past the Men's Shed over the coming years.

Another community initiative that I want to inform the house about is the Fisherman Bay AGM. This house would be well aware that there is plenty going on at Fisherman Bay, with the freeholding of shacks and the investment going on in that community now that the owners of those shacks have freehold title, and it is wonderful to see all the progress being made out there. That means that there is a lot more for the progress association to do, and a lot more complaints coming toward it.

It was wonderful to get there in the first week of January for their AGM when all the shackholders were there, and to listen to the issues. One of the big issues coming out, which maybe I had not appreciated properly at the start of my tenure in this wonderful position, was the issue of mosquitoes. Barunga West Council have something like 80 baiting stations around their council area to try to keep the mosquito population under control—there is quite a bit of stagnant water at Fisherman Bay that can lend itself well to a mosquito-breeding ground—and it just happens that this year has been a tremendously perfect year for mosquito breeding.

Those who have visited Fisherman Bay this year have found an almost unbearable number of mosquitoes getting around, and it is quite clear that the council's 80 baiting stations have not quite cut the mustard this season. Hopefully, that gets back under control in due course but we are aware, or at least the progress association is aware, that in 2016 and 2020 there was some quite extensive work done on alternative larval treatments that might help solve this problem in more busy years.

I have written to the Minister for Health, who was a part funder in those studies, to see whether they might well be rolled out in years like this, because it is a tremendously popular destination. Whilst we recognise that mosquitoes are part of the ecosystem, it would be wonderful for those people who own shacks there to enjoy them fulsomely. So I hope that we will be able to ramp up that treatment in years that require it. It would have been nice to have it rolled out this year when we had seen the conditions incoming, but hopefully in the future we can be ready and able to react to these bumper mosquito years more quickly.

I would like to congratulate Robyn Lyons—a new committee member at Fisherman Bay who has taken up this issue with gusto—on the work that she is doing, and I look forward to getting a response from the minister in due course. I would also like to congratulate George Blair-Nicholas. He has stepped down as chair of the Fisherman Bay Progress Association after quite some years running it, and is looking forward to travelling a bit more with his wife in their caravan. So congratulations and thank you to George for his longstanding service.

The final thing I would like to bring to this house's attention is the upcoming, on 6 to 9 March next year, Port Victoria Wauraltree and districts 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations. This is a massive milestone. The progress association formed a subcommittee way back in August a couple of years ago to get ready for it and gosh, they have done a good job. They managed to secure the attendance of two tall ships, the *One and All* and the *Soren Larsen*, to come out and tie up to the Port Victoria jetty on that occasion. That is a wonderful thing. It used to be a rather prominent port, and having those tall ships there will be a wonderful commemoration of the 150 years that that town and district has been present.

To make that happen, there has been a tremendously generous community who have donated a number of piles to be planted adjacent to the jetty so that those tall ships can tie up to them rather than the jetty, which might not withstand that. So that is a really significant cost for the community to bear. Congratulations to all who have fundraised. I look forward to seeing the piles go in by Mr Ken Davey, and well done to Greg Twelftree and that subcommittee for all their work.

### **GREENACRES RESERVE REDEVELOPMENT**

**Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (15:25):** I rise to speak about the recently completed Greenacres Reserve redevelopment in my electorate of Torrens. Developments such as this do not happen overnight and without enormous support. Advocacy over a number of years has finally seen the delivery of this significantly upgraded sporting facility. I would like to acknowledge the support of Port Adelaide Enfield councillors, in particular councillor Hannah Evans, with whom I worked closely, and local ward councillors Matt and Mark. In addition, I acknowledge the ongoing advocacy of the Greenacres Tennis Club president, Kaylah, and vice president, Darren, as being instrumental in the final outcome.

This terrific facility will serve the associated sporting clubs and members of the community for decades to come. Importantly, it will assist clubs to grow their junior and female programs. The opening of the new clubrooms and upgraded training and playing facilities by the Minister for Recreation and Sport, the Hon. Emily Bourke MLC on her first day as the new minister, and the City of Port Adelaide Enfield Mayor, Clare Boan, took place last week and it was truly an event to be celebrated. Included in this significant multiclub development are multifunction clubroom spaces, unisex change room facilities, four new tennis courts, new public toilets and a recreational court for community use, along with upgraded lighting and cricket nets. The redevelopment construction by the South Australian firm BlueBuilt was a jointly funded project by the City of Port Adelaide Enfield and the state government.

Community sports organisations have an important role in our communities. They are a place to gather, encouraging physical activity in many forms, and competition and social interaction in numerous roles, including as players, competitors, coaches, umpires, referees, committee members, administrative staff, supporters and support staff—more often than not as volunteers.

The club that calls Greenacres Reserve home today is the Greenacres Tennis Club, founded in 1961-62 by Colin Beames, with the original clubhouse built in 1967. The club has gone from strength to strength with President Kaylah Wilson and Vice President Darren Lambden at the helm.

Also there are the executive members David Buttery, Jess Galloway, Rachel Owens and head coach Matthew Owens.

Significant achievements include numerous premierships wins, most outstanding club and most outstanding competition at the Tennis SA Awards on multiple occasions. The future is looking very bright for this amazing club. The upgrade to the tennis courts and lightings means Greenacres Tennis Club, fondly known as the Green Dragons, is now compliant with Tennis Australia facility guidelines for training and competition.

Payneham Postel Lions Soccer Club is also based at Greenacres Reserve and has been there for over 35 years. Current president of eight years, Wade Allen, says that the postel's history dates back to the 1930s when the postal workers would play a competition against the Telecom workers. When the South Australian Amateur Soccer League formed, Australia Post and Telecom joined forces, becoming Adelaide Postel. Since then two further clubs, Payneham United and Para Hills Lions Soccer Club, merged forming Payneham Postel Lions Soccer Club, who now host three senior men's teams in the South Australian Amateur Soccer League. The club has been going from strength to strength, having been promoted within the South Australian Amateur Soccer League for two years in a row, now competing in 2025 in the division 2 Sunday men's league.

North Eastern Knights Cricket Club cricketers will benefit from the new cricket practice nets built to Cricket Australia standards at the reserve. These will be available for use by the wider community. Club president is Paul Eramo, and the club offers itself as a club for seasoned players and for beginners aged 15 and above interested in learning the basic skills of the game.

Windsor Gardens Old Scholars Soccer Club plays in the Collegiate Soccer League. It took out division 3 titles in 2010 and 2011 and was crowned champions of the CSL in 2010. The Greenacres Reserve new clubrooms will be available for hire, and the tennis courts will also be available to the public throughout the day via the new Book a Court system.

### SHARK ATTACKS

**Mr TELFER (Flinders) (15:30):** The start of this year saw a tragedy which has significantly impacted the community of Streaky Bay and the wider Eyre Peninsula, indeed communities across the state, especially the tightly-knit surfing community, with a devastating shark attack resulting in the death of Lance Appleby, a much-loved and respected young man. I wish to in this place express my condolences and love to the Appleby family, Lance's parents and many siblings, during what I know has been an unthinkable devastating time, and also to those who loved Lance across the surfing community, Streaky Bay, Eyre Peninsula and beyond. Our hearts really do go out to you at this incredibly difficult time.

Unfortunately, it is not the first time such a tragic experience has hit the community, and I also want to acknowledge and remember other recent victims of shark attacks: Simon Baccanello, who was killed while surfing at Walkers Rock near Elliston in May 2023; Tod Gendle, who was killed while surfing at Granites beach near Streaky Bay in October 2023; and following that, only a month later, Khai Cowley, who was killed at Ethel Wreck on Yorke Peninsula. These are absolutely devastating tragedies for the community, especially the surfing community.

Events like this should trigger attention from decision-makers. In the last two years, I have been speaking with community leaders, emergency services, and swimming and surfing communities across my electorate and taking their suggestions. The time for action is here. I welcomed last year's announcement from the government about a shark task force, under the proviso that there was actually action which came from it, unlike many of the similar announcements that have come.

Unfortunately, we are yet to see any action from this task force, and it is beginning to frustrate my community. Some money has gone into patrolling metropolitan beaches, but for my regional communities, where these attacks actually happen, it is also a frustration, which I am sure the minister is hearing all about.

I hear all the public discussions, the same sorts of comments that 'We are swimming in their backyards,' or 'There are always sharks in the sea,' or 'They should know the risks.' I understand all this, and I hear that—and you know, surfers understand this as well. They understand there are risks

to chasing the thrill of the surf, but I am all about practical action, practical outcomes and keeping our communities as safe as possible, so reflecting on what I have heard from my community and with a mind to be proactive, I am putting forward a five-point priority plan, which I am asking the government to consider as priority areas for shark mitigation and management.

No. 1 is about prevention. We need investment into robust communications, warning systems and signage, especially at key beaches and surf spots around our state, especially in our far-flung areas, an interactive warning system which can be adjusted upon sharks being sighted. Surfers locally could point to the beaches in each area, whether it is Port Lincoln, Elliston, Streaky Bay, the Far West or Yorke Peninsula, where these sorts of signages can be put in place.

No. 2 is about response. We need government investment into shark emergency response and shark first-aid kits. In speaking with emergency response workers and volunteers who have had to deal with these situations, it is clear that they are not appropriately equipped to deal with such challenges. The government needs to be talking to people like this who have this experience. Investment into boat or jet ski capacity in regional areas is an option, or to have in place a system where there can be a cohort of trusted and equipped community members who can be called on without the heavy burden of bureaucracy as a hindrance.

We have also seen the District Council of Elliston investing their own funds to install shark response first-aid kits at targeted surfing hotspots. This is the sort of thing that the government should be considering investing into.

No. 3 is a shark-deterrent rebate. We see something like this in Western Australia: a rebate system in place for scientifically proven shark-deterrent devices able to be worn and utilised by surfers, divers and swimmers to keep them safe.

No. 4 is investment into great white shark tagging and monitoring. Once again, we see significant investment interstate into tagging and monitoring. How can we effectively know about shark movements without this type of monitoring in place in South Australia?

No. 5 is the development of a shark app system. Once again, there are lessons that can be learned from interstate. Something we have seen is that both Western Australia and New South Wales have such capacity, and our government should be considering it too.

These are just five areas in which I believe there can be agreement and swift action from government, with targeted investment. It is not touching on other areas in which I know there will need to be a continued community conversation on topics such as exclusion zones for swimming and surfing, the use of baits, traps, lures or berlying close to recreational areas, or longer-term research investment. These are complex situations with significant impacts, but I am calling on the government to consider these five points that I am putting forward for immediate action, to help mitigate some of the risk of these tragic situations being repeated in regional South Australia.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Brown):** Order! The member's time has expired.

#### **HAY DONATIONS TO FARMERS**

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:35):** Farmers across the Adelaide Plains and the Mid North recently received much-needed hay, donated by farming communities from other states, as part of a 100-truck convoy. This was as a result of financial support provided by the Malinauskas Labor government. The delivery commenced over the Australia Day long weekend and assisted our primary producers through some of the driest conditions on record.

With hay prices continuing to soar and good-quality fodder becoming harder to find, some of the country's top-quality hay has been delivered to farmers like Mr Paul Doering of Dutton. Mr Doering said that while the hay received would only feed his 6,500 breeding ewes for one week, knowing that there are people across the country who care about him and his neighbours makes a big difference to our ability to survive through this drought. Mr Doering said:

The rural community has been devastated by this drought—the third worst on record, with crop return not even covering production costs.

He goes on to say:

It goes a little bit against the grain to receive this hay, as normally we are supporting other farmers across the country.

While the drought is having a devastating effect on farmers finances, I am really concerned about their health and wellbeing, and in particular, their mental health.

This is an issue that I will come back to in a moment. In Mr Doering's view:

We need to do more to support our farmers' mental health.

The hay run was supported by the charitable organisation Aussie Hay Runners. The delivery has been made possible in part by the state government's \$18 million drought support package, which the member for MacKillop referred to a little earlier. Some of the concerns the member for MacKillop has raised have also been raised with me by farmers in the region. The primary industries minister, Clare Scriven, said:

...we really appreciate these organisations helping South Australian farmers and are pleased to be able to support the delivery of much needed fodder to drought affected farming communities across the state.

She went on to say:

These truckloads of hay will provide some immediate relief, and we encourage farmers to explore the assistance available in the drought support package to help upgrade infrastructure and strengthen the ability to tackle the challenges of drought.

We are having tough times at the moment, but it is interesting to note that our strong sense of community shines through. This hay run, for example, is about Australians looking after each other. It was no accident that, on the Australia Day weekend, farmers from other parts of Australia were working with other charity groups like Hay Runners to support farmers in our state doing it tough at the moment.

When our farmers are hurting, so are people in our small townships, and vice versa. It is important to understand that it is not just the farmers on the land who are impacted by the drought but a whole range of communities. It is great to see our farmers in the Adelaide Plains and the Mid North being supported by the broader community.

I also had the opportunity to meet Linda Widdup, the founder of Aussie Hay Runners. She said that she was very proud to be working alongside the South Australian government and wished to acknowledge and thank everybody who has been involved in making the run happen. She said that a lot of people had been involved. She goes on to say:

As always, our reputation is of utmost importance to us and every single bale is top quality oaten or wheaten hay with the highest nutritional value possible [for stock].

I mentioned mental health a little earlier, and one of the areas I would like to particularly focus on is the mental health of men and young men. What I am hearing from the farmers is that, yes, there are a whole range of physical difficulties on farms from the drought but it is actually the concerns they have about the ability of men and young men to actually deal with these pressures. Often, they do not communicate in terms of the pressure they are under and often we actually only hear about what pressure they are under and also the state of their mental health when it is too late.

*Mr Whetstone interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO:** It is important that, firstly, as a government but also, secondly, as a community, we make sure that we have necessary mental health resources and supports in these communities to ensure that we do not add to this tragedy of the drought by having the tragedy of men taking their own lives. It is one area that I know farmers are concerned about. There is some good work being done by a number of groups like Gavin Schuster's group in Freeling, and there are a number of men's sheds throughout the communities which all offer, if you like, opportunities for men to discuss and talk about the issues and hopefully help them with their mental resilience.

*Private Members' Statements***PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (15:40):** I take this opportunity in parliament to speak about some Australia Day award recipients who were recognised for their outstanding contributions to their community. This year saw Amin Ayoubi, the president of the West Torrens Birkalla Soccer Club, recognised with a community service award by the City of West Torrens for his significant voluntary work in our community.

Amin became the president of Birks in 2013 and since then has worked tirelessly at the club. The club is located at Jack Smith Park in Novar Gardens and has a fantastic junior program that provides a pipeline of talent, not only to the senior men's team but also to the A-League. In 2020, Amin formulated the girls' and ladies' teams, which has added to the club's culture. The 2024 season saw Amin and the team's hard work pay off, with both the men's senior and reserves teams finishing top of the ladder to secure their respective league championship. The club was also promoted into the National Premier Leagues for the upcoming 2025 season.

I would also like to congratulate Glenelg Football Club captain, Liam McBean, for being a recipient of the City of Holdfast Bay's Young Citizen of the Year award. Liam capped off a fantastic 2024 season by winning the Jack Oatey Medal and becoming a premierships captain of the Tigers after their premierships win in the epic SANFL grand final. Congratulations to Amin Ayoubi and Liam McBean.

**Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (15:42):** The Malinauskas government just this week announced that we are cracking down on copper theft and my community could not be more pleased. Just recently, thieves stripped \$100,000 worth of copper from the power box at the O'Halloran Hill Early Learning Centre, leaving them without electricity and forcing them to rely only on a generator since Christmas. This is not just an inconvenience, it is a serious crime that hurts small businesses, families and entire communities.

I have spoken with Jillian and Michael who run the centre and they are more than frustrated. They work hard to provide a safe and nurturing space for local children, yet they have been left picking up the pieces after a senseless act of theft. That is why I am also very proud to have secured funding to help them install a new security system, giving them, their staff and the families that they support much needed peace of mind.

We know that tackling copper theft is not just about helping the victims recover, it is about stopping it before it happens and that is why this government is taking action. We are strengthening laws around scrap metal sales to make it harder for stolen copper to be traded for cash and ensuring that businesses, home owners and builders have much better protections. I am so glad that this government is taking this issue seriously. Together, we are cracking down on copper theft and protecting our communities.

**Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:43):** No doubt about it, when there is good news to celebrate, the areas of Mid North, Clare Valley, Goyder and Light region know how to celebrate their own. With the council-led Australia Day ceremonies just recently it was an opportunity to celebrate individuals by giving them that level of recognition here. Of course in the Clare Valley region the event of the year was the RFDS ball where we danced the night away on the tarmac, and credit to those organisers. Justin Brady, Isaac Nichols and Leonie Moore were also recognised.

In the Wakefield council it was Graham Duncan and Ben Mann, and the reunion of the Blyth/Snowtown Football Club premierships where, in 1974, my dad played, in 1984 Norwood also won, and the reunion was quite a laugh in the old institute.

The Light Regional Council was the event that I attended this year and it was fantastic to see people like Ches Geue, Jake and Kathleen Noack, Tali Pipe and the Wasleys Primary School celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Kapunda Quilters all being recognised.

In the Goyder council area we saw Peter Bonner, Alex McDonald, Sandra Snook, Abbey Snook, Kymm Apostolides, Robert Perry, Wendy Schmidt, Todd Mosey, Manfred Lang and Sharon



Tremaine recognised as well as the Eudunda Show and the Burra Market, not forgetting the Saints Fat Farmers 'Bluff to Pub Fun Run' event of the year as well.

For the Adelaide Plains Council it was Anne and Robert Arbon, Kai-Leigh Wilson, the Plains Community Group, the Two Wells Christmas Parade, the Mallala and Districts Lions Club Community Complex and Jake Slade from the northern areas.

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:45):** As a lover of history both from local to world, I tend to gravitate to local historical and heritage societies and groups across the community in addition to the ones that are in my own community. I have recently been in contact with the Dublin History Group and I met Andrea and Pat there. I have been in touch with the Clare Regional History Group and I met Gerald Lally there who is not only involved in history but is an author in his own right. I also met Wendy and David Spackman from the Mt Horrocks Historical Society. I look forward to meeting quite a few others.

The importance of these historical and heritage groups is that they actually record, preserve, publish, educate and inform our communities about our social and cultural history. I think that sometimes we do not actually appreciate and value the work they do perform. They spend endless hours collecting information, collecting books, sometimes publishing works, collecting artefacts, etc., which they then very carefully record, store and preserve. Importantly, they then go on to educate our communities about that history.

I think it is important because if we do not have groups like this we start to lose our connection to our history. The social and cultural history of any community, no matter where it is, in our state or across the world, is very important. It is from this history that we fully understand where our community is at today.

#### *Bills*

### **BIOSECURITY BILL**

#### *Committee Stage*

In committee.

(Continued from 4 February 2025.)

Clause 1.

**Mr PEDERICK:** As I understand it, yesterday I did ask a couple of questions around a couple of threats to this state on a biosecurity level. One was about the tomato rugose virus and also an update on where we are with the fruit fly management program at the minute. Certainly, in regard to the tomato virus I asked a specific question about whether or not the government were going to do their own internal review of how that is being managed, considering the impact on hundreds of people and businesses and millions of dollars lost, and also whether the government were looking at getting an independent external review.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Can I thank the member for Hammond for his question and for reiterating it for the purposes of the proceedings today. I have been provided the following information. I am advised that this bill does not affect the way in which the eradication response to tomato brown rugose fruit virus is managed or evaluated.

I am advised that as a signatory to the national Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed the state government is obliged to respond to exotic diseases, like the aforementioned virus, under national agreement. The Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed is a formal, legally binding agreement between Plant Health Australia, the Australian government, and all state and territory governments and national plant industry bodies. As a government-industry partnership, the deed outlines the national governance and investment in responding to and eradicating emergency plant pests, and has provided a consistent and agreed national approach for managing incursions since it was ratified in 2005.

The South Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regions is leading the nationally coordinated and funded response to the tomato brown rugose fruit virus under an agreed national response plan to eradicate the disease. The tomato brown rugose fruit virus eradication response

plan was approved in November 2024 by the National Management Group, which comprises all Australian governments and affected industries that are also signatories to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed.

The response plan includes agreed measures—including ongoing testing, surveillance and monitoring—to achieve eradication and support a pathway back to the production and trade of tomatoes. The National Management Group has committed \$5 million to achieve the response objectives. Clause 11.5.1 of the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed states that:

11.5.1 Plant Health Australia must monitor and report to its members on:

- (a) resource usage in the implementation of a Response Plan;
- (b) Deed policy issues;
- (c) the implementation of Biosecurity measures; and
- (d) the implementation of the provisions of this Deed relating to Owner Reimbursement Costs.

In order to fulfil this obligation, I am advised that Plant Health Australia holds debriefs in order to gather, analyse and report on information arising from incidents and response plans. These debriefs are conducted in accordance with the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience's *Lessons Management Handbook*. In addition, PLANTPLAN, which is part of schedule 5 to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed, guides activities under the deed and states on page 32 of part 1 that:

Incident debriefs are a critical component of the stand down phase as they provide an opportunity for participants to highlight areas requiring improvement as well as positive outcomes.

Incident debriefs will be held at local, state and national levels following termination of the EPP response. It is essential that relevant personnel involved in the response are included in the debriefing process.

PHA and the ACPPO will coordinate a debriefing in regard to the operation of the EPPRD and PLANTPLAN to help inform any appropriate changes to PLANTPLAN or the EPPRD.

Debrief reports contain confidential information under the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed and for this reason cannot be made public without contravening clause 29 of the deed. The government is satisfied that the independent oversight provided by Plant Health Australia and the Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer through this debriefing and reporting process is sufficient and appropriate for identifying any areas requiring improvements and positive outcomes of incident responses, and will update processes as required to incorporate new information or address gaps identified by the outcomes of relevant incident debriefs.

In addition, and in response to any requests from industry nationally, the requirement for an efficiency audit has been built into the tomato brown rugose fruit virus eradication response plan and agreed by all parties. This is a routine, independent assessment applied to national responses to ensure that they are being applied as efficiently as they can be. Further to this, PIRSA undertakes after-action reviews of all its incident responses as part of its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement in emergency management.

I know that that was very lengthy, apologies, as I discovered reading the second reading speech into the bill and then the bill itself. All matters seem to be lengthy in regard to this bill, but there is a layered approach to after-the-fact review and analysis and assessment of the response which is not only done pursuant to nationally-agreed and binding deeds but done beyond the Department of Primary Industries and the South Australian government.

I hope that that addresses not only the question that the member for Hammond asked but also the concern, which is not unreasonably raised, by members of industry about whether there is a third-party perspective or a non-South Australian government review and perspective of how this incident or crisis has been managed.

**Mr PEDERICK:** My second question raised yesterday evening was as to an update around where we are with the latest fruit fly response, which has been ongoing for quite a few years and noting that there has been a recent outbreak at Glynde.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** Thank you again to the member for Hammond for refreshing the committee's memory of the subsequent question, which was asked by him, about where we are

up to with the fruit fly response. My advice is that the response is still underway and I guess that reflects that initial advice I gave to the committee late yesterday that a significant amount of additional funds has been provided to continue combatting this across South Australia.

Perhaps what I can offer the member—without having chapter and verse detail on how that response has been carried out and where it is up to—is that my advice is that the minister's office is prepared to offer the member for Hammond a departmental briefing on how that response is going, so that he can have the full particulars of how the response is being conducted and at what stage it is up to.

**Mr PEDERICK:** I am happy with that and I have no further questions up to schedule 2, and then I believe the Treasurer might have something to say.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (2 to 306) passed.

Schedule 1 passed.

Schedule 2.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** I move:

That schedule 2, which is printed in erased type, be inserted in the bill.

Schedule 2 inserted.

Schedules 3, 4, 5 and 6 and title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN:** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:59):** This is a very important piece of legislation for our state's agricultural industry and biosecurity as a whole and I hope that it works appropriately for many, many decades to come. In this instance, I would like to thank the staff who are always available to do the committee stage. I appreciate their work in this field. I thank the Treasurer for his work here as well.

**The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (15:59):** Very briefly, I thank the member for Hammond for his collegial approach to dealing with the bill before the house. As I said in my second reading comments, he, as well as other members that represent regional communities, including the member for Finniss, obviously have a very keen interest in this area, and we are grateful for their support for the bill.

Bill read a third time and passed.

**PASSENGER TRANSPORT (POINT TO POINT TRANSPORT SERVICES) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (16:01):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Passenger Transport Act 1994. Read a first time.

*Second Reading*

**The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (16:01):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

I rise to introduce the Passenger Transport (Point to Point Transport Services) Amendment Bill 2025. The Bill amends the *Passenger Transport Act 1994* (the Act) to implement recommendations arising out of the Government's commitment to review the Act and reform the point to point passenger transport industry (taxi, chauffeur and rideshare). The Bill also seeks to implement elements of the Taxi Industry Support Package, approved as part of the State Budget 2024-25.

On 30 August 2024, the Government released the review which made 29 recommendations informed by feedback from industry, customers and key stakeholders. The review provides a framework for broad and enduring change designed to make services safer and more reliable, while supporting a more sustainable industry.

Change is much needed. There is no doubt this is a sector that is experiencing significant challenges. From safety concerns, fraudulent behaviour, and industry participants subject to differing requirements. This review, and the Bill here today before you, aims to build a framework to overcome these concerns.

The Bill removes the limit on the number of taxis that can operate and delivers on the taxi industry support. We have heard from all taxi stakeholders about the devastating impact of changes to the industry since the introduction of rideshare. This Bill removes the requirement for a perpetual licence to operate a taxi, removing the barrier to entry, and introduces an uncapped annual licence regime. The Bill also provides for the State Government to deliver compensation to the taxi industry, with the eligible licence holders to receive \$200 000 for the first metropolitan taxi licence held, and \$10 000 for each subsequent licence up to a total of six licences. In addition, anyone who is not eligible and has their perpetual licence cancelled will receive \$10 000 compensation. Access taxi licence holders will receive \$100 000 for their first licence and \$10 000 for each subsequent licence.

This will be in part funded by an increase in the point-to-point transport service transaction levy (the levy). The levy was introduced after the introduction of rideshare in 2017, to help fund assistance packages to metropolitan taxi licence holders and lessees to help them transition to a new regulatory model following the introduction of rideshare. The \$1 levy also funds reduced or waived annual fees for all passenger transport services, and to support other industry initiatives such as additional compliance officers and a lifting fee for people with disabilities who use a wheelchair or large mobility device and travel in an accessible taxi. At this time, the levy was \$1, this Bill enables the levy to be set by regulation to enable indexation increases to occur as required. The levy will be increased to \$2.

The Bill also strengthens the collection arrangements for the levy.

The Bill introduces a simpler accreditation model which reduces unnecessary complexity and enables more effective regulation of current and emerging business models. Introducing three accreditation types: Booking Service Providers, General Passenger Transport Service Providers, and Passenger Transport Drivers. A Booking Service is a point to point transport service where requests are made by members of the public and assigned to a driver or vehicle. General Passenger Transport Service Providers preserves the status quo for public transport and will apply to services that require accreditation but should not be required to meet the same obligations as Booking Service Providers, including payment of the levy. Driver accreditation broadly continues as it currently operates.

Vehicles will need to be authorised under the new framework to provide a passenger transport service. To hold vehicle authorisation the vehicle will need to meet prescribed standards, including vehicle identification and safety requirements.

The Bill strengthens compliance and enforcement regimes, introducing new offences and automatic suspension and cancellation of accreditation in prescribed circumstances. For example, a driver will automatically have their Passenger Transport Driver accreditation suspended if they do not have a current driver's licence. Additionally, the Bill provides that a person's accreditation will be cancelled if they have committed a prescribed offence, have breached the general safety duty or no longer meet the requirements to hold that type of accreditation.

The Bill enhances safety for drivers and passengers by introducing a general safety duty with similar principles to the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*, and the *Heavy Vehicle National Law (South Australia)*. This introduces a legal requirement to eliminate or minimise the risk of incidents involving death, injury or damage, and to encourage the development, maintenance, and continuous improvement of work safety practices. This duty will apply to those within the chain of responsibility for providing a passenger transport service, other than public transport, including the service provider, the driver, and holder of vehicle authorisation.

The Bill also implements a number of the review recommendations, with others to be implemented via future regulation changes. The Bill includes provisions to:

- Enable the Minister to prescribe passenger transport vehicle standards and fleet standards.
- Enable two separate metropolitan boundaries for point to point and public transport services to ensure they can be individually adjusted to respond to community needs over time.
- Establish a stronger compliance and audit framework, with Authorised Officers having clearer compliance and investigation powers, enabling swift action to be taken for expiable offences such as non-taxi point-to-point vehicles running a meter or stopping in a taxi rank. The Bill will also allow for audits to assess compliance with obligations under the Act, including correct payment of the levy.

- Replace the current Passenger Transport Standards Committee with a new decision making and disciplinary review mechanism, being Ministerial discretion, internal review mechanisms and appeals to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, rather than the District Court.
- Provide greater customer protection from price gouging by prohibiting surge pricing or a queue-jumping fee in prescribed circumstances. Currently, rideshare operators have the ability to charge 'surge priced' fares according to supply and demand. The prohibition is to prohibit price gouging when a declared emergency occurs, for example as occurred in Sydney at the occurrence of the Lindt Café Siege. The introduction of this prohibition aligns with a number of other jurisdictions.
- Insert new data and information exchange provisions to assist compliance, with the Minister to determine arrangements for sharing prescribed information.

This reform seeks to improve how the point-to-point industry is regulated, with fundamental changes to address the situation for taxi licence holders and to improve service availability. The reform also seeks to increase safety and recognise that many of these safety issues are common to both taxis and rideshare vehicles. Consumer protection issues and fraudulent behaviour will also be addressed.

I commend the Bill to the House.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

###### 2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of *Passenger Transport Act 1994*

###### 3—Amendment of section 3—Objects

This clause amends the objectives of the Act to include updated terminology used throughout, and to remove reference to the public sector.

###### 4—Amendment of section 4—Interpretation

This clause removes various definitions no longer used in the Act, and inserts various definitions consequential on the amendments being made by this measure.

###### 5—Amendment of section 5—Application of Act

The clause amends sections 5(2) and 5(4) to allow the Minister to confer or revoke an exemption and vary or revoke conditions of an exemption by instrument in writing.

###### 6—Amendment of section 20—Functions of Minister under Act

This clause amends the functions of the Minister consequential to changes being made by this measure.

###### 7—Amendment of section 22—Powers of Minister

This clause substitutes reference to a taxi-stand for reference to a taxi zone.

###### 8—Amendment of section 24A—Annual report

This clause deletes the paragraph requiring the annual report to include a specific report on taxi availability at taxi-stands and response times to bookings.

###### 9—Amendment of heading to Part 4

This clause makes a consequential change to the heading to Part 4.

###### 10—Substitution of Part 4 Divisions 1, 2 and 3

This clause substitutes new Divisions 1 and 2 as follows:

###### Division 1—Accreditations

###### 27—Minister may grant accreditation to booking service providers

Proposed section 27 provides that the Minister may grant a booking service accreditation to a person who provides a booking service, and details the purpose of such an accreditation including compliance with various standards prescribed by the regulations or determined by the Minister.

###### 28—Minister may grant accreditation to general passenger transport service providers

Proposed section 28 provides that the Minister may grant a general passenger transport service accreditation to a person who provides a general passenger transport service, and details the purpose of such an accreditation including compliance with various standards prescribed by the regulations or determined by the Minister. Such an accreditation must specify the services or kinds of services in respect of which it is granted.

#### 29—Minister may grant accreditation to passenger transport drivers

Proposed section 29 provides that the Minister may grant a passenger transport driver accreditation to a person, and details the purpose of such an accreditation including compliance with various standards prescribed by the regulations or determined by the Minister.

#### Division 2—Offences relating to accreditations

##### 29A—Booking service providers

Proposed section 29A makes it an offence to provide a booking service unless the person holds a booking service provider accreditation granted by the Minister under section 27 which applies in respect of the booking service provided.

##### 29B—General passenger transport service providers

Proposed section 29B makes it an offence to provide a general passenger transport service unless the person holds a general passenger transport service provider accreditation granted by the Minister under section 28 which applies in respect of the general passenger transport service provided.

##### 29C—Drivers

Proposed section 29C makes it an offence to drive a public passenger vehicle for the purposes of a passenger transport service unless the person holds a passenger transport driver accreditation granted by the Minister under section 29 which applies in respect of the passenger transport service provided.

##### 29D—Passenger transport service must be linked to booking service or general passenger transport service

Proposed section 29D makes it an offence to drive a public passenger vehicle for the purposes of a passenger transport service unless linked to an accredited booking service provider or general passenger transport service provider. It also makes it an offence not keep records of each point to point transport service journey in accordance with the regulations.

#### 11—Amendment of section 30—Procedure

This clause amends language to include reference to the right of review introduced under proposed section 37A.

#### 12—Amendment of section 31—Conditions

This clause, in addition to a minor language update, introduces a new subsection (6a) which imposes additional conditions on a booking service accreditation under section 27 relating to use of information sharing systems or other technological systems specified by the Minister.

#### 13—Amendment of section 32—Duration and categories of accreditation

This clause clarifies language used in subsection (4) to better reflect the provisions of subsection (3), which allows for classes of accreditations within each form of accreditation.

#### 14—Insertion of section 32A

This clause inserts a new section 32A:

##### 32A—Automatic cancellation of accreditation in certain circumstances

Proposed section 32A provides for automatic cancellation of accreditation in certain circumstances including an offence against sections 44K or 44O.

#### 15—Amendment of section 34—Renewals

This clause removes the requirement for a renewal application to be made within a prescribed number of days before the expiry of the accreditation.

#### 16—Amendment of section 35—Related matters

This clause updates language for consistency within the Act.

#### 17—Insertion of Part 4 Division 4A

This clause inserts a new Division 4A:

##### Division 4A—Public passenger vehicle authorisations

## 35A—Preliminary

Proposed section 35A provides definitions relevant to the Division.

## 35B—Minister may grant authorisation

Proposed section 35B provides that the Minister may, on application by the relevant person for a vehicle, grant a public passenger vehicle authorisation in respect of a vehicle or fleet of vehicles, and that the Minister may determine and publish standards for determining this authorisation. Use of a vehicle as a public passenger vehicle without applicable authorisation is made an offence.

## 35C—Procedure

Proposed section 35C establishes procedure in relation to an application for authorisation.

## 35D—Automatic suspension or cancellation of authorisation in certain circumstances

Proposed section 35D provides for automatic cancellation of authorisation in certain circumstances including an offence against sections 44K or 44O.

## 35E—Inspections

This provision is relocated from section 54 (to be repealed by clause 39 of the measure) and requires that a vehicle be inspected by an approved vehicle inspector, and provides for circumstances in which a certificate of inspection may be issued. It makes it an offence to use vehicle as a public passenger vehicle without a certificate or to violate the condition of a certificate. It is also makes it an offence for a vehicle inspector to contravene a code of practice.

## 35F—Requirements and standards

Proposed section 35F provides that passenger transport vehicle standards, passenger transport fleet standards, prescribed requirements and standards for the purposes of section 35E must be widely published and made reasonably available to interested persons.

## 18—Repeal of section 35A

This clause repeals the current section 35A (under which the Minister is required to establish the *Passenger Transport Standards Committee*).

## 19—Amendment of section 36—Disciplinary powers

This clause includes several updates to language consequential on the amendments being made by this measure. Several of these changes are reflective of the inclusion of public passenger vehicle authorisations.

## 20—Amendment of section 37—Related matters

This clause removes all references to the standards committee and replaces them with references to the Minister.

## 21—Amendment of heading to Part 4 Division 6

This clause makes a consequential change to the heading to Part 4 Division 6.

## 22—Insertion of section 37A

This clause inserts a new section 37A:

## 37A—Review by Minister

Proposed section 37A provides for Ministerial review of certain decisions under Part 4 of the principal Act.

## 23—Amendment of section 38—Appeals

This clause amends subsection (1) to provide for SACAT review following a Ministerial review under proposed section 37A, and removes references to the standards committee.

## 24—Amendment of section 39—Service contracts

This clause replaces a reference to Metropolitan Adelaide with a reference to the Metropolitan Regular Passenger Service Area.

## 25—Amendment of section 40—Nature of contracts

This clause replaces references to Metropolitan Adelaide with references to the Metropolitan Regular Passenger Service Area.

## 26—Amendment of section 44A—Interpretation

This clause replaces a reference to Metropolitan Adelaide with a reference to the Metropolitan Regular Passenger Service Area.

#### 27—Insertion of Part 5B

This clause inserts a new part 5B:

Part 5B—General safety duty and audits

Division 1—Preliminary

44F—Interpretation

Proposed section 44F provides definitions relevant to the Division.

44G—Relationship with other laws

Proposed section 44G addresses scenarios in which this Part and a provision of another safety law deal with the same thing, and provides that evidence of a contravention of this Part is admissible in a proceeding for an offence against a provision of another safety law.

Division 2—Principles and duties

44H—Principle of shared responsibility

Proposed section 44H establishes that the safety of activities associated with providing a point to point transport service or general passenger transport service is the shared responsibility of each person in the chain of responsibility, and provides factors for determining the nature of a person's responsibility.

44I—Principles applying to duties

Proposed section 44I establishes several principles relating to general safety duties.

44J—General safety duty

Proposed section 44J imposes a duty on each person in the chain of responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of the person's activities. It is made an offence for an officer of a corporation to fail to exercise due diligence to ensure compliance with the duty.

44K—Failure to comply with duty

Proposed section 44K provides for various offences relating to a failure to comply with the duty.

44L—Regulation may impose other duties or requirements

Proposed section 44L enables the regulations to impose other duties or requirements on a person in the chain of responsibility.

Division 3—Audits

44M—Purpose of Division

Proposed section 44M establishes that the purpose of the Division is to allow the Minister to carry out audits for purposes of assessing compliance and verifying information.

44N—Audit notice

Proposed section 44N enables the Minister to supply a written audit notice to a person in the chain of responsibility. Failure to comply with an audit notice is made an offence. The Minister is also required to provide a report to the subject of the audit following its completion.

44O—Direction to comply

Proposed section 44O enables the Minister to give a person whose activities were audited, and found not to have complied with transport legislation, a written direction to comply. Contravention of such a direction (without reasonable excuse) is made an offence.

#### 28—Amendment of section 45—Requirement for licence

This clause makes some minor amendments to language, removes one of the exemption requirements under subsection (2) and provides that regulations may make provision in relation to the meaning of 'ply for hire'.

#### 29—Amendment of section 46—Applications for licences or renewals

This clause inserts a subsection that allows the Minister to determine that renewal of a licence will be automatic on payment of the prescribed fee.

#### 30—Amendment of section 47—Issue and term of licences



This clause amends section 47 to implement several changes to the taxi licencing scheme which allow for the transition to a model based around the renewal of licences on a 12 month basis. A licence now continues in force for 12 months from the day on which it is granted or, in the case of a renewal of a licence, 12 months after the expiry of the term of the previous licence. The section no longer provides for the grant of temporary licence or the transfer of a licence.

31—Substitution of section 49

This clause substitutes section 49:

49—Cancellation of licence at request of licensee

Proposed section 49 provides for cancellation of licences at the request of a licensee. Transfer of a licence is no longer possible under the amended section 47.

32—Substitution of section 51

This clause substitutes section 51:

51—Reviews and appeals

Proposed section 51 provides for Ministerial review of certain decisions relating to licences under Part 6 of the principal Act. A person aggrieved with a decision of the Minister may appeal to SACAT.

33—Insertion of sections 52AA and 52AB

This clause inserts a new section 52AA and 52AB:

52AA—No compensation

Proposed section 52AA establishes that no action lies against the State in relation to licences impacted by the measure.

52AB—Scheme for buy-back or cancellation of perpetual licences

Proposed section 52AB establishes that a licence in force immediately before the commencement of this section continues to have effect as if it were a licence under this Part (subject to any modifications or conditions in a prescribed scheme). The Minister may, in accordance with a prescribed scheme, cancel any such licence. This allows for the implementation of a government buy-back or cancellation of taxi licences.

34—Amendment of heading to Part 6A

This clause makes a consequential amendment to the heading to Part 6A.

35—Amendment of section 52B—Non-cash payment surcharges

This clause makes a consequential amendment to the section.

36—Amendment of section 52C—Overcharging for non-cash payment surcharge

This clause makes a consequential amendment to the section.

37—Insertion of section 52D and 52E

This clause inserts a new section 52D and 52E:

52D—Maximum fares for taxis

Proposed section 52D allows the regulations to prescribe maximum fares or methods of fare calculation, as well as maximums or methods of calculation for any component of a fare for taxi services. The regulations may also provide for amounts that can be charged in addition to the fare.

52E—Certain fares and charges prohibited in prescribed circumstances

Proposed section 52E makes it an offence for a booking service provider or passenger transport driver to charge a fare calculated by reference to an element of surge pricing, or which includes a queue-jumping fee, for the provision of a point to point transport service in prescribed circumstances. The terms *queue-jumping fee* and *surge pricing* are defined.

38—Amendment of section 53—Authorised officers

This clause clarifies the powers of authorised officers primarily in regard to the collection of information and entry onto premises.

39—Substitution of section 54

This clause substitutes section 54 and inserts a new section 54A:

54—Confidentiality

Proposed section 54 makes it an offence to divulge or communicate information obtained in the administration of this Act except under certain circumstances, or to use information disclosed for such a purpose for another purpose.

54A—Arrangements for exchange of information etc

Proposed section 54A provides for disclosure of information obtained under this Act to the Commissioner of Police or a prescribed person or body. It also provides for information sharing agreements with a Minister, accredited booking service provider or accredited general passenger transport service provider.

40—Substitution of section 58

This clause substitutes section 58:

58—Liability of passenger transport service providers for acts or omissions of employees or agents

Proposed clause 58 clarifies liability for an act or omission of an employee or agent of a person who provides a passenger transport service, using language consistent with the rest of the act.

41—Substitution of sections 62

This clause substitutes section 62:

62—Recovery of debts

Proposed section 62 establishes that a relevant debt amount includes interest, penalty amounts and overpayments. Such a relevant debt is recoverable by the Minister as a debt due to the Crown.

42—Repeal of section 63

This clause deletes section 63.

43—Amendment of section 64—Regulations

This clause allows the regulations to make provisions of a saving or transitional nature consequent on the enactment of the *Passenger Transport (Point to Point Transport Services) Amendment Act 2025*. It also removes mention of the *Liquor Licensing Act 1985* and provides for the prescription of fees through by fee notices.

44—Amendment of Schedule 1—Regulations

This clause expands and clarifies the scope of matters which the regulations may make provisions in regard to, using language consistent with the rest of the act.

45—Amendment of Schedule 2—Point to point transport service transaction levy

This clause makes several changes to the point to point transport service transaction levy. These include changing the \$1 levy to a prescribed amount, updates to language, and changes necessitated by alterations to other schemes in the Act.

Schedule 1—Statute law revision amendment of *Passenger Transport Act 1994*

This Schedule increases penalties and removes gendered language.

Schedule 2—Savings and transitional provisions

1—Interpretation

This clause inserts a definitions for the term principal Act as used in the savings and transitional provisions.

2—Accreditations to continue

This clause provides for the continuation of accreditations under sections 27, 28 and 29 of the principal Act in force immediately before the commencement of section 10 of the measure.

3—Inspections

This clause provides for the continuation of accreditations as an approved vehicle inspector under section 54 of the principal Act in force immediately before commencement of section 39 of the measure. In addition, certificates of inspection issued in respect of a vehicle and in force before commencement will also continue and the relevant person for such a vehicle is taken to have been granted a public passenger vehicle authorisation.

4—Effect of Schedule

This clause is a power to make savings and transitional regulations that may apply in addition to, or in substitution for, the savings and transitional provisions in the Schedule.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Pederick.

**PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS (WASTE AVOIDANCE) REPEAL BILL***Second Reading*

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (16:02):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008, or, as is more easily understood, the plastic bags act, bans lightweight, single-style plastic shopping bags that are less than 35 microns in thickness. South Australia led the nation in the phase-out of lightweight plastic shopping bags when the act came into force on 4 May 2009 under the Rann Labor government.

The Malinauskas government is extending prohibitions on single-use plastic shopping bags by utilising the more modern and more broadly scoped Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020, or the single-use plastics act. This strengthens efforts to remove plastic film shopping bags of any thickness from circulation in South Australia by broadening the scope of prohibited plastic shopping bags. This includes plastic shopping bags already banned under the plastic bags act, making the plastic bags act redundant and therefore in need of repeal.

The Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Repeal Bill 2024 seeks to repeal the plastic bags act and the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Regulations 2022. In summary, the plastic bags act bans retailers from providing a customer with a lightweight, checkout-style plastic bag, which is defined as a carry bag that includes handles and comprises (in whole or in part) polyethylene with a thickness of less than 35 microns. Biodegradable bags and heavyweight plastic bags are not banned under the plastic bags act.

The Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Regulations 2022 set out signage requirements in relation to the banning of lightweight checkout-style plastic shopping bags from a prescribed day, being 4 May 2009. The prescribed day implemented a transitional period between commencement of the legislation on 1 January 2009 and the application of offence provisions.

The newly amended Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Regulations 2021, or single-use plastics regulations, under the single-use plastics act now include plastic shopping bags already banned under the plastic bags act, as well as banning all plastic film bags, no matter the thickness, and plastic laminated paper shopping bags.

The current plastic bags act includes an exemption for Australian Standard (AS) certified compostable shopping bags. This exemption has been included in the single-use plastics regulations, as well as additional exemptions for commonly used reusable shopping bags made from plastic materials, such as nylon, polyester, woven polypropylene and non-woven polypropylene.

Research commissioned by Green Industries SA in July 2023 found that 98 per cent of South Australian survey respondents already own reusable shopping bags, and 25 per cent of survey respondents do not use plastic shopping bags at all. Green Industries SA has developed a guide to the ban on plastic shopping bags, available through the Replace the Waste website, as well as information about alternatives to plastic shopping bags.

Information on the Replace the Waste website is available in nine languages other than English, reflecting the most common languages spoken by South Australian communities. As part of the education to support the 2024 bans, Green Industries SA will be developing a campaign in early 2025 to encourage South Australians to adopt more reusable items, including shopping bags, coffee cups and food containers.

Penalties under the single-use plastics act are broader and higher than those under the plastic bags act. Under the plastic bags act, the offence of providing a plastic shopping bag is limited to a retailer. However, the single-use plastics act contains an offence to sell, supply or distribute. The maximum penalty under the plastic bags act for providing a plastic shopping bag is \$5,000 whereas the single-use plastics act contains a maximum penalty of \$20,000 for a manufacturer, producer, wholesaler or distributor and \$5,000 in other cases, such as a retailer.

Consultation on the draft single-use plastics regulations ran in accordance with section (6)(2) of the single-use plastics act, which requires the minister to publicly consult for a period of no less than eight weeks prior to adding a new prohibited plastic product to the SUP Act by regulation.

There were 19 business survey responses and 134 individual survey responses received during consultation. Overall, there was strong support from individuals to ban plastic shopping bags. A small number of respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the ban, highlighting the reuse of plastic shopping bags for bin liners, holding wet items of clothing and poor performance of paper bags for some items. However, there was no evidence in the survey responses which suggested plastic film shopping bags are reused more than once or twice before they are discarded. In general, businesses agreed with the proposed ban, with one business highlighting the need to clear stock on hand.

The repeal bill commencement clause specifies that the repeal act comes into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation. Prohibiting all plastic shopping bags under the single-use plastics act promotes consistent, contemporary offences and penalties, and I commend the bill to members.

Of course, that is a rather dry recitation of the second reading speech, given that it is a necessary element to any piece of legislation: that the second reading speech be available for consultation should there be any legal activity in the future in order to guide the intention of the lawmakers. But I would like to add on a more personal and perhaps not quite so much a tongue-twisting note that I pay tribute to the former member for Black, who is no longer with us—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In parliament.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** —in parliament—forgive me, that was not deliberately ambiguous; no longer in this chamber and no longer a member of this chamber—for a couple of things that he did as the previous minister for the environment. One of them was to introduce the single-use plastics act that did create a modern mechanism. Therefore, by paying tribute to him I pay tribute to the former government, the Liberal government under Steven Marshall, for choosing to craft a piece of legislation that has now necessitated the repeal of what has now become an outdated piece of legislation. Through that, I recognise that this is a bipartisan effort to get rid of single-use plastics.

The majority of plastic in the world is only used once. That is a stunning fact, particularly given that still far too much of it is not only wastefully therefore produced, because it is only used once, but is still not being disposed of in a way that keeps it out of our waterways.

I commend this piece of legislation. It is a small piece of legislation in the sense that it is repealing what is now a redundant act but it is an opportunity for people to speak to the advantages of getting rid of single-use plastics, and I am sure that that will be the vast majority of the contributions today.

**The SPEAKER:** And it's not a single-use piece of legislation, is it?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Exactly. I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

##### Part 2—Repeal of *Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008*

3—Repeal of Act

This clause repeals the *Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008* as the prohibition and restriction on the provision and use of plastic shopping bags is intended to be regulated under the *Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020*.

##### Part 3—Repeal of *Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Regulations 2022*

## 4—Repeal of regulations

This clause repeals the regulations made under the *Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008*.

**Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (16:10):** I would like to thank the Deputy Premier for outlining exactly what it is, because I did not want to have to do that tongue twisting of plastic versus plastic. It is very much a bill to repeal a piece of legislation that effectively duplicates the banning of a particular class of bags twice, so it is fantastic that we are actually able to get rid of some legislation that is no longer necessary.

As the lead speaker for the opposition, we fully support the removal of this piece of legislation and so very much back this bill. I would like to again thank the Deputy Premier and her staff for organising a very quick briefing for me in relation to this bill after taking on this new role as the shadow minister responsible for the environment and having to get myself across this piece of legislation. I thank her, her staff and the departmental staff for that briefing.

**Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (16:11):** South Australia has always been a leader in environmental protection. We were the first state to ban plastic bags, to introduce a container deposit scheme and to push for stronger recycling measures. But we cannot stop now because plastic pollution is still choking our waterways and our wildlife. It might sound counterintuitive to progress legislation that repeals a law banning the sale of plastic bags, but we do it for good reason. This Malinauskas Labor government's commitment to minimising plastic waste of all persuasions extends far beyond an act designed only to capture plastic shopping bags. And that's no slight on a Rann Labor government that introduced these laws back in 2009; it's simply proof of how far we have come since then.

In 2009, the people of this house and the other place led the nation and paved the way for successful South Australian governments. Since then we have demonstrated how reform at a state level can help drive the whole country forward. That is not to say that there have not been speed bumps along the way. I am sure I speak for all in here when I say the collapse of REDcycle's soft plastics program was an extremely disappointing development, again one that state and federal Labor governments are working to resolve. But today, by repealing the plastic shopping bags act, we avoid duplication and instead run with one all-encompassing piece of legislation that captures this government's priorities.

Last year, South Australia's phase-out of single-use plastic products took another step forward. In September we waved goodbye to single-use plastic coffee cups and lids, all plastic bag food tags, plastic bag tags, plastic balloon sticks, ties and confetti, and of course plastic laminated paper bags. That is not a small change by any measure, but it is one we have embraced as a state, with 97 per cent of people participating in consultation saying that they supported further bans on single-use plastic items. And because we are a government that listens, that is exactly what we are doing.

Later this year, plastic barrier bags used for dairy, meat, poultry, fish and seafood products, plastic fruit stickers and, last but certainly not least, those silly little soy sauce fish containers will join an already extensive list of banned items. We are making this happen with the cooperation of both consumers and business and to know there is such widespread support for initiatives that help keep our communities clean and beautiful is extremely pleasing to see from a position of government.

Sadly, right now across our state, plastic waste continues to pile up where it does not belong. Plastic does not break down naturally. It generally takes about 500 to 1,000 years to break down. These products, leaked into our environment, can have a variety of environmental, health and economic consequences. In our oceans and rivers, fish and other marine life mistake microplastics for food, filling their little stomachs with tiny indigestible fragments. Sea turtles mistaking plastic bags for jellyfish will swallow them whole only to slowly suffocate from the inside. Even birds searching for food to feed to their chicks will bring back bottle caps, plastic shards and small pieces of plastic, unknowingly starving their young.

At times, along our highways and in our parks, plastic will flutter along in the wind, a regular reminder of a wasteful society. We cannot let this be our legacy. The plastic we use for a moment lingers for centuries, but the good news is that we can stop this. Right across the globe, governments are phasing out single-use plastics, and major companies and small businesses are investing in

biodegradable and reusable alternatives. South Australia should be at the forefront of this movement, driving real change, just as we always have.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the passionate advocacy of my community when it comes to eliminating the use of single-use and soft plastics, in particular, the students at Flagstaff Hill Primary School. When REDcycle wound up in 2022, I received a letter from each of the year 4 students at Flagstaff Hill Primary, but there is one student in particular whose letter I would like to share. Sophia wrote:

Dear Ms Erin Thompson,

My name is Sophia and I am a year four student at Flagstaff Hill Primary School. I am really disappointed that when we just started getting used to using the REDcycle program and collected 592 pieces in four weeks there was not that program anymore. Please can you go to Parliament House and invest some money for the REDcycle program. Thank you for reading this. I hope you can fix the problem.

Sophia may be a few years older now—I think she is probably in high school—but her message back then was on point, and it still is now. While we continue to work through soft plastic recycling solutions for our state, I hope that Sophia will be pleased to hear that we are reducing single-use plastic significantly.

She may also be pleased to know that Green Industries SA, through the Australian government's Recycling Modernisation Fund, is administering a \$20 million grant to Recycling Plastics Australia in Kilburn. This means that we will have a facility that cleans and purifies soft plastics, like chip packets and food wrappers, and then uses that recycled packaging to create new raw materials. This is an initiative that my community is ready and waiting for. Each of us has a role to play, and the advocacy of young South Australians has played no small part in bringing soft plastics recycling programs to life.

The work of this government since its election in 2022 speaks for itself. We have a strong and committed minister in the form of our Deputy Premier, who has dedicated not just the last few years but her career to bettering our environment and strengthening environmental protections. This is yet another example of her leadership, and I thank her today for her tireless advocacy.

South Australia has never waited for others to lead. We set the standard. By banning plastic bags and other harmful plastics, we take a stand for our environment, our wildlife and our future. I look forward to repealing the existing act, despite how well it served us, but only because we are making way for bigger, better and stronger legislation. With that, I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (16:17):** I, too, rise in support of this bill. South Australia has led the way in reducing waste. We were the first to introduce a container deposit scheme in 1977 and one of the first states to ban plastic bags. In recent times, we have introduced legislation to allow bring your own containers in supermarkets, restaurants and cafes, and we are continuing our nation-leading phased approach to banning single-use plastics.

South Australians have embraced these changes, whether it is collecting cans and bottles for charities or for the Scouts, taking a keep cup to our local cafe for our morning coffee or using our own reusable bags for the weekly grocery shop. In fact, research commissioned by Green Industries SA in July 2023 found that 98 per cent of South Australian survey respondents already own reusable bags.

As I previously mentioned, South Australia led the nation on the phase-out of lightweight plastic shopping bags when the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008, or plastic bags act, came into force on 4 May 2009 under the Rann Labor government, banning lightweight, singlet-style plastic shopping bags that were less than 35 microns in thickness. I applaud the work of the Rann Labor government in introducing this act, and today the Malinauskas government seeks to build on that legacy.

Through this bill, we are extending prohibitions on single-use plastic shopping bags by utilising the more modern and more broadly scoped Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020, or single-use plastics act. This strengthens efforts to remove plastic film shopping bags of any thickness from circulation in South Australia by broadening the scope of

prohibited plastic shopping bags. This includes plastic shopping bags already banned under the plastic bags act, making the plastic bags act redundant and in need of repeal.

The Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Repeal Bill 2024 seeks to repeal the plastic bags act and the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Regulations 2022. The newly amended single-use plastics regulations under the single-use plastics act will now include plastic shopping bags already banned under the plastic bags act, as well as banning all plastic film bags, no matter the thickness, and plastic-laminated paper shopping bags.

The current plastic bags act includes an exemption for Australian Standards-certified compostable shopping bags. This exemption has been included in the regulations, as well as additional exemptions for commonly used reusable shopping bags made from plastic materials, such as nylon, polyester and non-woven polypropylene.

During the consultation on this bill, there were 19 business survey responses and 134 individual survey responses received. Overall, there was strong support from individuals to ban plastic shopping bags. While a small number of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the ban, they highlighted the re-use of plastic shopping bags for bin liners or holding wet clothing and highlighted the poor performance of paper bags. However, there was not really any evidence from survey responses that suggested that plastic film shopping bags are re-used more than once or twice before eventually being discarded and ultimately ending up in landfill.

In response to a query from the charitable sector, a three-year time-limited exemption, until 1 September 2027, will be put in place for charitable organisations who receive donations of goods from the public in plastic film bags and then re-use these bags for sales of second-hand goods in their retail shops. By September 2027, it is expected that the number of plastic film bags still being used to donate clothes will have significantly decreased and the exemption will no longer be required.

The single-use plastics act also provides for broader and higher penalties than those under the plastic bags act. Under the plastic bags act, the offence of providing a plastic shopping bag is limited to a retailer. However, the single-use plastics act contains an offence to supply, sell or distribute. The maximum penalty under the plastic bags act for providing a plastic shopping bag was \$5,000, whereas the single-use plastics act contains a maximum penalty of \$20,000 for a manufacturer, producer, wholesaler or distributor, and \$5,000 in other cases such as for a retailer.

Why is this act so important? The same strengths that have made plastic so widely used in our community over the years have also presented an enormous environmental challenge. Plastic does not break down naturally; it generally takes between 500 to 1,000 years for plastics to break down. Even then, they become microplastics or nanoplastics, without fully degrading. Plastic products then leak into the environment and can have a variety of environmental, health and economic consequences, such as:

- marine pollution and negative effects on marine ecosystems and wildlife;
- health impacts of microplastics and nanoplastics on the human body;
- litter issues and the impact on the amenity of public spaces;
- single-use plastics as a growing source of greenhouse gas emissions; and
- the economic cost of damage to fisheries, aquaculture, marine transport and tourism industries due to marine plastic pollution.

It is recognised around the world that phasing out single-use plastics is an important and achievable step in striving to reduce pollution, cutting carbon emissions and protecting marine life. Without action the annual flow of plastic into the ocean alone will nearly triple by 2040 to 29 million metric tonnes per year, the equivalent of 50 kilograms of plastic for every metre of coastline worldwide.

That is why I am so proud of my local community, who has embraced these changes to phase out single-use plastics. There have been so many small businesses leading in this space in my community; for example, DayJob cafe on Halifax Street. The owner, Antonio, chose to avoid single-use plastics from the day he opened his cafe in 2020. They used paper straws and then switched to metal straws and, from the beginning, always used compostable cups. Another local

leader is Let Them Eat in Adelaide Central Market and James Place, who in 2022 was named our 42<sup>nd</sup> Plastic Free Champion. Let Them Eat have always had a focus on using sustainable ingredients, where possible, and minimal packaging that is either recyclable or compostable, and even their labelling is done with stamps, not stickers.

This Sunday, I am incredibly excited to be holding a community information session with the Minister for Environment, Dr Susan Close, on how South Australia is leading the nation in its phased approach to banning single-use plastics and other plastic products. Locals in my community are encouraged to come along to learn about how they can replace the waste by avoiding single-use and other plastic products and adopting clean and green alternatives instead.

We are holding the event at Something Special Concept Store on Hutt Street. This store is a female-led small business run by a mother-daughter team, Rachel and Dianne Mifsud. It is an eco-conscious store and stocks brands that follow a sustainable and ethical model from concept to manufacture to packaging and end-of-life waste. They stock eco-friendly kitchen, bathroom and cleaning products, composting starter kits, daily essentials, nail and body care, chocolates and beverages to name but a few.

Something Special Concept Store is one of our local champions for change and I love the store's motto, 'A minor pivot with a global impact'. If you would like to attend my community information session this Sunday, which includes a light morning tea, check out my social media page to RSVP. Minister Close and I would love to see you there on Sunday. With those comments, I commend the bill to the house.

**Ms O'HANLON (Dunstan) (16:25):** I rise most happily to speak on this bill, a bill which really speaks to the good that is being done in this parliament, the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Repeal Bill 2024. As of 1 September 2024, all plastic film shopping bags were banned in South Australia, so this bill seeks to avoid legislative duplication. This fact alone is such a giant step forward for us as a society and a sign that it does not matter how long something has been the norm when, as a society, we realise the error of our ways and we can do things differently and better.

I remember when I first moved to a jurisdiction that had banned single-use shopping bags in supermarkets, in this case Canberra where I lived for a year in 2012. I remember thinking, 'How damn sensible. Of course I can bring my own reusable shopping bags to the supermarket.' In the beginning, I did forget a few times, to be honest, and so I would load all my groceries into the boot of my car, not in any bags, and then unload them again when I got home. I soon remembered to bring my own shopping bags. I have been a convert to the practice ever since, and, frankly, going to jurisdictions like New South Wales that really were late to the party on this issue, well, they just seemed out of step.

In my first speech to this place, I spoke about my childhood in the country and riding my horse through the Australian bush. I truly believe growing up in the country, having that experience, gave me a deep love of nature and the bush and I think it is this love of nature that causes me to be so saddened when I see it spoiled by rubbish, particularly rubbish that we know takes hundreds even thousands of years to break down as plastic does, and even worse is that it often actually breaks down into microplastics on the way. We know that microplastics are now ubiquitous, so much so that they are in the human bloodstream.

So while plastic is a very useful invention and a very important part of our economy and will no doubt be something we as humans will quite possibly always make use of, it is self-evident that it has been overused. From islands in South-East Asia, where otherwise beautiful beaches are littered with single-use plastics, to the Galapagos Islands and even the Antarctic, we have evidence all around us of its overuse.

The prelude to this bill of course was not only the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008, which banned lightweight singlet-style plastic shopping bags that are less than 35 microns in thickness, but also the Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020, which broadened the scope of the plastic shopping bag ban and introduced a phased plan to ban single-use and other plastic products.



So what has been the story so far? Starting in March 2021, single-use plastic straws, cutlery and stirrers were banned. These single-use items have been replaced with reusable and plastic-free compostable alternatives we are already so used to seeing in use. In March 2022, polystyrene cups, bowls, plates and clamshell containers were also banned. These oxo-degradable plastic products have additives, which I personally find shocking, that actually enable the plastic to break down into microplastics.

In September 2023, plastic-stemmed cotton buds for personal use, single-use plastic bowls and plates, and plastic pizza savers were banned, of course with medical exemptions where necessary (probably not with the pizza savers). Most recently, in September 2024, thick supermarket or boutique-style plastic bags were banned as well as single-use plastic beverage containers, such as coffee cups, polystyrene food and beverage containers, and trays used for meat, fruit and other food items were also banned.

The final stage will be this year when as of 1 September 2025, plastic fruit stickers, plastic soy sauce fish and prepackaged and attached products such as products that contain plastic straws or cutlery will be phased out. I have to say I personally will be thrilled when an alternative is found to those little fruit and veg stickers which I am a bit obsessed with picking off fruit and veg as soon as I buy it. Of course, in undertaking this exercise in bringing our use of single-use plastics into the modern age, extensive consultation was carried out, including with specific stakeholders expected to be directly impacted by the amendment regulations and the South Australian public with the overwhelming number of respondents expressing their strong support, including that of business owners.

Additionally, exemptions were made for unavoidable uses of single-use plastic, such as plastic in medical settings and in the case of certified compostable plastic shopping bags. And so we see that the introduction of the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008 was subsequently superseded by the expanded Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020. This bill, the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Repeal Bill 2024 seeks to repeal that 2008 act and the subsequent Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Regulation 2022 and streamline the regulation of single-use plastic under the one expanded bill.

I truly thank the minister, her staff and the department for continuing to ensure that South Australia is at the forefront of environmental policy in this country. I am proud to be South Australian and I am proud to be part of this thoughtful government. This is an example of government that does not say, 'Oh that's too hard. Plastics are too entrenched in society, we can't sensibly reduce their use.' This government looks at what needs to be done, looks at how it can be done and gets on with it. I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms SAVVAS (Newland) (16:31):** I am incredibly pleased to be speaking to this bill as the elected recycling monitor for all of my primary school days. I have many a story about my own experiences as a generation that really saw the changes to legislation in the environment space in real time as a primary school and high school student. In fact, it was the first time I had any contact with a politician when I was at primary school—and I am really showing my age now—when I wrote to the local member, Jane Lomax-Smith, and spoke to her about my experience. We went to a recycling depot of some description and we learned all about the triangles on the bottom of bottles and different items at the time. I wrote to Jane Lomax-Smith as I think a year 2 or year 3 student asking for that to be extended. Then I went home and made a presentation to my parents about the importance of recycling and where we could recycle different things.

That for me has been something in my generation at least, alongside my peers, that we have always been brought up with and I think that has been really important in terms of watching those attitudes change, the narrative change, and it shows what can be done when governments are taking decisive action on things like plastic bags. I have grown up in a generation where I have seen it in a way that makes it seem like it has always been that way almost. I do not remember the time before we were having those discussions. When you make decisions like this it does go a long way to changing those attitudes, particularly for the next generation.

Here in South Australia we led the nation not just by a little bit but by many years when the Rann Labor government phased out lightweight shopping bags in 2009. Of course, by extending

prohibitions on single-use plastic shopping bags, we are strengthening our efforts to remove plastic film bags of any thickness from circulation in South Australia.

I think that we are all incredibly pleased with the work that is being done here, not just in relation to single-use plastic bags but of course single-use plastics more generally. Often in this place we do really important work but you cannot always see or touch what is being done out in the community or show individuals in a tangible way something that a government has done to effect change.

But, of course, here in this example we can see tangible changes in behaviours and attitudes to the environment as a result of that act. Each time we are buying takeaway food or coffee or get a paper straw in a drink, we can see the tangible changes that have been made as a result of this legislation. I think that is really important.

In order to continue that work, of course, we do need to repeal the plastic bags act and that is what we are doing, repealing both the act and the regulations. The new act, of course, bans retailers from providing a lightweight checkout-style plastic bag, instead requiring a biodegradable bag or heavy weight plastic bag or others that have previously been available for purchase.

I know that lots of us are really welcoming this change. It is something that many people have tried to do and take on in their own shopping. A lot of individuals I know, particularly my friends and peers as I have mentioned before, have taken a decisive action in terms of when they do their shopping and how they do their shopping. Many of my friends will purchase things in bulk online or in glass jars. We all take our little metal straws out with us when we go out for drinks and that sort of thing, and that is something that we have been doing for quite some time now. But I think it does say a lot to change those things in a real way, which helps to change those attitudes for individuals who have not been making those decisions self-prompted in the past.

I think that as we as a government particularly, and governments more broadly, look to a solution to the soft plastics problem overall, it is really important to be making decisions like this one. I know that many of us have struggled to return to putting our soft plastics straight into the red bin after we saw the REDcycle situation, when many of us would pack up our soft plastics, put them in big bags and take them over to Coles and watch them all overflow as other people did the same—sometimes leaving them in my car or in my garage for too many months before taking them over to Coles. But the way that it has encouraged people to change their attitudes back is really interesting. I think that that is something that lots of us have struggled with—trying to put those things in the bin again and feel that we are not contributing in a positive way, or that the thing that we tried to do to try to do the right thing is no longer having an impact.

I have seen a huge difference in being offered the biodegradable option at the supermarket or at the fruit and veg. Personally, I have really preferred the introduction of the heavy-duty biodegradable bags at a number of shops as a result of these changes, particularly in relation to the choice between that or a paper bag when you are going shopping.

I think it has been really interesting to look into the behaviours and attitudes of individuals towards these changes, particularly in South Australia. We know that we led the way in terms of the plastic bags act in 2009, as mentioned before. As a young person who watched that happen in real time, when you would go on holiday or when you would go and see relatives, seeing the single-use plastic bags in supermarkets interstate was often quite confronting and confusing: 'Why do they still have these here?' I think that is really important when we think about the impact this will have on the next generation of individuals who grow up in, hopefully, a retail environment where they are required to make environmentally conscious decisions about their shopping.

When we looked at the Green Industries research, it showed that 98 per cent of South Australian respondents already own reusable bags, and I think that that is quite telling. I am very curious to see if there would be the same sort of uptake in other states where it is not as entrenched or it is a newer decision to ban the single-use plastic bags. When you are talking about the fact that they are something that are basically found in every South Australian household, we can also see the tangible impact of work like that. We can actually look at it and see that something that a government did in terms of moving forward and changing those attitudes to shopping generally had

a significant impact, and in just a generation or less we have been able to change those attitudes tenfold. I think that is really important.

I did see something on the internet the other day about not being an adult until you have bags of bags in your kitchen or in your garage as the case may be.

**Mr Telfer:** Or in the back seat.

**Ms SAVVAS:** Yes, or in the back seat of the car—often left in the back seat, so you go into the shop and then you have to purchase more. I say it as a bit of a joke, but I think it is actually quite important and talks about just how significant that is to individuals and how that change in behaviour has really been entrenched in South Australians and what that means to individuals. We do not like to go shopping without our bags. I used the example before that even when I leave a bag of bags in the car, I go into the shop and I buy more rather than use the ones that were previously being provided at the supermarket prior to this change or the ones that are available for purchase.

Of course, I often try to use Olivia Savvas bags when I do my shopping locally, but I also do continually buy green bags when the option is available. I know that I am not the only one who has tried to change their own attitude as I have gone along and not add to the major issue that we have with single-use plastics as best we can.

There are a number of retailers where you shop online, for example, and they give you the option: 'Would you like the fancy packaging with coloured cardboard and glittery stickers and things, or would you like the eco-conscious option?' Although I would like to see a world where all retailers are moving towards an option where all that packaging is more eco-conscious, I do think that giving individuals the choice as they move towards that is quite important. Again, I would be interested to see the statistics on who is making those choices to have an eco-conscious package when purchasing something and I think that we would be very pleased to see the results.

I think it is also really important that we do make this accessible. Something that comes across a lot, particularly in multicultural communities—and I myself am the granddaughter of migrants on both sides—is that often environmental measures are not things that are seen as accessible or tangible for individuals who have a cultural misunderstanding, or perhaps there is a language barrier. I was very pleased to see that there is material related to these changes and to the changes we are making as a government in nine languages other than English. I think that is really important and, of course, that there will be continued work to campaign on all of the ways that we can make positive changes and encourage individuals to use reusable materials where they can.

I thought I would give a little bit of an anecdote about the seniors' forums that I host in my electorate. Last year we hosted I think five or six seniors' forums out and about in my electorate, some of those inside nursing homes or retirement villages, others just generally out in the community. Something that was asked for at the first two or three sessions that we did not have was someone to come and talk about waste. Generally individuals wanted to know what goes in which bin. I think it is really interesting to see that even an older demographic—and some of the individuals attending my forums are upwards of 90—is wanting to make decisions to make less waste, to make the right decisions in terms of the impact that they are having on the environment, many of whom are living alone and not necessarily contributing in a significant way. Still, it was a question that we were asked time and time again: 'Can someone come and speak to us about waste?'

It has become well and truly the most successful part of the forum and the presentation that we put on. People love hearing from our local council and the waste officers at the City of Tea Tree Gully. They give some really interesting stats about the amount of waste that goes to landfill each year and also on average what individuals in Tea Tree Gully are contributing to that problem. You always see the exasperated look on everyone's faces in the room as they hear that in actual numbers. It is something that people are generally worried about, even individuals of that older generation where perhaps a lot of this information could be new to some of them. I think it has been really interesting to show the breadth of interest in changing attitudes towards waste and the environment more generally.

The first time we had one of those sessions the individual from the council had these 'which bin' magnets that go on the fridge and talk about what you put in each bin and let me tell you I was

receiving calls for weeks with requests for those magnets. They are very large magnets too; there was a yellow one, a green one and a red one in our case I believe. People were just asking questions about what goes where. I always find it really interesting how surprised some individuals are to find out what goes in which bin.

I know that at the City of Tea Tree Gully when I was a councillor we ran a pizza box campaign over about a six-month period in all of our publications where we talked about putting your pizza box in the green bin and encouraging individuals to put anything cardboard or paper that had food remnants or oil on it to go into the green bin rather than in the recycle bin. At the time it was something that people mentioned to me on a very regular basis. People just did not know that your pizza box went in the green bin. Still to this day, every time I go and have pizza with friends, family or have people over, I do find myself moving pizza boxes from the recycle bin into the green bin and having to educate people on something that I thought was quite common knowledge, which, of course is not.

I just had my two teenage brothers come and stay with me for about 10 days over summer and let me tell you that was eye-opening for many reasons, but there were greasy cardboard boxes all over the house. Again, we had a real educational moment when teaching them what needed to go into the green bin: pizza boxes, their boxes of chicken wings, everything else that they were hiding in the bedroom as they played video games—putting everything in the green bin. I gave my 14-year-old brother the role of bin monitor. I said I had had the role in the family for way too long and I was passing the baton to him.

I think it was really interesting that even teenage boys of their generation (14 and 20) were not necessarily aware of what went in which bin. Again, I think that is a really important education piece as we move forward. Taking decisive action like this, relating to plastic bags, for example, or relating to single-use plastics, does go a long way in terms of changing those attitudes and to normalise behaviours.

I remember my brothers commenting on the paper straws and the paper lids on their frozen Cokes at McDonald's. Of course, that is not something they have interstate where they live, and that was something that was very obvious to them when they had McDonald's arriving off the plane. That was something that was tangible, that they could touch. They asked me why that was the case and we got to have that conversation. Even just a little conversation like that goes a long way to changing attitudes, changing the narrative and encouraging individuals to be more eco conscious when making their decisions or deciding on the way that they shop and eat.

It goes a long way to changing the attitude of businesses as well, knowing that there are requirements and these requirements are for a reason. I have been really pleased to hear feedback from so many local businesses in my community about how pleased they are to have transitioned in a really smooth way into the more environmentally friendly packaging of some of their takeaway foods. A lot of them feel encouraged by making a contribution as a small business, just in their own little way, to the environment more generally.

I want to acknowledge the work that has been done in relation to this. South Australia continues to be a leader in this space, and I for one am incredibly proud to be part of that work, to showcase our work when we have friends here from interstate, and to continue to play the role of recycling monitor in my own life as best I can. I continue to spruik the work of the South Australian government in terms of waste, packaging, shopping and the best ways that we can do so.

**S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (16:46):** I rise to support the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Repeal Bill 2024. This bill, or the plastic bags act, bans lightweight singlet-style plastic shopping bags that are less than 35 microns in thickness. South Australia led the nation on the phase-out of lightweight plastic bags when the act came into force on 4 May 2009. It is always worth doing the maths, because you always think that was only a couple of years ago, but it was a really long time ago. This was under our former Rann Labor government, something that we are all very proud that they instigated and began changing the behaviour of South Australians.

Now, the Malinauskas Labor government is extending prohibitions on single-use plastic shopping bags by utilising the more modern and more broadly scoped Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020, or single-use plastics act. This strengthens efforts to remove

plastic film shopping bags of any thickness from circulation in South Australia by broadening the scope of prohibited plastic shopping bags. This will include plastic shopping bags already banned under the plastic bags act, making the plastic bags act redundant and in need of repeal.

As a leader in Australia, because our behaviour is so normalised—and a number of members have talked about how common it is for all of us to take our own bags to the supermarket and to have as little plastic in our lives as possible—sometimes when you travel overseas and see the amount of plastic that is thoughtlessly applied to almost every product, it can be really confronting because our behaviour is so accepted now. It gives you cause to reflect on the influence that a government can have on changing our behaviour. Of course, so many individuals are motivated to do anything they can in every act they do to support our environment, but it really is our government that is able to instigate this broad-based change.

The plastic shopping bags bill seeks to repeal the plastic bags act. In summary, the plastic bags act bans retailers from providing a customer with a lightweight, checkout-style plastic bag, defined as a carry bag that includes handles and comprises polyethylene and a thickness of less than 35 microns. Biodegradable bags and heavyweight plastic bags are not banned under the plastic bags act.

The regulations set out signage requirements in relation to the banning of lightweight checkout-style plastic shopping bags from a prescribed day. That was back on 4 May 2009. The Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) (Prohibited Plastic Products) Amendment Regulations 2024 under the single-use plastics act include plastic shopping bags already banned as well as banning all plastic film bags, no matter the thickness, and plastic laminated paper shopping bags.

The current plastic bags act includes an exemption for Australian Standard certified compostable shopping bags. This exemption has been included in the draft single-use plastics regulations, as well as additional exemptions for reusable shopping bags made from plastic materials such as nylon, polyester and non-woven polypropylene.

Penalties under the single-use plastics act are broader and higher than those under the plastic bags act. Under the plastic bags act, the offence is limited to a retailer providing a plastic shopping bag. However, the single-use plastics act contains an offence to sell, supply or distribute.

I do note the member for Newland reflecting on her time as the recycling monitor at school and the campaign she led, and that she wrote to Jane Lomax-Smith at the time. She is not alone in running mini campaigns in her community. As a family, we used to regularly go to the food court in the Central Market on a Friday night and out of the blue the landlord shut the central kitchen down, which meant that, whilst all of the small shopfront food outlets were obviously cooking their food out the back, the central dishwashing services were no longer available, so many of the shopfronts suddenly started serving on plastic plates and with plastic cutlery.

You might not be surprised that the next week I was out with a petition so I could write to the landlord. I went around to all the consumers in the food court for a couple of weeks to get them to change the decision and provide dishwashing services to all the food outlets in the food court at the Central Market. So I think the kinds of changes that we are making in this community are very easily acceptable, and I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms CLANCY (Elder) (16:52):** I rise today in support of the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Repeal Bill 2024 which seeks to repeal the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008 and the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Regulations 2022. South Australia led the nation to phase out lightweight plastic shopping bags from May 2009 after the Rann Labor government passed the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008, more commonly referred to as the plastic bags act. It is estimated that this legislation has saved 400 million plastic bags every year in South Australia alone.

In 2010, I spent a few weeks in Tasmania for work. When I packed my suitcase, I threw my clothes in, some cleanser, maybe a little bit of mascara—maybe—and I actually made sure I packed a few reusable shopping bags. I knew I could get disposable bags in shops there but I did not want to. When my Tasmanian colleagues found out that I had packed my own shopping bags, they thought

it was weird and funny but it had just become more normal to me than even taking a shopping list to the supermarket.

I will admit that, even though I have some bags at home, in my car and, of course, in my office—feel free to drop by and grab one: a Nadia Clancy MP reusable shopping bag—every now and then I do get to the cashier with more items than I had planned on purchasing, maybe because I do not take a shopping list, but on those occasions you will see me walking out of the supermarket with an armful of groceries precariously piled on top of each other because I just will not get another bag.

Now, almost 16 years after the ban came into place, another Labor state government continues to extend prohibitions on plastic shopping bags and other single-use plastics. Today, we use the more modern and broadly scoped Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020, more commonly referred to as the single-use plastics act. The newer act strengthens our efforts to remove plastic shopping bags of any thickness from circulation in our state by broadening the scope of prohibited plastic shopping bags. This includes bags that were already banned under the previous plastic bags act. As such, today's bill simply moves to repeal the redundant pre-existing legislation and regulations, which are no longer required in this space.

I am incredibly proud to be part of a state government that is steadfast in our efforts to protect our natural environment, waterways and beaches. South Australians are rightfully immensely proud of our state's national and often international leadership in environmental protection and climate change mitigation. Typically only used for a matter of seconds, single-use plastics last many, many lifetimes in our natural environment. Phasing out their use is an important way to reduce pollution and carbon emissions while protecting marine life.

Our government has set an ambitious timetable to ban single-use plastics in line with expectation following the successful bans of single-use straws, cutlery and stirrers put forward by the previous state government. We have brought forward plans to decrease the amount of single-use plastics in line with people's expectations, who reasonably demand more than what had been planned by those opposite. Community consultation undertaken in 2022 showed that South Australians wanted urgent action to ban a range of items. Of the more than 3,000 people who participated in Green Industries SA's public consultation report, 97 per cent of respondents said they wanted more action on single-use items like plastic bags and takeaway coffee cups.

In 2023, we banned plastic-stemmed cotton buds, plastic pizza savers—it took me far too long to realise what they were and their purpose—and single-use plastic plates and bowls. The latest round of banned items as of September last year included plastic barrier bags, thick supermarket and boutique-style plastic bags, expanded polystyrene consumer food and beverage containers, plastic confetti and plastic balloon sticks or ties, plastic food bag tags and single-use plastic food and beverage containers, including coffee cups.

Further phasing out of single-use plastics in September this year will include plastic fruit stickers, thank goodness, and plastic soy sauce fish containers—yes! Members of my community have been incredibly supportive of our improved timeline for the phasing out of single-use plastics, with a number of local businesses already jumping on board and changing their practices ahead of time.

One such business is the lovely Pantry on Egmont, technically located in Hawthorn but mere metres from the boundary of my electorate. The Pantry is enjoyed by so many in Westbourne Park and Colonel Light Gardens as well as residents from other nearby suburbs who adore this community-orientated cafe. The Pantry on Egmont is a business member of Plastic Free SA, a pilot program that works directly with food retailers across Adelaide to assist them to switch from single-use plastics to better alternatives.

Like single-use plastics, my community is also gravely concerned about the impact soft plastics are having on our environment, particularly since the collapse of REDcycle. That is why I and thousands of South Australians were so excited when the federal Minister for the Environment and Water, the honourable and excellent Tanya Plibersek MP, announced that the Albanese Labor government would be investing \$20 million in advanced recycling technology.

In a partnership with our own state government, Recycling Plastics Australia in Kilburn have been tasked with cleaning and purifying soft plastics to create feedstock for new soft plastic packaging. This project will create 45 jobs and help Australia to develop an advanced recycling supply chain that will turn soft plastic waste back into packaging. Once up and running, this project will divert more than 14,000 tonnes of soft plastics from South Australian landfills each and every year.

While the bill before us today is really only a simple mechanism to repeal legislation that is surplus to requirements, it is important that our laws are consistent and promote activity that protects our environment and waterways, and I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the great work that has been done by this and previous Labor governments. I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (16:59):** Can I say how thankful I am to be living in a state that takes climate change, action on climate change and the impact that humans make on our environment so seriously. Whilst this is a relatively simple repeal bill to remove legislation that is now covered by the Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act, or the single-use plastics act, it really just solidifies our commitment to doing what is right in order to reduce waste and help protect our environment.

Simplifying legislation to the one act strengthens efforts to remove plastic film shopping bags of any thickness from circulation in South Australia, by broadening the scope of prohibited plastic shopping bags. The Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008 only banned lightweight shopping bags, the really thin ones. The new 2024 Single-use and Other Plastic Products amendment regulations broaden the scope of this by banning plastic shopping bags, including the thicker ones that we were getting in supermarkets and also in clothing stores, etc.

Penalties under the single-use plastics act are broader and higher than those under the plastic bags act. Under the plastic bags act, the offence of providing a plastic shopping bag is limited to a retailer. However, the single-use plastics act contains an offence of selling, supplying or distributing. The maximum penalty under the plastic bags act for providing a plastic shopping bag is \$5,000, whereas the single-use plastics act contains a maximum penalty of \$20,000 for a manufacturer, producer, wholesaler or distributor, and \$5,000 in other cases, such as a retailer. Serious penalties will result in compliance, which, when you think about it, benefits everybody.

Why do we ban plastic shopping bags? We do that because they are incredibly bad for the environment and they last forever. I think about when I was a young person when my grandma had an orange ceramic container in her kitchen and in there were all these plastic bags, neatly folded as grandmas do. I always remember her using them when she needed to. She actually passed away 10 years ago, and I inherited the pot when she did pass, for sentimental value. I can tell you those neatly folded plastic bags are all still in there, because we do not use them.

If you think about that and multiply it by the hundreds of thousands of people who live in our communities and think about the stashes of plastic bags that they have sitting there, you can imagine why we need to limit and stop our use of plastic bags, because they do not break down. I think my nan would be proud to know that our state is still leading the way in getting rid of plastic bags and other single-use plastics.

Plastic leaks into the environment, and it can have a variety of environmental, health and economic consequences, such as marine pollution and negative effects on the marine ecosystem and wildlife. We only have to look at the TV to see pictures of poor turtles with bags wrapped around their necks or dolphins with twine wrapped around them. The damage that we do to marine life when this sort of stuff gets into the system is hideous.

They are also a threat to the terrestrial environment, if you think about people who chuck their rubbish away out the door of the car or while they are walking. Then little critters look and think, 'That might be something for me to eat.' They try to get into the plastic. They ingest it or they get caught up in it, and again it can impact them and cause them to die. The health impacts of microplastics and nanoplastics on the human body are also extensive, and we know that there is a lot of research in that space.

Single-use plastics are a growing source of greenhouse gas emissions. We see pictures of barges floating with this plastic stuff in there. We need to just stop it, and we are doing that. The economic cost and damage to fisheries, aquaculture, marine transport and tourism industries due to marine plastic pollution is also significant.

Our state led the way with banning plastic bags. I remember going to Queensland when I was much younger, as my sister lived there, when we had already banned them here. I went to the supermarket and they were literally packing everything in plastic bags. I thought to myself, 'This is actually "the more the merrier" plastic up here.' I could not understand why they had not moved too to ban plastic bags.

Sometimes it can be a little annoying when you maybe, as the member for Elder said, do not take enough shopping bags to the shops or think you are going to pop in for two things and come home with a whole trolley full. I am really glad now that paper bags are there for us to use, because the paper bags have so many more uses than just carrying your groceries. The paper bags can be used for lining your compost bin or even lining your rubbish bin. I also use mine to collect my recycling so that it can go straight into the recycling bin and it keeps it all tidy. If you are really crafty, you can use it to wrap presents or wrap things that you are sending in the mail, because it is a strong brown paper. It is nice to know that we are now getting those, instead of plastic bags, in our supermarkets.

Further afield from just plastic bags is our single-use plastic ban and some of the things that I have seen change in my community over time. These are things that you can feel really good about. One of those is that a lot of the shops that sell banh mi and those kinds of things have gone from plastic-lined bags and takeaway containers to using paper bags and fully compostable containers. I know our favourite banh mi shop in Blackwood is one of those, and they do work hard to make sure that they are complying with all the regulations.

Sushi is another one. They used to serve it in those plastic containers that you would get your sushi in, and those were obviously also difficult to deal with. Now sushi is served in paper bags, and you can take them away. I cannot wait for the little plastic fish to be gone as well, because they have no other use than for soy sauce and they just pile up in your recycle bin.

At my Waite Youth Advisory Council I had a group of students for a couple of years, and we would meet regularly to talk about things that were worrying them in the community and things that they really wanted to work on. One of the issues they raised with me was the fact that, while plastic bags were banned in supermarkets, the thick plastic bags were still being used for when groceries were being delivered. They were really concerned about this. They thought that supermarkets could be using boxes or paper bags. Together, we wrote to our local supermarkets and asked them what their stance was and when they were going to be changing over. Thankfully, regulations changed and so those plastic bags can no longer be used, and paper bags and boxes are being used.

It is our kids who know this stuff. They are already doing the work. In school time they learn all about how they can do better things for the environment. In 2023 I attended the Belair Primary School expo, where the students had done different projects on the environment and things that you can do yourself, or things that the government could be doing, to improve things for the environment. I can honestly say that our future is incredibly bright, because these kids really knew what they were talking about. They had gone away, they had done the research and they had come up with creative ways to not only educate their friends and the school parents but the community more broadly.

One of the groups had mini rubbish bins that you can get from the City of Mitcham—mini green bins. They had ripped up different kinds of rubbish and paper, and you had to decide which bin each piece of paper had to go into. There were some Easter egg wrappers, there was some plastic, there were some papers and all sorts of things like that. Then they would judge you on how well you did at putting those things in the rubbish bin. I do not know whether I got a 100 per cent pass mark, but it certainly educated me, which was really helpful.

Another one of the groups had done some work on ocean litter, and they showed in a plastic container how it all swirls around. You can imagine how litter gets caught up in things, not only marine life but also coral and the things that grow at the bottom of the sea as well. These kids are incredible; they know what they are talking about.



I believe that, whilst we are making legislation in this place and we are doing this work, we should always look at it through a lens of how it is going to impact the kids in the future, because we are making these laws and this legislation for them. Our government and even our state are leaders in this space. It is fabulous to be part of a government that continues to work and continues to find ways of how we can rid ourselves of plastic and how we can do all that we can to protect the environment and create the opportunity to improve things like biodiversity. It is also about educating, because recycling sometimes can be a challenge for some people. We need to make it as easy as possible, and making sure that legislation is clear and straightforward does help in that space.

In a bit of a call-out for my electorate, we have a fantastic recycling centre, the Blackwood Recycling centre. They take all our cans and bottles, and they have been doing it for such a long time. I know that they work hard there every single day. You take all your cans and all your bottles and they have to count every one individually. Then they give you the 10¢ per bottle, which again is another thing in which South Australia has led. Hopefully we can continue to work in that space and look at wine bottles and how we can continue to recycle as much as possible.

This is a repeal bill. We are taking away an outdated piece of legislation and continuing to strengthen our laws in this state. I commend the bill to the house.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (17:09):** I am happy to close debate and I really enjoyed listening to everyone's contributions, thank you very much. As I had expected, although a repeal bill is not only very short but also something that seems would be difficult to give a long speech about, because of the subject matter and the reason that we are repealing it there were very interesting and important contributions made.

I would like to add a little more on my own views and position about what is happening and why it is that we are needing to get to a place where we manage our impact on the earth. It is true that at present we have very serious human social and economic problems to address and they are very present in our minds: the challenges of the escalating cost of living. In Australia, at least, the inflation rate has come down well but across the world it has remained a challenge and is nonetheless uncomfortable for people here. The ongoing social challenges of inequality, of lack of equal access to quality education, and domestic violence—wherever we look, there are human-centred problems that we need to address.

They unfortunately do not make the planetary problems that we have go away. Those lurk and they can be ignored for a period of time but they will have a profound impact on us. It is an important attribute of humanity that we deal with more than one challenge at the same time. South Australia has always done that well and I think that we continue to.

Just to focus our minds a little on those challenges that we are facing, climate change is pressing down hard on us. Last year was by far the hottest year on the record; it eclipsed the year before, which already had climate scientists aghast at the rate of change. Last year's calendar year went through the 1.5° of warming from pre-industrial levels. The previous year, there had been 12 months of that, but this time we have matched a calendar year.

The Paris Agreement wants us to keep on a 10-year average to not being warmer than 1.5° and we have had a lot of months in a row where we have done exactly that, well ahead of the time we were hoping to head that off. That is not to say that there is not still a lot of fluctuation in climate and that there is not a lot of hope that the world will turn around and drive emissions down to an extent that we can head off the worst of climate change but it is to say that it is here now and is affecting us now. As we all know, we can have a fever for a day or two and recover easily. Have a fever for a week, a month, three months, and the body's systems start to be so weakened that it can be difficult to survive.

That is exactly the experience that the planet is starting to see where we have fires that erupt and are very difficult to put out. We have in other places floods, landslides and droughts. That continuous impact of too much energy in the system, too much of the solar radiation being retained within the greenhouse effect, within the greenhouse that surrounds us, is really starting to take its toll on the earth and on humanity, on our capacity to predict when we can have our crops, on our capacity

to have secure settlements that are not prone to flood or fire and then of course our economic institutions on having insurance that works and that people can afford. We are under threat there.

We also have a challenge with biodiversity where we are seeing increasing numbers of species being pushed to the brink and over the edge and we do not know at what point we start to lose whole ecosystems. It is like rivets on an aeroplane, someone said many years ago. You can lose a few rivets—there are redundancies built into the system—but at one point you lose a rivet and the plane falls out of the sky, and that is the challenge with biodiversity. We see these species become increasingly vulnerable, we see them disappear, but we do not know at what point that becomes irrecoverably a challenge. Those are the two big existential threats that we share globally.

One of the examples of the way in which humanity has, without intending to, increasingly put pressure on the earth and increasingly accelerated this impact on climate and on biodiversity is the way in which we have fallen in love with plastic and failed to deal with it. Plastic is a marvellous material. There is a reason why it has become so successful. It is highly malleable, it is very durable and it is able to be used in very antiseptic circumstances. It can be a very clean product and therefore it is tremendously useful in a variety of places. That has resulted in humanity producing an enormous amount and accelerating.

We humans are often likened to being frogs boiling in a saucepan, that we do not notice that it is getting warm around us. Humans are amazingly adaptable and capable of normalising. That is a tremendous skill to have for a lot of the time and utterly disastrous when a problem is sneaking up on us. It might surprise people to realise how much of the plastic that we are now dealing with has been created very, very recently.

When you look back to 1950, not long after plastic had become a product that could be used fairly widely, there were only two million tonnes produced around the world in 1950. There are now more than 400 million tonnes produced in a year. We have seen an acceleration where in the last two decades we doubled the amount of plastic produced in the previous two decades. We are accelerating our production of this material.

Its very good features, being its durability and malleability, work against our being able to reuse plastic. Some of the chemical compounds are very complex to be able to remake into another product, and their durability means that they just do not go away. At worst, for most plastics as they break down, they become smaller and smaller and become microparticles that are then incorporated into nature and into ourselves.

In fact, I was just reading that it is estimated that on average each person is consuming about a credit card's worth of plastic each week as part of living our lives in this modern world. We know that there are very serious health challenges with that. Babies have microplastics in the placentas that are protecting and nurturing them. That is how ubiquitous plastic has become.

The amount of plastic that exists is, of course, highly wasteful even if we were to dispose of it very, very thoughtfully. In fact, Australia is not good at efficiency of resource use. We have a problem with getting the maximum value out of the material that we use. Australia is able to get about \$1.20 out of every kilogram of material that we consume. The OECD average is \$2.50, so we are wasteful. As efficient as we think we are, there is more that we can do.

Simply, the volume of plastic that is not able to be reused—and, of course, that was about all materials, but plastic is an increasing proportion of materials—the wastefulness of using resources and energy to create them and not reusing them is bad for our economic efficiency. Of course, there are also greenhouse gas emissions associated with producing plastic. Not only is it fossil fuel in itself, the vast majority of plastic is made from fossil fuels, but also in the production an enormous amount of energy is used, most of which is often coming from greenhouse gases, although we are hoping for and watching the rest of the world emulating South Australia in reducing emissions from electricity production.

Then you look at what happens when plastic is thrown away and it makes its way into our waterways and into the ocean. The loss of biodiversity is heartbreaking, the direct death of marine mammals and marine life through the ingestion of material that is not food that displaces the capacity for those animals to eat food because their stomachs are full or chokes them and kills them directly.

There is also the utter destruction of beautiful places—places that ought to be places that people want to go to pay money, to pay tourism dollars into countries, to visit to enjoy sandy beaches, where increasingly there are plastic bottles, plastic bags and plastic fishing lines washing up on beaches and destroying the natural beauty that would otherwise be a means for a developing country to attract tourism.

We have an enormous challenge before us. It is a challenge that was relatively recently created and we need to turn it around as quickly as, if not more quickly than, it became a significant problem. The good thing is that the public want us to do this. Collectively, we are keen to deal with plastic and with all other forms of waste and litter. Above all, South Australians have the highest per capita recycling rate in the nation. A lot of that could be said to be because we were the first—and it was more than 40 years ago now—to have a container deposit scheme, where it became just part of who we are and what we do that we would re-use beverage containers, we would take them back and get our deposit back. Now, at last, we are almost—Tasmania is still getting there, but they have agreed to do it—at a stage where we have a national scheme for container deposit.

Is that the reason we are different or are we just born different? I do not know, but I can give you a little story. When we were talking about getting rid of plastic bags many years ago, I was briefly a ministerial adviser to the environment minister. The previous environment minister, John Hill, had committed that we would get rid of plastic bags in shopping centres, in supermarkets, and that we would want to do it with the rest of Australia but if it could not be done with the rest of Australia then we would go it alone.

The following minister was Gail Gago, a lovely woman. We were at a ministerial council meeting where we expected all of the other states to agree to getting rid of single-use plastic bags. It must have been around 2006, a time when we thought that people had come on board with the idea and that this would be a natural next step to take. We were surprised to find that none of the other states were at that point ready to do it.

A very senior minister from another jurisdiction said, 'Well, you South Australians, you're just different,' as if there was something special—now, I like to think there is something special about that, but I also think that is an excuse. That is a little get out of jail card: 'You can do it but we couldn't possibly.' Of course, they have all now come on board, just a lot later than us, but we did proceed in any case. We did go ahead with getting rid of single-use plastic bags, which is a very great credit to the work that John Hill and then Gail Gago did to get us into a place where we were prepared to go it alone. I welcome the rest of Australia on board but I will never forget the leadership that was shown right in the early days of container deposit legislation and then through to this.

Then, of course, we have this bipartisan attitude, a bipartisan attitude that, as I paid tribute to earlier, the last Liberal government introduced the single-use plastics legislation. That is the reason that we are all agreeing to repeal this piece of legislation, because it has now become redundant. What we are doing is important. It is not the only thing we need to do to make people's lives better, but it is something that we do need to incorporate into changing our impact on the earth, because everyone will be grateful that we have done it as they increasingly see a healthier planet for our children.

Bill read a second time.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (17:23):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

I again express my gratitude to all the people who have contributed to the legislation—this one was short to write, but also to the preparation of the legislation that is the reason it is being repealed—and to those who made a contribution today.

Bill read a third time and passed.

**STATUTES AMENDMENT (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) BILL***Second Reading*

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (17:25):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This is a piece of legislation that has come down from the Legislative Council, from my good friend and our colleague the Hon. Kyam Maher MLC in the other place, who is our Attorney-General.

I am pleased to introduce into this chamber the Statutes Amendment (Criminal Proceedings) Bill 2024. The bill contains two amendments to improve the safe and efficient operation of the criminal justice system. The bill will amend the Juries Act 1927 to allow a judge to excuse a person summonsed for jury service from further attendance if their attendance would pose a risk to the safety or welfare of another person.

Currently, there are various grounds on which a person may seek to be excused from attendance for jury service, including recent service, ill health, conscientious objection or a matter of special urgency or importance. However, these all require an application from the juror themselves. The bill provides a limited ability for a person summonsed for jury service to be excused in the absence of any application from the juror where it is necessary to protect health or safety.

For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic various health and safety protocols were put in place in relation to persons attending for jury service. A potential risk was identified that, if a person had refused to comply with the protocols, they could only be invited to apply to be excused from jury service. There was no power to excuse them on the court's own initiative if they declined to make the application themselves. While the risks during the pandemic were well managed by the courts in the circumstances, the government feels that this gap in the legislation is worth addressing to provide more options to address health and safety risks that may arise in the future.

The bill provides that if the attendance of a prospective juror poses or would pose a risk to the safety or welfare of another person, a judge may issue a notice in writing excusing that person from further attendance. This will help protect the health and safety of their fellow jurors and all other court users. This may occur on the judge's own initiative or on the application of the court sheriff. The sheriff is responsible for managing persons summonsed for jury service and so will be well placed to determine if a prospective juror poses a health and safety risk and to present this risk to a judge for consideration.

The bill also amends the Courts Administration Act 1993 to provide that the State Courts Administrator's annual report must set out the number of times a person was excused from jury service under this section, as well as the number of times the sheriff made an application for a person to be excused, regardless of the outcome of the application. This will provide an additional layer of transparency and accountability in relation to the use of this power.

This bill will also amend the Sentencing Act 2017 to broaden the circumstances in which a defendant may attend sentencing for an indictable offence via audiovisual link. The default rule is, and will continue to be, the defendant should be physically present in the courtroom during sentencing proceedings for an indictable offence. This is appropriate to be the normal practice because the defendant's actual presence in the courtroom assists the judge to connect them when delivering sentencing remarks, particularly in Youth Court proceedings.

However, the Sentencing Act contains exceptions to this rule, allowing attendance via audiovisual link in some circumstances. The broadest exception, in section 21(2)(b) of the Sentencing Act, provides that, if a defendant is in custody prior to sentence, the court may deal with the proceedings by way of AVL without requiring the personal attendance of the defendant if the court is of the opinion that this is appropriate in the circumstances. However, there is no equivalent exception available to defendants in the community.

The bill would expand the existing exception such that any defendant may attend sentencing proceedings via AVL if the court considers it appropriate in the circumstances. However, defendants

in the community must consent to AVL attendance. This will allow greater flexibility for defendants in the community to attend their sentencing proceedings remotely—for example, due to mobility concerns, illness or caring responsibilities. This will increase the accessibility of the justice system. I commend the bill to the chamber and seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

###### 2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of *Courts Administration Act 1993*

###### 3—Amendment of section 23A—Annual report

This clause amends section 23A of the Act to require the Courts Administration Authority to include in its annual report information setting out the number of people who have applied to be excused from jury service on safety and welfare grounds, and the number of people who have been so excused. This is consequential on the amendment to the *Juries Act 1927* proposed by this measure.

##### Part 3—Amendment of *Juries Act 1927*

###### 4—Insertion of section 16A

This clause inserts a new section.

###### 16A—Judge may excuse juror or prospective juror from attendance on safety or welfare grounds

Proposed section 16A provides that a judge may excuse a person from attending jury service if the person poses a safety or welfare risk. A person excused from jury service under this section may be summoned to attend jury service at a later date.

##### Part 4—Amendment of *Sentencing Act 2017*

###### 5—Amendment of section 21—Presence of defendant during sentencing proceedings

This clause amends section 21 of the Act to allow a defendant who is not in custody to attend sentencing proceedings via audio visual or audio link, provided that the defendant consents.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Odenwalder.

At 17:31 the house adjourned until Thursday 6 February 2025 at 11:00.