

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 3 September 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

DROUGHT RESPONSE AND RECOVERY COORDINATOR BILL

Second Reading

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (10:33): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I rise to speak on this bill that has been brought forward from the Legislative Council, and this Drought Response and Recovery Coordinator Bill is important. I want to encourage the government to give this serious consideration because I think there is an opportunity here for there to be a quality, constructive and nonpartisan solution for what I see as a significant challenge for not just regional South Australia but South Australia as a whole.

Our whole economy is built on what is driven by regional parts of our community and the contributors that bring in those export dollars. What we are facing in regional areas are some of the most challenging times that we have seen for a long time. Just because it rains in some parts of the state at the moment does not mean that there are not drought conditions being faced right around different parts of our state.

I was out west, at Streaky Bay and surrounds, only a few days ago and saw the challenges being faced right now by landowners, like the drift they are facing with their soil being blown away, with a very little amount of ground cover trying to hold it together. The year-on-year challenges that drought conditions bring are not just to regional farming businesses but to regional communities as a whole.

This legislation has been brought with an aim to try to create models that work, not based on the opinion of someone who is not facing the reality of drought every day. These people walk out their back door day after day and they have a heavy load on their shoulders when they know that there is not anything they can do within their own capacity to confront these conditions and do anything about it.

Financially, they are facing the challenge of trying to source and pay for fodder, and they are facing the challenge of having to resow areas where, as I said, the winds have come through and cut through the topsoil and they have suffered damage there. Every single day, people are facing the challenge of management of livestock and the elements of that we do not want to talk about; that is, having to actually make the hard decision of when to dispose of livestock, and not all livestock can just be sent off to the abattoir. Sadly, the heavy burden that is carried by farmers is that they have to do that disposal themselves.

These are real situations being faced by people in our community and regional South Australia right now because of the drought conditions. It was only earlier in the year when it seemed like right across the state these drought conditions were being faced. I was personally frustrated that there was not an understanding at the ministerial decision-making level of the actual total impact of what was being faced by regional South Australia.

The current drought package has been designed to support farmers who are not doing too bad financially and can afford the initial outlay for infrastructure; that is, the one-for-one grants or the like where, if you spend a bunch of money, you can get some money from the government. Well, not everyone has got that initial capital to be able to outlay. Then there are those who are doing it so tough that they qualify for the Farm Household Allowance. We know that, of the nearly 9,000 farming businesses in South Australia, less than 10 per cent actually qualified for that Farm Household Allowance. That means there is a whole significant swathe of South Australian regional farming businesses that were not able to qualify for any of those support mechanisms that the government decided eventually they would fund.

What we are seeing is a continual degradation of regional communities because of the challenges that they are facing with drought. When the rhetoric comes from government, whether it is at a state or federal level, like, 'We have the RIC loans in place to be able to support farmers'—well, the RIC loans, the so-called low-interest loans, the interest rate for those loans is over 5 per cent. For a farming business that is able to source capital, already 5 per cent is not competitive for them. For those who are not able to, this is a challenging situation where they might be desperate enough to have to take up the 5.18 per cent or whatever the current interest rate is.

It was only a couple of weeks ago that I and the shadow minister, the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, wrote to the body managing the RIC loans at the national level, because they had actually proposed to increase the interest rate for those so-called low-interest loans. They were going to increase it. It was at just about the same time that the Reserve Bank was decreasing interest rates that that entity, thinking it was a way to be able to support farmers, was actually considering and had been planning to increase it. Thankfully, they decided no, they were not going to increase it, but they certainly did not decrease the interest rate.

At a time when farmers are at their most vulnerable financially, the solution from government and the entity that has been set up is an interest rate of over 5 per cent for their support. There need to be greater supports for farmers with low or even no-interest loans, because we know that there is the capacity within farming businesses to be able to rebound when the drought conditions move on, and inevitably they will. However, we know that unless there are these mechanisms in place for them to find that support they are not going to survive, and we are going to end up with lesser communities because of it.

As I said at the opening, there is an opportunity for there to be a nonpartisan, proactive, constructive support mechanism actually built into legislation that is able to have support from both parties of government, and I certainly invite the government to consider this. I was disappointed, but probably not surprised, at some of the amendments that got baked into this bill by the Greens in the upper house, the way they tried to hijack this legislation and make it something more of an activist mechanism than a proactive and constructive drought mechanism.

I encourage the government to consider this. I think we should be peeling those back, we should be putting something forward that both Liberal and Labor can agree on. It needs to be above party politics because, in the end, it is about the long-term financial sustainability of regional communities, of regional businesses, and allowing people to keep farming. This is trying to enable them to be able to put a crop in next season.

I have been hearing stories from right across South Australia, and especially within my patch, of heartbroken farmers who have done everything right in their planning, have done everything right in their delivery, whether it is at Streaky Bay or up at Ceduna. I was speaking to someone only a few days ago up there who does not know where to turn next. They have had three years in a row of low to no income in their farming businesses. These are not hobby farmers, these are substantial farming businesses that have had long-term financial sustainability for decades that are now facing conditions with high inputs and high risk. What happens with low rainfall is that basically they need to deal with having zero or very low income.

These are farmers, some of whom are out in the Far West, who put a crop in living in hope, living in faith, that it will rain. Well, the rains did not come out there—and what little rain has come has been so late that the crops have not been able to be established to get up and going. I hear the same stories from a lot of farmers through the Mallee and beyond, and the Mid North is exactly the

same. There are areas there that are once again facing—not just for the first time—cumulative years of low or no income.

This legislation we are debating, the Drought Response and Recovery Coordinator Bill, really does try to provide more certainty around a framework, because it should not be a year-to-year thing, where it is dependent on the electoral cycle and which colour government is in place. We should have certainty around the drought supports that are able to be delivered for regional South Australia. I understand that there different aspects that are obviously state versus federal. That is fine; we understand that at this level, but farmers do not understand it on the ground. That is why both levels, state and federal, need to have an understanding of what is actually going to work. As I said, I have been frustrated with the press release and media cycle response to drought rather than the practical, sustainable outcomes that we should be driving as decision-makers.

The work that has been done on delivering some of the fodder and support for livestock farmers around South Australia is really significant, and I commend the organisations, the charities, and those philanthropic donors that have put their hand in their pocket—some small and some bigger organisations—to help farmers get through some of the most challenging times. We had a fantastic event out in Streaky Bay a couple of months ago where, while there was no hay available for people to be able to buy, there were pellets that were locally produced that were sponsored by the Lions Club. There are a couple of Lions Clubs here in Adelaide that put their hands in their pockets, recognising the whole-of-state impact that the drought is having.

The Streaky Bay community—and beyond, as this is a big, wide community right across the West Coast—came together. It was not just about the fodder or the pellets, as it was on the day, that were able to be supplied to these people; it was about actually meeting together, having boots on the ground, having people understand the individual stories, and having the opportunity for people to be able to talk one on one. I talked to that many farmers that day—and continue to—who have not had an outlet. They have not had the opportunity to be able to actually speak to people about how things are going.

I thank the drought coordinator, Alex Zimmermann. At the time, he had only just been appointed and he made it all the way out to Streaky Bay. I thank Rural Business Support, who do amazing work. Each individual farming business situation is different. You cannot look over a fence and look at a piece of equipment or a piece of infrastructure or a crop and know the financial situation that is being faced by that farmer. We know that as regional people. We know that there are different levels of financial gearing. Some people might be in significant levels of debt, or they might have equipment but it is on significant financial machinery loans. Each individual business is different, and this is why that Rural Business Support framework is really important.

If you are a farmer who is facing those challenging drought conditions and those challenging financial situations, I encourage you: do not feel that you are alone. Take up the opportunity to be able to find those supports that Rural Business Support do in a confidential way. They can point you in the right direction, they can help with restructuring advice and they can have a look at each individual business's financial situation. As I said, on that day at Streaky Bay it was really prominent, but every day since then there have been people coming to me and saying, 'This is the challenge that we are facing.'

There is opportunity for government to be doing more, absolutely. We want to be making sure we are putting in a framework that supports businesses that have long-term sustainability so that we actually ensure that farming businesses continue to flourish in South Australia in some of the most productive areas right around the state and also those communities that contribute so much to our state's bottom line. The budgets of both state and federal governments are based on what activity happens within regional South Australia, and having this Drought Response and Recovery Coordinator framework within this bill is really positive.

Once again, I want to encourage the government to be proactive and to know that the opposition is open to be able to work to get a long-term sustainable model in place for drought support and make it nonpartisan. We are happy to have those conversations and try to pare back some of the ill-conceived aspects which have been woven in, I believe, by the upper house.

Let's actually have a bill which regional communities can be confident in, which farming businesses can be confident in, and through which we as decision-makers can proudly say we are putting in place a framework which is going to mean that regional communities going through some of the most challenging drought conditions have those supports in place so that they are sustainable not just now, not just in the medium term but in the long term. As a regional MP, I think that is something which is incredibly important.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (10:47): I would like to make a contribution on an issue that has been in the face of South Australia for a couple of years now, but no more so than for our primary producers. They have been through the wringer over the last two years. I think what we have seen is that a lot of South Australia has been regarded as marginal country and that there is a significant amount of the state that I think has what we would call reliable rainfall—they have fairly reliable seasons. But what we have seen this year on the back of a very, very dry year last year has been a very late start. I think what we are encountering at the moment has gone a bit back to the future, where we are coming back to more of a traditional start.

Once upon a time, we saw farmers sowing their crops into June, waiting for that opening rain. A lot of grain growers in particular have always waited for the rain before they sow a seed. But with modern-day practices, with no-till and some of the newer crops—growing much higher return crops, which has a level of risk in it—they are seeding earlier.

It is not unusual now to see a lot of primary producers who are sowing dry and putting their crops in on the faith that they will get the rain—then they will get a start, should they not have the subsoil that they are looking for. But I think we have to look much further and much broader and be very realistic about what our farming families, our farmers and primary producers are experiencing.

Government does have a role to play, but so do our regional communities. It is about understanding and promoting governments to do better when it comes to times of hardship. We have seen the current South Australian government and federal government come to the fore to support what I would call the majority of their base, which might be some of those industries that they have long supported and supported at the drop of a hat.

We look at the steel industry, we look at manufacturing and we have seen a significant support package put in place without the blink of an eye, and fair enough. But I would like to think that our primary sector is just as important—in my way of thinking, more important than any other sector. It is renewable, and it employs a significant part of the population in South Australia. Whether it is a service sector or at the coalface of that primary production, we have seen this government being quite tardy in coming to the fore with those support packages.

Really, what we are seeing this year is very much a cut and paste of what the former government did, with myself as the primary industries minister, in putting a support package forward to actually address the short-term needs and obviously look to implement practices which I would call droughtproofing, which would be a longer term strategy to support our primary sector.

We all know that the primary sector has long been challenged with variable seasons, commodity prices, a lot of technology, but if we look further afield, I am not here to point the finger at the government that they should fix all, but I think they do have important roles to play, whether it is investing in R&D, looking at seed trials, more drought-tolerant types of crops, or making sure that we look at what has worked over the course of time.

As the member for Flinders has quite rightly put it, some of the support packages that we on this side, the opposition, would like to see in a bipartisan manner would be to look at the RIC loans. Yes, we look at the infrastructure programs that help droughtproof our farms to help safeguard our livestock, but it is more important than just safeguarding livestock; it is more about protecting our breeding stock. It is about protecting something that has taken decades, in most instances, where primary producers are breeding bloodlines of livestock that give better returns for their clip and better returns for their meat products.

Breeding those animals specifically for food production is of paramount importance. Not only does it put food on the table, three meals a day, but it is also a serious driver in our economy. We know that some of the big business in South Australia is underpinned by agriculture. It is underpinned

by those who have taken a leap of faith to continue to invest to make sure that every dollar invested in a farming enterprise is money that has a multiplier return.

Obviously, the importance of looking after the wellbeing of our primary producers cannot be overstated. As an example, last Friday, I was at a hay drop in Paruna, which is in the Mallee in the great electorate of Chaffey. I got there bright and early and a lot of those trucks or those road trains were laden with vetch hay. They were there to support growers who are doing it tough, particularly in the Mallee and surrounding areas.

All of that hay had come from New South Wales. That was a good gesture, a leap of faith by the Rapid Relief Team, a Christian philanthropic organisation that have done an outstanding job. I have been to their drops at Mannum, Jamestown and now at Paruna. They brought not just the hay; they brought some level of support, whether it be that conversation or whether it be a farmer speaking to government agencies or to support agencies. They brought simple things like breakfast. They brought a nice cup of coffee.

It got farmers out of their kitchens into their truck to come down, pick up a load of hay and also have that conversation. There were a couple of farmers I spoke to. One in particular, was a young farmer trying to make it work. He had not been out of his house for two weeks. In that two-week period, there had been threatened rain; it never eventuated. But what did eventuate was that every time he opened the blind his country was blowing away. We have had horrendous winds this year, with no rain, particularly affecting those light Mallee soils. It just typified what it seems to be—that the end game is that we see a lot of the paddock up against fences, a lot of those paddocks covering the highways. That is the harsh reality of dealing with primary production in those light Mallee soils.

What we talked about—and I talked to a couple of a couple of growers who were looking for support—was that it is not about lining their pockets with gold; it is just about providing them with a level of certainty that they will have support to fight another day, to be able to plant a crop for another year, making sure that they continue with the great work that they are doing.

I will mention some of some of the ideas that I have just jotted down. Obviously we were very, very proud to lift the GM moratorium back in 2019-20. I think it was a great initiative to allow for more drought-tolerant and salt-tolerant seed to be planted, and some of the results I saw come out of that initiative have been truly outstanding. Other ideas include water infrastructure upgrades to help protect and sustain livestock on farm, making sure that we do have an opportunity to bank fodder, making sure we have an opportunity to bank seed. The seed used for growing seed is something I think that has been long overlooked.

I think the government's role in terms of more promotion of research and development needs to be addressed. As I said, there are drought-resistant plants. Using carbon credits is another way to diversify. But currently it is hand to mouth, and that really is not looking at the long term. So a fodder program, the hay drops and the water for fodder are great initiatives, but I think there is always more to be done. I think the government need to be more flexible. They need to reduce the red tape. I am looking forward to be able to contribute more ideas to the government on behalf of the opposition to help our farmers get through another tough year.

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (10:58): It gives me great pleasure to speak on a topic and a drought response and recovery piece of legislation that to my understanding has been brought forward from the other place and from the opposition and particularly the Hon. Nicola Centofanti. This whole process is close to home. Not only my electorate but many thousands of businesses in South Australia that depend on regional South Australia are affected by the seasonal climatic variations that we are subject to and also the ups and downs in commodity prices.

To understand where we have landed in the last couple of years, I am going to highlight what we are facing and what we have been through, which is nothing less than extraordinarily serious. We saw a 70 per cent correction of commodity prices in beef, lamb and mutton in June 2023. We saw a dry period extending from Perth, Western Australia, right through to Melbourne, Victoria, a span that includes South Australia. We have seen the dry period continue on through 2023, leading into 2024 and going now into 2025. Recently, June may be okay, July has been good, August has been good, and we have our fingers crossed for a good September and late spring rains.

I am alluding here to some of the safer rainfall areas between Perth and Melbourne on the southern edges of Australia, which depend on a Mediterranean climate that is normally quite consistent. Yes, we can have dry periods and, yes, we can miss out on the odd season, but we have had nearly two to three years of extraordinarily low rainfalls that have broken records, on the back of a commodity price which I do need to explain.

The commodity price collapse that occurred in 2023 is not really a government fault. It is probably a success of stock producers in the country as a whole overproducing in the capacity of our processors to meet the demand of a sell-off. This was exacerbated by processors—meatworks and killing works that obviously deal with lamb, mutton and beef—that could not cope with the influx that occurred in 2023 due to a sell-off. It has nothing to do with live sheep out of Western Australia either, because that trade has not closed, and it definitely was not yet closed in 2023.

The thing that has occurred here and that is different from any other time is that meatworks and processors would put on the second and third shift normally through visa workers. These visa workers were not accessible after COVID and still are not accessible after COVID like they used to be. Even if the visa workers were accessible, they would struggle to house those visa workers in and around the towns that the meatworks operate in. You cannot just bring in 500 or 400 workers and put on another shift, because you have to put them somewhere, and that is not available anymore like it used to be.

So we saw this collapse where we nearly went back to the days when some stock was basically being euthanased because the value of the animal was not worth putting on a truck to pay the transport costs in 2023. The other extraordinary part about that collapse is that it took six months to see any change on the supermarket shelf from December 2023. We saw only a 12 per cent reduction in price by then, after producers had seen a 70 per cent collapse.

The other thing that has happened since is we have seen it gradually increase to where we are in 2025, where we are seeing record prices for lamb and nearly record prices for mutton. I have to say that beef sits at around 70 to 80 per cent of decile points over the last five or ten years, which is nothing to be scoffed at and very much appreciated.

Giving some context of what that collapse means and where we have landed, we saw dry cows selling between \$2,700 to \$3,000 a head. Within two or three months, they were only worth \$1,000 a head in June 2023. We have probably seen that corrected, and we are back to about \$2,000. I can tell you from experience as a producer that we sold some steers into a feedlot. We had normally been receiving around \$1,300 to \$1,400 around that collapse. In the last week, we have just received \$2,400 a head on those animals. That is good money.

What is going wrong, and what are we doing here? We are going to bring in a coordinator. It worries me when we are bringing in a drought coordinator that it is not a full-time position. It actually says here that we are going to impose a coordinator when it is dry, when it gets tough. I wonder who that will be. I wonder what the expertise of that coordinator will be. I wonder how that person will get traction in any government.

The ironic thing about this debate here is that, really, the drought and any sort of large response is a federal government issue, not a state government issue. I praise the state government going from around \$18 million initially. I think they might have lifted it to \$40 million or \$50 million, and they went up to about \$70 million worth of help. A lot of the help that \$70 million represented was mental health and the like with what has been out in the community across the spectrum in the two to three years that we have been suffering in the regions. No doubt resilience is being tested to the absolute utmost.

Talking about water, infrastructure and spend, the government is going to give us a 50 per cent subsidy to help with expenditure. You are talking about producers who are on the bones of their knees. To give you a little bit of insight, McBrides are a large business with 11 properties in South Australia/Victoria, shearing some 300,000 sheep a year, and we were budgeting losses over the last one to two years. On top of that, just recently—in March, April, May 2025—we were feeding out 400 tonnes of grain costing \$160,000 a week to keep six properties in the south of this state alive and functioning. We talked to the member Chaffey about the value of breeding stock, the key flock

nucleus and so forth—just keeping those properties alive. Those costs are absolutely losses on top of losses.

So what I would say that I think is lost in this debate and where the answers lie is that it comes back to resilience, the taxation system and the federal government having a responsibility, somehow, in trying to negate what are the ups and downs that we know we have always survived. In the pastoral region, where McBrides have five pastoral properties—and they average 175 millimetre rainfall; some years they get it, sometimes they do not, sometimes they get more—they are still in drought today. No doubt we have neighbours up there, we have families up there and they are still looking for rain that actually turns the pastoral country around. They have had five millimetres, 10 millimetres, I am hearing of some in the 20s and 30s in some isolated areas, which they have very much welcomed, but it is not widespread. In general, the pastoral regions are very much suffering in South Australia still.

The other matter I want touch on is the FMD system. FMD stands for farm management deposits. It is a federal government initiative. Some businesses can do it, depending on the structure of their business. Family trust companies can do this, but I do not believe partnerships can. FMD is where an individual farmer, wife and children can lay down up to \$800,000 worth of funds in the good times, and they can roll those funds out in the dry times.

The problem with that system is that the money then has to go back to individuals and, as soon as you top them up over \$180,000 a year, they are in the top tax bracket and they start losing 50¢ in the dollar that they will have to pay tax on in the year after. They are in recovery mode and they are not going to be flush with funds. So that is the ultimate in the scrutiny of a FMD system that really does work, but it does not because it is in dribs and drabs. When I talk about large moneys of businesses, and that planting a crop costs \$1 million—some of these business have between \$1 million to \$5 million in chemicals—the FMD system does not really go that far when things are really bad in larger family businesses. They do not have to be that large to get up to those sorts of costs.

All I would say in this chamber is that state politics has a role to play. I think that the state government has done all that they possibly can in regard to mental health, resilience and backing up. I saw voluntary hay load drops and getting the spectacle on the toughness of what was out there—that connection, that connectivity—which then goes back to the praise and the support that farmers and regional people are looking for. All I can say is if the coordinator can coordinate all that, well, good luck to him.

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (11:08): I am pleased to rise to speak to this bill, but very sad to rise to speak about drought. As someone who has farmed for many years, we farmed in a very high rainfall area at Mount Compass, and there are two or probably three particular eras that come very much to mind as far as drought goes for our farming business that was based at Mount Compass.

We were on that farm for over 40 years, and I can only remember three times when we actually fed hay—supplementary feeding—to our cows during the month of June, and twice we fed into July. That is a real indicator of how reliable the rainfall is on Fleurieu Peninsula around your part of the world, Mr Speaker—the Lower Fleurieu—and my part of the world, around Mount Compass in particular.

It is a real struggle for those dairy farmers, because it is a particular cohort of farmers who are farming with their breeding stock as their stocking rate. Usually they do not have any surplus stock sitting there that they can destock. When circumstances get really tough for them, it gets really tough. I very much reflect on my personal experiences of the Millennium Drought: it was a huge challenge for the dairy industry in South Australia, and it was when I was president of the South Australian Dairyfarmers' Association.

One of the things I did that I am most proud of during my time in that role was getting all of the dairy regions of South Australia drought declared under the old system. It is something that had never occurred for a single dairy region in South Australia previous to that, and to get them all declared was amazing. The old system was broken. The challenge was that you needed two failed seasons in a row. Queensland got that all the time because they have two seasons in one year,

whereas in South Australia we need two consecutive years to have failure—a really hard threshold to get over.

When we have those sorts of seasons, it really hits hard, and we are going through that right now. We have had two absolute failures in our seasons through our farming areas, and it has been really quite sad to see the pressure. Personally, I know that pressure. Interestingly, back in the Millennium Drought, one of the criteria for being eligible for the funding was that you had to own the farm for, I think, two years before you were able to apply. My wife and I had only taken over 18 months before from my parents, so we were not eligible. It was me personally fighting for the rest of the industry, but I was one of the few dairy farmers who could not apply.

That pressure sits there, and it puts pressure on your business not just for the drought years but for a number of years after that that it takes to recover. To try to build up funds in the dairy industry is also really challenging. It is a very high turnover business, so a lot of money goes out and a lot of money comes in on a very regular basis. For example, destocking is not an option because you take your milking cows off and there goes all your income. You still have some expenses; yes, you might save on feed expenses, but you will lose other things, so there is no ability to recover. To go and then try to purchase cows from elsewhere to re-establish is really difficult after a drought.

With this drought that we have gone through, I attended a dinner back in June held in the Encounter Bay Football Club. The Minister for Primary Industries was there, and it was a nice dinner to get together with farmers who were really quite stressed at the time; part of the need is to support those farmers and, through the stress of it all, to know that they are not alone, that they are not the only ones suffering. It is a huge challenge for a dairy farm.

We were milking through that Millennium Drought somewhere between 400 and 450 cows. The amount of feed I needed to be able to buy on a weekly basis was 50 tonnes of hay to supplement what would have normally been there in grass—50 tonnes of hay, to put in people's minds, is 2½ semi loads a week. When you look at that, how does a business make that work? The milk income that would have been coming in would not have even gone close to just covering the hay bill. In the circumstances we have been in this year, even worse than what I went through with the Millennium Drought, the problem was that South Australia ran out of hay. Hay was coming in from interstate, from far and wide. It was coming from WA and Queensland, which is where we ended up trying to source fodder.

My understanding is that fodder that would normally have cost in today's terms somewhere between \$200 and \$250 a tonne delivered on farm was costing approximately \$1,000 a tonne delivered on farm. So, in my circumstance, that is \$50,000 a week just in fodder. We are talking \$200,000 a month that a farmer has to find from his milk cheque that would not even be that, but also still pay his staff, still pay himself and still pay all those other bills.

Again, it is a really challenging environment, and attending that dinner was certainly something that moved me. It made me dig my hand into my pocket. My wife and I actually decided to bid on an auction item. It was a Tonka toy truck, a large one, probably valued at maybe \$100 max. It was going up—it was about \$190, I think it was—and I put in a bid for \$5,000 and, surprisingly, I won with a bid of \$5,000, but it was very much about me making a donation to that farming community to make sure people were not feeling as alone as they can.

Moving towards drought preparedness is certainly an important move, but I also think it is something that we have to understand is really challenging as well. Farmers do not have spare money at the moment to invest in preparedness, so to have those programs put on the table actually puts more mental stress on people's minds because they have to weigh up: 'Do I actually do this? Do I have to find the money from elsewhere? Do I not pay that bill to the feed supplier, to the fodder supplier, and instead I go and try to prepare for the next drought when I am in one?' It is a real challenge and a really awkward situation for farmers to deal with.

To me, I think it is great that we work towards that preparedness and try to underpin the strength of our industry, but I think there are some real challenges there. I think also the world has very much changed, particularly in the banking world. Historically, farmers would have been able to go to their bank at reasonably short notice and find some extra money through an increase in overdraft, or some extra borrowings, to actually make sure their business had the cash flow to

survive. Probably since the banking royal commission we have not seen that same flexibility available to farmers. To go to the bank when you are actually making significant losses and ask them to lend you more money, their willingness to lend that money in those circumstances is really tough.

To have a piece of legislation that tries to help those farmers through that difficult time—as you are actually looking to save your business, to make sure it does not fold, to make sure that you are there for the future generations and to supply the food Australia and the world needs—is so important. I think it is really important that we work to make sure pieces of legislation like this pass this place so farmers actually have the support they need, particularly financially but also very much for their mental needs.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11:18): I rise proudly to speak in support of the bill and with, I think, a healthy dose of humility as a participant with fairly rose-coloured glasses towards the old primary industries. I was not born and raised on a farm and my family connection to farming, primarily in Western Australia, has been episodic to the point where I have always looked at it as the greatest way of life that there is.

I spent a short time at WA's perhaps smallest primary school, took weeks off to shear and returned for holiday breaks throughout my primary and senior schooling, and it remains: an aspiration to farming being the highest calling in many ways. I will say that, perhaps, to illustrate the rose-coloured glasses approach to what I know are the real-life, day-to-day mundane struggles of farming families and communities throughout our state and our nation.

To get a few things straight, we are debating this bill in circumstances, as we do in this parliament, not where we deal with the necessary social supports for vulnerable communities, vulnerable children, those in need. In circumstances of drought, yes, that is where our families and communities on the farms find themselves. But these are families and communities who are contributing to our state's single largest export—about half our exports. They contribute enormously to our state's revenue. Their products are woven into the carpet in this chamber. They are families and communities who are at the foundation of what we take pride and joy in celebrating about what makes us South Australian.

As we come to this debate, in this week of the Royal Adelaide Show, at a time when those families and communities are coming to town, as they have done for many decades, to show off the world's best produce, we bear in mind that this is the strength of our state. This is at the heart and soul and at the core of what is successful about our state. It has been so from the very beginning, it still is so and will be so for the decades and centuries to come.

I say that emphasising one more thing, in the celebrated memory of that great man of South Australian politics, Bert Kelly, the long-time member for Wakefield—

The Hon. N.D. Champion: He was a great man.

Mr TEAGUE: —who led the charge federally—and we have had a contribution from the member for MacKillop—preceded in Wakefield by the member for MacKillop's grandfather, Philip McBride, who also did that area proud. But I focus on Bert Kelly, because he described himself as—

The Hon. N.D. Champion: The modest member.

Mr TEAGUE: —the modest member, as the minister is right to emphasise. He was taking up that important debate in the federal parliament throughout his time, at many times arguing the merits of the free trade argument that has now finally won the day. He took up that fight really as often a lonely voice, in circumstances where there were lots of voices around the parliament, including from the Country Party, as it then was, the National Party and broader interests, that spoke up for what abides in so many parts of the world, which is a highly subsidised protection model for primary industries. We see that is still the case very much so in Europe and in other parts of the world.

Bert Kelly's success in prosecuting the argument for Australia and, in particular our primary producers to be at the forefront in a free trade environment globally, in speaking up for the benefits that would flow, has meant that over these many decades our South Australian primary producers have been at the global forefront producing the very best produce that there is to be found in food

and fibre and wine and all those wonderful products, not with their hand constantly held out and not with the constant featherbed of public policy around them to provide some sort of advantage into markets—quite the contrary. They have had to suffer the slings and arrows of the global fortunes, the fluctuations in global pricing, exposure to just about every external market force that might be coming along and that is before they have to navigate the vagaries of the natural elements that are the focus of some modicum of support that might come through this mechanism for the installation of a drought response and recovery coordinator.

I highlight where we all are here in this state parliament. There has been a contribution to the debate including, relevantly, highlighting the important role of the federal government from the taxation side. I think it is well to remind us that schemes such as may be available to ameliorate the effect of the feast and famine that comes with seasons good and bad are very important core business for federal government to deal with.

What is front and centre, and remains so for state governments and for those of us here in this state parliament, is the health and security of our farming families and communities. That is what we are good at in state governments. We are good at getting around families and communities and providing supports when they need it. We have heard a bit about the mental health challenges that come along when you are not only at the helm of your family business but you are also at the helm of your family, looking to bring up children and keep them thriving at home, get them going to school to keep up the opportunities that might come for them, while bearing the financial pressure and the personal identity crisis that comes when you are under the unique combination of pressures that affect those heroic women and men at the helm of farming businesses around our state.

We talk about resilience. Sure, that is a word you can bandy about. It is for no small reason that our farming enterprises are known for being characterised by their resilience, some essential elements on display all the time, and that is particularly so in circumstances of drought. It is acutely relevant that the state parliament can legislate for the application of a coordinator in response to circumstances of drought, of those circumstances that come along, as we know, periodically, and that can therefore apply social, health and financial supports to help people through.

I just emphasise that if there is a purpose for government in relation to families and communities, it is to demonstrate that you are there for them with all the tools at your disposal to let them know that they can actually have confidence that the public institutions have their back. So we would do well—not the least in this week when our country families have come to town to show off their world-beating wares—to recognise their great work by getting on with legislating to support them via this mechanism.

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:28): I move:

That the debate be adjourned.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes23
Noes.....15
Majority8

AYES

Bettison, Z.L.
Champion, N.D.
Dighton, A.E.
Hughes, E.J.
Michaels, A.
Pearce, R.K.
Savvas, O.M.
Thompson, E.L.

Boyer, B.I.
Clancy, N.P.
Fulbrook, J.P.
Hutchesson, C.L.
Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)
Piccolo, A.
Stinson, J.M.
Wortley, D.J.

Brown, M.E.
Cook, N.F.
Hood, L.P.
Koutsantonis, A.
O'Hanlon, C.C.
Picton, C.J.
Szakacs, J.K.

NOES

Basham, D.K.B.
Cregan, D.R.
Hurn, A.M.
Pisoni, D.G.
Teague, J.B.

Brock, G.G.
Ellis, F.J.
McBride, P.N.
Pratt, P.K.
Telfer, S.J. (teller)

Cowdrey, M.J.
Gardner, J.A.W.
Patterson, S.J.R.
Tarzia, V.A.
Whetstone, T.J.

PAIRS

Mullighan, S.C.
Malinauskas, P.B.

Pederick, A.S.
Batty, J.A.

Motion thus carried; debate adjourned.

*Motions***RURAL ROAD SAFETY MONTH**

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (11:33): By leave, on behalf of the member for Hammond, I move:

That this house—

- (a) recognises that September is Rural Road Safety Month;
- (b) notes that, on average, more lives are lost on rural roads in Australia;
- (c) thanks the Australian Road Safety Foundation for the work they put into their annual campaign to spread awareness; and
- (d) calls on the Malinauskas government to invest more in upgrading our rural and regional roads.

This is an important motion to put into context, not just in September, which is Rural Road Safety Month, but in the context of a road toll that so far this year continues to be truly worrying. We know that the distance that is travelled on regional roads and rural roads means that indeed there are incidents and accidents that, sadly, do happen. As the member for Flinders, an electorate which covers over 220,000 square kilometres, believe it or not, I cover a fair few kilometres in my trusty car. Somewhere between 60,000 and 70,000 kilometres I drive every year, and I see a range of rural roads. I really worry that our underinvestment in most of them will mean that there is not going to be a safe passageway for people who are using that road.

Thankfully, I am someone who has one of those red posts on the side of the road, which signifies a spot where I was involved in a significant accident in my teenage years. Thankfully, it was not a black one. There are too many of those black posts with a little red cross on them littered around the roadsides of South Australia, signifying the number of deaths which have happened on rural roads. As I said, thankfully my little post is a red one and I am here to be able to tell the story. It really does highlight that in regional South Australia, even if we have not been involved ourselves, we all know someone or have family members or loved ones who have been involved in serious or significant crashes, many of which sadly end up in a fatality. As I said, the road toll continues to be something which I hope weighs heavily on the minds and the hearts of decision-makers.

Proper investment in rural roads is crucial when we are looking at not just ensuring that our roads are safe but also ensuring that our roads continue to be safe into the future—safe and productive. We know that so much of our state's economy is driven, quite literally, by those regional areas that need significant continual investment into their road infrastructure. This is why paragraph (d) of the motion is especially crucial:

- (d) calls on the Malinauskas government to invest more in upgrading our rural and regional roads.

I proudly look at the work that was done in the four short years of the Marshall Liberal government, in my region in particular. Those who know Eyre Peninsula well know the framework that is provided by the road infrastructure of state roads. We have the Lincoln Highway that runs sort of north-south on the eastern side, we have the Tod Highway that runs north-south through the middle, we have the Flinders Highway that runs north-west and south-east on the West Coast, and we have the

Eyre Highway, National Highway 1, which cuts across the top, all the way from Port Augusta through to the border with Western Australia.

The previous Marshall Liberal government invested significantly in this productive infrastructure. There was shoulder sealing on the Tod Highway—and I recognise the advocacy of the previous member for Flinders, Peter Treloar, who, like me, drove on these roads a lot. He would drive on that Tod Highway and realise that the very narrow carriageway that cars are having to traverse, with the significant shoulder drop-off at the edge, was causing a really dangerous situation.

I have been in a car many a time—and one incident sticks in my mind in particular—where there were two road trains going past each other on the Tod Highway and I was behind one of them. In passing, both of them had to drop their back trailers off the shoulder on the side of the road. There was dust everywhere, there were rocks flying everywhere and there was a really dangerous situation for both those truck drivers.

They were experienced operators of their trucks, but I do know, sadly, that there are situations where there are inexperienced drivers. Say, for instance, someone decides to make the great change of transitioning from work life to travel life and buys a four-wheel drive, buys a big caravan and sets off on the road. We do see these situations well and truly writ large in regional South Australia, especially out west. They hop behind the wheel of a vehicle that they are not used to driving and come into situations where they start to have interaction with heavy vehicles in particular. We have seen many incidents and accidents on regional roads with the inexperienced traveller dealing with such a situation.

Under the Marshall Liberal government there was significant investment in the Tod Highway and now, if you drive all the way from Cummins to Kyancutta, you will be on a carriageway which is much wider. A wider road really is a safer road. It provides the opportunity for people not just to ensure they have a safe carriageway but to also have a relaxed state of mind, and allows fatigue to be lessened because they are not on edge with the challenge of those shoulders and the drop-off.

We also saw significant sealing of shoulders from Port Augusta all the way west of Ceduna. That road now is actually a joy to drive on. The amount of heavy vehicle traffic movements that run east to west these days really would astound you, I believe. For those who do not know that road well, you might think there are 1,000 trucks a day, but there are literally thousands—3,000 truck movements a day east-west along that road.

They often go between the Eastern States and Perth, or between Adelaide and Perth, and they are long-haul truck movements. You see all sorts going across Eyre Highway: boats and caravans on the back of trucks, big pieces of mining equipment, swimming pools, houses and whatever it might be. A fair bit of movement happens on that road east-west.

It is a road that is not just for transport east-west, or the grey nomads on their caravanning trips, it is also local people from my area. We have seen some interactions with school buses, for instance, or parents doing school runs or on their way to work along Eyre Highway, facing some really dangerous situations. That investment of \$125 million west of Port Augusta was significant for my region under the last Marshall Liberal government because it meant that the roadway, the carriageway, was so much safer for road users of all descriptions.

This is why it really is so important that continual investment into infrastructure on our rural roads continues. It needs to be something that is done by governments of whatever persuasion because these are productive, high-use areas that continue to add so much to our state's economy.

The next really important investment that needs to happen, in my region in particular, is in the Flinders Highway. That road goes from Port Lincoln all the way up to Ceduna. If you have the great privilege, as I do, of driving on that road you will realise there are some dangerous spots when you are actually trying to go around them. I have photos and videos, and I see it whenever I travel. There are significant drop-offs on the edges of these roads, 300 millimetres or more.

It only takes just a small break in concentration, or a small deviation—maybe dodging a wombat up near Elliston—where you drop the wheels off the side of the road and it is very easy for people to lose control. I have come across different incidents and accidents in my traversing of that road. That road really does need to have an upgrade, especially from Wangary South where I know

there is a lot of movement. In the section from Wangary to Elliston there are some really dangerous spots where caravans, heavy vehicles and just normal domestic road users have to traverse.

There is also the section between Streaky Bay and Ceduna. Streaky Bay is a really fast-growing town, Ceduna is the service hub of the Far West Coast, and Flinders Highway, in between those two towns, really does leave a lot to be desired. It is not only the shoulders that cause significant and dangerous situations to be faced; it is also the actual carriageway itself.

If there is not proper investment into our rural roads the carriageway itself—where the tyres go along—becomes indented. You may not see it when it is dry but as soon as there is rain those carriageways become channels. They become little mini rivers on the road where all the water sits, and it really highlights these areas which need to have a significant upgrade in order to make sure that things are kept safe for road users of all persuasions.

I do recognise that indeed September is Rural Road Safety Month, and I encourage all people in regional areas, and also our city cousins who traverse our roads, to be safe when we are travelling along the roads. There are situations that are faced with interactions with other vehicles or wildlife. In dry situations, it is often the kangaroos and the emus that are starting to get closer and closer to roadsides to find the grass that has grown on the side of the road or the pools of water from the rain. These are dangerous situations, so we need to be safe.

I want to highlight some of the really important investments that the previous Liberal government made, not just in my area but also further along. I really encourage the current Labor government to take the next step when it comes to investing into some of these roads. If you look at the important work that was done with the duplication, which was only just recently opened, of the road from Port Wakefield to Lochiel, it has finally been done.

I am not one to defend the amount of time that was taken to do the work but, indeed, finally it is done and we can drive on that road most of the time without a speed restriction. It is really important to provide a modern roadway for a modern South Australia in an area that has increasing use, and I for one will continue to advocate for further duplications. I am sure the member for Giles would drive it as much or more than I do even. We should continue to invest in that long-term strategic base infrastructure, which is so important for South Australia's future.

I want to thank the Australian Road Safety Foundation for the work they put into their annual campaign to spread awareness, because a high proportion of South Australians do not drive that much on rural roads and, when they do, it might be for a short period of time. However, for those of us who have to do it all the time, we truly know the challenges that are faced. There is no easy silver bullet when it comes to investment into rural roads. It is significant, it is long term and it is strategic.

We need to make sure that the work that is done actually puts the foundations into having a proper asset assessment. Certainly, the work that has been done in some areas—and I encourage it to be spread out to all of South Australia—to do a fulsome analysis of not just the top of the road but also the base is important. The challenge is that we need to always be on the cutting edge of making sure we get the technology right when it comes to the construction of new roads.

I, for one, was incredibly frustrated with some of the delays and workmanship of some of the work that has been done in my area. I recognise that the overtaking lanes, which were invested into at the southern end of Eyre Peninsula along the Lincoln Highway, as well as the overtaking lane as you enter into Port Lincoln along the Western Approach Road, are really important infrastructure and a really important investment, but there was an incredible delay and incredible frustration within my community at the questionable workmanship that had to be redone two, three, four or five times even.

The roadway lifts up as soon as things heat up a bit or as soon as there is a truck that goes along it. This is why that accountability needs to continue to be back to the taxpayers of South Australia so we are getting bang for buck and we can be strategic with the investment that we are putting into our rural roads.

We really do call on the Malinauskas government to invest more in upgrading our rural and regional roads, not just for those regional members of the community in South Australia but for South Australia as whole, for our future and for the infrastructure needs that we know we need to continue to invest in for the long-term prosperity of our state both financially and socially.

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (11:49): I think this is an important motion. We will be amending it, but I think the core of the motion is incredibly well intentioned and, as a regional member who travels the roads far, far too much, I get to see a lot. The member for Flinders mentioned the size of his electorate, a very big electorate. I guess my electorate is over 350,000 kilometres, so it is vast, with roads varying from National Highway 1 to dirt roads that are often of a poor quality.

One of the issues when it does come to roads in this state is that it is such a vast network with a very small, widely spread population. It does present challenges, and historically the federal contribution has not matched the size of the road network we have. With those few words I will get onto the amendment. I move to amend the motion by the member to read as follows:

That this house:

- (a) recognises that September is Rural Road Safety Month;
- (b) notes that, on average, more lives are lost on rural roads in Australia;
- (c) thanks the Australian Road Safety Foundation for the work they put into their annual campaign to spread awareness; and—

this is the change:

- (d) acknowledges the ongoing investments and commitment to improving the safety of our rural and regional roads.

I think it is important, especially when we are talking about safety, that we make that effort to get beyond a partisan approach. Governments of both persuasions invest in our road network, if sometimes the priorities might differ somewhat. However, I take up what the member for Flinders said: that it does need to be strategic, it needs to be long term, and it needs to be guided—especially in the country—by the accident data.

What are the roads that present a real risk? The member for Flinders has mentioned the Port Augusta Highway, and those of us who travel it extensively know what a risky road that is for a significant stretch, because you have that concentration of heavy vehicles, caravans and light passenger vehicles all travelling on the road, a national highway of that nature. When you get to Lochiel and you do that section from Lochiel now all the way to Adelaide with the duplication it makes a massive difference.

It is one of those major highways, National Highway 1, in our state that ultimately needs to be duplicated all the way to Port Augusta. That is a priority, and it is a priority driven by just the mortality and injury rates on that highway, the number of deaths and the number of serious accidents on that highway. It is probably either the worst or the second worst in the state when it comes to fatalities. That needs to be a priority.

The government has invested. When you look at country roads, they are different from the metropolitan roads, obviously, and speed is one of the issues. You are generally travelling at 100 km/h or 110 km/h—and you see people travel lot faster than that. Speed is sometimes the cause of the accident but sometimes other factors are the cause; however, because you are travelling at such a speed, in general the outcome is going to be terrible.

For those of us who travel country roads, we know it is also often the distances that we travel—there is fatigue, there is distraction. Unfortunately, some people still may be under the influence of either drugs or alcohol when they are on our roads, and some people still neglect to put on their seatbelts. Given the factors that are at play on country roads, the chances of a serious accident are greatly increased. Indeed, I think two out of three of the serious accidents and fatalities in the state happen on country roads.

We can obviously make investment in the physical infrastructure to improve the situation. As I have discussed, that duplication from Lochiel to Adelaide makes a great deal of difference. I speak to some of the people who travel that particular road—and you can apply this to other major country roads as well—about the amount of stress that some people have in driving a road before it does become duplicated.

Over the years, we have seen improvements. There are a lot more overtaking lanes, which are good and do help. I have been one of those people who has been an advocate for being able to

go faster in the overtaking lane when overtaking trucks—and I have written to the minister on this—because I think that is the safest thing to do. The other thing that really pisses me off is when one truck overtakes another truck and there is all this traffic behind and you go, 'Oh my God, please!'

I am also a big fan of having your headlights on when on country roads, especially with an ageing population. The colours of some vehicles blend into the background. When a car or a truck has its headlights on, you can see it from a good distance away. These are minor changes but I think they should be seriously entertained.

Unfortunately, in my life I have been involved in two serious accidents. One was within Whyalla itself, so I will not go into that, but one was on the highway. We are just incredibly fortunate that nobody died, but somebody was incredibly seriously injured. It highlights one of the things that the member for Flinders talked about. On this stretch of road, it was a combination of an inexperienced driver, no shoulder widening and no audio tactile marking. It might have made a difference in this particular accident if those investments had been in place way back then.

The other factor in that accident that does reflect upon the nature of country driving is that it was a single-vehicle accident. Over 50 per cent of the accidents on country roads are single-vehicle accidents. The road make-up can make a contribution to that. There is fatigue and there is distraction. In my community of Whyalla, the end of that journey from Adelaide between Port Augusta and Whyalla is a bit of a boring stretch. One mate had his arm totally cut off at the shoulder in an accident. A number of young people who I knew died on that road in single-vehicle accidents. If they had had a break in Port Augusta and not continued on, they might have survived; who knows?

There are a whole range of factors when it comes to country roads and why they produce so many fatalities, and governments of whatever persuasion do look at the accident data. We do need to make those investments to make country roads safer.

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (11:58): I rise to support the motion in its original form, quite transparently, and in so doing would like to start by acknowledging the wonderful work that we have done over the past 7½ years—almost eight years—on roads in my electorate. We have had some tremendous fortune in getting some of our real problem roads fixed, and they are now a really encouraging sign for our community of what can be done when the government comes to the party and ensures that those trouble roads are fixed up and improved for our community.

I have a non-exhaustive list that I have jotted down of some of those roads that have been fixed, but I am most proud of the fact that the road the entire way from Port Broughton through Bute, Kulpara, Arthurlton, Maitland and Minlaton has been fixed in the past eight or nine years. It is quite an extraordinary feat and it was one that I doorknocked on as a candidate a little while ago now, promising to get that road down the middle fixed up to make it in a drivable state. To have that road fixed for that length is an extraordinary feat and I know one that the community appreciates a great deal.

It is a very busy thoroughfare that hosts a great deal of traffic, both domestic and grain traffic down that middle road, and it is now a really smooth and enjoyable trip for the most part. The first stretch that was fixed, from Minlaton to Urania, is starting to break up and become a little bit bouncy, but, for the most part, it is a really wonderful piece of road and, as I said, tremendously appreciated by the community that have put up with a bumpy, narrow section of road for far too long. I am incredibly proud about that.

The Spencer Highway, from Wallaroo to Maitland and through Moonta, has had its shoulders done over the past few years. Obviously, the big-ticket item at Port Wakefield, the overpass and duplication all the way through to Lochiel, has gone tremendously well for many people. There is hope, even within my community, of ensuring that now travels from Lochiel through to Port Augusta. But I have to say, as the local member of parliament that represents the town of Lochiel, there is some concern in that community about what the roadway through that town will look like. Its existing road carriageway is far too narrow to host four lanes, in my view at least.

On one side of the town is obviously the famous salt pans, so you cannot cover that up with road, and then the question is whether we go behind the town through some paddocks on the other side to ensure that those four lanes, the double lane, can be accommodated through the town there.

It would be a wonderful thing to see that completed all the way through to Port Augusta. Of course, what we have there now at Port Wakefield under the overpass and those duplications is a wonderful asset.

But it is not just those big state roads that we appreciate, of course; it is the ones in our community that have benefited from state government assistance as well, perhaps most famously in my community, Bay Road, Moonta, which is now a road truly befitting of the major tourism status that it holds and a really pleasant endeavour for those who visit our community to travel down to famous Moonta Bay, onto the jetty and whatnot. They now get to travel on a road that is not a patchwork quilt of different potholes and fix-ups; it is now a nice wide road with appropriate drainage and stormwater facilities, and a really attractive road with some plantings and whatnot there as well.

Of course, there are other little roads which have benefitted from a grant from the state government, like in my own town of Kadina, past the showgrounds, that is now upgraded. As I said, that is a non-exhaustive list, but they are some of the more impressive ones that we have had done and, of course, from the big to the small, it is a really wonderful thing to see it happen.

The government are attempting to amend this motion to celebrate the ongoing investments, and to that end I would like to note that there are some in our electorate that are ongoing. The Wallaroo Entrance Road is very much a work in progress. The council are out there doing the stormwater component of it now, and my understanding is that the state government will swoop in very soon to start the actual bituminising of the road to upgrade that.

Similarly, Bay Road—that will be much appreciated by that community, which will elevate it to an entrance road to a tourism town befitting its popularity. We look forward to seeing that happen because, golly, it has been a significant wait for that. It has been a project mooted for quite some time and to see it finally happen and the trucks and tractors out there right now doing some work is very encouraging.

We also have the Edithburgh to Yorketown stretch of road, which was the subject of a petition that I tabled in this place relatively recently. Rick Hutchinson from Edithburgh did all the legwork to secure a significant number of signatures to highlight to this place the perils of that road, the narrowness of it, the undulations and whatnot, and, as should happen, that petition seems to have worked. The government have since committed to doing some shoulder work there to widen that road and make it easier for trucks and caravans to get down. I know Rick is somewhat happy with that. It would have been nice to get a completely new road, but at least it will be widened and those shoulders will be fixed.

Then, of course, there is the Rex Minerals road realignment to allow for that mine site. Ostensibly not being the subject of any government funding, it will still be a new road for our electorate. The entrance into Pine Point was quite contentious and the subject of a lot of complaints to my office, and that will now be fixed up, presumably by Rex Minerals, to ensure that it is a far better road now as well, and we look forward to seeing those completed too.

However, the reason that I would like to support the motion in its original form and oppose the attempted amendment is that we clearly need more. The ongoing investments are nice, and we appreciate the work that is being done and mooted to be done, but there is still a lot to do in our community. Whilst we have had some significant fortune over the past 7½ or eight years, we need it to continue and we need, in the words of the original motion, to call 'on the Malinauskas government to invest more in upgrading our regional and rural roads'.

To that end I would like to identify some that I would like to see upgraded or committed to being upgraded at least in the next few months as we head toward the next election to ensure that our community can continue to keep pace with the requirements that it needs in its road network. The Bute to Snowtown road in the north of my electorate, which is again a major thoroughfare for grain trucks trying to get to the Snowtown silos near the railway line there, is a terrible piece of road. Undulated and narrow, it is in desperate need of an upgrade. We have been lobbying for it for some time, and it certainly needs to find its way to the top of the government list somehow.

We have roads out of Minlaton to Port Vincent and to Yorketown which are far too narrow and which would need significant upgrading. I would like to mention at this point Chris Thompson, who has been a staunch advocate for trying to widen the road from Minlaton to Yorketown.

More recently we have had contact from the Port Clinton Progress Association. This is not necessarily a complaint about the standard of the coast road there but a noting of the fact that there are three entrances to the community of Port Clinton, all from the highway, and that the turning facilities from the highway into the town are somewhat deficient. It is a 100 km/h zone on the highway going past, and the driveways and front yards of at least three houses open up onto the highway. It is a major thoroughfare for grain trucks heading to Port Adelaide or Ardrossan, and of course it is a dangerous thing.

Port Clinton is a decent-sized town with a strong community, and there are significant concerns from the progress association that there will be an accident there from a car waiting to turn into the community or from a child playing in their front yard adjacent to the main highway, so I have undertaken to do my best to help that community investigate safer ways for their town to be accommodated. It just goes to show that not all government investment needs to be in major roads and upgrades; it can be as simple as changing a speed sign or building a turning lane.

I have a couple of final thoughts that I would like to express for the consideration of this place. The first is that there seems to be an increasing frustration from motorists when it comes to roadworks. It certainly seems that over the duration of the eight years that I have been in this place, there has been an increasing onus on those people who put out the roadworks signs to make them more complicated and cumbersome. I had a bill in the previous parliament to try to whittle that back a bit so that those requirements only applied whilst there were roadworkers present at an actual roadworks site.

I have not reintroduced that this time, but it seems to me that those signs are continuing at pace and that there needs to be some work done to balance the utility of the road user with the safety of the roadworker. It would certainly seem that it has got out of hand and that there could be some restabilisation to ensure that comes in back into balance.

The other thing that I would like to observe is that some time ago our roads were all dropped to 100 km/h. This was done in the name of road safety at the time and it was an acknowledgement of the fact that our roads were not up to a standard of being able to safely host traffic at 110 km/h. Well, I would like to make note of the fact that there has not been any appreciable difference in the road toll since that occurred. I would love for someone to do some research on whether that has actually had a positive impact on road safety or no impact or a negligible impact, because if it is negligible we would much appreciate those roads, at least the ones that are recently redeveloped, being returned to 110 km/h, because ultimately people on regional roads have places to be and things to do, and the quicker we can get there the better.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:08): I rise to contribute to the Rural Road Safety Month debate and support the original motion. The government's amended motion really does acknowledge that the government should be embarrassed about the lack of focus and funding for regional roads. For far too long this government has been fully focused on a city-centric roads program. Not only are we looking at many billions of dollars' increase in the cost of the north-south corridor; it is also that the minister responsible for infrastructure is now putting a tunnel underneath his electorate. I think it is outrageous that South Australian taxpayers are footing the bill for this government's agenda, which is city roads, and the regions get the rest.

On the weekend I travelled down to Cape Jervis to go over to Kangaroo Island to do some fire prevention maintenance work, and I was amazed at the level of work going on down south. It was 24/7. If I drive on some of the regional roads here in South Australia, there is no activity at night. There is no urgency for regional roads that are significantly underfunded and under pressure. They also deal with heavy freight, which is now putting more and more pressure on our roads because the current government have closed the rail lines in the majority of regional centres. That again is putting more pressure on our roads, on our shoulders, on the safety of our roads.

September is Rural Road Safety Month, and it is about reminding people that travelling on regional roads can be risky. It can be dangerous, whether it is travelling longer distances, whether it

is dealing with fatigue. We also have to acknowledge that, particularly if you are a regional youth, if you are a young driver on a regional road, you deal with a lot of uncertainty. You deal with something that very few young city folk deal with, and that is speed limits of 110 km/h. Yes, some of the younger drivers are restricted, whether they are on L-plates or P-plates, but they are the vagaries of dealing with regional roads.

How does a government act responsibly? It provides adequate funding. I know that the Marshall Liberal government in two years put \$1.16 billion into regional road maintenance, yet we see that the funding has diminished under this Labor government. I think it is an absolute crime that we continue to see the lack of funding, the lack of focus, in keeping our regional roads safe.

Yes, many roads have heavy vehicles or high-productivity vehicles on them, but that is a consequence to driving an economy. It is making sure we get freight from point A to point B. It is taking a lot of that freight from a farm to the city, whether it is for manufacturing or whether it is for putting food onto people's plates. That is what regional roads are all about. It is about keeping them safer so that we can make sure that people feel safe and are safe on our regional roads.

This year there were 57 fatalities and 534 serious injuries on our roads. Last year, 63 per cent of fatal crashes were on regional roads. That really says that more than half of the crashes on our regional roads are single-vehicle crashes. What contributes are rollovers, hitting trees or other objects. The number has increased from 2023, and it is clear that the condition of our roads is playing a huge role in those incidents. Tragically, 11 lives were lost last year of drivers aged between 16 and 24. I have already demonstrated what my children have been through driving on regional roads and what many other young drivers in regional communities are having to deal with. What we need to understand is how we make our roads safer not only for the less experienced drivers but for every road user.

September is the month when we need to put a focus on this initiative so that we can point the finger at the government of the day and make sure that they do provide adequate funding not only for safety but for maintenance and make sure that there is equity in a regional road versus a city project. I think that is something that we need to really focus on.

In the great electorate of Chaffey, there are many roads that have been neglected over these last three years, almost four years. But what I must say is that one of the roads in the worst condition is the Wentworth to Renmark road. It is an unsealed road. It gets graded once or potentially twice a year. That is now starting to become a common thoroughfare for tourists, for some heavy vehicles.

What it is showing us is that the copious letters that I have written to the minister have fallen on deaf ears. I want to thank his department; they have taken my correspondence and helped. Every little bit helps, and for some of those actions I thank them. But the response in the correspondence I get back from the minister—when it does eventually come back to me—is quite tardy, and it really does beggar belief in most instances. So that is something that should be looked at.

Of course, the most recent floods did a lot of damage to our regional roads. I live on the Lyrup causeway and some of that road was undercut by floodwaters. After three years of waiting, that road is down to one lane; it is on restricted traffic lights. A lot of heavy productivity vehicles use it. A lot of Riverlanders—whether they are travelling out of Lyrup, travelling out of the Riverland across the river—are always having to consider whether they take that road or spend another 20 minutes driving around that damaged piece of road. So I am glad to see that the council is now scheduled to rebuild that road, with completion in December 2026.

The duplication of the Sturt Highway is something else that really has been a bugbear. The Sturt Highway is a federal highway. The Sturt Highway sees a majority of heavy vehicles using that road regularly. I helped promote a campaign—12,000 signatures on a petition—for delivering the Truro freight route.

I know that the member for Schubert is in her electorate, and she is doing a great job of giving that project a voice, but what I must say is that my constituents are the people using that freight route, whether it be a heavy vehicle or whether it be people travelling to Adelaide, and they encounter near misses on regular occasion. So I think the member for Schubert, myself and every person who

travels on the Sturt Highway should say loudly and clearly to the government that we need a solution there: a solution-based approach not only for productivity but particularly for safety.

I want to also highlight the issue of what we have seen on that stretch of highway since 2018. There have been 40 lives lost on that stretch of highway—40. That is 40 too many. The current government have kicked the can down the road on this stretch of highway that is absolutely screaming out for help: for safety upgrades, for productivity upgrades. They continue to ignore it. There is the blame game: 'Blame the feds, blame someone else.' The minister is very good at playing the blame game, but I am calling on him to fast-track this federal highway upgrade so that the Truro freight route is addressed and we see those safety concerns addressed and the productivity gains. It is about efficiencies, it is about bringing tourists into the regions, it is about getting people from the regions back to the city safely and it really does need the government's attention.

I want to thank the Australian Road Safety Foundation for their good work, their hard work, in their annual campaign and for spreading that awareness. They make a real impact in workplaces, schools and communities every year, and they support events right across Australia. It is no more important than here in South Australia and no more important than those campaigns being promoted in regional South Australia, because the regional road network is under pressure every day and, with the government's neglect, we are going to see more and more issues when travelling on those highways.

Road safety, as I say, is everyone's responsibility. There is an element of state, federal and local government responsibility, and I urge all of them to please act responsibly. Keep our roads safer than they are today, and make sure that people use rest stops when they are fatigued and that they slow down in times of need.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12:19): I rise also to support the motion, unsurprisingly, in its original form, and I might just address the reason why the original form of the motion is particularly apt, standing in contradistinction to the amendment the member for Giles has brought to the house. I will do that by illustrating where the government has needed to be brought to us at a 180-degree turnaround to invest in the Hills and, very specifically, in the road safety upgrade necessary, right at the heart of Meadows at the centre of Heysen. I will come to that momentarily.

Of course, uncontroversially, the motion recognises this month as Rural Road Safety Month and highlights, as we are well to do, that there are more lives lost on rural roads in Australia, and that is true for South Australia as well. As those on country roads are appropriately reminded, it is the locals who are suffering in a greater proportion as well. It is local communities in the country in South Australia that we need to call on the Malinauskas Labor government to not forget about when we are calling on the investment necessary for those upgrades.

We are well to recognise the foundation for its work and for its annual campaign to spread awareness. It is necessary, of course, as we have done in the course of the motion, to focus on the necessary works, the physical investments and the significant capital that has devoted the money that is necessary to be prioritised and then devoted to those works. It is also not to be forgotten that it is important to have campaigns of communication to road users to drive safely and to ensure that we do all we can reasonably through each year to avoid those terrible incidents involving, as they do in the worst of circumstances, trauma and death on the roads.

The original form of the motion rightly calls on the Malinauskas Labor government to invest more in upgrading our rural and regional roads. There is a very good example of the need for that call to be reiterated in this Rural Road Safety Month. I make particular reference to the government's announcement, as recently as May this year, a statement dated 23 May, with a heading 'Road safety upgrade bonanza for Adelaide Hills'. It provides residents, including my constituents in Heysen, with news, which the government was proud at that time to trumpet, that residents and visitors will benefit from investment into various Hills roads, the result of the \$150 million Adelaide Hills Productivity and Road Safety Package that is an 80:20 federal and state government commitment.

That fund is welcome, and the federal government's commitment to that is welcome. What we need to see is that that translates into action and that the Malinauskas Labor government is held

to account to apply those funds to the improvement of roads in the Adelaide Hills, and that means holding Malinauskas Labor to even the most basic of standards to do what it said it would do.

We see, prominent in this statement about the bonanza in May, in fact, the first of the projects that is trumpeted as being on its way as the result of the application of these funds, is:

The intersection of Mawson Road, Battunga Road and Nottage Terrace, Meadows is being upgraded, with a new single-lane roundabout to improve safety for drivers and pedestrians. On average, more than 10,000 vehicles and 550 heavy vehicles pass through this intersection each day.

Now, that is a statement from the government just in May this year, and it is a 180-degree turnaround from what the minister had his chief executive advise Mount Barker council as recently as a few months prior to that, at the end of 2024. By a letter, the chief executive wrote—not to me, but to the council—to say, 'I am just going to advise you that that's actually not on the list of things to be done. It hasn't stacked up.'

I go back even a bit further, to January of 2024, when the minister wrote to the council—again, not to me, to the council—to say, 'This is being done, this upgrade.' After a bit of inquiry, I was able to get hold of the fact that, when the minister made that promise to my constituents via the local council, it was not just a kind of 'in principle, maybe, let's see how it all stacks up' kind of promise, but it was a promise that was made in the light of engineering drawings, plans and all the rest of it that were done and stamped November 2023.

So we had an informed promise from the government in January of 2024 that this would be done. Then at the end of last year, 2024, that same government—this time by a letter by the chief executive—says, 'Oh, actually, no, that's not quite getting there.' Unsurprisingly, cue outrage from me, my constituents, local council, and everyone who is even remotely aware of what it is like to have to navigate that intersection day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. We all just said, 'Hey, do what you said you would do. Do what you said you would do, and go and construct that safety upgrade at the centre of Meadows.'

Anyone passing through Meadows in the first half of this year leading up to about May and the bonanza would have, in all likelihood, had the misfortune of crossing paths with me or someone bearing a sign saying, 'Do what you said you'd do, government.' When there is a fund for the improvement of regional roads in the Adelaide Hills, and you are advertising what a great achievement that is, make sure it sounds in works actually completed, not in this kind of, you know, 'We have the engineering drawings and we will tell you it is on its way and then we will sort of back away from that and you might not see it.'

It is very important that this house sticks with the original paragraph (d) of this motion, and calls on Malinauskas Labor to invest more in upgrading our rural and regional roads, because if you do not call on it to do it, and if you do not keep up your calls, the risk is that Malinauskas Labor will just sort of drift away from it and you will have an announcement about some money and you will never see anything for it.

I am proud of my community, I am proud of the local council, and I am proud of all of those who have stood up together to make sure that by the time we get to 23 May this year and we hear about a bonanza, first cab off the rank is the government saying, 'Actually, yes, we will do that after all.' We need to keep up the calls. I will be keeping up the calls, and let's make sure that Malinauskas Labor does not forget about our regions, including particularly in the Hills.

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (12:29): I rise to speak in support of the original motion that was moved by the member for Hammond, namely:

That this house—

- (a) recognises that September is Rural Road Safety Month;
- (b) notes that, on average, more lives are lost on rural roads in Australia;
- (c) thanks the Australian Road Safety Foundation for the work they put into their annual campaign to spread awareness; and—

importantly—

- (d) calls on the Malinauskas Government to invest more in upgrading our rural and regional roads.

There are a number of things which I wholeheartedly agree with the member for Heysen on, but most particularly just recently the fact that this house must continue to urge the government to act on investment into our regional communities.

We serve as a constant reminder that there is always more to be done to improve road safety in regional communities, particularly having in mind the Barossa Valley and the Northern Adelaide Hills. And whilst it is all fantastic to have road safety awareness month and to talk about the importance of this dual responsibility to keep safe on our roads, that of course is about the drivers themselves and the state government and federal government investing in the roads. But we need more than talk; we need always to see more money poured into regional road safety.

The facts speak for themselves, which are that, in terms of rural road crashes, the stats are that 60 per cent of those crashes happen on rural roads. There are more lives lost in regional South Australia than in the city and that in itself is a very clear reason why we need to see more investment. It is not good enough just to talk about the statistics or the lives that are lost on our roads as numbers, because they represent members of our communities, they represent loved ones of people who tragically have lost a loved one as a result of accidents on our roads. That is why we need to do more.

For members of my community in the Barossa Valley and the Hills, driving long distances is a part of daily life, really. People use our roads as an intricate network of connection to their work, to schools, to sport on the weekends, and every pothole, every crumble in the road, every road without a proper shoulder sealing is noted by regional communities, and members in the regions particularly know the road networks like the back of their hand and when they are concerned about a road it is incumbent on the government to listen and, importantly, to act to rectify that.

I have spoken in this place on a number of occasions about the importance of genuine investment in our road network. There are a number of roads in my local community that I am constantly contacting the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport about, so much so that I have noted that there has been a slight change in tack and that I am now getting responses from the minister's team and not signed letters all the time from the minister himself. I think that is just a reminder to my local community to keep coming to me on all of your concerns. We will keep flooding the government with real-life examples about the gap in investment and that more needs to be done.

I have spoken recently in the chamber about the Eden Valley Road. This is a major freight route, a major transport route for tourists throughout my local community, and also a main thoroughfare connecting all the little townships in the Barossa Valley. At the moment its condition is simply deplorable. I have raised questions about this with the minister directly, and it seems to be that there has been a big change in the way that the road is actually sealed. It has a gravel-like substance on the top and it is causing more issues in my local community due to the fact that it has not been done properly.

I have spoken with local businesses and people who have had to have their windscreens replaced as a direct result of this gravel that is flying up from the roads. I have spoken about the intersection of Hurns Road and Eden Valley Road. That is a major problem point. Likewise at the front of Yalumba winery in Angaston. These are two hot spots that must be addressed.

Belvidere Road is a growing thoroughfare that connects people to the Sturt Highway. This is an issue I have written to the council about. It is an issue that I will continue to lobby on for action. There has been a big increase in the volume of traffic coming through Belvidere Road and it seems to me that a slip lane is desperately required there to accommodate the increase in traffic, particularly for heavy vehicles.

Sturt Highway in general is a national highway that carries freight, tourists and people from right across South Australia and connects them right across Australia. At the moment we have some really serious undulations occurring there and so much so that I have received reports of caravans becoming airborne. There was a local family whose relatives actually ended up in the Lyell McEwin Hospital as a result of their caravan flipping on these undulated surfaces.

This is an issue that has sparked a lot of community interest, so much so that a local community petition has been started by Michella and Jacqui. They are two passionate women from

Greenock. They have thousands of signatures on this petition, which I look forward to tabling in the house in due course. It calls on the government to invest in a long-term solution to fix this road safety issue.

I am really hopeful that as a result of investigations that have been launched by the department we can get to the bottom of what would be required for a long-term fix. Patchworks and resurfacing last happened in 2019, and that served its purpose for some time, but clearly the issues are back and they are back worse than ever. There is an acknowledgement that this is a road-safety concern for the local community because now we have a reduction in speed from 110 down to 80 in numerous positions along the Sturt Highway and we also have a hazard up ahead sign. I encourage everyone in my local community to sign that petition, if they have not already. One is available in my local electorate office.

Both Cricks Mill Road and Gorge Road are in dire need of maintenance. I am constantly contacted by constituents in my local communities, particularly across the Adelaide Hills, who have been speaking about this poor condition, so much so that people have had to go to mechanics and have serious work done to their car for damage that has occurred due to hitting these potholes.

Gomersal Road is a very scenic route, one which I always love driving along as I am heading home to Angaston from the big smoke here in the city. It is pretty, but I have to say that the condition of the road at the moment is pretty average. Again, this is an issue I have raised with the minister on multiple occasions, the need to improve the condition and to look at ways that we can potentially have some overtaking lanes. There are minimal opportunities to overtake along Gomersal Road. It is a prime tourist stretch, which means we have people interested in going about things a little bit slower so they can take in the scenic view of the Barossa Valley.

Melrose Street in Mount Pleasant is an upgrade for which I secured a commitment from the government to get done. It is one that my local community is really excited about but, disappointingly, the government has advised those works have been pushed into the next financial year. Again, I will continue to hold the government to account on making sure that we can do everything possible to fast track investment into regional roads. We know that there is a multibillion dollar backlog when it comes to road maintenance right across regional South Australia, and indeed the city, and we must do more.

As I have said, it is not just about commuters and drivers who need to do what they can to keep safe on the road, there is an incumbency, a responsibility, if you like, for the government to invest and to ensure that they are playing their part in the bargain to keep people safe on our roads. Every life lost on our roads is one too many. Rural Road Safety Month is a reminder that when it comes to road safety the stakes could not be higher.

I commend the motion in its original form to the house. I thank members, particularly all those regional MPs on my side of the chamber who have made a contribution. You can see how passionate we are about ensuring that our regional communities have the road safety network and the roads that they deserve: safe roads, and safe roads ultimately save lives.

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (12:39): I likewise rise to support the motion in its original form. It is really important that we do actually understand regional roads and the needs of them. I very much reflect on many sad, tragic accidents that have occurred in my part of the Fleurieu, particularly along the Victor Harbor Road. There are many that I remember over my lifetime, very tragic stories that have occurred in relation to those who have been involved in tragic accidents that have devastated the town and the community, in particular the families closely affected by the lives that have been lost through that process.

It is really, really important that we make sure our roads are funded well, make sure that they are actually maintained well, make sure that they are renewed, and make sure that networks are expanded when necessary. I guess that brings me to a particular concern in my electorate that has certainly been bubbling along for a number of years now. It is something I very much remember raising when I was involved in advocacy within the dairy industry. That is the traffic volumes that move along the coast, along the road from Victor Harbor through to Goolwa.

That is a really challenging part of the network, particularly between Waterport Road and Middleton itself. That piece of road is really pushed beyond its current limits. There are nearly 13,000 car movements a day along that piece of road. In my lifetime, it has gone from a 110 km/h speed limit down to an 80 km/h speed limit, and often the traffic is travelling at 60 km/h or below, just with the volume that is travelling along that part of the road.

An expansion with a second road bypassing both Middleton and Port Elliot, connecting across to Waterport Road to link up with Waterport Road, that then bypasses Victor Harbor itself to take you through to Encounter Bay is certainly something that I think is an important piece of infrastructure that needs to be invested in going forward. It is something that I will continue to keep advocating for. It is a very important piece of infrastructure that will actually make the network so much safer.

It may not even be a significant road accident that will actually cause problems in relation to human life, but if they occur at the wrong spots it is really a large diversion around those incidents. If there happens to be an issue that occurs in Middleton, at the Middleton Bridge, for example, where Middleton Creek goes, to divert around that on any decent sort of road is almost driving all the way to Mount Compass and so a significant barrier for getting people from Goolwa to health services they may need in Victor Harbor.

Likewise, if something happens at the corner of Waterport Road, again it is really difficult to find a diversion road around the back. No matter what size of vehicle we are talking about, there are very few options past that. It is very much a significant restriction in the network. To me, we have seen an enormous increase in the volume of traffic over the years and we see significant volumes travel on the regional roads through my electorate, probably, as I said, nearly 13,000 on Port Elliot Road between Middleton and Port Elliot.

Probably the one that most people think of is the Victor Harbor Road. As people head into Mount Compass, they are sharing the road with 14,200 cars a day. Just over 12,000 of those then go through Mount Compass. It is a huge volume of traffic that really puts pressure on the network, and that sheer volume then puts pressure on the road safety aspects in relation to that road. It is a sad thing about the Victor Harbor Road.

We have certainly seen some improvements, from McLaren Vale back to the start of the road at Old Noarlunga. It was a commitment by the previous government to invest in that road, and I am pleased to see that completed under this current government. There is great improvement in road safety through that area. It was a high-fatality zone, and the network has certainly improved significantly with that upgrade.

Then we go from McLaren Vale to Willunga. I can vaguely remember that road being built when I was a child—that puts it in the 55-plus years range of that road being in operation. We have seen overtaking lanes added and we have seen changes that have occurred in that time over the life of that road, but at the moment that road is appalling. It is built on a soil that makes it really quite difficult to maintain the road: the Bay of Biscay soil makes the road move significantly. We have seen the surface of the road break up significantly over the last couple of years, and it has been patched in the last few months. That patching has made the road very rough and very challenging to drive on. Most of the patching actually occurs in the overtaking lane, particularly heading south, and so we see a lot of people choosing to drive in the right-hand lane, whether they are overtaking or not, to try to get away from that rough surface.

We then travel all the way to the other end of the road, towards the Mount Jagged region, and again there are some significant issues. There is a little dirt road, called Isaacson Road, that comes off the Victor Harbor Road, and there is an overtaking lane there, heading north. There are so many potholes there that I would very much run out of all the fingers and toes in a busload of people, let alone a carload of people, to count how many there actually are in this section. It is really disappointing that this road has not been maintained to an adequate, safe standard. Again, the majority of regular users are no longer using that portion of the road because it is so bad. They go straight out into the right-hand lane, and it removes the ability for a sensible overtaking point, which has been put there to actually help with road safety.

Even recently, only a month or so ago, we saw a pothole that I have reported, three years in a row, to the relevant minister as being a significant safety issue. We saw that pothole again this year. We saw reasonable media attention in relation to that particular pothole, where there were multiple cars hitting that pothole. They were lined-up there, changing tyres after they had blown tyres upon hitting this pothole in wet conditions. It is certainly quite scary that the road is in a state where people unexpectedly hit such a hazard on a road that you would expect will be in good condition. It is really sad that roads are not kept at that level.

We have other roads in the electorate that are challenging as well, such as the Goolwa Road that goes from Mount Compass to Goolwa. My understanding is that the first five or so kilometres of that was never built with a decent foundation and is continually falling apart and getting patched up on a regular basis. Then we have the Inman Valley Road, where people are choosing to drive for an extra 10 kilometres on other roads because that road is so bad and so challenging to drive on. They are actually choosing local council roads, including some that are dirt, as an alternative because it is a safer option. Hindmarsh Tiers Road is another road that has over 1,000 cars a day and certainly is having challenging times as well.

So we need to make sure that this government and future governments invest in our regional roads. Human life is so special, and to have people lost through not having the network kept to a suitable standard is just not acceptable in today's terms. I really encourage governments to keep investing.

Ms PRATT (Frome) (12:49): Noting that we have some very special guests in the chamber who have been listening to our important debates this morning, and I am sure they will understand that country MPs have a lot to say about regional roads, I will make some brief remarks in support of the original motion, recognising that September is Rural Road Safety Month. In brief—as I promise to be—we continue to call on the Malinauskas Labor government to invest more funding into our roads to keep them safe.

The Horrocks Highway is really the arterial road that connects my electorate from north to south. I just want to reflect on some comments that were made by the member for West Torrens last week when he visited my communities, introducing himself as the minister of Horrocks Highway. It was delivered as a cheap laugh, and he got one, but it comes with a costly price tag, and that is the cost of repairs to our road network in the regions and the cost of lives lost. It is not a joking matter. We understand the complication of the terrain across the state, but this is a government that was elected to do its job, and there is a department that exists to maintain and repair our roads.

My communities expect no less, and it is certainly no different from the argument about painting the opera house bridge, if you like: it is a never-ending job; you start at the beginning, get to the end, and rinse and repeat. The community of Frome, from Roseworthy and Hewett all the way through to the Clare Valley and beyond, expect that the Horrocks Highway is taken seriously by this government, and through this motion we expect to see more money invested in keeping our roads and our drivers safe. I commend the original motion.

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (12:51): I will speak briefly in wrapping up. I also recognise the situation with the Hospital Research Foundation team who are here, and I will give the health minister an opportunity to say a few words on the next motion. We, on this side, oppose the amendment that has been put by the member for Giles.

I thank the members for Chaffey, Heysen, Schubert, Frome and Finniss for their contributions to this really important motion. Indeed, I thank the member for Giles who, in the body of his speech, reflected the challenges but also the opportunities, if we get funding right, for rural roads. He drives on a lot of the same sorts of roads as I do. Under normal circumstances we would be calling for a division on the amendment but to expedite the process we will not—not for the sake of a minister but for the sake of the friends in the gallery. If it was my decision I would say, 'Minister, forget it.' I am happy to support the original motion, and indicate that the opposition opposes the amendment as put by the member for Giles.

Amendment carried; motion as amended carried.

*Parliamentary Procedure***VISITORS**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will very quickly acknowledge people in the gallery who are involved with the Hospital Research Foundation Group. They are guests today of the Minister for Health: the Chair, Rilka Warbanoff; the CEO, Paul Flynn; and Briony Marshall, Abbey Bell, MaryLou Bishop, Jim Deed and Olivia Baldock.

*Motions***HOSPITAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION GROUP**

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (12:54): I move:

That this house—

- (a) congratulates the Hospital Research Foundation Group on celebrating its 60th anniversary this week;
- (b) recognises the invaluable contribution made by the Hospital Research Foundation Group supporting more than 60 areas of medical research and patient care in South Australia; and
- (c) thanks the Hospital Research Foundation Group for its six decades of meaningful impact to improve the health and wellbeing of South Australians.

Given the time, my speech will be a bit briefer than I had originally intended. If we go back to 1965, there was an original donation of £120 that started off the work that has now become the Hospital Research Foundation. Originally, it became The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Research Foundation, and that donation was one of the things that helped us develop to have the Southern Hemisphere's first live kidney transplant.

The QEH and now the RAH have had a tremendous impact in terms of kidney transplants in South Australia, with 3,400 kidney transplants having happened here in South Australia. The Hospital Research Foundation played a key role in that, but it has grown and grown since then. Of course, because of the generosity of donors, now more than \$250 million has been invested in research and patient care just since 2009 alone.

The Hospital Research Foundation has grown to now cover 12 different charities, covering a whole range of issues, from stroke to breast cancer to heart research and palliative care, and the foundation supports 60 areas of medical research and patient care. To name just some of those, the government is partnering with the Hospital Research Foundation in terms of Parkinson's care and having nurses who are working with people with Parkinson's across the state to make sure they can manage their Parkinson's well in the community.

We are also partnering with the Hospital Research Foundation for what is about to be installed at The QEH, which is a new PET machine. That is going to help us in terms of being able to diagnose and treat cancer in the western suburbs, and it is going to be very much appreciated by that community. The Hospital Research Foundation have supported faster and more accurate bowel cancer screening, trials of new therapies for children with brain cancer, innovative treatment of sepsis, world-leading and world-first imaging to better diagnose heart attacks, and the list goes on and on.

It would not happen without, firstly, the donors—and there are so many people who support the Hospital Research Foundation across the state with generous donations—and, secondly, the team. The Deputy Speaker mentioned Rilka and Paul and all of the team who are here today. We thank them for coming into parliament. This is our chance, on behalf of the Parliament of South Australia, to say thank you to the group for what you do. It makes a difference to the lives of South Australians right across the board, and the support you provide is absolutely invaluable for all of our hospitals and healthcare workers, so thank you.

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (12:57): I would like to echo the comments made by the Minister for Health and congratulate Paul, Rilka and your entire team, who are here today, and thank you for your contribution over the last six decades. As the minister has said, you have really helped to change

the lives of so many South Australians. You have changed the game of health. To everyone who is here today to celebrate, I say thank you.

I also echo the sentiments of the minister to all of the donors across your various programs. It is extraordinary to have a foundation like this here in South Australia. Thank you for your patience, thank you for being in here and I look forward to celebrating with you at 1 o'clock when we rise. Thank you very much.

Motion carried.

Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00.

Parliamentary Procedure

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:03): I give notice that on Wednesday 29 October 2025 I will move that this house notes that Sunday 26 October is National Grandparents Day; recognises and values the contribution that grandparents and kinship carers make to families, communities and the economy, despite not being formally recognised by the government; commends the ongoing work and advocacy of Grandcarers SA in providing a vital network for grandparents and other full-time, informal kinship carers; and calls on the state government to formally recognise Grandparents Day as the last Sunday of every October, bringing South Australia in line with Queensland, New South Wales—

Members interjecting:

Mr WHETSTONE: —Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

The SPEAKER: Members on my right! The member for Badcoe! There is absolutely no reason to be yelling and screaming at this time of the day. We haven't even got to question time yet. Everyone will come to order. Did you want to repeat any of that, member for Chaffey? I think Hansard got it.

Ministerial Statement

PORT OF WHYALLA LITIGATION

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:05): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: As the house may be aware, OneSteel Manufacturing Pty Ltd, which operates the Whyalla Steelworks and associated mines, was placed into administration by KordaMentha on 19 February 2025. Whyalla has since become the focus of the single biggest economic transformation and stimulus package in South Australian history and remains a critical priority for our government as we work through the administration and subsequent transition to decarbonised iron and steel production.

On 24 June this year, the sale process for the Whyalla Steelworks and associated mining operations formally opened, after strong interest from global steelmakers and consortia looking to expand into low-emission steel production. More than 15 national and international parties have now formally submitted their interest in the sale of the Whyalla Steelworks.

While the sale process has been advancing, there has also been ongoing litigation, as well as recent legislation passed by the state parliament, with respect to the Port of Whyalla. I am pleased to advise the house that earlier today Justice O'Callaghan of the Federal Court of Australia ruled in favour of the administrators of OneSteel Manufacturing and held that the assets at the Port of Whyalla are fixtures and thus property of OneSteel Manufacturing.

Through the Whyalla Steel Works (Port of Whyalla) Amendment Bill passed by the state parliament earlier this year, any uncertainty about the ownership of the port itself and its rail connections was removed, but there remained uncertainty for prospective buyers about ownership

of critical assets, including cranes and sheds. This was the matter being interrogated through the Federal Court proceedings and did not directly involve the state government.

However, today's decision from the Federal Court confirms that the assets at the Port of Whyalla are indeed the property of OneSteel Manufacturing, therefore removing encumbrances and creating greater certainty in relation to the port and its role in the sale process. This is important for Whyalla, South Australia, and our nation to deliver the sale of a steelworks as an integrated pit-to-port operation to a credible buyer who will ensure sovereign steelmaking well into the future.

We welcome today's judgement as a next step towards achieving this outcome and will continue to work with the administrators to make that happen. This judgement adds to the promising start to the steelworks sale process, with over 15 credible parties actively engaged. The government is pleased to see multiple strong bids in the mix and looks forward to working with all bidders over the coming months to identify the best possible buyer through a fair and competitive process.

Let there be no doubt that the Government of South Australia, through this parliament, will actively pursue any action that is necessary to ensure a future for Whyalla and sovereign steelmaking in this country.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to parliament a few groups that we have in the galleries today. We have students from St Peter's College, who are guests of the member for Dunstan. Welcome to parliament. We hope you enjoy question time. I would like to give a shout-out to students from my electorate who were here during the lunch break. Unfortunately, they had to get back to Aldinga so they could make their buses home.

The Aldinga Payinthe school is a really important development in our local area. When we got to talk to the students about what we do in here, one of the things I was able to talk about was taking to the Budget and Finance Committee, if you like, through the then Minister for Education, the Deputy Premier, a bid to build a high school which then turned into the B-12 school at Aldinga, Payinthe. I would like to thank the member for Morialta for the four years he had as education minister.

We talked through how that process works and how we develop things in our local communities. It was really good to have them in here and I am sorry they could not hang around. They were student leaders from year 7 through to year 11, doing a tremendous job representing other learners and students in their cohorts.

We also have people in from Hallett Cove School, guests of the member for Black. We have the school captains, Karli vandenBrink and Jedd Quilliam. Welcome to Parliament House, along with your principal, Tony Hall, and assistant principal, Tom Wall. We also have Tony and Jude Parmiter here, who are guests of the member for Kavel.

Also, we are about to have guests of the member for Davenport. I am going to mention them now because I do not like interrupting question time with acknowledgement of people in the chamber. We have the Flagstaff Hill Probus Club coming in, and one of their number is a fellow called Trevor Mewett. He was the teacher of the Minister for Transport, the Leader of Government Business, in year 9. So if we spot Trevor, he might have a few answers to come up with for the guidance that he provided to the Leader of Government Business and grandfather of the house.

Parliamentary Committees

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (14:13): I bring up the 68th report of the committee, entitled Subordinate Legislation.

Report received.

Mr ODENWALDER: I bring up the 69th report of the committee, entitled Subordinate Legislation.

Report received and read.

*Question Time***NORTH ADELAIDE PUBLIC GOLF COURSE**

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:15): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier cap at \$50 million the state government's financial commitment to the North Adelaide Golf Course redevelopment project and, if not, why not? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: In 2011, the then parliament put a \$535 million cap on the government's financial commitment to the redevelopment of Adelaide Oval.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:15): The government has a budget for the project. The project is operating in accordance with that budget. We see it being an important economic opportunity for the state but also a very significant investment in public amenity for people who are using the Parklands. That's what makes this such a unique proposition, is that we have got an investment in public amenity in the Parklands for a publicly-owned asset the South Australian public will be able to use. It's a very different proposition from the \$600-plus million—in fact, what would have almost certainly ended up being a billion-dollar basketball stadium the public wouldn't be able to play on. This is a golf course that the public will be able to play on. It is shaping up to be a—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley is on his final warning.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It is shaping up to be yet another example of how the Liberal Party are very at ease associating themselves with opposition to Adelaide Oval, opposition to the Adelaide 500—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Premier, if you can be seated. Member for Morialta, member for Hammond, you will listen to the Premier in silence after we hear this point of order from the deputy leader.

Mr TEAGUE: It's standing order 98(a). I'm conscious that it's only so far in. The question is very directly associated with the cap on the cost for this project. The Premier is embarking on wideranging debate, including reflecting on irrelevant matters associated with this site.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, deputy leader. I have been paying attention to the answer. The Premier did start off saying that there was a budget and he has, I think, gone into the territory of comparing and contrasting with some other capital works that have been proposed or carried out. I will keep listening, but I am sure the Premier will not stray too far from the subject matter.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: As I was saying, this is a project that is shaping up to be in the same category as other critical milestone projects for our state. The Libs opposed Adelaide Oval—we got it done. They shut down the Adelaide 500—we brought it back. They were opposed to Majors Road—we are delivering it; in fact, they were a bit all over the place on that one. The Adelaide Aquatic Centre, they made noise and sought to oppose that—we're delivering it, and for the golf course it is the same equation. They are going to fall into the trap of racing down the path to any sort of voice of dissent, any minority view that they think—

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order. He has continued to prove up the point that I raised a minute or so ago. There's no attempt to deal with anything remotely associated with a cap on the \$50 million budget.

The SPEAKER: I will keep listening, but I think the Premier has not strayed too far from what the question was. It is an important question about the budget for something and the Premier is comparing it to other proposals that either got underway or did not. The Premier can continue.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Whatever the minority view is they are racing towards, we are focusing on developing quality public amenity for the people of South Australia, which at the same time will deliver a major economic dividend. Here we are, having a golf course in the city that

has been underinvested in forever, the council has had aspirations to invest in it and redevelop it but haven't had the capacity to be able to deal with their balance sheet. We do, and we are going to make it happen. Meanwhile, the Leader of the Opposition is hitching his wagon to Frank Pangallo and a myth that there are 5,400 trees going to be chopped down.

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: You stand next to Frank, and your 5,400-tree prediction, and let's see how that ends up for you. Let's see how that ends up for the Leader of the Opposition. Fast forward a few years and, all being well, we will cut that ribbon on the golf course. It will be just like when we cut the ribbon on the Adelaide Aquatic Centre and just like we cut the ribbon on Adelaide Oval. The opposition will start to reclaim a different version of history.

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order, sir. The Premier is now flagrantly disregarding your observation to give the Premier an opportunity to answer the substance of the question, and it's just further departing from anything remotely associated with the cap.

The SPEAKER: I understand you are frustrated, but it is much harder as these books in here allow. You have two former Speakers here. It is always much harder for those asking the questions and the limitations put on you. There is more licence given to those who are to answer the questions. I think the Premier is okay, but I will keep listening. The Premier.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We have got a plan and a project for something that has been a resounding success for the state. We know that in the few short years that the LIV Golf tournament has been here, it has become the envy of other states around the country. It has been attended in numbers that no-one would have thought was predictable. The economic dividend has been real, the number of people who are getting employed in our state on the back of the huge numbers of visits that we have seen from these major events is something to be celebrated.

The Leader of the Opposition can't work out if he's for or against the LIV Golf. He got asked during the break. He says he is for it, and then he goes running around starting to argue against it. So Flip-Flop over there has got a different position every day of the week on this issue. We are going to remain focused and seek to get it done.

NORTH ADELAIDE PUBLIC GOLF COURSE

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:22): My question is to the Premier. Has anyone in government seen concept plans of the new golf course development project, and does that indicate the number of trees to be removed? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: At a parliamentary committee meeting on Friday, DPC Chief Operating Officer, Wayne Hunter, admitted some versions had been shared between the government and Greg Norman Golf Course Design.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:22): I am not too sure what the revelation is there, but there is a—

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia: Because you are changing the design. You've got caught out, mate.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Mr Speaker, let me explain what's really going on here. The Leader of the Opposition stands up with Frank Pangallo and says 5,400 trees are going to get chopped down. It turns out that, of course, that is a complete fallacy.

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition is on his final warning.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It turns out that's a complete fallacy.

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I don't care what you said, it's unparliamentary to interject while the Premier is on his feet. One more peep out of you and you are out of here.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Leader of the Opposition stands up with Frank Pangallo and says 5,400 trees are going to be chopped out, then he works out very quickly that that is probably a bit of a boo-boo.

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order, sir.

The SPEAKER: The deputy leader has a point of order, Premier.

Mr TEAGUE: Standing order 98(a). The question, again, this time is specifically directed to concept plans and whether or not those have been seen. We are embarking on this irrelevant and—

The SPEAKER: I'm a little bit over you getting up with your constant points of order—

Mr TEAGUE: Well, I'm not.

The SPEAKER: —when I'm trying to listen to what the Premier has got to say.

Mr TEAGUE: So am I—every word.

The SPEAKER: You have interrupted him four times during the first question and just over a minute into this response, despite the yelling out of your leader to almost drown out the Premier—

Mr TEAGUE: I am just seeking a ruling on the point of order.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Premier.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: So they stand up and say 5,400 trees are going to be chopped down. It's so obviously going to be proven to be such an insane prediction or statement on behalf of the opposition, but now they are trying to say, 'Oh, well, if it's not 5,400 trees it's because they changed their design.' What an absolute nonsense from the Leader of the Opposition. You hitched your wagon to Frank and his crazy prediction. You made the bed, you are going to sleep in it, mate. Because let me tell you, everybody knows how completely preposterous it is that in a golf course that's got 9,000 trees, where we actually want more trees not less, more than half are going to be chopped down. You made your prediction. You stick by Frank and don't come up with excuses about why it's wrong when it's proven to be complete nonsense.

NORTH ADELAIDE PUBLIC GOLF COURSE

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:25): My question is to the Premier. How many trees will be cut down as part of the North Adelaide Golf Course redevelopment, and will it be more than the government has previously identified? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my right will come to order.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: While unwilling to put a number on himself, the Minister for Infrastructure has said publicly that he will resign if the number of trees predicted as needing to be axed is more than 5,000, which was the number that was quoted by a globally recognised golf designer, and is wrong.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:25): I will tell you what the number is not going to be: anywhere near 5,400. I and the government welcome that the Leader of the Opposition has been so willing to stake his reputation—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The leader is on his final warning.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Leader of the Opposition is so willing to stake his reputation on a nonsense prediction that has been made by Frank Pangallo—

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The leader can leave question time for the next 10 minutes.

The honourable member for Hartley having withdrawn from the chamber:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It's not anywhere near 5,400—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Morphet—

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: —but the Leader of the Opposition has staked his reputation on that number, which means all your reputations—

The SPEAKER: Premier, will you sit down. The member for Morphet, you can leave question time until the end of question time.

The honourable member for Morphet having withdrawn from the chamber:

The SPEAKER: People will listen to the Premier's answer in silence. The Premier.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: They are working hard, Mr Speaker. They are working hard to try to turn this project into a point of difference. We welcome it being a point of difference, because this is a government that believes in investing in our Parklands for public use, for public amenity, investing in facilities that the Adelaide City Council themselves have always wanted to do but have never had the capacity to be able to do it. We are here, willing and ready to help. We are going to make a difference. It will be an absolutely positive difference for the thousands of people who use the golf course and all the people who walk through the golf course. More than that, it will deliver a major economic dividend and benefit to the state.

What you don't realise is just how unwise it is, in my view, to stake your reputations on a prediction that is so beyond the pale, so insanely exaggerated, but you are willing to do it, and that is your prerogative. But when it plays out, when all of this plays out in a way that will be completely transparent before every South Australian, everyone will remember 5,400 trees was the prediction that they thought would be chopped down. Let's wait and see how that plays out because it won't be anything like that.

The legacy of this project for you will be you hitching your wagon to Frank Pangallo, being seen to be opposed to yet another successful, ambitious project for the state. On this side of the house we're just getting things done: getting things done that are making a difference for our economy and for people who use these types of assets. That's our legacy. Yours is a silly prediction that will be proved to be completely wrong.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my right will come to order so I can hear the deputy leader.

NORTH ADELAIDE PUBLIC GOLF COURSE

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:28): My question is to the Premier. Premier, is there a business case for the golf course redevelopment project and, if so, when will it be released for public consultation?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:29): We have done a lot of work in terms of what the economic benefit of this project will be. We have already released much detail around it. The deputy leader would be welcome to assess the economic dividends that the state has already received as a result of the LIV Golf event. I look forward to the next one; it's scheduled to be in February next year.

South Australians will be able to familiarise themselves that, if they want to vote for a party that is getting major events to our state, that is bringing huge economic benefit, putting us on the map like never before, increasing the level of attention we get from other parts of the country, they have to vote Labor, and if they want all those events to go, and probably the Adelaide 500 cancelled again, they vote Liberal. It's very simple.

DAM INTEGRITY

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel) (14:30): My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier provide any advice to the house on what additional support might be available to private landowners concerning unexpected dam integrity issues that may exceed their financial capacity to address but which threaten other property owners? The Deputy Premier will appreciate this is a matter, of course, that she and I have discussed on an earlier occasion.

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): I think this is perhaps the second time that this has been raised by the member in this chamber and also directly with me representing his area. I imagine that this has come up as a question today because of the news yesterday of the Echunga dam owned by the golf course looking like it might lose integrity, and the SES are paying careful attention to that and the consequences should that occur.

There has been a three-year program undertaken by the Department for Environment and Water alongside the two landscape boards in the region, the Hills and Fleurieu and also Northern and Yorke, alongside the SES, working on mapping those privately owned dams that, should they lose integrity, might have a significant impact on other landholders. Also, part of that program has been working with all landholders, offering workshops to skill them in how to identify what challenges there are and how to adequately maintain their dams.

There is money that has been applied to funding demonstration projects on works for dams in order to be able to demonstrate the way in which dams can be looked after so that the likelihood of their failure is reduced.

STATE ECONOMY

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (14:31): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the house on the South Australian economy?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:31): Thank you to the member for Adelaide for her question. The member for Adelaide knows that our kids and future generations of South Australians getting jobs and having a decent standard of living is so much informed by the performance of our economy. Today, only a couple of hours ago, the Australian Bureau of Statistics released their economic growth numbers.

I am very pleased to report to the house that this state is the fastest growing economy on the mainland of this country. We are experiencing economic growth numbers that are consistently now far outpacing almost all other jurisdictions and certainly outpacing the rest of the nation. In the most recent financial year, following the June quarter figures being released today, I am pleased to report that the South Australian economy grew by 3.3 per cent. The rest of the nation grew by 2.2 per cent.

This is a state whose economy continues to power ahead. We see this on the back of the most recent employment numbers, which yet again showed, from the ABS, that more people in South Australia are employed than ever before. We seem to have month after month of record growth numbers. We are getting unemployment numbers that we have seen a three in front of. There have only been 15 occasions in the history of records being kept in this country where South Australia has had an unemployment rate with a three in front of it, and all 15 of those occasions have occurred during the course of the life of this government.

We have now got an economy that is growing not by a marginal amount but by a full 100 basis points faster and larger than the rest of the economy. This is a place that is delivering results, and for our young people that means more opportunities. People used to talk about the brain drain. Well, there ain't no brain drain if there's a good job to be had, and there are plenty of those in South Australia.

More than that, one of the major contributors to economic growth in South Australia at the moment is the record investment in dwelling investment, which is up by 4½ per cent, yet again at rates that outpace the rest of the nation. More homes are being built in this state. If you want to do something about housing, you have got to see more homes being built. You don't incentivise higher

prices for vendors, which is their policy: what you do is you actually deliver outcomes in terms of increasing housing supply.

This is a state that is going places and increasingly getting the attention of the rest of the nation for it, and why is that? First and foremost, it is because of the ingenuity and the enterprise of so many businesses in our state that continue to invest, renew, capitalise and show strength in their own position. We commend them first and foremost, but second to that, we have a government that is actually getting things done.

We are pulling all of the levers at our disposal to make a difference in economic performance, whether that be in housing, in training and apprenticeships, in what we are doing in our skills policy more broadly with higher education amalgamations or investing in our schools, or in investing in major events to open up attraction to our state for visitors who want to spend money in our economy, which on balance—in terms of the size of the investment and the reward that we get back—is money for jam.

We are doing everything that we can to see that our economy grows, and it is yielding dividends. The fastest growing economy in the mainland of this country is something to be proud of, and this government is committed to keep delivering results because that matters to the living standards of South Australians.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS COSTS

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:35): My question is to the Premier. How much public money, if any, has been paid towards the legal proceedings brought against the Premier by Annabel and Greg Digance, and what, if any, cost estimates has the government been provided with?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:36): That is a question I am happy to take on notice and send to the Attorney-General, who is responsible for those deliberations.

ELECTIVE SURGERY

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:36): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Has the government developed an elective surgery recovery plan, and if not, why not? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mrs HURN: In the 2024-25 state budget, the government outlined that it would:

Develop an elective surgery recovery plan for South Australia to reduce overdue elective surgery and colonoscopies.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Karna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:36): All of our health networks have elective surgery plans in place, which we can see the benefit of in the fact that we are dramatically increasing the number of elective surgery operations that our hospitals are performing. Each of the years that we have been in government, we have increased the number of operations that our hospitals are performing. More patients than ever before are getting their operations through the public health system in this state.

What we have seen is that, in the past financial year, 61,920 people in South Australia had elective surgery operations through the public system. That is a 9 per cent increase, or 4,737 more people, compared to 2023-24 and of course is higher than any year under the previous Liberal government and particularly higher than the year when we took the reins after the last election. We are delivering increased operations across our system.

We know that there are headwinds in terms of not only an ageing population but also issues in terms of people deciding to go on the public list rather than getting private operations due to the cost of private surgery and particularly specialists' and anaesthetists' fees that people are having to pay in the private system. So we are going to have to increase that by even more. To do that, we are hiring more doctors and nurses, we are building more hospital beds and we are building more operating theatres to meet that need.

We recently had additional operating theatres opened at The QEH and hospital beds opened right across the system. We are building more operating theatres at our new Flinders Medical Centre development, which is now underway, and our new Mount Barker hospital development, which is now underway. There is, of course, the new Women's and Children's Hospital program as well. Right across the system, we are building more capacity for elective surgery to take place. We are hiring the doctors and nurses to do that. We are delivering more surgery than ever before, with plans to do that into the future as well.

The other factor is that we are working more strongly with the private system, trying to reform the way that we work with the private system to deliver better outcomes. One outcome of that has been the work particularly that the Treasurer led in terms of saving Western Hospital. Part of the arrangements there is that we are making sure that some of the spare capacity that Western Hospital had is now being used to get orthopaedic patients in particular off the public waiting list and through Western Hospital to be able to get their surgery. This is a government that continues to invest in our health system—more theatres, more beds, more doctors, more nurses, more surgery—to make sure that patients can get that care.

ELECTIVE SURGERY

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:39): My question is again to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Have any patients on the overdue elective surgery waitlist experienced any adverse outcomes and, if so, how many? With your leave and that of the house, sir, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mrs HURN: There are currently 6,019 South Australians overdue for elective surgery which is the worst in South Australia's history.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:39): As I said, we are working to increase the number of operations that we are doing and we know that we need to continue to do that to meet the number of patients who are coming on the list. So we acknowledge that there are more and more patients coming on to the list, even as we are doing more elective surgery operations. We need to increase even more the number of surgery operations that we do.

Of course, to anybody who is requiring elective surgery, they are triaged by our clinicians. They are triaged in terms of their category of clinical urgency, and there are three different categories; it is a national standard in terms of category 1, 2 or 3. We encourage all patients who are requiring elective surgery to keep in close contact with their general practitioner because their case can be escalated if their clinical condition deteriorates. If there are changes in their clinical condition, then the GP can be in contact with the hospital to make sure that they can get more rapid treatment. Of course, their categorisation may change over that time. Any patient who has concerns, speak to their GP and their GP can speak to the hospital clinicians and can make sure that they are seen in the appropriate timeframe.

FOUL BAY COASTAL EROSION

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (14:41): My question is to the Minister for Environment. Minister, when can the residents of Mud Alley at Foul Bay expect work to protect their property from coastal erosion to commence? With your leave and that of the house, sir, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr ELLIS: I recently visited Foul Bay in early July and wrote to the minister on 9 July thereafter, and that was followed by another letter from the Mud Alley Residents Association on 17 July, neither of which has been responded to yet. In the meantime the council has paused proactive remediation work pending advice from the Coast Protection Board and the erosion continues to threaten shacks. I can confirm the absolute perilous state this community is in.

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) (14:41): I thank the member for his question. I apologise that you haven't received a response and I will be getting on to that very quickly. What I can tell you, though, is that the big storms obviously caused a lot of damage to a lot of marine infrastructure and beaches around

the state—indeed, that is one of them. The road itself, as I understand it, is owned by the council but the council, as you say, is indicating that they are unable to do anything until they hear from the department.

My understanding is on 18 August, so a couple of weeks ago now, the department went on site with the council and inspected and is giving advice now to the council. But again, I reiterate: I do apologise that you didn't receive a response in time, nor did the residents' association, and I will rectify that now that you have raised it with me. I appreciate it.

CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (14:42): My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier update the house on any changes to South Australia's container deposit scheme and any other recent actions to improve the circular economy?

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) (14:42): South Australia and South Australians should be so proud of what we do in recycling, and it should be no surprise to anyone that we are per capita the best recyclers in the country. We also incidentally have more solar panels on our roofs proportionally than any other state as well. We are a really green state and not to mention of course our fantastic record in electricity production from intermittent sources of renewable electricity.

But what we did in South Australia back in 1977 was we introduced a container deposit scheme. It took about 45 years for the rest of the country to start to catch up with us. Initially it was intended to deal with litter; it wasn't really about the idea of circularity. In fact, quite a lot of the materials that have been brought in as a result weren't physically able to be recycled originally, so the idea was simply: don't chuck it, bring it in somewhere so it can be dealt with thoughtfully as we used to say.

What we created was a mechanism to be able to get people to separate out certain items, beverage containers, and get them now into the recycling and the re-use stream—absolutely brilliant. Although it took them a long time, I am not surprised that the rest of the country has caught up. Now that we have a national scheme, effectively—each state has its own legislation but we are all doing it—we can now really take advantage of that to give consistency to industry.

What we have done recently in each of the states other than Victoria, which is a special case—and I can explain in detail the many, many ways in which it is a special case, but let's leave that for another time—is that we are prepared now to add the container deposit to wine and spirit bottles. This is something that the people of South Australia have wanted for some time, having consistently given feedback that they would like to make sure it gets recycled.

Anyone interested in a circular economy will want that to happen, because if you put it into a yellow top bin about 11 per cent of that glass is going to get recycled back to being used as a bottle, but if you take it out separately and take it to the Scouts, or any of the depots, it is going to be 99 per cent returned to being made into a new bottle. Glass is amazingly resilient and able to be constantly recycled back into the original product, but to get that to happen you need people to separate them out, and the container deposit is the way to do it because it creates that little incentive and little reminder.

We have joined today with NSW. We have announced that at the end of 2027 we will add wine and spirit bottles to our scheme. That is consistent with Queensland where, although they have already put it in place—50 per cent of the wine drunk in Queensland is made by South Australia, of course, because we are the best; I am just surprised the other 50 per cent is not—they are requiring labels to be in in 2027 as well. Western Australia announced in their election campaign that they are doing it, and the Northern Territory is changing their legislation. So we are starting to get a proper system across the country that the industry can rely on.

We are waiting until 2027 because we want to be consistent with the other states so that it is simple for industry. But also, having made the decision, we now want to sit down with our wine industry and make sure that it is the lightest touch, the least administratively burdensome, the least

expensive possible option for them, because we treasure our wine industry and we know how significant it is for us economically and also culturally.

This is a moment to celebrate, because yet again something we led is driving behaviour change across the country and is paying off for our environment.

CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:46): A supplementary to the Minister for Environment. What impact on the industry will there be by this government's decision on this economic burden?

The SPEAKER: It's not a supplementary. I will put that down as a question.

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) (14:47): There was a study done by the government; I think it might even have been done by the previous government, because this all started in 2019 under a previous minister. The assessment was initiated then.

What the assessment looks at is not only the 10¢—which of course you pay but you get back—but also how much that additional handling fee will be to make the system work. That is estimated at between 3¢ and 6¢ per bottle. The wine industry has concerns about that, and I have been listening to those concerns all the way along. What we are doing, in order to make sure we take the least burdensome approach possible, is taking the full two years to talk to them. I have written to them this morning to assure them that they will be absolute partners in designing the system.

What is important to understand is that South Australia could hold out all it likes; it sells wine to the other states. I said as soon as I became the minister, when the wine industry raised this with me, that I would not propose that South Australia go it alone to add a deposit to wine bottles, because our wine industry is so important to us—but nor did it make any sense for us to be the only state that held out against it when all the other states were doing it.

What we need, as much as possible, is to offer industry the certainty that comes with national consistency, so that is the approach we are taking. As I say, 50 per cent of the wine drunk in Queensland is South Australian, and that is already subject to the costs associated with engaging in this scheme. Western Australia announced it during the election campaign and now there is New South Wales. The Northern Territory has said so too.

There is no point in avoiding the fact that this is something that is happening in Australia. What we have done is put a sufficiently long time period on it so that we are able to work very closely with the industry and, as I say, have the lightest possible administrative burden. We also recognise that while there are many big companies that invest in South Australia and produce wonderful wine, we also have a lot of really small producers, and I want to make sure that their interests, in particular, are paid attention to and that they are not disproportionately affected by the way this is enacted.

ANGASTON DISTRICT HOSPITAL

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:49): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Have any additional resources been made available to the Tanunda hospital or the South Australian Ambulance Service in light of ongoing closures at the Angaston hospital emergency department, and, if not, why not?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurana—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:49): Significant extra resources have been provided to all areas of our health system under this government. We have substantially increased the budget of the health system by some \$9 billion since we came to office. That has increased the budget of the Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network. It has increased the budget of the SA Ambulance Service. It has meant that health services have significant extra budget to be able to provide those services across the state.

I was just recently with the member for Light at the new Gawler Ambulance Station, which has additional crews in the outer northern suburbs of Adelaide, which is just one example of the additional resources that are going into our Ambulance Service. Of course, we also have the new

emergency department at Gawler, which has additional staff in it, and right across the board the government have hired additional staff to work in our health system: over 1,400 extra nurses above attrition and over 600 extra doctors above attrition, which is not only in our metropolitan area but in country areas right across the state, including in the Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network.

In answer to the member's question—are we providing extra resources—we absolutely are providing extra resources and it stands in stark contrast to the situation that we inherited where nurses were being made redundant. Redundancies were being provided to nurses across our health system. Hundreds and hundreds of nurses were made redundant in the midst of a global pandemic. We are not doing that. We are hiring additional staff; we are hiring paramedics, we are hiring doctors, we are hiring allied health professionals, and we are going to continue to do that because we value and prioritise the health of South Australians.

INDIAN HOUSING PLAN

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:51): My question is to the Minister for Planning. Is the government in any form of negotiations with the Indian government over its plans to build one million houses in Australia at a cost of \$500 billion? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr WHETSTONE: The highly respected newspaper, *The Economic Times*, has reported that the Indian government's union minister, Piyush Goyal, has stated he is in deep negotiation with his counterpart in Australia to create one million homes in Australia. He went one step further, saying India is proposing to allow Indian workers to get trained in Australia on the necessary skill set required to build those homes.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (14:52): I thank the member for his question. He did alert me to it yesterday, that there are news reports, and I had seen them—I think they were in the *Daily Mail* and a few other publications of repute—but I have not been briefed on or have any knowledge of any such proposal. I will ask my department just to be sure—I will take it on notice—but to the best of my knowledge, no.

NARACOORTE HOSPITAL

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:52): My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister update the house on the Draft Clinical Services Plan for the Limestone Coast? Mr Speaker, with your leave and leave of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: The draft plan was released in July after extensive consultation. Part of the plan includes renal dialysis for Naracoorte, which constituents have been really calling for.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Karna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:53): I thank the member for MacKillop for his question and his significant advocacy in relation to this issue. As the member very well knows, we committed, upon coming to government, to invest in Naracoorte hospital, an \$8 million investment in terms of the Naracoorte hospital, which I also know is of interest to the member for Adelaide as well.

Those works are underway at the moment, investing in particularly the emergency department area but also some of the key structural issues in the Naracoorte hospital that have been left to wilt for many, many decades, including a lift that was out of action and other significant infrastructure works that have needed to happen.

We were always clear as part of this that we regarded this as really stage 1 of works that needed to happen at Naracoorte hospital, which is a key hospital for that particular region. In the second budget the government had, we committed \$1 million—and I thank the Treasurer and the Premier for that decision—towards future planning. That work is happening firstly in terms of Naracoorte hospital itself but secondly in terms of the broader regional planning as well.

The Limestone Coast Local Health Network have used that funding to engage Destravis, who are health planning experts, to firstly undertake a broad consultation and consideration process

in terms of what the future looks like for the other hospitals in the Limestone Coast region, which obviously largely encompasses the member's own electorate—those hospitals outside of Mount Gambier. We now have the results of that. That has been published.

The draft clinical services plan gives a 10-year road map for what services need to be provided and where they should be provided, not just for the hospital but for community services across the Limestone Coast. That is part of the local health network's commitment to providing those safe, high-quality services across the region. Importantly, it looks to how we can adapt into the future as well—how things will be able to change with technology—and identify models of care that can provide contemporary care utilising the best practice models.

This has now gone out to the public, and there has been broad consultation with the community and with clinicians about this as well. There were initial consultations with staff, community members and key partners from February to April this year, and face-to-face sessions happened in July in Millicent, Robe, Kingston, Keith, Bordertown, Lucindale, Naracoorte, Penola and Mount Gambier. I understand that they were very well received by people. People have provided their input, but generally the plan has been met with significant interest and, I think, welcome by the local community.

In terms of what this will mean for the Naracoorte community, I think it does see the future expansion of some services in Naracoorte hospital and it does specifically raise renal dialysis as an issue for Naracoorte. We know that renal dialysis is an area that we are having to expand right across the state. At the moment, we are undertaking a big expansion in the northern suburbs of Adelaide and there have been a number of regional expansions that have happened in recent years as well, but we know that there is going to have to be more that has to be done into the future for renal dialysis. This is a sensible proposition. I understand it is listed in the plan as a medium-term objective.

Now this planning work will go into the other planning work for what the future of the next stage of works at Naracoorte hospital will look like, as we plan for the eventual rollout of improved services right across that Naracoorte site. I thank the community and I thank the member for his interest and support of this. It is going to help us to plan a better Naracoorte hospital into the short, medium and long term.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT SAFETY

Mr DIGHTON (Black) (14:57): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister explain how cohesion and discipline within a government can strengthen public transport safety for the people of South Australia, and what are the outcomes of alternative approaches?

The SPEAKER: Before I give the minister the call, I remind him that his year 9 teacher, Trevor Mewett, is in the gallery today, along with other members of the Flagstaff Hill Probus Club. Mr Mewett will be marking your work, minister.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:57): If my memory serves me correctly, he probably still has that duster he threw at me primed and ready to go!

An honourable member: It wasn't big enough!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, it wasn't. I learnt a lot at Adelaide High School from my teachers and from my friends. Discipline and loyalty and cohesion were some of those core benchmarks of building a united team. So when it comes to working together as a united effort to try to deliver policy for the people of South Australia, it is important that you do have unity—very important.

Just last weekend, the final aspect of our undoing the privatisation plan came into effect, when at 3am on Sunday morning the trams returned to public operation. The public service staff in the rail operations centre officially changed their uniforms and now have the state logo proudly displayed on their uniforms. They are now government employees acting in the interests of South Australians, not in the interests of profit-making entities offshore or multinationals.

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, you privatised the buses, that is true. Yes, that is right. I forgot to mention the privatisation. My young friend reminded me, of course: I forgot to mention that they privatised the buses as well. Thank you very much.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I don't forget, when it's 2 o'clock, to be here doing my job. On this side of the chamber, we recognise the importance of centres being in public hands, and we also recognise the importance of the safety and amenity of being on public transport. Of course, those 31 additional Public Service assistants who are on public transport are key. We are investing \$7.5 million to roll out security bus screens on all state-owned buses for our drivers and, more recently, we are expanding barring orders to crack down on offenders on our network. The thing about the barring orders, which was interesting, was I had the Leader of the Opposition demanding we do more about barring orders and then when we attempted to do it his colleagues went on radio and opposed it. I've got to say, it's the Hon. Nicola Centofanti who opposed this—

Mr Telfer: Who's got the majority on the committee?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That's right. That's why it wasn't stopped. Your tooth's better.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That's right. It was interesting that the person who opposed our plans for—

The Hon. D.G. PISONI: Point of order, sir: the Minister for Transport is always defending his right to privacy when it comes to his family. All day, he's been referring to the member for Flinders' health. It's inappropriate and I ask that it be withdrawn.

The SPEAKER: That's not a point of order. The minister.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I think the point of order you're looking at is that I shouldn't have mentioned the absence of members in the chamber. That's the point of order you should be looking for.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley will resume his seat. The minister.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I'm glad Mr Mewett can go home and say we put on a show for him, at least. When we brought back those barring orders and introduced that legislation to allow us to remove people from our public transport system who are deliberately disorderly or conduct antisocial behaviour, the Leader of the Opposition in the upper house tried to explain the opposition's opposition to that process despite the Leader of the Opposition saying that he supported it.

The important thing here is that that disunity within the opposition on a relatively minor policy matter goes deeper to what's actually going on in the Liberal Party. If you read exactly what's going on, they are at war with each other, so much so that the member for Morialta isn't going to be contesting the next election. He is quitting. He is so outraged by this, he is leaving. I have to say, seeing members opposite fight amongst themselves is galling. Rather than get behind their leader, all they do is argue amongst themselves.

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

The SPEAKER: The member for Morialta is on his final warning. The member for Chaffey.

INDIAN HOUSING PLAN

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:02): My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Minister, did you meet with the Indian government's union minister Piyush Goyal or any other government officials during your recent trade trip to India? If so, were any housing initiatives discussed?

The SPEAKER: There are a lot of questions there. The Minister for Trade.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:03): I am happy to answer the member's question; in fact, it's the first time the member has asked me any question on trade and investment now for probably 12 months. The good news is that not only did I meet with—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Morialta can leave the chamber until the end of question time.

The honourable member for Morialta having withdrawn from the chamber:

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Trade, please resume your answer.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: The good news is that not only did I meet with a series of government leaders and officials in India, including the governor of Maharashtra, India's largest economy, but I also met with Minister Goyal, the subject of the member's question, right here in Adelaide. Such is the focus that our government is placing on our economic relationship with India, one of the most important and one of the most highly ranked Indian ministers travelled to Adelaide and met with myself, met with the Premier, met with the Governor, where we had an extraordinary discussion around the opportunities for economic collaboration between India and Australia. I can't recall at that point whether we did speak about housing, but I can certainly—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: Let me recall what we did speak about. Members across, particularly this member in question bleats and moans and goes quite red in the face, even in estimates this year, about no longer being able—as he did when he travelled to Modesto and when he travelled to Texas and when he bought a pair of ear pods on behalf of the taxpayers of South Australia—to travel overseas. Such is the role of a minister of the Crown that we did speak with Minister Goyal about a series of things, including improving our two-way trade, in which we have seen dramatic increases across the last three years of our government—in fact, a 40 per cent increase of trade out of South Australia in just the last three years. That's what we spoke about with Minister Goyal.

We also spoke about the extreme focus that the large Indian conglomerates like Tata Group and Mahindra are placing on jobs growth here in South Australia. In fact, in the last 12 months alone we have seen the number of Indian companies employing people here in South Australia grow. We have also seen the number of South Australians employed by Indian-owned companies here in South Australia grow. That's what we spoke about. We also spoke about the Australian wine industry, including the grape producers of the Riverland who, according to the member, and rightfully so, have been doing it tough in the Riverland. We met with Minister Goyal and we met with other ministers in India and discussed exactly that.

NORTH ADELAIDE PUBLIC GOLF COURSE

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (15:06): My question is to the Premier. Will the government have to pay an ongoing licensing fee to Greg Norman for the use of his name once the North Adelaide Golf Course redevelopment project is completed and, if so, how much? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr TELFER: Celebrity golfers who design golf courses, like Greg Norman, Gary Player and the great Jack Nicklaus are known to charge licensing fees to use their names to promote golf courses they have designed. Greg Norman's rate is believed to be anywhere between \$US100,000 and \$US500,000 a year.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (15:06): I am not aware of that proposition. I am happy to take advice on it and get an answer back for the shadow treasurer. What I would say is that there was a process undertaken within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to test the arrangement in terms of the fees, and the contracting arrangements between the state government and Greg Norman Golf Course Design, to make sure that they were appropriate and

competitive, and that benchmarking exercise, or that undertaking, was important before the state government entered into a contractual arrangement to deliver the golf course.

What I would say is that obviously it is a big opportunity for the state to have a world-class golf course in the city, a public golf course. We know that these deliver very substantial economic dividends. In fact, last weekend I was with the Speaker—I was with you, sir—on Kangaroo Island, and it was very interesting. We were getting around and talking to a lot of people about the algal bloom and the impact on the tourism sector within Kangaroo Island. As I am sure the Speaker himself can attest to—he is, of course, the local MP—one thing that kept coming up was the new golf course being built on Kangaroo Island and the sense of optimism that exists amongst tourism operators on Kangaroo Island at the prospect of having a genuinely world-class golf course there. That won't be a public golf course; it's a private golf course.

In fact, even one of the oyster growers that the Speaker and I met with at American River was talking about potential opportunities that they see for their particular enterprise as a result of the golf course being installed on Kangaroo Island. These will be big drivers of economic activity, which is why we make commercial decisions around it and will continue to do so. We certainly welcome not just any scrutiny that the opposition want to provide, but we particularly welcome the increasing level of opposition that the Liberal Party seek to advocate around this golf course, because it demonstrates you for the recalcitrants or opponents that you are to substantial and thoughtful economic development in the state.

ELECTRICITY PRICE MODELLING

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (15:09): My question is to the Minister for Energy and Mining. Why are South Australian households now paying some of the highest electricity prices on record? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr TELFER: The Essential Services Commission of South Australia publishes annual energy retail offer comparison reports which show that since the former Liberal government energy bills for households have skyrocketed by \$776 per year.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:09): I wish the shadow treasurer paid as much attention to the sales on in Rundle Mall as opposed to the changes to wholesale power pricing here in South Australia.

The opposition are quick to compare wholesale power prices in the quarterly reports that are published, but it is a disingenuous tactic to compare different seasons where the energy profiles are completely different and costs do not reflect reality. So what the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) does annually is put out a state of the energy market report and it smooths out the jumping around of all the quarterly reports to provide a holistic representation of the state market. So, if you want to look at the average wholesale price in the last calendar year, in NSW the average price was \$150 a megawatt hour, in Queensland it was \$128, and in South Australia it was \$132.

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, again, with wholesale power pricing the entire bill is set up by a number of factors. Half the bill—

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: He had a toothache yesterday and couldn't speak but today—it's amazing. It's amazing what Nurofen and Panadol can do and a big bag of it too! How many did you buy? Anyway, I digress to the member's habits. I digress.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I know he's squeamish about it. It was a great photo, wasn't it? Wasn't it a great photo? Very becoming, I thought. Question time on, walking around Rundle Mall, having a look. Anyway, I will go back to more important things.

About half of households' bills are made up of distribution and transmission costs. Those distribution and transmission costs are basically about half, so you are looking at about 40 per cent transmission, 60 per cent distribution costs. That's half your bill: the poles and wires in front of your house and the transmission lines to get the generated electricity to those distribution lines.

Then you have the green schemes that are in place and they are about 10 per cent of the bill. The remaining 40 per cent of the bill is made up of retail, which is about 15 to 20 per cent of the bill, and the rest of the proportion is wholesale. So to try to say that this section of the bill is responsible for the outcome of the entire bill is disingenuous. So what I am trying to explain to the member, who is just constantly interjecting rather than trying to listen to the answer, the man who purports to want to run the South Australian economy, who spent most of the day yesterday shopping in Rundle Mall rather than doing his job in here—I think it's a bit rich.

What I would like to do is actually tell the opposition that the retail bill is only a small part of the entire component. What South Australia is doing is attempting to lower that. The way we are trying to do that is by getting more gas into the system. What sets power prices in South Australia? It's gas. Why is it gas? Because gas peakers are the ones that set the price. They are the ones who set the last dollar. Whoever bids the last megawatt in the Australian retail energy market sets the price, and they are gas peakers.

What makes gas expensive? I will tell you what makes gas really expensive: banning its extraction from the second largest basin in South Australia. And who did that? Members opposite. And then they turn up and they say, 'Why are electricity prices high?'

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Flinders has interjected for the entirety of the answer to the question he asked. You can leave the chamber until the end of question time.

The honourable member for Flinders having withdrawn from the chamber:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You could duck out to David Jones and finish off your shopping.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I can do better. Apparently he injured it whilst he pulled his hamstring shopping.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes. The energy policy in this state is set by gas pricing. Gas pricing is expensive for a number of reasons. Members opposite approved an import facility to be built and gave it state sponsorship to be built at Outer Harbor. That facility, if built and commissioned, will lock in international parity pricing for gas in South Australia, which would be a disaster.

COASTLINE PROTECTION

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (15:14): My question is to the Minister for Environment. Can the minister inform the house if there are any plans to use artificial reefs to protect our South Australian coastline? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and the leave of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: After recent storms and the damage that has occurred along the South Australian coastline, plus the government supports of the artificial reefs to build new habitats after the algal bloom, is there a potential to protect our coastline from further storm damage?

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) (15:14): I am delighted to have been asked this question, because what we have discovered collectively in South Australia is the impact of the loss of shellfish reefs along our coastline over 100 to 150 years ago, for which we are now paying the price.

We had about 1,500 linear kilometres of native oyster beds and reefs along our coastline. What they did was each oyster can filter a bathtub of water every day. They eat algae. The reefs themselves encourage fish nurseries, seagrass growth and, because of both of those, they slow down the energy in waves and therefore mitigate heavy winter storms. All of that was here in place a couple of hundred years ago, and in 150 years it's gone, and we need to work out ways in which we can bring that back.

Now, there have been examples already of that occurring. We have got five artificial reefs that have been put in place, one off Ardrossan that is a particularly substantial one and has done very, very well. The Premier recently announced that there will be 15 smaller shellfish reefs that will be built over 15 hectares over the next little while that will be part of helping to restore our seas in response to the algal bloom.

But I think we should share an ambition to do even more over time, because there can be no regrets about bringing back the shellfish, there can only be benefits. It is a reminder to us not just of this example but the truth that nature looks after us, nature cares for us, it softens the harm of climate change and it protects us from algal blooms and other disasters. Therefore, we must look after nature in order to receive that benefit.

If we learn anything from this bloom, it shouldn't just be the specific example and instance of the bloom, it should be the greater story, which is that we must look after nature better. We can help restore nature, and we will all benefit as a result.

Ministerial Statement

VARROA MITE FOUND IN MANAGED BEEHIVE

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:16): I table a copy of a ministerial statement made by the Hon. Clare Scriven MLC in the other place.

Grievance Debate

POWER PRICES

Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (15:17): On the weekend, I joined the Leader of the Opposition to meet recently widowed grandmother Antonetta and hear her battle to keep her heating on this winter. Antonetta's most recent electricity bill was \$436 for one month, the highest it has ever been, even though she has solar panels. Antonetta's story is similar to thousands of other South Australian pensioners and families who have had to struggle under skyrocketing power bills.

The latest ESCOSA report into household electricity bills again showed that South Australia's power bills remain in record territory under the Malinauskas Labor government, with the average household bill increasing by \$776 more than under the former Liberal government. While power bills are increasing, this Malinauskas Labor government wasted three years and spent \$250 million on an experimental hydrogen power plant that they admitted was not going to bring down power bills for households and has now been scrapped.

When asked in parliament if his hydrogen power plant would bring down power bills, the Premier replied, 'It will bring down emissions.' That is a luxury for someone who does not flinch at his energy bill. Working families do, small businesses do and pensioners like Antonetta certainly do. They have been front of mind as the Liberal opposition have developed our energy policy that focuses on affordability and reliability.

The Liberal opposition engaged EnergyQuest to look into the chaos of the South Australian electricity system under Labor. There are a number of key risks facing our state's electricity system that have been ignored by the Malinauskas Labor government. It is estimated that, once renewables exceed 90 per cent penetration, the cost of the last 10 per cent sends wholesale power prices skyrocketing by up to six times. South Australia also faces extreme blackout risks if the Torrens Island power station closes in June 2026 without any replacement in place, with AEMO also warning of a 390 megawatt shortfall by 2026.

Back in 2022, the Malinauskas Labor government added nearly \$20 million onto households' already surging power bills to keep Torrens Island running until June 2026. Labor then spent the next

three years on their hydrogen hoax rather than a fit-for-purpose replacement for Torrens Island. Now, at the eleventh hour, the government have been forced to extend Torrens Island again until 2028, kicking the can down the road to the other side of the election but still with no replacement plan.

Last week, I joined the leader to announce our energy supply-side policy, which focuses on securing a gas-fired electricity generation pipeline into the future. We will work with industry to ensure the old Torrens Island B generators, which were fit for the 20th century, are kept running until our state has modern gas-fired energy generation fit for purpose in the 21st century so we can finally plan for Torrens Island to retire, and if the market fails to build the generation, we will see to building it ourselves.

Our plan does not rely on expensive and inefficient green hydrogen. The Liberals will not let our last important base load generator retire until there is a proven replacement in South Australia, both generating megawatts and providing vital system security for South Australia's electricity system that Torrens Island provides via inertia from its heavy spinning turbines to help provide stable frequency and voltage to the system. I am a qualified electrical engineer, and I understand why system security is important. In 2023, SACOME reported that system security direction costs had increased by 224 per cent since 2019 and market intervention costs for large industrials now account for up to 30 per cent of their electricity bills.

The Liberal plan also recognises the huge volatility in South Australia that is a result of Labor's disorderly energy transition. We will reform the retail market by increasing hedging and reducing volatility, helping to bring down household bills. We will also support gas by investigating the feasibility of a carbon capture storage hub in the Upper Spencer Gulf to take advantage of South Australia's jurisdictional advantage of carbon capture at Moomba, which has already stored over one million tonnes of CO₂ since it was opened in October 2024.

South Australian families, South Australian businesses and pensioners deserve energy abundance, not blackout risks and skyrocketing power bills. The upcoming state election is a pivotal moment for South Australia, with the choice between continuing skyrocketing power bills that will only accelerate under Labor or the Liberal policy that keeps the lights on and stops the power price spiral.

THE POWER OF HER

Mrs PEARCE (King) (15:22): If we want to see real, lasting change in women's and girls' participation in sport, it is important that we listen to and work with young people to help build this future. It is why I am proud to stand here to shine a light on the youth panel that is currently helping to drive the Power of Her task force. These leaders are not waiting around for someone to hand them permission to speak: they are already making waves in sport, in community leadership, in advocacy and in business. The Power of Her task force is about recognising that power, backing it and building a better future with them, not just for them.

I would like to introduce to this place some of the brilliant people who are on the panel. First up, we have Layan Saadeh. She is a swimming and surf instructor, a football player and a second-year law and art student, and somehow she also finds the time to work in sport development. She has already been named Young South Australian of the Year, and honestly, I am not surprised. Layan is the kind of person who does not just turn up: she leads. Then there is Elizabeth Taban. She is a soccer player and an all-round force of nature. Her background spans sport, finance, mentoring, coaching and event management. She knows how to bring people together, challenge the status quo and lead with both strength and heart.

Sallee Shepherd brings a different kind of leadership. She is from Tailem Bend and has already been Mayor of the Murray Bridge Youth Council. She has run her own cupcake business, has been part of the Coorong Connection Youth Network and was awarded the ADF Long Tan Youth Leadership Award. Sallee is proof that regional youth leaders are just as powerful, capable and community driven as anyone in the big city.

Then there is Andriana Petrakis, currently ranked number five in the world and number two in Australia in her chosen sport of tennis. She works at One Culture coaching pickleball, she has taken on public speaking roles, and she recently won the very first Power of Her Emerging Leader

Award. Among other honours, Andriana is breaking boundaries and setting new standards every day, specifically in the space of creating more inclusive opportunities in our state through sport. Now on to Akon Baak. She is a taekwondo Australian representative and a former national high jump champion, all while still attending school. Akon is an elite athlete and a SASI participant, and she brings the kind of quiet determination and focus that inspires everybody around her.

Finally, we have Tara Vivar-Hayes. Tara brings with her a strong foundation of leadership and service. She is an under-16 surf lifesaving gold medallist on a state level and a mentor to young nippers, showing that commitment to both her community and personal excellence. Beyond the beach, Tara is a passionate advocate for Aboriginal education at Warriappendi Secondary School. Her voice is strong, it is thoughtful and it is impactful—qualities that have earned her the 2024 Children's Week Award.

Now imagine what it means to have this group of young people sitting at the table shaping the direction of gender equity work around South Australia. It is not just symbolic, it is game changing. These young leaders are from different parts of the state, different cultural backgrounds, different areas of expertise, and that is what makes this panel so powerful, because equity does not look the same for everyone. We need to hear from people with lived experience, people who understand the gaps, the barriers and the opportunities because they have lived them.

As a politician, yes, as one of the adults in the room, I see my role as helping clear the path, not controlling the process, not owning the spotlight, but making sure these voices are heard, respected and acted on. So today I want to thank Layan, Elizabeth, Sallee, Andriana, Akon and Tara, not just for being part of this panel, but for showing us what is possible when young people are given the trust and the space to lead. And to everyone else, whether you are a teacher, a coach, a parent, a policymaker, I encourage you to get behind this panel, not just with applause but with action. The Power of Her is real, it is happening and, with this group leading the way, the future is looking extremely bright.

WINE INDUSTRY

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:26): I rise today to speak about the concerns that the South Australian wine industry is facing at the moment. The uncertain future of the commercial wine sector has never been more apparent.

Today a bill to amend the Wine Grapes Industry Act 1991 will be introduced to the Legislative Council. It is about an indicative price. This indicative price amendment bill raises many questions with very few answers at the moment. We have a politician, an Independent, who is going to present this bill to the Legislative Council with little to no consultation with the industry.

What I am worried about is that we have government spruiking that the wine industry is in great shape. We have the minister telling everyone that we are seeing record amounts of wine hitting our global markets. But the premium end of the wine industry is going okay; 80 per cent of premium wine into China is Penfolds. So what about the smaller players? What about the other sectors of the wine industry? None is more important than the engine room of the wine industry, the Riverland. We know that the commercial wine grapegrowers have been doing it extremely tough for the last three to four years. Many of them have not returned the cost of production, many of them are now on Farm Household Allowance.

Many of them are facing a very uncertain future, yet this amendment to the Wine Grapes Industry Act also paints a very uncertain picture. Many of the wine industry representative bodies that I have spoken to over the last couple of days have no idea what this bill means. What does it mean to the Riverland? But what does it mean to the cooler areas? What does it mean to the overall wine industry here in South Australia? So I am very concerned that we have one politician, we have a small group of wine grapegrowers who are supporting this amendment, but the rest of the industry have not been consulted, not at all. I fear it will create division between wine grape growing regions. It will create division between winemakers, as it will with wineries.

We have seen the government come out today banging their chests about the wine bottle container deposit scheme. That, again, is another burden on an industry that is on its knees. If you do your sums—450,000 tonnes out of the Riverland multiplied by 850 bottles per tonne—that is a lot

of bottles, and it is a lot of cost that will be passed on to the consumer. Maybe it will be absorbed by the grower, maybe it will be absorbed by the winery but, again, this is just painting another uncertain picture to a sector that is critically important to South Australia's economy.

South Australia has long been the champion of winemaking, and here in South Australia we have a number of sectors that contribute to the overall picture of the wine industry. Yes, the premium industry is a beautiful part of the wine world, but the critical and essential part of the wine industry is the engine room. It is the commercial sector, it is the sector that provides affordable drinking wine to middle class, aspirant people. We see there is a global decline in demand for that sector and that is really hurting the Riverland, so to see today that there will be an amendment to the Wine Grapes Industry Act again paints a more uncertain future.

Will the indicative price be a valuable tool in the toolbox? Potentially yes, it will, but for a politician, driven by a small group of growers, to go out there with no wide consultation with industry to bring industry with it to actually help support a sector that is on its knees? As I said, the commercial wine sector, the warm, inland growing regions of South Australia, produces the lion's share of the volume of wine here in South Australia; they produce the lion's share of wine nationally. However, what we are seeing today is that we have an amendment to the wine grape act that potentially paints a more uncertain picture than what everyone within the industry needs.

It is unfortunate that the Independent Sarah Game has moved the way she has. Not even a phone call. As I said, I have spoken to industry, I have spoken to many, many grapegrowers who are very concerned about the level of uncertainty the introduction of this bill will mean to their business.

RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (15:32): I could play it safe and stay silent, but when extremist groups co-opt our flag and poison national pride I feel compelled to speak, because people in my community were justifiably horrified by what we saw in Adelaide and across the country this past Sunday 31 August.

I support the right to protest. Peaceful protest is fundamental to our democracy, and it should always be protected. However, what we saw on the weekend was not a genuine debate about migration policy: it was something far more insidious. Many of those involved now claim it was not anti-immigration but was about ending mass migration, but the chants of 'send them home', the signs of 'Stop Immigration', and the banners declaring 'White Unity' told another story. That was not policy debate: that was racism, plain and simple. While some may frame it around cost-of-living pressures or infrastructure, let's not kid ourselves: the language that was used on Sunday has long been used to veil a much darker ideology. Real policy debates can and are happening, but they must be rooted in facts, in respect, and in our values—not in hatred and exclusion.

What particularly saddens me is how my own feelings about the Australian flag are changing. As a child, I saw it with pride. I waved it at Australia Day fireworks, I cheered under it at sporting events, I stood with it on ANZAC Day. To me it meant unity, celebration and sacrifice. But today, when I see a flag on the back of a ute or hanging over a fence, or marched through the streets, I do not think of unity. Sadly, I am more likely to assume that it belongs to some right-wing extremist or someone looking for a fight. I know I am not alone in feeling this way.

Let's be honest, this is not the first time. We all remember the Cronulla riots, when the flag was wrapped around shoulders and wielded as a weapon of hate instead of a symbol of pride. That day in 2005 marked a turning point. The flag was hijacked and the damage to its meaning has lingered. That is the real tragedy: extremists have taken something that should make us proud, and they have turned it into something that many now recoil from.

And then, of course, there is the image we all saw on the weekend of the flag worn like some cheap superhero cape. Our flag is not a costume. It is not a prop for bigotry. Draping it across your shoulders while shouting abuse does not make you a hero: it makes a mockery of everything the flag represents. True respect for the flag is not about wearing it on your back, it is about carrying its values in your actions: fairness, decency and giving everyone a fair go.

True Australian pride lives elsewhere. It lives in our classrooms, where children of dozens of cultural backgrounds sit and learn together. It lives in our workplaces, where migrants are the

backbone of industries, from health to hospitality. It lives at our clubs, where mums and dads give up their weekends to coach local teams. It lives in our festivals and our food and our music, all which make South Australia so vibrant and unique.

To those who are genuinely worried about housing and health and jobs and bills, I hear you. These are real concerns, but scapegoating migrants will not build a single home or lower a single bill. It only divides us, and division never builds stronger communities, it only tears them apart. Our government is acting on these issues. We are investing in bigger, stronger health systems, building new hospitals, expanding emergency departments, and recruiting more nurses and doctors and ambos so every South Australian can get the care that they deserve.

We are also driving a major program of new housing because we know supply is the key to affordability. Thousands of new homes are being planned and built to ensure that families, young people and older Australians all have a place to call home. These are real solutions grounded in fairness and responsibility, not in fear or division. The Australian flag will always stand taller than the voices of hate. Its meaning is found in the millions of Australians who live by fairness, decency and compassion every single day. That is the pride we carry forward and that is the pride that will shape our future.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Odenwalder): Very well said, member for Davenport. The member for Morialta.

CAMPBELLTOWN ROTARY CLUB

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (15:36): This afternoon, I would like to reflect on an organisation in my community of Morialta that has contributed enormously to our local area and to my own personal development as well, prior to coming into the parliament. As a member of parliament, I have observed them contributing so much to our local community on a personal level, on a human level, on a resourcing level and on an infrastructure level.

I am talking about the Rotary Club of Campbelltown, one of the largest Rotary clubs in South Australia and a club whose members have included myself and the Leader of the Opposition, Vincent Tarzia, at different times. I have been pleased to be an honorary member for most of my time in the parliament. I was pleased to reconnect, along with Scott Kennedy, the Liberal candidate for Morialta, with them at a meeting a couple of weeks ago.

The reason I am keen to reflect on the Rotary Club of Campbelltown this week, rather than leaving my thanks to them and all of their members to a speech I will give later this year on leaving the parliament or at another time, is that it has been a very difficult month for the Rotary Club of Campbelltown, losing two of their members. I just want to take a moment to reflect briefly on those two worthy local residents in my area, and I think, potentially, the member for Hartley's area as well.

John Russo was only 74 when he passed away on 15 August. Born on 2 December 1950, John Giovanni Russo, as a member of the Rotary club, served his community and provided his efforts and his labours towards supporting others. I did not know John well but I met him on a number of occasions. I saw him hard at work and he is sadly missed and fondly remembered by those in the club who knew him.

The other member of the club who I knew much better was David Richards, very affectionately known to all as 'Wacka'. Wacka was a larger-than-life figure who was a member of the Rotary club for a number of decades. I do not think he was a foundation member of the Campbelltown Rotary club, but if he had not reached 50 years then I would be surprised if he was too far off it. He passed away on 8 August at the age of 89. He was born on 11 May 1936. The changes that he saw in our community over that time were significant.

Wacka was somebody who always had a smile on his face whenever he greeted you. My fondest memories of him are from the Campbelltown Christmas parades that we had for a number of years. The Campbelltown Rotary club would make a habit of having the van that was used to collect donations for the shed sale tied up in tinsel and towing a trailer on which would stand an electric keyboard and an amplifier with a microphone. Wacka would be playing the keyboard and singing Christmas carols. He had a unique voice that I remember very fondly: a strong voice, an

audible voice and one that everybody on Stradbroke Road and the near surrounds and possibly some of the surrounding suburbs heard on those occasions.

He was a really good man. He was somebody who contributed to the community. I will miss him when I go to club events. He led a long and rich life, and he will be no less missed as a result. In this house I recognise the service of John Russo and Wacka Richards. Their service will be remembered fondly.

I do want to reflect more broadly, though, on the service that the Rotary Club of Campbelltown—and of course all of our Rotary clubs—provides to our communities. I will reflect on the other local Rotary clubs in Morialta on another occasion. The Rotary Club of Campbelltown through its shed sale raises significant money every month. The number of people contributing items to that is tremendous, and the money that they raise at the shed sale and through their other fundraisers goes towards a range of local, statewide, national and international relief effort causes. Very few clubs in Australia would provide as much as the Rotary Club of Campbelltown.

But it is the hands-on effort that the club is famous for, which I think all of their members can be particularly proud of. I am grateful that the club has taken on the role of supporting the annual fundraiser quiz night for domestic violence and the Eastern Adelaide Domestic Violence Service. The next one is coming up, and I note that Rory McClaren is the celebrity quizmaster this year. I thank all of those members of the club who are providing that service. I look forward to continuing to work with President Gail and all the other members of the committee for the remainder of my term and look forward to seeing them more in the years ahead.

COUNTRY SHOWS

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:42): As members would know, the Royal Adelaide Show is on this week. While that is an important event, I would like to talk about some equally important events, which are the local shows that are throughout country South Australia. My local show held its event as a two-day show—it is the biggest show outside of the Royal Show—on 23 and 24 August. They had over 25,000 people attend the show, one of the highest attendances for the show. Not only did they have a great attendance but the show society also decided to donate 50¢ from every ticket transaction to the Need for Feed Australia initiative. They were proud to announce that they will be donating \$5,000 to support the farmers in need in South Australia after selling 25,175 tickets.

The show was well supported, with sponsors, the community, volunteers, committee staff and life members making it a very successful day. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the committee members. Often these people are behind the scenes, and you rarely see them and the events just happen. I would like to acknowledge president Braden Turner, treasurer Karen Appelkamp and secretary Ainslee Allen. General committee members are James Rundle, Steve Coulter, Wendy Marshall, James Burgess, Kylie Burgess, Ben Turner, Riley Taylor, Zoe Doudle, Andrew Mann and Debbie Speed. There is a whole range of other volunteers who helped them. They put on an excellent event. The weather was kind, which helped. The Gawler Show is often seen by many families in the northern Adelaide area and also in near country areas as an alternative to attending the Royal Show, because it is probably cheaper for the families and it is also more accessible.

The other show I would like to talk about is the Clare Show, which is coming up on 18 October. It is the 160th Clare Show this year. Often, these shows, like many other shows, started as some sort of agriculture competition, in the early days, and over time they grow. The Clare Show this year will be holding its 160th. Recently, they paid tribute to the Angas family by installing some gates. The show is a one-day show. What I really like is all the various entries at these shows, ranging from flowers to various cakes and other things. These shows are really events which bring community together, a great opportunity for the community to come together at least once a year.

This group owns their own site and they have to fundraise on an ongoing basis to pay for the upkeep of the site, etc., so they have a monthly market, where they raise funds that are reinvested in the show each year. I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by the committee of the show: Sid Nichols, the president; Liz Fitzgerald, the secretary; Sam Hull, the treasurer; Paulie Calaby, the senior vice-president; Peta Smith, junior vice-president and committee member;

Steve Sanders; Geoff Mckinnon; Alicia Callary; Mark Stewart; Sharna Juett; James Meyer; and Sam Reed. These are people who work behind the scenes to make this event occur.

One of the smaller shows but, again, a very important show, is the Kapunda Show, to be held on Saturday 25 October this year. I have attended the show on a number of occasions. This show is held at the local racetrack and often attracts a lot of people. I am sure the minister is aware of the Kapunda Show, having been associated with Kapunda himself.

The Hon. N.D. Champion: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Again, it is one of those key community events. It is probably one of the biggest community events held in those townships. It is an event that promotes rural life. It is an expression of what rural communities are like. I would like to again acknowledge some of the people involved in the show: Doug Hazel, the president; Janet Hazel, vice-president; Tess Gerhardy and Crystal Hall, secretaries; Stephanie Bishop, treasurer; and a number of other people who work together to put on a very successful show. Also on the show trail throughout the electorate is the Eudunda Show, which I will talk about on another occasion.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Odenwalder): Before I go to personal statements, I do just want to welcome some guests from the South Australian branch of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation: Jackie Wood, Kelly Fraser, Nicola Williams, Nicola O'Loughlin and Wendy Foster. Welcome. They are guests of the Minister for Health and Wellbeing.

Private Members' Statements

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:47): Months ago, a national committee determined that SA tomato growers had it right all along, that eradication was not going to be feasible, and moved the industry to a management protocol. Finally, restrictions have been lifted on those tomato growers across the Adelaide Plains in my community. Sadly, for some it is too late. None were more affected at the time than Peter and Oriana Petsios of SA Tomato. I want to celebrate the hard work and perseverance of all the families who have been growing for generations across the Adelaide Plains and give them a shout-out. They have built their businesses over a long time, growing some of the best produce in our nation. It is certainly our state's salad bowl.

At the AUSVEG awards many months ago, Paul Cafcakis won Young Grower of the Year, his brother Jack won it the year before, and father, Emmanuel, won Grower of the Year in 2022. Businesses through this lush area of the Gawler River have put so much back into our community. To Harry Kapis, who binned \$1.1 million of tomatoes at the time, of Gawler River Tomatoes, I thank them for the work they keep doing. I thank Juliet Tripodi of Rainbow Fresh, the Mitolos, the Zerellas, the Marrones, the Simonettas of Perfection Fresh, Tony Sacca and his son Salvatore, who won an award at the protected cropping association conference just recently. They are an extraordinary community and they contribute greatly to our horticultural industry.

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:49): We love celebrating new and improved additions to our local health system in my electorate, and we had a wonderful addition celebrated on 20 August at the Wallaroo Hospital rehab facility. We took delivery and officially welcomed a SOZO machine into our hospital, which was a wonderful event. I was sorry I could not be there whilst I was down here in parliament, but it was a well-attended event opened by a good friend of many in this room, Monique Bareham.

The SOZO machine, for those who do not know, is an advanced diagnostic tool that allows for early detection of lymphoedema through bioimpedance spectroscopy. It is a wonderful thing for those who are suffering from lymphoedema, to help aid in early detection and trying to uncover it so that it can be treated appropriately. Since the Lymphoedema Compression Garments Subsidy Scheme launched in 2021, it has been a wonderful benefit to those suffering from lymphoedema. In 2023, over 4,500 garments were provided to 2,405 individuals affected by lymphoedema in South Australia, and that number is expected to keep on growing.

While we are wonderfully thankful to welcome this into our local health system, it is the product of a wonderful community effort. Credit must go to Alison Meier and Pat Daniel of the local Cancer Council group, who led the charge and fundraised \$17,000 for this piece of machinery, ably assisted by other wonderful community groups. I know it will be welcomed by lots within our area, but particularly by Lindi Brokenshire, our local McGrath Breast Cancer Care Nurse, and I look forward to seeing it being a benefit to our region.

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (15:50): There was an understandable flurry in my community and right across South Australia over the last couple of weeks when there was a conversation that started about the removal of 56 Canary Island palm trees in Marananga. It was something which I think came as a shock to many in my local community, especially given how iconic they are for our region, how iconic they are for the state of South Australia. Like many in this chamber and across South Australia, you can see imagery of these iconic Seppeltsfield palms being beamed right across the world as a beacon to attract people to the Barossa Valley. So when it was put as an option for them to be removed, it caused a flurry.

Pleasingly, after speaking with the Light Regional Council mayor, I do not think that there was any suggestion that this was a true and viable option. I wrote immediately to the government, to SAPN and also to the council, to encourage all parties to work together to save these iconic palms from removal, and pleasingly the council did successfully move a motion that a working group would be established. So I am pleased that the state government is now part of that.

I have also written to the government asking for a permanent protection mechanism to safeguard every palm along this stretch to be considered because it is not just about these 56 along Marananga—but about the palms right throughout Seppeltsfield that need protection, and I am looking forward to receiving a response.

Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (15:52): I rise briefly on behalf of Paul Kavanagh, who is the newly elected president of the North Pines Sports and Social Club in Parafield Gardens, and I do this to express thanks. Specifically, this goes to Cameron Taylor, General Manager of the Para Hills Community Club and, of course, club members for their support, and I ask that Hansard records our gratitude today.

Para Hills generously provided 80 chairs—black and red ones—proudly matching North Pines colours, which became surplus from their own recent renovations. This may seem like a small gesture, but to the North Pines community it means a great deal. It shows how clubs can support one another, ensuring resources go further and community spirit is strengthened. Cameron, in his role as president of Clubs SA, has led by example in reinforcing this principle.

On behalf of Paul and the North Pines Sports and Social Club community, I wish them every success as they continue to grow, and I extend heartfelt thanks for this act of generosity. It is proof that when clubs work together, communities thrive.

Bills

NURSE AND MIDWIFE TO PATIENT RATIOS BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:54): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to establish nurse and midwife to patient ratios and other staffing requirements in incorporated hospitals, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:54): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This is an incredibly important piece of legislation and is a landmark moment for nursing and midwifery here in South Australia. The Nurse and Midwife to Patient Ratios Bill 2025 will, for the first time in South Australia, enshrine nurse and midwife to patient ratios in legislation.

The legislation confirms the government's continued commitment to ensuring the safety of our nursing and midwifery workforce within the public health system. It further supports the safety of

the public health system and optimises health outcomes for patients. Transparent mandated minimum staffing has been recognised both nationally and internationally as a crucial factor in delivering high-quality hospital care and ensuring best patient outcomes.

The model outlined in this bill is based on the successful model implemented in Victoria, tailored to the South Australian context. It also aligns with the global push towards establishing transparent and consistent staffing standards, including mandated nurse and midwife to patient ratios. This not only supports the delivery of high-quality care, but also helps to ensure that the South Australian health care system is resilient, sustainable and able to meet both current and future demands.

This bill seeks to establish minimum nurse and midwife to patient ratios per shift across key clinical areas, including: general medical and surgical; coronary care; high dependency; oncology; stroke; rehabilitation; birthing and labour; neonatal intensive care; and palliative care wards. The bill will apply to all South Australian public hospitals, including aged care, where it will mirror the federal government requirements of care minutes for all aged-care beds.

The bill will include a two-year moratorium in which a hospital cannot be the subject of a finding that it has failed to meet a prescribed ratio. This will enable SA Health to embed the new staffing approach and to support the implementation as efficiently as possible. The bill also applies the principle of rounding up where the number of occupied beds is not divisible by the prescribed ratio. It will allow operational flexibilities informed by clinical decisions to optimise the efficient use of nursing and midwifery resources.

Our nursing workforce will be able to rely on the higher minimum staffing requirements that apply under the Nursing/Midwifery (South Australian Public Sector) Enterprise Agreement as these will be preserved under the bill. Nurses and midwives are the cornerstone of South Australia's public health system. They provide a vital role in promoting health, preventing illness and delivering care across both acute and chronic primary care settings. Collectively, nurses and midwives comprise nearly 50 per cent of the state's health care workforce, underscoring their essential contribution to the health and wellbeing of the South Australian community. This bill will ensure that the appropriate minimum number of nurses and midwives are available on a shift-by-shift basis, enabling staff to meet patient care needs in a working environment that supports our dedicated nurses and midwives.

We have worked very closely with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation South Australian branch to deliver this bill and I want to take the opportunity to thank them for their collaboration and support in finalising this work. In particular, I want to extend my thanks to the leadership of the ANMF SA: Adjunct Associate Professor Elizabeth Debars, who is the CEO Secretary; Adjunct Associate Professor Jackie Wood, Director of Nursing and Midwifery practice; Ms Roslyn Hewlett; and Mr Rob Bonner, an Emeritus Director of the ANMF, all of whom have had tireless advocacy into achieving this result of the introduction of this legislation today. We will continue to work in partnership with the ANMF SA and our local health networks to ensure the sustainable implementation of this bill if passed.

I want to extend my gratitude as well to the departmental officers behind the scenes, in particular Judith Formston, Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Health and Wellbeing, and Gabrielle Starr, Director of Strategic Industrial Relations and her team in leading this work on this initiative, as well as to the office of the chief nursing and midwifery team, including Jenny Hurley and the broader team for their work on this bill as well.

I also want to thank—in the chamber today we have Kath Thomas, who led the work in relation to drafting this legislation and Kath is actually retiring after 25 years of public service to this state and this was her final project. So thank you, Kath. She is also joined here by her granddaughter Sophie, who is about to start work next year as a graduate nurse at Flinders Medical Centre, so it is particularly fantastic to have you here as well. I also want to thank Georgia Phillips from my office who has been busily working on this for the past few years.

This bill is a positive change that delivers a key election commitment by the Malinauskas Labor government to enshrine nurse and midwife to patient ratios into law. It reiterates our commitment to supporting the safety of our patients in the public health system and it delivers on our

promise to ensure the safety of our valued nurses and midwives. I commend this bill to the house and seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

3—Interpretation

Definitions are provided for key terms used throughout the measure.

4—Objects of Act

This clause sets out the objects of the proposed Act.

5—Act not to affect employment contracts

This clause provides that nothing in the proposed Act is intended to affect or require the alteration of any employment contract.

6—Application of *Fair Work Act 1994*

Following the commencement of the Act, SAET may not approve an enterprise agreement which would provide for a minimum staffing level applying in a ward or other hospital site to which a ratio or minimum staffing requirement applies pursuant to the proposed Act.

Part 2—Staffing requirements in incorporated hospitals

Division 1—Nurse and midwife to patient ratios

7—Application of ratios

This clause imposes the obligation on an incorporated hospital to staff a ward in accordance with an applicable ratio (set out in the Schedule). It also provides further guidance as to how ratios are to be applied, including imposing an obligation for an additional nurse or midwife where the application of a ratio to the number of patients on the ward does not result in a whole number of nurses or midwives.

8—Ratio for mixed wards

A process is set out for the staffing of wards to which more than one ratio would otherwise apply. An incorporated hospital must nominate such a ward as a mixed ward and staff the ward in accordance with the provisions of this clause.

9—No breach in circumstances of emergency

This clause provides that an incorporated hospital will not be in breach of a ratio if the failure to meet a ratio arose from an unanticipated emergency situation, and the hospital determined the actual staffing level to be safe.

Division 2—Variations from ratios

10—Quality of care paramount

11—Agreement to vary a ratio

These clauses provide a process by which a ratio applying to a specific ward can be varied by agreement between the Chief Executive and a union. A ratio as varied would then apply to the relevant ward instead of any ratio applying under this measure.

Division 3—Other staffing requirements

12—Minimum staffing requirements

This clause imposes the obligation on an incorporated hospital to staff a hospital site, ward or bed in accordance with an applicable minimum staffing requirement (set out in the Schedule).

Division 4—Effect of existing enterprise agreement

13—Relevant enterprise agreement of no effect

The enterprise agreement applying to nurses and midwives at the time the Act commences is to have no ongoing effect to the extent it provides a requirement for minimum staffing in the same setting as a ratio or minimum

staffing requirement imposed by this measure. Proceedings which relate to disputes as to minimum staffing levels contained in the enterprise agreement will not be able to be brought.

14—Preservation of existing higher staffing level requirements

Despite the preceding clause, a minimum staffing level imposed by the enterprise agreement which requires more nurses or midwives than would be required through the application of the Act will be preserved. These requirements will be treated as if they are a ratio or minimum staffing requirement imposed by the Act.

Part 3—Dispute resolution

15—Local dispute resolution

A dispute arising under the Act is to be initiated through notification to the relevant incorporated hospital and resolved in accordance with prescribed procedures and policies. Such a dispute may be initiated by a nurse or midwife employed to work at the relevant hospital, or by the union.

16—Dispute resolution by South Australian Employment Tribunal

If the parties to a dispute initiated under clause 15 are unable to resolve the dispute in accordance with that clause, they may apply to SAET (constituted as an industrial relations commission) to resolve the matter. The clause also sets out the procedures and powers of SAET in dealing with such a dispute.

Part 4—Civil penalties

17—Civil penalty for breach of ratio or other staffing requirement

A nurse, midwife or union may also apply to SAET (constituted as the South Australian Employment Court) to have a civil penalty ordered against the incorporated hospital for a breach of their obligation to comply with a relevant ratio or minimum staffing requirement. A civil penalty may only be ordered where the contravention was deliberate and part of a systemic pattern of conduct by the hospital. Any penalty ordered is payable into the Consolidated Account.

18—Civil penalty rules and procedure

This clause provides that a civil penalty is not a criminal offence and that the Court in hearing an application for such a penalty must apply the rules of evidence and civil procedure.

19—Costs

The Court may only award costs against a party to proceedings under this Part if of the opinion that the party has acted unreasonably, frivolously or vexatiously.

Part 5—Miscellaneous

20—Certain information to be included in annual report

Information relating to dispute resolution and civil penalties must be included in each incorporated hospital's annual report.

21—Regulations

This clause provides a regulation making power. Regulations made under the Act may amend hospital category sites, and add new wards to which a ratio is to apply.

Schedule 1—Staffing requirements at incorporated hospitals

Part 1—Categories of incorporated hospital sites

1—Category 1 hospital sites

2—Category 2 hospital sites

3—Category 3 hospital sites

4—Category 4 hospital sites

These clauses categorise certain hospital sites across the State. Some ratios require a different number of nurses or midwives depending on the category of the hospital site.

Part 2—Nurse and midwife to patient ratios

5—Acute stroke wards

6—Antenatal wards

7—Birthing suites

8—Coronary care units

9—General medical and surgical wards

10—Geriatric evaluation and management units

11—Haematology wards

12—High dependency units

13—Neonatal intensive care units

14—Oncology wards

15—Palliative care inpatient units

16—Postnatal wards

17—Rehabilitation inpatient units

18—Special care nurseries

These clauses provide ratios requiring a certain number of nurses or midwives per patient on certain wards of incorporated hospitals.

Part 3—Minimum staffing requirements

19—Small hospitals

This clause provides a minimum level of staffing for a hospital site that is not a Category 1, 2, 3 or 4 hospital site.

20—State aged care

This clause provides a minimum level of staffing for aged care beds in State hospitals.

Schedule 2—Related amendments and transitional provisions

Part 1—Related amendment to *Fair Work Act 1994*

1—Amendment of section 79—Approval of enterprise agreement

This amendment to the *Fair Work Act 1994* is consequential on proposed clause 6 of this measure.

Part 2—Transitional provision

2—Moratorium on applications to SAET

Disputes arising under the Act may not be resolved through SAET and proceedings for civil penalties may not be initiated for a period of 2 years after the Act is assented to. During this time, staffing requirements imposed by the existing enterprise agreement will be enforceable, despite the operation of proposed section 13.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Teague.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES (INCLUSIVE EDUCATION) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:00):

Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Education and Children's Services Act 2019. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:00): I

move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Education and Children's Services (Inclusive Education) Amendment Bill 2025. This bill implements part of the government's response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. In 2023, the disability royal commission made 222 recommendations for preventing and responding to violence, abuse, neglect against and exploitation of people with disability and for building a more inclusive society in which the rights of people with disability are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Fifteen of the royal commission's recommendations were directed towards promoting safe, quality and inclusive education for students with disability in all Australian schools. These recommendations followed the royal commission's sobering findings that students with disability

faced multiple barriers to inclusive education, underpinned by negative attitudes and low expectations.

Some of the key barriers it identified included gatekeeping practices, which deny students with disability access to the school of their choice or informally discourage their attendance; the inappropriate use of exclusionary discipline, particularly from an early age; and the failure to provide students with disability with appropriate adjustments, supports and individualised planning. To overcome these barriers, the royal commission recommended a range of legislative and policy changes, improved procedures and support services, and changes to culture, capability and practice.

Last December, the South Australian government, together with Catholic Education South Australia and the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia, jointly announced a cross-sector response to implementing key recommendations of the royal commission related to preventing discrimination and exclusion and ensuring a more inclusive education for students with disability in South Australia.

Implementation of two of the recommendations (7.1 and 7.2) requires amendments to the Education and Children's Services Act 2019. These recommendations specifically addressed providing equal access to mainstream education and enrolment and preventing the inappropriate use of exclusionary discipline against students with disability. The bill I am introducing today will amend the act to support the implementation of those two recommendations in all South Australian schools.

The bill will insert a new object into the act to make clear that education and children services provided under the act are to be inclusive by enabling the participation of children and students with disability and supporting them to develop to their fullest potential. As disability is not currently defined in the act, the bill will also insert a definition of disability aligned with that in the commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

The bill will remove the existing power of the chief executive of the Department for Education to direct that a child be enrolled in a specified government school because of the child's disabilities or learning difficulties. The bill will prohibit a government or non-government school from refusing a child's enrolment on the basis that the child has a disability, unless the enrolment of the child would impose an unjustifiable hardship on the school.

In determining whether a hardship imposed on the school would be an unjustifiable hardship, all relevant circumstances of the case will need to be taken into account, including the matters referred to in section 11 of the commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and any relevant provisions of the Disability Standards for Education made under that act.

Government and non-government school principals will be required to report to the minister annually on the number of children with disability who had their enrolment refused on the basis that it would impose an unjustifiable hardship on the school. They will also need to report on the number of students with disability whose enrolment was cancelled and any measures taken by the school to reduce the number of refusals or cancellations of enrolments of children or students with disability.

The bill includes provision for the regulations to prescribe other information that must be included in the reports of the minister. I note in this regard that we intend to prescribe that reporting should also include the number of children with disability who had their enrolment refused on the basis that the school was at enrolment capacity, recognising that this is another reason that a school may need to refuse an enrolment application. As there are multiple factors that determine how enrolment capacity is defined and managed by different schools, it was determined to include this detail in regulations rather than in the primary legislation.

The government is committed to working with the non-government schooling sector on those regulations, and I want to acknowledge in this speech my thanks to Dr Neil McGoran and Anne Dunstan from Catholic Education South Australia and the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia for the work and support they have given us in the drafting of this bill.

The bill further requires that the minister publish a report setting out the number of times children with a disability were refused enrolment at government schools and the number of times children with a disability were refused enrolment at non-government schools on the grounds that it

would impose an unjustifiable hardship on the school as well as the number of times students with a disability had their enrolment cancelled in each sector.

The minister's report will also need to include information regarding any trends identified in relation to the refusal or cancellation of the enrolment of children or students with a disability and any measures taken by the sectors to reduce the number of refusals or cancellations of enrolments of children or students with disability by government or non-government schools.

Government and non-government school principals will also be required to report to the minister annually de-identified information on the use of exclusionary discipline against students with disability at the school. This will include, for example, the number of times a student with a disability was suspended, excluded or expelled, the grounds for the disciplinary action and the number of school days impacted.

The minister will be required to publish sector-level reports of the information provided in relation to government and non-government schools. The use of exclusionary discipline in government schools is regulated by the act and associated regulations; however, Catholic and independent schools are not subject to those provisions and are able to determine their own approaches.

To support the implementation of recommendation 7.2, the bill will insert a new requirement that all non-government schools have a published policy regarding the use of exclusionary discipline in relation to students of the school. The policies will be required to set out the general approach of the school to managing student behaviour and the purpose for which exclusionary discipline may be used, the types of exclusionary discipline that may be used, when they may be used and by whom, the maximum length of time for which a student may be suspended, and the process for a student to return to school following a period of suspension.

In relation to these matters, the policies must be, as far as reasonably practicable, commensurate with any policy relating to exclusionary discipline that applies to government schools. The bill sets out that matters to which a person must have regard in determining whether to suspend or expel a student from a non-government school will be able to be prescribed in regulations. The Education and Children's Services Regulations 2020 already include a range of matters that must be considered when determining whether to suspend, exclude or expel a student from a government school.

Draft amendment regulations have been developed in consultation with the non-government sector, which will extend the application of this regulation into non-government schools and add a number of additional matters that will need to be considered by all schools, including the age of the student, whether the student has a disability, whether there is an individual learning plan in place for the student and whether it is being implemented, and whether there are any reasonable alternatives to suspending, excluding or expelling the student available in those circumstances.

In developing the amendments proposed by this bill, the government has worked closely with Catholic Education South Australia and the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia, disability advocacy groups, principals' associations, the Australian Education Union and other peak bodies, and I sincerely thank all of those bodies for their contributions to this very important work. The bill and draft supporting regulations were subject to public consultation through the YourSAy website from 20 May to 13 June 2025. The measures in the bill were well supported, with stakeholders particularly welcoming the increase in transparency and accountability that the new reporting provisions will bring.

All children deserve access to a safe, quality and inclusive education system, but the royal commission has shone a light on the barriers that still exist for many children with disability. This bill will support the implementation of two of the royal commission's recommendations for overcoming these barriers and enabling children and students with disability to participate and realise their full potential. I commend the bill to the house and I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Education and Children's Services Act 2019*

3—Amendment of section 3—Interpretation

This clause inserts a definition of *disability* which is based on the definition used in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* of the Commonwealth.

4—Amendment of section 4—Application of Act to non-Government schools

This clause makes a consequential amendment to reflect that some of the proposed amendments to the Act by this measure will apply only to non-Government schools (see proposed new Part 7 Division 3A).

5—Amendment of section 7—Objects and principles

This amendment inserts as a new object of the Act to ensure that the provision of education and children's services in the State is inclusive by enabling the participation of children and students with a disability and supporting them to reach their fullest potential.

6—Amendment of section 62—Chief Executive may direct that child be enrolled in particular school

The amendment to section 62(1) to delete paragraph (a) removes the power of the Chief Executive of the Department to direct that a specified child be enrolled in a specified school if satisfied that, on the basis that the child has disabilities or learning difficulties, it is necessary or appropriate to do so.

7—Insertion of Part 7 Division 1 Subdivision 1A

This clause inserts a new Subdivision in Part 7 Division 1 of the Act as follows:

Subdivision 1A—Enrolment of children or students with a disability

63A—Enrolment of children with disability

Proposed section 63A provides that a child must not be refused enrolment at a school (whether a Government or non-Government school) on the basis that the child has a disability unless it would impose an unjustifiable hardship on the school. In determining whether a hardship would be an *unjustifiable hardship*, all relevant circumstances must be taken into account including those matters set out in section 11 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* of the Commonwealth and any relevant provisions of the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* made under that Act.

63B—Reporting in relation to refusal or cancellation of enrolment of children or students with disability

Proposed section 63B sets out the reporting requirements for Government and non-Government schools in relation to the refusal to enrol, or the cancellation of the enrolment of, children or students with a disability. This includes the number of children with a disability that were refused enrolment at a school on the ground that it would impose an unjustifiable hardship, the numbers of students with a disability whose enrolments were cancelled, the measures taken by the school to reduce the number of refusals or cancellations of enrolments and any other prescribed information. This information must be provided on an annual basis by 31 May in relation to the previous calendar year. The Minister must then publish a report on the information collected from the schools by 31 August in each year. Information provided for the purposes of this section must not directly or indirectly identify any individual and the information provided by the schools is not liable to disclosure under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*.

8—Amendment of heading to Part 7 Division 3

This amendment makes a consequential amendment to the heading to Division 3 of Part 7 to take account of proposed new Part 7 Division 3A.

9—Insertion of section 80A

This clause inserts proposed section 80A as follows:

80A—Reporting in relation to suspension, exclusion and expulsion of students with disability

Proposed section 80A sets out the reporting requirements for Government schools in relation to the suspension, exclusion or expulsion of students with a disability. This includes the number of times students with a disability were suspended, excluded or expelled, the number of students with a disability that were suspended, excluded or expelled and, of those students, the number of instances each student was suspended, excluded or expelled, and for how long. Information is also required regarding the grounds on which those students were suspended, excluded or expelled and, of the total number of students with a

disability enrolled at the school, the proportion of those that were suspended, excluded or expelled. This information must be provided on an annual basis by 31 May in relation to the previous calendar year. The Minister must then publish a report on the information collected from the schools by 31 August in each year. Information provided for the purposes of this section must not directly or indirectly identify any individual and the information provided by the schools is not liable to disclosure under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*.

10—Insertion of Part 7 Division 3A

This clause insets a new Division 3A in Part 7 of the Act as follows:

Division 3A—Suspension and expulsion of students—non-Government schools

81A—Non-Government school to have policy in relation to suspension and expulsion of students

Proposed section 81A sets out the requirement for a non-Government school to have a policy regarding the use of exclusionary discipline (suspension and expulsion) in relation to students of the school. The policy must set out the general approach of the school to managing student behaviour and the purpose for which exclusionary discipline may be used, the types of exclusionary discipline that may be used and the grounds on which they can be imposed. It must also set out who is authorised to use exclusionary discipline and the maximum length of time for which a student may be suspended, in ordinary circumstances, and in exceptional circumstances. The policy must also set out the process for a student who has been suspended to return to the school and any other matters prescribed by the regulations. The policy must, as far as is reasonably practicable, be commensurate with any policy relating to exclusionary discipline that applies to Government schools. The policy is required to be published on the school's website.

81B—Reporting in relation to suspension and expulsion of students with disability

Proposed section 81B sets out the reporting requirements for non-Government schools in relation to the suspension or expulsion of students with a disability. This information is consistent with the information to be provided by non-Government schools under proposed section 80A. This includes the number of times students with a disability were suspended or expelled, the number of students with a disability that were suspended or expelled and, of those students, the number of instances each student was suspended or expelled, and for how long. Information is also required regarding the grounds on which those students were suspended or expelled and, of the total number of students with a disability enrolled at the school, the proportion of those that were suspended or expelled. This information must be provided on an annual basis by 31 May in relation to the previous calendar year. The Minister must then publish a report on the information collected from the schools by 31 August in each year. Information provided for the purposes of this section must not directly or indirectly identify any individual and the information provided by the schools is not liable to disclosure under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*.

81C—Regulations in relation to decision to suspend or expel a student from non-Government school

Proposed section 81C provides that the regulations may specify matters to which a person must have regard when deciding whether to suspend a student from a non-Government school.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Teague.

TAFE SA BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:10):

Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to continue TAFE SA, to repeal the TAFE SA Act 2012, to make consequential amendments to certain other acts, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:11): I

move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The TAFE SA Bill 2025 responds to the recommendation of Associate Professor Jeannie Rea in the report for the 2023 Roadmap for the Future of TAFE SA, that the TAFE SA Act 2012 be reformed to articulate the repositioning of TAFE SA with reforms reflected in functions, governance and the management structure. The government commissioned the road map report to engage with industry, unions, government, and TAFE SA staff and students on long-term changes required to support TAFE SA to deliver skills needs for our state.

Out of this work I announced a first action to review the TAFE SA Act 2012. This was to ensure TAFE SA's legislation is more focused on delivering in the public interest and on government priorities, and places TAFE SA at the centre of the government's goals for skills development for the state.

Since its incorporation in 2012, TAFE SA has operated as a statutory corporation under the direction of an independent board of directors. I have publicly stated that the 2012 bill does not support TAFE SA to be the public training provider the public expects and needs. I do not reflect on those members in this house who passed the bill then, as here in South Australia and nationally VET and TAFE were operating in a very different market to where we are today.

TAFE SA is a public provider. It should be focused on delivering quality vocational educational outcomes for all South Australians, no matter where they live, with acting in the public interest as its core requirement. Our government has high expectations of TAFE to play its role in regional and remote delivery, teaching in thin markets and being at the forefront of new and growing areas of curriculum development.

I am proud that this bill sets out clear objectives that realign TAFE SA's purpose. Development of the bill was facilitated by a project reference group tasked with leading a review to establish a fit-for-purpose governance framework for TAFE SA and consequential changes to the act. Guiding principles for this work were that TAFE SA:

- develops and delivers industry relevant training aligned to government priorities, supporting a strong economy through a skilled and agile workforce;
- ensures eligible South Australians have the training they need to participate fully in their local communities and economy, including removing barriers to access; and
- is an effective and efficient organisation with clear governance arrangements.

Out of this work a draft bill was developed which transitions TAFE SA from a public corporation to a statutory authority. The government consulted with key stakeholders on a draft version of this bill and respondents to the review provided valuable feedback which has resulted in a number of improvements and refinements included in the bill.

The bill enshrines the legislative means to transition TAFE SA from a public corporation to a statutory authority without eroding corporate governance performance and accountability standards currently applied to TAFE SA through the general provisions of the Public Corporations Act 1993. Similar to legislation for other statutory authorities, the bill ensures TAFE SA obtains its authority and operating context from its enabling act, and its functions, level of independence, and the respective roles of the board, chief executive and the minister are derived from its enabling legislation.

To highlight TAFE SA's role and importance at the centre of the vocational education and training sector, the bill introduces objects which are informed by the aspirational and contemporary values for the state's vocational education and training system, similarly expressed in the Adelaide University Act 2023 and the South Australian Skills Act 2008. Under the bill, TAFE SA is responsible for:

- delivery of high quality, responsive and industry-relevant education and training that responds to the needs of employers and aligns with the strategic priorities of the South Australian government;
- equitable access to education and training for all eligible South Australians that assists them to build the skills needed to contribute to the economic, social and cultural life of their communities; and
- performing as an efficient, transparent, innovative and accountable public institution underpinned by strong governance, effective leadership, and a commitment to public interest and educational excellence.

Functions under the bill are also updated to reflect contemporary values for TAFE SA and VET so that TAFE SA is to:

- focus on excellence and demonstrate integrity;
- demonstrate quality and innovation in teaching, including through the application of leading and contemporary industry practices;
- enable pathways to further learning or training in VET or at university and promote life-long learning;
- engage with the broader VET sector;
- provide appropriate student support services and be responsive to the diverse needs of students;
- focus on the impact and success of its services on students, staff and the communities that TAFE SA serves;
- engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to provide education and training appropriate to meet their needs and those of their communities; and
- provide inclusive and culturally safe services on all TAFE SA campuses.

Importantly, the bill also ensures our continued focus on delivering training in regional and remote areas. Ensuring equitable access to education and training for eligible South Australians is a core object of this bill. TAFE SA is often the only provider in regional and remote regions, as it is not viable for non-government providers. It is one of the unique reasons why the public provider is so important, and this bill reflects that.

TAFE SA will, of course, continue to perform its commercial functions and, in so doing, the bill ensures it must apply prudent commercial practices. Unlike the current act, broad application of the Public Corporations Act and the commercial principles in it, the bill ensures that TAFE SA performance functions in the public interest first and foremost, having regard to its objects and its business plan.

It is critical that the board of TAFE SA can tap into the expertise of member directors with direct industry experience and experience in the education, training and employment sectors. The bill does this by changing the attributes for TAFE SA board membership to include members who collectively have expertise, abilities and experience required for the effective performance of TAFE SA's functions, including direct industry experience or direct experience in the education, training or employment sectors, and knowledge or expertise in the education and training of persons who have experienced disadvantage in accessing education, training and work or who are from non-metropolitan, regional and remote areas. These attributes are in addition to directors possessing skills, experience or expertise in commerce, corporate governance, economics, finance, law and management.

The bill formalises the authority of the TAFE SA Board to appoint an acting chief executive for any period for which the chief executive is absent or unavailable to carry out official duties, and requires the board to meet a minimum of four times a year. The bill also formalises the authority of the TAFE SA Board to establish committees or subcommittees to advise or assist TAFE SA in relation to its functions. The bill requires TAFE SA to prepare a business plan and authorises the minister to provide a Statement of Priority to TAFE SA. This replaces the current Ministerial Charter and Performance Statement requirements under the Public Corporations Act 1993.

The minister must consult with the Treasurer and TAFE SA in the development of a Statement of Priority, and TAFE SA must have regard to and address the requirements of the Statement of Priority in preparing its business plan. In other words, the Ministerial Statement of Priority is key to indicating to TAFE SA the government's expectations and aspirations for TAFE SA's forward outlook and how planning and delivery of its activities and operations for the pending financial year support those deliverables. TAFE SA must address this in its business plan.

A new power is added to authorise TAFE SA to issue barring notices in a manner specified in regulation in relation to specified conduct. Breach of a barring notice will result in a penalty and is enforceable. This will extend protection to staff and students of TAFE SA on all its campuses from unwanted conduct by others.

The bill increases the maximum fine for a breach of a by-law to \$2,500, up from \$1,250. TAFE SA's rule-making powers are expanded to include setting standards in relation to student admission and selection, staff behavioural conduct and staff or student academic standards. This adds clarity to the scope of matters that a TAFE SA rule may cover.

In the interests of administrative efficiency, the requirement for Governor confirmation of a proposed TAFE SA rule or by-law is removed from the current act by the bill. However, proposed rules and by-laws will continue to require agreement of the TAFE SA Board and, in addition to ministerial approval, by-laws will continue to be tabled in parliament and be subject to disallowance.

In the development of the bill, detailed consideration has been given to ensuring TAFE SA will continue to be subject to robust accountability and transparency standards across the breadth of its operations. This is particularly achieved through the operation of other legislation in relation to statutory bodies and their governing boards and partly through the selective inclusion in the bill of provisions derived from the Public Corporations Act 1993. For example, there are provisions requiring TAFE SA to advise the minister as soon as reasonably practicable of any matter that affects its financial or operating capacity, and to authorise requirements or recommendations by the Treasurer to pay income tax equivalents or dividends to ensure compliance with competitive neutrality principles. I commend the bill to members. 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.

3—Object

This clause sets out the objects of the measure.

4—Interpretation

This clause defines terms used in the measure.

Part 2—Administration

Division 1—TAFE SA

5—TAFE SA

This clause continues TAFE SA as established under the *TAFE SA Act 2012* and sets out its corporate characteristics.

6—Functions

This clause sets out the functions of TAFE SA.

7—Protection of proprietary interests

This clause provides that TAFE SA has a proprietary interest in all official insignia and sets out the manner in which the official insignia may be used by persons other than TAFE SA. An offence with a maximum penalty of \$20,000 applies for a person who uses the official insignia of TAFE SA without the relevant consents set out in the clause.

8—Ministerial direction

This clause sets out the manner in which the Minister may give directions to TAFE SA.

Division 2—TAFE SA Board

9—Board appointment and responsibilities

This clause establishes the Board of directors of TAFE SA, sets out their primary responsibilities and makes provisions regarding the appointment, number and required qualifications of directors.

10—Conditions of office of director

This clause provides for the appointment and conditions of office of a director of the Board.

11—Committees and subcommittees

This clause provides for the manner in which that the Board may establish committees or subcommittees and the procedures applying to the operation of such committees or subcommittees.

12—Board proceedings

This clause sets out the manner and form of meetings of the Board.

13—Conflict of interest under *Public Sector (Honesty and Accountability) Act 1995*

This clause sets out that a conflict of interest of a director will not arise under the *Public Sector (Honesty and Accountability) Act 1995* by reason only of the fact that the director has an interest in a matter that is shared in common with those engaged in or associated with the technical and further education sector generally.

14—Common seal

This clause provides for the manner and operation of the common seal of TAFE SA.

15—Minister's or Treasurer's representative may attend meetings

This clause provides for the manner and circumstances in which a representative of the Minister or the Treasurer may attend meetings of the Board.

Division 3—Chief Executive and other staff

16—Chief Executive appointment and responsibilities

This clause provides for the appointment terms and conditions of the Chief Executive of TAFE SA.

17—Other staff

This clause provides for the manner in which other staff of TAFE SA may be employed.

18—Use of staff etc of administrative unit of Public Service

This clause provides that the Chief Executive may, by agreement with a Minister responsible for an administrative unit of the Public Service, make use of the services of the staff, equipment or facilities of that unit.

Division 4—Rules and by-laws

19—Power to make rules

This clause sets out the manner in which TAFE SA may make rules for various purposes.

20—Power to make by-laws

This clause sets out the manner in which TAFE SA may make by-laws for various purposes

21—Evidentiary provision

This clause sets out various evidentiary provisions applicable in relation to the by-laws.

22—Fines and expiation fees

This clause provides that fines and expiations in relation to the by-laws must be paid to TAFE SA.

Division 5—Barring notice

23—Barring notice

This clause provides for the manner and circumstances in which TAFE SA may bar a person from TAFE grounds.

Division 6—Reporting and information requirements

24—Business plan

This clause requires TAFE SA to prepare a business plan that complies with the requirements set out in the clause.

25—Minister to be advised of change in financial or operating capacity

This clause requires TAFE SA to advise the Minister as soon as reasonably practicable after becoming aware of any matter that materially affects the financial or operating capacity of TAFE SA or gives rise to an expectation that TAFE SA may not be able to operate within approved budgets or savings targets or meet its debts as and when the fall due.

26—Annual report

This clause requires TAFE SA to provide an annual report to the Minister on the performance of its functions in the previous financial year.

27—Provision of information to Minister

This clause requires TAFE SA to provide information or documents to the Minister in accordance with the provisions set out in the clause.

Division 7—Statement of priority

28—Minister to provide statement of priority

This clause requires the Minister to provide TAFE SA with a statement of priority outlining the government's priorities for TAFE SA in respect of a financial year or such other period as specified by the Minister. The clause sets out the obligations of the Minister and TAFE SA in relation to the statement of priority.

Division 8—Financial and other provisions

29—Guarantee of liability by Treasurer

This clause provides for the liabilities of TAFE SA to be guaranteed by the Treasurer.

30—Tax and other liabilities of TAFE SA

This clause provides for the manner in which the Treasurer may require TAFE SA to pay tax or council rates.

31—Dividends

This clause provides for the manner in which certain dividends may be paid to TAFE SA.

Division 9—Delegation

32—Delegation

This clause sets out the manner in which the Minister, the Board or the Chief Executive may delegate functions under the Act.

Part 3—Miscellaneous

33—Regulations

This clause provides for the manner in which regulations may be made under the Act.

Schedule 1—Repeal, amendments, saving and transitional provisions

Part 1—Repeal of Act

1—Repeal of *TAFE SA Act 2012*

This clause repeals the existing *TAFE SA Act 2012*.

Part 2—Amendment of *Education and Children's Services Act 2019*

2—Amendment of section 110—Interruption of service where officer leaves teaching service

These amendments make consequential amendments to substitute legislative references to the repealed Act with references to the current measure.

3—Amendment of section 113—Entitlement of persons transferred to the teaching service

These amendments make consequential amendments to substitute legislative references to the repealed Act with references to the current measure.

Part 3—Amendment of *South Australian Skills Act 2008*

4—Amendment of section 23—Staff

This amendment make consequential amendments to substitute legislative references to the repealed Act with references to the current measure.

Part 4—Saving and transitional provisions

This Part contains saving and transitional provisions consequent on the repeal of the *TAFE SA Act 2012* and the enactment of this measure.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Teague.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES (ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE) AMENDMENT BILL*Introduction and First Reading*

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:21): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Education and Children's Services Act 2019. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:22): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Education and Children's Services (Enrolment and Attendance) Amendment Bill 2025. The bill proposes modest but important changes to the act to strengthen the effectiveness of the current scheme for the enforcement of compulsory enrolment, attendance and participation of South Australian children at schools and approved learning programs.

The benefits of quality education for our children cannot be understated. It can develop their skills, abilities and opportunities to support productive, socially engaged and healthy lives. The negative impacts of a denial of education through the failure of a child to be enrolled in a school or supported to attend can be profound and affect the person throughout their life.

The necessity of education is recognised through the requirements for the compulsory enrolment and attendance of children at school, requirements that have been in place in this state in some form since 1875. Most children attend school regularly, with the state's attendance rate across all school sectors at 88.4 per cent in 2024. A small but significant number of children, however, fail to attend school regularly and, alarmingly, in some cases, a child may not be enrolled in a school at all.

The government continues to make improvements to support students to attend school and to help parents to understand the benefits that schooling provides for their children. Since coming into government, we have established a new attendance directorate within the department, trialled and implemented new programs for improving attendance and launched an attendance hub to improve the support and information available to schools, and importantly to parents as well, to address attendance issues. We have seen the attendance rate across all sectors increased by 2.8 per cent since 2022 to sit now just above the national average in 2024.

Despite these improvements, there is certainly more work to be done. The state's attendance rate, as was the case with other Australian states and territories, remains below pre-COVID levels. The level of children attending school more than 90 per cent of the time is also significantly below that prior to the pandemic.

The reasons for a child's non-attendance can be complex, multiple and compounding. Schools and school systems employ various strategies to support the regular attendance and participation of children at school and approved learning programs. These can include monitoring absences and following up on unauthorised absences, meeting with parents, undertaking home visits, identifying barriers to their attendance, and working with families and other agencies to ensure that appropriate supports are in place to help their child to attend.

In some cases, despite the best efforts of schools and the Department for Education, some children continue to fail to attend or participate as required under the act. In such cases, statutory intervention may be considered. The chief executive may, for example, convene a family conference under section 71 of the act. This strengths-based process supports a family to identify barriers to a child's attendance and determine an agreed plan to address those barriers and support the child to once again attend. Where a parent fails to engage with the department or to otherwise take such steps as reasonably practicable to ensure their child attends or participates as required, it may be necessary to consider prosecution under the act.

Since coming into government to June of this year, we have reviewed 122 families involving 179 children for potential prosecution. Of those, 44 cases, involving 68 children, are currently either

under assessment or investigation. That is, they are being closely monitored, have been referred for legal advice, are under preliminary assessment or are under investigation. Of the remaining 78 cases, which involve 111 children, 45 cases showed improvement in attendance and engagement following action by the department, and in 33 cases prosecution was not pursued due to complex factors and/or prosecution would not have achieved improved attendance.

The outcome of this work has demonstrated that taking serious steps towards prosecution can in many cases result in improvements to the enrolment, attendance and engagement of children. That is why we have done so much of this and taken it so seriously in the last 3½ years.

The bill aims to strengthen provisions of the act to manage serious cases of non-enrolment, non-attendance or non-participation and address various issues which have been identified through efforts to enforce the current arrangements. The bill also aims to ensure procedural fairness for those parents who may be considered for prosecution.

Clause 3 and clause 4 of the bill will amend section 60 and section 61 of the act, respectively, to require a written notice to be sent to a person responsible for a child before any proceedings are commenced against the person for a failure to ensure their child is enrolled in a school or an approved learning program as required. The notice will outline the person's obligations in respect of the child's enrolment and warn the person they are not in compliance with the act and could be prosecuted.

A warning notice will provide a clear delineation between supportive and punitive approaches to addressing serious cases of non-enrolment. They will ensure parents are afforded appropriate procedural fairness in any decision on potential prosecution. Recent trials of this process have demonstrated that receipt of a warning notice can also result in a parent taking steps to ensure their child is enrolled and avoids the need for commencement of prosecution.

Clause 5 of the bill will amend the act to clarify the information or documents the chief executive can require under section 66 of the act in relation to a child where reasonably required in the administration, operation or enforcement of the act. The bill clarifies that the information that can be required includes but is not limited to any of the following: medical certificates, reports or advice relating to a child; reports relating to the mental, emotional and social wellbeing of a child; referrals for a medical, psychological or allied health service relating to a child; and any other personal information relating to a child.

Clause 6 and clause 7 will amend section 68 and section 69 of the act, respectively, to:

- require a written notice to be sent to a person responsible for a child prior to the commencement of the prosecution of that person for their child's failure to attend school or participate in an approved learning program as required. The notice will outline the person's obligations in respect of the child's attendance or participation and warn the person they are not in compliance with the act and may be prosecuted;
- reduce the period within which a parent must notify a principal of a school or head of an approved learning program of their child's failure to attend or participate from five days to three days; and
- remove from the list of valid reasons for a child's failure to attend school or participate in an approved learning program that there was a danger of the child being affected by an infectious or contagious disease—a reason that only exists in South Australia.

Arguably, a child may at any time be in danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease by attending school. Removal of that as a reason for a child's failure to attend or participate ensures it cannot be relied on in cases where it is appropriate that the child attends or participates. A parent whose child is sick with a contagious or infectious disease or whose sickness or infirmity puts them at heightened risk of such diseases can rely on the reason in section 68(3)(a)(i) and 69(3)(a)(i) that the child was sick or infirm.

Schools and the department will continue to promote and comply with SA Health guidance on the management of infectious diseases at schools, including recommended periods of exclusion, and comply with any relevant directions of the Chief Public Health Officer under the South Australian Public Health Act 2011.

The reduction of the period in which a parent must notify the school of their child's failure to attend or participate from five days to three days will bring the act in line with the policy and procedure for government schools of the timeframe for schools to follow up a child's non-attendance. The introduction of statutory warning letters for offences in relation to a child's non-attendance at a school or non-participation in an approved learning program provide a clear delineation between supportive and punitive approaches to addressing serious cases of non-attendance and ensure parents are afforded procedural fairness in any decision on potential prosecution. Similar to cases of non-enrolment, recent trials of this process have demonstrated that receipt of a warning notice can result in a parent taking steps to ensure their child attends or participates and avoid the need for or commencement of a prosecution.

Under section 127 of the act, currently an authorised officer can only request such information when attending at residential premises but can require it when a child is at a public place at a time they should usually be attending school. This is in relation to clause 8 of the amendment bill, which will amend the act to provide that an authorised officer, when in attendance at residential premises, can require a person at that premises to provide the officer with the full name and age of a child of compulsory school age and compulsory education age who resides in the premises and the school or approved learning program, if any, in which such child is enrolled. The amendment in clause 8 will ensure consistency in the powers of an authorised officer to obtain relevant information about a child's enrolment or attendance, whether that be in a public place or when attending at residential premises.

The bill was subject to broad public consultation through the YourSAy website from 20 May 2025 to 13 June 2025. Overall, there was broad support for most measures in the bill, particularly from key stakeholders. There was very strong support for the introduction of statutory warning letters.

Our children deserve the best possible education, and the government continues to invest in South Australian schools and promote high-quality education for all students in this state. A child that is not enrolled in school or is not supported to regularly attend school is denied the opportunity to achieve their very best, and it can have short and long-term impacts on their safety and their wellbeing. This is something that none of us in this place should ignore and it is something that the bill aims to address. I commend the bill to the house and seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Education and Children's Services Act 2019*

3—Amendment of section 60—Children of compulsory school age must be enrolled in school

This clause amends section 60 of the Act to require notice to be given to a person who is in breach of their obligations in respect of a child's enrolment in school prior to proceedings being commenced against the person for an offence against the section.

4—Amendment of section 61—Children of compulsory education age must be enrolled in approved learning program

This clause amends section 61 of the Act to require notice to be given to a person who is in breach of their obligations in respect of a child's enrolment in an approved learning program prior to proceedings being commenced against the person for an offence against the section.

5—Amendment of section 66—Chief Executive may require further information relating to child

This clause amends section 66(2) of the Act to clarify what material may be required by the Chief Executive from a person responsible for a child, for the purposes of section 66(1).

6—Amendment of section 68—Child of compulsory school age must attend school

This clause makes various amendments to section 68 of the Act. Section 68(3) sets out the list of reasons for a child's failure to attend school that do not trigger the offence in section 68(2). Subclause (1) amends this subsection by removing from the list there being a danger of the child being affected by an infectious or contagious disease. Subclause (2) reduces the time period within which a person responsible for a child must advise the principal of the child's school of a child's failure to attend school, where the reason for the failure was one contemplated by section 68(3)(a), in order for the offence provision not to apply from 5 school days to 3. Subclause (3) adds a requirement that notice must be given to a person prior to proceedings being commenced against the person for an offence against the section.

7—Amendment of section 69—Child of compulsory education age must participate in approved learning program

This clause makes various amendments to section 69 of the Act. Section 69(3) sets out the list of reasons for a child's failure to participate in an approved learning program that do not trigger the offence in section 69(2). Subclause (1) amends this subsection by removing from the list there being a danger of the child being affected by an infectious or contagious disease. Subclause (2) reduces the time period within which a person responsible for a child must advise the head of the approved learning program of the child's failure to participate in the learning program, where the reason for the failure was one contemplated by section 69(3)(a), in order for the offence provision not to apply from 5 business days to 3. Subclause (3) adds a requirement for notice to be given to a person prior to proceedings being commenced against the person for an offence against the section.

8—Amendment of section 127—Powers of authorised officers

This clause amends section 127(4) of the Act such that an authorised officer attending at a residential premises may require certain information to be provided by any person in the premises, as opposed to only requesting it.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Teague.

NORTHERN PARKLANDS BILL

Committee Stage

In committee.

(Continued from 2 September 2025.)

Clause 19.

Mr TELFER: Minister, just rounding out where we were at when we finished last night on the funds coming into a council that is raising the levy on behalf of the Northern Parklands Trust—and we have done that comparison work to the landscapes levy which is collected—there are circumstances where the landscapes levy is levied onto a ratepayer and that ratepayer is defaulting on their rates, so the moneys are not coming into a council to cover the obligation of the landscape levy annually, year on year, and thus the financial responsibility for the shortcoming from the landscapes levy for those unpaid amounts then gets foisted onto a council to carry the burden of it. I do note within this clause there is this aspect in subclause (10):

- (10) If a council writes off a debt constituted by an unpaid Northern Parklands levy...under section 143 of the Local Government Act 1999, the Northern Parklands Trust must, on application by the council in accordance with any requirements determined by the Minister, refund to the council an amount equal to the amount of the levy (not including any related interest) that has been written off.

What often happens with these levies that are obligated to be collected but have not actually been paid by those ratepayers is they can accumulate for a significant period of time. It says at the bottom 'not including any related interest'. That amount can actually be quite substantive, and I know that the Playford council has had its challenges with some of these unpaid rates as a whole. Why is there not any related interest? I read 'related interest' as a financial interest component. Am I correct in my reading of it? If not, is it the minister's intention that the cost of raising the levy, including any defaulting and interest attached to that defaulting, will be covered by the council or a reduction in the amount that will go to the trust in a cumulative manner?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: The member highlights perhaps one of the issues that happened for councils and people defaulting on their rates. It highlights the issue that might arise. It would be the government's intention that the trust and the council are acting in cooperation. It would be the intention of the government that the trust not leave councils with an unreasonable burden in those instances. I think in this case, it will be an easy issue for the trust, the council and, ultimately, the minister to deal with. In places in rural South Australia, it is perhaps a larger issue off a smaller base. In this case, it would be a relatively small issue off a larger base.

Mr TEAGUE: I have a question on subclause (3)(a). Is there any indication the government can give about what it is anticipating is going to be the basis for the levy? Are those four options deliberately in contemplation of a different basis being likely to be applicable at different times along the track over the decades to come, or is that just a matter for the trust to determine and that is just a smorgasbord?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: This is one mechanism that assists with the funding of the parklands. What we went through yesterday is that essentially we have developers through their open space requirements or through the rezoning process. The infrastructure schemes are also associated with the rezoning process, with the commercial activities that we talked about, and we have this proposition, which is essentially the same as the act I referred to yesterday. It is just designed to give a degree of flexibility. It still has to be in the annual plan, which, as we talked about yesterday, there is a publication of that and, of course, it has to ultimately go to the minister for approval.

Mr TELFER: Just some clarification on that item. On my reading of this, when we are looking at a council rates notice—and I have looked at a few of them in my time—there is the component of a variable rate in the dollar, which is a component that ratepayers pay, and it fluctuates depending on the value of their property. There is often a fixed charge, which is a flat rate that everyone pays. It is the same, no matter whether you have a \$200,000 house or a \$1 million house. There are often service charges, so that is for direct services provided.

The landscapes levy is raised as a flat charge, not variable depending on the value of your property. Is it the intention of the minister for that to be the structure for how you envisage the levy to be raised, or do you envisage that those with a higher property value, comparatively, are going to be paying a higher proportion of the Northern Parklands levy?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: In the first instance it will be the trust that determines that, in consultation with the council. It has to be part of the annual business plan and it has to come to the minister and then there are the provisions that relate to the house as well. There is a degree of flexibility in terms of the trust.

In terms of what the government's view is, obviously we want to establish the trust in the first instance. That will be done. As I said before, we have to establish a trust and do a master plan. The first stage of the Northern Parklands is government-held and council land. The second stage is development that is adjacent to the Northern Parklands, the Kudla rezoning code amendment. So that first phase of the creation of the Northern Parklands and the trust is most likely to be funded out of those mechanisms. These mechanisms are really about long-term sustainment and operating expenses, because, of course, we have all seen big capital expenditure followed by a failure to have good operating expenditure and, as I said before, the West Beach Trust is a model in this regard.

Clause passed.

Clause 20.

Mr TELFER: Is it the intention of the bill that the costs incurred by councils in collecting the Northern Parklands levy be fully compensated, or does the government intend that councils, in performing this new statutory function, will be out of pocket?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Councils will be compensated and they should not be out of pocket, or it should not affect their budget in relation to the collection of the levy.

Mr TELFER: For clarification, what is going to be the process for a council to ensure that there is that proper communication between it and the trust? Will it be representation on the board, or will it be the direct operational relationship, because this is an area where you can build a structure at the start and it can fall down and end up costing the ratepayers more, potentially. What is the intention of the minister as far as that relationship goes?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: The intention is to build a very good park for the people of the northern suburbs. That is the intention. We want to build a new model for urban parks, as I said before. By necessity, that requires a higher degree of consultation, cooperation with and respect of the local councils. I imagine that both through their board representation and through directly working

with the trust, because there will have to be a high degree of collaboration and working with them day to day, they will protect their interests in that respect. Obviously, the intention of the clause is to make sure that their budgets are not affected in this way from the collection of the levy.

Mr TEAGUE: Bearing in mind that the Northern Parklands Trust membership leaves the constituent councils in a small minority—with the structure of it, they are far from controlling the trust—therefore, there is a three-way arrangement involved at clause 20, in that you have got the trust having an obligation to make good the councils but by a means that is determined by the minister.

What is the virtue going on there in terms of that three-way arrangement? Is the minister guarding the interests of those councils in ensuring that the amount is adequate? I see there is the note there about what the minister might take into account on the overs and unders. Perhaps for the record, conveniently all sort of wrapped up in one, how is the trust going to ensure that it has got the necessary funds to pay that money to the councils?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: As a measure of safeguarding the councils' position, the clause itself safeguards it, the representation on the board safeguards it, the accountability mechanisms to the minister and ultimately to the public, because it is a part of the annual business plan—all of those things cover it. Then, of course, we are leaving it to the trust and the council about what mechanisms effectively they use to do it. However, I would have thought all of those mechanisms safeguard the councils' position.

Clause passed.

Clause 21.

Mr TELFER: We have touched on this stuff a little bit and then there was the bit that we deferred for consideration when we got to this clause, so I have been anticipating it for a while. Does the government intend to establish more than one statutory trust and, if so, what additional statutory trust will be formed? What will its purpose be?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: In the same way the reading of the Linear Parks Act focuses on the Torrens but then leaves open the way forward for future ministers and future governments to establish linear parks, the same pathway has been left open here for future governments. It is this government's intention to establish a Northern Parklands Trust and the Northern Parklands and, as I said yesterday, that in and of itself is a huge piece of work. We have to establish a trust, do a master plan and go through the rezoning process. There are a number of stages in it.

It is my intention and the government's intention to do that process, establish it and, if you like, prove that it works before we embark on any other trusts. But we are leaving the provision in there that, if the Northern Parklands Trust is a good model in the same way the West Beach Trust is a good model, future governments have that option to create new trusts.

Mr TELFER: Can the minister confirm that the bill is capable of technically applying to land right across the state? I am trying to work out what the intention of the government is. This is your big project about the Northern Parklands, and this is sort of like a little bit of an added addendum: to save us coming back to parliament if we want to form another statutory trust, here is a mechanism for us to be able to do it. Is this bill, especially this component in itself, technically capable of applying to land in any part of the state?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It would only apply where you were building a substantial park that crossed council boundaries. I think that is self-evident. There is a provision in this clause that refers the establishment of any new trust to the Legislative Review Committee, and that process can be disallowed. So, if you like, there is the capacity for future governments and future ministers to utilise this model, but the parliament retains control over where it would apply and how it would apply, and that is a suitably high level of parliamentary oversight and parliamentary approval to match, if you like, the pathway forward or the options available to government.

It is this government's intention to set up this trust in the Northern Parklands. That is a mighty piece of work. Having been through the code amendment process, having been through this process in partnership with councils—on Concordia, for instance, we have been working in partnership with

The Barossa Council and in partnership with Concordia Land Trust and the other landowners in the area. To avoid the Mount Barkers and the Angle Vales, it is a very, very complex piece of work. It requires officials and governments and a degree of bipartisanship because these suburbs get built over decades. So I do not underestimate how much work is in front of us. It is our intention to, if you like, set this model up, show that it can work in a mature way and then leave the way open for future governments or future ministers to do it if they wish, but with parliamentary oversight and approval in that regard.

Mr TELFER: If this aspect in particular of the bill as a whole is technically capable of applying to any land around the state, could you confirm that also the cost recovery provisions to councils would be the same—technically, the capacity of this bill to be able to put that in place across a council area as well across the whole state?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Once the Northern Parklands are established and set up, any new trust would be set up in a similar way, but again it would require the consent of this parliament. Either house of parliament can move a disallowance motion in relation to the regulations, so there is appropriate oversight in that regard.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Brown): If you are quick, member for Flinders.

Mr TELFER: A little half one: can you clarify for me, in establishing the statutory trust and if it can technically apply to any land within the state, does that land need to be contiguous? You talk about 'across council boundaries'. Under the parameters and powers of this bill, under the establishment of a statutory trust, could there be islands of land, to put it in a pretty basic way—portions of land in different council areas—that could then be conglomerated to fit under the banner, under the umbrella, of a statutory trust? In the broad perspective of the Northern Parklands, it is going to be a swathe across two council areas. Is there a requirement for that land to be contiguous in any potential subsequent statutory trust that is formed?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: There is no requirement for it to be contiguous, but you would imagine that if it was not contiguous at least it would be located in the same area; that would be common sense. Again, this government does not intend to, and I would expect it will take the better part of a decade to set up the trust to establish it and to run it appropriately.

But if a future government were to set up a trust where it was not contiguous or did not meet a public interest test, then it would come before this parliament, and parliament has the ultimate control over it. It would be the same if you were to not include that option in this bill. The alternative, I guess, is that we leave it out and, if this model did work, we would have to set up a whole new trust through legislation.

So we are leaving that option there; we are retaining parliamentary control. But through disallowance, which is not unusual, we think that that is the appropriate way forward to establish a new model for urban parks to allow future governments the flexibility to establish new trusts but to retain parliamentary control. As we have discussed before, this will only work if there is a high degree of bipartisanship across the chamber, intergenerational bipartisanship by policymakers—they would look at the West Beach Trust; do not include either of us in that—but also a degree of consultation and bipartisanship between local and state governments.

Mr TEAGUE: The minister says the alternative is to go about it by way of leaving it entirely to fresh legislation. Just to be clear, the way this is drafted on its face it does not actually characterise the statutory trust at all or limit it to even being related to parklands on its face, and it could. The bill does not have any purposes and the statutory trust is simply defined by reference to the constituent parts of a statutory trust. The clause that we are dealing with now simply provides for the power by regulation to establish one. So it is all completely vanilla flavoured, a bit like other aspects of the generic nature of the bill, for better or worse—that is a drafting approach that has been taken—so you could very conceivably on the face of this.

The Northern Parklands Bill might be the famous omnibus bill that is the mechanism for the establishment of statutory trusts left, right and centre. And again, just from a drafting point of view it would be very straightforward, I suggest, for the definition of a statutory trust back in clause 3 to be

for the purposes of this bill a statutory trust with respect to trust parklands, for example, which is the very next defined term.

So if a statutory trust established under this bill was limited to a statutory trust with respect to trust parklands, then we would know what we are all talking about and then I would be with the minister on the rest of the checks and balances aspect of it, and we would all know what was actually being dealt with from the beginning. But I just stress that, on its face, it seems to me there is no statutory limiting factor, including by reference to any purpose of the bill.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: The intent of the act is to establish a statutory trust to look after the Parklands. I think the member's concerns are low risk, in part because this exists in other acts like the Urban Renewal Act. There are very strong precinct powers in the Urban Renewal Act, as well, to make statutory trusts effectively. While there might be a concern voiced, it is a very, very low risk and the parliamentary oversight and the disallowance measures mean that it is not likely to occur. If there were that degree of parliamentary support for anything, arguably one could pass legislation to effect a government's desires at the time. Yes, it is vanilla, but it matches what this parliament has done previously and we have not seen the misuse of those powers.

Clause passed.

Clause 22.

Mr TEAGUE: We highlight the point, at clause 22, that we see there described a statutory trust. There is no limiting of that. It is just describing what a statutory trust is for all purposes, much like the definition.

Clause passed.

Clause 23.

Mr TELFER: This is a quite a short clause, but potentially very meaningful. So clause 23:

Ministerial control

A statutory trust is subject to the control and direction of the minister.

Does this clause basically give the minister carte blanche to overrule or direct a trust established by the bill?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It is the exact same clause as in the West Beach Trust act. It is the exact same clause you will find in the South Australian Housing Trust Act. It is a standard clause that is put in the establishment of these trusts.

What that is about is ensuring there is always, if you like, control of the minister over the trust because parliament sets up the trusts. The power is there but it is rarely used in terms of trusts. It is a standard clause that we put in this sort of legislation.

Mr TELFER: The minister uses the words 'standard clause', but basically he is admitting that it gives the minister the capacity to be able to control or direct a trust at their whim. As I have been saying all along, this is legislation as a whole that we are considering—no reflection on the current minister at all—and it could be read as a capacity for a giant power grab for a minister, the capacity for them—as we have already seen throughout the rest of the clauses of the bill—to be able to take land from an unalienated land and put it within a trust. It now gives the minister the ability to be able to control and direct the trust.

We were surmising about what commercial potentials could be used, and I took it to the extreme somewhat, but if the power is baked into the legislation, into a clause like this, when I was talking about the going to the extreme of some of those commercial potential outcomes, the minister assured me of the oversight of the trust. Now the minister has control over the trust, so that oversight of the trust could potentially be nullified by an overzealous (I think that was the word you may have used yesterday) minister.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: As I said before, that is a clause that exists in many, many acts. I could probably provide the member with a list, but it would be a long one. As I said, just two acts: the West Beach Trust and Housing Trust acts. It is an important clause to have in there and

obviously ministers are judged on their actions. It is an important clause to be in the act and consistent with many, many other acts that this parliament has passed.

Mr TELFER: Just one more. It says 'a trust'. Is that any statutory trust in any act—like we talked about yesterday, the Waite Trust, for instance?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: No, it refers to statutory trusts created under this act.

Mr TEAGUE: I was only going to add that, just for the benefit of ease of reference at this point, I agree, the minister is quite right: it is a statutory trust as defined, and the definition of 'statutory trust' includes the subject trust, the main existing subject of the bill being the Northern Parklands Trust. It is not as though any of the procedures and safeguards and balances and all the rest of it that are spelled out in relation to the Northern Parklands Trust somehow make it special and different from any subsequent statutory trust that might be established under the bill. It is also smack bang front and centre under the control and direction of the minister, just like any future statutory trust that might be established subsequently.

Clause passed.

Clauses 24 to 27 passed.

Clause 28.

Mr TELFER: Just for some clarification on what is intended by the minister in the structures that are set here, the clause provides:

- (1) Subject to this section, there will be—
 - (a) a chief executive officer of a statutory trust;

and a chief executive officer will be appointed by the minister on terms and conditions determined by the minister. What do you envisage as the structures for a statutory trust, as formed in this legislation to be appointed by the minister, the terms and conditions that you envisage as the author of the legislation?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Broadly, similar to the West Beach Trust act and the West Beach Trust.

Mr TELFER: Can I ask about the setting of the remuneration for the CEO in particular? Obviously, whatever the structures of the statutory trust are, the CEO is the one who is in charge of what comes below. Obviously here the arrangements, terms and conditions and, I am assuming, without it being specified in here, the remuneration level for the CEO will be determined by the minister, or do you envisage there will be a comparable process to be followed when deciding what that remuneration level for the CEO of a statutory trust would be?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Obviously, in regard to the Northern Parklands Trust, that has not been decided yet, but the way that it works in the West Beach Trust is the board, broadly speaking, in collaboration with the department, whether it be Treasury or DHUD, sets their terms and conditions, broadly speaking, in line with the rest of the government. Then, if there are any increases or changes to that, it comes to the minister and I believe has to also be signed off by the Treasurer as well. I will double-check but, in terms of the way those conditions are set, that is the way it is done and is broadly consistent with the rest of the Public Service.

Mr TELFER: Just one more piece of clarification: you envisage that the board of a statutory trust that is formed under this arrangement will be the ones who are responsible for making a recommendation to the minister on the remuneration terms and conditions of the appointment of a CEO and that the minister will take that advice and make the final decision on the basis of that advice, depending on the output that is expected of that statutory trust? That is, the minister will take the advice but the minister will have the final say?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: There is an ability to appoint a CE before the trust is established, obviously to get things going. I would imagine in those circumstances it would be the government's intention to set the remuneration there broadly in line with the West Beach Trust. Subsequently, it would be—I just cannot remember if it is noting or approval. Given the minister's broad powers in the act, which we talked about before, it would almost certainly come to the minister

either for noting or approval, following advice from Treasury and other Public Service workforce agencies and the like.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Brown): Alright, member for Flinders.

Mr TELFER: I appreciate your flexibility, sir. Minister, you reflected just then on the broad powers of the minister. Do you envision that the minister has the power to be able to direct employees of statutory trusts?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: No. It is the trust itself which is subject to ministerial control, not its employees.

Clause passed.

Clauses 29 to 37 passed.

Clause 38.

Mr TELFER: Clause 38 talks about damage, etc., to property of a statutory trust and creates an offence of damaging the property of a statutory trust. Probably, thus, it raises the question of what is trust property. Does this include land that was previously owned or under the control of a council that has been taken over by the trust?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Yes.

Mr TELFER: Does this clause then apply to any council-owned land?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Only if it was in the care and control of the trust.

Mr TEAGUE: I will couch this in the form of a question. My understanding is that none of this is transferring title or ownership of any land. In being related to eligible land, it is simply identifying land that is capable of being brought within the care and control of the trust and its status is otherwise unalienated and unaffected, right?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Yes, with the exception of land that is to be acquired. That will obviously be owned by the minister.

Mr TEAGUE: On that then, the land that is to be acquired, the title will be dealt with, I think, as the minister on reflection put it: there will be no real property of the trust in that sense. The trust will simply do what trusts do and exercise powers and so on. Presumably, the land that is within the defined area of the Northern Parklands will have a variety of different statuses depending on where it has come from.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Yes, that is right.

Mr TELFER: There is a bit of a list of offences, for want of the better word, in this aspect. There are two that I would like a bit of clarification on concerning what you envisage the definition might be. Firstly, (c) and (e) together are probably comparable. What is the definition of 'cultivates'? That could be in the eye of the beholder somewhat, and the same with 'excavates'. Is a cultivation a scratch on a surface? Is an excavation a small hole? Who makes the decision when looking at the potential for a violation of these aspects in particular, especially with those two?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It has been modelled on the Crown Lands Management Act. If you look forward to clause 40, there are agreements that the trust can make with councils about enforcement, and obviously that model allows for if someone were to do these things and be prosecuted, that is how we would enforce it and that is how we go through it. That would be a matter for court, I would imagine.

Mr TELFER: The other aspect which provides a fair bit of ambiguity is paragraph (f):

cuts down, lops branches from or—

and these are the words I just want to highlight in particular—

otherwise damages any tree or bush (whether alive or dead) on trust parklands.

On face value, with 'otherwise damages any tree or bush (whether alive or dead)' there is a fair bit of range within that. What do you envisage that process looks like when the determination is made? Firstly, to what degree and, secondly, what is the process for the decision? We see later in clause 40 that an 'authorised officer' is 'a person who is an authorised person for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1999'. I see a full range of general inspectors throughout the years across the 68 different councils. Some are conscientious, some are overzealous. I worry that having this level of capacity range within a piece of legislation opens it up for that potential overzealous authorised officer within a council to go over and above the expectations of the minister or the community about what exactly would be defined as 'otherwise damages any tree or bush (whether alive or dead)'.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It is no different to a linear park, where councils have enforcement of their own by-laws. It is a very similar process and provision. Obviously, it is there to protect the parklands from a range of misuse, and one can imagine what that might be.

Clause passed.

Clause 39.

Mr TELFER: This clause is about the power to resume land in trust parklands. Can the minister explain the new powers to resume land and set out whether the previous owner of the land, such as a council, is required to be consulted or entitled to any level of compensation?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: If land is removed from the parklands, it has to be for a public purpose and it has to be tabled in parliament.

Mr TELFER: Can you set out whether the previous owner of the land that had been placed in a statutory trust, like a council, is required to be consulted or entitled to any level of compensation?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It is required to be consulted, but it goes back to a public purpose.

Mr TELFER: It goes back to a public purpose under what sort of arrangement? It could go back to Crown land managed by X department, or it could go to a council in that local government area. What is envisaged by this aspect in particular?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: This involves where the parklands were getting smaller, the land was going out of the parklands trust. You will remember the previous clause, that you need a resolution of both houses of parliament in order to effectively do that. So there are already two important provisions of the act. It just provides a mechanism that, if land is coming out of the parklands, it has to go for a public purpose and it has to be tabled in parliament.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Brown): Member for Flinders, you are stepping over the line. You are a habitual line stepper, member for Flinders, but go ahead.

Mr TELFER: So for a public purpose, what do you envisage? One automatically thinks of parklands, etc., but does public purpose also have the potential for public housing or a public golf course or a public sports stadium? Can you give some definition as to what public purpose might be?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: I would imagine public purpose means public open space. I do not envisage it to be used for other purposes, but this bill is all about creating our parklands, not divesting oneself of it. It just provides a provision—

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: No. I understand the member's question, but I think it is unlikely to be used and, if it was used, it would be for some other form of public open space.

Clause passed.

Clause 40.

Mr TELFER: We have reflected on this a little bit already. Can the minister explain the arrangements that are proposed within clause 40, including who would receive the revenue from any expiation notices issued?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It is a matter for the trust and the council once the trust has been established.

Mr TELFER: So there is the capacity within this for either the trust or the council, who would be the potential instigator or the one that has the authorised officer, depending on the agreement between the trust and a member council, to decide on who takes any expiation fees that are raised through these aspects from clauses 38 to 40?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It is an agreement between the trust and the council and those arrangements will have to be worked out. The purpose of the legislation is not to do the trust's job but to set out the mechanisms for which they would reach agreement.

Mr TEAGUE: It is an interesting choice, and there may be precedent as there is for lots of this, to provide that—including not just expiations, but penalties for the various offences the subject of clause 38. It might be \$20,000; there could be a fair bit in it. That is not going to the trust but to the council. So if it does involve lopping of trees, you zero in on that particular part of the park in which that has happened. I do not want to call them the lucky council, but it is an offence against the concept of the parklands as a whole to see someone getting in there and destroying it, to use that example. One might wonder: is there not an alternative virtue in the penalty amount going to the trust, as opposed to that it just happens to be over the line from Playford to Gawler, or one way or the other, and it just all goes holus-bolus to that council?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Councils have experience as authorised officers. They know how to do this. It is not uncommon for them to do enforcement, like under the paid parking act. It is the same arrangement and that arrangement works well, so it works well for the trust, it works well for the council, and this is there to obviously dissuade people from engaging in activity that was contrary to the interests of the parklands.

Mr TELFER: Under that circumstance could the council recover from the state government the costs that it incurs from the enforcing of this new act? On the one hand the member was talking about a windfall, but the most likely outcome is that the enforcement requirements and costs are going to be larger than the amount they are actually going to be able to get from the expiation, or is that all to be incorporated within an agreement between the statutory trust and the council?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: The idealistic hope is that enforcement is not needed and people love the parklands and do not engage in bad behaviour. That said, bad behaviour does occur and obviously that would be part of the agreement between the trust and the council, which they can sensibly reach, to deal with any of those sorts of issues.

Clause passed.

Sitting extended beyond 18:00 on motion of Hon. N.D. Champion.

Clause 41.

Mr TELFER: Can the minister let the committee know if the statutory trust will be required to publish annual reports to parliament and, if not, what will be the accountability measures for those statutory trusts?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Both the strategic plan and the annual plan are public documents, and obviously I have not turned my mind to other performance agreements. I think the parliament will want to know regarding the annual report, and I certainly have no problem with committing to the opposition that I would consider tabling them in parliament.

Mr TELFER: So you envisage that the annual business plan will be one that is able to be tabled, and we may or may not talk about the long-term strategic plan but the same sort of thing, so it is set out into a process that any future statutory trust should be required to participate in?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: I think the government's position would be a maximum degree of openness. However, that said, there will be important commerciality issues in that. So, with that proviso of protecting the trust and its commercial ventures, I am happy to commit, when I come to setting up the trust and putting forward the performance agreements to consider, to the tabling of an appropriate report to parliament.

Clause passed.

Clauses 42 to 44 passed.

Clause 45.

Mr TELFER: Clause 45—Acquisition of land refers to stage 1 and stage 2. Can you explain the difference?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It mainly relates to the timing. Stage 1 is before 2030 and relates to the land, broadly speaking, from the top of the hill down to the river. Stage 2 is 2030 to 2040 and that is for the other section of the Northern Parklands.

Mr TELFER: For further clarification—and this is obviously setting parameters as well as setting expectations—the additional land to be expected in stage 2 is to be included?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Prior to 2030, whoever is minister at that point will lodge a GRO plan and that will outline the land that is to be acquired. Obviously, we would have to go through pretty sophisticated and sensitive discussions with landowners about what land is to be acquired. It is the government's preference, however—and I have met with a number of landowners—to work with landowners about reaching sensible agreements about the establishment of that stage 2. Noting that it is 2030 to 2040, I do not think that will be a job I am doing at the time.

Mr TELFER: We spoke about this a little bit earlier in the committee stage, but when councils change the use of community land they are required by the state to consult local communities in a pretty prescriptive manner. What do you envisage the process looks like? Do you agree or disagree that communities should be thoroughly consulted in a prescriptive manner before local land is acquired from a council or before they are charged a new property tax for local parks?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Again, we get back to the point. Council land will come under the care and control of the trust. For other lands that are acquired, the Land Acquisition Act will apply. We have sort of been through a bit of a semantic argument. We have outlined how the trust might derive its operating revenues. I would not characterise it as a new property tax because that is the wrong characterisation. I appreciate—

Mr Teague interjecting:

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: No, I did not—anyway, we will not get into it at this late stage. It is clear what the intention of the act is to do. As I said before, parks always require revenues, and if you form a linear park, it is paid for out of the rates of the council.

Mr TELFER: I was trying to get clarification on what your expectation is on the consultation process. The consultation for community land revocation is pretty thorough. There needs to be publication. There needs to be a reasonably extended period of time for community to have their input and then decisions made.

For consultation on the acquisition of a piece of land from a council, I note that the government's preferred mechanism for consultation often is the YourSAy website. Well, things can get lost pretty easily on YourSAy. Do you envisage there being a more prescriptive process when looking at the changing of that, e.g., local advertising, a letterbox drop within the affected council area, etc., a more detailed consultation piece than just broadly, 'This is what we plan to be doing; what do you think?'

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: The 170-page discussion paper went out for around three months, and then there were the deliberations of the State Planning Commission, who released a draft plan, and there then was the government's formal adoption. That is already a huge amount of consultation. I have been meeting with landowners in Kudla and other places to discuss that with them as a result of those consultations. The trust will have an annual business plan or a long-term strategic plan. So I would argue there has actually been more consultation than many other processes, more transparency than many other processes, the processes you talk about for local government for revocation of land. We do have to provide a prescriptive process for the acquisition of land through the Land Acquisition Act. That is the answer.

Mr TEAGUE: Going to subclause (2) and then subclause (3), again, it might be interesting to note that the drafting approach here seems to be that it first sets it up as an obligation to comply with the process under the Land Acquisition Act, and then the notice of intention that is referred to in subclause (3) appears to be necessarily a notice of intention pursuant to section 10 of the Land Acquisition Act, but we do not see that separately stipulated.

In a way, the only purpose of subclause (3) appears to be to identify this offence that is going to apply only where the acquisition of land is pursuant to this particular process. There is no such offence in the Land Acquisition Act ordinarily. It is a serious offence with a very large maximum penalty, so I am interested to unpack the particular reason for the imposition of such a serious offence in circumstances where one might ask the question: why is the usual straightforward process of land acquisition pursuant to the Land Acquisition Act not sufficient?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: It is because of the special circumstances of creating a park and in creating a park we want to make sure that the land is not damaged as part of that process. We are using the Land Acquisition Act and we are putting this provision in there to make sure the land cannot be damaged. You would understand that that might be an issue in the creation of a park and that we want to prevent any damage that might occur.

Mr TELFER: Just reflecting on the answer you gave before about the comprehensive process, minister, can you advise the house if the new Northern Parklands levy has been considered by either of the two affected council chambers? Have they made any decision or given any direction formally to the government on what their position is on the levy in particular?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: I have met with both councils on many different occasions as part of the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan process and the setting up of these parklands, or the proposed setting up of these parklands. I do not know if council chambers have considered it; they certainly considered the GARP though. Gawler council certainly considered the GARP and I believe Playford council certainly considered the GARP.

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Well, the bill is up on the SA legislation website. I have not received any communication beyond that.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (46 and 47) passed.

Schedule 1.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: I move:

Amendment No 1 [Planning-1]—

Page 30, line 31—Delete 'provision' and substitute 'provisions'

Amendment No 2 [Planning-1]—

Page 31, after line 4—Insert:

2—Transitional provision—constituent councils for Northern Parklands Trust

For the purposes of the appointment of the initial members of the Northern Parklands Trust (and until the approval of the first annual business plan of the Trust), a reference in section 12(1)(a) to the constituent councils will be taken to be a reference to the Town of Gawler and the City of Playford.

Just in relation to the issues the deputy leader, the member for Heysen, raised about the transitional councils, which would normally be dealt with in transitional regulations once the act is done, we decided to move these two amendments as a result of the opposition's questions.

Amendments carried; schedule as amended passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (17:43): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:44): I rise briefly—and I do not want to jump the gun if the minister had anything further to add, otherwise I will.

In relation to the amendments that have been passed in the course of the committee, I note they have just now been provided to me. I am looking at them and, on the face of it, I am not surprised, and indicate that the minister has flagged that amendments of this nature would be brought here at the conclusion of the committee stage in light of what was raised—most relevantly, at clause 3 primarily and also clause 12.

That is in relation to the necessity to have some constituent councils in existence before those councils can go ahead and nominate their two, I think, members of the trust. The trust can then be formed and can, among other things, settle on an annual business plan which can then reveal—for the first time, and pursuant to the machinery in the bill—the councils that are thereafter going to be the constituent councils for the trust. It is kind of a fundamental starting point and necessary, in my view, that that be specifically provided for, and I am glad it is there.

Otherwise, with the usual provisos as to reserving a right to consider that in debate in between the houses, in a way I am not expecting there is anything more to it than that, but that is as I understand it at this stage. I just indicate that, and it is a constructive and necessary step. I just refer to the fact that there is a bunch of useful material (for want of a better word) that has been aired in the course of the committee stage that I anticipate will be a useful reference point for, among others, those relevantly affected by the two councils that are going to be the constituent councils at the beginning, and anyone else who is more closely following the progress of the establishment.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: I thank members of the opposition for their consideration and support of the bill, and for the debate on the bill. We had a good discussion about it, and I thank members for their contributions. The opposition has flagged some issues with clause 15, particularly relating to only the House of Assembly having oversight of particular sections of the act. I indicate that the government is happy to consider an amendment that includes both houses of parliament, as we have in other sections of the bill. That will be a matter we can consider between the houses. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a third time and passed.

**RADIATION PROTECTION AND CONTROL (COMMENCEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 21 August 2025.)

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (17:49): I rise to speak in support of the Radiation Protection and Control (Commencement of Proceedings) Amendment Bill 2025. South Australians rightly expect their government to safeguard both the health of our people and the safety of our environment. Radiation, whilst enormously valuable in fields like medicine, industry and research, also carries risks if it is misused or poorly managed. That is why this parliament passed the Radiation Protection and Control Act 2021 to ensure strong oversight of activities involving radiation sources and to make sure the benefits can be realised without compromising community safety.

It is worth remembering that radiation is not only a risk to be managed, it is also an extraordinary tool for good. Every day in this state, radiation technologies help to diagnose disease, deliver targeted cancer treatments and guide life-saving medical decisions. South Australia has a proud record in this field and I want to take a moment to acknowledge the outstanding work of our medical physicists, particularly those at SA Pathology. These highly skilled professionals ensure that radiation is used safely, accurately and effectively in medical imaging and therapy. They are at the

frontline of patient care, often behind the scenes, making sure that every scan and every treatment delivers maximum benefit with minimum risk. Their expertise is vital to our health system and it is a reminder of the value of a strong, publicly funded health service.

This is something that Labor will always stand for. We will always back in our health workforce, from doctors and nurses to medical scientists and medical physicists. We will continue to invest in the people and the systems that keep South Australians safe and well. The great work being done at SA Pathology and across our public health network shows the strength of a system that Labor has built, defended and continues to strengthen.

But as legislators, we also have a responsibility to make sure the laws that govern these areas are practical, effective and enforceable, and here we have identified a flaw. Section 82(1)(a) of the act currently requires that proceedings for an inexcusable offence be commenced within six months. That timeframe might be suitable for relatively straightforward matters, but for more complex or serious cases it is simply unworkable.

Some offences under the act are capable of being dealt with either by expiation or prosecution. There is a substantial difference between the penalties that apply in each pathway. That difference reflects the clear intent of this parliament that minor breaches may be expiated but serious breaches should face the highest scrutiny and consequence of prosecution; yet, because these offences are technically expiable, the six-month limitation applies to them.

The reality is that the Environment Protection Authority, the body charged with enforcing the act, often needs more than six months just to properly investigate. Their work may involve site inspections, witness interviews, reviewing technical documentation, commissioning expert analysis and seeking legal advice. In some cases, the alleged offence may not even come to the EPA's attention until well after six months have passed. The risk is obvious—serious offences may escape prosecution altogether, not because they are not worthy of prosecution but simply because the law imposes an arbitrary and unrealistic deadline. This bill fixes that problem.

The amendment before us today will extend the period for commencing proceedings for expiable offences under the Radiation Protection and Control Act 2021 from six months to three years. That will bring the act in line with the Environment Protection Act 1993 and it will ensure that investigations can be carried out thoroughly and prosecutions pursued properly without being undermined by unnecessary time pressures.

This change does not alter the balance of the act, it does not expand the scope of offences, nor does it increase penalties. What it does is give regulators the time they need to uphold the standards this parliament has already set. It strengthens accountability, it supports deterrence, and it ensures that those who breach the rules cannot simply run out the clock. At its heart, this is a bill about protecting people and protecting our environment. It ensures that South Australians can continue to benefit from the safe use of radiation in medicine, research and industry, while knowing that strong and fair enforcement is there as a backstop. It is also a bill that reflects Labor values. It is about putting public health first. It is about supporting our world-class health professionals with a system that backs them in, and it is about making our laws serve the community, not the convenience of those who would break them. I commend this 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) (17:54): I am pleased to close the debate on this small change but nonetheless a very important one, basically fixing a little error that had crept in under the previous version of this bill. We need to make sure that our standards are the highest and, as has been so eloquently described by the member for Gibson, that we are looking after the professionals who operate within the world of the positive use of radiation and ensure that anyone who is doing the wrong thing, either inadvertently or deliberately, is treated with the appropriate seriousness. I therefore commend this bill to the house.

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) (17:55): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

At 17:56 the house adjourned until Thursday 4 September 2025 at 11:00.