

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 30 October 2025

The SPEAKER (Hon. L.W.K. Bignell) took the chair at 11:00.

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

The SPEAKER read prayers.

Parliamentary Committees

SELECT COMMITTEE INTO STILLBIRTH IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Ms SAVVAS (Newland) (11:03): I move:

That the final report of the committee be noted.

Forgive me, for I will no doubt falter in my words today. I would like to acknowledge the presence of advocacy groups, health professionals and, of course, bereaved parents in the gallery this morning, including one very special bereaved parent on her first visit to our parliament: my mum, Rachel.

We have been forever shaped by the loss of my baby brother, Benjamin Isaac. I will never forget the day that I was told he would not be coming home with us. I stood on the grass out the front of the women's and kids' as a four year old on the phone to my mum. 'The baby is going to be looked after by Mrs Murphy in heaven,' she told me. Mrs Murphy was my great-uncle's mother, who had passed away in the months beforehand, and we had all loved her. I could not quite understand why being looked after by Mrs Murphy would be a bad thing.

In the days, weeks and months following, I felt myself grow up very quickly. I will not forget watching my mum at the cemetery as my little brother's casket was lowered into the ground, nor will I forget the way his passing changed the dynamic of our family for good. I know my family is not alone in that.

The unwavering change in the Australian stillbirth rate signifies that, in the last 20 years, over 40,000 babies' deaths changed families around our country forever. Over 40,000 babies did not take their first steps or learn to ride a bike, or have their first day of school. That is over 2,000 families each year not bringing their baby home. Despite the significant advancements in health care, and Australia being one of the safest countries in which to give birth, at least six babies are born still every day—double the national road toll.

I know that much has changed since my brother's passing. The establishment of the Wattle Clinic at the women's and kids', for example, means that the support my mum received in subsequent pregnancies is now being formalised to help families navigate the complexity of pregnancy after loss. But despite that, the most recent figures show that the stillbirth rate is rising—8.7 per thousand births—and that is the highest rate recorded in Australia in 20 years.

Red Nose Day and the SIDS campaign paved the way for an evidence-based safe sleep program, to reduce the risk of babies dying in their sleep. This is estimated to have saved 12,000 little lives. With the development of the National Stillbirth Action and Implementation Plan, and the implementation of effective prevention and awareness campaigns regarding stillbirth, it is my hope that even more babies' lives can be saved.

During our inquiry, the select committee heard from bereaved parents, support services, stillbirth awareness groups and charities, medical associations, academics, psychologists and government bodies. I am grateful to everyone who took the time to provide a submission to speak with us, in particular the bereaved parents—thank you for sharing your stories. I am really proud of our recommendations today and I will speak to a few of them.

The first area of recommendation goes to improved data collection and research effort. We know that the rollout of the Safer Baby Bundle here in SA has not been consistent, and we want to see consistent uptake as well as consistency in those conversations being had with expectant parents. We are encouraging a specific evaluation of the bundle here in SA, as well as the embedding of the bundle into our SA Pregnancy Record, following on from Western Australia.

We are also encouraging formalised timely data collection. We have heard time and time again that the data with respect to lost babies is lagging behind, and there are two issues that we see with that:

- (a) it makes it incredibly difficult to assess the success of the National Stillbirth Action Plan and/or the Safer Baby Bundle; and
- (b) it is one more barrier for bereaved parents in their quest to feel that their baby's life and subsequent death has been acknowledged.

The second area goes to standardised resource distribution and empowerment. This recommendation goes to the provision of standardised resources to every pregnant woman, regardless of cultural and linguistic diversity or postcode. The *Your Pregnancy* brochures, from Still Aware, offer evidence-based information, advice and guidance about each stage of pregnancy, including common questions about fetal movement, sleeping position and trusting your maternal instinct.

Thirdly, we are recommending improved education and continued professional development, not just for the benefit of families but for the clinicians themselves. There are a number of wonderful clinicians who do their best in these circumstances but, unfortunately, most are just not trained to do so, although there is education available from the Department for Health and Wellbeing, as well as the Stillbirth CRE, and I do note that WCHN and NALHN have recently supported midwives to complete the COPE training course.

From evidence received, we do believe that uptake of this training needs to be further strengthened to provide consistent, compassionate support to bereaved families. It is very clear that this needs to start at university, and we are recommending that South Australian universities embed loss into their undergraduate midwifery curriculum. Midwives hold a primary responsibility for supporting women and families during stillbirth. One parent, while noting that staff did show compassion after their baby's delivery, stated:

It was obvious that most staff there had never encountered a stillbirth. I believe it had been over 15 years since one had occurred at the hospital. Many of the nurses were very uncertain and uncomfortable about dealing with us.

This isn't fair on parents, and it isn't fair on clinicians either. We want our health professionals to be empowered and supported through what is likely to be incredibly traumatising for them as well. Starting that conversation early in their journey is important.

Fourth, we are recommending standardised and trauma-informed bereavement care at our hospitals. This will include the implementation of a formal bereavement midwifery model at maternity hospitals. We do know these champions of care exist in many settings, but we also know that babies come whenever they like and it is important that we have a model where there are teams of professionals specifically trained in bedside trauma care and infant loss.

We are recommending a standardised process for bereavement care as well as a trial of the Precious Wings model of memory box delivery, which provides both memory-making for families and educational resources for clinicians. We are recommending—and I am really pleased with this one—an expansion of the current follow-on care for live births, traditionally delivered by CaFHS, to support bereaved mothers inclusive of at-home visits. One parent noted:

From day two postpartum I was to experience the first example of how stigmatising stillbirth is, realising that a postpartum grieving mother was deemed not to require post-natal midwifery care because I did not have a live baby in my arms. I remember wondering on day four, with painfully engorged breasts, whether the emotional pain in my heart was worse than what I was feeling physically.

We are also recommending ongoing funding to the beautiful team at Red Tree to continue their delivering of counselling supports for families who have lost a pregnancy or child up to 17. This is a

vital service, and I am incredibly pleased that our government will be continuing to support Red Tree moving forward.

Recommendation 5 goes to future conception planning, and I acknowledge for the record today the complexity of navigating pregnancy after loss. For those parents who decide to conceive again after a miscarriage, stillbirth, neonatal death or loss of a child, it can be a very complex and anxiety-inducing period.

I was incredibly pleased to stand up at the women's and kids' a year ago tomorrow and talk to the success of our First Pregnancy After Loss, or Rainbow Clinic, here in SA. I am really pleased to be recommending the continued rollout of these clinics and I do want to acknowledge the incredible work of Tina Bode, who is here today somewhere in the gallery, and the team at the Wattle Clinic.

They offer additional appointments for things like early screening for gestational diabetes, increased fetal movement assessment and the possible use of low-dose aspirin if pre-term pre-eclampsia or other forms of placental dysfunction were evident in previous stillbirths, not to mention the psychological benefits for families who do not want to be repeating their stories at every visit.

We are also recommending a Purple Butterfly program. We have seen so much success in the Sunflower Project as a universal symbol of hidden disability, it is the hope of the committee that this bereavement symbol will silently acknowledge the pregnancy loss, facilitating a respectful, sensitive environment. This symbol will remove the need for explaining previous trauma at every hospital presentation. Additionally, it will benefit healthcare professionals and prepare staff when meeting patients for the first time.

Finally, we are recommending an investigation into the ways we help parents who wish to conceive again after what is identified as a preventable loss. I do want to acknowledge Chris Barnett and the broader team here in SA who are doing leading work in genomics.

We are advocating for some changes to the model of care at our maternity hospitals. Firstly, we are recommending an expansion of models of midwifery-led continuity of care, particularly in rural and remote communities. We are recommending also a separate space at the new Women's and Children's Hospital, somewhere where parents can deliver their children without the sound of crying babies around them.

I acknowledge that generally mothers are sent to the rooms furthest away at the current women's and kids', but many submissions still mentioned the sound of crying or walking through the hallway and seeing babies in incubators, not to mention balloons and flowers. One submission said:

Once everyone left they left me in the birthing suite for observation where they tried to medicate me to sleep but I didn't sleep a wink. All I could hear was other women having babies and hearing the babies being born crying repeatedly. This was so distressing.

Another said:

Most devastating of all, as we made the most difficult of walks leaving our dead baby in the hospital, we passed other rooms in the birth suite. We heard a baby's heartbeat on a CTG monitor and a newborn baby crying. I nearly physically collapsed from the shock and the grief.

While we acknowledge that birthing suites may need to be close together for access to resourcing and medical equipment and supplies, we believe this can be done in a way that allows for privacy and sensitivity during an incredibly traumatic but important time where parents are saying goodbye to their babies.

Finally, we will advocate for a streamlined approach to the federal government, particularly with respect to a national stillbirth awareness campaign, psychological supports and preconception testing. I will also advocate to cemetery providers, including councils, for reduced fees for burying infants. I am completely shaken by the stories from parents who said:

I asked what would happen if we didn't arrange this and was told after a month or two the baby would be disposed of as medical waste, which shocked me to my core.

I acknowledge the incredible, valuable support of those private funeral providers who have shown compassion and kindness to bereaved families, and the huge number of councils which have done the same.

When I asked my mum for her blessing to establish this inquiry she told me that she never thought my brother would have a legacy. I want to thank each and every parent who has contributed to our work. I hope our report is a strong legacy for your little ones.

In my household we were raised knowing and loving our baby Ben, as we often called him. Each year he was remembered with a new ornament on the Christmas tree. Some years we would buy a gift at the Kmart Wishing Tree for a boy his age. On special occasions we would sit amongst families like ours at the baby cemetery wondering what his life would have looked like. We remembered our baby Ben with a portrait hanging in the front hall of our family home. We remembered our baby Ben with his footprints proudly displayed above the kitchen sink. We remembered our baby Ben with a Benjamin ornament on the tree each year but, until now, like so many babies loved and lost, he has only been remembered by us. With this report I remember him for the record, not as a member of parliament but as a proud big sister, and with this report I thank my mum for letting this be our baby Ben's legacy.

In closing, as their legacy with many of their parents joining us here today, I would like to acknowledge the stories of other babies who have contributed to this legacy: Harry, Emma Louise, 'Gromit', Avery, Celeste, Gemma Violet, Conor James, Oscar Frederick, Sofia Josephine, Theodore Lawrence, Bella Grace, Alfie, Blair Anne, Aurora, Harry, Willow, Jack, Alexander, Daniel Junior, James, Jacob, Claudia, Reggie, Liam Henry, Tommy, Askel Jude, Ayla, Connor, Elaria, Lucas Adam, Isabel Nellie, Chaunte Rose, Aya, Ella Grace, Hunter Jude, Zen, Phoebe, Toby, Ezra Alexander, Charlie and Sophia, Kendra, Norman Thomas, Mia Siena, Tom, Olivia and Sophie, Aimee, Leo, and, of course, Benjamin Isaac, as well as all pregnancies lost, babies lost and unnamed babies in the stars. This is for you. Thank you.

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (11:17): Well done to the member for Newland. There will be a few tears in this chamber today, not just on the floor but in the gallery, I know, probably tears that are only a small portion of the emotion, love and care that this report represents. I have been watching with interest the work that has been done and I congratulate the member for Newland on bringing it to the attention of this place because it is sadly untalked about subject matter.

It is one that families carry with them and is often one that is, as the member for Newland has spoken about, only grieved within that small family cohort but perhaps one that is carried through. Every time a day goes past with a smell or a sight or a reminder is a day of a reminder of what could have been. Every time that someone says, 'That's a big gap in between those kids,' only you know the reason for that gap.

I want to speak about some friends of mine in particular who went through the most challenging time, lost their baby at beyond full term. It is one we share their grief in, one where we were able as young friends to attend a service to recognise the life that never was, a baby who was not able to take their first breath but who is a key part of their family. It was their firstborn. Thankfully, they have gone on after this incredible challenge to have the remainder of their family being born, but they will always have that gap, that hole at the start of their family.

There are some really important recommendations shared within this report. I congratulate the committee on being thorough in the way they have gone about it. I also want to impress to those who are reading the report and covering this that the burden on regional families is even greater because of the isolation faced going through a situation like this.

Often it is a traumatic situation where they have ended up at the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide and gone through exactly the same situation that the member for Newland talked about: the level of grief, of shock, of uncertainty and then they have to go home. My electorate is hundreds of kilometres away from the Women's and Children's Hospital, and the support structures, which are already not enough, are even less accessible in regional communities.

I hope with the tabling of this report that there is understanding of the depth of grief and the depth of challenge faced by grieving families, and mothers in particular. The maternal instinct that

the member for Newland spoke about is really special. Speaking to mothers who have lost their children, they knew; when they woke up they knew something was wrong. They did not know what was wrong but it ended up in a terrible situation.

That aspect is really important and for medical professionals to understand that intrinsic maternal link to the unborn child is a really important one. Life is so precious. Life is so precious and we should do what we can to hold it near and do what we can to support those who have sadly experienced loss of life. It is only in a situation like that that you can really understand how precarious life really is and how much we should hold on to it dearly.

This report has made a series of recommendations. In reviewing them, I am really appreciative of the thorough nature of the report. As I said, I want to ensure that there is not just a metropolitan focus but that there is an understanding of the additional responsibility that we have as decision-makers to ensure that those who live in postcodes further away from 5000 have the supports necessary to be able to get through. Support from the CaFHS nurses is really important but, sadly, we are seeing it becoming harder and harder to get CaFHS support in regional South Australia and that is something that needs the understanding of decision-makers.

If you are living out in a community, a farm or wherever a hundred kilometres away from anywhere, that CaFHS nurse is the connection you need, that reassurance, that support, whether you have a baby in your arms or whether you are grieving the loss of a child born without taking a breath, it is a really important thing.

Once again, I congratulate the member for Newland. I thank the members in the gallery for being here. Thank you for your understanding as we deal with having to articulate emotion on the floor. I thank those who have been putting in efforts to build a greater understanding within both community and the medical profession about some of the different aspects of the causation of this terrible challenge that is being faced and also the support structures for those who have to face it. Sadly, these incidents will happen. Even with the greatest of science, there is always going to be those who experience loss, so the support that is provided is really essential.

I commend the report. I thank the member for Newland and the rest of the members of the committee. I am sure I would have been a blubbing mess in the committee as we heard presentations—as we all would have been. If we have not experienced loss ourselves, we all know someone, a family or a couple, who have gone through some of these challenging situations. With that, I conclude my remarks.

Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (11:24): I stand today in support of the South Australian parliament's report of the Select Committee into Stillbirth in South Australia. In doing so, I acknowledge first the dedication by the Chair, the member for Newland, who through the establishment of the committee honoured her brother, baby Ben, who was born still. I acknowledge also all of the parents and family members who presented evidence to the committee and those who appeared before the committee, including those here today who shared their heartbreaking journey with us. I acknowledge them as parents and I acknowledge each of their babies.

While stillbirth is defined by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare as the death of a baby after 20 weeks of pregnancy or weighing 400 grams or more, there are also many bereaved parents who endured the loss of a much-wanted baby earlier in their pregnancy, and I acknowledge them also today.

Stillbirth and miscarriage are often seen as taboo subjects. However, it has become clear through the evidence presented to the committee that it should be spoken about during pregnancy with expectant parents in antenatal classes and by medical practitioners, and that this may assist to some degree with alleviating social isolation, misplaced guilt and frustration of bereaved parents and families should the pregnancy outcome be a stillbirth or miscarriage. While some stillbirths can be prevented, there are many that cannot, and the overwhelming evidence provided to the committee was that awareness and being informed on the possibility is important.

On an average day in Australia, six babies are born still, affecting more than 2,000 families each year. It is estimated that around one in every 135 pregnancies that reach the 20-week mark will end in stillbirth, and it is higher in First Nations populations and disadvantaged groups. The

committee heard from numerous experts that side sleeping in late pregnancy can significantly reduce the rate of stillbirth and, further, that side sleeping after 28 weeks more than halves the risk of stillbirth compared to sleeping on the back.

This information has been incorporated in Stillbirth CRE's Safer Baby Bundle handbook. We also heard from the Australian College of Midwives that maternal awareness of any changes in fetal movement, decreased or increased, is extremely important and that with timely assessment and follow-up the possibility of stillbirth may be reduced.

The committee developed seven recommendations, the summaries of which are improved data collection and research effort, standardised resource distribution and empowerment, improved education and continued professional development, standardised trauma-informed bereavement care, supporting future conception planning, models of care at maternity hospitals, and continued advocacy for a streamlined approach. The member for Newland, the Chair of the committee, has gone into some detail with those.

While acknowledging that not all stillbirths can be prevented, we heard that the adoption of the recommendations will help reduce the risk of stillbirths and, further, that when such a tragedy occurs healthcare professionals need to be adequately equipped to support the parents at the time of their loss and in subsequent pregnancies. The implementation of these recommendations is crucial to reducing stillbirths across South Australia.

In closing, I want to acknowledge my parliamentary colleagues—committee Chair, Ms Olivia Savvas, member for Newland; the Hon. Lucy Hood, member for Adelaide; the Hon. David Pisoni, member for Unley; and David Basham, member for Finnis—for their unswerving professionalism and sincere empathy throughout. There were occasions when tears were shed and quiet times following a committee meeting where we had heard evidence from grieving parents.

I want to thank the committee secretariat, who were also on this journey with us—Melissa Campaniello, Dr Amy Mead, Dr Evan Smith, and Vicky from Hansard—and the medical practitioners who are there at the darkest hours of parents who experience this devastating loss. Finally, I want to thank the organisations that support bereaved parents and families, in particular Red Tree, and also acknowledge the work of the Wattle Clinic. I commend the report to the house.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (11:29): First up, to all the people in the gallery I say thank you for coming in. I thank the member for Newland for bringing this up. It is a very, very emotional issue. I am sorry; I do not know if I can get through this. There are a lot of things out there in the community. This happened to me personally years ago with my late wife.

When it does happen to a family, it is absolutely traumatic: to go through the issue of knowing that you have nine months or whatever it may be with the joy of thinking you are going to have a little one come out in that period of time and then to find out that there was an issue during the pregnancy that may prevent that from occurring and not having the joy of seeing and hearing the newborn baby come through.

My eldest daughter lost her little 18 month old to drowning. That was traumatic enough. At the same time, my younger daughter became pregnant. She always wanted a son. She had two girls; she always wanted a son. Unfortunately, something happened during the pregnancy and she had to carry that baby until such time as the birth occurred. The trauma for both my girls on the anniversaries and birthdays and things like that is always there. It was the same for my late wife. We lost two children during pregnancy and there is always that fear.

The member for Flinders had trouble talking through this. It is a very emotional issue. My thoughts are with the parents and the families who are here. You always have that uncertainty and the question of what happened during that period. But, as the member for Newland indicated with her little brother, Ben, and we have with my grandson, Jett, the photographs are there, the footprints are there and everything like that, so we do have that going forward.

I do not know how the committee would have got through this, hearing all the trauma and hearing all the evidence. It must have been hard for the parents who have gone through that trauma to actually come and relive that incident to the committee. I do not know how the members of the

committee, and the member for Newland as Chair, would have got through this—hearing all the evidence, being able to collate all that.

As the member for Flinders indicated, I know that it is no different to the people but when it happens in regional areas the staff and the nurses who are in the hospital have to deal with that. They are not trained on how to do that, because at the end of the day it does not happen every day. Certainly, in regional areas people know each other and it is very, very hard.

I say thank you to the committee for the recommendations. I say to all sides of politics, both state and federal: make certain we try everything we can to ensure we give every possible support to the parents involved in that journey and also to the staff and to the clinical people, to make certain that we have that support for those who go home and know that they are not going to have that particular person enjoy what we all in this chamber have done. We have all had a life. Some people just do not have the opportunity to enjoy what we have enjoyed, and we have taken that for granted.

I commend the report. I hope that we can look forward to reducing these experiences and during that period of time of pregnancy ensure that if something is going wrong we have the ability to address that. My condolences and my thoughts are with everybody here. Sorry, Mr Speaker, I do not think I can go any further.

Ms SAVVAS (Newland) (11:34): I want to thank everyone who has spoken today: the member for Torrens, as a member of our committee; the member for Flinders; and also the member for Stuart. I would particularly like to acknowledge the member for Stuart sharing his own experience. I have lost track of the number of people who I have spoken to throughout this period, some of whom I have known for years, who have shared their story, and perhaps it was a story I had not heard before. I would get texts from friends or calls from colleagues.

There is a lot to be said about the role of stigma in this discussion. Lots of people do not speak because they do not feel that they are able to. We heard time and time again from parents saying that, when family and friends do not know what to say after the loss of a little one, they choose to say nothing at all. I know how isolating that has been for so many families.

Above all things, I hope that this committee experience has been an experience where you have felt listened to and you have felt that your babies' lives were acknowledged. Those are two themes that I have found from every conversation with bereaved parents: (1) they want to be heard, and (2) they want us to acknowledge that their children existed. Above all things, I hope that we have been able to contribute to that journey for you and hopefully help you as you continue on your path of healing.

I would like to acknowledge everyone in this place who has been so supportive of my own passion project to do this work. I know there are a number of bereaved parents on both sides of the chamber, and I do want to acknowledge them. This is not easy, and it is not easy to be emotional in a place like this either, though we do have a motto in the stillbirth committee that we do not apologise for crying. We say that to our witnesses but also someone often has to say it to me sitting in the chair blubbing as someone speaks. Again, I think that goes to the stigma question. We want to be talking about these things, because we should. It is important. I think that infant loss is everyone's business. It is important to continue those conversations and for us to create an environment here in this parliament where people feel that they can have them. It is really important.

As I said, I would like to thank the members of the committee: the member for Torrens, the member for Adelaide, the member for Unley and the member for Finniss. All of the committee members showed compassion and kindness on this sensitive topic. I would also like to thank the committee staff: Melissa, who has been absolutely excellent and a real pillar of strength for me throughout this process; and Dr Amy Mead and Dr Evan Smith, who are in the top gallery. We had two research officers contribute to our report today. Evan came in towards the end of that project and took it in his stride. I am really grateful for the effort that both of you put into our report. You well and truly brought all of my feelings, thoughts and ideas to life, so I am really grateful for your work.

I would also like to thank someone who probably does not get thanked too often, and that is the wonderful Vicky from Hansard. Vicky came to me early in the piece and told me that she wanted to be the Hansard reporter on our committee. That was really special. She showed so much warmth

and often had a little comment to me on the side or sent me an email with an article she had seen. She was really engaged, which may not be the traditional way for Hansard reporters recording at the back, so I want to say a big thank you to Vicky from Hansard, she was excellent.

To all of our support staff and everyone who has contributed to this work, I am incredibly grateful. I know that our parents are too, as well as Minister Picton and his office, particularly Lauris. Lauris has been an excellent support to me as we worked through the report, the recommendations and considered what the government can do moving forward. I would also like to thank my own staff in the electorate office. Often my intense passion for this project has taken over everything else that we need to get done at any given time, so I am really grateful that they have given me the freedom to do so. They have all been so sensitive and warm in their approach as well in speaking with parents and helping me through this journey, which has been an incredibly emotional one.

I am incredibly proud of what we have done here. For me, although my official role as Chair is ending, I will not stop advocating in this space while I have the great privilege to do so. Thank you so much to everyone who has contributed. I am really grateful for the opportunity to have contributed to this work in this parliament.

The SPEAKER (11:39): I would like to thank and congratulate the member for Newland and all the committee members and everyone who played a part in this important report.

Motion carried.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE: YORKE PENINSULA HEALTH SERVICES

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (11:39): I move:

That the sixth report of the committee, entitled Inquiry into Delivery of Health Services on the Yorke Peninsula, be noted.

Beginning in November 2024, the Economic and Finance Committee, pursuant to section 16B of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, established an inquiry stemming from a petition presented to the South Australian House of Assembly in 2023 that requested the house to urge the government to take steps to ensure the equitable distribution of health expenditure, material and staffing resources to ensure appropriate access to quality health care for regional and rural South Australians and to reclassify Port Pirie and Wallaroo hospitals to improve resource allocations within the electorate of Narungga.

The Economic and Finance Committee resolved to specifically investigate (1) the classification of the Wallaroo Hospital, (2) the most appropriate local health network coverage of the Port Pirie hospital, (3) factors impacting the delivery of health services on Yorke Peninsula and especially in relation to access and equity and (4) any other matter relating to health services on Yorke Peninsula.

The inquiry received 86 submissions and heard from witnesses in Adelaide, Yorketown and Wallaroo. The committee thought it was especially important to visit Yorke Peninsula to hear from people directly and not expect them to come to Adelaide. The committee heard from nearly 30 individuals at the two public hearings on Yorke Peninsula as well as from several organisations and stakeholders.

One of the petition requests was an examination of the classification of Wallaroo Hospital within the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network, as it is the primary hospital on Yorke Peninsula. Classifications are determined for certain facilities and services at hospitals, with most services at Wallaroo Hospital being resourced at level 2 or 3. A number of submissions and witnesses stated that the services at Wallaroo Hospital needed to be upgraded, with a limited number of beds, particularly in the emergency department. It also highlighted that some specialist services, such as radiology, were not available at Wallaroo on a 24/7 basis.

Representatives from the local health network told the committee that the plan was to establish Wallaroo as part of a triangular hub alongside hospitals in Port Pirie and Clare with similar levels of service delivery.

The petition also requested for the Port Pirie hospital to be transferred from the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network to the Flinders and Upper North Local Health Network. There were

submissions and testimony which suggested that the Port Pirie hospital drew resources away from hospitals on Yorke Peninsula and that people were unlikely to travel to Port Pirie for treatment when travelling to metropolitan Adelaide was preferable, with suggestions that removing Port Pirie hospital from the local Yorke and Northern Local Health Network may result in the redistribution of a similar level of resources within a smaller network. However, the committee also heard that Port Pirie hospital was critical for maintaining levels of resources, staff and institutional knowledge within the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network.

The committee received submissions and witness statements on several other issues concerning health services on the peninsula. A problem faced across the region is a lack of personnel, including doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. This has meant that hospitals are at risk of being understaffed, people cannot access GP appointments in a suitable timeframe and specialist services are not available. Furthermore, the committee was told that early intervention and health monitoring measures have become inaccessible to many.

A lack of health practitioners on Yorke Peninsula partially stems from difficulties in recruiting to and retaining staff on the peninsula, especially when other regions in South Australia and nationally also have staff shortages and compete for suitable personnel. The committee heard that incentives are needed to attract staff to Yorke Peninsula while also addressing workload and safety concerns amongst existing staff.

Distance on Yorke Peninsula was raised as a significant issue during the inquiry, with many people choosing or needing to travel to Adelaide for treatment. This may be due to a lack of suitable appointments on the peninsula or that the services, particularly specialist services, are not available in the region. Further to this, there were numerous reports of people needing to travel long distances to Wallaroo, Maitland and Kadina from the southern parts of the peninsula. These travel requirements put strains on patients as well as their loved ones and present further risks to the residents of Yorke Peninsula. A lack of travel options was highlighted, with many depending on the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme or volunteer-driven ambulances.

Many specialist services are limited on Yorke Peninsula, including mental health services, antenatal and postnatal care, and palliative care services. In many of those cases, the committee heard that people need to travel significant distances, such as to Wallaroo or Adelaide, to access them or face substantial waits in accessing necessary services. This has led to a call by residents on Yorke Peninsula for greater investment in staff and facilities to provide greater services that are more locally accessible.

The committee made 16 recommendations in its report. Some of the key recommendations include investment to be considered to upgrade services at Wallaroo Hospital, such as an increase in the number of beds and 24/7 onsite radiology services, and the exploration of options to develop emergency department facilities at Yorketown and Maitland hospitals. The committee also recommends an investigation of pathways to increase the number of staff in hospitals on Yorke Peninsula, including incentives for early career nurses and those based in metropolitan areas to relocate and work on the peninsula, and possible expansion of the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network's Rural Doctor Program.

There are also recommendations in the report that relate to consideration of expanding specialist services for the community on the peninsula, such as increased mental health support in hospitals, greater child and family health services in the region and the expansion of palliative care services. A full list of the recommendations, with explanations, can be found in the report.

On behalf of the Economic and Finance Committee, I would like to extend my gratitude to the individuals and organisations that submitted evidence to the inquiry. I particularly want to highlight the contribution made by residents on Yorke Peninsula who attended the town hall meetings in Yorketown and Wallaroo in April of this year. I would like to thank them for their generosity of time and the evidence provided.

I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Economic and Finance Committee for their work on the inquiry as well as the parliamentary staff: Jessica Watson, Shannon Riggs and Dr Evan Smith. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the member for Narungga in getting behind the

petition and advocating so strongly for his community when it comes to the provision of health services.

All of those that live in the country, and especially the more distant parts of the country, know that there is a real challenge when it comes to delivery of services. There are issues around access and equity, and there is no magic wand here. There is no partisan political magic wand to some of these issues, but we have to keep plugging away. We have to sensibly allocate the resources necessary and we have to address some of the systemic issues—some of which are state based, but some are federal—and the interaction between the federal sphere and the state sphere. Once again, well done to the member for Narungga.

There are some changes currently going on. Country and Outback Health has been doing a lot of good work in the country; that is a federally funded agency that has a degree of flexibility. One of the issues that was raised on Yorke Peninsula, and especially in Yorketown, was the availability of GPs. There has been one very longstanding GP in Yorketown and there have been issues around accessibility and availability, so I am pleased that Country and Outback Health has now secured one additional GP for Yorketown and they are very confident about another GP also relocating to Yorketown. One of those GPs, the one who is currently there, has come all the way from Wales and apparently is settling in very well. So I think it is worthwhile calling out that organisation for the good work that it is doing.

I know in my electorate we were looking at losing Dr Tony, one of those old-school longstanding GPs, who has now retired, and Country and Outback Health were able to secure two GPs for Quorn who came from overseas. From what looked like a fairly dire situation when it came to securing GPs, the work done by the federal agency has certainly helped. With those few words, I commend the report.

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (11:52): I rise to speak on this important report from the Economic and Finance Committee as a member of the committee and obviously as a regional member of parliament. The work that was done to encourage these hearings to happen was really important. This was brought to the attention of this place through the petitioning and the signatures of thousands of members of regional communities, predominantly across Yorke Peninsula, highlighting the challenges, restrictions and risks that are faced every single day by regional people who are dealing with a health system that is very different from the one that their city cousins enjoy.

Some of the aspects that were brought to the attention of the committee through the hearings were really important, such as the challenges of distance, which the member for Giles has highlighted. When you are living hours and hours and hundreds of kilometres away from a major hospital, the level of care that is delivered is not adequate and is not sufficient. We heard about some of the challenges that are faced in some of the smaller hospitals in regional South Australia and Yorke Peninsula through the hearings, but I know that these are only replicated—if not amplified—for those who live even further away or in more isolated communities.

There are the challenges of recruiting and then retaining staff, whether it is GPs at the very top or the challenges that we have seen through the hearings and through our experiences of even some of the basics: the registered nurses or even just general nursing staff in regional communities. The load that is being carried by a smaller cohort of nurses in regional communities is significant. This is why it really is important that these sorts of reports are brought to this place and these petitions are brought to and understood by this place about the challenges that are being faced by regional communities when it comes to health delivery.

As the member for Flinders, I am fully aware of the 11 hospital and medical centres that are around my electorate, and the challenges that they are facing with health delivery. If you cannot get to a GP appointment on the corner of one of the main drags here in Adelaide, you have choices: you can go to any number of clinics and try to get in—you can go to 24-hour GP clinics, you can go to emergency departments—but when you are in regional South Australia, when you are a long way away, and you are in an emergency situation or you need urgent medical care, the choices are not there. This is why we are seeing some really negative health outcomes in some of our regional communities.

The petitioners who brought this to our attention, which led to this report, really were crying out for help, and they were crying out for help on Yorke Peninsula in particular. I congratulate the member for Narungga on his work in getting behind this petition and ensuring that his community's voice is heard. Those issues and challenges faced can be replicated right across regional South Australia. The member for Giles points out that the more isolated, the more regional and the more remote you are, the more challenging that health delivery is becoming. My colleagues on both sides—the member for Giles, the member for Chaffey, the member for Stuart, the member for Hammond, and yourself, sir—would well know that communities that are further away from Adelaide are finding it increasingly difficult to get that consistent level of health care.

We understand from regional communities that we are not going to get the exact level of health care that our city cousins get. It comes with the territory—no pun intended—it comes with the population size. I believe there is a standard of care that is expected to be delivered right across South Australia, but that we in regional and remote South Australia really should expect because of the contribution that we are making to the state's economy. The perverse outcomes that can result from that medical care not being delivered are significant, and they are costly.

We heard in the report about the reliance on the Patient Assisted Transport (PAT) Scheme. Those of us who live further away from Adelaide know the PAT Scheme well. There are those of us who have to advocate on behalf of our communities to speed up recompense and to get appropriate recognition. Just because nominally there is a specialist who might be closer, it is actually better for medical care, for logistics and for transport for us to go to Adelaide to get that care. So there needs to be an understanding within the health department and within the bureaucracy that there needs to be that flexibility within the Patient Assisted Transport Scheme.

I have been on my feet in this place many times advocating for there to be an expansion of that scheme in recognition that we are having less and less specialist care delivered in regional South Australia, and this is something which is not sustainable. So it is a nod to a bandaid covering up a situation rather than a healing of it, but at least that structure needs to be in place to recognise those challenges that are faced. The people of Yorke Peninsula really did call out to the Parliament of South Australia, through this petition and through their submissions to the committee, to have their voice heard and to have an understanding of those challenges that are being faced in regional communities.

As I said, in Flinders we have communities far and wide, hundreds of kilometres apart from each other, and we are in a sad situation where they are all competing for a very small amount of funding. You have towns a hundred kilometres away from each other that are basically fighting for the attention of the health department to just get a doctor in town. You have bureaucracy telling health professionals that, 'Well, you're alright to service this town, this town and this town,' even though they are 250 kilometres apart. They are asking doctors to be on call at a hospital even though they are over an hour's drive away. Some of the ridiculous outcomes that we are seeing, because of the lack of understanding by decision-makers, is really astounding—and I hear these stories, as I know my regional colleagues do as well.

There needs to be an understanding within the decision-making bureaucracy. We know the size of the SA Health budget. We know that last financial year it was \$700 million over budget and we know that the year before that it was \$900 million over budget.

There needs to be an understanding of what actually is being delivered on the ground in regional communities and the work that has been done by this committee is really important. Our regional communities deserve that level of care that should be expected in a community like ours in Australia. The outcomes for your health should not hinge on what your postcode is. It should not be variable depending on how far away from Adelaide you are. For the petitioners who helped form this committee it was a cry for help. It was a cry for help, not just from those who are receiving medical care but if you read the submissions, if you go through the long list of people who had their voice heard through this process, you will see.

*Bills***CARERS RECOGNITION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 15 October 2025.)

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:01): I declare that I will be the lead speaker on the Carers Recognition (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2025. The Carers Recognition Act has been an important piece of South Australia's legislation since 2005. It acknowledges the exceptional role of unpaid carers in our community, it ensures government agencies are providing services that protect carers and it makes sure that agency staff are aware of carers' needs. Carers need to be consulted when programs and policies are planned.

The act also enforces the Carers Charter, which is a set of guiding principles that must be followed, principles like acknowledging the choice of carers, recognising their critical role in maintaining the fabric of our society and the crucial importance of carers' health and wellbeing.

It is also about ensuring carers have the same rights and choices, giving them the same opportunities as other South Australians. All carers play a vital role in our communities, and they change lives, but the vast majority are informal carers, often going unpaid and unrecognised. The need to ensure all South Australian carers are recognised cannot be overstated.

But at the moment the divide is obvious. There are 245,000 unpaid carers in South Australia, but according to DHS there are only 236,000 carers in our state, so the discrepancy highlights just how important it is to keep the act updated and ensure that it does what it is designed to do.

The act underwent a review in 2023 and it is the first full review since 2011 when a minor review was undertaken. The final report handed down in May 2024 makes a total of 24 recommendations. The commonwealth government also undertook an inquiry into carers' recognition and released the National Carer Strategy 2024-2034. Across both reviews over 2,000 carers were consulted. Both reviews played a part in piecing this bill together, but I am advised that some recommendations in the state review are at odds with the federal review, therefore not accepted by government and left out of this bill. I was not able to get a list of recommendations which were included and which are omitted from the minister's office, so there are important questions that I will be asking in committee just to clarify so that we have a much clearer understanding.

The primary components of the bill broaden and clarify the definition of 'carer', broaden the scope of the act's obligations and reporting requirements, require a review to be undertaken every five years, require all public sector agencies to comply with the act—currently, there are only seven agencies that have to comply—and update the Carers Charter to provide explicit recognition of informal kinship care relationships and other carers who were previously excluded from the legislation.

In general, I am very pleased to see the scope of 'carer recognition' expanded. In the charter there is explicit recognition of informal carers including grandparents, siblings, family friends, Aboriginal collective kinship care, and other family and kinship relationships. Many carers are currently unrecognised by the act including informal kinship carers. Right now it only covers those caring for someone with a recognised disability, a chronic illness or those diagnosed with mental health conditions, leaving out anyone who cares for someone who does not meet these conditions.

However, informal carers will still be excluded from the definition of a carer unless the person they care for meets the requirements of a care relationship. Many informal kinship carers care for children who do not meet these requirements. For example, Grandcarers South Australia's clients care for more than 2,200 children across South Australia. That is just children they know about. There is an estimate of approximately 7,000 children who are in care of informal kinship carers. Without them, these children would otherwise be in state care.

We want to see all of those who dedicate their time and effort be formally recognised for the exceptional role they play in our communities, especially in the vast majority of them who go unpaid.

I am advised that the government excluded the three recommendations from this legislation. I do want to understand just how those recommendations are at odds with the federal review, and we want to ensure that this piece of legislation is meeting the expectations of the review and the recommendation.

I want to put on the record that I thank the minister for her contact, the briefing. As I said, there were still some unanswered questions, which I feel warrants us to go into committee, so I look forward to that stage being presented.

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women) (12:07): I am really pleased to rise today to speak in support of the Carers Recognition (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2025, and I wholeheartedly thank the Minister for Human Services and her team in her ministerial office and in the department for their work to bring this bill to life and to bring this important piece of legislation to this place.

This is a really important bill which is about South Australia recognising and indicating our support for carers and making us a national leader in doing so. It aligns our carer's recognition framework with the National Carer Strategy, a strategy that helps to improve the lives of those who spend their lives helping others.

Carers and their dedication to the person or people for whom they care and our community must indeed be recognised, celebrated and supported. Carers embody the very best of our human family. Often, in an enduring way, they care for a loved one, offering support, kindness, commitment and strength, and always, unfailingly, love. Carers care for their loved ones in a diversity of circumstances, providing care to a parent, a sibling, a child or grandchild, a longtime friend, a partner or sometimes those who have more recently entered their lives. They often commence and continue their caring journey in circumstances where things can be emotionally, mentally and physically difficult.

I know some remarkable, inspiring carers who, despite their age or their own challenges or sometimes heartbreak at the circumstances their loved one finds themselves in, continue to care in many different ways. I see carers who are there 24 hours a day, providing every aspect of physical and emotional care. I see others who tirelessly advocate for their loved ones, others who take their person to multiple appointments, shop and cook for them, and parents who are alongside their children as they approach periods of debilitating mental or other ill health.

I am continually inspired by the dedication of these remarkable individuals. They give so much of themselves to ensure the person that they love is empowered to live their life and participate in every aspect of community life, is valued and is able to live with dignity and respect and know that they are not alone.

My portfolio as Minister for Child Protection also supports a range of extraordinary carers. Those carers are recognised and supported by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, an important distinction to make. Carers are at the very heart of the Child and Family Support System and I deeply value their contributions. I very much look forward to their rights being further strengthened as our Children and Young People (Safety and Support) Act 2025 is implemented and as we continue our reform of the system and our deep listening to carers through a range of mechanisms across our state and via our brilliant Carer Council.

There are thousands of carers in my local community, each of whom inspires me and each of whom, as well as providing such excellent care to a loved one, strengthens the fabric of our community through doing so. I love to hear story after story of the difference these carers make providing practical care and love and empowering their loved one to live their life with dignity and in ways that provide them with opportunities to thrive.

Every carer is special. A very special one I mention today is my unbelievably strong mum. As some in this place know, my late younger sister suffered through debilitating mental illness for 33 years of her way-too-short life. For every single one of those 33 years, my mum was her primary carer, throughout the years when she also juggled work and many other commitments, and later throughout the years when she should have finally, after some pretty hard years, had some time to

explore whatever pursuits retirement may have offered or simply to have just been able to put her feet up.

Anyone who has a loved one who has long-term psychosocial illness, in this case schizophrenia, knows all that that brings: lengthy periods of intense unwellness and hospitalisations; many sleepless and unpredictable nights; long days of despair; the management of medications; seeing your loved one becoming more socially isolated; and the need for encouragement to eat, to sleep, to hydrate, to shower, to dress, to just continue—the times when your loved one is just so very ill and keeping them with you minute by minute is a journey. The relentless advocacy, the exhaustion, is a journey taken that is fuelled some days by love alone.

As do many other carers—and certainly as did my mum's fierce band of long-term carer friends—somehow, amongst all of that, they continuously think about how systems can be improved for others and above all else see the strength and the beauty of the person they love and empower them in all that they do or choose not to do. In the face of all of this, my mum co-developed the Wellways program for carers of loved ones with mental illness, a brilliant and award-winning program that helped others to navigate systems and to find connection and support.

I say all of this not because I think that our circumstances are more special than anyone else's. I know that way too many people face this really hard journey. It is the caring story that I know best and one that my husband and I, in a much smaller way than my mum, contributed to, particularly in the later years of my sister's life, as she started to spend more time with us in our home, with her room and her place all set up ready for her to live longer term in the hope that we could finally provide just a little bit of respite for my mum.

I tell this story because it is an experience that I know many people can relate to. I say to every one of those people that through this bill and in many other ways we see you, we recognise you, we understand that the journey you traverse can be so very hard, and we applaud and we value you. This important bill seeks to improve support and better acknowledge and empower carer roles by strengthening and modernising the Carers Recognition Act. This will give back to those who give so much for others.

There are approximately 236,000 carers in South Australia, about 13 per cent of our population, often without the recognition they so rightly deserve. Carers provide essential dignity, support and compassion to those who need it most. Through direct consultation with carers, this bill incorporates their voices to reshape the legislation, enhancing reporting requirements and promoting responsiveness, accountability, consistency and transparency. It recognises carers as individuals with aspirations, rights and basic needs that can sometimes be overlooked in their role.

The carer definition aligns with national standards, reflecting contemporary relationships and that unpaid carers now include those supporting people with medical conditions, frailty, substance dependence or mental ill health. It focuses on care relationships, ensures inclusivity without hierarchies, and applies to anyone providing such care, unless excluded and covered by other legislation, as I have mentioned.

The Carers Recognition Act 2005 formally embeds, rightly, the Carers Charter, recognising carers' critical community role in maintaining social fabric, and the importance of their health and wellbeing. The charter specifically acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers, supporting their self-determination and unique kinship, cultural identity and relationships. It further values carers' contributions to finances, education, social standing, careers and wellbeing, with explicit recognition of grandcarers and young carers for their societal impact.

We must provide carers with appropriate, tailored support to sustain them. This bill helps to fulfil that responsibility, demonstrating our government's commitment and gratitude, while affirming carers' vital role in enabling those in need to thrive. Thank you so much, again, to the thousands of carers across our state. We see you and we appreciate you.

I give a special mention to the approximately 2,700 carers based in Reynell. Thank you for what you do and for making our space in the fabric of South Australia such a wonderful place to live, to learn and to play, and for making it a kind and connected place that is there for people. I thank

Carers SA and Young Carers SA for their excellent advocacy in helping to shape this bill, and I commend this bill to the house.

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (12:18): I rise to speak in support of the Carers Recognition (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2025, a bill that delivers on the government's 2023-24 budget commitment to report on the review of the Carers Recognition Act. Carers are individuals who provide essential care and support to family members, friends and members of our community, often quietly and often without the recognition or resources they deserve. This amendment bill is about modernising and strengthening the Carers Recognition Act. It seeks to improve carers' ability to self-identify, ensuring they are better supported, acknowledged and empowered in their roles.

This bill is the direct result of consultation with carers themselves. Their voices have shaped this legislation. The bill will strengthen the accountability of state government departments and expand reporting requirements under the act to promote greater consistency, transparency and responsiveness across government.

With this legislation, South Australia will become the first jurisdiction in Australia to align its carers recognition framework with the National Carer Strategy—a landmark move that positions our state as a national leader in carer recognition and support. The bill also incorporates recommendations from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs following its inquiry into the recognition of unpaid carers. These recommendations ensure our approach is informed by national evidence and best practice.

Crucially, this bill recognises carers as individuals in their own right: people with wants, needs and aspirations that are often overlooked when they take on the role of caring for others. The updated definition of 'carer' reflects contemporary care relationships and aligns with national standards. It removes the requirement for care to be ongoing and recognises a broader range of unpaid carers: those supporting individuals with medical conditions, mental ill health, frailty or substance dependence. Rather than listing specific carer types, the new definition focuses on the care relationship itself. This ensures inclusivity, avoids hierarchies among carer types and recognises the diversity of care arrangements across our community.

Embedded within the Carers Recognition Act 2005 is the Carers Charter, which serves as a formal acknowledgement of the vital role carers play in our society. While not legally enforceable, the charter articulates the values and principles that underpin carer recognition. It affirms carers' rights to make choices within their caring role, highlights the importance of their own health and wellbeing, and recognises their contribution to maintaining the social fabric of our communities.

Through this amendment bill, specific cohorts such as informal kinship carers, grandcarers and young carers are explicitly acknowledged within the Carers Charter, recognising their unique experiences and contributions. The charter also recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers should be supported in ways that respect their right to self-determination and reflect their unique cultural identity and kinship relationships. Importantly, the charter also recognises the social and economic value of carers, who often provide care at great personal cost to their careers, wellbeing, education, social lives and financial security.

Carers reflect the diversity of our communities, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that they are provided with appropriate, safe and tailored support services that meet their specific and unique needs. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (12:22): If we measured a community's strength by the compassion of its carers, South Australia would be off the charts. In every street in my electorate there is someone holding everything together, not because they are paid to but because they care. That is why I rise today to speak in support of the Carers Recognition (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2025. The Carers Recognition Act has served us well but our understanding of care has evolved. This bill brings our laws into line with the realities of modern life.

As we have heard today from previous speakers, there are around 236,000 carers in South Australia—13 per cent of our population. That means that in every street, every workplace and every school community there are people quietly performing acts of love and service every single day. They are the adult children supporting ageing parents, the parents of children with disability, the partners

caring for their loved ones after an accident or a diagnosis, the neighbour who steps up when someone falls ill, and grandparents raising grandchildren.

In my own electorate of Davenport I have met many of these people. They do not seek attention; in fact, most of them do not even think of themselves as carers. They simply do what needs to be done for someone they love. A few weeks ago at a local coffee catch-up in Happy Valley I spoke with a woman who has spent the past decade caring for her husband after a stroke. She told me that her biggest challenge is not the medical side of things, it is the paperwork, the phone calls and the endless coordination between agencies that do not talk to each other. She said she sometimes feels invisible. This bill helps to change that.

It modernises the Carers Recognition Act to make sure carers are seen, heard and supported across every part of government. It strengthens accountability and reporting requirements, ensuring that when policies are designed or services are delivered carers are not an afterthought, because carers should not have to fight to be recognised. Their contribution should be embedded in the way that we do things.

This bill also updates the definition of carer to better reflect the world that we live in today. It removes the outdated requirement of care to be ongoing, recognising that carers' roles can be temporary, fluctuating or come and go depending on the situation. It expands recognition to people providing unpaid care to someone with mental ill health, frailty, substance dependency or chronic illness, reflecting the diversity of caring experiences across South Australia. In practical terms, that means that carers supporting someone through recovery from addiction or mental illness will finally be recognised under the act. That is an important and compassionate change.

Crucially, this bill has been shaped through consultation with carers themselves through lived experience. Organisations like Carers SA, Carers and Disability Link and community networks across our suburbs and regions all contributed to this review. Their feedback made clear that carers want to be able to self-identify early and access supports before they reach the crisis point. This bill delivers that. It creates a stronger framework for recognition and coordination across government and makes South Australia the first state in the nation to align its carers recognition laws with the National Carer Strategy, and that is something that we can be really proud of.

At the heart of the act is the Carers Charter, a statement of values that sets out how carers should be treated and supported. While it is not legally enforceable, the charter carries immense symbolic and practical importance. It acknowledges that carers have the right to make choices about their caring role, that their own health and wellbeing matters and that they play a vital part in the social fabric of our communities.

This bill strengthens the charter by explicitly recognising groups whose experiences have sometimes been overlooked: young carers, grand carers and informal kinship carers. I have met grandparents in Flagstaff Hill and Aberfoyle Park who are raising grandchildren full time. In fact, one is raising nine grandchildren on her own. They are doing the school runs, they help with homework and they are attending the parent-teacher interviews, often while managing their own health challenges. Their love is boundless, but they need recognition and practical support too.

The updated charter ensures that these families are visible in our laws. It also recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers, ensuring they are supported in ways that respect their right to self-determination and their unique cultural and kinship connections. That is an essential inclusion, one that honours the deep intergenerational caregiving traditions in Aboriginal communities.

Carers are not just a pillar of our community, they are an essential part of our economy. Nationally, the unpaid care provided by family and friends is estimated to be worth tens of billions of dollars each year. Without it, our health and social systems would simply not function. However, we also know that carers often pay a personal price: many give up paid work or reduce their hours, they face social isolation, interrupted education and financial strain. One local carer told me that she had had to leave her job because she could not find flexible work hours to fit around her son's therapy schedule. She said, 'I love my boy, but sometimes I just wish someone would see me too.' This bill is about doing exactly that, seeing carers as people in their own right, with ambitions, needs and hopes beyond their caring role.

This legislation also follows the recommendations of the House of Representatives inquiry into the recognition of unpaid carers, ensuring our reforms reflect national best practice. It strengthens transparency, requiring departments to publicly report on how they are implementing the Carers Charter. That means we can track progress, share good practice and ensure no agency falls behind when recognising carer needs. It ensures that carers' voices are heard consistently, whether they are engaging with health, education, transport or housing services, because being a carer should not mean that you have to start from scratch every time you deal with a new department. Our system should work together, not make life harder.

In Davenport, I have seen how community plays a vital role in supporting carers. Our neighbourhood houses, church groups and community centres all provide small but meaningful acts of respite: a coffee morning, a shared meal, a listening ear. All of those moments matter. This bill reinforces that same ethos—that caring is everyone's responsibility and that government should reflect the compassion and connectedness that already exist in our local communities.

Ultimately this bill is not just a technical update on an old piece of legislation. It is a statement of respect, recognition and commitment: respect for the countless hours of unpaid labour that sustain families and communities, recognition of the diversity of carers and the challenges they face and commitment to making sure that our systems, our policies and our services reflect their realities. As a state we pride ourselves on being compassionate and community minded. This bill will live up to that. It says to every carer, whether you are 14 or 84 and whether you are caring for a partner, a parent, a friend or a neighbour, 'We see you, we value you and you matter.'

To all the carers in my community, the quiet heroes in our suburbs, thank you. Your contribution is immeasurable, but today this parliament recognises it. Good governments listen, and this bill is the direct result of listening to the thousands of carers who asked to be seen, heard and supported. I commend the bill to the house.

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well) (12:30): The contributions by the members for Chaffey, Reynell, Gibson and Davenport are appreciated, and of course all of those remarks go on record in perpetuity, and I am really proud to be part of that. I also commend the bill.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3.

Mr WHETSTONE: I refer to clause 3, which amends section 3—Objects.

Recommendation 1 of the review was to update the objects of the act:

- (a) to increase recognition and awareness of carers and to acknowledge the vital contribution that carers make to the community; and
- (b) to support carers in their role in the community...

Recommendation 1(b) is included in the charter, but 1(a) is not. Is there a reason this recommendation has not been added to the objects of the act?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: The recommendations were to deliver on support, recognition and public sector accountability, and we combined the two sections of support and recognition so that support was not left separately.

Mr WHETSTONE: Was recommendation 1(a) included at all? Where does it appear in the bill, or is that because it was amalgamated? That was a question and an answer, I think.

The Hon. N.F. COOK: It is there but it is all combined, as per my previous answer.

Clause passed.

Clause 4.

Mr WHETSTONE: I refer to clause 4(6). Minister, why was the definition of 'spouse' removed?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: This was to reduce confusion because there were people interpreting it as that they were excluded, and they are not. It was to reduce confusion that had been fed back to the people who were doing the review.

Mr WHETSTONE: What confusion is there with the definition of 'spouse'? Is it because there are so many definitions of 'spouse': legal spouse, commitment spouse, de facto spouse?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: It read previously that a spouse was not a carer if they were merely a spouse, so now a spouse can specifically be. Like many of the other areas within regarding definitions, to point out some things can raise attention and make people feel that others are excluded by default, so we are trying to avoid people thinking they are actually excluded and make sure they know that people can be included rather than excluded.

Clause passed.

Clause 5.

Mr WHETSTONE: I refer to clause 5(2)(b). Is this change to address recommendation 2(4)(a), which says children and young people who are primary informal kinship carers should be included as a category?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: It is not directly in response to the recommendation, but throughout the delivery, as we have discussed together, on this piece of legislation—one of the reasons why it did take some time for us to come was that we wanted to read the federal government's final definitions and their charter and make sure that there was not confusion. So there has been some broadening of that, but it is not directly in response to that. There was a piece of work that has brought together all of those things, and this brings us in line with the commonwealth.

Clause passed.

Clause 6 passed.

Clause 7.

Mr WHETSTONE: At clause 7(2), this amendment meets recommendation 12(a) of the review but does not fulfil recommendations 12(b) and 12(c), which are to require each public sector agency to report on the actions it is taking to support the wellbeing of its employees who are carers and to report on how the agency's employees are being trained and educated to recognise and support carers. Are these recommendations included elsewhere? If not, can you give me an understanding why?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: That level of detail and commentary is really granular and would be included in the reporting and the guidelines, rather than actually in the act itself. We have this bill, which will become an act, and we will have the charter as well that sits with that, and then there will be guidelines that will be developed for the public sector in terms of their obligations and their methods of reporting. Those particular components will be captured within that.

Clause passed.

Clauses 8 and 9 passed.

Schedule 1.

Mr WHETSTONE: Minister, we have had this conversation. Which recommendations from the review did the government accept in full, which recommendations were accepted in part and which recommendations were excluded?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: I have a report that talks to 14 recommendations being fully incorporated, six partially incorporated and three not included. One of the recommendations was referred through to another department for consideration, that being the Health and Community Services Complaints Act as a capture for that. Recommendations in general that have not been

supported either did not align with the subsequent commonwealth inquiry findings, or further consultation on the amendments did not support them.

Those that were not supported were to add to the definitions a criterion of 'frailty due to age or other condition', because 'other condition' lacks clarity and would be captured by 'has a medical condition' that is already included; to include a definition of 'personal care', which was not supported by further consultation that supported a broad definition and noted conflicting views of what constitutes personal care by different cultural groups, and being a multicultural society that has been respected; and to change the wording around 'spouse' and 'domestic partner' in section 5, as we discussed—this explanatory subsection was removed as it caused confusion for stakeholders, who took it to be an exclusionary clause.

The partially supported ones, which we have also discussed, include amending the objects to also include 'support carers and their role in the community'—as we said, this act relates to recognition, and that may cause confusion. Also partially supported was to add a criterion for a child or young person if the person providing care is a primary, informal or kinship carer. The reason behind this is that informal and kinship carers have been explicitly included in clause 9 of the revised charter, noting that this recommendation also did not align with the commonwealth inquiry findings, which happened after the state review, and was not supported by further consultation.

Also partially supported was to ensure that when a care recipient moves to a residential facility, the person who has been providing all that care and support in the community continues to be recognised, so we have also inserted that into the Carers Charter in clause 10. There was also the charter giving greater emphasis to special needs of children and young people who are carers in relation to additional support, timeout and guidance, so a broader clause around the needs of young carers has been included in the charter at clause 8.

In relation to the recommendation to add a separate principle recognising carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, we have respected culture and the needs of that community, which is now reflected across multiple clauses in the charter: clauses 1, 4 and 11.

The final one refers to the fact that the specific needs of ageing carers with disability should be recognised. I spoke a little bit to that before about the care we are taking to not identify certain groups so that it generates a discussion about exclusion of other groups. Rather than a separate clause for each different cohort, on a broader clause it speaks to individual needs, which has been included as clause (12).

Mr WHETSTONE: Just to get a little bit more clarity on that, the charter used to read:

- (1) Carers should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as other South Australians.

Is there a reason this has not been included in the new charter?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: I am not sure if the member has the charter, schedule 1, in front of him at this point but, if you were to line the two up, the previous charter has seven points. The new charter has 11 points and has a much expanded volume of references in it for guidelines for people to follow. Our judgement and that of other people that we have talked with is that that is actually a more inclusive and catch-all way of discussing the Carers Recognition Act and providing guidance to those who are following it.

Mr WHETSTONE: Similarly, the charter used to read:

- (2) Carers should be supported by individuals, families, businesses and community organisations, public institutions and all levels of government in the choices they make in their caring role.

Is there a reason that this wasn't included?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: The best way to respond is to refer the member to the way of not being too specific in identifying certain groups, which can create a sense of exclusion for others. It is very important that all people who are providing care to someone, per the defined parameters, is part of that included group. We feel that that happens now through many of the changes throughout the act that we have discussed, but also through the charter.

It is often difficult when you have someone come into your electorate office, and they are looking for support, and they say, 'Yes, but it says this in the federal government, and it says this in the state government.' So as much as we possibly could we tried to line them up and work in a way that tries to minimise that confusion and ensure that people get the best possible support that they can throughout their journey.

Mr WHETSTONE: Thank you. Recommendation 15 calls for greater emphasis to be given to the special needs of children and young people who are carers, including in relation to additional support, time and guidance. The former charter recognised that: 'All children and young people have the right to enjoy life and reach their full potential.' Why is this new amendment seemingly weaker?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: It is good to put that on the record, so I appreciate the question. I refer the member to clauses (8) and (9) under the charter, which state:

- (8) The specific needs of young carers (aged 25 and under) should be recognised, supported and acted on so that they have the support and opportunities needed to reach their full potential.
- (9) The unique and complex roles of informal carers, which may include grandparents, siblings, family, friends, Aboriginal collective kinship care and other family and kinship relationships, should be recognised and supported irrespective of any ambiguities around guardianship and legal status.

So this is about catching all carers and ensuring everybody has a right to that support. Again, I refer back to all the other previous answers in terms of singling groups out.

Mr WHETSTONE: Finally, recommendation 16 of the review is to update the Carers Charter to include that young people and children who are carers are entitled to participate fully in education and training and are supported to do this. Does this clause fully meet that recommendation? I guess the question is: where is the recommendation fulfilled?

The Hon. N.F. COOK: There has been a bit of work that has been done over recent years as well to work with young carers across a number of our departments. We have a lot of young carers in our community who should be and are recognised for the excellent work they do holding families and communities together.

There has been work done in the education department to ensure that young people can identify safely as a carer and have a level of understanding and comfort displayed when they are unable to fulfil some of the obligations that are required by structures which are black and white. When you are a carer there are unanticipated responses and reactions that might be required and that does not allow for young people to do something in those black-and-white boundaries.

The Department of Human Services has acknowledged this by targeting and supporting and funding a program of around \$800,000 a year, which specifically relates to the support of young carers. So, in terms of the words, all of these priorities are being delivered on and focused on, and under clauses 8 and 9 in the charter are the words 'reaching full potential'. That is, in our view, the statement we are being led by in order to be able to ensure that young people do get what is needed to reach their full potential.

Schedule passed.

Long title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well) (12:53): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (COMMUNITY AND STRATA TITLES) BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 18 September 2025.)

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12:54): I rise to indicate I am the lead speaker for the opposition and I indicate the opposition's support for the bill. That is in the context of a series of amendments that are on the file that we will deal with in the course of the committee process.

The minister brought the bill to this chamber some little time ago, not quite a year ago, and it is another round of response to calls for updates, in particular the work of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee, the subject of its 81st report.

I want to highlight that the bulk of what is to be amended, the subject of this bill, is uncontroversial and it goes to the very practical day-to-day arrangements that will ensure that members of strata and community titles are appropriately able to participate in the necessary decision-making from day to day of their community and, to that end, makes some specific changes to obligations on managers of those communities.

The issues that have been therefore of keen interest to the industry stakeholders, for want of a better word in this context, have come back in terms of three categories of further improvement that have been posited. I continue to look to work on the merits with the government about the capacity to take on board those changes—all practical, not really in any sort of ideological category or really even a wrestle about relative rights but really about what is practical in the day-to-day administration of communities.

So the concerns the opposition has are really in three categories. The first is procedural—time requirements for the provision of information and the provision of notice and such things. The second is a discrete point that finds its way into several references throughout the course of the bill, going to the question of materiality with respect to gifts. It finds itself frequently referred to in the bill. The third is a question of what might be the limited capacity of a meeting to conduct business in circumstances where there might be some impediment on ordinary quorum. As I said at the outset, those matters might, I expect, find themselves most productively aired in the committee process.

That is the nature of the categories of concern to raise them in advance. I am very conscious of the time and was on my way to saying that I was grateful to the government in terms of the way it has conducted itself in the lead-up. I am conscious of the time and, in those circumstances, with a few short remarks remaining in the second reading I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Treasurer (Hon. A. Koutsantonis)—

Annual Report 2024-25

Electricity Industry Superannuation Scheme
Infrastructure and Transport, Department for
National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
National Rail Safety Regulator, Office of the
Police Superannuation Board

Public Sector Act 2009—

Overseas and Interstate Travel—Deputy Premier Report 14 to 15 August 2025
Overseas and Interstate Travel—Minister for Energy and Mining Report 14 to
15 August 2025
Overseas and Interstate Travel—Treasurer Report 10 to 11 August 2025

By the Minister for Health and Wellbeing (Hon. C.J. Picton)—

Annual Report 2024-25

Community Visitor Scheme
Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner
Health and Wellbeing, Department for
SA Health—Government Response to the Coroner's Finding into the Deaths of
Mark Furlan and Richard Miller Report October 2025

By the Minister for Child Protection (Hon. K.A. Hildyard)—
Child Protection, Department for—Annual Report 2024-25

By the Minister for Police (Hon. B.I. Boyer)—
Coroners Act 2003—Coronial Recommendations—Findings of Inquest into the
Death-in-Custody of Mr Duy Ngoc Pham Report 20 May 2025

By the Minister for Human Services (Hon. N.F. Cook)—
Human Services, Department of—Annual Report 2024-25

By the Minister for Education, Training and Skills (Hon. B.I. Boyer)—
Annual Report 2024-25
Child Development Council
History Trust of South Australia

By the Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. J.K. Szakacs)—
Annual Report 2024-25
Community Services Sector Long Service Leave Board
Construction Industry Long Service Leave Board
Director of Public Prosecutions, Office of the

By the Minister for Planning (Hon. N.D. Champion)—
Annual Report 2024-25
State Planning Commission
West Beach Trust

By the Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services (Hon. R.K. Pearce)—
State Bushfire Coordination Committee—Annual Report 2024-25

Ministerial Statement

OPERATION IRONSIDE

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills, Minister for Police) (14:03): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yesterday, South Australia Police carried out coordinated operations as part of Operation Ironside. Starting early yesterday morning, almost 300 South Australian police officers from Crime Service, Metropolitan Operations Service, State Operations Service, Security and Emergency Management Service and the Operations Support Service raided 23 properties executing a number of search warrants.

Yesterday's operation resulted in 55 individuals being arrested. Those 55 individuals are facing 813 serious criminal charges, including money laundering, drug trafficking and drug manufacturing. More than \$25.8 million in assets, including 23 properties, 70 vehicles—including two

Harley Davidson motorcycles—and bank accounts holding \$588,000, along with \$142,000 in cash were seized.

Operation Ironside is a joint initiative between the Australian Federal Police and state law enforcement agencies and has been running since 2021. Ironside originated from intelligence gathered from the encrypted messaging service ANOM that was being used on devices by criminal syndicates.

On 8 October 2025 the High Court of Australia held that the Surveillance Legislation (Confirmation of Application) Act 2024 is valid. This ruling has confirmed that information obtained as part of Operation Ironside was lawfully obtained.

The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Linda Williams, yesterday reflected that during her time in SAPOL she could not recall anything that compared in terms of mass arrests. Yesterday's operation will be a significant disruption to serious and organised crime networks in South Australia. To the almost 300 brave men and women who were knocking on doors early yesterday morning, I say thank you on behalf of all South Australians.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Before I call the Minister for Trade and Investment I welcome students from St Michaels, which is the school that the minister went to. You are guests today of the member for Colton. I am also an old scholar of St Michaels; we did this gag yesterday.

I would also like to welcome to parliament today students from Open Access College at Marden, who are guests of the member for Dunstan. It is great to have you here at question time today. The Minister for Trade also has some other guests in here as well as the St Michaels students: the Nazareth Wise Owls, Susan McAuliffe and Jayne Spinkston. Welcome to parliament. It is great to have you here.

Question Time

POWER PRICES

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:06): My question is to the Premier. When will the government deliver on its promise for lower electricity prices? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: At the last election South Australians were promised a Hydrogen Jobs Plan that would reduce wholesale electricity prices by 8 per cent. That plan has now been shelved and hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars have been wasted.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:07): Today AEMO released its most recent update to wholesale power prices, which saw a dramatic drop from the last 12 months. You have seen prices drop across the country. I say this again to members opposite who made this bold promise in 2018 to lower power prices by \$301 and didn't get anywhere near it: when politicians claim that they can set power prices while simultaneously privatising assets and giving control to foreign companies, it is just a lie. It is just a lie and the public are sick of it. They are sick and tired of the Liberal Party getting up and saying—

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will come to order. The Deputy Leader.

Mr TEAGUE: I didn't want to leave it too late just now. It is a straightforward question about the price promise that this government made, not a history lesson or a debate contrary to standing orders.

Members interjecting:

Mr TEAGUE: 98(a).

The SPEAKER: I will keep listening to the Minister for Energy's response. He is entitled to give some context and background, but I am listening.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The promise that we made that the deputy leader just got up and made an issue of was about wholesale power prices for industrial users, but the Leader of the Opposition was asking me about South Australian household prices. You can't have it both ways, right?

Mr Teague interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, which question do you want me to answer? The one about your point of order, which is about an election commitment that was about industrial customers, or the Leader of the Opposition's question about household prices? Now you are confused. I understand.

The truth is, politicians pretend that they can come into this place and say that through the power of their personalities they will overcome market forces and lower power prices and do X, Y and Z. What we have said is that members made horrific mistakes about the electricity system in this state, but we are dealing with them and we are dealing with them systematically.

First and foremost, we have got targets on renewable energy. That renewable energy is putting downward pressure on power prices. We have got an additional policy we announced today, which is \$17½ million to get more gas out of the ground. Why do we need more gas? Because gas sets the price of electricity in South Australia. Who is opposed to gas? Members opposite. The guilty party opposite who voted just a few years ago to ban gas extraction methods in South Australia are now saying, 'No, don't worry about that, we're now actually pro gas. Don't worry about how we voted, don't worry about what we do, don't worry about what we say, it's the vibe.' I have to say, this is why members of parliament—

Mr Whetstone: You are misleading the parliament.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I would ask the member to stand up, withdraw and apologise.

The SPEAKER: Member for Chaffey, I will give you the opportunity to withdraw and apologise.

Mr WHETSTONE: Just for clarification, Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: No, I will give you the opportunity to withdraw and apologise.

Mr WHETSTONE: I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: And apologise.

Mr WHETSTONE: I will not apologise.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It speaks volumes. Wholesale power prices are coming down and we are seeing renewable energy have an impact on power prices; they are dropping. There are particular events that occur in South Australia, like last year alone one weather event on one day, which constrained the interconnector for a period of time, actually had an impact of \$18.50 per megawatt hour on the annual wholesale power price. That is how becoming reliant on interconnectors can impact power prices. Members opposite, who have put all their hope into connecting to other jurisdictions rather than our own sovereign capability here in this state, have a lot to answer for. We buy generation and they sell it. We want to extract gas and they block it.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yelling and laughing, incoherent rants and noise are not a substitute for policy. Yelling nervously in your seat is not a substitute for policy. If you have a policy proposition, let's debate it. Yelling is for children.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the leader, there are students up there in the gallery looking down at that thinking they wouldn't be allowed to do that in their classroom environment, and I am

not going to stand for it. All those people who were yelling out—the member for Morialta, the deputy leader, the member for Morphet—*you are on your final warnings.*

POWER PRICES

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:12): My question is to the Premier. What impact will the closure of the Office of Hydrogen have on the government's plan to lower power prices?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:12): I do not think the Leader of the Opposition has quite grasped the impact that power prices have and their correlation to gas prices. I think that link that he refuses to make—what I will do is I will explain it again one more time for the house to understand this. The person who applies the last megawatt of hour to firm the entire system sets the price in our National Electricity Market. So, if demand is 1,500 megawatts and wind is offering 1,400 megawatts but gas offers the final 100, they set the price for the entire 1,500 megawatts, because they are able to complete the system.

An honourable member: Who did shut down that power station?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The South Australian government has not shut down any gas-fired power station. The only people who have shut down a gas-fired power station are members opposite when they underwrote a power connection to New South Wales, whose sole regulatory investment test was about shutting down Torrens Island. All of you here sitting opposite are responsible for the closure of Torrens Island and you're trying to blame us for it. And fake laughs don't change anything. Fake laughing doesn't change anything. This is serious business.

The reason gas prices are expensive in this country is because there are governments in this country that seem to try to do everything they can to stop its extraction. Where is gas extraction stopped here in this state? In our second largest basin. Who did that? Members opposite. Why did they do that? To hold a seat. What happened to that seat? Well, they lost that seat because the member got charged with an offence. And like the Premier said over the weekend at the ALP state convention, there are more Liberals who are charged with offences than there are women in their party.

I have to say, if they don't understand the connection between gas and electricity pricing, God help us all. The truth is the only way we are going to lower power prices in this country is to have an orderly rollout of renewable energy, appropriate climate change policies and an availability of gas at affordable prices to firm that renewable energy until there is a breakthrough technology to store that energy.

Members opposite have ruled out two of those three solutions. There is no solution on climate change, because they don't believe in it, and the second part is they don't believe in gas extraction. So for us it's either coal or nothing. South Australia has no coal, so their solution is to only connect to New South Wales and Victoria—to what? To brown coal. Of course, their coal is old and being underwritten by the taxpayer because it can't survive in the commercial market.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Now they're yelling out, 'Uranium.' Now they want the most expensive option for South Australians. There is no coherent policy from members opposite. All they do is complain. If they were serious about electricity pricing in this country they would get up and apologise for the privatisation of ETSA.

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: They would say that they'd made a mistake.

The SPEAKER: Minister.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: They wouldn't underwrite policies that close—

The SPEAKER: Minister, there is a point of order.

Mr TEAGUE: Standing order 98(a). The question is what impact will the closure of the Office of Hydrogen Power have. The minister is not remotely close to answering the question. It is a rant masquerading as debate, but it is not responsive to the standing orders.

The SPEAKER: My recollection is he answered that part of the question in the first 20 seconds, and now he's just giving some commentary on the wider energy market in South Australia. But I'll continue to listen. The Minister for Energy.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I don't think members opposite like to hear the cold, hard truth about the energy transition. The cold, hard truth about the energy transition is that we are embarking on the biggest transition in human history. We are moving away from thermal based generation of electricity to renewable based generation of electricity, and South Australia is leading that. And there are impacts of this political division. Those impacts of political division cost money. We've got a shadow minister for net zero and a federal member of the same party saying, 'Net zero is rubbish,' yet you still have a member for net zero. They don't believe in climate change, bemoan the closure of coal-fired power and don't have a systematic policy for unlocking renewables, and thus you then get this partisanship which does not give us lower prices.

HYDROGEN JOBS PLAN

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:17): My question is to the Premier. How many contracts associated with the Hydrogen Jobs Plan are still to be terminated, and what is the taxpayer exposure of those terminations?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:17): As far as I know there are no contract terminations to come. I'm not sure the Leader of the Opposition has made his question clear enough. I will try to explain more, if I can. What the Auditor-General has made clear—

The Hon. D.G. Pisoni: A lot of contracts have been let.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sorry?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley and the member for Florey, you are both on your final warnings.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So I'm not sure that the Leader of the Opposition is on firm ground here. The Hydrogen Jobs Plan, which was deferred as a result of us transferring that money from the Hydrogen Jobs Plan to Whyalla—that process is well underway. We will recover a very overwhelming amount of the funds that members opposite are claiming is wasted—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yelling out 'When?' doesn't make it happen faster. It might make you feel as if it's a substitute for policy debate, but I will explain it again to members opposite. We procured 200 megawatts worth of generation. That generation costs money. We have a contract with General Electric to purchase those generators. We will recover the cost of those generators through a sale process. Members opposite are refusing to accept that those generators have any value, yet they've announced an energy policy which is about procuring 200 megawatts worth of generation.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Interjecting and yelling is not a substitute for facts. Yelling across the chamber again just shows that they do not want to hear the answers: they just want to make accusations. When you try to give them the answers to what they are asking, all they do is yell incoherently amongst themselves across the chamber—

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —and then move a point of order when they do not like how it is turning out.

The SPEAKER: The deputy leader.

Mr TEAGUE: Standing order 98(a): the minister is not entitled to filibuster the answer. The minister needs to address the substance of the question. He is not remotely close to doing so.

The SPEAKER: If we are going to talk about standing orders, how about the opposition stops with all the interjections? It has been nonstop interjections since the very start. The Treasurer, continue.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am not aware of any other contracts that will be 'broken'. I will endeavour to go away and have a look, but my understanding is that all of our contracts have been wound up. The only remaining one, of course, is with the generator, but that contract is being fulfilled. So it is not a termination of the contract, as it were, because we are purchasing the generators.

That is identical to the policy members opposite have announced, yet when we do it, it is a waste of money; when they do it, it is prudent planning. It is interesting analysis from members opposite. Ultimately, those generators will be dispatched into the South Australian system. I am not aware of any other contracts that may be terminated, but if there are, I will get back to the house with a detailed answer.

HYDROGEN POWER PLANT

Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:20): My question is to the Premier. Did the government ever receive advice not to proceed with the hydrogen power plant?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:21): I thank the shadow minister for energy for his question. I note the theme of questions we have had from the opposition regarding the Hydrogen Jobs Plan, and that is appropriate. The Hydrogen Jobs Plan was a comprehensive policy that the government took to the last election. We have made clear consistently that, in our view, it is in many respects regrettable that we have not been able to pursue that program or that policy in the way that we had desired.

The reason is worth reflection. In all the back and forth about some of the matters that the opposition pursue, it is very easy for them to quickly forget some of the reasons why we took the pretty difficult decision that we did in the early months of this year. The reason the Hydrogen Jobs Plan is not actively being delivered by the state government is principally because we had a very difficult decision to make around the future of OneSteel Manufacturing Pty Ltd as owned by GFG. What we learned throughout the last part, certainly the last quarter, of calendar year 2024, particularly in the immediate lead-up to Christmas and then in the early part of the new year, was there was a very real prospect that GFG and the Whyalla Steelworks was, in effect, about to collapse.

Hence, we made the extraordinary decision to have an intervention that is largely unprecedented in Australian corporate history, where a state government moved special-purpose legislation in order to put GFG into administration so that, in effect, we could seek firstly to protect the state's position for the money that it was owed in terms of SA Water bills and royalties and then, in turn, potentially seek a new ownership of the steelworks with the capital and the expertise to invest in the opportunity that we believe in for Whyalla so much.

Since making that intervention, I don't mind saying that we didn't do it a moment too soon, because we know that they were days away, potentially, from running out of metallurgical coal, critical for keeping the blast furnace going. The state of the steelworks in terms of OH&S was deplorable. Contractors were on the verge of becoming bankrupt themselves because they had not been paid, despite months of work. It is easy to say this now with hindsight, but it is true to say that it was the right call to make in an exceptionally difficult set of circumstances.

That is the reason we took that position. Of course, not having a steelworks ready to live out the transition that they were committed to, to be a customer or an offtaker of hydrogen, thus delays the necessity to have the Hydrogen Jobs Plan enacted. But this government's aspirations and our pursuit of seeing Whyalla transition—

Mr PATTERSON: Point of order.

The SPEAKER: Member for Morphet, what number is your point of order?

Mr PATTERSON: It's 98(a): not answering the question and debating. The question was quite clear: did the government receive advice to not proceed with the hydrogen power plant?

The SPEAKER: The Premier is answering that very question. I am listening very carefully. This is an important question for the entire state, and one that the Premier is answering, so you can sit down.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice that the government received was that if the government did not act, we were at risk of losing the steelworks. That was the advice we received and that was the advice we acted on. We did it assertively and deliberately, and we now have a viable steelworks today. I was up with the member for Giles in Whyalla only a couple of Friday nights ago and had the privilege and opportunity to speak with countless small businesses firsthand—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: You should try it sometime. They understand why the government did what it did and they are grateful for it. What we are committed to doing is making sure we see the recapitalisation of the steelworks to realise the decarbonisation opportunity before it, particularly with the pursuit of a more decarbonised form of green iron.

NYRSTAR

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (14:25): My question is to the Minister for Energy and Mining. Can the minister please update my community regarding the potential future opportunities for the Nyrstar Port Pirie smelter? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: Following the recent meeting between the Prime Minister and President Trump, I understand an agreement was reached regarding the potential for Australia to supply critical metals to America, and I was wondering if Nyrstar may have some opportunities there.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:26): I thank the member for his question. We all know he is a passionate supporter of his town. He is of the Port Pirie multimetals smelter. He worked there for a number of years. He was mayor of the city. He is a citizen of the city. He lives and breathes that city. He wants it to survive and do well, and he is passionate about making sure that the smelter continues.

The truth is that the Port Pirie smelter is unique. It is unique in its capabilities, it is unique in its social licence and it is unique in its acceptance by its local community. Think of the counterfactuals: the world right now has a shortage of key critical metals that are critical to our defence sector, antimony being of the highest order. It is a critical metal that is used to harden shells, bullets and other parts of armour that are invaluable to our allies not only in the Asia-Pacific but in Europe. One country has nearly an entire monopoly on this.

The way that you are able to extract antimony is through the by-products of lead processing. There are currently no lead smelters anywhere in the United States—none—so our allies are having to rely on one country. That one country that has a monopoly on this commodity is also using its state finances to purchase the raw materials at a much higher cost and is then actively subsidising the processing of that raw material into the metal, therefore controlling the entire life cycle of that commodity.

Port Pirie on its own, without this uncompetitive practice and intervention by a foreign state, would be profitable, but because of that foreign intervention we need to act. Prime Minister Albanese and President Trump have come to an agreement, and that agreement is good for our country, it is good for our allies and it is good for the Free World. We are already conducting a trial at Port Pirie for the extraction of antimony. You might remember we went there and saw the acid baths with the anodes producing antimony, and we are seeing that now displayed around the world.

One of the most important things that I think should encourage people about the future of Port Pirie is that while the Prime Minister of Australia was being hosted by the President of the United States in the Oval Office, Port Pirie was being discussed actively. When the head of Trafigura

recently visited Capitol Hill and had his annual meeting with senators and congressmen, and met with the Armed Services Committee, Port Pirie was actively discussed. I can't tell you how important it is for our allies that Australia has this source and supply of this vital commodity.

This commodity is so important to the Western world that we can't allow it to be monopolised by any one country. We need to have redundancy and our own supplies and our critical reserves so that not only can we keep it ourselves and we can defend our own country but also our allies can use it to defend themselves.

This is not something that we can afford to let go. You can't let normal market forces prevail here. There needs to be government intervention, and I am glad that we have two Labor governments at federal and state levels that understand there is a market gap here, there is a national need here, there is an economic sovereignty question and we are stepping up to the mat to protect Port Pirie.

ALGAL BLOOM

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (14:30): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the house on the current status of the algal bloom?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:30): I thank the member for Gibson for her question. The member for Gibson, of course, has the substantial responsibility of representing an electorate that is coastal, and I know how enthusiastic the member for Gibson is to make sure that her constituents get the information that they need and genuinely want in regard to what is happening with the bloom.

Each and every Thursday the task force meets. We collate data that we have received over the preceding seven days and put it out in the public realm at the first available opportunity. Today is no exception. I do appreciate the member for Gibson's question, because it does present the opportunity to talk about some data that is a little bit different than what we have seen in the past and I just want to explain a few things around it.

Last week, after the task force, we reported that there have been positive signs over the last month or so in regard to what the algae is doing, particularly through a proxy measure of the algae, which is chlorophyll-a levels. We are particularly focused on the Gulf St Vincent, because that's where the bloom has persisted. We have talked in here before about where it has left or abated, but it has principally persisted in the Gulf St Vincent, although it's true that it's also in parts of Spencer Gulf, as the member for Flinders would well be aware.

So we saw the decline in the chlorophyll-a levels, and what we were looking for was data that validated that in terms of the cell counts of the *Karenia*. This week, we have seen more than a reduction in the cell counts of *Karenia*—we have seen a dramatic reduction. I want to talk about it, because it's important that we have a bit of context and people don't get too excited by this data. If you only looked at this data, you'd be forgiven for assuming that the bloom has gone, and that is not the message that we are seeking to project.

But just very quickly, in terms of some beaches that I know the member for Gibson would care about—for instance, down in the southern parts—we have seen at Hallett Cove the cell count go from 720,000 a couple of weeks ago to 141,000 last week, to zero today. At Brighton, in the member for Gibson's electorate, we have gone from 5.2 million last week to 280,000 this week. Just up the road at Glenelg, it has gone from 3.8 million last week to zero this week. At the Pat, 500,000 down to 36,000. At West Beach, in the member for Colton's electorate—and I know he's got an interest in this—2.1 million down to 1,300, which is basically zero, and so forth and so forth, right up the coast. The West Lakes exit, zero. Port River Dock 1, down to literally 100—not 100,000 or a million, just 100, which is basically zero. West Lakes Inlet, 12 million last week down to 1,500 this week.

So what we are seeing is not just a decline but what could be characterised as a collapse in the cell count data. This is positive and worthy of acknowledgement, but there is work to be done because this may be a representation of a dramatic decline in *Karenia*, which is good, but what has to be analysed is whether or not it's just a *Karenia* reduction but the bloom persists because the composition of the bloom has changed.

While we welcome this data, we approach it with an extraordinary degree of caution and there will be more that the government will explain, as we did in our task force press conference today regarding this, because I know it is an important subject matter. But we continue to monitor it and we will report about what we find out from that research to South Australians at the first available opportunity.

HYDROGEN ELECTROLYSERS

Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:34): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the house as to why no hydrogen electrolyzers were ordered or purchased? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr PATTERSON: The government has budgeted \$220 million for 250 megawatts of hydrogen electrolyzers; however, the CSIRO indicates they would have cost over \$650 million. This wasn't even included in the amounts identified by the Auditor-General as spending or contingent liabilities that totalled \$497 million.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:35): So the shadow minister has asked why we didn't order or procure the hydrogen electrolyzers. That is because earlier this year, in January and February, the government made the decision to change our plans and focus on the saving of the steelworks, and I am very glad we did.

GREEN HYDROGEN

Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:35): My question is again to the Premier. Will the Premier admit to South Australians that the Whyalla Steelworks would not have used green hydrogen this decade? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr PATTERSON: InfraBuild's chief executive, Francisco Irazusta, said:

All the talk about green hydrogen is not very good. There is no way in hell today we can think that we can substitute natural gas with green hydrogen and the cost will be unthinkable.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:35): The Liberal Party is going back to the Sanjeev Gupta well and quoting his employee and saying, 'InfraBuild says, Sanjeev Gupta says'.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I don't trust anything Sanjeev Gupta says and quoting Sanjeev Gupta's employees here is really, I think, counterproductive. The opposition voted with us to remove those assets from Sanjeev Gupta.

Mr Patterson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Morphett, you are already on your final warning.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Members opposite voted with us to remove those assets from Sanjeev Gupta. They are now using his employees to attack the government.

It is not true to assert that green hydrogen would not have been used in the steelworks. That is simply inaccurate. Of course, it's inaccurate. But, of course, members opposite who wanted to keep Sanjeev Gupta in place by handing him another \$50 million, just handing him money, are now quoting his employee at InfraBuild. I would have thought the Leader of the Opposition would have had more foresight than to rely on Sanjeev Gupta and his employees to make an attack on the government.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You are just posing questions. Then why are you quoting Sanjeev Gupta's employees as an authority on the matter? Are they an authority on steelworks? Is

there anyone left in South Australia who really thinks that anyone who worked for Sanjeev Gupta is an authority on this matter? Really? After everything the Premier has just said about—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Again, interjecting is not a substitute for policy and debate. Yelling gets you nowhere. Yelling gets you nowhere. Let's analyse this question. So they want me to take the advice of Sanjeev Gupta in our hydrogen plans. No, I won't—no, I won't take their advice. I won't use the advice of Sanjeev Gupta. I won't do that.

Do you know whose advice I will take? I will take BlueScope, CSIRO, commonwealth government, and how about this person: '...hydrogen, which has emerged as an area of future growth,' Vincent Tarzia. That was your opinion just not that long ago. And what about the shadow minister himself? What did he have to say? What did he have to say about hydrogen and its applications? He said:

I would like to take this opportunity to speak in parliament today about the fantastic federal government announcement last Friday of the Marshall Liberal government's successful \$146.5 million Port Bonython hydrogen hub...

Hydrogen, and what is Port Bonython close to? The steelworks. The shadow minister continued:

This is a huge win for South Australia that will create thousands of jobs and establish South Australia as a globally-significant supplier of clean hydrogen.

So here they are now saying in one aspect, hydrogen has no future, quoting Sanjeev Gupta, but a few years ago you told the parliament that it did. So which one is it? I think when it comes to hydrogen and you hear everything they say—I mean, it goes on:

...hydrogen really has a fantastic ability. It is going to provide clean energy going forward...

When they were in office they acknowledged the value hydrogen has. When they are in opposition they say it is valueless. Be consistent. Have a consistent message. Follow my example. Be consistent. I have been consistent about this from the very beginning. Yes, a winning consistency. I have to say, when it comes to hydrogen you haven't kept a consistent point of view from term to term.

The SPEAKER: The member for Morphett can leave the chamber until the end of question time. I didn't want to interrupt the minister while he was on a roll but, gee, it was loud.

The honourable member for Morphett having withdrawn from the chamber:

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Do you want to head out as well, because I could hear you yelling as well.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:40): My question is to the Premier. Has the government approved the movement of oysters from an algal bloom closed area at Franklin Harbour to a non-algal bloom affected area on the West Coast? If so, what science was used to justify the decision? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr TELFER: The industry and community of the West Coast have significant concerns about departmental decisions being made without a full understanding of the potential risks and impacts in an area of the state unaffected by the algal bloom and need assurance that scientific proof for such a decision is robust.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:41): I thank the member for Flinders for his question. Yes, there has been a decision made by PIRSA to authorise the transfer of oysters from one area to another, to which the member for Flinders refers. This was done after a rather lengthy examination by SARDI in conjunction with PIRSA to understand what the opportunity is here and what the risks are associated with that.

Clearly, the obligation upon all concerned is to make decisions in a thoughtful way on the basis of a risk analysis and understanding what is involved. The view was formed by the experts and the scientists that a transfer could be facilitated, which is of great benefit to the affected oyster grower, without running any adverse or unnecessary risk to other oyster growers in the area. The advice I have received is that it was done in consultation with oyster growers more broadly.

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: You're shaking your head. Were you there when SARDI, when PIRSA was sitting down talking with them?

Mr Telfer: Yes, I was. I was at the SAOGA AGM when they promised they would and they didn't.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Obviously, if the member for Flinders was present when the consultation occurred—

Mr Telfer: No, it's not consultation—where they promised they would, and they haven't.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: My advice is that consultation occurred. If you weren't in the room when the consultation occurred, you can't discount the fact that it did occur, so that's just worthy of note.

Mr Telfer: How come they all tell me it didn't occur?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice—

Mr Telfer: Because I think he has been given misinformation, that's why.

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

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, it's okay.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Sorry—I asked this question in the task force this morning. This question was asked and the advice that I received from the CEO of the Department of Primary Industries was that oyster growers were consulted with regarding this, understanding that 'consulted with' doesn't necessarily mean that people get what they want. But they were engaged, and it was explained why the decision was being taken that has.

But understand this: this is a decision that has been very thoughtfully considered by all the experts. My job is to scrutinise that and make sure that that has occurred. From both SARDI and PIRSA, they were at one in saying they don't believe there is a considerable risk here and that the transfer can happen. Bear in mind, in respect of brevetoxins for instance, the language that was used in his explanation to me was that brevetoxin is not like a contractable—a disease you can contract from one person to another. It's not like a COVID or anything. The brevetoxin is—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It's not contagious—thank you. It's quite different again. This provides an opportunity for the brevetoxin to flush out of those affected oysters without having a risk to the other oysters as well. There is also the consideration of the algae. The work has been done. As I have said repeatedly, we back our scientists. We question them and we scrutinise them. That is the advice that has come through that has informed their decision.

Now I am aware that there are some people who are unhappy about it because they would rather those other oyster growers not be looked after. What we are trying to do is make the right judgement for the industry as a whole.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:45): Just a supplementary, sir.

The SPEAKER: We will see if it's a supplementary. You did have a couple of questions that you threw across via interjection. I think you are down for about eight questions so far, but have a crack.

Mr TELFER: The lengthy study that the Premier referred to, will he commit to releasing that so there is clarity for oyster growers?

The SPEAKER: I will allow that as a supplementary.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:45): What I referred to was the lengthy piece of work that was done by those agencies. No doubt, they will appear before committees. There's a parliamentary inquiry here, and there's one being conducted federally. We have supported the parliamentary inquiry. Officials are available for scrutiny. Any information that can be furnished should be.

We have had an open book on the science. All the data we get, we publish. Other scientists scrutinise it. There's no shortage of commentary around that. Let's think about it this way: I don't know how it would be in the interests of PIRSA or SARDI for them to authorise a transfer of one oyster from one region to another that solves one problem but creates a bigger one. I don't know why they would possibly be motivated to do that. They are not motivated to do that. What they are motivated to do is make the right decision by the industry as a whole. It has come a long way over recent months. They are making a decision on the basis of science and I think that's what we have a responsibility to back.

COOBER PEDY DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (14:46): My question is to the Minister for Local Government. Can the minister update my community of Coober Pedy on the situation of the Coober Pedy council currently being under administration? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: As we are aware, the Coober Pedy council was placed under administration by the previous government and during that time not one of the three local government ministers, or any other ministers, visited Coober Pedy during that four-year period to communicate on the administration progress to the community. The community would be appreciative of any progress made with regard to finalising the administration and getting back to an elected body.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:47): I thank the member for Stuart for his question. As a former local government minister, I know how passionate he is. Today, in response to his question, I particularly want to discuss the extraordinary work that he was able to undertake in his couple of years as minister. I also thank the member for Giles for his advocacy on and for the Coober Pedy community.

It is worrying that the party that is allegedly stood up and set up and believes in the representation of regional communities, just couldn't be bothered getting up to Coober Pedy, one of the most extraordinary—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: COVID—two years, two years before COVID, and in the first weeks of me being the minister, where was I? I was in Coober Pedy. I appreciate that ministers from the former government were preoccupied with other things: travel rorts, stopping ports in Kangaroo Island, all of those really important things. But notwithstanding that, the Coober Pedy community knows that what they have and what they have to offer for our state is pretty extraordinary.

They are one of the most amazing places in our state: the history of opal mining, their connections to First Nations communities and also a really important service hub, not just north into the APY lands but also down to the Woomera area. As we see defence and space industries continuing to gather speed in our state, the Coober Pedy community will play a critical role in supporting that. What I can commit to, and what I can provide a high degree of assurance to the member for Stuart on, is that the Coober Pedy community will be out of administration next year.

If it wasn't for the really important work that the member for Stuart undertook as minister, we would be much, much farther away from that resolution. If it was the trajectory and the effort and the

appetite which the former government had, we would still be sitting here with nothing to show for it. We certainly wouldn't have secured—thanks to the member for Stuart's advocacy—the \$250,000 in the last state budget to deliver the service and assets review, which I have now received and the community of Coober Pedy has received. This is a really important piece of work that goes directly to the resourcing and restructuring issues to ensure a sustainable financial future.

The one thing I will agree with the former government's approach on for Coober Pedy is that it was right to put the Coober Pedy council into administration. It had poor governance and abysmal asset management and was a council that was at absolute breaking point.

As a government, we have instituted the Coober Pedy task force which comprises senior representatives from the South Australian government agencies including agencies responsible for or that have an interest in water and electricity services. It is also examining options for the future delivery and governance of essential services. The work is now very mature. As a government, with the support of the member for Stuart and the member for Giles, we will very soon be able to update the Coober Pedy community on their future, which is a bright and prosperous one.

Fundamentally, what I can say to the member for Stuart today is that this government will ensure that the water runs, that the electricity continues to be powering this community and that your council will be exiting administration next year. Coober Pedy's best days are ahead of it, and thanks to the member for Stuart that will be delivered.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr BROWN (Florey) (14:51): My question is to the Minister for Energy and Mining. Can the minister explain how the government is delivering on its energy policies, and are there any alternative views and approaches?

The SPEAKER: The old 'alternative views' question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:51): I thank the member for Florey for his question and his keen commitment to energy transition. It is attracting not just local attention but the attention of the world. We have transformed our renewable energy generation from 1 per cent—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I always love it when Tim intervenes—the one person we fear.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is—the front! We transformed our renewable energy generation from 1 per cent in 2007 to 75 per cent. We are committed to achieving 100 per cent net renewable generation by 2027, which I think is a target we are going to meet. We are committed to doing this, but we can't do it without the role of gas-fired turbines. Gas-fired turbines are going to be critical. It has been a consistent message from us as a government, when we were in opposition and as a previous government that gas is going to play a critical role in the transition.

There will be a breakthrough technology ultimately one day that will be able to store energy efficiently and dispatch that, but to overcome those shortfalls we are going to need gas in the short term. That is why today we announced a new \$17.5 million gas initiative offering matched funding for innovative gas projects: up to \$2.5 million dollars for eligible projects that increase gas supply and capacity. We want to encourage projects that enhance geological knowledge of areas of potential gas supplies close to our existing infrastructure and that drive the adoption of new technologies to lift productivity and improve the efficiency of gas production.

We are also looking at gas storage solutions, underground aquifers. Iona in Victoria is a very, very important national reserve of gas. South Australia has the potential to have even larger or more significant gas storage options. One that we are looking at is in the Katnook, which is probably a very good opportunity for us to store gas. This is something that these funds could help unlock. Of course, we also want to support infrastructure to unlock new gas supply to improve deliverability.

I have to say, it is an approach that is unique to South Australian Labor—probably because we are so far ahead of the curve on renewable energy that we understand the complexities of it. It is also in stark contrast to members opposite, who are opposed to new gas basins and gas extraction in those basins. It is a unique antibusiness view of members opposite to be so opposed to gas extraction, especially in the South-East. But I have to say that securing supply is critical. If we could have an oversupply of gas in this state you would see prices in retail electricity generation drop, but that will take time.

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia: When?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The Leader of the Opposition said, 'When?' If the ban on fracture stimulation in the South-East were lifted, the only way it would get any meaningful investment is for members opposite to say openly and publicly that they would support the lifting of that ban, because no-one can rely on one government. You need to have bipartisan support for this and, until the Liberal Party come out and tell us their views on fracture stimulation, no-one will invest in South Australia, because what they fear is another opportunistic ban like there was in the last parliament by the former Liberal government that they all voted for bar one.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:55): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier guarantee the people of the West Coast, which is currently free of the harmful algal bloom and the associated brevetoxin, that the movement of oysters from algal bloom areas happens with zero risk to the local environment and industry, and what conditions have been placed on those movements?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:55): I thank the member for Flinders for his question on this subject again. I can advise the member for Flinders in a bit more detail. Firstly, in regard to the SA Oyster Growers Association, I am advised that there was consultation that took place with them. They advised themselves, that is, the SA Oyster Growers Association, and I quote:

...[SA Oyster Growers Association] recommend to PIRSA that relay requests should begin to be processed and then allowed where at least one method of risk mitigation is used prior to movement.

That goes to the matter that we were discussing earlier about consultation and engagement with the industry more broadly. So a comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken, consistent with national standards. The oyster transfer arrangements were standards that were developed nationally and there was a review that was undertaken in 2023 regarding biotoxins.

South Australia updated its guidelines last year to align with those national standards, which is worthy of note. A comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken consistent with the national standards, and an independent review further concluded that the likelihood of translocation causing a bloom is low. I am advised that the oysters will be kept out of the water for 24 hours, cleaned, rinsed and equipment properly washed down and changed. The oysters will be quarantined under strict conditions until brevetoxin levels drop to a food-safe level under 0.8 milligrams per kilo. Then I mentioned what was said about the consultation.

What I would say to the member for Flinders is when the member for Flinders contemplates the position that he will take on this matter, as he is entitled to do and indeed has a responsibility to do as the member for Flinders, I would invite him to look at the big picture here. Because of course it is open to the member for Flinders to pursue a political path and go around and whip up fear and seek to critique—

Mr Telfer: I am not whipping up the fear.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am not accusing you of that.

Mr Telfer: The fear is there; you have started it.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Exactly. I know that fear is there and it is open to you to whip that up. Or it is also open to you to seek to engage with those people who have a degree of concern with the fact that the people who are the regulators and the authorities who are custodians of the science regarding all of this have done the work and made judgements accordingly. We know in government—and this was discussed in the task force meeting, of which I am present—that there

are people who are opposed to this, but we also know there is a genuine need for other oyster growers.

Our view is that we have got a responsibility to think about them too and make balanced decisions in the interests of the industry as a whole. So, yes, we could focus on the fear but we could also focus on the science that should assuage people of any of those fears, bearing in mind that the more people beat the drum about this I don't know how it is doing the industry any favours. The truth is that eating South Australian oysters is an excellent thing to be doing at the moment. They're absolutely magnificent eating. In fact, I had more on the weekend—they were pretty good—that I bought from Samtass—

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: —because I want to support people eating oysters. You should too. And that means having a discussion based on the science.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:59): My question is to the Premier. Did the government consult with the SA Oyster Growers Association or other oyster growers or industry in the destination zone before making the decision to move oysters from an algal bloom area to the non-affected West Coast? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr TELFER: I don't want to have duelling statements from SAOGA, but to quote a statement from the South Australian Oyster Growers Association:

This decision was made with no consultation with SAOGA, sharing of recent scientific evidence, decision making matrix, other industries/stakeholders or local communities...SAOGA have asked for the conditions of the translocation to be shared but this has also been denied.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:00): I am happy to follow that up.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Isn't that what you want me to do? I would have thought that's what you want us to do. Like I said, we have no interest in creating unnecessary risk. We only have interest in supporting the industry, which we've done consistently throughout this. We've certainly spent a lot of money on that, and will continue to do that if it's necessary. So more than happy to follow that up.

I'm aware that there are some people who don't support the decision. I'm also aware of the fact that the people who do support the decision aren't likely to be heard of very much. But if there are any issues that the association has or anybody else we're happy to chase them down. We've been working with the association and other representatives of commercial seafood producers in this state extremely collaboratively. We have sought to accommodate every single one of their requests where we can.

We don't suggest for a moment that government always has all the answers. We have been, though—I've been making sure and asking the questions of PIRSA and SARDI to satisfy ourselves that they're doing the work that is required here to make the right judgement call, acknowledging that someone somewhere always has to make a judgement call. The responsibility of government means that you accept that, and there'll be people who have a different view. But I'm more than happy to chase that up and will engage with the association from my office.

COP31

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:02): My question is to the Premier. What level of confidence does the Premier have that our state will host COP31 in November next year? With your leave, sir, and that of the house I'll explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: *The Australian Financial Review* today revealed the Prime Minister is unlikely to attend the Brazil summit 'as COP bid teeters'.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:02): I thank the member for Frome for her question. It's a good one and one that we'd like to have an answer to ourselves. Naturally, I have been monitoring the negotiations and been in discussions with commonwealth colleagues regarding how they are proceeding.

The first thing is this: no matter what happens from here I can't tell you how proud I am that South Australia is currently in the position to be the hosts—or Adelaide is to be the host city—in the event that Australia wins the right to host COP. I don't think it's fully appreciated that this was not the way it was supposed to go. These events always tend to be in either Sydney or Melbourne, but if Australia wins the rights it's in Adelaide. And well it should be given that we've got a pretty good story to tell on all things associated with decarbonisation, apart from the fact that we've demonstrated our capacity to host a pretty good event, notwithstanding the fact that this will be the biggest we've ever had by a proverbial mile.

We are very excited about the proposition. Australia ostensibly—and this was also reported in the *Fin* this morning—has the support of the overall majority of member nations that are otherwise eligible to have a say, overwhelmingly. However, we have this system that we are subject to in the UN where everything has to be done via consensus. People might debate the merit of having such an arrangement in a different forum. I am happy to contribute to that discussion.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, we are not. We make decisions; that's right, and we have means to resolve how those decisions are made, even including things such as that. But there is no mechanism here: we need Turkiye to withdraw. So we do not know what is going to happen. Only the Turkish government, or the government of Turkiye, can truly say whether or not they are likely to withdraw. Time will tell.

There have been negotiations about what a potential compromise option might look like. I welcome those discussions, but we are in the box seat. I certainly hope we get the result we are looking for, but we can't be guaranteed it. Anyone who says they know how this is going to play out, unless it is President Erdogan, probably does not know. We will wait and see. The advice that I have received is that it is ultimately going to have to be decided at the Brazil COP, as was foreshadowed in that article as well. We will wait and see how it transpires.

Our fingers are crossed, but nothing ventured, nothing gained. It will be a huge upside for the state if we get it. In fact, if we do not get it, we have already had a benefit by virtue of the fact that we have procured a lot of IP and got our name out there with very small cost indeed. In fact, we have got a bit of international recognition out of it. It is good to be in the position we are in, and we will wait to see how it plays out. It is impossible to predict. What I do know is, like I said, you have got to be in it to win it, and we are very much in it.

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (15:06): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Can the minister update the house on when GPs will be able to diagnose and treat South Australians with ADHD?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Karna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:06): Thank you to the member for Davenport for her interest in this very important topic. As members will know, at the moment, it is very difficult for so many South Australians to get access to a diagnosis for ADHD. At the moment, you have to go to a psychiatrist or a paediatrician to be able to do so. That is a very expensive exercise for South Australians to do. It means that people with money are able to get that diagnosis, and it means people without money are facing significant hardship in doing so and in many cases missing out on care for themselves or for their children, across the state.

What we have embarked upon doing is a reform whereby we will allow GPs to be able to diagnose people from eight and up in South Australia for ADHD. This is a really exciting development. It will be coming about whereby they undertake additional training, and calls of interest for that

training have gone out today. GPs across the state are able to apply for that training. That will be undertaken over the course of the next few months, and therefore we expect from February next year at least up to 100 GPs across the state will be able to undertake that diagnosis and make prescriptions available for people for ADHD.

That is incredibly exciting. We have had such a really positive response from people across the community for this. I met just yesterday with a family, Josh and his son Jaxson. Jaxson and his dad were able to describe the change and the impact that finding a diagnosis has meant. They live in Elizabeth at the moment in the member for Elizabeth's electorate, and they have had to travel a significant distance to be able to see a paediatrician to be able to get that diagnosis.

That will be changed from February next year, when we have GPs across the state who are able to provide this diagnosis. This has been supported by the RACGP (the College of General Practitioners), by the College of Physicians, who look after paediatricians, and by the College of Psychiatrists. I want to thank all of those three organisations for their support and working with us to devise this training and make sure it can be rolled out.

It has been fundamentally supported by so many people. You have to wonder: where is the opposition? There have been no negative comments. Surely, someone will come out being negative about this issue. Of course, they did. In steps the most negative person in South Australia, the member for Schubert. She steps up to the plate, ready to be negative about this. What did she say on the TV news last night? Not offering support, not saying this is a great development for families, but saying, 'This will place additional demand on GPs, who are already stretched.' Stepping up to the plate, ready to offer the negative commentary for whatever's happening, you're there: 1800-Negative-Comment.

We have the member for Schubert saying this is going to be detrimental to GPs. What do GPs think about it? Are GPs similarly fretting about what this is going to mean for their workloads? It would be interesting to know. The Chair of the College of GPs, Dr Sian Goodson, was asked about this very subject and she said, 'I don't think this is going to put additional unnecessary pressure and I think we'll find lots of GPs have got ability and capacity to take this on.' So here we've got the member for Schubert always negative and always out there criticising, while the College of GPs is working with us and supporting this important measure that will help patients across South Australia.

Parliamentary Committees

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:10): I move:

That the committee have leave to sit during the sitting of the house today.

Motion carried.

Grievance Debate

MALINAUSKAS LABOR GOVERNMENT

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (15:10): It has been another disastrous week for this state Labor government, let me tell you. Today, thousands of frontline workers who are not being listened to by this government are taking to the steps of Parliament House, walking between the Royal Adelaide Hospital and parliament, because they have an arrogant government that is just not listening to their concerns.

This week, the bandaid job that this Labor government has been doing in managing our state's economy has been laid bare for all to see. You cannot just put a bandaid on the bullet hole that Labor has shot through our state's finances. What a debacle: \$500 million literally poured down the drain, half a billion dollars that has been wiped out of our state's coffers for nothing but a complete vanity project. What a complete embarrassment—an embarrassment that generations are going to have to pay for.

Did the Premier or his merry men do any due diligence whatsoever before they promised South Australians that their Hydrogen Jobs Plan would be the way of the future? It seems not. Not

only has the hydrogen vanity project been a broken promise and a spectacular failure but it has done nothing, absolutely nothing, to bring down record power prices in South Australia. We know that South Australians are battling with some of the highest power prices in not only Australia but the world.

Where is the accountability? There is none. Heads must roll, yet not a single person has been held accountable—not one single person. Quite the opposite, in fact: this government is actually rewarding those who are responsible for this debacle. Have a look at what they have done. For wasting half a billion dollars, we have now seen that the energy minister has actually received a promotion to Treasurer so that he can go and waste even more of South Australia's hardworking taxpayers' dollars. What about the chief executive who oversaw the failed plan? It is all good for him: he kept his \$600,000 or so a year salary to work on another important project, the Whyalla transformation. He will probably stuff that one up as well.

This week, we learned about one particular staffer. How much did they receive? Not \$100,000, not \$200,000, not \$300,000, not \$500,000, but \$800,000 in wages and, effectively, a golden handshake—\$800,000. It must be nice. It was not one of the Daicos boys, let me tell you. Eight hundred thousand dollars is more than five times the average salary of the nurses who were rallying on the steps of Parliament House today because this government will not listen to them.

That brings me to my next bandaid that this government has tried to put on our healthcare system. The government promised to fix the ramping crisis and they have not delivered. We have had 40 months of the worst ramping in South Australia's history—40 months. What is their solution? They say that they will build more beds, but what have we learned this week? Do not just take my word for it; look at the Auditor-General's Report. Their revelations show that a number of hospitals are actually delayed. The new Women's and Children's Hospital, the Mount Barker hospital and the Flinders Medical Centre expansion are all delayed. We know what that means: prices are only going to go up.

At this rate, what will happen is that toddlers will actually be teenagers before the doors open at the new Women's and Children's Hospital. And 12 years after Labor first promised to deliver the project, just 20 per cent of the design work has actually been completed.

Mrs Hurn: Not even the car park.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Not even that car park. Well, Labor has form when it comes to failing to deliver major health infrastructure projects or just generally health infrastructure, or infrastructure projects generally. We saw this with the Royal Adelaide Hospital which was delayed. It was over budget and it was already too small the day that it opened.

South Australians need a government that they can trust to deliver on these projects—big projects that are essential to alleviating pressure on our EDs and also on our hospital ramps. We were told that fixing ramping would be the priority of this Labor government, but the reality could not be further from the truth. Yet again, though, there is no accountability for this complete failure, only spin and, quite frankly, a whole heap of hot air. It is time for this Premier to be up-front and to admit that these projects are in strife. And he has broken another election promise.

Unsurprisingly, we also saw another bandaid pulled out of the packet this week, this time where they placed a single mother and her child with disabilities into a Housing Trust home. Do you know what it used to be? A meth lab. Can you believe it? This is what they do to some of the most vulnerable in our community. It was a series of events that could only be described as a horror story for this family, yet all they got from North Adelaide Nick was gaslighting—that is all they got from North Adelaide Nick. Vulnerable families deserve safety and dignity, but all they are getting is substandard living under Labor.

We will keep fighting for people who are being left behind by this government's failures, because South Australians deserve far better than bandaids over the holes that Labor has created in our economy, in our healthcare system and in our housing crisis.

ELDER ELECTORATE

Ms CLANCY (Elder) (15:16): I rise today to talk about a couple of things that happened last week: one in the community and one in my portfolio in the mental health space. I held my annual seniors forum last Wednesday at the Edwardstown Baptist Church—which, confusingly, is actually in St Marys—and we are really grateful to them for letting us use their facilities again, which are really topnotch.

I also want to thank Becks Bakehouse and Pasadena Foodland for catering the event. It was a very popular morning tea. I also want to thank all the local residents who came along to the forum to hear from our speakers. We had the RAA, Aged Rights Advocacy Service and SAPOL all present, and their presentations were listened to very intently. We have received really good feedback about the forum, and people felt they received a lot of really helpful information. It was really lovely to see a lot of familiar faces from our community, as well as some new ones.

I am sure the former Minister for Transport would love to hear that the crowd cheered when I spoke about the expansion of the free travel for seniors that we introduced. They are using it so much. It has been a really great change for people and it has meant that a lot of older people in our community are now using our public transport system no matter what time of day, because it is more accessible to them now that it is free all the time.

I also want to thank all of our stallholders. We had a number of them who were there to answer any questions and provide information. Some of them had some cool little goodies. There were lots of bookmarks with magnifying glasses in them and cleaning products for glasses—lots of fun stuff. Everyone went away with a Nadia Clancy show bag full of goodies.

I want to thank organisations such as the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, Carers SA, COTA SA and some of our local organisations who do such good work bringing people together on a regular basis, like our Probus clubs. So thank you, and I look forward to putting on another seniors forum next year if I have pleasure of being re-elected as the member for Elder.

On Thursday night, I attended the Mental Health Coalition of South Australia's Lived Experience Workforce Program awards. I have attended these awards for the last three, maybe four years, and they are always a really special evening to recognise the incredibly important work that the Lived Experience Workforce does in our community and for the mental health sector. I really appreciate everyone in that workforce who provides such an important insight into what someone is experiencing and is willing to use their own personal experience in their work to support somebody else. Congratulations to all of the nominees for the awards. I want to congratulate the winners, Mark Godfrey and Jadee-Mae Cartledge, as well as the joint winners of the Lived Experience Program award, which was Safe Haven and LETSS (Lived Experience Telephone Support Service).

I give a particular shout-out to Safe Haven. I was really pleased to go to their opening when they first started, and it is a really special place where people with lived experience are able to support those who can just walk in and have someone to talk to who actually really does get it. Safe Haven has already supported 8,000 people, so they are making a really big difference in our northern suburbs and I am really grateful for that.

Lastly, I would just like to encourage everybody to get involved in the Torrens to Darlington tunnel-boring machine naming competition. I was stoked to be in Clovelly Park at the site of the T2D work on Sunday for a press conference where we announced that the biggest part of the tunnel-boring machine had arrived. In the middle of the night it had come down Port Road and then South Road and just seeing that piece of machinery, along with all the other bits that are going to slowly be welded on over a six-week period, was pretty outstanding and really exciting.

Everyone can get online. You can go onto my Facebook as well and see how you can get involved. You just need to put forward a name. I think you get up to 30 words to say why you have chosen that name and it needs to be a female name. Just think, you can be a part of history and feel more connected to this huge infrastructure project.

There are three machines. Nadia is a pretty good name, but there are also lots of different names that would be great for the tunnel-boring machines to be named after and, as I am sure the member for Hammond would agree, it would probably be strange for something 'boring' to be named

after me, because I am obviously anything but. I encourage everybody to get involved. I thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: I would call it Doug. The member for Hammond.

MYPOLONGA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:21): I rise to talk about the Mypolonga Primary School, a great little school in my electorate. The Mypolonga Primary School was established in May 1916 with an enrolment of 42 students. Today there are 140 students enrolled.

Over the last 100-plus years there have been a number of improvements and additions to school facilities, including the building of a bike shed, clearing of ground for the tennis court and cricket pitch and the establishment of the famous Mypolonga School Shop. Back in 1921, the school purchased waterbags for all its students. More recently, in 2006, the school purchased water bottles for each student.

The school is situated near the riverbank at Mypolonga, which provides a beautiful location most of the time, just not during the 1956 and the 2022-23 River Murray floods. In 1956 the floodwaters entered the school grounds, so the decision was made to move furniture and school equipment to the Mypolonga Institute up the hill until the water subsided. According to records, the furniture and school equipment were transferred back to the school grounds on 18 November 1956.

Volunteers have been a vital part of the development of the school, working overtime assisting with things like repairing the school during the war years, grassing the oval, tree planting and helping with elective programs.

The Mypolonga School Shop has been operating since 1995 and celebrated 30 years last Friday. The shop has been very instrumental in educating students in financial literacy and how a business operates. The idea of a school shop came about following the closure of the Mypolonga Post Office, which was located across from the school. A student suggested it could be turned into a shop selling handmade crafts by the students and other locals.

At the time, the *Proud Mary* nature tours, which ran a boat cruise along the River Murray, heard about the shop and added it to their itinerary and they still continue to visit the shop every Friday. This is a partnership that, as I said, remains today.

Various products were trialled by the school over the years such as dried apricots, jam, chocolate-coated oranges, herbs, vinegar and postcards, but it was ultimately decided that the market mainly wanted chocolate-coated apricots and lemonade, which we sampled the other day. Along with crafts made by students and locals, the school currently sells recipe books, plain apricots, choc-coated apricots, choc-coated almond apricots, pens, lemonade, magnets, bookmarks, key tags and greeting cards.

Each week, the year 5/6 students work in pairs on one of eight rotations. The rotations are: choc-coating the apricots; bagging the apricots for sale; selling the apricots; making the lemonade; staffing the inside counter, which involves selling items on consignment and retaining a 20 per cent commission from each sale; staffing the outside counter, which involves selling products made by students; being the tour leader for visitors; and reconciling the books.

As I said, it was the 30-year book launch of the Mypolonga School Shop last Friday and the mural unveiling. The mural was unveiled by former principal Rita O'Brien and former staffer Anne Martin. It is just so good to see this lovely little school and its 140 students. People do all they can to get their students enrolled at this fantastic little primary school. It is only about 15 kilometres outside of Murray Bridge and it is such a great place for learning and the students did such a great job when they were assigned to escort us around the school and show us all the projects and all the things that they were making for the school shop.

It was a proud moment for me, just before the peak water came through with the 2022-23 floods, to work with a few people but mainly former head of the department of environment John Schutz to make sure we had a 700-metre levee bank built across in front of the Mypolonga School, and parts of low-lying Mypolonga, to protect those facilities so they could keep operating

appropriately and save all the objects at the school so they did not have to be moved again, like they were in 1956.

Again, I salute the Mypolonga Primary School and everyone who has anything to do with it because it is a fantastic school and I wish it well for the next 100 years.

PROSPECT LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:26):

I rise to acknowledge the 20th anniversary of the Prospect Local History Group. I congratulate them on this significant milestone and thank them for their ongoing work. In the gallery today, we are joined by Anna Graves, who did not have to travel too far as she is also our esteemed Deputy Parliamentary Librarian; Karen Martin; Lesley Attema; Neil Rossiter; and Catherine Manning. Thanks so much for being here.

I was fortunate enough to celebrate with the group at their 20th anniversary afternoon celebration, Making History 2005 to 2025, held at Wassail Wine Bar on Prospect Road, which I understand also happens to be the childhood home of two of the original members of the history group, sisters Lesley Attema and Merry Wickes.

Run by a group of passionate volunteers, the Prospect Local History Group was founded in 2005 under the wing of the Friends of Prospect Library and aims to preserve, protect and promote the history of the City of Prospect and the surrounding areas. They have played a significant role in ensuring the people, places and stories of our beautiful neighbourhood are not only remembered but celebrated.

Prime movers in setting up the group included then library staff, Ann Gowin and Lianne Gould, as well as key volunteers such as the late Jenni Cotton, along with City of Prospect current councillor Kristina Barnett who was, at the time, the mayor of the City of Prospect. I want to acknowledge Councillor Barnett for her continued contribution. Other early volunteers included Jo Talmage, Lesley Attema and Merry Wickes. These early movers wanted to capture the city's history before key members of the community passed on, so there was a great interest in oral history. The group now boasts a significant collection of oral histories of notable residents.

Many of the group's initial objectives have been achieved, and many members of the Prospect community have served as volunteers. They are too numerous to mention but we thank them all for their contribution to our community.

The Prospect Local History Group has worked hard to establish themselves in the community as the go-to on all things Prospect, taking on research requests from the public and working alongside council to contribute to the Prospect Local History collection and multiple celebrations. If you live in Prospect and you are curious about when your house was built or who lived in it before, there is a good chance the group can find out.

In recent years the group has been involved in major developments in the City of Prospect such as the design of Payinthe and the state heritage listing of the Prospect Air Raid Shelter where they also host tours for a small donation fee. In 2024 they successfully organised the digitisation of the *Standard Messenger* for the years 1966 to 1967 which were then added to Trove. The front page of the edition from 18 May 1966 has been noted as a particular favourite, with the headline, 'History of Prospect to be written,' with the story outlining that the then Mayor J.W. Rattley had formed a special committee to gather information for a book to be published, coinciding with the centenary of Prospect in 1972.

Alongside all the ongoing hard work the group does, they are extensively involved in the preparatory work with council on the Historic Area Code Amendment, which recently introduced 432 representative buildings across five historic neighbourhoods of the City of Prospect's now 11 historic areas. This was a code amendment that the Malinauskas government, through me and the planning minister, Nick Champion, was very proud to approve. Our community is incredibly proud of our leafy green streets, lined with character homes and buildings that hold so much history. I was thrilled to see these changes come into effect, which will ensure the character of our community is maintained for current and future generations.

The Prospect Local History Group has also produced various publications, ranging from self-guided tours to a compilation of stories about people gone long before us, and essays about life in Prospect during a time we can only imagine. The Parliamentary Library has copies of all the group's publications in their collection.

Volunteer commitment across a range of activities, such as exhibitions, displays, research, walks and talks, photography and the digitisation of documents and images easily exceeds 2,500 hours per year. I want to thank again the Prospect Local History Group for their ongoing dedication and contribution to our neighbourhood. Your commitment to preserving and celebrating our community's history is admirable, and I look forward to following along with your next project and many more beyond. Congratulations on your 20 years.

With the time I have left, I want to say that it was an absolute privilege last week to attend the official opening of the brand-new Walkerville Bowling Club. I am a big fan of bowling—which I took up after snapping my Achilles playing netball. I thought I needed a new sport and what greater sport to join than lawn bowling.

Joining the Walkerville Bowling Club came at a great time. It is a really incredible community and incredible family, and seeing the brand-new centre come to life, I want to acknowledge the efforts of the former member for Adelaide, Rachel Sanderson, for her contribution towards the project in securing the funding and then me, as the member for Adelaide, working with council to see the development constructed. Last Friday, it was a wonderful celebration seeing our brand-new Walkerville Bowling Club open. I look forward to getting on the green and getting a few wins.

SCHUBERT ELECTORATE

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (15:32): There are always so many exciting things happening in my local electorate. As the member for Schubert, I always appreciate the opportunity to mention them here in the parliament and to put on the record all the fantastic work that so many groups and people in my local community are doing.

In the last few weeks there has been a lot on and I have enjoyed getting out and about and celebrating so many achievements. First up, we had the Keyneton Primary School 100th birthday celebration. I was really delighted to be one of more than 250 people who attended the 100th birthday of Keyneton Primary School. This is a small school but they have an extraordinary story and it is a generational school in my community that is full of so much pride.

I would like to give a big shout-out to principal, Emily Barr. She did a remarkable job in putting together all the history and making it such a celebration for locals. I would like to put on the record all the anniversary event organising committee members: Bruce Evans, Glen Johns, Sarah Bailey, Georgie Keynes, Kay Gerhardy, Leanne Boehm, Deb Roesler and Alice Howard. They did a fantastic job. The CFS was there, and the Scouts were there cooking up a storm and it was really wonderful to speak at this event and formally recognise all their achievements over the past century. I hope they have many more years of schooling ahead at Keyneton.

Over the weekend, I had a stall at the Houghton Spring Fair. This is a really fantastic fair in the northern Adelaide Hills. There are always so many businesses popping up showcasing the fantastic work they do. I was next to the Slow Flower Company, so I was next to the prettiest stand at the entire fair. I also had the opportunity to present some life membership awards to all the volunteers who have gone above and beyond over an extraordinarily long period of time for the Houghton Inglewood memorial oval.

I presented life membership to Julie Sharp, who has been on the committee for 20 years and is retiring this year—well done to you, Julie; Helen Atkinson, who has been volunteering her time on this committee for 25 years; and Shirley Warner, who has volunteered for a remarkable 32 years and for 28 of those 32 years has been the secretary of the committee, which is a remarkable job. When you look at all of the volunteer groups across our communities the secretary is hardly the most sought-after job, given the work that is involved, but Shirley has done a really tremendous job. I put on the record my thanks and appreciation to her. We also have Mr Matt Thomas, who has been on the committee for 23 years. He is currently serving as the president and has done for the past

18 years. Congratulations to all of those members who I was honoured to present life member pins to.

I give another shout-out to Han Robat and the organising committee of the Houghton Spring Fair. In the last few years the weather has been pretty ordinary, to say the least. Last year it was around 40 degrees and the year before that there was torrential rain. Over the weekend I think we had a nice sweet spot. Well done to all of those people who coordinated that.

Anyone who has driven along the Sturt Highway lately would know that it has been an absolute rollercoaster. There is a petition that is currently going that is being coordinated by locals Jacqui and Michella and has garnered nearly 6,000 signatures. I would like to give a shout-out to those ladies and all the businesses across the Barossa Valley who have been supporting this call for a long-term solution for the Sturt Highway. Pleasingly, there are some night works happening at the moment which are intended to fix some of the really dreadful spots along the highway. We welcome that, but it is certainly not the long-term fix that we are looking for so we will keep pushing for that.

I also briefly acknowledge the hard work of BIL. BIL is not a person; it is an organisation called Barossa Infrastructure Limited. They do a great job as a cooperative in providing water to grapegrowers in the Eden Valley. They recently held their AGM, and I was delighted to attend that, where we got an update about the progress on our plight for a long-term water security solution for the Barossa Valley. The importance of this for our growers, for our farmers and for our agricultural community cannot be overstated. Water is literally the lifeblood of industry in the Barossa Valley. I congratulate them on their advocacy and I look forward to continuing to work side by side with them as we secure funding for a long-term water security solution for our region.

ITALIAN COMMUNITY

Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (15:37): As members of parliament, we are privileged to attend many events in our local communities. Today I would like to acknowledge two special celebrations I recently attended, celebrations of significant milestones for two wonderful Italian organisations. The Italian Historical Society of South Australia 10th Anniversary Gala Dinner celebration was not just a celebration of a milestone—the night was a tribute to the enduring legacy of Italian migration and its profound impact on our state. I would like to acknowledge and thank the president of the society, Giuseppe Geracitano, known to many as 'Joe', for the invitation and for his valuable contribution.

Since its founding in 2015, the Italian Historical Society has played a vital role in preserving the rich tapestry of Italian heritage in South Australia. Through the collection of primary sources—oral histories of first-generation migrants detailing reasons for emigrating and their challenges and successes upon arrival, letters, photographs and documents—the society has created a living archive, one that tells the story of courage, resilience and contribution.

The society's flagship publication *La Partenza: Journey to a New Beginning* showcases stories, research and articles on Italian migration. Its project 'A trunk full of dreams and a suitcase full of memories' makes primary data publicly accessible. In addition, the society interviews key figures who have contributed to South Australia in business, culture, sport and, of course, food.

The migrant stories of the Italian community are important chapters in South Australia's story and its postwar evolution as a multicultural state. From the earliest Italian migrants to more recent young arrivals, we will forever appreciate the legacy and the influence of those who made the journey halfway across the world to start a new life here in Australia. I am sure the Deputy Speaker will agree with me on that.

The first documented Italian migrant to our state, Antonio Giannoni, lived in High Street, Kensington, having arrived here in 1839. He started the first horse-drawn tram service in South Australia. Antonio's son, Peter, was the first Italian Australian to be elected mayor in South Australia, leading the then Town of Kensington and Norwood from 1920 to 1922. Preserving these stories is not just about looking back, it is about educating future generations, fostering understanding and strengthening our shared identity. Stories like Antonio's help shape the South Australian Italian story and, importantly, shape the South Australian story.

The contribution of the Italian community is being felt in every aspect of our society, particularly through the migration postwar period. The work of the society ensures that the voices

and experiences of Italian South Australians are never forgotten. Congratulations to Joe and the Italian Historical Society of South Australia team for their incredible work documenting the history of our South Australian Italian community. Ten years of work through exhibitions, community programs and historical initiatives, ensuring Italian migration stories live on for generations to come, is truly worth celebrating.

The second event was the Sicilia Social and Sports Club Golden Jubilee Gala. It was a night to remember celebrating the past 50 years. President, Rita Palumbo, has been at the helm for the past 18 years doing an extraordinary job with her dedication to the South Australian Sicilian community, and the evening was testament to this. Of course, Rita has a hardworking committee to assist her, along with many selfless and dedicated volunteers. I acknowledge their valuable contribution today to the success of the club.

On the evening, recognition was given to the contribution of those who have gone before to help make the club what it is today, reflecting on early days when the first clubrooms were located at Camden Park before relocating to Klemzig in 1992. Like other cultural organisations, the Sicilia Social and Sports Club has humble beginnings, with pioneers leaving a proud legacy for those who follow, embracing the traditions of the past and working to ensure they were carried forward into the next generation.

Sicily played a significant role in the story of Italian migration to Australia, with many migrants from both the mainland and Sicily itself leaving from the port city of Messina to start a new life. These migrant journeys that started decades ago with sacrifice, struggle and ultimately success, both individually and collectively, are part of South Australia's Italian migration story. I congratulate the club on its golden jubilee and thank them for their valuable contribution to our South Australian community.

Parliamentary Procedure

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:43): I move:

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 11 November 2025 at 2pm.

Motion carried.

Bills

STATUTES AMENDMENT (ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO) BILL

Second Reading

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:44): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased today to introduce the Statute Amendment (Attorney-General's Portfolio) Bill 2025. This bill makes various amendments to several acts committed to the Attorney-General. I commend the bill to the chamber and seek leave to have the remainder of my second reading speech and the explanation of clauses in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

Part 2 of the Bill amends the *Bail Act 1985* to ensure that electronic monitoring services, for people who are fitted with an electronic device as a condition of bail, must be provided by:

- a public sector agency within the meaning of the *Public Sector Act 2009*; or
- an entity acting pursuant to a contract for services approved by the Chief Executive Officer (i.e. the Chief Executive of the Department for Correctional Services).

These amendments seek to respond to concerns that have been raised about the regulation and oversight of private bail monitoring services following the recent collapse of BailSafe Australia and the implications of this within Victoria and New South Wales.

BailSafe Australia is a private company that provides electronic monitoring services using GPS devices to track people who are fitted with an electronic device as a condition of bail. While it is a standing practice in Victoria and New South Wales for persons seeking bail to be monitored by a private provider, BailSafe Australia did not alert Victorian or New South Wales authorities of its collapse.

In response to these concerns, New South Wales has recently enacted legislation to ensure that private electronic monitoring bail conditions can no longer be imposed. Victoria has also announced that it will end the use of private entities for electronic monitoring of people on bail.

Unlike Victoria and NSW, it is not an established practice in South Australia for private entities to provide electronic monitoring services to people who are on bail. In South Australia, all electronic bail monitoring services are currently provided by public sector agencies. Accordingly, there are currently no private entities providing these services in the State.

Notwithstanding, the proposed amendments to the Bail Act will assist to safeguard against any potential future risk of a similar situation occurring in South Australia by ensuring that electronic monitoring services cannot be provided by a private entity without the approval of the Chief Executive of the Department for Correctional Services.

Part 3 of the Bill amends section 16 of the *District Court Act 1991* to ensure that a person who resigns from judicial office, or who resigns from their term of appointment, may continue to act in the relevant judicial office for the purpose of completing the hearing and determination of any proceedings that were part-heard before their resignation.

Unlike section 13A(3) of the *Supreme Court Act 1935*, there is currently no power for a Judge or Associate Judge of the District Court to continue to act for the purpose of completing the hearing and determination of proceedings that were part-heard before their resignation from judicial office. The proposed amendments in the Bill will ensure that these judicial officers can complete any proceedings that were part-heard before their retirement or resignation, as the case may be.

Part 4 of the Bill amends section 57 of the *Legal Practitioners Act 1981* to allow for the Attorney-General to delegate their functions and powers in relation to the authorisation of payments from the Legal Practitioners Fidelity Fund (Fidelity Fund).

The primary purpose of the Fidelity Fund is to provide compensation to people who suffer financial loss arising from an act or omission that involves dishonesty and results in a default of a law practice.

Section 57(5) of the Legal Practitioners Act provides that no payment may be made from the Fidelity Fund without the express authorisation of the Attorney-General.

Subject to authorisation, money in the Fidelity Fund may be applied for any of the specified purposes listed in section 57(4) of the Legal Practitioners Act.

There is currently no power for the Attorney-General to delegate their powers and functions under section 57(5), even though there may be situations where it may be appropriate for this to occur.

Accordingly, the Bill amends the Legal Practitioners Act to insert an express delegation power, similar to the delegation power that applies in relation to the Legal Profession Conduct Commissioner in section 77, to enable the Attorney-General to delegate their functions and powers to authorise payments from the Fidelity Fund.

A number of safeguards have been included to ensure that any delegation that might be made is subject to appropriate oversight. This includes a requirement for any delegation to be in writing and that any delegation can be revoked at will. There is also flexibility so that a delegation can be made on an absolute or conditional basis, for example, so that a delegate can only authorise payments of a certain kind or up to a certain monetary amount.

Part 5 of the Bill inserts new section 19A into the *Legislation Interpretation Act 2021* to provide that an amending Act or instrument is to be construed as part of the amended Act or instrument.

The amendments are intended to provide certainty regarding the validity of the 'listing technique', which is a common drafting method used by Parliamentary Counsel to give effect to declarations and designations made under relevant legislation.

The validity of the listing technique was considered by the Federal Court of Australia in *Deripraska v Minister for Foreign Affairs* [2024] FCA 52. In that case, the Federal Court affirmed the validity of the listing technique and noted that it is a common and useful drafting technique.

In confirming the validity of the technique, the Federal Court relied upon the operation of section 11B(1) of the *Commonwealth Acts Interpretation Act 1901*, which provides that 'every Act amending another Act must be construed with the other Act as part of the other Act'.

There is currently no equivalent provision in South Australia. Accordingly, the Bill amends the Legislation Interpretation to insert a new provision, modelled on s 11B(1) of the Commonwealth Acts Interpretation Act, to ensure that an amending Act or instrument is to be construed as part the amended Act or instrument.

Part 6 of the Bill proposes to repeal the offence in section 35 of the *Summary Offences Act 1953*, which restricts certain newspaper reports on descriptive material or legal proceedings relating to sexual immorality, unnatural vice or indecent material.

The original version of this offence was enacted in 1929 under the repealed *Indecent Reports (Restriction) Act 1928*. The offence was then later consolidated into the former *Police Offences Act 1953*, which is now known as the *Summary Offences Act 1953*.

It appears that the purpose of the original offence was to protect the public from material which, at the time, was considered to be capable of corrupting public morals due to its obscene or immoral nature. In particular, Parliamentary debate from the time suggests that that the offence was historically intended to restrict newspaper reports on activities of an illicit sexual nature, such as homosexuality and sexual relationships outside of marriage.

South Australia and Victoria are the only two jurisdictions to retain an offence of this kind. All other jurisdictions, including South Australia, have laws which restrict the reporting and publishing of certain material in connection with legal proceedings more broadly.

In South Australia, Part 8 of the *Evidence Act 1929* contains a number of offences which restrict reporting on legal proceedings, including offences that restrict reports relating to sexual cases as well as media reporting on the outcome of criminal proceedings generally. These offences carry significant financial penalties of up to \$10,000 in the case of an individual and \$120,000 for a body corporate. In addition, section 33 of the *Summary Offences Act 1953* makes it an offence to produce, sell or exhibit indecent or offensive material.

Given the existing restrictions that already apply to certain reports on sexual cases and legal proceedings, the Government considers it appropriate to repeal the historical offence in section 35 of the *Summary Offences Act 1953*.

Part 7 of the Bill amends section 31 of the *Surrogacy Act 2019* to postpone the requirement to undertake a statutory review of the Act by a further two years so that it must be completed by the eighth anniversary of the commencement of the Act—i.e. 1 September 2028.

The Surrogacy Act commenced operation on 1 September 2020. It repealed Part 2B of the *Family Relationships Act 1975* and created a standalone Act to recognise and regulate certain forms of surrogacy in South Australia.

Section 31 of the Surrogacy Act requires the Minister to cause a review of the operation of the Act to be conducted and submitted after the fifth, but before the sixth, anniversary of the Act (i.e. between 1 September 2025 and 1 September 2026).

The Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) is currently undertaking an inquiry into surrogacy and is due to report to the Commonwealth Government by 29 July 2026.

As part of its terms of reference, the ALRC has been asked to identify reforms, including proposals for uniform or complementary Commonwealth, State and Territory laws, that:

- are consistent with Australia's obligations under international law and conventions; and
- protect and promote the human rights of children born as a result of surrogacy arrangements, surrogates and intending parents, noting that the best interests of children are paramount.

It is anticipated that the South Australian statutory review will likely canvass similar issues and engage similar stakeholders to the ALRC inquiry.

Given this, the Bill proposes to delay the requirement to conduct the statutory review of the Surrogacy Act for a further two years so that it must be completed by 1 September 2028. This will ensure that any reforms that are proposed by the ALRC to improve the operation of surrogacy laws in South Australia can be taken into consideration as part of the South Australian statutory review.

Parts 8 and 9 of the Bill amend the *Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2005* and the *Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act 2005* to delay the effect of the expiry and sunset provisions in those Acts by a further 10 years, i.e. until 8 December 2035.

The Terrorism (Police Powers) Act provides authority for police officers to prevent and investigate terrorist acts. The Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act provides authority for the temporary detention of terror suspects in order to prevent the occurrence of a terrorist act, or to preserve evidence of, or relating to, a recent terrorist act.

Without legislative amendment to extend the operation of these Acts, the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act will expire, and the operative parts of the Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act will cease to operate, on 8 December 2025.

The extension of these Acts will ensure that South Australia can continue to use the powers provided for in those Acts to prevent and respond to potential terrorist acts and to keep our community safe.

Mr Speaker, that concludes the matters that are the subject of this Bill. I commend the Bill to the chamber.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Bail Act 1985*

3—Amendment of section 3—Interpretation

This section amends the definition of *Chief Executive Officer* in section 3 of the principal Act to align with changes to the terminology in the *Correctional Services Act 1982*.

4—Insertion of section 11AA

New section 11AA is inserted into the principal Act as follows:

11AA—Certain electronic monitoring must be conducted by public sector agency etc

The proposed section provides that, if a grant of bail is made subject to a condition requiring the applicant to be fitted with a device for the purpose of monitoring compliance with the bail agreement, any electronic monitoring services in respect of the device must be provided by a public sector agency, or by an entity acting pursuant to a contract for services approved by the Chief Executive Officer for the purposes of the section.

Part 3—Amendment of *District Court Act 1991*

5—Amendment of section 16—Retirement of members of judiciary

This clause amends section 16 of the principal Act to allow a person who resigns from judicial office to continue to act in the relevant office for the purpose of completing the hearing and determination of proceedings part-heard before their resignation.

Part 4—Amendment of *Legal Practitioners Act 1981*

6—Amendment of section 57—Fidelity Fund

This clause amends section 57 of the principal Act to empower the Attorney-General to delegate their functions and powers under the section to a person, including a person performing particular duties or holding or acting in a particular position.

Part 5—Amendment of *Legislation Interpretation Act 2021*

7—Insertion of section 19A

New section 19A is inserted into the principal Act as follows:

19A—Amending Act or instrument to be construed as part of amended Act or instrument

The proposed section provides that an amending Act or legislative instrument must be construed with the Act or legislative instrument it amends as part of that amended Act or instrument.

Part 6—Amendment of *Summary Offences Act 1953*

8—Repeal of section 35

This clause deletes section 35 of the principal Act.

Part 7—Amendment of *Surrogacy Act 2019*

9—Amendment of section 31—Review of Act

This clause amends section 31 of the principal Act to require a review of the operation of the Act to be completed after the seventh, but before the eighth, anniversary of its commencement (rather than after the fifth, but before the sixth, anniversary).

Part 8—Amendment of *Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2005*

10—Amendment of section 31—Expiry of Act

This clause amends section 31 of the principal Act to provide for expiry of the Act on the thirtieth anniversary of its commencement (rather than the twentieth anniversary).

Part 9—Amendment of *Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act 2005*

11—Amendment of section 52—Sunset provision

This clause amends section 52 of the principal Act to prevent the continued operation of, or making of, preventative detention orders and prohibited contact orders at the end of 30 years after the commencement of the Act (rather than the current 20 years).

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Heysen, do you wish to adjourn the debate?

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:44): I think the bill is coming down from the LegCo, so I think we are continuing on—is my understanding.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, go ahead.

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, and I commend the minister for taking the opportunity this time that he might have taken last time and saved us all a bit of time in the evening.

The Hon. J.K. Szakacs: The ball was in your court, Josh.

Mr TEAGUE: It is not, so much, because I do not have that privilege to seek leave to incorporate my remarks, but I certainly—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, can I suggest we just stick to the subject matter of the bill?

Mr TEAGUE: The member for Elizabeth might not want to really embark on setting that precedent—but feel free. I appreciate that the bill has been introduced by the Attorney in another place, and that was the subject of debate not all that very long ago. I can indicate that I am the lead speaker for the opposition and, in making some brief remarks in the second reading stage, indicate the opposition's support for this 2025 portfolio bill. As the name suggests, the bill is amending several pieces of legislation within the Attorney's responsibility. Just for the sake of the house I will briefly walk through them.

There are amendments to the Bail Act that will require that electronic monitoring of a person on bail is undertaken by a public sector agency. That is standard practice, but this amendment, like some others that have perhaps been in a more broadly policy driven area in anticipation of certain trends that are going on interstate, is anticipatory rather than responsive to any particular concerns in this state. There has been the collapse of a private provider that operates in the eastern states—I think in Victoria and in New South Wales—which, as a result of their sudden closure, left those states in an invidious position. So those changes will just ensure the practice in South Australia remains that way.

Clause 5 of the bill is operating so as to ensure that a resigning judge can continue on to conclude cases to which they are assigned. That is going to have the effect of bringing the District Court Act in line with the relevant provisions of the Supreme Court Act. Clause 6 is about providing for the Attorney-General to be able to delegate authority to make payments from the Fidelity Fund. Clause 7 is going to make a change to the Legislation Interpretation Act that is responsive to some recent authority in the Federal Court, the case of *Deripaska v Minister for Foreign Affairs*, that is making its way through the appellate process.

I note that, as I was most recently advised, the High Court has granted special leave to *Deripaska* to appeal against a decision of the Full Court of the Federal Court. That litigation is not complete, but the matter of legislative interpretation that it raised at the first instance is nothing so far as the matters before the High Court are going to turn on the matter that is the subject of clause 7. That litigation has thrown up the issue, but even while it is continuing, that matter, so far as legislative interpretation is concerned, can be dealt with.

Clause 8 is dealing with a historical matter in the Summary Offences Act that is restricting certain newspaper reporting. That is in the category of obsolescence and in circumstances where there is a whole suite of law that is dealing with restrictions, suppression and otherwise in relation to

reporting. Clause 9 is extending the mandatory review period of the Surrogacy Act. That is to align with the current Australian Law Reform Commission national inquiry into surrogacy.

Finally, clauses 10 and 11 extend the length of sunset clauses for the two terrorism acts from 2005, the police powers act and the preventative detention act respectively. Both of those acts would cease to operate 20 years after their commencement, and that is later this year. These amendments are going to extend that period for an additional 10 years to 2035.

The combination of the government's speech and hopefully that outline on the record will certainly at least, I hope, explain why the bill is titled as it is and addresses those several matters supported by the opposition. I commend the bill to the house.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:53): I thank the member for his contribution and commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I move:

That clause 6, which is printed in erased type, be inserted in the bill.

Clause inserted.

Remaining clauses (7 to 11) and title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (15:55): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

GUARDIANSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION (TRIBUNAL PROCEEDINGS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:56): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Mr Speaker, today I introduce the Guardianship and Administration (Tribunal Proceedings) Amendment Bill 2025.

This Bill will amend the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1993* to make changes to procedures and reviews by the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) to help facilitate timely discharge from hospital of patients with impaired decision-making capacity.

When patients no longer require hospital care but are kept in a hospital bed awaiting discharge to an appropriate place such as an aged care facility, that extra time that they are unnecessarily kept in hospital is not good for the patient, and it is not good for the hospital.

And that is the issue that this Bill seeks to alleviate, Mr Speaker.

The issue to be addressed

When a hospital patient lacks capacity to make the decisions required to enable their discharge from hospital, for example because they suffer from dementia, another appointed person is needed to make these decisions on that patient's behalf.

This could be a substitute decision-maker under an Advance Care Directive made previously by the patient. Where the patient has not made an Advance Care Directive, it is likely that a guardian or administrator would need to be appointed by SACAT under the Guardianship and Administration Act.

The Guardianship and Administration Act, and the principles of procedural fairness applicable to SACAT, require that medical evidence is gathered about the patient's decision-making capacity and that information from family, or other persons who know the patient well, is understood by SACAT before a decision is made to appoint a guardian or administrator.

Protracted stays in hospital while awaiting these appointments and for discharge decisions to be made are not ideal as previously mentioned – both in terms of the negative impacts on the wellbeing of patients, and on the capacity of hospitals.

Mr Speaker, it is accepted that extended stays in hospital awaiting decisions about movement into an aged or community care setting are detrimental to the health and wellbeing of patients.

Of course, the ability to make timely discharge decisions is only one piece of a larger puzzle. Limited availability of Commonwealth-funded places in aged care, into which these patients can be discharged, is a significant factor.

However, the Government is determined to pursue measures within its power to help alleviate this problem.

Measures in the Bill

One such measure in this Bill is to make legislative changes to enable SACAT to deal more quickly with applications to appoint a guardian or administrator for a hospital patient.

The Bill would amend the Guardianship and Administration Act to authorise SACAT to prioritise these hospital applications over other non-urgent applications, where necessary. SACAT will be required to deal with guardianship and administration applications in respect of hospital patients within 14 days of a complete application, which is accompanied by all required supporting information.

For applications where a person may be at risk of imminent personal or financial harm, the Guardianship and Administration Act already provides for urgent 'without-notice' SACAT hearings.

Hospital patients, however, are often safe and cared for in hospital, so urgent interim orders do not ordinarily apply to that cohort. For hospital and other non-urgent guardianship and administration applications, SACAT's past listing timeframes have compared favourably with equivalent interstate tribunals.

Mr Speaker, the new proposed 14 day requirement for hospital applications, coupled with additional funding for SACAT, will facilitate timely hearings for hospital applications, even during unusually busy periods.

The Bill also proposes to make provision for expedited hearings of hospital applications (including in less than 14 days) in 'appropriate circumstances', by allowing SACAT to dispense with the requirement to notify all interested persons, or to shorten the usual notification period—only in appropriate circumstances.

Examples of what could constitute 'appropriate circumstances' are set out in the Bill. These include:

- where discharge is proposed to be back to the patient's home, to reside with the guardian, or into short-term respite care;
- where the application is for appointment of the Public Advocate or Public Trustee and no other suitable appointee has been identified by the hospital after satisfying SACAT of reasonable inquiries; or
- where the hospital has identified a willing and available relative or supporter of the patient for appointment as guardian and/or administrator, but not identified any other interested person to be notified after satisfying SACAT of reasonable inquiries.

To address potential risks that may arise from these expedited proceedings, the Bill amends the provisions in the Guardianship and Administration Act that currently allow SACAT to vary or revoke a guardianship or administration order at any time.

These amendments will allow an interested person who was not notified of an expedited proceeding to make an application to vary or revoke an order without needing to satisfy SACAT of a change of circumstances.

Finally Mr Speaker, the Bill would amend the review provisions in the Guardianship and Administration Act to allow more flexibility in the setting of mandatory review periods of SACAT orders.

The maximum review periods for special powers orders will increase from 6 months to a maximum of 12 months for the first review, and from 12 months to a maximum of 3 years for subsequent reviews of these orders.

The maximum review periods for other SACAT orders under the Act will increase from 3 years to 5 years. I note that SACAT will have discretion to fix a shorter review period, in either case, where it considers this necessary or desirable.

These proposed changes to review periods would increase SACAT's capacity to deal with applications for orders under the Act and streamline imposts on parties arising from frequent mandatory reviews of SACAT orders, in circumstances where it is uncommon for orders to be changed on review.

The measures in this Bill are supported by the Government providing additional funding to SACAT. Further funding of \$3.8 million over two years and \$1.7 million per annum (indexed) from 2027-28 was provided to SACAT as part of the 2025-26 Budget to support SACAT in achieving the objects of this Bill. There was also increased funding within SA Health to support the transition of people with complex needs into aged care services.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Guardianship and Administration Act 1993*

3—Amendment of section 33—Applications under this Division

This clause amends section 33(1a) to provide that the qualifications in that section apply except where an application relates to an order that was made at proceedings expedited pursuant to section 65A and the applicant was not given notice of those proceedings by the Tribunal.

4—Amendment of section 37—Applications under this Division

This clause amends section 37 to provide that subsection (1a) does not apply in circumstances where an application relates to an order that was made at proceedings expedited pursuant to section 65A and the applicant was not given notice of those proceedings by the Tribunal.

5—Amendment of section 57—Review of Tribunal's orders

This clause amends section 57 in relation to the times within which the Tribunal must review the circumstances of a protected person as follows:

- in the case of a protected person who is being detained in any place pursuant to an order of the Tribunal—the time for review of the protected person is proposed to be—
- within 1 year of the making of the order or such earlier time as may be specified by the Tribunal in the order; and
- thereafter at intervals of not more than 3 years or such shorter intervals as may be specified by the Tribunal in the order; and
- in any other case—at intervals of not more than 5 years or such shorter intervals as may be specified by the Tribunal in the order.

6—Insertion of section 65A

This clause inserts proposed new section 65A which provides that if an application for a guardianship order, an administration order or an order under section 32 (or a variation of any such order) is made in relation to a person who is an inpatient of an incorporated hospital, the Tribunal must hear the application as a matter of priority (but in any event within 14 days of the application being made and the completion of all preliminary obligations imposed in relation to the application under the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1993* or the *South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013*).

7—Amendment of section 66—Tribunal must give notice of proceedings

This clause amends section 66 to provide that in relation to proceedings on an application to which proposed new section 65A(1) applies, the Tribunal is not obliged to give notice of the proceedings to a person referred to in section 66(1)(d) and may shorten the time for giving notice of the proceedings to any person referred to in section 66(1) if satisfied that appropriate circumstances exist in the particular case.

For the purpose of determining if appropriate circumstances exist in the circumstances of a case, it is proposed that—

- appropriate circumstances in which the Tribunal may dispense with giving notice to a person referred to in section 66(1)(d) or shorten the time for giving such notice include (without limitation)—

- where the application is for the appointment of a guardian or administrator for a person and it is proposed that the person is to be discharged from the hospital to reside—
 - in their own home; or
 - with the person who is proposed as the guardian or administrator (as the case requires); or
 - in a short-term funded aged care service or a Transition Care Program (both within the meaning of the *Aged Care Act 2024* of the Commonwealth); or
 - in prescribed circumstances; and
- where the application is for the appointment of the Public Advocate as guardian for the person and no other suitable person has been identified as a proposed guardian following reasonable enquiries by the applicant or other person as set out in the application; and
- where the application is for the appointment of the Public Trustee as administrator for the person and no other suitable person has been identified as a proposed administrator following reasonable enquiries by the applicant or other person as set out in the application; and
- where the application is for the appointment of a guardian or administrator for the person and no other person having a proper interest in the matter has been identified following reasonable enquiries by the applicant or other person as set out in the application; and
- appropriate circumstances in which the Tribunal may shorten the time for giving notice to a person referred to in section 66(1) (other than subsection (1)(d)) include (without limitation) circumstances where the application is for the appointment of a guardian or administrator for a person and it is proposed that the person is to be discharged from the hospital to reside—
 - in their own home; or
 - with the person who is proposed as the guardian or administrator (as the case requires); or
 - in a short-term funded aged care service or a Transition Care Program (both within the meaning of the *Aged Care Act 2024* of the Commonwealth); or
 - in prescribed circumstances.

Mr TEAGUE: Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Heysen, do you wish to speak to this briefly?

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:59): Thanks, Deputy Speaker. I rise and indicate that I am the lead speaker for the opposition and that the opposition supports the bill. The Guardianship and Administration (Tribunal Proceedings) Amendment Bill was—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Heysen, I hate to interrupt you but we are now coming up to the Auditor-General.

Mr TEAGUE: It is only the second time today, but I am very conscious of the time and I might just hopefully draw it to an elegant conclusion in about 10 seconds.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ten seconds, alright.

Mr TEAGUE: It was introduced by the Attorney in another place and only a couple of months ago. It is good that we are here in the house now debating the bill and, in the circumstances, I will seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Auditor-General's Report

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In committee.

(Continued from 29 October 2025.)

The CHAIR: I declare the examination of the Report of the Auditor-General 2024-25 open. I remind members that the committee is in normal session. Any questions have to be asked by members on their feet and all questions must be directly referenced to the Auditor-General's Report 2024-25 Report and Agency Statements for the year ending 2024-25, as published on the Auditor-General's website. I welcome the Minister for Trade and Investment and the member for Chaffey, and I call the member for Chaffey for questions. The 30 minutes start now.

Mr WHETSTONE: I refer to the trade and investment program expenses, DSD financial statement on page 12. The trade and investment program recorded \$11.3 million in income but \$41.1 million in expenses in 2024-25—a cost to government of \$29.8 million. How is the government justifying that level of subsidy?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: It is not a subsidy.

Mr WHETSTONE: Can you explain what the \$29.8 million means, the cost to government?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I will do my best to answer the member's question with respect to the appropriations. I can confirm that there are no income-generating or income-recoverable matters contained within the member's broad question around the \$29 million. But, largely, I can again give some examples of fees and services at \$442,000 and grants and subsidies, a very small and limited approach, which is through our grant funding program, of \$373.029 million. Other matters, of course, are employee-related expenses of \$19.939 million. I am happy to go on should the member ask in another question, but it's not a subsidy: this is cost of service delivery.

Mr WHETSTONE: Under 'Leased property' of the financial statement, the lease of the Office of the Agent General in London expires in June 2027 and the lease of the Jinan trade office expires on 31 May 2028, with no option to renew the leases at the end of their terms. What are the plans for these offices at the conclusion of their leases?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: Just for clarification, the page number?

Mr WHETSTONE: Page 36.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: Thank you to my advisers: I am advised that the phrasing the Auditor-General has used indicates that under the current leasing arrangements there is not an immediate rollover right of renewal. However, I am also advised that we are well into negotiations with the appropriate owners to extend those leases. In particular, I note that South Australia's presence in London in the United Kingdom, at Australia House, is a particularly natural and competitive advantage that South Australia has in respect of our trade and investment ambitions and agenda and, as I said, I am advised that negotiations are well underway with respect to locking in a further long-term contract.

Mr WHETSTONE: Moving onto page 354, under Payroll: between July 2024 January 2025 only 68 per cent of bona fide certificates and 71 per cent of leave return reports were approved within the required timeframe. Minister, are you aware of any financial risks arising from these delayed reviews, such as overpayments or paying staff who have left DSD?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I am advised in the audit findings that there was obviously an identifiable risk as a result of these findings. However, with no compromise to payroll and a remedy has been immediately identified and executed by the department.

Mr WHETSTONE: How much was related to overpayments made, and has any of that been recovered?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: With reference to which page?

Mr WHETSTONE: Page 354.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: With respect to overpayments?

Mr WHETSTONE: If we read through Payroll, the Auditor-General has talked about bona fide certificates, as we have already talked about. He recommended that:

...DSD regularly remind its managers to promptly review these reports, particularly for areas with consistently lower compliance rates.

He also states:

DSD advised us that it is reviewing payroll reporting capabilities and increasing staff training and awareness for reviewing these reports.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I am very keen to tailor my response to the member's question specifically. The member asked about a remedy for overpayments, but I am perhaps missing this in the audit reports. But if there is a reference the member can refer to where the Auditor-General finds there were overpayments, I am happy to respond.

The CHAIR: Are you on page 354 of Part C: Agency audits?

Mr WHETSTONE: Yes, under Payroll. I have asked the minister: is he aware of any financial risks arising from these delayed reviews, such as overpayments or paying staff who had left DSD?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: That was the member's previous question. In the second part of his question, he specifically asked about the remedies for overpayments. I am just trying to tailor the answer I have specifically to what he is asking me. Otherwise, I can say, in reiterating my previous answer, that all remedies have been undertaken by the department and the audit findings—insofar as I am advised or that I have read—make no reference to overpayments.

Mr WHETSTONE: Have there been any financial risks arising from delayed reviews?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: Again, I am advised that, as the Auditor-General found, this was a timing issue. I can confirm to the member that there were no findings of payments to any individual who had left the department. The finding, as I am advised, has not created potential for material mis-statement within the department's financial statements, due to other compensating controls in place during the 2024-25 financial year, including the regular monitoring of actual results compared to budget and review of transactional errors.

Mr WHETSTONE: Minister, which areas of DSD had consistently lower compliance rates, as the Auditor-General states?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I am advised that there were no specific business units or responsibility portfolios within DSD that had a specific variance to compliance. There was a general non-compliance per the audit findings. But I can also advise the house that the audit office did note that 68 per cent of the department's bona fide certificates were reviewed within 14 days and 71 per cent of leave return reports were reviewed within 30 days, in that financial year.

Mr WHETSTONE: The Auditor-General has stated that there are issues with compliance rates. Is it workload? Has the amalgamation of four departments into one meant increased workload for payroll staff, or are other department staff or executives having to take on additional responsibilities?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I am advised by the chief executive that there were no resourcing issues. If there were to be any tempo issues, I use this opportunity to thank the department, from the government, and from me as minister. We have had an extraordinary tempo of engagement from the trade, investment, industry, innovation and science portfolios in the last 12 months. They have been working incredibly hard, in fact probably at a pace that has not been seen for some time and that is to capitalise on the unique and extraordinary opportunities economically before our state.

This is paying dividends for investment attraction in our markets, for export growth, and particularly in our markets where we have the most unique competitive advantage, and we are seeing records continue to be broken. But, as I am advised by the department, there are no resourcing matters that contributed to this other than it was an administrative matter that has now been remedied.

Mr WHETSTONE: Have staff had to take up additional responsibilities in other areas as a result of the amalgamation of the departments?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I am advised, no. I think perhaps in Estimates this year, I had a similar line of questioning from the member, and one which is very genuine because when it comes to the Department of State Development and the machinery of government changes which the

government implemented to be fully operative from 1 July 2024-25 financial year, this was around driving economic outcomes for our state and not efficiencies.

I have the privilege of being the minister to inherit this and to drive this on behalf of the government in an environment where we are MoG-ing not based upon rationalising but rather based upon bringing some scale. I am sure that every minister from every side of politics at some time or another has overseen a MoG where there have been calls upon that minister or agency to find efficiencies as a result. We are not doing that. We have not done that. We are seeing the really important work that this MoG is delivering on behalf of the people of South Australia really paying dividends.

Mr WHETSTONE: Have any staff out of DSD had to take up any responsibility particularly relating to the algal bloom?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: There have been no staff who have been moved out of DSD into other government agencies or roles, but it is consistent with that industry engagement piece that staff across the department undertake with industry that has been adjacent to and contributing to the efforts of the state government's algal bloom response, whether it be from the trade team, international team, the investment team, industry team, and more broadly.

I will pay credit to Chief Executive Adam Reid, who is here with me. In respect of leading responses on behalf of government and within government, DSD has been playing an exemplary role in driving the outcomes the government seeks to do to support industry, support workforce and support communities.

Again, I take this opportunity to thank each and every one of the people who work within DSD, because not for one moment as minister do I have any concern that anybody in that department does not see themselves as contributing to the whole-of-government response and the whole-of-portfolio response. They have done that, they are doing it well and I expect, subject to future environmental conditions but certainly consistent with our summer plan, that that contribution into the whole-of-government effort will continue for some time.

Mr WHETSTONE: I have no issues with the great work that the office of trade are doing, but I am looking for you to give me an understanding of how many people have been seconded to deal directly with the response to the algal bloom.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I did give you that response explicitly and directly in my final answer. I said none.

Mr WHETSTONE: No, you did not. We will move on to Part C, page 356, Supplies and services. Can you provide a breakdown of how the \$6.7 million is spent across each of the 15 overseas offices?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I am happy to do that. I actually have that information to hand. This is across the 2024-25 year: \$1,709,000, Shanghai; \$516,000 in respect of China re-engagement specifically; \$395,000, Hong Kong; \$415,000, Korea; \$334,000, San Francisco; \$180,000, Kuala Lumpur; \$386,000, Washington DC; \$436,000, Houston; \$387,000, Singapore; \$579,000, New York; \$907,000, Tokyo; \$221,000, Guangzhou; \$186,000, Chennai; \$266,000, Mumbai; \$300,000, Berlin; \$418,000, Dubai; \$177,000, Jinan; and \$2,031,000, London. I am advised that is a combination of service delivery, employee costs, program delivery and rents.

Mr WHETSTONE: Of the 15 overseas offices that you have just talked about, is there any consideration of closing any of those offices?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: No.

Mr WHETSTONE: I go to the Department of State Development financial statement, page 7. The minister responsible for Industry, Innovation and Science has a 25 per cent interest in SABRENet. Is there any current or future funding arising from the interest that the parliament should be aware of?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I can advise no.

Mr WHETSTONE: I go back to page 355, under income. Appropriation increased by \$379 million in 2025 compared with last year. How much of that appropriation relates to each of the three transfers?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I can advise that the increase of \$379 million from appropriations can be broken down into Skills SA at \$336 million and the appropriation for trade and investment functions at \$31.5 million, and that the material costs with respect to population were marginal.

Mr WHETSTONE: I have a couple of questions before I hand over to the member for Hammond. Under grants on page 29 of the financial statement, what grant programs did the \$33 million for Industry, Innovation and Science grants cover, and how many were competitive?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I can advise the member that \$10,924,000 was expended from the Research and Innovation Fund for which the fund was competitive. Adelaide University was in receipt of \$10 million; StudyAdelaide was in receipt of \$4.5 million; NCRIS received \$4 million, which was competitive; EXCITE intermediaries was in receipt of \$800,000; the Defence Industry Connection Program received \$722,000; the defence supplier capability uplift pilot received \$591,000, which was competitive; teaching professional scholarships, which I think was an election commitment, was delivered at \$500,000; degree apprenticeships was in receipt of \$450,000—I am very proud of that course; the multicultural tertiary course is another one, which is a great initiative supporting diverse communities at \$250,000; SAYES received \$133,000; and the manufacturing and innovation grants. That is it.

Mr WHETSTONE: So that is all of the applications that were successful?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: No. I think the question you asked me was the breakdown of the grant streams.

Mr WHETSTONE: Are you able to shed any light on how many applications were received and how many applications were unsuccessful?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I am just taking advice from my adviser. We will take that on notice and provide the degree of information that we can with considerations of commercial-in-confidence and other probity matters.

Mr PEDERICK: Moving on to veterans, I refer to the Independent Auditor's Report on Defence SA, page 9, expenses and income by program. What is the source of the \$25,000 received in grant funding in 2024 and 2025?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I am advised that that is incoming appropriations by way of grant from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, which provides partial support for the ANZAC Day Commemoration Fund.

Mr PEDERICK: Can you tell me why the employee-related expenses have risen from \$534,000 in 2024 to \$660,000 in 2025?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: In fact, I am very pleased to. This is a direct increase in successive budgets now to further fund the important work that Veterans SA undertakes. That has not just been around additional grant funding for grassroots and front line but additional funding in research, additional funding for commemoration, but perhaps most importantly the additional funding in respect to capacity. That capacity building is really important. I think we have spoken about it in estimates before.

One of the important pieces of work that this additional resourcing is able to undertake is the regional engagement, that is, engagement with parts of the veterans' community in parts of our state that have not traditionally or necessarily been able to be achieved because of the modest funding of Veterans SA. This has been as a direct result of additional funding—in fact, record funding—that our government has been able to undertake in the important work of veterans' support.

Mr PEDERICK: According to the table, Veterans SA allocated \$911,000 in grant funding during the most recent financial year. How many grants in total were allocated?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I will take the specific number on notice, but it is across the ANZAC Day Commemoration Fund, 80th anniversary of World War II fund, Veterans SA community

programs fund, Legacy Club grants, minor grants funding, Capacity Building Grant Fund and Commemorative Services Grant Fund. There are also new initiatives that we have undertaken in respect to scholarships for tertiary and further study of veterans. It is in the dozens, if not hundreds, but I will arrive at a final number across all of those and provide it to the member.

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you. In regard to that this was a significant increase in grant expenditure compared with the previous year. Can this be attributed to the 80th Anniversary of the end of World War II Grant Fund, or are there other reasons?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: Yes, there was specific one-off grant funding that was consistent with the specific and special commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and, as the member said, the 80th anniversary fund was the single largest part of the additional grant funding for this financial year. However, there were other upticks as a result of new money being brought on or new initiatives which had been responding to need.

As I said, one of the initiatives that I think has been in this financial year was the scholarship and study support which we have implemented as a government. That was as a direct result of the advice and support from the VAC. One of the most critical times for us to get right as a government, as policy leaders, is that transition for veterans, and often the hardest thing for veterans in that transition is the change in income—the decrease in income for themselves and for their family. What this has been able to do is not just support those veterans with financial support during that transition but also sequence in with the other priorities we have as a government with respect to investment in skills and in particular in important workforce issues.

The member and I have spoken—and I take this opportunity to thank the member for his support; he is a very strong advocate for the veterans community—and I have the privilege as the minister of often and consistently doing what I do shoulder to shoulder with the member. Backing our veterans in to find them meaningful work is one of the most important things we can do.

Mr PEDERICK: Wow. Why have total assets gone from \$127,000 in 2024 to \$22,000 in 2025?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I will seek the specifics on notice, but I would anticipate that that would be a matter largely of depreciation of assets.

The CHAIR: The time allocated has expired. I thank the minister and also the members for Chaffey and Hammond. I welcome the Minister for Health and Wellbeing and also the members for Schubert and Frome. I call upon them for their questions.

Mrs HURN: Minister, just on page 82, 'Budget and performance', under Investment, the new Women's and Children's Hospital, the new Mount Barker hospital and the expansion of the Flinders Medical Centre all have delays in starting construction. How many months or years are each of these projects behind schedule? If you could just put some timeframes on how long those delays have been?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I am very happy to address this issue. Obviously we have talked somewhat about it in question time, but also it has been a topic in the media yesterday after the ABC's report focusing on this section of the report. In terms of all those three projects that have been highlighted, the advice that I have is that the projects are on track. The projects are on track for completion by the designated time. For the Women's and Children's Hospital, that is by the end of 2031; the new Mount Barker hospital, the end of 2027; and the Flinders Medical Centre expansion, by the end of 2028.

You can see with each of those projects that construction is well underway, with cranes up, workers on site, a whole lot of work happening. For each of those projects, there is a lot of work that needs to go into making sure that we get the design right and we get the clinical engagement right. In terms of some of the experts who spoke on this yesterday in the ABC's report, and I also note one of the infrastructure experts who was on ABC radio this morning as well, both pointed out that the time before construction starts is very important in terms of making sure you get the design right and the outcome right.

What happens in terms of the budget setting of different infrastructure projects is that, when they go into the budget, there is an allocation made not only for the overall project but for each financial year of where we expect how much of that budget will be allocated per financial year. It is true to say that when you look at those individual years there are often variances between year to year in terms of those infrastructure projects. It is true under this government, it was true under the previous government, and it was true under the government before that as you understand more in terms of what the specific construction timeline will be as you get further into the project.

That is what has happened here. The Auditor-General notes—does not criticise, I would note, just notes—that there have been variances in three of those projects where we spent less and one project where we spent more. If you look at the graph above that table, it makes very clear the overall spending compared with what the overall budget of our investing was in those years. There is very significant growth in the expenditure of the overall infrastructure budget compared with the 2021-22 financial year, which is clearly noted there.

The advice I have is that this graph demonstrates that we are some 16 per cent lower than where we expected to be in terms of what we are spending, and that compares with, I am advised, 38 per cent lower in 2021-22 on a much smaller base. So the huge amount extra that we are spending can be demonstrated clearly. There is a much more massive infrastructure delivery now compared with where we were three years ago and a smaller percentage of underspending compared to where we were on those projects.

So in answer to the question, I am very confident in terms of the advice I have received that all of those projects are on track. You can see the work that is happening on those projects, and we expect them to be delivered in the timeframes that we have previously outlined.

Mrs HURN: Very clearly it says the reason for the difference between the budget and actual for 2024-25 was a delay in starting construction. I appreciate the minister's focus on the end result. My question specifically is about how long that delay has been, and perhaps the minister could advise the house of the actual spend. The \$125 million for the actual spend: what has that been spent on?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I think we will have to take the actual spend on notice, but I know the member is a member of the Public Works Committee—

Mrs Hurn interjecting:

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: You used to be.

Mrs Hurn interjecting:

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: Sorry—the member was a member of the Public Works Committee, where there have been a number of presentations in terms of this project. There have been a number of packages of works that have been approved by the Public Works Committee and presented to this parliament. I am advised that we have recognised \$250 million of capital works in progress for the new Women's and Children's project, including around \$125 million of additions in 2024-25. The \$250 million mainly comprises \$110 million in early work costs, including the construction of the car park; \$70 million in professional services costs; and \$17 million in utility infrastructure costs.

Other costs relate to the management of the project and other contractual arrangements, and relocation fees are included in that as well. So there are those two packages of works that we have brought through the Public Works Committee into the parliament for those early works, and that is what we are getting on and delivering. In terms of the other projects, I am happy to provide any further detail in terms of what those specific dollar amounts are for what is being delivered there. What was the first part of your question again?

Mrs HURN: How long have the delays been in starting construction?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I will see if there is any further information that we can provide there, but take the new Women's and Children's Hospital project: this was a project that was announced by Premier Weatherill in 2013 and has taken a very long time, over successive governments, to get to the point of actually being underway. You could say, in some respects, that the delay was actually close to a decade in terms of getting works undertaken, so I am not sure where you draw the line there.

We are very pleased that we now have work underway on that project. We have a great team who are working hard and engaging with our clinicians, and we are absolutely confident that this is going to deliver an excellent outcome for the women and children of this state for many decades into the future. I also note the comments of Bernadette Mulholland, representing the Salaried Medical Officers Association, last night on the news saying exactly that: that we need to get this project right. That is what this government is determined to do.

Mrs HURN: On page 84, the Auditor-General notes:

The consolidated entity's total expenses exceeded the original 2024-25 State Budget by \$754 million, an 8% overspend.

But he says that is a good job, comparatively, to the last financial year, which was an overspend of 12 per cent. What meetings is the minister involved in to ensure that SA Health sticks to its budget?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I am very happy to talk about meetings because I have a lot of meetings. I have a very regular meeting with the chief executive of the Department for Health and Wellbeing in which we quite regularly talk about the budget for SA Health.

I also meet with all of our 10 local health network CEOs and board chairs. I meet with the CEO of SA Ambulance Service. I meet with the executive director of statewide clinical services. I meet with the CEOs of Preventive Health SA and the Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health. I meet with our infrastructure team. I meet with our mental health team. Part of this job is many, many meetings. There are, effectively, 15 CEOs in SA Health who I meet with regularly. In addition to meetings that I have, there are a number of regular meetings that our various instruments of SA Health have with Treasury officials to monitor budget performance.

I think it is fair to say, of course, that this is an area of government that is demand driven. We see increases in demand facing our hospital system and we have to meet that demand. We try to do so as effectively as possible. We try to do so in the best, most prudent way for budget management as possible, but we also know that we have a responsibility to make sure that patients get the care they need.

As we are seeing an increase in the complexity of the patients who are presenting to us, that is leading to an increase in the complexity of the work that we are doing. As we are seeing barriers in terms of people being able to be discharged from our hospital system, we are seeing a really big increase in terms of what is classified under the national system as maintenance care patients. That is really one of the largest areas of growth that we are facing and that is putting pressure on our budget as well.

Having said that, I think—as the member has noted in the opening of her question—that while obviously there is still overspending occurring, we are seeing that head in a positive direction. We are seeing that improve, which is welcome. It is something that we are obviously keen to continue working on with Treasury, all our local health networks and all the instruments of the department to make sure we can balance getting patients the right care that they need but also as efficiently as possible for the budget.

Mrs HURN: At page 86, I have a couple of questions in relation to agency staff. The budget for agency staff was around \$50 million but the actual expense was \$200 million. Can you just talk the chamber through that and can you advise, with that \$150 million discrepancy, how many additional nurses and doctors were employed via that agency staff—\$150 million?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: Obviously, agency staff is a critical area that we focus on in terms of our budget management issues, because we know it is a key pressure point. It is a pressure point which has been a pressure for a long time in terms of metropolitan hospitals, but we are seeing an increasing pressure in terms of regional hospitals in terms of nursing agency staff but also in terms of medical locum staff. The graph does demonstrate, as you say, that there has been an increase over a number of years. The biggest increase happened between the 2020-21 financial year and the 2021-22 financial year. That clearly showed the largest increase.

I advise that in terms of contractors for agency staff, we have seen some LHNs that are increasing and some that are decreasing. For example, we are seeing reductions in SALHN, WCHN, FUNLHN, and in the department itself. We have also seen some increases in others, in terms of

CALHN, NALHN, BHF, Eyre and Far North, Limestone Coast, Yorke and Northern. This is something that is a key focus of that work that I mentioned before in terms of the work that happens between treasuries and our local health networks. It is monitored very closely. It is also a key area of focus for us in terms of making sure that we can replace our need for agency staff with employed staff.

Members will be aware that we have significantly increased the number of staff that we have employed across SA Health over the past three years: some 1,400 extra nurses FTE addition—not agency but actual employed staff. Similarly, there are over 680 additional medical staff FTE above attrition—employed staff, not locums.

One of the key elements of this is making sure that we are increasing the work that we are doing to employ additional staff upon graduation, so we can see record numbers of medical interns that we are bringing in. Over the past few years, we have seen record numbers of TPPPs—the Transition to Professional Practice Program nurses who come on board as well. That has to be a key strategy to make sure that we have our own pipeline of nurses and doctors without having to rely more and more on agency staff.

In addition, we are also, of course, targeting international recruitment. We have regional attraction incentives and flexible employment models. In particular, a key area of recruitment for us has been the United Kingdom, where we have been very successful in being able to recruit a number of doctors and nurses. We have seen a lot of applications from even just a recent trip that we have undertaken to the United Kingdom by a number of our officials taking part in job expos through the United Kingdom. So we see that as a really pivotal market in terms of building our workforce and hopefully replacing our need for much of this agency staff.

Mrs HURN: I refer to the same page but just down a little bit in terms of the fee for service. Obviously, there has been a pretty significant increase in fee for service for doctors, specialists, anaesthetists, allied health, dentists and radiologists during the last four years. It notes that fee for service has increased for a number of reasons. At the first dot point there it says that one reason is that surgeries are being delayed to manage inpatient numbers. How many surgeries have been delayed as a result of this?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: We are not going to have that figure. We will have to take it on notice.

Mrs HURN: Another reason on page 87 was that the hospitals are unable to recruit medical officers and are relying on fee-for-service arrangements which have increased the cost. Does this speak to a large problem with vacancies for medical officers and, if so, can you advise the chamber how many vacancies there are?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I think we have previously discussed, whether it is in this forum or in estimates, or maybe even the department in Budget and Finance, how difficult it is for us to give an accurate number in terms of vacancies given our workforce systems across the various entities of the department. Clearly, when we can see such a significant increase in our medical workforce of over 680 additional staff above the rate of attrition over the past few years, that has led to us having a stronger and more stable medical workforce situation than we did previously. But, of course, we are competing with demand as well.

We have recently signed, sealed and delivered, and now it has been ratified by the SAET, a new enterprise bargaining agreement for our salaried medical officers, which we believe will make it even more attractive for people to be able to work for SA Health and its entities. Part of that is making sure that we can increase junior doctors of all levels under consultant salaries and part of it as well was about additional regional incentives to apply to doctors to work in our regions.

This adds to other key components of our workforce plan in terms of what we have seen in the Riverland Academy of Clinical Excellence. The Riverland Mallee Coorong Local Health Network has been able in the past few years to increase its medical staffing by 40 per cent, which is a huge increase. We are now looking to apply those lessons in terms of the rest of our system in making sure that we can roll out a Single Employer Model across all of SA Health.

In terms of regional contracts, which are obviously a part of this question, there has been a lot of work that has been undertaken between the Rural Support Service, which sits under the Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network that does work on behalf of all of our local health networks to strengthen our financial controls and our governance processes around our contracting, making sure that we are having in place appropriate contracting arrangements for those staff but also making sure that we can recruit additional staff to not rely on those contracting arrangements as well.

Another area I would highlight is the work that Yorke and Northern Local Health Network have been undertaking in recent years, leading to more salaried work undertaken and introducing an intern program in that region for the first time this year. They have recruited additional staff to work in emergency departments as salaried staff for the first time, and I think we are going to see in coming months and years that medical workforce in that region really significantly increase so that we can meet this need into the future.

Mrs HURN: On page 92, there are a few graphs there, but just focusing on the metropolitan LHNs, there has been a 2 per cent increase in emergency department presentations since 2022, but the percentage of patients who have been seen, treated, discharged or admitted within four hours has decreased by 8 per cent in that same period. Can you just explain that?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I am very happy to and I will try not to take the entire remaining time in doing so, but there are a lot of elements in terms of the pressure that our emergency departments face. That is a pretty open question.

The issue is not necessarily just the raw number of people, it is the complexity. There has been a lot of work done to try to reduce the number of people going to emergency departments, whether that is the work that we have done, including—harking back to the previous government—Priority Care Centres, other alternative care pathways, the Virtual Care Service. But now, in addition, Urgent Care Hubs, which we run, but also the urgent care centres, which the federal government runs, all of which have seen less pressure of the lower acuity patients compared to a number of years ago, but we are seeing increasing numbers of higher acuity patients.

Those patients obviously require more care, longer care and are more likely to require admitted care in hospital. At the same time, therefore, that increasing pressure for admitted patients has meant that our emergency departments are regularly facing a problem where they have a number of admitted patients who are waiting for a ward bed and that reduces their capacity to see other patients. So the more patients you have waiting for a bed in the rest of the hospital, who have been treated by the emergency department but are waiting for that ward bed, takes away from the other patients who need that bed in the emergency department.

That is why so much of what we have been delivering has been additional beds across the system to meet that need. Of course, the other challenge at the same time has been aged care—discharging people from hospital. We have seen that rise dramatically. Back when I first became minister there were about 60 people in that situation. This week we have just hit a new record of 296 people in that situation. That takes away beds and then flows right through the emergency department and those people waiting to be seen.

That is the pressure that we face in terms of our emergency departments. You can see, from that graph, there has been an increase in terms of the number of presentations we have seen in the past year. There has also been a big increase in terms of the number of presentations that have happened in our country LHNs as well. Clearly part of that is the ageing of the population, but all of those alternative care pathways that we have developed in the city do not apply in regional South Australia. The impact that has happened to primary care, after a decade of freezing the Medicare rebate and also issues in terms of GP workforce have clearly put more pressure on emergency departments in country South Australia too.

*Parliamentary Procedure***VISITORS**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like to recognise the special guests in the gallery at the moment. We have a delegation from Finland visiting South Australia, and I would like to welcome them and acknowledge their presence. The delegation is led by Lieutenant General Esa Pulkkinen and Mr Arto Haapea, the Ambassador from Canberra; Mr Janne Kuusela, Director General from Defence Policy Department, Ministry of Defence of Finland; the Director of Unit, Material Unit, Resource Policy Department, Ministry of Defence in Finland, Pasi Pajunen; the Military Assistant to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence of Finland, Major Karri Lahtinen; and the Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Finland in Canberra, Mr Ahti Torronen; and the Personal Assistant to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence of Finland, Sari Viitala. Welcome to the House of Assembly in the Parliament of South Australia. We do hope you have fruitful discussions and negotiations while you are here in South Australia.

*Auditor-General's Report***AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT**

Debate resumed.

Mrs HURN: Minister, at page 98 on fees and charges, the Auditor-General notes there has been a 12 per cent increase in those, and it notes particularly a \$36 million increase for patient and client fees. Could you just explain by what quantum and what percentage did the fees and charges that are charged to patients staying in hospital longer than 35 days increase?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I also pass on from the government of South Australia our thanks to the delegation who are here. I also note the excellent work of Ms Satu Teppo, who is an excellent representative of Finland here in South Australia.

In terms of this question, I think you will be right in that I suspect the vast majority of this increase has been in terms of long-stay patients, of which we have obviously seen an increase. I am happy to take the question on notice in terms of a breakdown. What is fair to say is that this is a provision of the National Health Reform Agreement that has been in place for many decades, that if a patient stays above a certain amount of time where they no longer require treatment, then there is a fee that attaches to that which is set as a benchmark of the age pension. That is the same in South Australia as it is in every other state and territory.

Let me just check if we have that information. I just have that information in terms of the increase of activity, but I will see if we can break that down even further in terms of that fee versus any other fee. The only other fees that I am particularly aware of that we charge are in relation to international patients. Obviously, we provide care for people who are covered under the Medicare system. For people who are not, there is a schedule of fees, which is issued every single year, which people either have to pay or they have overseas health insurance which pays, of which Bupa and other providers provide coverage for people in that category. That may well be part of it and we will see if we can break that down.

Mrs HURN: At page 175, under SAAS, how many customers had paid their membership fees but not had their status updated in SAAS's billing system? And how many members were then, therefore, incorrectly invoiced for transport costs?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: My adviser has been furiously looking to see if we have that information. I do not think we do. I am happy to take that on notice. I believe SAAS work quite constructively with people. If there were to be an issue, I am sure that they would look at it appropriately and make commonsense judgements in terms of people's membership if they were to have an ambulance incident at a time when there had not been a membership processed. But we will see what information we can provide.

Mrs HURN: At page 199, under WCHN, the audit details that WCHN received \$26 million of land free of charge for the new Women's and Children's Hospital. Who provided that land? Can you confirm what piece that is? Is that sum included in the \$3.2 billion budget for the project?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: The advice that I have is that we believe that is from the council. Members may recall we passed the New Women's and Children's Hospital Act, which made provision in terms of land and that may well be part of that land. We will seek to confirm that information.

I have the information that resources received free of charge increased by \$26 million related to land received free of charge from SA Police, which was valued at \$15 million, and Adelaide City Council, valued at \$10.5 million for the new Women's and Children's Hospital. I am advised that would be part of the overall budget.

Mrs HURN: At page 105, in relation to 'Information technology general controls', the Auditor found a number of issues in relation to information technology general controls. He states:

These findings increase the risk of unauthorised access or changes to data, and being unable to recover data in the event of a system failure.

Are you concerned about this, and is patient privacy being increasingly compromised?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I think it is fair to say that, clearly, cyber attack risks are significant for SA Health and also for every other government agency and everywhere across the world. It is something that we take extremely seriously and is obviously a very high priority for Digital Health within our portfolio.

As per what it says here, we will certainly respond to the recommendations of the Auditor-General on this matter. We want to do everything we possibly can to improve cybersecurity for our systems. If there is any other information that I can provide that does not breach security information then I will certainly take that on notice.

The CHAIR: The allocated time has expired. I thank the minister and the member for Schubert and also the advisers. Next please. Member for Bragg, you are leading the charge?

Mr BATTY: Yes, sir.

The CHAIR: We have not started the clock yet, so you are alright.

Mr BATTY: I do not expect to need much of the time on the clock.

The CHAIR: I welcome the Minister for Climate and Environment and the member for Bragg. Please start the questions.

Mr BATTY: I suspect this could be a relatively brief examination because I know how much of a stickler for the rules you are, sir, from past experience, and that you would like me to confine my questions to the audited report of the agency. Unfortunately, we are in the rather unusual situation where we do not have an audited report of the Department for Environment and Water. We have a statement in the Auditor-General's Report that the time needed to finalise financial statement audits and provide assurances was beyond the time they had available to finalise the audit for inclusion in this report. So in those circumstances, I guess my first question is whether we can adjourn this examination and return at such a time when we have an audited report to examine.

The CHAIR: Unfortunately I do not have that power and nor does the committee have that power, because it has been determined by the house that it will take place today. Unless the house changes its mind, it is not going to happen. We need to progress to the extent that you can.

Mr BATTY: I would like to ask the minister whether she would be prepared to return to parliament at another time to answer questions about the Auditor-General's Report, as and when it is submitted, so there can be some scrutiny in the usual way.

The CHAIR: The minister is a powerful person but does not have the power to overrule—

Mr Teague interjecting:

The CHAIR: Let me finish. I did not interrupt you when you were speaking. The minister does not have the power to overrule a decision of the house. So we can pack up and go and you can ask the house when it resumes if you want to do that and take your chances. It is up to you. Or you can do what you have available and, acknowledging the difficulty you are in, I am happy to allow you some flexibility.

Mr BATTY: What advice did the minister seek as to why we do not have an audited report for the Department for Environment and Water, and when does the minister expect to receive the audited report?

The CHAIR: I will let the minister look at that, but my view would be that the minister is not responsible for the Auditor-General and therefore cannot speak on behalf of the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General, as far as I understand, has made an interim report, which is on page 79. That is my ruling. So you can continue with page 79 and, like I said, I will allow you some flexibility if there are other things you are aware of during that audit period.

Mr BATTY: Let's confine ourselves to the report, sir. On page 79, which the Chair has characterised as an interim report, it begins with the quote, '...at the time of this report our audit of DEW is not complete.' My question is whether the minister has sought advice as to why the report is not complete? Is there outstanding information that her department needs to provide? Is it a particular unique set of circumstances that the Department for Environment finds itself in? I am just trying to do the best I can to work out why we are in this situation, and I am certainly not reflecting on the minister or the department in asking that question.

The CHAIR: I did not take your question that way, but I do draw your attention to paragraph 2 of the Auditor-General's Report. That answers your question. Minister, you are free to add to that if you wish.

The Hon. L.P. HOOD: On 11 September 2025, the Auditor-General advised that DEW's audited financial statements would not be included in the 2024-25 annual report to parliament. Under the Public Sector Act 2009, DEW's annual report must be submitted by 30 September and include audited financial statements. Historically, the Auditor-General's audit opinion for DEW has been issued by late September and this delay was not expected.

I understand that over recent years concerns have been raised about DEW's bank reconciliation process, with the Auditor-General reporting the need to improve controls over it. Despite these concerns, previous DEW audits were completed in time for the Auditor-General's annual report. In his annual report, the Auditor-General advised that the 2024-25 financial statement audit has involved detailed work on DEW's bank reconciliation. Reflecting this history, additional time has been required to finalise the audit.

The department is aware of these issues and has continued in looking for ways to improve its bank reconciliation process. DEW's account is complex. It services 16 entities from the one bank account and handles a large volume of low-value transactions generated at retail sites, making matching difficult at times. The Auditor-General has confirmed that DEW's audited financial statements will be reported separately, with timing and format yet to be confirmed.

DEW lodged its financial statements on time with the Auditor-General and continues to cooperate fully, providing documentation and responding to audit queries. It is important to note that, from the work completed to date, there is no suggestion of impropriety. Given that the audit has not yet been finalised, DEW is unable to present audited financial statements with its 2024-25 annual report by 30 September. When presented after that date, the annual report must include a statement of reasons and, once the audit is complete, the audited financial statements will be incorporated into the annual report and tabled within the 12 sitting days.

The Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium, Dog and Cat Management Board, Environment Protection Authority and Green Industries SA are also affected by that delay in audited financial statements, and their annual reports cannot be finalised until the Auditor-General completes the DEW audit. Like DEW, these agencies will provide a written statement of reasons for the delay with their annual reports, and they will be tabled in parliament together.

DEW is committed to resolving the issues and have steadily reduced historical unmatched items and strengthened reconciliation controls despite legacy system limitations. The department is preparing to migrate to the whole of government Oracle financial platform in 2026, which will enhance controls and simplify banking arrangements. In the meantime DEW will continue to work closely with the Auditor-General to finalise the audit and provide updates as required.

Mr BATTY: Thank you, minister and thank you, Chair, for giving the minister the opportunity to answer a question. I refer to page 79. There is a reference here:

Our audits over a number of years have raised concerns about the effectiveness of DEW's bank reconciliation process and the need to improve the controls over it.

What specific concerns have been identified regarding DEW's bank reconciliation processes in recent years, and how have they been addressed by the department?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD: I thank the member for his question. The Department for Environment and Water bank reconciliation, as expressed, has been a longstanding issue raised by the Auditor-General for multiple years, dating back to as far as 2010, to the former Department for Environment and Heritage, including under the former Marshall Liberal government. The issue has continued to be raised for the Department for Environment and Water since its creation in 2018. The Auditor-General in his report wrote that his 2024-25 financial statement audit has involved detailed work on DEW's bank reconciliation, reflecting this history.

As I have stated previously, DEW's bank reconciliation is complex, with a single bank account used by 16 entities, a high volume of low value transactions and system integration issues for old legacy systems all combining to make matching transactions difficult at times. Over the years DEW has implemented multiple processes to identify and rectify unmatched bank reconciliation items in a more timely manner, which has seen an improvement in the number and value of unmatched items.

In terms of processes implemented over previous years to improve controls, DEW continues to look for further improvements, and some processes that have been effectively implemented include decommissioning one legacy financial revenue system with integration issues to the general ledger; creating unique batch identifiers to prevent duplicate batch IDs, making matching transactions easier; creating an online portal to provide additional detail on each unique batch and to make identification of the source of batches easier with transactions in the bank account; establishing a failed batch SharePoint register to identify system integration failures and to ensure batches are fixed and matched in a timely manner; and systematic review of historical unmatched items to clear them from the bank reconciliation.

Mr BATTY: I am not really sure there is much more point in continuing to try to examine a report that does not exist. I wonder whether the minister might agree at some other time, not necessarily in parliament even but in some public setting, to give us the opportunity to examine her on the report when it is finalised by the Auditor-General?

The CHAIR: I think the minister is responsible to this committee, not individuals, so the parliament would have to reconvene the committee at some time. In my understanding the report will be released—

The Hon. L.P. Hood interjecting:

The CHAIR: It is up to the Auditor-General? Yes, it is up to the Auditor-General. I assume if it is released after we rise for the year the new parliament can deal with that question.

Mr BATTY: My question is whether the minister has any suggestions as to how we can ensure there is transparency and accountability in this process and give us the opportunity to ask her some questions at some point on a report that does not yet exist.

The CHAIR: I understood, yes—

Mr BATTY: But it is a question, respectfully, sir, to the minister—whether she has any ideas perhaps or whether the department has any ideas about how we can ask her some questions on this report.

The CHAIR: You may have misunderstood or misheard my first answer. I appreciate you trying to rephrase your question, but the minister is responsible in this committee to this parliament, and that is very clear. The parliament would set the requirements for the minister to do that. If that has to be at some future date, the parliament decides that, and so be it. When we sit next time, you are at liberty to ask the house, and the house can then direct the minister. The house decides.

Mr BATTY: It does not look like the minister is going to be allowed to answer any of these questions, in any event.

The CHAIR: Hold on, member for Bragg.

Ms Stinson interjecting:

The CHAIR: Member for Badcoe, you are not in your place; I cannot hear you. Member for Bragg, you are getting close to inferring something in terms of the Chair's ruling. Just be very careful.

Mr BATTY: Perhaps I might conclude shortly. I do want to point out that the shadow minister wrote to the Manager of Government Business on 20 October concerning this unusual situation we find ourselves in, in a fairly constructive manner, I might add. I might just read that letter out:

I'm writing to you in your capacity as Manager of Government Business to request the rescheduling of the examination of the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water on matters contained in the report of the Auditor-General for the year ended 30 June 2025.

The Auditor-General has not completed the examination and reporting on the relevant department and agencies. Of note, the Auditor-General, at Monday's Budget and Finance Committee meeting, indicated that it was his expectation that the audit opinion would be signed off before Christmas.

Given there is not an audit report or financials to examine, and to facilitate the transparency that is expected by the community, I request that the examination be delayed until after the release of the report into the relevant department and agencies. Please note this could require a time slot in the last sitting week or possibly a brief sitting to allow the report to be examined in December or January.

I think that is a fairly reasonable request in the circumstances. I think it is a shame that the house, or indeed the Manager of Government Business, could not agree to it. In the circumstances, there are obviously no further questions we can ask.

The CHAIR: So you have no further questions?

Mr BATTY: No.

The CHAIR: You did have 15 minutes to go, but since there are no further questions, I will—

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order: I think the Chair might be about to wrap up the committee. I do not want to—

The CHAIR: I was told by the lead person that there were no—

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Let me finish. The reason I was doing that is that the lead speaker for the opposition indicated he had no further questions. I do not think the minister is going to ask questions to herself. If other members want to ask questions, go ahead.

Mr TEAGUE: I think that might be right, Chair. If the Chair was on the way to wrap up the committee, I am not sure that is consistent with the motion. I think that might be out of all of our hands as well in that the house has determined that the audit is open for inquiry for the relevant period of time. It is unlike an ordinary committee stage on a bill.

The CHAIR: Well, ask questions.

Mr TEAGUE: We do not have any more questions.

The CHAIR: You have no questions?

Ms Stinson interjecting:

The CHAIR: Member for Badcoe, you are still not in your place. You have no more questions, but you want me to keep the committee—you do not want to do anything; just sit here?

Mr Teague interjecting:

The CHAIR: It was just a point of order? What was the point of order? What are you asking me to rule on?

Mr TEAGUE: The point of order is simply a question of what is within the power of the Chair in the circumstances of the motion and the setting aside of the time. The Chair might want to take advice from the Clerk. In that case, we will all be the better for it.

The CHAIR: My advice, my understanding, is you are allowed up to 30 minutes. If the opposition runs out of questions, we cannot proceed.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

Bills

LOCAL NUISANCE AND LITTER CONTROL (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

Consideration in committee of the Legislative Council's amendments.

(Continued from 29 October 2025.)

The Hon. L.P. HOOD: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

Motion carried.

HIGHWAYS (WORKS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

Consideration in committee of the Legislative Council's amendments.

(Continued from 28 October 2025.)

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

Motion carried.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (COMMUNITY AND STRATA TITLES) BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:30): I was nearing the conclusion of my contribution on the second reading, having flagged three topics the subject of amendments for a committee stage. This is one of those circumstances in which that is the best opportunity to air the matters that will, I still hope, be receptive of a positive response from the government. There are many amendments, 17 in all, and they are in the three categories that I have outlined prior to the adjournment of debate earlier on. So in the interests of expedition and so forth, I will conclude my contribution at the second reading stage and we will step through those matters then at the committee.

The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley) (17:31): On speaking to this bill, I think it is opportune to raise the issues that strata living costs add to senior Australians in particular, and senior South Australians, of course—but senior Australians in general—and how it is time for a revision of the assets test when it comes to those who qualify for a pension or a part pension. There is no doubt that there is a move, and it is a desire by governments right around Australia, for there to be more choice in housing and to encourage people to look at apartment options when it comes to buying. One of the key markets for that, of course, is people who are downsizing: those who are retiring, whether they be self-funded retirees or whether they be partially self-funded and still qualify for either a full pension or a part pension.

Obviously, the asset test and the income test that you achieve from those assets varies, whether you are a married couple or whether you are a single person, whether you are a home owner or whether you are a renter. Renters get more; they get a higher pension. They also get a higher asset base and can earn more money before they lose parts of the pension. What is new now is the fact that strata fees are a cost that those who stay in their own homes do not have. The amount of

money they can have in their own savings, in their super fund or in some other investment where they might be earning some income will not buy them as much from the return that they are getting because they need, in some instances, \$12,000 or \$14,000 a year in additional revenue simply to pay strata fees.

Unfortunately, this legislation does nothing about that. It is really more of a federal issue. It is relevant because there is no doubt that this legislation has been put in place to improve the strata system, but there are some key fiscal problems with what we have at the moment. Until they are addressed, we are still going to see a lag of people being prepared to sell the family home and move into a strata, particularly if they are in that sweet spot where you can get maximum pension and still earn maybe an extra \$20,000 to \$25,000 in income from what you have invested in your super fund. For a married couple that would be somewhere close to \$500,000.

Consequently, you have to pay that extra \$12,000 to \$14,000 in strata fees that you have not had to pay before—and do not forget that on top of that you still have council rates, the emergency services levy and other household costs that you have with your own home that is not part of a strata. This is a brand-new additional cost that you need to find extra money for if you move into a strata arrangement.

You would need an additional quarter of a million dollars in assets in an average year to generate that sort of income in order to pay those additional strata fees and yet there has been no adjustment. The federal government has been talking about apartment living for quite some time, expecting people to move into apartments. Their language is aiming obviously at those who are starting off in the housing market and also those who are perhaps in a position where they could downsize.

It is an important message for the federal government to understand that you need to make reforms right across the sector if you want to improve outcomes and if you want to make the sector fairer. The changes that are being made through this bill are what the state government can do, and I am sure that there are more changes that they can make.

I think there are people who take issue with the fact that it is a known practice—I am not quite sure how widespread it is here in South Australia, but certainly in the Eastern States where they have had strata living for much longer—where a developer will only sell about 49 per cent of the units that they have in a new block so that they are the majority holder of votes at the inaugural AGM that appoints the strata manager. They appoint someone they are friendly with, someone that they have done business with for many years who consequently then will go to the strata sinking fund for the next 20 years for repairs that should be done under the warranty of the builder and they are giving that bill to the strata owners. This is a very serious issue and if it is not addressed here in South Australia I think you will find that there will be some risk in South Australia for those who are buying off the plan and those who are buying into a strata that is dominated by the developer.

Once that is set up, of course, it is very difficult—and anyone who has had to deal with a strata would know how difficult it is—to get the consensus of the other owners to actually change a strata manager. It is not an easy thing to do and that is something this legislation could have included to make it much easier. You almost need to work with the person you are about to sack in order to establish a new strata manager for your strata organisation.

There is a lot more that can be done to put the power back in the hands of those people who own those strata properties. The fact that we still have this ability for a developer to have such a say, if you like, of who manages that strata before the completion of the sale of those apartments, I think is a serious flaw and something that needs to be addressed.

There are two issues I have raised in conjunction with this bill: one is a job for the federal government, if it serious about offering more choice and encouraging people to take up that choice when it comes to housing and, of course, for the state government to ensure there are not unintended consequences or areas that can currently be exploited that may not have been exploited yet. I am not accusing anybody of doing that. However, when I was looking at an investment property a number of years ago, I read the strata minutes and noticed that the strata had been hit with a bill for that particular place for an outdoor garden that was for the almost exclusive use of the penthouse owner who was the developer of that property.

I would argue that that is an abuse of the strata system, either by apathy from owners or proxy votes being given to the strata manager, naively, rather than other owners, for those who cannot make the meeting. That is where that type of situation can happen. Needless to say, we were not interested in purchasing in that area because we could see that we would be subsidising the lifestyle of somebody else through the strata fees.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Odenwalder): Before I go to the member for Davenport, I want to welcome to the chamber some friends from Vietnam Airlines who are here today as guests of the Minister for Tourism. Welcome, thanks for coming.

Bills

STATUTES AMENDMENT (COMMUNITY AND STRATA TITLES) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed.

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (17:41): I, too, rise to support the Statutes Amendment (Community and Strata Titles) Bill, a bill that makes important reforms to the way that we regulate, govern and protect the interests of South Australians who live in community and strata title properties.

This bill represents another step in the Malinauskas Labor government's broader commitment to improving fairness and security in our housing system. Since coming to government we have pursued a program of generational reform in housing. We have introduced landmark changes to the Residential Tenancies Act, strengthening the rights and protections for renters. We have made significant investment in public housing, accelerating construction and maintenance to meet demand. We are tackling housing supply and affordability through planning reforms, land releases and targeted support for first-home buyers.

The bill before us today is part of that same story, ensuring that people who live in strata and community title homes have confidence in the governance of their communities, the transparency of their body corporate managers and the integrity of the processes that affect their daily lives.

The Community Titles Act 1996 and the Strata Titles Act 1988 govern tens of thousands of South Australian households. These are the rules that determine how apartments, townhouses and other shared developments operate: how fees are set, how decisions are made, how common areas are managed and how disputes are resolved.

But like all laws they need to keep pace with emerging challenges. That is why the Environment, Resources and Development Committee undertook its 81st report on strata titles and why this bill implements many of its recommendations. It is also why we have listened carefully to the community, to residents, to advocacy groups and, importantly, people who have been let down in the past when the system has failed them.

One of the key issues this bill tackles is the need for greater transparency in the conduct of body corporate managers. An ABC *Four Corners* investigation exposed troubling practices in the industry: body corporate managers acting as insurance brokers, re-invoicing corporations with hidden mark-ups and failing to disclose commissions or related party dealings. These practices create conflicts of interest and erode trust.

This bill tightens disclosure obligations. It requires full and clear declarations of any commissions, related party transactions or benefits, not vague wording, but detail: what the interest is, who the related parties are, the dollar value of the services and how the arrangement is in the best interests of the community. Managers must also front up at AGMs to declare what they have received and what they expect to receive. If they do not disclose they will be liable to repay. This is about accountability, fairness and respect for people whose money they are entrusted with.

This bill also responds directly to recent painful lessons in my own community. Amendments in this bill address concerns about how inappropriate use of the Community Titles Act has left families

exposed. The clearest example is the failed Felmeri Holmes development at O'Halloran Hill. There, land was divided for new housing developments under community title when an ordinary Torrens title division would have been more appropriate because the dwellings were all unattached and the only common property created was a shared access road and utility connections.

When Felmeri collapsed, the developer became insolvent before completing the road and utilities. Families who had invested everything into their dream homes were stranded. Builders could not even get onto the site to finish construction. Had the development been Torrens title, the local council would have been responsible for ensuring roads and infrastructure were completed to standard, backed by security or bonds, but under the Community Titles Act the safeguard was missing.

To address this, the bill inserts new clarity into the law that regard must always be given to the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act when determining if community title is appropriate. Planning authorities will have sharper tools to prevent another Felmeri. Of course, reforming the law is one thing, but we also had to act quickly to help the families left in limbo.

The Malinauskas government stepped in. The Department for Infrastructure and Transport completed urgent works to make the site accessible, filling trenches, clearing debris and levelling roads so that builders could return and families could finish their homes. Fortunately, that nightmare is now over, with all families having moved into their new homes, but we are still pursuing options to recoup the costs from Felmeri.

As the local member, I saw firsthand the heartbreak that these families endured. What should have been a time of joy became a nightmare. I also saw the relief when the government delivered the first light at the end of the tunnel. This bill ensures no future family will face that same fate. The bill makes many other sensible, practical reforms:

- insurance: lifting mandatory public liability cover from \$10 million to \$20 million, in line with other states;
- sustainability: prohibiting unreasonable bans on solar panels or EV charging infrastructure;
- health: allowing by-laws to control smoke and smoke drift in common areas;
- governance: addressing meetings limiting proxy abuses and ensuring owners can put items on agendas;
- consumer protection: mandating clearer contracts, information for prospective purchasers and extending sinking fund planning from five to 10 years; and
- fairness: enabling courts to order repayment of undisclosed commissions, removing outdated requirements for corporate seals and ensuring fees caps apply equally whether charged by corporations or managers.

Each of these reforms might seem small in isolation but together they add up to a system that is clearer, fairer and more fit for the way that people live today.

Importantly, the bill also works to harmonise the Community Titles Act and Strata Titles Act. Although new developments since 2009 are governed by the Community Titles Act, many older properties remain under the Strata Titles Act. Creating consistency wherever possible helps owners and managers and regulators alike.

These reforms are part of a broader housing agenda. We are in a period of enormous reform and investment in housing in South Australia. Since coming to government, the Malinauskas Labor government has embarked on one of the most ambitious housing agendas our state has ever seen. We have launched the Build to Rent program to increase affordable rental supply, delivered stamp duty relief to help first-home buyers enter the market and fast-tracked land releases to improve housing supply in growth areas. We have boosted funding for public housing maintenance and construction. We have established the Office for Regional Housing and supported TAFE SA training pathways to address workforce shortages in construction and trades. Each of these initiatives relies on a robust, well-regulated industry that consumers can have confidence in.

We are not just making patchwork fixes, we are delivering generational reform to make housing fairer and more sustainable for the decades ahead. This bill is about learning from the past, fixing problems in the present, and preparing for our future. It addresses conflicts of interest and improves transparency, closes loopholes and prevents abuse, ensures families are not left stranded by developments that should never have been approved and strengthens protections for every South Australian who lives in community and strata titled housing. I commend this bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Odenwalder.

GAMBLING ADMINISTRATION (LIMITATION ON ADVERTISING) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

FINES ENFORCEMENT AND DEBT RECOVERY (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill with the amendment indicated by the following schedule, to which amendment the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

No. 1. Clause 42, page 17, lines 35 and 36 [clause 42(1)]—Delete subclause (1)

RADIATION PROTECTION AND CONTROL (COMMENCEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

HARBORS AND NAVIGATION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

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

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill with the amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the House of Assembly:

No. 1. New Schedule, page 9, after line 26—Insert:

Schedule 1—Review of operation of Act

1—Review of operation of Act

- (1) The Minister must cause a review of the operation of the provisions of the *Education and Children's Services Act 2019* enacted or amended by this Act to be conducted, and a report on the results of the review to be submitted to them.
- (2) The review must be completed, and the report submitted to the Minister, before the third anniversary of the commencement of this clause.
- (3) The Minister must cause a copy of the report on the review to be laid before both Houses of Parliament within 12 sitting days after the Minister receives the report.
- (4) In this clause—

Minister means the Minister to whom the administration of the *Education and Children's Services Act 2019* has been committed.

At 17:52 the house adjourned until Tuesday 11 November 2025 at 14:00.