

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, 12 February 2015

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. R.P. Wortley)** took the chair at 14:17 and read prayers.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The PRESIDENT: I acknowledge the presence of the Hon. Mrs Caroline Schaefer: it is good to see you here. I also recognise the Hon. Peter Dunn behind you.

Condolence

WHYTE, HON. A.M.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:18): By leave, I move:

That the Legislative Council expresses its deep regret at the passing of the Hon. Arthur Mornington Whyte AM, former President of the Legislative Council, and places on record its appreciation of his distinguished service and that, as a mark of respect to his memory, the sitting of the council be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

I rise today to pay respect to the Hon. Arthur Whyte AM, a former President of this place. On 15 December last year, we learnt with great sadness of the passing of Arthur Whyte. We remember him today as a member of the council elected in 1966 and as president of this place from February 1978 until his retirement in November 1985. While I never had the pleasure of actually meeting the man, I have certainly learnt a great deal about him. I have heard stories about him and read quite a bit about him, and I can say with absolute certainty that today we honour a truly remarkable Australian.

Arthur was born in 1921 and grew up in the Flinders Ranges region in rugged and isolated country. His family eventually moved to the Kimba region on Eyre Peninsula, an area with which he maintained a deep connection his entire life. It cannot have been easy; it would not have been an easy life for an isolated farming family starting out in the Great Depression of the 1930s. I understand his schooling was limited to a one-teacher school near Yeltana, the family property north of Kimba. He finished 12th in the state when he completed his qualifying certificate at age 11. However, I understand he was forced to stay at school for another year because of his age and completed his formal schooling at the age of 12.

Clearly, were he living in the city and it was not the Great Depression, probably his life would have been quite different in a number of respects, but it mattered not because he was one of those people for whom lifelong education was automatic. He learnt from every aspect of his experiences and from people he met, whether they were bushmen, Aboriginals, soldiers or parliamentary counsel.

Growing up in a farming family, Arthur became at a very young age a very capable horseman and bushman. At the age of 15, with, I understand, one packhorse and his dog, he rode out across the country from Yeltana to Moonarie Station to begin working as a jackeroo—a distance, I understand, of about 150 kilometres. This journey took Arthur five days, alone but for his horses and a dog, and if he had had an accident or been hurt, clearly he faced perishing and no-one would have known for some time. But at that time, no-one considered this solo ride unusual for this particular 15-year-old boy.

While Arthur was working as a stockman, the Second World War broke out and he joined the 2nd/48th Battalion, which was to become the most decorated Australian unit of the war. He served in the epic siege of El Alamein and was one of the legendary Rats of Tobruk, rightfully a matter of considerable pride for him. Upon returning to Australia in 1943, he lost his arm in an accident while training to be a jungle fighter and was discharged from the Army.

Incidentally, I have been told that he never complained about the loss of his arm and was always finding very innovative ways of doing things, and there are many tales about Arthur cracking a whip or throwing a beast while riding on horseback or, perhaps even more frightening, rolling a cigarette while driving, which I understand he was quite famous for. Of course, there is a particularly wonderful photo of him, in a newspaper going back to July 1977, opening up his parliamentary office door with his security key and using his foot to unlock the door and managing his briefcase as well.

He returned to the South Australian bush in 1945 and married Mary Seal, and they remained a great enduring partnership for nearly 70 years. Arthur and Mary moved to Yeltana in 1950, and their four children, Caroline, Annette, Martin and Nola, were raised there. Caroline, of course, eventually became a member of the Legislative Council in her own right. Obviously, I had the great pleasure of working with the Hon. Caroline Schaefer for a number of years. I found her to be an incredibly hardworking and diligent member of this council, and she has always conducted herself in a highly professional way, whether it was in this house or with other responsibilities she had in a number of roles throughout the years.

Throughout the fifties and sixties, in addition to being a successful farmer Arthur was energetically involved in his community. He held positions in the Kimba district council, the Stockowners Association of SA, the local Lions Club and RSL and numerous horseracing organisations. Arthur's leadership qualities attracted the eye of those in power, so it was no surprise when he was elected to the Legislative Council in 1966.

In 1978, Arthur was elected President of the council, a position he held for nearly eight years. Given that proportional representation was still a relatively novel thing at the time and that the numbers in the council, for the first time, were very evenly divided between the major parties, I understand his term as President was a quite volatile one.

He was widely acknowledged as a forthright President who was respected by all sides. Arthur, I understand, was anything but a simple bushie who happened to wander into parliament. He was going to be a very shrewd political player and a man of influence with a very strong independent streak. He was not afraid to have his say and I understand he did that frequently. I am sure that the Hon. Rob Lucas, who was here in Arthur's time, can probably shed some light on these matters.

There are still some very close connections with Arthur Whyte that I would like to acknowledge here today: Jan Davis, our highly esteemed Clerk was his Black Rod during his presidency, and also Margaret Hodgins, who is secretary to the Clerk now, was the President's personal assistant at the time, and I am sure they will have shared a recollection or two between themselves about Arthur.

When asked later in life about what he considered to be the highlights of his political career, I understand he nominated the work that he did with the Aboriginal people to secure their rights to the Maralinga lands. I understand he spent considerable time sitting down with the elders in Maralinga to ensure that amendments to the Maralinga lands act were acceptable to all parties. Arthur's own words at the time were, 'I have a smattering of the lingo, for a start, and they sensed I was a bushie.' How rare it would have been for the Maralinga people at that time to meet a politician who was able to speak at least some Pitjantjatjara.

In November 1985, Arthur retired as Legislative Council President and in 1987 was awarded an Order of Australia for his service to the Parliament of South Australia. In retirement, Arthur and Mary returned home to Kimba where he apparently enjoyed a regular visit to the Kimba pub and a quiet drink with old mates—and apparently a bet on the horses every now and then as well.

He is now amongst people he loved and was laid to rest in the Kimba cemetery on 19 December 2014. He leaves behind Mary, his four children, 13 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Arthur's life encapsulated experiences and values that have come to define—at an almost mythical or iconic level—our sense of national character and identity. Arthur was one that singular generation of Australians who lived through really tough times of great turmoil and often enormous personal hardship and yet they survived and thrived with a stoic and always fundamentally a very decent spirit intact.

His ability to mix with all kinds of people, to respect them and to be respected in return was just one of his rare qualities. I think the outpouring of tributes since his passing is a profound

acknowledgement that here was a truly remarkable Australian. May Arthur Mornington Whyte rest in peace.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (14:28): I rise to second the motion and endorse the comments made by the Leader of the Government and add a few personal comments and comments on behalf of some of my colleagues. I had the privilege of personally knowing the Hon. Arthur Mornington Whyte and, in December last year, I drove to Kimba to attend Arthur's funeral. It was a beautiful service commemorating his long and rich life.

Arthur came from humble beginnings. He was born into a family with a deep and rich farming history. He was the youngest of four children. From a young age the notion of hard work was instilled in Arthur, a characteristic which he exemplified throughout his life. While at school, Arthur worked on the farm leaving little time for his homework. Despite this, Arthur's hard work and discipline saw him finish 12th in the state with his qualifying exam results.

True to his roots, Arthur took a job at Buckleboo Station after finishing school. Arthur became well known as an excellent stockman and was later employed as a jackaroo on Moonarie, which at that time carried some 30,000 sheep and 700 head of cattle. However, in 1940, in the midst of the Second World War, Arthur made the brave decision to join the Army.

As part of the 2nd/48th Battalion, Arthur served throughout the Middle East, serving in Palestine, Libya and Lebanon, and as one of the famous Rats of Tobruk. Ironically, it was not until after these battles that Arthur suffered his injury. In 1943, he was involved in an accident in military training which saw him lose his arm, and he was subsequently discharged from the Army just before Christmas that same year. Perhaps Arthur was a little more accident prone than he would have cared to admit, because some years later he fell off his horse, breaking his arm in three places, and had to endure a painful four-mile walk back home while negotiating three fences with only one (broken) arm.

Family was truly important to Arthur, and upon returning to Australia he married his wife Mary in 1945. Two years later, they bought some land at Kimba. Kimba was to become the family home, and here, on the family station of Yeltana, Arthur and Mary had four children: Caroline, Annette, Martin and Nola. I am pleased to see that Caroline and Annette are here today; the others have not joined them, but I am sure they are here with us in spirit.

Arthur's devotion to his community was the foundation of his political career. He was a monumental figure in and around Kimba, serving on the Kimba District Council, and was president of the Kimba branch of the RSL, a member of the Kimba Show Society, and a member of the Kelly Football Club. He also held positions within the Kimba Racing Club and the school committee, just to name a few. I think that was displayed in Kimba on the day of his funeral, where every possible seat was taken, and there were two rows of people standing around the Kimba hall listening to the service.

After being elected to the Legislative Council in 1966 as a member of the Liberal Country League, Arthur was elected President of this chamber in 1978. It was as President that Arthur Whyte made his long-lasting imprint on South Australian state politics. He played a key role in the passing of legislation to construct the Olympic Dam uranium mine, and Arthur was a strong advocate for the mine, which continues to be a significant contributor to South Australia's economy and its jobs market today.

Most notable was Arthur's relationship, as the minister and Leader of the Government indicated, with the Aboriginal people, and what he was able to achieve for them with the Maralinga lands bill was nothing short of remarkable. Having considered the government's bill and the opposition's alternative bill, Arthur was adamant that neither afforded the Maralinga people the appropriate level of protection. He sought to consult with the Maralinga people, not as a politician, but as a fellow bushie and as a friend who had grown up and worked with the Aboriginal people throughout his farming life. Through his determination, Arthur was able to ensure the Maralinga land and the sacred sites were safeguarded. The mutual respect between Arthur and the Maralinga people was to be admired.

Arthur retired in 1985 and two years later received a truly deserved Order of Australia. Of course, as we know, Arthur was also a wonderful host at home in Kimba. I visited there a number of

times. I was warned by Caroline not to go back to his house for 'just one more' glass of port, and I thought, 'This guy's perhaps in his mid 80s by now so it won't last very long,' but, sure enough, she was right and we were still there at 3 o'clock in the morning, and Arthur was going strong. So he was certainly a man who was strong in body, strong in mind and strong in heart as well.

Today, I would also like to pay tribute to Arthur, in a strange way, by way of Arthur's children, especially Martin, who was the first person who suggested that I should run for the Legislative Council, and took a role in—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: I know members opposite and some others might not like the role they played! I think Martin then spoke to his sister Caroline, who then committed to help support me during my preselection process. As I sat in the hall in Kimba, I thought, 'Actually, I have a stronger and longer connection with the Whyte family.' If it were not for Arthur, he would not have had those children, and those children would not have been able to offer that support on my journey to becoming a member of the Legislative Council.

As I reflected on the life of Arthur, I was full of admiration for a man who stood up for what he believed in. A man full of humility, no matter where his travels took him or what parliamentary office he held, Arthur always remained humble. He was a true representative of his people, and it is a great loss the community of Kimba, as well as those from South Australia.

Mr President, I would like to close by reading a poem that was handed out as a memento of Arthur's life on the day of his funeral. I do hope I can do it justice. It is entitled *The Measure of a Man*:

Not 'How did he die?' but 'How did he live?'

Not 'What did he gain?' but 'What did he give?'

These are the things that measure the worth

Of a man as a man, regardless of birth.

Not 'What was his station?' but 'Had he a heart?'

And 'How did he play his God-given part?'

Was he ever ready with a word of good cheer

To bring back a smile, to banish a tear?

Not 'What was his church?' Not 'What was his creed?'

But 'Had he befriended those really in need?'

Not 'What did the sketch in the newspaper say?'

But 'How many were sorry when he passed away?'

These are the things that measure the worth

Of a man as a man, regardless of birth.

Arthur Mornington Whyte, rest in peace.

The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS (14:35): I start my support of this motion by acknowledging Mrs Mary Whyte, the Hon. Caroline Schaefer, Gar and Nettie Heron, and of course the Hon. Peter Dunn, former President of the Legislative Council. I was fortunate to meet Caroline Schaefer, the first of the Whyte family I came into contact with, and the great privilege that I had through meeting Caroline was to be introduced to her highly-respected father, Arthur Whyte.

My journey with Caroline started as a candidate for the state seat of Giles in the early 1990s. I had not met Caroline before and, out of that silver medal I received at that time, that podium finish without any chocolates, I had the great fortune to come into contact with the Whyte family. Can I say that the experience for me has been one where I feel extremely fortunate and honoured to have been befriended by that particular family.

The Hon. David Ridgway, the Hon. Rob Lucas, the Hon. Peter Dunn, the Hon. Graham Gunn, Rowan Ramsey, the federal member, and Peter Treloar, the member for Flinders, and I were all

fortunate to attend the celebration of Arthur's life in Kimba in December. As a Whyalla person who has always admired West Coast folk, it was exactly as I would have expected it to be. There was an enormous amount of respect shown. It was an enormously well-attended celebration, and I could not help but think, even though it was an extremely sad occasion, that when you looked at the pictorial of Arthur's life as it was presented in this marvellous ceremony, there would not have been a person who walked away without having been inspired by the celebration of Arthur Whyte's life.

Arthur Whyte was a legend of the West Coast; he was a great South Australian and Australian. My condolences to Mary and all of your family. You have much to be proud of, and I indeed was honoured to know Arthur Whyte.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (14:37): I rise to support the condolence motion and in doing so indicate that I had the honour of serving with Arthur in the Legislative Council, as the leader indicated, and also with the Hon. Caroline Schaefer, so I guess I am in a rare position to be able to speak to the condolence motion. As the other speakers have indicated, Arthur was held in very high regard and, as my colleagues have indicated, I think that was amply demonstrated by the many hundreds who attended the service for Arthur in the Kimba Institute Hall the week before Christmas.

I suspect for some of us—I speak for myself and will let others speak for themselves—that when it comes our time to pass, those who will be there in the equivalent of the institute hall might be our nearest and dearest and perhaps a few who just want to make sure that we are dead and buried and well and truly so, but that was not the case with Arthur. There were many hundreds from all over South Australia. I know some of the individuals I spoke to were people who had come into contact with Arthur—some had travelled over from in and around the Clare region, of course many came from the West Coast, and some had driven up from Adelaide.

I am sure there were many others there I did not get to meet who had travelled much further than that to pay tribute to Arthur, and not just of course because of his parliamentary service, which we are acknowledging here, but because, as other speakers have indicated, he was involved in very many community organisations. Many of the people I spoke to were there acknowledging the service he had given to many community organisations, both before he entered parliament and during his time in the parliament.

As we sat in that institute hall, one older gentleman behind me (I am not sure of his name) was proudly telling everyone in his row that he was the man who had nominated Arthur to run for preselection for the Liberal Party back in the early to mid-1960s, whenever it was that Arthur first started. As is the case with many a country send-off, it ended up in the Kimba Hotel. I am sure it would have been the sort of send-off that Arthur would have appreciated himself, in terms of everyone coming together, enjoying themselves and saying farewell.

I want also to pay tribute to Mary, his wife. One of the touching aspects of the ceremony was that the funeral card we all received stated that Mary and Arthur had been married for 69½ years. It was not 69, it was not nearly 70, but it was 69½. When we asked afterwards, 'Why so precise?' we were told it was because Mary had insisted that it would be 69½ years. For those of us who can even contemplate perhaps being married for 70 years, or 69½ years, it is a magnificent tribute to the two of them, but I want to place on the public record on behalf of my colleagues an acknowledgement to Mary.

I know how she loyally supported him through not only all the trials and tribulations that have been publicly acknowledged on that particular occasion and referred to briefly here today but also the many challenges they met together in raising a family on the West Coast, and supported him in his parliamentary life and his community life. He would not have been able to achieve it without Mary's support, and I want to place on the public record an acknowledgement on behalf of my colleagues, both present and past, for Mary's loyal support all through those years.

My earliest recollection—I still have nightmares about it on occasions—is when in my very first term in parliament, in that period of 1982-85 when Arthur was still the President of the Legislative Council, I was visiting the West Coast and travelling with Arthur on the dusty back blocks of Kimba and Buckleboo. I cannot remember the road; I just remember the occasion. It was my first experience. There was Arthur steering the car with his left knee—and not just on the straight stretches but around the corners—whilst he busily rolled his cigarette with his one arm and lit it whilst

he successfully, as it turned out, managed to steer the car on those dusty back roads of Kimba and Buckleboo.

As I said, I still have nightmares; I thought my political career was going to end in its first three years. I had never seen that performed before, and can I thankfully say I have never seen it performed again. It was the first of many experiences—some of which I can put on the public record and some which I cannot—in my time with Arthur. He certainly was a good tutor or mentor for someone who, whilst they came from the regions (I came from a regional city, Mount Gambier), certainly did not know too much about the bush and about the West Coast. Through Arthur, firstly, and, in the latter years, Peter Dunn and Caroline Schaefer, I learnt marginally more about the issues that confronted those who lived and worked on the West Coast and in country areas of South Australia.

The other recollection I can put on the public record—as I said, not all of them I can—is that Arthur certainly, together with Martin Cameron and some of the other characters of those early years in parliament, was, if I can put it delicately, very great company during those late hours and early mornings that we had to endure in those days in terms of considering legislation. Particularly on the long nights, if I can again put this delicately in these politically correct days, Arthur I think had what I would refer to as an unmatched capacity to consume liquids which had significant percentages of alcoholic content within them.

My experiences generally, much less so in terms of the capacity, I might say, but certainly experiences in parliament with those late hours, involved Para Liqueur port, which is not as popular a drink these days but was certainly a very popular drink during those late evenings and early hours of the morning for Martin Cameron and Arthur Whyte. I can remember many an evening when, in the Hon. Dennis Hood's office as it is now down on the lower ground floor in the corner, which was the office of the then leader of the opposition, the some might say plaintive sounds of the bagpipes being played were heard in the early hours of the morning—that was not Arthur, that was Martin Cameron—as they whiled away the hours whilst legislation was being passed.

I remember clearly one particular night a story recounted to me later or embellished a bit by Martin Cameron. I vaguely remember retiring hurt at about 2am myself and heading home, making my excuses, and leaving Martin Cameron and Arthur Whyte there in the office and then, the next day, running into Martin Cameron, who had a very sore head, I might say. I said, 'What time did you two finish up?' He said, 'I think it was about 5 o'clock or 6 o'clock in the morning when we finally got Arthur home and I finally got home.'

He said the worst thing in the world was that evidently Arthur arrived at 8am the next morning in Parliament House, bright-eyed, bushy-tailed, whistling and wanting to know whether Martin was ready for some breakfast. Martin said the last thing in the world he was looking for at 8am, after a session with Arthur, was breakfast. Arthur had a remarkable capacity to enjoy himself but, in the end, it did not inhibit the long hours and the work that he undertook both as a member and as a president.

We were all provided with information about some of the more controversial clippings that the library had pulled out in terms of Arthur's time in the parliament. It certainly refers to—and it was controversial at the time—a battle he was in with Ren DeGaris, who was the Liberal Party nominee for the President of the Legislative Council. Arthur won that particular contest with Ren, with the support of the Labor members and the two Democrat members at the time. That was obviously a source of some angst between the Hon. Ren DeGaris and Arthur for some time after that particular battle.

As the press clippings show, and they prompted my own recollections of the time, Arthur was very much his own man. You could put a point of view to Arthur and he would listen to it. He was obviously a strong Liberal but, in the end, whether it be the Maralinga legislation or whether it be the native vegetation legislation, which was originally in the planning legislation, or whether it be electoral reform or a number of those issues, Arthur had very strong views. He was his own man. Some might say he was stubborn. I would not be game to say that, but he was his own man. He formed his views and, once he had formed a view, it was very hard to shake that particular view.

I can remember screaming matches at the back of the chamber here. Jan Davis and others might remember them as well. There were screaming matches with the then attorney-general and

leader of the government, the Hon. Chris Sumner, who was not backwards in coming forwards, putting a very strong point of view on behalf of the Labor government at the time on a number of issues, and Arthur Whyte as the President putting his very strong view at the same time.

On occasions, the house was suspended when the President refused to come back into the chamber. We sat here thinking, 'Well, there's obviously something important going on at the back.' We could hear the screams going on, and the house was suspended. On one very famous occasion, when the chamber did not support a ruling of the President, the President indicated that he felt compelled, as he saw the conventions of the time, to resign as the President.

The house did not sit from between about 1am until 2am, and the then health minister, the Hon. John Cornwall, who has a Mount Gambier connection, as the Hon. Mr Maher and I would know, came into the house and adjourned the house until the next meeting so that the matter might be sorted out. It was sorted out the next morning when the Labor Party and the Democrats and everyone moved a motion of confidence in the president. I am not sure how heartfelt it was from some of those who had disagreed with him the night before; nevertheless, it was deemed to be a political resolution to something the government of the day did not want to occur, which was for the President to resign.

There were threatened court cases. The attorney-general threatened to take the President to the Supreme Court and to the High Court because he had decided that he would vote, in a deliberative fashion, on the third reading of a piece of legislation, the native vegetation legislation, something which was very important to country people in those days. The early days of native vegetation were fraught with controversy.

Arthur had voted in accordance with the legal advice he had; he had QC advice. The Hon. Mr Sumner, the government, the then solicitor-general and a number of other QCs disagreed with that position. There were threats of overturning the decision in the Supreme Court and the High Court. Eventually, the government backed off, recognised that they were unlikely to win that, and they forged a political compromise with the then President on that particular issue.

As I have said, there were other occasions when there were very significant differences of opinion between the government of the day and then President and, on some occasions, the house was suspended whilst we decided whether or not we were going to have a president. So, there were days of great controversy.

I conclude by saying that, through all of it, Arthur was a rich and staunch defender of the Legislative Council. He had a great love for this chamber; he had a great respect for its conventions and its power. I am absolutely positive that, if he were here today, as some politicians, some political commentators and others are canvassing various options to gut or reduce the powers of the Legislative Council in some way, he would be staunchly defending the existing powers, entitlements and responsibilities of this chamber as being an important part of our bicameral system in South Australia. He would have been arguing that this chamber is here as a safety net or a safety valve to protect the interests of all South Australians.

Whether they be farmers from the West Coast or whether they be any other minority that individual members of parliament might represent, he would be indicating that this chamber is the opportunity for those interests to be represented by members in this chamber and that, if there were sufficient numbers to convince this chamber, this chamber should be listened to by any government, whether it be a Labor government or whether it be a Liberal government. There are many challenges ahead of this chamber. I know that I can say without contradiction at all that in those challenges ahead, Arthur, as he demonstrated in his time of service in this parliament, would have continued to defend this chamber.

I again place on the record my acknowledgement of Arthur's service to the Liberal Party, to the Legislative Council, to the parliament and to the community. I again acknowledge Arthur's family and on this occasion pass on the condolences of not only myself but my wife, Marie, to Caroline, Mary and the family.

The Hon. S.G. WADE (14:55): I stand to pay tribute to the Hon. Arthur Whyte. Mr Whyte was one of the elders of my party and I always found him to be a wise and gentle man. Since coming into this place I had the opportunity to speak with Mr Whyte, in particular about disability issues, and

I was struck by his grit and character, hardly surprising considering the problems that he would have faced growing up in the Far North in those early years.

Mr Whyte grew up a few miles from Copley in the Flinders Ranges and the nearest doctor resided in Quorn, so Mr Whyte's mother had to travel to Adelaide to give birth. Mr Whyte was a Rat of Tobruk and served in El Alamein with South Australia's famous 2nd/48th. He lost his left arm in a pit in a freak accident during an ammunition exercise in World War II. He remembered standing ankle-deep in his own blood. Morphine was used to end the pain and the following day his arm was amputated.

At a time when this parliament is considering the reform of rehabilitation services, it is worth noting that Mr Whyte did his own rehabilitation. He did not allow his disability to hold him back. Prior to entering politics, Mr Whyte was a stockman and a station overseer. As has been recognised in parliament, Mr Whyte was a vigorous advocate for people in regional South Australia, and one of his most significant achievements was the key role he played in shepherding through the Maralinga land rights bill.

Mr Whyte thought that Parliament House should act as a model building in terms of access for people with disability. As the Leader of the Government alluded to, he had personal problems trying to access this place. Given his disability, entering Parliament House was often difficult. In order to get into the building, Mr Whyte had to put his briefcase on the floor, place his identification card in a slot located a metre from the door with his right hand and then manipulate the door handle with his leg. In *The Advertiser* on 28 July 1977, Mr Whyte expressed his concerns about the lack of thought shown for people with disabilities in the renovations of Parliament House. He said:

There are no amenities for disabled people in the whole scheme of renovation for Parliament House. I was an example of problems that people like me face and I was virtually sitting on their doorstep.

I am sure Mr Whyte would have welcomed the renovations of Old Parliament House which have made this place more accessible, but, of course, we still have a long way to go. I join other members in paying tribute to Mr Whyte as a man, as a parliamentarian and, of course, as the father of our respected former colleague Caroline Schaefer. Vale Arthur Whyte.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS (14:58): I rise to support this motion. My first memory of the Hon. Arthur Whyte was meeting him when I was a schoolboy and he had not long been elected to this place. He and my father served together in the Legislative Council for 16 years. During that time, Mary and my mother shared a friendship, and I am delighted to say that the extended connection that has gone over the years between the Whyte and Dawkins (including Schaefer) families was extended today when my granddaughter met Mary. I think that was just an extra extension of that connection. Obviously Caroline and I served in this place for about 12½ years, I think, but Caroline and I had a strong friendship well before both of us came to this place, actually.

We have had some really good summaries of the man that Arthur Whyte was, the member of his community both around Kimba and the broader Eyre Peninsula and across South Australia, but also of the way in which he operated, particularly in the parliament. We have heard the stories that the Leader of the Government and others and I think the Hon. Rob Lucas have told about the legendary rolling of the cigarette while he was driving. My father used to tell vivid stories about those experiences. You have to remember that my father and Arthur, while they had a great friendship, had not a lot in common in that Arthur obviously liked a smoke and a drink and my father never smoked in his life and he was a teetotaler. Despite those differences, they got on very well.

I remember the vivid stories of going over to Eyre Peninsula with Arthur and going to meetings at night in various communities on Eyre Peninsula, whether they be Liberal Party meetings or community meetings, followed by late-night long drives back on unsealed roads. Those familiar with Eyre Peninsula in those days will remember the infamous Lock-Elliston Road, and the even more infamous Kimba-Cleve Road. Driving on those roads was dangerous enough in the daylight, let alone in the dark when you were rolling a cigarette with your only arm. But my father survived that, as obviously Arthur did.

I have always admired Arthur's fantastic knowledge of outback South Australia and particularly the pastoral industry. I do not think there was a station in South Australia that he did not know personally. He seemed to know who had been on that station, who was on it now and who they

were related to. Most of us know that a lot of the pastoral families are quite interrelated, and Arthur could always tell you who was related to whom in outback South Australia.

I have a lasting memory of an evening at Enterprise House, where the State Council of the Liberal Party used to meet quite often, an evening where Arthur Whyte was honoured for his long service to the Liberal Party. Arthur stood up, and one of the things he said (and he directed to a lot of the younger members of our party) was that, while the Liberal Party was far from perfect and that he had disagreed with the party position on a lot of occasions, it was the closest thing by far to the political views that he held and the principles he stood for. I have always kept that in my mind at various times when you have to deal with some issues where perhaps your party position is not as easy to support as some others.

Arthur's principles, reflected in that view I think, were demonstrated in his influence on the continuing strength of the Kimba branch of the Liberal Party. Anybody who has ever been on preselection for an upper house seat would know that the Kimba branch would always meet when you came to town and put you through your paces, invariably in the Kimba Community Hotel, but that branch in many more ways I think has been a very strong entity in that community and has produced a large number of members of parliament for a branch of that size. With those words, I add my heartfelt sympathy to Mary and the Whyte family.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

Sitting suspended from 15:05 to 15:25.

Petitions

PAGES FLAT ROAD

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: Presented a petition signed by 12 residents of South Australia, concerning road safety on Pages Flat Road between Willunga Hill and Myponga, requesting the honourable house to urge the state government to:

1. Address the unworthy state of the Pages Flat Road between Willunga Hill and Myponga;
2. Assign funding to bituminise the road shoulders;
3. Undertake a study on the suitability of the 100 km/h speed limit; and
4. Undertake an audit on the general safety of the road.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills (Hon. G.E. Gago)—

South Australian Government Response to the Citizens' Jury Report on Sharing the Roads Safely

By the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation (Hon. I.K. Hunter)—

Office of the Ageing—Report, 2013-14

Ministerial Statement

CYCLING CITIZENS' JURY

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:27): I table a copy of a ministerial statement made in the other place by the Premier on Cycling Citizens' Jury.

SAMPSON FLAT AND TANTANOOLA BUSHFIRES

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:27): I table a copy of a ministerial statement made in the other place by the Minister for Emergency Services on Clipsal tickets for bushfire volunteers.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (15:27): I table a copy of a ministerial statement made in the other place by the Minister for Health titled 'Repat Foundation Chair to Lead New PTS Move'.

Question Time

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (15:27): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills a question about the latest unemployment rate in South Australia.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: This morning the ABS released the latest figures for South Australia and, very sadly for the state, we are now the highest in the nation at some 7.3 per cent. Just to put that in context, it is 6,240 people unemployed more than last month, 7,420 more than this period 12 months ago, 18,080 more than when Jay Weatherill became Premier, 21,980 more than when Labor made the promise and committed to 100,000 extra jobs, and 11,070 more than the election less than 12 months ago.

Given those figures, my question to the minister is: given the government promised the people of South Australia it would create an additional 100,000 jobs, can the minister outline her plan for delivering the additional 999,400 jobs required to meet this target?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:28): I thank the honourable member for his most important question. Indeed, the employment figures were very disappointing, the ones that came out today. It was very disappointing to see a sudden increase in unemployment to 7.3 per cent after the unemployment rate had actually declined over a six-month period. We know that these figures are highly volatile, these headline figures month to month.

Obviously, youth unemployment was of deep concern to us; that also rose. However, I have to say that we were treating that youth figure employment with a high degree of caution, given that it was a 10 per cent increase in just one month. Although we know that those particular figures for that month capture the summer holiday period when students are looking for work, we know that historically this figure has been highly volatile from one month to the next.

The pleasing trend to note was that full-time employment increased over the past year. If we compare the number of people who are employed now with 12 months ago, there is an increase. It was also pleasing to see that part-time employment increased this month.

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway: There are more unemployed today than there were 12 months ago.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Well, that's just not so. The honourable member is not right there. In fact, I think the figure is 1,800. What the honourable member says is just not true. The full-time employment increased by, I think, 6,500 over the past year. We know that full-time employment certainly has increased over the past year; there are more people employed now than there were 12 months ago. Also, part-time employment increased this month, and we note that the participation rate remained fairly steady. When we look at those figures that show trend data, we can see that in the longer term there are some stable aspects to our employment and a level of confidence in our economy.

We know that these headline figures bounce around quite a lot from month to month. They tend to go from one extreme to the other and then back again from one month to another. For instance, in one month South Australia can have one of the nation's best unemployment figures and then the very next month the figures can be the worst. These figures keep bouncing around. What we must do is keep our eye on trend figures and watch them carefully rather than have a knee-jerk reaction to volatile month-to-month headline figures.

Indeed, we have a strong economic plan to help South Australia grow prosperity and grow jobs. We have established 10 priorities that include unlocking our potential in relation to resources, energy and renewable assets. We have our premium food and wine produced from a clean environment and exported to the world. We have a priority that is recognising the work we do in health research, ageing and looking at advancing that.

We have a priority around the knowledge state, which is about trying to attract diverse student bodies, particularly to increase our international student rates. We also have a priority around growing our destination of choice for international and domestic travellers, priorities around innovation, business and a vibrant city heart of Adelaide, and also priorities around small business and global markets.

We have a clear plan, and that plan has been articulated clearly. We have set key performance indicators for each of those targets in terms of the time frames in which we have committed to achieve them. We have set both short and medium-term goals. Of course, we have seen just recently—this very week—the Premier announce some major initiatives that will have significantly huge potential for this state. They involve the tax reform, the time zone changes and they also look at potential in a nuclear industry.

Those announcements around further investigation and consideration of those three areas alone are likely to have huge economic potential at a later date. So, we have a clear plan. We work very hard with businesses and industry to increase our prosperity and to grow jobs to transform and diversify our economy so that we remain a robust and vibrant state.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is one person on their feet.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (15:35): Supplementary, Mr President: is the government still committed to its 100,000 jobs target by 2016?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:35): I have answered this question several times in this place. The target remains in place, and it remains a commitment of this government. Clearly, I have indicated in this place that it is aspirational.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Maher, it is very rude to be having a discussion across the chamber while your leader is standing there giving a speech, so please refrain from that.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: I think it is also very disrespectful to the minister to be bantering across the room while the minister is on her feet. Minister, could you please finish your answer.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Thank you, Mr President. Indeed, the government takes employment very seriously. As I have said, I have indicated in this place on several occasions that we maintain that commitment to that particular target. Although we recognise that it is aspirational, we still continue to strive to do the very best we can in relation to improving employment in this state.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

The Hon. K.L. VINCENT (15:37): Supplementary: can the minister provide an update as to the level of employment of people who identify as having a disability, particularly given a recent report which suggests that employment of people with disabilities is worse than it was some 20 years ago?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:37): The ABS employment reports released today do not break down groupings for disability, so they were not included in the reports for today.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (15:37): Does the minister accept that if the state government was to reduce state taxes and thereby reduce business costs, that would help improve the employment situation in South Australia?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:37): We are a state that works hard to support business. We have already made payroll tax concessions, we have put in place major WorkCover reforms, and we are obviously working very hard at building a skilled workforce and supporting skilled migration. We are also providing more help for businesses to win government work through a number of initiatives—the most recent one was Tender Ready, in collaboration with Business SA.

There are a number of initiatives that we have put in place, and, as I said, just this very week our Premier announced major proposals to debate in detail—tax reform, that is on the table, as well as potential time zone changes and nuclear industry changes. These are three major policy initiatives that have been put on the table for public consultation and consideration, and each one of those on their own could potentially have an enormous economic influence, a positive influence on our economy.

TENNYSON DUNES

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:39): I seek leave to make an explanation before directing a question to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation on the subject of the Tennyson Dunes.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: Honourable members who have been here for a few years would have heard numerous implorings and exaltations to protect what is one of our remaining remnant dunal systems in the area of Tennyson, Semaphore, Semaphore Park and some of the surrounding suburbs. In the lead-up to the last election, commitments were made by both major parties to the protection of the dunes. In particular, I am quoting from a letter from the minister to Ms Val Wales and Mr Nicholas Crouch of the Tennyson Dunes Group, which is one of the community groups which seeks to preserve the dunes:

In the matter of the protection of the dunes, I am pursuing the dedication of the dunes as a coastal conservation reserve under the Crown Land Management Act 2009. I have advised the City of Charles Sturt and the Minister for Planning of my intention. I also note your concerns about the proposed construction of a shared pathway through the Tennyson Dunes as part of the Coast Park initiative. I have requested that the City of Charles Sturt consider a route for the Tennyson phase of the Coast Park that does not include the construction of a path through the dunes.

Further, the minister wrote a letter to Mr Mark Withers, chief executive of the City of Charles Sturt, dated 27 February 2002, in which he stated that he was 'progressing the dedication of the coastal conservation reserve under the Crown Land Management Act'. I quote:

The conditions of this dedication will ensure that inappropriate development does not occur in the reserve. In addition, the management plan to be prepared for this reserve will provide that any continuation of the Coast Park project will not be through the dunes.

As I have recently highlighted, given the ecological, educational and heritage values of the dunes, as well as the strong community support for the protection of the dunes, this Labor government is committed to its protection.

My questions for the minister are:

1. Does it remain the policy of this government that there will not be a pathway through the dunes?
2. Is he continuing to progress the coastal conservation reserve and when can we expect that given that it is well over 12 months since he wrote those letters?
3. What is the current status of heritage listing of the dunes?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (15:42): I thank the honourable member for her most important question and her continuing interest in this area of policy. Minister Mullighan (the member for Lee) from the other place and I will ensure the protection of the dune system. We are both very concerned to make sure that they are adequately protected and the dedication of lands to that effect will be coming forward to this chamber in the not too distant future.

The discussions we have had with council and communities over the last 12 months—and indeed the Hon. Michelle Lensink has been down there at the dunes during some of these discussions—were to look at alternative proposals. The major concern was about a shared pathway through the dunes, not exactly a 'pathway through the dunes', but my concern is in fact a path that would actually bisect the dunal system and have negative impacts on the wildlife in the area, such as it is. There are alternatives, however, that can be considered, and these are the systems we are looking at.

One of the alternatives was to detour the users of bicycles around the dune system onto Military Road. That has some practical problems in terms of safety for cyclists and also traffic, but we do need to look at how we can actually protect the dunes as a first priority. The Coast Park will, of course, go ahead, and the linear arrangement is what we need to work on. But there are proposals we can consider which will protect the dunes and keep the pathway going through the same area without having a negative impact on the fauna and flora that is present in that dunal system.

These are the issues we will be discussing with the new council, and we are looking forward to a cooperative relationship with them in that regard. Mr Mullighan and I will ensure the protection of the dune system, whatever the resulting outcome is in terms of the pathway.

TENNYSON DUNES

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:43): Supplementary question: what has been the advice of the Coast Protection Board, and is the government still pursuing a dedication of this area as a coastal conservation reserve?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (15:44): I cannot recall advice from the Coast Protection Board at this present time, but we are pursuing dedication of the land for protection purposes.

APY LANDS, GOVERNANCE

The Hon. S.G. WADE (15:44): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation in relation to the APY Executive Board election.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: Last year, when parliament hurriedly considered the APY Land Rights Act 1981, the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation mused about the options before the government in relation to electoral processes for the APY Executive Board. In particular, he mentioned the option of amending the bill or postponing the election.

He gave an assurance to the council that if the government took the option to introduce amendments to the act prior to the next APY board election, this would be done early in the next session of the parliament. By law, the SA Electoral Commissioner must conduct the next APY Executive election by no later than 29 May 2015. Allowing for the statutorily prescribed nomination period, there are only three more sitting weeks before 1 May, the last day by which the APY election process can begin. My questions are:

1. Is the minister planning to introduce a bill to amend the APY Land Rights Act ahead of the next APY Executive Board election?
2. If so, will the minister give an assurance that the bill will be introduced during the next sitting week so that parliament can give the bill its due consideration?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Manufacturing and Innovation, Minister for Automotive Transformation, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (15:45): I thank the honourable member for his important question. I have had some discussions with the department and a number of other people in regard to the upcoming APY elections. I am turning my mind to this matter and over the coming days in the next couple of weeks will make a decision about the best way forward.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Hon. J.M. GAZZOLA (15:46): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills a question about young people in vocational education and training.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.M. GAZZOLA: We all know the important role that participation in vocational education and training provides, enabling employment in our communities particularly for young people. Minister, will you provide information about the extent to which young South Australians are engaged in vocational education and training?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:46): I thank the honourable member for his most important question. This government shares his view in terms of the vitally important role that education and training play for young people in their ability to find work as well as the broader benefits obviously provided to our economy and community. The short answer to the honourable member's question is that South Australia's young people are highly engaged in vocational education and training (VET) programs. The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) recently released data on this very issue and it makes interesting reading in the context of the government's training guarantee for SACE students program.

Analysis of the NCVER data that was just released (it is data for the 2013 year) indicates that nationally most young people were participating in one form of education and training. The national estimates of participation by young people in education and training in 2013 show a 1 per cent increase in school enrolments and a 3.6 per cent increase in higher education compared to 2012. In South Australia more young people were participating in VET in schools: there was a 2.3 per cent increase, and in VET overall a 2.5 per cent increase in 2013 compared with the previous year. The percentage increases, as you can see, were above the national average and the highest in the nation.

In South Australia, the number of young people in higher education increased by 3.8 per cent, or 700 students, compared with 2012. South Australia boasted the second highest proportion of young people who successfully completed at least one unit of competency or module as part of a VET qualification at certificate II or above in the nation. In South Australia this was 28.7 per cent, which again was above the national average by nearly 2 per cent.

This government recognises the importance of promoting VET qualifications to secondary school students. That is why we have put in place policies and funding to encourage and improve access and take-up by students. The Department of State Development subsidises training delivered to eligible secondary school students by approved RTOs in three ways: the training guarantee for SACE students (TGSS), school based apprenticeships and/ or trainees and Innovative Community Action Networks (ICAN). Around \$1 million of funding is allocated by the department to TAFE, who auspice VET delivered in schools, and the government is also committed to quality VET delivery in the school sector through fee-for-service arrangements as well.

As the Minister for Education recently announced, a massive 96 per cent of public school students continued their studies into year 12 last year—the highest proportion ever. It's also pleasing

to note that the NCVET Student Outcomes Survey released in December last year tells us that 78.7 per cent of South Australian graduates were employed after training, and this is well above the national average. In fact, if I recall, South Australia was one of the leading jurisdictions in employment after training.

This government has a strong record of believing in and investing in our young people and backing them in decisions that they make to prepare for their future. It's sad to see that the Liberal federal government is so keen to slash important funding to these training initiatives.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Hon. K.L. VINCENT (15:50): Supplementary, Mr President?

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Vincent.

The Hon. K.L. VINCENT: Thank you. I have a few, so thank you for your patience. Can the minister provide information as to how many VET students are identified as having a disability as a percentage; of those, how many students with disabilities actually complete their studies? And a final more general question: is the minister able to provide a breakdown of the most common fields that are being studied by VET students and how those compare with corresponding available jobs on the jobs market?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:51): The report that I referred to was an NCVET report, so it's a federal body that is responsible for monitoring and reporting on our training system. They provide jurisdictional breakdowns for some of their data. This particular report was for SACE outcomes, so I am just clarifying—are you asking for those people with disabilities who are registered for SACE training and apprenticeships?

The Hon. K.L. VINCENT: Yes, I'm sorry. I think I said VET, but I actually mean SACE.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: So, you wanted the figures for the general VET sector?

The Hon. S.G. Wade: No, she does want SACE.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: SACE?

The Hon. S.G. Wade: Yes.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am not aware that NCVET makes that breakdown, so I am not sure whether that data is available but, if it is, I will certainly make sure that is brought back to the house as soon as possible.

NOARLUNGA TAFE

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE (15:52): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills some questions regarding the Noarlunga TAFE.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: My questions are:

1. Can the minister advise the house what the budget of the Noarlunga TAFE has been last financial year and in its current financial year?

2. Can the minister advise the house how many staff were employed last financial year and how many are employed this financial year?

3. Can the minister also advise the house whether it's true that there are more people putting up their hands for packages to get out of the Noarlunga TAFE than are actually now working there?

4. Can the minister advise the house how many courses have been cut at the Noarlunga TAFE over the last two years?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:53): I thank the honourable member for his most important questions. TAFE SA is an independent statutory authority. It is run and managed by its own independent board. The TAFE board is responsible for its operational matters, such as staffing numbers and distribution. It is also responsible for the budgets for its various campuses. It also is responsible for managing TVSPs and designing and managing courses and other content.

These are matters that should be raised directly with TAFE SA, so I would encourage the honourable member to contact TAFE SA and request that detailed information from them.

NOARLUNGA TAFE

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE (15:54): I have a supplementary question. I look forward to contacting them with the invite from the minister. My supplementary question is: is the agenda of this government to effectively destroy TAFE in South Australia?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:54): That is an absolute nonsense. TAFE SA is South Australia's leading public VET training facility, and it has a well-established reputation and track record for providing quality training outcomes, which we are very proud of.

The TAFE budget has remained fairly constant around \$200 million over the last number of years, and that is in spite of a very heavy impost on us to make savings, and TAFE has to share in those responsibilities as well. But there is still a significantly large public funding contribution to TAFE SA, and we continue, as I have said, to hold TAFE SA in extremely high regard as our primary public provider and as a quality institution.

On my most recent trip to Malaysia and India, we worked very hard to sign a number of MOUs with international partners which hold TAFE in extremely high regard and which are looking to partner with TAFE in terms of increasing international training initiatives. I was incredibly proud just to see firsthand the enormous regard that TAFE SA is held in those two countries I visited, and I know China as well, and the incredible quality reputation it has internationally.

We are striving very hard to expand that international training market with TAFE SA; it is well positioned to do that. There were, I think, three MOUs which were signed on just this one last visit, which could result in significant future partnerships for TAFE in that space.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (15:57): My question is to the Minister for the Environment. Will one of the options that the government uses to achieve its promise of a carbon neutral Adelaide be the purchase of green power by government departments and agencies?

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway: It's a very simple answer; you shouldn't have to get your finger in the hot topics.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (15:57): Well, I'm going to give you a bit more. I thank the honourable member for his most important question. The issues around making Adelaide a leading player in terms of climate change are complicated. They are not helped by the lack of support from a federal Liberal government which doesn't believe in climate change. They are not helped by an attitude of the Liberal Party that climate change is 'crap', as expressed by their leader. It is not helped by an attitude that, in fact, we don't believe the science if the science doesn't support our preconceived ideas about what the right policy should be for this country.

Climate change is a complicated issue that is going to take the very concentrated efforts of world leaders and countries to try to restrict what will come at us into the future in terms of rising sea levels and rising temperatures, which are already locked into the system. Mitigation and adaptation is where the states can play a big role, and that is exactly what we intend to do.

In terms of our leadership role, we as a state government will do everything we can, in connection with other state governments here in Australia and around the world, when our national government fails the test of leadership, which it has so comprehensively done to date. We have seen a report come out today, which comes out of a leading think tank in the United States, which says that our Prime Minister is the most incompetent leader in a Western industrial country in the world.

When you have the world looking at the Liberal Party and its leadership in those contexts, Mr President, you have to understand that we will not get any support from those opposite in time to tackle the most important issues that are facing us as a community today, and that is: how do we mitigate and how do we adapt to the climate change that is coming at us right now?

In terms of how we are going to address these issues, we will be talking to the community, to the Adelaide City Council and to industry as we develop forward a plan to put South Australia and Adelaide on the world map in terms of leadership on climate change and adaptation. We will be looking at all the options and all the available plans for the future mitigation and at how we might prioritise, encourage and incentivise—to use a horrible old Liberal word—to make sure that we can invite and have electric cars, driverless vehicles and hybrid vehicles as a preferred mode of transport into the future.

We will be doing everything we can, working with those people who believe that we need to address issues of climate change, and we will take advice from the experts, which I can say comprehensively that the Liberals will not do.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (16:00): I have a supplementary question arising out of the answer. Does the minister support government departments and agencies within the carbon neutral Adelaide region purchasing green power?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (16:00): I just made it very plain that we will be looking at all of the options that are available to us and we will be talking to those players who want to combine with government to achieve these very important outcomes. We will be looking at everything that is available. We want to grow industry, investment and jobs in this new world of climate change adaptation. We want to look at how we can drive new investment in green industries, and the investment from government will be dictated around where we get the best bang for our buck in terms of driving economic development in our economy and getting more jobs in this new future of green industries.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (16:01): Supplementary question.

The PRESIDENT: Supplementary.

The Hon. K.J. Maher interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Allow Mr Ridgway to finish.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: Thank you, Mr President. Will the government be insisting on a driverless car race as part of next year's Clipsal event to promote their carbon neutral city?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (16:02): I am ecstatic to hear the Liberals come up with an idea, the first one in my long experience in this place that the Leader of the Opposition has presented to the government. Can I say that I am not going to reflect on the quality of the idea; I am just so very grateful that they have offered one up to the chamber.

LEVITZKE, MR V.

The Hon. T.T. NGO (16:02): My question is to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation. Can the minister tell the chamber about Mr Vaughan Levitzke, Chief Executive of Zero Waste SA, and his outstanding contribution to the public sector in general and the waste and recycling sector in particular?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (16:03): I am very grateful to the honourable member for his very important question. We have fantastic people working for us in the Public Service in this state, serving the South Australian public on a daily basis and making a real difference for all of us.

One way that outstanding public servants are recognised is through the Public Service Medal. I am very pleased to inform the chamber that one of the recipients announced on Australia Day was Mr Vaughan Levitzke, Chief Executive of Zero Waste SA, for outstanding public service in the area of waste management reform and policy. Only 100 public sector medals are awarded nationally each year, making this a very prestigious award, and what an incredibly deserving recipient we have in Mr Levitzke.

With over 33 years' experience across government in environmental science, innovation and industry development, Mr Levitzke is a noted expert in waste, recycling and container deposit legislation, to name a few areas. He has held the role of Chief Executive of Zero Waste SA since it was established in 2003. He quickly developed a reputation as a passionate leader who has guided the organisation to become a respected, innovative and effective agency. Most importantly, Mr Levitzke has positioned South Australia as a national and international leader in recycling and waste management.

Mr Levitzke's achievements are really too numerous to list in their entirety, but I would like to highlight those that have resulted in real and tangible improvements for South Australia. Through his leadership and innovation, this state has invested in state-of-the-art infrastructure which has stimulated new ventures across South Australia in electronic waste, composting and recycling of construction demolition waste, and it has improved regional waste planning and infrastructure, invested in world-leading research and waste management and reduction and recycling and resource efficiencies and introduced industry resource efficiency measures that are not only making businesses greener but also saving them money.

Through his leadership, it became the first state in Australia to ban checkout-style plastic bags in May 2009, with a considerable amount of help from my parliamentary leader, the Hon. Gail Gago, who led this wonderful change. All these initiatives and more, overseen by Mr Levitzke's leadership, have resulted in remarkable reductions in the amount of waste sent to landfill.

We are the only Australian jurisdiction, as far as I know, to show steadily reducing waste to landfill since 2003. In 2003-04, South Australians were diverting about 61 per cent of materials from landfill, and this figure has now increased, I am advised, to over 77 per cent. These rates are not only the highest in the country but among the world's best.

Mr Levitzke's achievements, however, are not just confined to this state. Zero Waste achievements under the leadership of Mr Levitzke have been recognised in the UN habitat report, entitled Solid Waste Management in World Cities. Mr Levitzke is a member of the Advisory Board to the International Partnerships for Expanding Waste Management Services of Local Authorities, an initiative of the United Nations Centre of Regional Development in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. In February 2012, he was invited by the United Nations to advise on earthquake and tsunami reconstruction for sustainable communities, where he provided advice on waste and sustainability in respect of disaster recovery and planning.

I know that Mr Levitzke is highly respected by his peers, and in particular by the hardworking staff at Zero Waste South Australia and the industry and community that he and that agency support. I have particularly appreciated his outstanding communication skills, his integrity and honesty and his willingness to fight for what he believes is in the best interests of the state, based on the best available scientific evidence. I congratulate Mr Levitzke and all the staff at the Zero Waste SA on this well-deserved acknowledgment of their talent, skills and hard work on behalf of the citizens of South Australia.

CLIMATE CHANGE COUNCIL

The Hon. M.C. PARNELL (16:06): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Climate Change a question about the Premier's Climate Change Council.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.C. PARNELL: In August last year, so five months ago, Mr Allan Holmes resigned as the CEO of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. As CEO of the department, Mr Holmes was also the government's representative on the Premier's Climate Change Council, a body whose charter, according to the act, is to provide independent advice to the minister about matters associated with reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. My questions to the minister are:

1. Is Mr Holmes still a member of the Premier's Climate Change Council?
2. If he is, in what capacity?
3. If not, who his replacement?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (16:07): I thank the honourable member for his most important question. The Premier's Climate Change Council is established under the Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act 2007. The council's primary function is to provide me with independent advice about matters associated with reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. The third term of the council commenced with its meeting on 2 June 2014.

Council members are appointed for a three-year term, and I am advised that the current council membership comprises: the chair, Mr Bruce Carter; Ms Kathryn Bellette; Ms Michelle Tucker; Mr Brian Foster; Mr John O'Brien; Ms Nicole Halsey; Ms Ros DeGaris; and Mr Allan Holmes. I am responsible for appointing council members with a view to obtaining a balance of expertise that is relevant to reducing emissions and adapting to climate change, while providing reasonable representation from state and local government, the business community, the environment and conservation sector, the scientific community and other sectors of the state's community more generally.

The council is therefore tasked with giving me advice, and I don't think anyone would dispute the fact that Mr Allan Holmes has a great deal of experience in this area and in giving advice to government over a very long period of time. However, Mr Holmes at my request, I think, stayed on this council; he was appointed, of course, as CE of my department and that is how he had his position. We now have a new CE, and it is my expectation that she will be replacing Mr Holmes on that council in due course.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS (16:09): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Sustainability Environment and Conservation, representing the Minister for Education and Child Development, a question regarding suicide prevention training in the education sector.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: During the estimates process held in the other place last year, the member for Morphett asked the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse a number of questions regarding the implementation of the government's 2012-2016 Suicide Prevention Strategy. Late last year, the minister tabled his response to these questions in the other place which he had taken on notice. I was specifically interested to read, and I quote from the minister's response:

A South Australian Government Suicide Prevention Implementation Committee will be established in the coming months to unite government departments, supporting them in the implementation and ensuring the objectives in the 'South Australian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2012-2016; Every life is worth living', relevant to each government department are fulfilled.

Given this answer, my questions to the minister are:

1. What part will the Department of Education and Child Development play in implementing the objectives of the South Australian Suicide Prevention Strategy?
2. Will training for front-line staff in the department to prevent suicide by our youth be included in the implementation of the strategy?

3. Will any suicide prevention training be included in the school curriculum delivered by the department following implementation of the strategy?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Climate Change) (16:11): I thank the honourable member for his most important questions on the subject of mental health. I undertake to take those questions to the minister in the other place and seek a response on his behalf.

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS (16:11): This is the first time I have had an opportunity to ask the Minister for Manufacturing and Innovation a question, and I congratulate him on his elevation to the ministry. Can the minister update the council about the Business Transformation Voucher Program?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Manufacturing and Innovation, Minister for Automotive Transformation, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (16:11): I thank the honourable member for his question and his interest in this area. The South Australian government is committed to supporting South Australian manufacturers as they enhance their competitiveness, productivity and profitability. The \$4.5 million Business Transformation Voucher Program has been developed to help high-value South Australian manufacturing businesses identify opportunities to accelerate their growth through innovation.

The Business Transformation Voucher Program was one of the first initiatives to be rolled out as part of Building South Australia: Our Jobs Plan, the state government's \$60 million response to the looming closure of the automotive vehicle manufacturing industry in 2017. The Business Transformation Voucher Program provides up to \$50,000 for manufacturers to gain expert advice and implement recommendations to improve their profitability and competitiveness.

That is \$50,000 to help businesses engage specialists to assist them with things such as reviewing and identifying business and manufacturing process improvements, developing a marketing and brand strategy, developing a business model and business planning, training and mentor management, preparing themselves to capture export markets, and implementing any recommendation that arise from those reviews.

Successful applicants are required to provide dollar-for-dollar matching funds. So far, 23 local companies have been part of this scheme to transform their businesses. One of the local companies that is striving to transform their business is the Udder Delights Group. Udder Delights was established in 1999 as a goat cheese factory in the Adelaide Hills town of Lobethal. The company has grown to become a well-known and respected brand in Australia and makes its products from locally sourced goats and cows milk.

This South Australian food manufacturer has used its voucher to engage Sage Automation to provide an independent expert review of its manufacturing and packaging processes to identify opportunities for operational improvement and capital investment so that the company can achieve greater efficiency and capacity. Udder Delights aims to automate the packaging process utilising high-tech, innovative methods to meet the growing demands of local and export markets.

Agribusiness is one of the sectors that the government has identified as a growth area for this state. Another successful company, Fruit Wise Pty Ltd, was established in 2005. The business manufactures snack pack products from 100 per cent Australian-grown pulped fresh fruit, with no added sugar, fat or preservatives. The business has used its vouchers to engage Kingsgrove Consulting to assist it to improve manufacturing operational performance around quality and product consistency. These are just a couple of the 23 companies that have so far received transformation vouchers.

The government is also working with companies to identify opportunities for them to apply for similar support through jointly-funded programs that we are rolling out with the commonwealth government, such as the Next Generation Manufacturing Investment Program, as part of our response to the decline of the auto industry in this country and in this state.

I encourage all manufacturers looking to transform their business and capture new opportunities to visit the Department of State Development website or GRANTassist at

grantassist.sa.gov.au to find out how we can help them to make South Australia a place where people and businesses thrive.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

The Hon. A.L. McLACHLAN (16:15): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills a question about employment in South Australia.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A.L. McLACHLAN: I note that the South Australian Strategic Plan target 48 seeks to increase the proportion of older South Australians who are engaged in the workforce by 10 percentage points by 2020. It was reported in the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology Annual Report 2013-14 that in 2010 there was a proportion of 40.3 per cent of older South Australians engaged in the workforce. The report has also revealed that by 2014 this figure has only increased to 40.5 per cent with progress in this area therefore rated as negative movement. My question is: can the minister advise the chamber why any substantial progress in this area has not been achieved?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (16:16): That target is to increase the proportion of older South Australians engaging in the workforce by 10 per cent by 2020. In January 2010 (which provides the baseline figure for this target), 39.9 per cent of South Australians aged 60 to 69 were participating in the labour force, and in December 2014 this had increased to 40.2 per cent. On the basis of these figures the progress has been pretty steady.

The target aims to increase the labour force of older South Australians. Despite the lack of progress to date, the achievement is still within reach, we believe, given that there are a number of years yet to reach that target. The sorts of actions that have been taken to help improve this result include a number of initiatives such as: bringing forward local council infrastructure projects; partnering with local employers to identify job opportunities and skill gaps, particularly to target disadvantaged jobseekers with a particular focus on regions; and intensive case managed support for 350 families in the Playford region.

That is particularly focused on intergenerational joblessness. There is Skills for All and there is support for workers in areas of transition to help retain and find new work quickly. That often involves older workers. Obviously, boosting productivity and information also would impact on this group. They are the general employment drivers, some of which appeal to older workers.

However, we also have South Australia's ageing plan 2014-19, which has working and volunteering as one of its key priority areas, and the Equal Opportunity Commissioner will partner with the DSD and the Office for Ageing to help tackle age discrimination and help promote recruitment and employment for older workers, particularly in the private sector.

The Council for Ageing and the business community will work together in providing more flexible workplaces and to help change workplace culture that often does not value the contribution of older workers. Often, it carries a sense that it's time—'Your time's up, move over; move out for younger blood,' so to speak. We need to change that culture and value the experience of older workers.

Also during 2012-13, DSD-related employment programs have engaged, I am advised, 4,000 people aged 45 and over, with over 1,100 employment outcomes achieved. Obviously, the government is also committed to expanding the Skills for Jobs in Regions program to support an additional 1,000 mature-age people to find jobs in their local communities, and they are supporting Don't Overlook Mature Expertise (DOME) to help 1,200 mature-age workers return to work. There was some additional funding made available fairly recently for that group. Those are some of the program areas that we have in place or intend to put in place to help stimulate employment of older people, and will hopefully help us deliver our target.

WOMEN HOLD UP HALF THE SKY AWARDS

The Hon. J.M. GAZZOLA (16:21): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for the Status of Women a question about acknowledging the role women play within the community.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.M. GAZZOLA: Expanding the acknowledgement of the role women play within the community sits within the strategic priority Safe Communities, Healthy Neighbourhoods. Minister, will you update the chamber about this year's Women Hold Up Half The Sky Awards?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (16:21): I thank the honourable member for his question and his ongoing interest in supporting women. At the Australia Day Award presentations on 23 January this year, I was proud to present the Women Hold Up Half the Sky Award to Ms Michelle Sibbons. The award is provided by me, as Minister for the Status of Women, and the Office for Women, and administered by the Australia Day Council of South Australia.

This is the fifth year that this award has been presented, as an award which acknowledges the outstanding contribution for women in our community. Again, this year the Australia Day Council of South Australia received high-quality nominations for this particular award from quite a diverse range of different women. The 2015 award is being awarded to Ms Michelle Sibbons for her commitment, in a voluntary capacity, to educating and supporting families with children suffering from congenital melanocytic nevus (CMN).

Michelle's daughter was born with CMN, and Michelle struggled for information—it is quite a rare condition and there is not a lot known about it—about the rare diagnosis, which led her to develop a website and support groups for other Australian parents and children in a similar position. Michelle is seen as a non-medical expert with regard to CMN and has organised multiple conferences which have been attended by families from around Australia and the globe.

Michelle stood out above many amazing applicants as her service to the community is completely voluntary and reliant on donations, and is not associated with her job or career. She has educated herself about this little-known disease and shares that knowledge freely and extensively with other families learning about CMN, and has grown her online support group to encompass all of Australia and have a global outreach.

Michelle has coordinated conferences that have attracted visitors from across the globe, and volunteers as a board member with Naevus Global, which is beyond her own service here in Australia. She has recognised the need for people with CMN to meet each other and has created spaces for young people with CMN to share their experiences and learn from each other while making friends. This condition often leaves people with skin blemishes and disfigurements and can be quite confronting and difficult, particularly for young people.

I also provided a commendation this year for Karyn Bradford for her community work in her role as executive officer of the Milang and District Community Association and her ongoing commitment outside of work to her local community. Karyn has been a very active member of the statewide network of community and neighbourhood centres for more than 10 years, and two of these were as a board member of Community Centres South Australia Inc., at a time when the sector was leading introduction of outcomes-focused methodology as a planning, evaluation and continuous improvement tool and opportunities for adults to reengage in learning pathways. The third area was initiatives based on community conversations with shared outcomes identified and agreed by the community.

Karyn is a strong supporter of developing the country region and has demonstrated leadership in country centres, including a significant contribution to mentoring new staff. It certainly gave me great pleasure to support and present this award. I congratulate both Michelle and Karyn on their achievements within our community.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (16:26): My question is directed to the Minister for Automotive Transformation. In light of reported declining sales of the Holden Commodore and Holden Cruze, both locally manufactured of course, and the recent announcement from General Motors Holden that one variant of the Cruze would cease production, does the government have any plans to increase its ordering of the locally-produced Commodore or Cruze, or are there other arrangements that can be made in order to assist the company through this period?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Manufacturing and Innovation, Minister for Automotive Transformation, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (16:27): I thank the honourable member for his important question. In relation to government ordering and government procurement policy, that is not my portfolio area, but I will certainly take that question to the relevant minister and bring back a reply. I do note the government is doing many things in many different areas in relation to the future closure of Holden and the decline in our automotive industry.

I mentioned earlier, in a question from the Hon. Gerry Kandelaars, some of the ways we are helping companies in other areas of manufacturing to look to pick up some of the areas where manufacturing will decline. It is true, as the Hon. Dennis Hood knows, that manufacturing has always been a cornerstone of South Australia's economy. It remains critical to securing a diversified economy with sustainable export capability and generating skilled jobs that underpin a high standard of living.

Another program is that in 2012 the state government launched Manufacturing Works, which was primarily in response to the recommendation of former Thinker in Residence Professor Göran Roos in his 2012 Manufacturing into the Future report. Manufacturing Works is a comprehensive advanced manufacturing strategy to accelerate the transition of manufacturing towards higher value-added activities, competing on value for money and not for cost alone.

Manufacturing Works programs are designed to assist firms in responding to the economic conditions that threaten to erode manufacturing and are consistent with both the economic strategic priority to grow advanced manufacturing and with economic priority 6—growth through innovation. All 20 Manufacturing Works initiatives have been implemented to various stages. To date, there are more than 230 manufacturing firms that have participated and/or received support under the Manufacturing Works program. I can give the honourable member more information, but as I—

The Hon. I.K. Hunter: Tell us about how much the Liberal government in Canberra helped us in terms of Holden's and manufacturing. Tell us how much the Liberals care about workers and their jobs in the north. Tell us how many Liberals get out there and support the workers out at Holden's. Tell us.

The PRESIDENT: There is only one person on their feet, and that is the Hon. Mr Maher. Please, minister.

The Hon. I.K. Hunter interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is worth remembering, as the honourable and heroic Andrew McLachlan asked me earlier this week—

The PRESIDENT: Gallant.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Gallant, brave, heroic and muskets at dawn Andrew McLachlan—we are in this situation largely because of the federal Liberal Party's decisions. They goaded Holden to leave, and Holden left the country. Now we are in this situation largely because of what they have done.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am not sure if I heard the interjections correctly, but I might have been asked about submarines. I will have much more to say about that—the single biggest thing that anyone could do to help manufacturing in this state.

Address in Reply

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 11 February 2015.)

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS (16:30): I rise to support the Address in Reply. Firstly, I wish to congratulate and thank the Governor, His Excellency Hieu Van Le AO, for his address on the opening of the Second Session of the Fifty-Third Parliament. His Excellency's personal story is one of incredible achievement. Having been born in Vietnam, he and his wife left the nation in 1977 and were in one of the early groups of Vietnamese refugees to arrive in Australia by boat.

I understand that His Excellency is the first Vietnamese born person to have ever been appointed to a vice-regal position in the world. I have had the pleasure of meeting His Excellency on a number of occasions, particularly in his role as chair of the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, and I know how hard he worked in that role. He has already brought, and I am sure he will continue to bring, the same dedication and commitment to the role of Governor of South Australia.

I would also like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the great work of our former governor, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce and his wife, Liz. They have represented this state and its interests with great distinction and I wish them both well in the future. I know they will continue to be active in the community. As we all know, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce will be the royal commissioner looking into the nuclear industry and its potential in South Australia. I should also acknowledge Uncle Lewis O'Brien for his Welcome to Country.

On Tuesday, the government outlined a dynamic and bold vision of the Weatherill government to ensure our future is bright. The Labor vision continues to keep building South Australia. It is a vision that we on this side are proud of. It also looks to keep South Australia moving forward to transform and to continue to modernise our economy by ensuring a strong partnership between government, business and the community.

South Australia has some significant challenges ahead of it. Many of these challenges are made a lot harder by the shambolic federal Coalition government, which is wreaking havoc on the state's finances by abandoning previous commitments to various partnership agreements, particularly in health and education. It does not stop there. The federal government appears to be hell-bent on repudiating a commitment to build 12 submarines at Osborne, or at least until it comes time to buy some votes in the federal Liberal parliamentary room.

Even now, it is very unclear what the commitment is. Where do those opposite stand on the issue? Let us not talk about how the federal government is seeing off the Australian vehicle manufacturing industry and the subsequent impact that will have on this state.

The Governor's speech outlined a number of bold initiatives that the Weatherill Labor government wishes to pursue to transform South Australia to meet the challenges we face. I would like to expand on some of those, in particular the government's proposal in relation to planning reform, the renewal of South Australian Housing Trust stock and Transforming Health.

The government is soon to release its response to the Expert Panel on Planning Reform's report 'The planning system we want', chaired by Brian Hayes QC. The independent panel was appointed to review South Australia's planning regime. The government's response to the report will establish the most significant changes to South Australia's planning system in over two decades. These changes will be taken to the parliament, and we hope they will be supported in a bipartisan manner. These changes are too important to be held back.

In an environment where the states are competing for a share of national economic growth, South Australia simply cannot afford to have a planning system where delays are frustrating investment. Our reforms will reduce red tape, generate short and long-term employment

opportunities and catalyse complementary development. Most importantly, they will also contain important mechanisms to provide transparency and ensure the continued liveability of our city and suburbs. It is the government's intention to legislate an urban growth boundary to prevent the encroachment of suburban areas where it is unsuitable to do so. A modern, vibrant and liveable city does not simply sprawl.

Reforms to housing do not end there. Guided by a comprehensive new strategy—Renewing Our Streets and Suburbs—Renewal SA will be charged with renewing the assets of the South Australian Housing Trust and delivering more dwellings. It will align the activities of the South Australian Housing Trust and Renewal SA to allow for a stronger focus on urban renewal in line with South Australia's strategic plan and the 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide. It will provide certainty to both the not-for-profit and private stock sectors to work with one government agency, accelerate the transformation of our social housing system and provide more houses in the suburbs of Adelaide.

These changes will ensure there is no disruption to South Australian Housing Trust tenants and tenancy and maintenance services. These changes will allow for a focus on renewing old stock built before 1970 and giving more people a chance for home ownership in the community where they grew up, where they want to live and in properties appropriate to their needs.

As part of Transforming Health, the South Australian government proposes to invest \$252 million over four years to improve the state's health infrastructure. This comes on top of significant investment in health by the government here in South Australia over the past 12 years with major infrastructure upgrades to hospitals.

Under Transforming Health, significant investment will be made over four years at every major hospital. Proposed investments include \$15 million for a centre of excellence for the treatment of post-traumatic stress, \$154 million for the Flinders Medical Centre, \$32 million for Modbury Hospital, \$20 million for The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and \$15 million for Noarlunga Hospital.

Funding for capital investment proposals comes from the Health Capital Reconfiguration Fund announced in last year's state budget. The establishment of this fund was the result of a \$655 million cut in health from the federal government, which caused the state government to pause the rollout of many of its planned health infrastructure improvements.

Under Transforming Health, we have had a look at the entire health system and spoken to our doctors, nurses and allied health professionals about what we need to invest in to make our health system work better. Transforming Health is the biggest transformation of the South Australian health system ever undertaken and it is one that needs to be made.

Over the past nine months, the South Australian government has listened to our healthcare professionals about the way the system could work better. Three clinical advisory committees have found many areas of excellence providing world-class health services, but they also found areas where our health system is not delivering consistent quality of care. These professionals have worked together to develop quality principles for health care that will guide the state's transformation of our public health system. Improving quality is the primary driver of Transforming Health: best care, first time, every time.

After the Transforming Health discussion paper was released last year, an extensive consultation process was undertaken, with over 39 community information events held across metropolitan and country areas. Over 2,225 South Australians provided feedback to the Transforming Health discussion paper, and over 90 per cent of respondents endorsed the need to improve our health system, particularly supporting the six quality principles. These principles state that a quality, world-class health system is patient centred, safe, effective, accessible, efficient and equitable.

More than 6,000 people who attended the Transforming Health Summit in late November, hosted by the Minister for Health, the Hon. Jack Snelling, agreed that transformation was needed to ensure that the state's health system delivers the best-quality health care first time, every time, beginning with our metropolitan hospital system. The evidence for change is compelling. There are

challenges in providing contemporary health care, given an ageing population, changing health needs and, added to that, the advances in technology and medicine and how services are structured and operate.

We know that we can improve in many areas to meet the challenges and to ensure that South Australians experience consistent, quality care. This allows us to focus on how we deliver health care in these upgraded hospitals. We have an opportunity to embrace innovation and to transform our hospital system to be sustainable and to meet the future needs of South Australians.

There are some important areas where excellent health care is delivering great outcomes, but there are areas that require improvement to ensure consistent care is provided. There are many factors that contribute to this, such as historic service layout and working arrangements, as well as the adoption of new technologies and medical advances.

Simple cuts to health spending will not deliver the best outcomes and will not result in the health system focusing on quality. Instead, we must improve quality, innovation and adopt best practice. International evidence shows that, if we deliver quality health care consistently first time, this will be more cost-effective. The government, along with our doctors, nurses, and scientific and allied health professionals, is working to transform our health system so that South Australians receive the consistent, quality care they deserve in a modern health system.

SA Health has been undertaking an intensive planning program over the last nine months and, with its clinicians, has worked through how to deliver health care to incorporate the vision of 'best care, first time, every time', the agreed six quality principles and the clinical standards of care.

Last week, the Minister for Health publicly released the Delivering Transforming Health Proposal Paper, detailing draft decisions to implement Transforming Health. The draft decision details the Delivering Transforming Health Proposal Paper are designed to deliver consistent quality care to South Australians and to set the foundation for continuous improvement across the healthcare system. The government is now asking the community for feedback on the Transforming Health proposal. I encourage South Australians, including South Australian health staff, to provide feedback on the paper during the feedback period, which closes on 27 February.

I would like to also congratulate the new Labor member for Fisher, Nat Cook, who, along with her campaign team, worked so incredibly hard. Nat, until recently a nurse at Flinders Medical Centre, along with her husband Neil, formed the Sammy D Foundation after the tragic death of her 17-year-old son in an unprovoked one-punch assault. Sammy D, as we know, runs a range of programs and encourages young people to reach their potential, stay safe and make positive life choices. I am sure Nat will be a great asset to our Labor government team and will represent the Fisher electorate well.

Labor's win in Fisher created history, being the first non-first term government in Australia to gain a seat in a by-election since 1973. This is a reflection on the achievement of this government and on Nat Cook's hard work, but equally it is a reflection of the deep levels of distrust and contempt that South Australians have for the federal Coalition and their frustration that time and again Steven Marshall and the state Liberals fail to show backbone and stand up for the interests of South Australians.

I should remind members that on 9 March 2011 the Hon. John Dawkins moved a motion in this place on youth violence which in part thanked organisations such as the Sammy D Foundation for proactively seeking to discourage youth violence by empowering young people to make safe and positive choices. This council passed the honourable member's motion on 18 March. Given this, I must say that it was disgraceful that the Hon. Robert Brokenshire chose to denigrate Nat Cook and the Sammy D Foundation in this place late last year, under the cloak of parliamentary privilege, by suggesting that the state government, in giving a grant to the Sammy D Foundation in 2012, was doing something improper.

It should be noted that Nat was not a member of the ALP at the time. I understand that the honourable member actually met with Nat and the Sammy D Foundation at his request in February 2013, following the announcement of the grant to the Sammy D Foundation in September 2012. The honourable member was even put on the Sammy D Foundation's mailing list

as a supporter. I will read an excerpt of an interview in November last year with David Penberthy and Nat Cook on FIVEaa. David Penberthy asked:

Nat, have you had a history with Mr Brokenshire? You said that you did have a conversation with him about the good work that the Sammy D Foundation does.

Nat's response was, 'He requested a meeting with us post this announcement in September 2012.'

The PRESIDENT: Order! Just a moment, Hon. Mr Kandelaars. First, the lady to whom you refer, Nat Cook, is now the member for Fisher and ought to be referred to as such. Secondly, I caution you, as I would caution any member, that this is an Address in Reply to the Governor's speech, and I am not sure to what part of the Governor's speech this matter actually refers, but I will ask you to continue.

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: I will continue, sir. As I said, I am quoting directly from an interview. The now member for Fisher's response was:

He requested a meeting with us post announcement in September 2012, he requested a meeting with us to talk about what we were doing...I met with him. I would warn any not-for-profits now regarding meeting with people like this who really clearly—I do not know what the agenda was back then or now, but he left that office very, very happy with what we were doing. I talked to him about the rigours that we were going through...micromanagement that was happening from government regarding the spend...that was what we talked about...I left that meeting, he left my office, and we were happy, he was put on the database to keep informed as a supporter of the foundation and I leave it to the public to make their own opinions about it; it's not for me to defend any of that...government needs to work that out...in terms of the process, that's the only...association I've had with him.

I also note—and I quote from an article in *InDaily*:

A complaint by Family First MLC Robert Brokenshire about World War II imagery in the promotional film clip of a song by the now defunct band, The Spooks, in which Woodyatt played drums and also garnered media attention two days before the polls closed. That was referring to the Fisher by-election polls.

I wonder whether the honourable member was acting as a proxy for those opposite. All I can say is that I have come to expect the honourable member's hypocrisy.

It should also be noted that the Liberal Party was asked by the Electoral Commissioner, Kay Mousley, to withdraw material they distributed in the seat of Fisher because it was materially misleading. As I intimated in my Address in Reply speech last year—

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway: A racist campaign in Elder.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: We on this side will not be lectured by those opposite—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I remind the Hon. Mr Kandelaars that this is the Address in Reply to the Governor's speech. I am struggling to work out what aspect of the Governor's speech you are replying to. I think you have made your point in this issue, and you ought to continue. I think it is important that members remember that this is the Address in Reply to the Governor's speech, so matters raised ought to be related to an aspect of the Governor's speech. I am not sure where this relates to that speech. I ask the honourable member to continue.

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: I think it is quite normal practice for members to actually discuss—

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway: So you are defying the chair?

The PRESIDENT: Hon. Mr Kandelaars, I think I have made myself quite clear, and you should move on.

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: The point I will make is that we on this side will not be lectured by those opposite about the ethics of campaigns.

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway: Your racist campaign—give me a break.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: In the spirit of welcoming new members, I also acknowledge the new member for Davenport, who outdid himself by taking a blue ribbon safe seat

and turning it into a marginal. I also thank him, as without his politically inept campaigning in the seat of Fisher at last year's general election—

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member—sit down please. I have been quite clear about this and members ought to relate to it. It is fine to welcome a new member, but you are saying things that have nothing to do with the Governor's speech, and I ask you to continue.

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: In conclusion, I will deal with the issue of the Sampson Flat bushfires and acknowledge the tremendous work of the various organisations that assist in fighting the terrible Adelaide Hills bushfires that ravaged the northern Mount Lofty Ranges just after New Year's Day. Thankfully there was no loss of life but 27 homes were lost as well as many sheds and fences and, sadly, wildlife. The fires were a reminder of the damage that can be inflicted on our landscape when uncontrollable bushfires occur.

A special mention, as I said, must go to those who assisted in fighting the fires and who have been assisting those impacted—organisations such as the CFS, the SES and SAPOL to name a few, but I would also like to acknowledge other organisations such as Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Housing SA staff, Centrelink staff, and local service clubs such as Rotary and Lions.

I took an opportunity to visit local emergency relief centres at One Tree Hill and Golden Grove and spoke with a number of volunteers who worked tirelessly supporting those affected by the fires. I also spoke to a number of people who had suffered damage to their properties as a result of the fires. One couple in particular whom I met lost their home at Upper Hermitage and, in the case of the wife, her business. They were overwhelmed by the support that they had received from many and varied organisations.

Their journey along with other South Australians affected by the Sampson Flat bushfires will be challenging but with the support of families, friends and the broader South Australian community, I hope they will get their lives back on track.

The Hon. T.T. NGO (16:56): I rise today to second this motion in support of the Address in Reply. I want to commend the Governor's Address delivered to us on Tuesday and I would like to take this opportunity to put on the record my congratulations on his appointment as Governor. It is an excellent appointment and I am sure an appointment that the state can be very proud of, and so far the Governor has not let us down.

His Excellency Mr Hieu Van Le, and his wife, Mrs Lan Le, continue to uphold themselves with utmost dignity. They are representing this state and its interests with distinction. Before I discuss the legislative program that the Governor has outlined on behalf of the government, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedicated service of our former governor, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce. During his tenure, he and Mrs Scarce rendered most distinguished service to our community. The warm regard in which they continue to be held by all who encounter them is the measure of their contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of our state.

I would also like to place on record my condolences regarding the five former members who have passed away since the opening of the 53rd parliament: the Hon. Donald Hubert Louis Banfield, the Hon. Cecil Creedon, Mrs Heather Southcott AM, the Hon. Dr Bob Such MP, and the Hon. Arthur Whyte AM, for whom we moved a condolence motion today.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome and congratulate the parliament's two new members in the other place. To both the Member for Fisher, Ms Nat Cook, whom I have met and who is a great woman, and the Member for Davenport, Mr Sam Duluk, whom I have not met, but I am told by my opposition colleagues that, as the Hon. Mr Ridgway just said, he is 'a good bloke, I wish them the very best of luck in their time in this place.

In fact, that a 13-year-old government was the recipient of significant swings to it in both those by-elections is a testament to the enduring vision this government has which was reflected in the Governor's speech the other day. Today, I want to assure our Governor and our community that this government has not lost its sense of urgency when it comes to the continued program of reform so necessary to our collective wellbeing now and into the future. I can assure His Excellency that our government has not lost any of its impetus and is ever vigilant.

Labor constantly renews itself with new blood, as can be seen with the recent appointment of my good friend the Hon. Kyam Maher. Many of you will agree that he will make a great minister. We have a continued vision for the prosperity and the momentum of South Australia and its people. It is at this stage that I would like to turn my attention to elements of this reform agenda that were outlined by the Governor.

We all know that the state is in need of economic transition, and I was hopeful that we would have had the support of a commonwealth government in this difficult process. Unfortunately, the need for collaboration of governments, as discussed by the Governor, has to date been non-existent on the part of the Abbott government. This has led to the effective shutdown of our automotive industry. It has also led to what looks like the loss of capability in our defence industry, an issue which I have regularly raised concerns about in this place since being elected.

South Australians have overcome adversity before and we can do it again, even if we have to do it on our own. In recent years, Australia has grown off the boom in the mining states. Whilst this has been a good thing nationally it has led to a two-speed economy. This has led to the decline of our state's traditional sectors as activity within the boom states pushed the Australian dollar to historically high levels. Conventional commentary following the Holden closure from the conservatives was to blame the Labor government for all the handouts, and then they blamed the workers for apparently accepting high wage demands.

Let me put on the record these facts: first, Australian government assistance to the automotive sector was some of the lowest levels when compared with other countries; secondly, Holden workers were some of the most productive workers in our workforce. It did not matter what pay cut Holden workers accepted, it was always a difficult business model to sustain with a high—

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway: Do you drive a Holden?

The Hon. T.T. NGO: I do—Australian dollar and other macroeconomic decisions at play. Any intelligent economist will tell you that the boom in the mining states has been at the expense of the manufacturing states. Rather than assist South Australia in the necessary transition the Governor discussed in his speech, the Prime Minister has decided to take the big stick approach. My question to the Prime Minister is: what value do you see in states competing against each other to export the same products to the same markets, with each state having to compromise its tax system for the sake of competition, which then compromises basic services?

This is the paralysis that Europe has found itself in, where nation-states have sacrificed their independent currencies to the European Union, forcing them to impart harsh cuts on their populations with no genuine prospects of sustainable growth in their economies. Surely this is not the way to run a national economy. A national economy needs diversity in its industries, and there will come a day when all Australians, not just South Australians, will regret the dismantling of strategic industries like the automotive manufacturing and defence industries.

The commonwealth government's interim federal tax paper shows an alarming disregard for these facts. It is an attack on the Australian ideal of equality that, regardless of which state you live in, you will receive the same quality health care and education. We have already seen a tax on federal health and schools funding which disproportionately hits South Australia compared with other states.

When former prime minister John Howard introduced the GST, it was obvious that it was done in order to lower the burden of income tax. Where the real reform lay, however, was the way it would be distributed to the states. It continues to be distributed on the basis of horizontal fiscal equalisation. Lower growth states impeded by growth in other states receive larger amounts of grants. Effectively, the GST has become an important regulator of Australia's two-speed economy.

The federal government has already been suggesting that these funding formulas need to be changed. This is a dangerous policy which will have a disastrous effect on our state. This is why it is important that this government continues to forge this state's own future. We will have to because we will not get much support from the current commonwealth government. This means we need to assist in the creation of industries that give our state a comparative advantage over the rest of the world as well as over other Australian states.

The obvious reform outlined by the Governor that fits in this category is the establishment of the nuclear industry in South Australia. I commend the proposal of the royal commission into the nuclear industry as it demonstrates that the Premier gets it when it comes to addressing the economic challenges in our state, as opposed to the opposition leader, who labelled this announcement a 'distraction'.

I call on the opposition to support this process and provide constructive input. The creation of a nuclear industry in South Australia would see the creation of many jobs and would not be subsumed by the same level of cost pressures imposed by other countries on South Australia's other exports. Put simply, there are not many nations that have uranium, and of those countries that do not many would come close to the safeguards and political stability that South Australia offers to potential clients. This explains a good deal of where our comparative advantage would lie.

It is no secret that South Australia has an abundance of uranium, yet we export only a fraction of the world's resources. South Australia has 25 per cent of the world's known uranium resource, and it would be expected that over time there would be more uranium mines here in South Australia. Whether Australia builds nuclear power plants is virtually irrelevant because one or two plants will hardly make a difference in terms of our production of uranium in South Australia. China alone is building 120 nuclear power plants, and that is actually only going to shift their reliance towards nuclear fuel by an extra half a per cent—not even 1 per cent. They are still building coal-fired power stations and other power stations at a much higher rate.

We sometimes forget, as a state with such plentiful sources of energy, be it coal, gas or renewable energy, that other nations do not have the same energy security and are forced to look at other forms of energy, like nuclear power. These nations need a stable supplier. Simply shipping off unenriched uranium will not do for South Australia. We need to be involved in the enrichment process, but this requires the establishment of local expertise to drive technological innovation. Our universities would have an important role to play in this scenario.

The Governor talked about greater collaboration between industry and our educational institutions. Nowhere would this be more critical than the establishment of a local nuclear industry. Value-adding through enrichment has three clear benefits:

1. We will get a much better price for what we are shipping out.
2. The build-up of intellectual property required would buffer the locally established industry from future competition in other markets.
3. We would be contributing to the wellbeing of international safeguards currently in place for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

Whether South Australia enriches or not, there will always be countries participating in this market. Surely the entry of a politically stable country like Australia into this market can only be a good thing, particularly as we now have bilateral agreements on trade with countries like Japan and China. Australia could have more of a direct say on safeguards through bilateral trade negotiations.

South Australia could host a nuclear waste facility for three particular reasons: first, there is the political stability of our state, and secondly, as has been very well explained by Professor Stephen Lincoln, a lecturer in nuclear chemistry at Adelaide University, our terrain is conducive to hosting such a site. South Australia has rock strata which are very stable. They are likely to be stable for many more millions of years, and so you could quite confidently make tunnels into this substrata and install nuclear waste there for however long you wish to. Lastly, technology continues to advance in waste management. After over 50 years, it is getting to a point where nuclear waste facilities are being referred to as recycling repositories as scientists continue to develop ways to continually extract energy from reprocessed uranium.

Whether we like it or not, many countries have decided that nuclear power is an important source of energy in a carbon neutral future, and it is time that we as a state play a greater role in this development. The royal commission established by the Premier will bring out all the issues I have raised and many more into an appropriate form of debate so that we can decide collectively as a state what the best way forward will be.

The second way in which I believe our state can actively forge our own future economic growth is through the sustainable growth of our population. The Deputy Premier's reforms to our planning system address this issue. A report provided by the Minister for Planning by an expert panel on 12 December last year has made a number of recommendations to the government. It looks towards the creation of regional planning boards across the state, a model widely acknowledged to be the most effective way to generate economic benefit, coherently plan infrastructure and protect our environment.

It looks towards a charter of citizen participation to promote and enhance citizen engagement, consultation and debate. Regional areas will each be served by a single integrated planning scheme, so that the views of citizens in those regions may be better heard and understood. A single statewide menu of planning rules will reduce complexity and eliminate planning policies that are no longer relevant or applicable.

During my time as councillor on the Port Adelaide Enfield council many businesses and residents often complained to me that they were frustrated with the current process. Heritage laws will be consolidated into one legislative instrument, and Aboriginal heritage will be better integrated with the planning system. Changes to plans will become easier, quicker and more transparent and this will be to the benefit of our economy. I am certain that these ideas canvassed will be taken seriously by this government and that many, if not all, of these priorities will be achieved.

In conclusion, I would like to briefly address the government's health reforms. Reforms contained within minister Snelling's Transforming Health discussion paper address the issue that, while we have pockets of excellence in the health care system, unfortunately there are not consistent quality outcomes across all services and sites. Rectifying this issue is at the heart of these reforms, not cost cutting as those opposite will claim. Yes, the status quo is inefficient economically, but more importantly it is extremely dangerous to health outcomes if we continue with business as usual in our current health system.

Our highly skilled clinicians need to be performing procedures in their areas of excellence on a regular basis to maintain their skill sets. Consolidating services at specific sites will ensure this occurs. This government has an integrated and coordinated plan for our health system, with each hospital having a role to play. We do not have a plan from the opposition. We do not even know if they want our public hospitals to stay in government hands.

I note an article in *The Advertiser* recently, dated 9 February and titled 'Doc takes scalpel to Lib lack of action'. In the article, Dr Philip Tideman, a senior Flinders Medical Centre clinician who says he is normally a Liberal supporter, told the opposition leader, Mr Marshall, to stop wasting taxpayers' time and money with useless political stunts, to stop insulting the intelligence of health workers. Dr Tideman went on to describe the state Liberal Party as being 'so embarrassingly ineffectual in day-to-day public debate'. The doctor went on to say that Mr Marshall should:

Rather than lazily resist any change in this intellectually bankrupt rote way, please ensure that you and your parliamentary colleagues spend the time understanding the challenges that have to be addressed and put some effort into making some positive alternative policy proposals like those of us actually providing the services continually try to do.

I could not agree more.

In closing, I want to express my thanks once again to our Governor. I thank him for presiding over the opening of this parliament and for setting out so eloquently the goals to which the government aspires.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (17:19): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Address in Reply. Firstly, let me thank our new Governor, the Hon. Hieu Van Le, for his first speech to the parliament as Governor. I do not recall him coming as Lieutenant-Governor. I think, when Marjorie Jackson-Nelson was Governor, Mr Bruno Krumsins may have come once or twice, but I do not recall the Hon. Hieu Van Le coming as Lieutenant-Governor; so he was here for his first speech.

I will also again put on the record that I think his selection has been warmly embraced by the whole community. He is somebody who has worked tirelessly in his life prior to being appointed to

Governor. I think Hieu Van Le's contribution to public life has been exceptional, and it is wonderful that he has been rewarded with the position of Governor. I know that he takes that as a great honour, and I know that he will certainly serve with distinction over what I hope will be many years of being our Governor. Listening to him speak on Tuesday was a real pleasure.

I think the crux of the Governor's speech was that we are in a state of transition. Our economy is in a volatile state, and the way we manage the transition will mean make or break for this great state. For the members in the chamber today, it may be the difference between having our children find employment in South Australia or having to leave to get work.

I am reminded of a speech I suspect a lot of us have heard in various different forums from Raymond Spencer, the chair of the Economic Development Board, who thinks that South Australia is at the crossroads. He thinks that it could be the Harvard study in 20 or 30 years' time of a great small economy, if we get it right—or we could be the Harvard study of an economy that destroyed itself. I think we do find ourselves, after 13 years of Labor government, definitely at the crossroads.

The essence of my reply to the Governor's speech is this: I do not have confidence that the Weatherill Labor government can manage South Australia's economic transition. I believe that a great deal of our community does not have that confidence either. This Labor government has had 13 years to strengthen our economy in preparation for changes we are now experiencing, particularly in the manufacturing sector.

It is interesting to see that the Premier, the Hon. Jay Weatherill, has been a minister for those 13 years, yet it is only now that he is out there advocating some of the things that I will address later in my speech such as tax reform, the nuclear debate, a whole range of other issues and health as well, which of course I will also touch on. He has sat there in cabinet. I know that he says they have very few votes in cabinet, as it is always done by consensus. I assume that was the way that former premier the Hon. Mike Rann ran cabinet as well.

He has sat there for those 13 years, and I think the Leader of the Government opposite has been a minister now for nine years. If you start to add up the tally of the senior people in the government who have actually been in the cabinet through the good times and did nothing with the good times, you now start to be concerned about where this state is going. You cannot just sit on your hands and hope that it is going to be good forever.

Premier Weatherill expects us to have confidence in his governance because of the pipe dreams and motherhood statements. We have had various iterations of the State Strategic Plan, along with his seven strategic priorities the last time the Governor addressed this chamber, and then, of course, towards the end of last year, the 10 economic priorities which I think were the same seven regurgitated and another three added, but really, where have they got us?

When this parliament reopened some five years ago after the 2010 election, a pillar of the Governor's speech was the creation of an extra 100,000 jobs over six years, which, of course, takes us to March 2016. I asked some questions about that today, Mr President, as you would recall. Our unemployment rate now is at some 7.3 per cent, which is the highest in the nation—higher than Tasmania. Of those 100,000 jobs, roughly a year away from the deadline, there are 99,400 jobs still to be created.

So, you see what has happened. Jay Weatherill was in cabinet at the time that decision was made. The Hon. Gail Gago was in cabinet at the time that decision was made. They all signed off on it, but they have not delivered on it. So, we have seen this decline right across a whole range of sectors, where they talk the talk, but they never ever walk the walk. It is also interesting to see that, at that time, minister Hill also said that health and health care would remain a core priority for the government.

Five years on, what we see with this health transition program we are dealing with at the moment is that we are going to close the emergency department at the Noarlunga hospital, close the emergency departments of The QEH and the Modbury, close the Daw Park Repatriation General Hospital, close the Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre and close St Margarets Rehabilitation Hospital at Semaphore.

This morning, I was listening on the radio I think to the clinical advocate for Transforming Health. I do not recall her name, but she was a very articulate lady—a professor, I think. She said that this has been an issue that people have been talking about for 10 years. So, we have had a government for 13 years: it has been 10 years of that 13 years.

I recall the Hon. Kevin Foley saying many years ago that health was an issue, yet they have done nothing: the Hon. Jay Weatherill, the Hon. Gail Gago—a health professional herself, from a nursing background. She has been in cabinet for nine years and the Hon. Jay Weatherill for 13 years. We have been talking about it for 10 years, and they have done nothing. That is what poor governments are made of: people who talk about stuff, but they do not actually do anything. We should have had some action well before this, but they sat there believing that they would have the rivers of gold from a well-managed national economy and a world economy that was booming at the time—but they did nothing with it; in fact, they squandered it.

Over that time, in the very early stages of that 13-year journey we have been on—it is more like a nightmare than a journey—we had the Menadue report, which talked about decentralising health services. Then, out of the blue, minister Hill, minister Foley and premier Rann decided to build a new Royal Adelaide Hospital.

I recall minister Foley at a function, when he was open for questions, turning to me and saying, 'Ridgway, you ask me a question. You're in the other house; you never get to ask me a question.' It was at a property function. I said, 'Tell me, Treasurer, what expert advice did you get on the location of the new hospital?' He said, 'Well, none. John Hill, Rann and I decided on the location.' So, they did not seek any expert advice on the location of it.

The amount to be spent will now be \$2½ billion to \$3 billion. The current government talks about a bipartisan approach to things like the reforms in WorkCover and reforms in taxation, so one would think that if you were going to spend \$2½ billion to \$3 billion, which I think is \$1.1 million a day for 30 years, which our children and grandchildren will have to find to pay for it, you would actually speak to the opposition.

Interestingly, after the 2010 election, everybody knew two things about both parties, regardless of who won: we wanted footy in the city and we wanted to spend a lot of money on new health facilities, whether rebuilding the RAH on its existing site or obviously the new one the government was talking about. The bipartisanship was not anywhere to be seen. We have had this discussion on health—it started at least 10 years ago—but a lazy, lazy government has done nothing to address it.

In 2010, the Governor confirmed that the government would continue to boost the mining sector. Prior to the 2014 election, in trend terms, mining expenditure in South Australia actually decreased for the seventh consecutive quarter. We have watched the closure of a number of mines: the Honeymoon uranium mine, the Angas zinc mine, and the scrapping of plans for the \$1 billion Arafura rare earth processing plant. Various major projects were touted and, over following years, associated epic cost blowouts became apparent: the desal plant, Adelaide Oval, the rail yards hospital.

Rather than preparing our economy for transition, this government has long been spending out of control. I think that it is important to look at the spending, and I will come back to the Governor's speech in more detail shortly—because I recall the direction from the chair that contributions should stay more focused on the Governor's speech. I think it is important, in the context of the Governor's speech and some of the new things we are talking about, to look at where we are at.

By the end of the 2016-17 financial year, the public sector debt will be around some \$13.2 billion. In the 2014-15 period, the Labor Weatherill government will run a \$185 million deficit, even after extracting hundreds of millions of dividends from SA Water and the Motor Accident Commission.

If that is not concerning enough, this year the government will borrow nearly \$260 million just to cover its debts. If we look at the public sector borrowing expense, it is some \$530 million this year; in 2016-17, it will peak at \$725 million. That is interest of \$2 million a day. So one thing that has become very apparent over the 13 years is that Labor does not understand the budget basics. When

a household budget comes under stress, it is logical: you curb your spending and not look to additional revenue measures.

In regard to where the budget is at, where the state's economy is at and the way this government operates, you have to live within your means, and we have never, ever seen that in 13 years. We have squandered the good times. Only a bunch of imbeciles would think that the good times would be there forever. We all know that state economies, national economies and world economies are cyclical things and that when things are booming you should be putting a bit away and provisioning for the future, or investing in productive infrastructure and productive investments that can help to grow and support the economy throughout the tougher times. Instead, this government promised no more privatisation during that period but went on to privatise our forests.

I point out again that the government has privatised the forests. It actually sold them at the bottom of the market. It is a bit like the Labor Party—not the government but the Labor Party—owning a pub in Port Adelaide that went broke. Only the Labor Party would have a pub that went broke in Port Adelaide. I know that has nothing to do with the Governor's speech, so I will come back.

We have sold the forestry assets, SA Lotteries and HomeStart Finance, and the Motor Accident Commission is up for sale. It is interesting that the Treasurer and the government announced that. They were not really quite sure how they were going to sell it and they were not quite sure how they could make that stack up. Of course, the ESL has gone up exponentially and the government has also moved to take away pensioner concessions on rates.

Also, just by way of context and background, in 2010 the Governor spoke of business needing an operating environment which encouraged enterprise and tailoring our tax system to that end. He said that our tax system's success should be measured by the jobs growth in our economy. Well, we have not seen too much jobs growth.

In 2014, the Sensis Business Index noted that South Australian small and medium businesses recorded lower expectations of all indicators for the June quarter and the worst perceptions of all states about the current state economy and the economy in a year's time, which of course is the economy we are in now. Sadly, I think those perceptions were right. We recorded the worst employment expectations of all states for both the June quarter and the next 12 months which, of course, we saw today with the 7.3 per cent unemployment rate. Of all states, South Australian small businesses were the least supported in state government policies.

I could continue at length on this government's track record, but the point of my reciting this evidence is that talk is cheap. Labor has spent 13 years talking about various lofty goals and plans, but there has not been enough action. After 13 years in government you cannot pass the buck to previous governments anymore. Labor must take full ownership of South Australia's position.

When I was first elected in 2002—of course, we had a Howard federal government—it was all the Howard government's fault, or it was the former Brown/Olsen/Kerin government's fault. Then, of course, we went into a bit of a silent period during the unprecedented tumultuous time with the Rudd/Gillard/Rudd government, when it was not the federal government's fault. Now, of course, where we have a change federally, it is the Abbott government's fault. This government has always looked to try to blame somebody else for its problems.

This government cannot even get its finances right and now it wants to make Adelaide the world's first carbon neutral city. It is an admirable goal. The Governor mentioned it in his speech on Tuesday, but what is the plan? We have asked questions of the Minister for Climate Change, the Hon. Ian Hunter, who after being sacked from Aboriginal affairs was given (I do not know whether it was a promotion) the task of being the Minister for Climate Change.

I really do not know how we will be the world's first carbon neutral city. Will it help grow our economy? Will it create jobs? Will it make Adelaide a tourism destination? It may have some tourism potential. How big is 'Adelaide'? Is it the CBD, the council area or Greater Adelaide, as per the 30-year plan? We are very scant on detail on how this might work.

If we are talking about carbon neutral city, how will things like the Clipsal be taken into consideration during that process? I am a great lover of motorsport, but a reasonable amount of

carbon goes into the atmosphere during that wonderful four-day event, which of course was a Liberal initiative. I wonder how that will be calculated.

We saw premier Rann put wind turbines on offices in Adelaide because that would be a way that they could be self-sustainable—none ever worked and none were ever connected. It intrigues me that we will see another round of wind turbines that do not work in Adelaide to fund or promote or try to achieve this goal of a carbon neutral city. The Governor mentioned we will legislate for driverless vehicles. It is promised that these vehicles will be safer, but in the case of accidents or speeding who will be liable—the owner or the manufacturer?

It intrigues me, when you drive in the city, as to exactly how these things will work. We have the new rules around cyclists and keeping one metre away from them. We all in this chamber spend a fair bit of time on the road coming to and from here and doing our work in and around the city and the state. I am a bit intrigued with that new initiative and the law of having to stay a metre away from a cyclist. What happens if a cyclist moves closer to you? What happens if a cyclist moves closer to a driverless car? Who gets the fine—is it the owner, the manufacturer, the premier who thought it was a good idea or the cyclist for going too close?

It is easy to get right in the speech and for cabinet to sign off on it. I am told that cabinet signed off on the Governor's speech—I suspect that is the way these things work, but there is no detail around it.

The Hon. K.J. Maher: You'll never find out.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: The Hon. Kyam Maher interjects that I will never find out, I suspect was what he was saying. I expect that I will find out. However, what I want to know is how these things work. Again, it is another example of cheap talk.

I read that the minister says that Google have driverless cars or the technology. Is it adaptable to Australian conditions? Given that I read somewhere—

The Hon. I.K. Hunter interjecting:

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: The minister says, 'Well, roads,' and he laughs. The way they rip money out SA Water—I read recently that we have more burst water mains in South Australia than anywhere else. Will these cars have the technology to drive around the water or will they just drive into the hole in the middle of the road? It is intriguing. It may be a little bit sexy, a little bit distracting, like some of the other things the Governor and the Premier spoke about.

The Hon. K.J. Maher: A little bit sexy?

The Hon. I.K. Hunter: A little bit distracting?

The PRESIDENT: Both ministers are out of order.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: Certainly I would not be looking at them and saying anything about sexy. They are a bit distracting, but certainly sex has got nothing to do with them.

On Tuesday, the Governor also spoke about how we need a more open planning system and debates about the future growth that will occur with full transparency. Why has it taken 13 years to deal with this issue? It is interesting to note that we have an urban growth boundary that has been in place for a very long time. I think that the Hon. Di Laidlaw put it in place. Out of the blue a few years ago, outside the urban growth boundary, Buckland Park was identified by, I think, the former minister here, the Hon. Paul Holloway, and that was rezoned for housing.

It was outside the urban growth boundary with no infrastructure and no services—just one of the things they plucked out of the air. I think at that time that there were reports that the lobbyists at the time may have received a seven-figure success fee for that particular project. It is interesting to note that Premier Weatherill and the government are now going to look at lobbyists and payments they may receive.

It is just interesting that there has been a whole range of things happen over the last few years, and Mount Barker and some of the other areas have been rezoned, and that now suddenly this is all outrageous and we are going to have legislate for an urban growth boundary and we must

not allow people to be lobbyists for certain periods of time; from my understanding, as again it is very vague on detail. There have been some big questions asked about the government's relationship with lobbyists over the last few years.

Of course, we have inquiries, ranging from quite high-level secret ones right through to inquiries through the media and parliament, about the transactions around the Gillman deal. That would have to be one of the craziest things I have seen. Why on earth a government would not go to tender on a large piece of land and do it in a transparent and open manner is beyond me.

I am certainly aware in that process where certain parties made some inquiries about that particular piece of land and were told, 'No, we're not ready to sell it because we are master planning it. We will let you know when we are and we've done the master plan.' Out of the blue, Adelaide Capital Partners puts in an unsolicited bid and gets the property. This is not the forum to discuss Gillman in any great detail, but it is a questionable deal that again brings into question some of the reasons around why we are just now saying that the planning system, the urban growth boundary and some of the reforms need to take place.

It is interesting that some of the major reforms are about having an independent planning commission, regional assessment boards and regional planning boards, as the Hon. Tung Ngo talked about. Members opposite probably will not remember, because they would not have taken the time to read it, but some nearly four years ago I released a discussion paper around a better planning system.

When Brian Hayes QC was talking about the draft on radio with Ian Henschke last year sometime, he explained what the new reforms were about. I was quite surprised, because often I probably do not have the highest regard for some people in the media, when Ian Henschke said, 'Hang on, Brian. What you've said is just exactly what the Liberals announced three years ago,' and he said, 'No, it's not.'

Henschke then read out some material that he had kept on file and said, 'This is where they were going to have an independent planning commission and regional boards,' and Brian Hayes said, 'Well, if that's what the opposition said they were going to do, that's what we're going to do.' So it is interesting that it is something we thought of three or four years ago. We were scoffed at at the time, and now of course it is looking like we are going to have similar reforms.

The Governor said also that the government is open to radical tax reform and, if you look at the big graphs, the pie charts and the bar graphs the Treasurer, the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis, had yesterday in his lock-up, if you like, for the media on their tax reform, it talks about the volatility of stamp duty which, of course, is the one that they are concerned about.

That is an admission that they have no plans for growth. Stamp duty was booming during the boom periods when the rivers of gold were coming in from the GST and we were getting mountains of diamonds, if you like, from what was coming in from stamp duty. If the government is saying, 'Well, we can't rely on stamp duty anymore,' that it is an acknowledgement that they do not expect any growth from the economy.

It is really quite surprising, so now they are looking to tax the average household about \$1,200 a year, and I think that that is for the median house of about \$410,000 to \$420,000. The Hon. Tom Koutsantonis, when I was listening to him on radio this morning, said, 'Oh it's just a discussion paper.' With some of the comments today from members opposite and ministers opposite talking about taxation policy, they are a lot more committed to it than I think the Treasurer was saying they were committed to it this morning on radio.

With \$1,200 a year for a \$400,000 house, there are tens of thousands of houses with interest rates as low as they are that are much more than the \$400,000. Of course, the government says they have not done the modelling on how much the other houses are, but I suspect that if there is a formula that gives you \$1,200 for a \$410,000 or \$420,000 house, it would be very easy to apply that formula to a \$600,000, \$700,000, \$800,000 or \$900,000 house.

I know that there are a number of houses—and you often see the articles in our *Advertiser* newspaper—and a number of suburbs that have tipped over the million dollar mark. So, if it is \$1,200

for a \$400,000 house, for an \$800,000 you could easily assume it is \$2,500, and for houses more than that it might be \$3,000 or \$4,000, so it is a significant amount of money.

You have to ask yourself: why should all South Australians have to pay for Labor's economic incompetence? This comes on top of increasing bills—gas bills by 150 per cent, water bills by 236 per cent, electricity bills up 140 per cent—and we have highest taxes in the nation and now we have to endure also the increase in the emergency services levy. Again, this government has had 13 years to repair our economy for this transition. There has been clearly no forward thinking and now each South Australian household and each South Australian man, woman and child is expected to bear the brunt of it.

As I have said before, it is simple: you cannot spend more than you earn and you need to put a little bit away in the good times. We just have not seen that. It has been almost like they have been negligent, derelict in their duty in the good times. I reiterate that Premier Weatherill has been there for every day that this government has been in power. The Leader of the Government here, the Hon. Gail Gago, has been here for some nine years. I think if you start looking through, the Hon. John Rau has been a minister for five years, the Hon. Jack Snelling at least the same, the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis, six years, and the Hon. Ian Hunter, I think, if I look at my little cheat sheet here, has been here for four years.

When you add it up, there is 51 years of cabinet experience in the team at the moment. All the senior ones have been there for a significant part of that 13-year period and yet they say, 'Oh, we've got a crisis. Our health system is in crisis.' We have known that for 10 years and they have been talking about it for 10 years and done nothing.

I will also just quickly touch on the nuclear debate that the Premier wants to have, the royal commission. It is interesting that it will be the first royal commission of its type. As Steven Marshall, the opposition leader said, we welcome the debate. We should have an open and frank debate about all the possible opportunities for industries in our state. However, I remind members opposite that it has been their, if you like, backward-looking policies around nuclear energy which have held us back.

Mike Rann said that Roxby Downs is nothing more than a mirage in the desert and then he spent most of his time as premier hoping like hell he could get BHP to expand it, and then overspruiked it and caused a lot of grief in our community. I remember that in the regional city of Whyalla house prices boomed and then crashed on the back of the Hon. Mike Rann and the Hon. Kevin Foley overegging the pudding, if you like, and people speculated (assuming there would be significant growth and there was not) and got their fingers burnt.

Then there is Labor's national federal policy of the three mines policy. The resources in the sector said to me that nobody was game to explore in South Australia because even though we have a large, world-class supply of uranium and you are likely to find uranium wherever you dig, if you could not actually use that uranium or sell it because of the Labor Party's three mines policy, there was not any point in exploring here. That policy, which I know has been overturned but was in place for a very long period of time, has held us back. I am sure Jay Weatherill was a big supporter of that policy up until it was overturned at their federal convention about five years ago—that is my recollection.

After 13 years of Labor we have another Governor's speech. Great bloke and great person that Hieu Van Le is, at the end of the day unless it is backed up with a real commitment from members opposite to deliver, we are really facing the same old sad story of spiralling debt and our economy going backwards.

As members opposite would know, we have various shadow ministers and I will touch on a couple of the areas that I am directly involved in. On Tuesday, the Governor rightfully mentioned that our traditional industries are declining. Once upon a time, we were the whitegoods capital of the nation and we had a profitable shipbuilding industry. Those industries are now in the past and we are currently observing the same fate with our manufacturing industry.

In a few years' time, of course, sadly there will not be any Australian car manufacturers. It is interesting to note that we did put a lot of support and effort in as a nation, and various governments of various political persuasions put a lot of support into car manufacturing in Australia, particularly in

South Australia. However, it is interesting to see the number of non-Australian made cars out in the streets over the last two, three or four years. There has been a move away from the vehicles that have been made in Australia. It is interesting to see that we have invested as a nation, we have supported Holden, Toyota and Ford but, at the end of the day, the community or consumers have not supported it.

I noticed on Twitter around the time of the election that—I will say I am not 100 per cent certain of the accuracy of this, but I will mention it—Treasurer Hon. Tom Koutsantonis's second car may have been a Honda. We are still making Holdens, Fords and Toyotas, but I think his family made a decision to buy a Honda. I know all of us in here who have access to vehicles have Holdens, because they are the ones we have access to. I would be interested to know about the vehicles we all buy outside those we have access to here. Are they Holdens, Fords or Toyotas, or are they some other vehicle from some other part of the world? Now, I am not just pointing the finger at the Labor Party; I think all of us are—

The Hon. G.E. Gago: Because you can't afford to.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: No; I think it is a sign that we have had a range of vehicles that the consumers have not wanted to purchase from Australia. What I also find staggering, though, is that the primary industries and agriculture sectors—which have existed since our settlement; we know this was a rural experiment in South Australia—and have the potential to exist for as long as rain falls from the sky, have been given almost no forward thinking by the minister or the government.

If you look at our traditional manufacturing industries, one common theme is that we have always focused on the manufacturer rather than the design aspect of those industries. The problem is that we no longer have the capacity to compete with developing nations on labour costs, so we will continue to put all forms of manufacturing at risk unless we look to other areas where we can capitalise on the value of those industries. I believe, to a certain extent, the only thing keeping the agriculture and primary industry sectors competitive is our natural advantage. However, I think it is dangerous to rely on that advantage, as other nations seek out and succeed in finding innovative ways to cultivate food products.

You only have to look at New Zealand's explosion in agricultural exports after they signed a free trade agreement with China some six years ago. I will touch on the free trade agreements in a little while in my contribution, but I think we have to be careful that we do not just sit back, rest on our laurels and say, 'We've got a good food and agriculture sector.' We must continually back it up. I think R&D is the key to the future viability of these sectors, and I am really disappointed to see that there was no mention of an increase of support for R&D for our agriculture sectors in the Governor's speech.

In fact, I am not quite sure where the premium food and wine from our clean and green environment initiative still fits. It certainly was not prominent in the Governor's speech, yet it is still the biggest business in town. The South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) has had its funding cut five times in the past seven years. One of the largest single funding cuts came shortly after the Premier announced that premium food and wine from our clean environment was one of his seven strategic priorities. On one hand, they talk the talk, but they do not walk the walk.

I ask: how is South Australia supposed to continue to deliver a premium product to a rapidly evolving global economy when we are not looking to the latest methods and technologies? How should South Australia's cereal farmers go about delivering a premium product when the government cuts annual funding to the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics, which is investigating new ways to tackle salinity and drought issues, by \$1.5 million?

It is rather interesting that the funding for building that particular facility was signed off by cabinet in the last months of the Kerin government, and minister Hamilton-Smith—it was the first time he was a minister—was the one who promoted it and had carriage of it through cabinet. It is located in his electorate of Waite, and yet he has been silent. The silence on the lack of funding to that facility is almost deafening.

Is the government aware that Eyre Peninsula, which produces almost half of South Australia's wheat, has a research centre (the Centre of Excellence in Low Rainfall Farming for Southern Australia) and that the centre is fighting for its survival? It has recently lost more staff. It

just does not make sense. We have asked questions time and time again to the Leader of the Government opposite, who was for a period of time the minister for agriculture, in relation to our commitment to research and the national framework, but then we see the sale of R&D assets like Flaxley and Lenswood, which I think is about to go. My understanding of that national framework was that we were meant to put that money back into research. We have a dryland research centre at Minnipa and now people are being sacked and staff are leaving because there simply is not enough money to keep them there.

Yes, South Australia has a natural advantage in food production, but it also has some major challenges, not the least of which are soil salinity and low rainfall. The Governor rightly stated that demand for South Australia's premium food and wine will increase. The world has an insatiable appetite which will only grow. This government has become obsessed, though, with defining premium food and wine.

You and I know, Mr President—we have both been involved in agriculture at various times in our lives—that all South Australian food and wine is premium in the world market and that the demand for it will continue to grow. The government says it will do more to maximise the benefit of this demand. Yes, an engagement strategy with international markets is important, but it will be useless if we fail to invest in innovations for the future of farming.

Make no mistake that other primary industries across the globe are actively investing in ways to overcome salinity, drought and other challenges. Since he became the Minister for Climate Change, minister Hunter has often said that we are not taking it seriously. Well, if they were taking it seriously, they would be putting a lot more money back into R&D to tackle things like salinity, drought, heat stress—all the things that will, according to minister Hunter, impact on our agricultural sector. We saw nothing in the Governor's speech about that.

I also believe we have a minister who is sidetracked with his boutique food and wine products but ignoring those who produce the real commodities. Last year, I was at an industry forum where the minister spoke and talked about delivering premium, clean and green product to overseas markets. One producer stood up and said that his chief concern was simply about getting a bulk commodity to market. He was implying, and I believe correctly, that the minister's fixation on fashionable food and wine products is distracting him from the major industry challenges. I think he is really quite out of touch on this particular issue.

Another thing the minister has bungled is his politicisation of the GM debate. He has engaged in scaremongering tactics which do nothing more than set the industry back. What South Australia needs is a focus on the quantifiable benefits of remaining GM free. As members opposite would know, we publicly supported a moratorium, but we want to be able to measure what those benefits are. We need to be in the position to make an informed decision about the best way forward for farmers, the environment and our wider society. In the meantime, the GM moratorium remains. It needs to be counterbalanced with more investment in conventional farming methods.

This government, if they are not prepared to measure and wish to keep that in place, actually have to make sure that we use every other bit of possible research and development and technology to keep our farmers at the forefront of the game, rather than having the industry locked out of that technology, which is a government decision. As I said, we want to measure the benefits, but you have to make sure you look at every other possible opportunity.

I notice that yesterday minister Bignell was talking about the \$400,000 in grants for manufacturing food, of up to \$40,000 and for small tourism opportunities. It was \$400,000 that he announced. Interestingly, that is \$100,000 less than was announced at the budget nine months ago, so we have seen a 20 per cent cut from that program. I remind people, too, and members opposite, that just recently we saw Pernod Ricard, a big multinational company, get \$1 million for their St Hugo cellar door experience. That is \$1 million to a company that last year made in excess of €1 billion profit. They make more profit than our deficit, yet we are giving them \$1 million of taxpayers' money.

I am really interested to look at the guidelines for this new grant program to make sure that it is targeted at South Australian businesses—South Australian businesses that need a bit of a hand to grow, or have an idea where a grant of \$20,000, \$30,000 or \$40,000 will actually mean that they can invest. They get that money from the government and it makes the financials for their project

stack up, rather than a massive international company that could simply write the cheque out themselves.

I applaud the Governor for wanting to be involved in the South-East Asia strategy. Obviously, we are all aware that he and his family come from Vietnam. We are all aware of his connection with that part of the world, and I do applaud it, but we have to make sure that it is not just a whirlwind tour, if you like, and that we back that up with some really strong support from government.

I look at some of the projects, even one that was announced when the Hon. Gail Gago was minister, their investment in the Fujian clean food centres, which, to my knowledge, have never been built or, to my knowledge, are not operating, yet there was a lot of fanfare, there were MOUs signed, there was a whole range of government activity put in and around that. At the end of the day, we have seen nothing for it. I seek leave to conclude my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Bills

PUBLIC FINANCE AND AUDIT (TREASURER'S INSTRUCTIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (18:01): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

The *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987* provides the framework for the financial management of public finances. The ability for the Treasurer to issue instructions binding public authorities is central to providing a framework that advances accountability, integrity and transparency for the benefit of the State. This Bill clarifies matters relating to the application and scope of Treasurer's Instructions and makes minor amendments of a statute law revision nature

The main purpose of the Bill is to make it clear that a general provision in an Act establishing a public authority, such as a power to enter contracts (or even a more specific provision such as a requirement to have a particular body approve a contract), will not override a requirement of Treasurer's instructions applying to the public authority, for example, requiring an approval of the Treasurer or delegate to be obtained for entry into a contract. While these matters can be clarified in relevant charters and directions for particular bodies, the amendments are designed to improve general understanding about the relationship between Treasurer's Instructions and provisions of an Act providing a public authority with functions and powers.

The opportunity is also being taken to clarify the scope of Treasurer's Instructions so that it is clear that they may regulate any matter related to the receipt, expenditure or investment of money, the acquisition or disposal of property, or the incurring of liabilities, by the Treasurer and public authorities.

I commend the Bill to Members.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987*

3—Amendment of section 4—Interpretation

This amendment adds a definition of property to make it clear that it includes any type of property including contingent rights.

4—Amendment of section 5—Receipt of public money

This amendment is consequential on including both real and personal property within the definition of property.

5—Amendment of section 41—Treasurer's instructions

The addition of paragraph (f) to subsection (1) is designed to ensure that Treasurer's Instructions may regulate any matter related to the receipt, expenditure or investment of money, the acquisition or disposal of property, or the incurring of liabilities, by the Treasurer and public authorities.

New subsections (4) and (5) clarifies that Treasurer's instructions may refer to standards etc published by the Australian Accounting Standards Board or Standards Australia.

Subsections (6) and (7) are designed to ensure that a public authority's powers and functions are read subject to Treasurer's instructions. It is only if it is not possible to comply with both the Instructions and the authority's Act, that the Instructions give way.

Schedule 1—Statute law revision amendment of *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987*

The Schedule contains further amendments of the Act of a statute law revision nature.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. D.W. Ridgway.

FAIR WORK (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (18:01): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

The Fair Work (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2014 amends the *Fair Work Act 1994*, as well as making consequential amendments, to abolish the statutory office of the Employee Ombudsman and to make changes to the requirements for constitution of the Full Commission of the Industrial Relations Commission.

Employee Ombudsman

The Office of the Employee Ombudsman consists of the Employee Ombudsman and staff appointed to assist the Employee Ombudsman in the performance of functions under the Fair Work Act. The Employee Ombudsman is appointed by the Governor pursuant to section 58 of the Fair Work Act and is not subject to control or direction of the Minister responsible for the Fair Work Act.

The statutory functions of the Employee Ombudsman are set out in section 62 of the Fair Work Act and were designed to operate in the context of the former industrial relations system, whereby the State had responsibility for the private sector and the Employee Ombudsman was considered necessary to protect the rights of non-union represented workers in the private sector. This is no longer a state responsibility since the referral of the private sector industrial relations regulation to the Commonwealth.

Due to recent changes as a result of the Commonwealth's development of a national industrial relations system, the functions of the Employee Ombudsman have been limited to public sector and local government employees. This has reduced the workload of the Employee Ombudsman. In its annual report for the 2012-13 financial year the Employee Ombudsman reported less than 2 900 requests for assistance, with only 22% of these queries being from the public sector. The remaining 78 per cent of requests were from private sector—employees for which the Employee Ombudsman has no statutory function.

Statistics were not provided by the Employee Ombudsman in the annual report for the 2013-14 financial year, however it was noted that again more inquiries were received from the private sector than the public sector.

Residual functions of the Employee Ombudsman with respect to the public and local government sector are already performed by SafeWork SA (a business unit of the Attorney-General's Department) as well as by representative unions (Public Sector Association and Australian Services Union—SA & NT etc.), removing the need for a dedicated and separately funded the Employee Ombudsman and office. For the most part, the role of the Employee Ombudsman is a duplication for public sector and local government employees. The Commonwealth Fair Work Ombudsman is responsible for providing a similar service to private sector employees. In addition there are various free or low cost legal services available to all public and private sector employees.

This Bill will reduce the financial burden to State Government of providing services that are provided and funded by the Commonwealth for private sector employees through the office of the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The decision to abolish the Office is in no way a reflection on the efforts of the Office's staff members but is a decision taken based on the changing landscape of the industrial relations system in recent years.

Full Commission of the Industrial Relations Commission

The Industrial Relations Commission of South Australia is established under the Fair Work Act. It has jurisdiction to approve enterprise agreements, to make awards regulating remuneration and other industrial matters, to resolve industrial disputes and, among other things, hear and determine matters arising from an industrial matter.

The Full Commission of the Industrial Relations Commission has original jurisdiction in minimum standards applications (e.g. remuneration, sick leave, severance payments), adoption of Fair Work Australia principles and unreasonable conduct applications as well as appeals and references from single members and applications by the Minister for review.

The Full Commission consists of three members or the number of members (more than three) as directed by the President. Section 39(3) of the Fair Work Act requires that the Full Commission consist of one or more Presidential members and one or more Commissioners.

The Bill will amend the Fair Work Act to remove the requirement in section 39(3) for the Full Commission to include one or more Commissioners. Instead the Full Commission is to be constituted of one or more Presidential members and such number of Commissioners, if any, as directed by the President of the Industrial Relations Commission.

This will provide the President of the Industrial Relations Commission with greater flexibility in constituting the Full Commission.

I commend the Bill to Members.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal

Part 2—Amendment of *Fair Work Act 1994*

4—Amendment of section 4—Interpretation

This clause removes references to the Employee Ombudsman from the interpretation section and is consequential on the repeal of Chapter 2 Part 6 Division 1.

5—Amendment of section 7—Industrial authorities

This clause is consequential on the abolition of the office of the Employee Ombudsman.

6—Amendment of section 39—Constitution of Full Commission

This clause amends section 39(3) of the principal Act to remove the requirement that the Full Commission consist of 1 or more Commissioners and to instead allow the President to direct the required number of Commissioners (if any).

7—Repeal of Chapter 2 Part 6 Division 1

This clause repeals Chapter 2 Part 6 Division 1, which constitutes the office of the Employee Ombudsman, sets out the appointment and conditions of office of the Employee Ombudsman and the functions of the Employee Ombudsman.

8—Amendment of section 64—Who are inspectors

9—Amendment of section 75—Who may make enterprise agreement

10—Amendment of section 76—Negotiation of enterprise agreement

11—Amendment of section 79—Approval of enterprise agreement

12—Amendment of section 80—Extent to which aspects of negotiations and terms of the agreement are to be kept confidential

13—Amendment of section 150—Proceedings to be in public

14—Amendment of section 153—Intervention

15—Amendment of section 219—Confidentiality

16—Amendment of section 223—Discrimination against employee for taking part in industrial proceedings etc

These clauses are consequential on the abolition of the office of the Employee Ombudsman.

17—Transitional provision

This clause makes it clear that the person holding office as the Employee Ombudsman will cease to do so on the commencement of this clause.

Debate adjourned on motion of the Hon. D.W. Ridgway.

At 18:02 the council adjourned until Tuesday 25 February 2015 at 14:15.