

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 25 March 2020

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens)** took the chair at 14:15 and read prayers.

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

*Parliamentary Procedure*

### PAPERS

The following paper was laid on the table:

By the Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. D. W. Ridgway)—

Report from the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government pursuant to section 39 of the Passenger Transport Act 1994

*Question Time*

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:17):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Health and Wellbeing regarding public health.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER:** Yesterday, the minister advised that schools remained open on the advice of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, the AHPPC. My questions to the minister are:

1. Has the minister or any of his advisers read or considered the advice on the closure of schools provided by 22 eminent specialists from the Group of Eight research universities?
2. Can the minister also advise the chamber whether he is aware if children can spread COVID-19?
3. What additional cases have been identified beyond those associated with Sacred Heart College, Unley High School and Scotch College in our schools?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:18):** I'm not aware of the research that the honourable member refers to, but let me make it very clear: a politician's reading of a clinical paper, even if that politician happens to be the Minister for Health, is quite irrelevant. I am not the one to second guess the AHPPC and the CDNA. If the honourable member thinks that every time we are in a major emergency, a pandemic that hasn't been eclipsed for a century, that we should have politicians musing about whether they prefer this academic's advice or this clinician's advice or this letter signed by 1,000 or 3,000 or 10,000 clinicians and second guess the group that has been put in place as part of our emergency response, I think he is dangerous.

We need to have a situation where all of these people can express their views to the relevant clinical advisory groups. Dr Brendan Murphy has repeatedly engaged in dialogue with other clinicians who don't share his view, but once those clinicians—the CDNA and the AHPPC—have considered all the evidence and all of the diversity of opinions and they have formed their judgement, do not expect me to second guess them.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:19):** Supplementary in relation to the minister's answer: can the minister advise the chamber if children can spread COVID-19?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:19):** The honourable member obviously knows that that is possible.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:20):** Supplementary arising from the answer about advice about schools remaining open: can the minister advise if there have been any additional cases identified beyond those associated with Sacred Heart College, Unley High School and Scotch College?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:20):** This government is maintaining its practice right through this pandemic, which is that clinicians give regular updates, in fact, daily updates; in fact, not only daily updates but daily updates seven days a week. I think it's probably about 10 days in a row that I have stood beside my clinicians as we have kept the community up to date. I am not going to become some commentator on case statistics or details. We need to have a clear, consistent voice on public health matters and that is the Chief Public Health Officer and her deputies.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:20):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: is the minister aware that different states have taken a different attitude in relation to school closure, particularly in Victoria where schools have closed early?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:21):** Yes.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:21):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: has the minister sought any advice about why different states have taken the option to close schools early and has he sought to avail himself of the reasons why they have done that?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:21):** I have certainly been privy to the dialogue, but I am going to continue to back my Chief Public Health Officer and her colleagues in the AHPPC and CDNA.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:21):** Supplementary arising from the original answer, and noting that different states have taken different approaches in relation to this: can the minister advise what are some of the reasons that other jurisdictions have given for deciding to close schools?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:21):** The honourable member—

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister.

**The Hon. S.G. WADE:** —was already treading on thin ice—

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister!

**The Hon. S.G. WADE:** —by engaging with me about education policy management of schools, but I can assure you, I am not responsible for other Labor and Liberal governments around the country.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Leader of the Opposition, you are actually straying from the original answer. This is a really important subject, so I will allow you to continue, but please be mindful that your supplementary question should be arising from the original answer.

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:22):** My supplementary arising from the answer in relation to the advice about closure of schools: is the minister aware of any health advice that other jurisdictions are relying upon to close their schools early?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:22):** So now the honourable member wants to ask me not only do I want to stray into minister Gardner's portfolio, not only do I want to stray into education policies and practices in other states and territories, he now wants me to find out whether they have advice on it. I am sorry, ask somebody else in another parliament to ask another minister.

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:23):** Final supplementary: does the minister still maintain his—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER:** —answer that he is aware of the dialogue between jurisdictions about the early closure of schools, or does he now retreat from that?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:23):** I confess: I listen to radio, I watch TV, I read the papers.

**The Hon. D.W. Ridgway:** How do you find time to do that?

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister Ridgway, we don't need you to be chiming in at this point. This is a serious subject. The Hon. Ms Scriven.

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (14:23):** My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Why, unlike other states, is SA Health refusing to provide details of where identified COVID-19 patients come from? What advice did the minister or his agency provide to the Premier that led him to say on radio, 'In terms of our curve, we are in front,' and is it actually the case, particularly on a per capita basis, that South Australia is in front when data shows that we are very similar or worse than other states?

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The Minister for Health and Wellbeing.

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:24):** The first question, as I recall it, was about identifying locations of confirmed cases. Let's be clear: the Chief Public Health Officer in South Australia, Associate Professor Nicola Spurrier, is very keen for that information to be available to the public. That is why she has publicly said that she is continuing to ask the commonwealth to post heat maps, as they call them; in other words, maps that show the concentrations of confirmed cases both within the metropolitan area and country South Australia. My understanding is that those heat maps are expected to be posted this week and we look forward to that.

In terms of South Australia being ahead of the curve, I think the Premier has a lot to be proud of. We all, as South Australians, have a lot to be proud of. As I highlighted yesterday to the Legislative Council, we have one of the highest COVID-19 testing regimes in the world. My understanding is that there is only one jurisdiction in the world that has undertaken more tests per 100,000 head of population than South Australia. We are also ahead of the curve again in the SA Pathology realm in the way that we have been operating the drive-through facilities, and there is a lot of work being done in other domains of SA Health which I believe mean that we are in a much better position than we would have been.

In particular with the testing regime, we have a line of sight into community contamination that other jurisdictions do not have. That helps us in terms of getting an understanding of what is

happening in the community, and the contact tracing work has been exemplary. I might take this opportunity to see if I can reference an example of that—no, perhaps it will take too long. However, let me make the point that in some other jurisdictions there can be up to a third of the cases that are still under investigation, whereas it is very rare in South Australia to have more than two or three cases at any one time under investigation.

What does that reflect? It reflects the extraordinary work being done by the Communicable Disease Control Branch, led by Dr Louise Flood. Let's understand what they are doing: they are getting reports of confirmed cases, and it is now up to 170 people. You need to identify who are those people, who have they had contact with and when did they have contact with them? That is a mammoth task. We have needed and have added resources to that team because of the magnitude of the task.

Other jurisdictions have, shall we say, more cases under investigation, and I appreciate that there will be lots of different reasons for that, but one of the reasons why our 'under investigation' rate is so low is because of the work of that branch. I have a record of a place where I can locate that data for you, so I have done that. According to a report dated 20 March—so that is five days old—as at that date, for example, Queensland had 184 cases and 127 were under investigation; New South Wales had 382 cases with 91 under investigation; by comparison, South Australia, on that day, had an unusually high rate of seven out of 50, which is 14 per cent; whereas 127 out of 184 I can assure you is well above 14 per cent, as is 91 out of 382.

I want to take this opportunity, and I thank the honourable member for giving me the opportunity, to pay tribute to yet another SA Health team that is delivering a world-class response in a global pandemic.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (14:29):** Supplementary: is the minister able to then confirm that the comment about South Australia, in terms of our curve, that we are in front was not in relation to the number of confirmed cases in South Australia?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:29):** The honourable member is correct. The Premier is not so simplistic as to think that one static figure can tell the story of a global pandemic.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (14:29):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Health and Wellbeing regarding public health.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** Yesterday, the Minister for Health took many questions on notice, including those relating to intensive care beds and whether there was expert health advice not to release such information. My questions to the minister are:

1. Exactly how many extra ICU beds are being created?
2. When will they be ready and where will they be?
3. How many acute cases of COVID-19 does our state have the capacity to deal with at any one point in time?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:30):** There is no doubt that the onset of COVID-19 will put pressure on our ICU capacity. We have seen that around the world. While Australia is ahead of the curve, we have to plan for every eventuality, and that will include significant pressure on our ICU capacity. South Australia is well placed in terms of ICU beds and ventilators, but the key challenge is to expand and upskill our workforce in the delivery of ICU-level care.

Across the system, we have more than 300 beds and a further 60 ventilators for extra surge capacity. In my conversations with Dr Evan Everest, the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, his plan is that we would use some of those 60 ventilators in places that are not normally ICU beds. The

reality is that, in a situation where the hospital system is experiencing a surge, we may need to do things that are unorthodox.

#### **CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (14:31):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: exactly how many ICU beds are expected to be needed at the peak of the infection?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:31):** I am happy to take that question on notice.

#### **CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (14:31):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: exactly how many trained ICU nurses do we have today, and how many will be needed at the peak of this crisis?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:31):** I am happy to take that question on notice.

#### **CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (14:31):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: how many additional clinical staff are being trained to manage the ICU beds necessary for COVID-19 patients?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:31):** I am happy to take that question on notice.

#### **CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (14:32):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: what is the maximum percentage of ICU beds that could be dedicated to COVID-19 patients in a severe outbreak?

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister, do you have an answer to that?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:32):** I don't really understand it. If we have got them and we need them, we will use them.

#### **CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (14:32):** My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Can the minister update the council about how the Department for Trade and Investment is working across both state and federal governments to combat the challenges posed by COVID-19?

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:32):** I thank the honourable member for his question. As we know, we are in some of the most extraordinary, in fact the most extraordinary, times I think any of us have ever seen, with countries all around the world facing tremendous pressures from COVID-19, shutting down their borders and shutting down their economies.

It is an enormous task ahead. Yesterday, I outlined how the Department for Trade and Investment is gearing up its digital activities to support our exporters and investors, but I think it is important to inform the chamber that the Department for Trade and Investment will also play a significant role as on-demand supply coordinators for critical supplies required by SA Health, amongst others, and will be assisting South Australian businesses to participate in supply opportunities arising from this crisis.

This morning, I was on a national conference call with all state and federal ministers, organised by federal minister Andrews, regarding supply and manufacture of personal protective equipment. My very hardworking colleague the Hon. Stephen Wade, who, I might add, is doing an excellent job in this particularly demanding time, spoke yesterday about the national approach for supplies of medical supplies. I think that today all of the trade and investment ministers and the federal minister were together to make sure we can coordinate that, so that if one state has a supply

of a particular product the rest of the nation needs that they are actually aware of that, and it is being coordinated so that we can respond.

Our health agencies are responding on a national level, but certainly our agencies will respond in a national way to make sure that we have, nationally, the supplies of goods where we have it, that where we have manufacturers that can actually manufacture products that can help the nation other states are made aware of that and we can get those products to them. The federal government has had discussions around some of the regulations, for example, the excise on alcohol for hand sanitisers. The ATO has waived that, and that is a sensible approach. So there's a big national effort going on to make sure that we are well served to have the equipment we need to combat this horrible threat of COVID-19.

We saw on the weekend pretty much all of our international flights suspended. We have established an export recovery task force to support exporters and companies and provide assistance, especially to the suppliers looking for airfreight. We want to be prepared, to look for opportunities. We have no international flights leaving South Australia now. There are some freighters that take freight to Melbourne.

We are looking now at coordinating with the producers—and a lot of them are fresh seafood—on how we can coordinate to get product to Melbourne or Sydney. There's a handful of freight-only planes leaving Melbourne and Sydney each week. We are working closely with them. We are also reaching out to all our other manufacturers, making sure that we understand the pressures that their businesses are under and seeing ways that we may be able to help them stay in their markets. It is good to see that they are responding.

Even today, out of some of these very dark clouds opportunities arise, one of them being that international supermarket chains can no longer find a source of Spanish olive oil, so they have reached out to a local olive oil producer for, if you like, import replacement. So while our exporters have lost some of their overseas markets during these times, there will be some opportunities for our high-quality food exporters to fill the gaps left by the break in the supply chain, even if it is only temporarily. I think that emphasises how important it is for all of us to work together.

In closing, I would like to mention that I am in regular contact with the shadow minister, Zoe Bettison. She is being briefed again tomorrow. I reach out to her regularly, and I have told her that anytime she wishes to call me to do so. I am happy to keep her informed. Even though the crossbenchers are not here—the Greens, SA-Best and the Hon. Mr Darley—at any time, if they need some information in the areas that I am responsible for, I am more than happy to provide them with information, and if I can't I will try to get the information for them. Mr President, I think it's important that we share the load and actually work together to get through this as quickly as we possibly can.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:37):** Supplementary arising from the answer: I might have missed it in the minister's answer, but what portfolio of ministers was this phone hook-up with?

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:37):** It was the federal minister, Karen Andrews, and a range of others. Martin Pakula was one. It was mostly trade ministers. Every state is slightly different, but Martin Pakula was the minister from Victoria. Some of the other men and women I don't know personally, but it was just about a coordination of what is happening in each of the states: has a state got a manufacturer of a product that the rest of the nation needs? It was just to make sure we don't duplicate our efforts. For example, some of the face masks and surgical masks require importation of particular qualities of fabric and product. Let's not have two states bidding against each other for their supply. It's just really a coordination role.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:38):** Further supplementary arising from the original answer: I think the minister gave Spanish olive oil as an example. Is the minister able to outline if there were any specific equipment shortages that were identified for South Australia and then also outline if there are any specific equipment shortages that were identified for the whole of Australia?

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:38):** There were none identified as being particular, but this was a level of coordination not of what people needed but what was available in all the states. Every state is facing a different level of pressure, so we really weren't saying, 'Well, I've got 10 of these and you need 11.' There was none of that sort of detail. It is more: what is the capability? We have identified a team of senior officials that will meet on a weekly basis to update each other on what is available. More importantly, it was about making sure that two states don't go to a supplier and compete for the same thing.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:39):** Supplementary arising from the answer: can the minister outline which specific areas he was able to inform his colleagues from around Australia that South Australia has specific capabilities in terms of manufacturing goods or equipment that will be needed?

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:39):** We didn't go into a lot of detail. Obviously we have people like Bickfords, which is now focused on making quite a large amount of alcohol for hand sanitiser; in fact, there is an article in one of the Queensland papers about Bickfords and Bundaberg and the Beenleigh distilleries, and we have seen Shane Warne, who will give up making gin and make hand sanitiser. I think that's something we will see the team at Bickfords doing out in northern Adelaide where they have that new manufacturing facility.

We have some capability emerging now for the manufacture of surgical masks. However, it is really for the senior officials to sit around behind the scenes, talk about what the capabilities are, and make sure we don't duplicate our efforts.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:40):** A supplementary arising from the original answer: in terms of medical devices or equipment, was the minister able to contribute any South Australian capabilities to the national meeting, particularly ones that might be able to switch from current manufacturing to the manufacturing of things that are going to be needed?

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:40):** As I said, we have got some capability starting to emerge for the manufacturer of surgical masks. That was the one that I'm aware of, but of course the senior officials will keep talking to each other about what is needed. It wasn't like a shopping list this morning but a coordination, that everybody is on the same page and let's not compete, let's make sure we have national coordination to make sure we don't duplicate our efforts, and of course make sure that we have the best possible amount of equipment for all of Australia.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:40):** A supplementary arising from the original answer: is the minister aware of whether work has been done in mapping our manufacturing capabilities in South Australia, and what those could be changed to, in terms of needed equipment?

*The Hon. S.G. Wade interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** The Minister for Trade and Investment. Minister for Health, stay out of it.

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:41):** Of course, we have the Industry Capability Network funded by the federal government. There is a portal, based here in South Australia, and people can put information onto that, what they have available and also the demands that are there. There is quite an amount of work being done. That was discussed this morning and it will be shared amongst all the other states.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (14:41):** A supplementary: the minister mentioned that one of the reasons for this tele hook-up was to ensure that states were not bidding against each other. Where there are disagreements around the supply of equipment or materials, how will these be addressed and how will priorities be allocated?

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister, before you answer the question: the Hon. Ms Scriven, you just ask a supplementary question. There is no explanation, you don't go into detail, you just ask the question. Minister for Trade and Investment.

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:42):** I am relatively confident that this process will make sure that we get the maximum amount of equipment, whatever it is, to the people who need it at the appropriate time. Certainly, there was no discussion around prioritisation of one state over another. This was about, from an industry point of view and a supply and manufacturing point of view, making sure we get the absolute best performance out of local manufacturing and, if we do have to import various bits and pieces from overseas, that we don't compete, that we actually get them here so that the Australian people can benefit from them.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (14:42):** A supplementary: so rather than prioritisation of states, is there any plan in place to ensure there is prioritisation of needs? If so, what is that plan?

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:42):** That wasn't the nature of the discussion this morning. The discussion this morning was to kick it off and make sure all the states were on the same page. We have a team of senior officials who will actually sit down and look at industry capability and make sure that we have adequate support and are not duplicating effort. Allocation of resources, when it comes to actual critical supplies, was not on the agenda, and I do not believe that will be the role of that group either.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:43):** My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing regarding public health. When the Premier refers to the government's comprehensive plan for managing coronavirus, what is the specific document he is referring to, and is it publicly available?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:43):** The Premier is referring to the government's four-pronged approach. One element is to slow the spread so that we can better respond to the inevitable onset of COVID-19. The second element is to optimise health resources, both public and private sector. We need to be acting as a comprehensive and coordinated health service network.

The third element is in relation to public confidence. It is very important, in the context of a public health emergency, that the community gets clear information and can have confidence in it. That is why we are so concerned about the scaremongering of Labor. Fourthly, the government's plan is to ensure that we minimise the negative impact on jobs through an economic stimulus strategy.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:44):** Supplementary arising from the answer: where can one go to find a copy of this plan that the minister refers to?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:44):** Tomorrow's *Hansard*; I just put it down.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:44):** Supplementary arising from the answer. I note that the minister thinks this is funny and a laughing matter, but we don't. Has the plan the minister referred to been distributed to clinicians around South Australia?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:45):** I would love to tell you how many interviews myself, the Premier and the Chief Public Health Officer have done where we have highlighted these elements. I believe that the people of South Australia, and particularly clinicians, are well informed. In fact, I thank the honourable member; you remind me that the chief



executive of the Department of Health did a video which was distributed throughout the network and those key elements were highlighted.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:45):** Supplementary arising from the answer: apart from the Legislative Council *Hansard*, is there any other place in South Australia that one could go to find this plan?

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister, you can choose to answer how you wish.

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:45):** No.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:46):** Supplementary arising from the answer: does this comprehensive plan include specific protocols about how an outbreak within a hospital will be treated?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:46):** The protocols are in a whole series of documents, both historical and current. In terms of historic, let me draw the honourable member's attention to some relevant documents. The honourable member might like to see the Pandemic Influenza Plan issued in October 2018. The member might like to refer to the *Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-2019)*.

In terms of detailed clinical protocols, the overarching strategy is reflected in documents such as those. In terms of particular strategies to deal with particular clinical streams, there is a lot of work being done, particularly in the area of intensive care. Our own Dr Evan Everest, the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, has been actively involved in—you may call it a protocol; I would prefer to call it a strategy or a plan. Of course, the government has an overarching plan, which I have referred to. There is a myriad of other documents which support what will have to be a multifaceted approach.

I think it is appropriate to pause and acknowledge the support being given to the health sector right across the state government. The police commissioner is stepping in as a state coordinator. We have regular meetings of cabinet, which are significantly focused in relation to the state's response to the pandemic. I have been very grateful for the support not only provided to Health in terms of direct support for ongoing health operations but also for the wider work being done in the community, particularly in relation to the fourth element, which is to minimise the negative impact on jobs.

It is very important for the health of South Australians not only that we deal with the threat of pandemic but that we maintain the prosperity of our state. We all know the significant relationship between poor health outcomes and poor socio-economic indicators. As we go towards a period of significant unemployment, that is a threat to health just as the pandemic is.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:49):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: for the sake of clarity, can the minister confirm that when his government refers to South Australia's comprehensive plan for managing coronavirus, there is not an actual comprehensive, written down plan, rather a series of historical documents, plans from other jurisdictions or videos that he is referring to?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:49):** The government's plan is more than all of those. It is those plus more. There is work being done in terms of detailed plans of the local health networks in terms of what they are preparing for their own response. So, for example, the Central Adelaide Local Health Network has the dedicated clinics as well as the preparation they are taking for COVID-19 patients. SAAS has been doing very detailed planning.

There is also the work that we are doing with the commonwealth, the work being done through the national cabinet process, but also the work being done by the health ministers' council. But in a whole range of domains within SA Health, a whole range of domains within government, business continuity plans, pandemic-related plans, have been developed. Our comprehensive plan is both the four-point plan that I referred to and detailed plans under those, unpacking what that means in a whole range of domains.

As I said, the economic stimulus element is part of the government's plan. It's not my responsibility as the Minister for Health, but I appreciate the support being provided right across the government to make sure that we minimise the economic damage because that's the best way to maximise the health of South Australians.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:50):** A supplementary arising from the original answer: is the minister aware of whether other states have written, comprehensive plans that outline their state's holistic response to the coronavirus epidemic, and can be referred to by the health sector as well as the public?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:51):** We have continued to release information about the pandemic just as other states are.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:51):** A final supplementary, just for clarity: is the minister aware if other jurisdictions have one comprehensive overarching plan about how they are managing this crisis?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:51):** I would be interested to see them. The fact of the matter is, I am pretty focused on getting the job done here in South Australia.

**The PRESIDENT:** I call the Hon. Ms Lee.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Sorry? Did you have a supplementary question?

**The Hon. C.M. Scriven:** Next question.

**The PRESIDENT:** No. My understanding is we are going from Labor to Liberal to Labor to Liberal to Labor to Liberal now, given that we have—

*The Hon. K.J. Maher interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Sorry?

*The Hon. K.J. Maher interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Mr Maher, this is a list I have been given.

**The Hon. K.J. Maher:** We have given you this list?

**The PRESIDENT:** I would like to say yes because the Hon. Mr Hunter is not here to defend himself. The Hon. Ms Lee.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (14:52):** My question is to the Minister for Human Services about supporting vulnerable South Australians during the coronavirus pandemic. Can the minister please provide an update to the council about how the Marshall Liberal government is promoting public health and safety through ensuring that South Australia's most vulnerable continue to be supported during the response to COVID-19?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (14:52):** I thank the honourable member for her question. In relation to the work of the Department of Human Services, can I start by commending them for the leadership they have shown at this very challenging time for all South Australians, particularly those who are vulnerable, who are on low incomes and the like, and who are supported through a range of the services that we provide. At this time, clearly, the health and safety of all clients, staff and the broader community is our utmost priority.

The Department of Human Services has activated full business continuity arrangements. An incident management team meets daily to lead the department's response across all of its businesses, and a dedicated COVID-19 response team is supporting the cross-departmental

coordination and response. All DHS staff have been asked to work from home where possible and arrangements are being put in place to make that achievable.

All essential and high-sensitivity functions have been identified and strategies are in place to protect and support continued service delivery. These include support and care for people with disability; support for vulnerable families; interpreting and translating services, particularly in the very important health settings; the Adelaide Youth Training Centre; and employment-related screening services to enable rapid stand-up of additional workforce as required.

Extensive support and information is being provided to the non-government sector, who provide many crucial services across our community, such as disability support, food security and emergency financial assistance, family and domestic violence, and support to vulnerable families. Last week, the Department of Human Services organised a teleconference for all services and we are scheduling one for tomorrow afternoon, which will include the Premier and myself.

In terms of specific measures that we have introduced so far as a response, we are working with our partners to continue to deliver essential 24-hour-a-day domestic family and sexual violence services and, as I have mentioned, priority screening checks. We are also ensuring that we are practising physical distancing in our disability group homes, including some visiting restrictions to ensure the safety of residents; delivering services, including the Women's Information Service; and providing concessions for the Interpreting and Translating Centre through alternative communication channels.

We are establishing an online network of non-government service delivery providers to collaborate and reduce risks to vulnerable families; forecasting future staffing priorities and starting required skills training; providing additional cleaning regimes and physical distancing practices; practising physical distancing in the Adelaide Youth Training Centre where possible and increasing screening of visitors. We are also working with Volunteering SA and NT to support the volunteer workforce and those organisations that rely on volunteers for service delivery, and we are working with the food security sector, including Foodbank, as well as all related providers in the emergency sectors to support their important activities.

We stand-by with our non-government partners to ensure that we continue to deliver these essential services and look forward to continuing our work with them to ensure that we are able to provide continuity of service.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (14:56):** I actually have a supplementary for the minister. In the teleconference on Tuesday that the minister referred to, the department, I understand, committed to provide the sector with an information toolkit. Did that occur?

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Ms Scriven—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Mr Maher, I don't need your help on this. Couch your supplementaries as a question, okay? Minister.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (14:57):** My understanding is that the department was working on providing an implementation tool through PricewaterhouseCoopers. If that has not been provided, I will bring back an answer to the parliament.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (14:57):** Further supplementary: could the minister advise, if it hasn't been provided, when it will be provided?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (14:57):** I will take that on notice and provide that response, if necessary.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:57):** Supplementary question arising from the answer: the minister mentioned interpreting services. Can the minister outline what

sorts of languages are involved in those services, and also if the information being given to those who use the services is distributed in various languages?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (14:57):** The comments I made were in relation to ensuring that we continue to provide the existing work through the interpreting translating services. My advice is that it employs over 380 interpreters and translators of 114 languages and dialects. Wherever possible, the ITC employs NAATI, which is the national accreditation authority for translators and qualified or credentialled interpreters and translators. In this current calendar year, it's partnering with Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, TAFE SA and NAATI to develop and deliver a new model for Aboriginal language interpreting services.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (14:58):** Supplementary question: is the minister aware of any problems of services in her department areas not being provided in Aboriginal languages for South Australian Aboriginal people wanting to use the services?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (14:59):** That's not been brought to my attention, but I will check with the department and if that is an issue then I will bring back some further details to the chamber.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (14:59):** Supplementary: has any additional funding been provided for food supplies during this coronavirus crisis?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (14:59):** The issue that's been raised so far has been the matter of ensuring that we have continuity of volunteers. From that point of view, DHS met with Foodbank, particularly, last week and has offered that there will be a provision of staff that we have available in the department who are not actually coming into the office. We have also, through our partners, Volunteering SA and NT—they are the key partner to ensure that there is some continuity of matching volunteers with those services—and the department is continuing to work through a range of other issues with food security. We appreciate that it is a critical service and through the government's website we will be providing more information as it is made available.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (15:00):** Further supplementary: has any funding assistance been sought by any food provider?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (15:00):** Certainly where Foodbank asked for an additional \$1 million a year to manage—I think it was anticipating that it was going to lose its volunteer workforce and the department provided DHS staff, as I have outlined.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (15:00):** Further supplementary: have any other services requested additional funding, in particular I'm talking about food supply services?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (15:00):** I am not aware that other food security providers have specifically asked for funding. I think there are potentially some issues with some of their food supply chains, cafes and the like that they might have utilised, but we are continuing to work through all of those issues on a daily basis because this is clearly a very important issue for South Australians.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (15:01):** Further supplementary: are any services under DHS or the South Australian Housing Authority still providing face-to-face services?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (15:01):** The ones that would immediately come to mind include staff who work in places like the Adelaide Youth Training Centre and through our disability group homes. Clearly, where it is somebody's living environment through the Housing Authority, those services which are funded by the Housing Authority would include

emergency shelters and the like, so there would be a range of services that have some face-to-face interaction with clients.

Where that is the case, clearly they need to implement hygiene practices and practise physical distancing, as is the case with others. These are essential services and we are working through all of our business continuity planning to ensure that every essential service can continue to operate.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (15:02):** I have a further supplementary arising from the original answer: how many hours are the staff you have just mentioned volunteering and working and committing their support to Foodbank?

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (Minister for Human Services) (15:03):** Gosh, how long is a piece of string? I'm not sure that I can even provide an answer to that particular question, but I will get some more details about the proposal between DHS and Foodbank and bring back a further reply.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (15:03):** My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing regarding public health. What do your projections and modelling show about how many ventilators our state may need to treat COVID-19 patients?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:03):** I refer the honourable member to my earlier answers, both today and yesterday.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (15:03):** A supplementary question arising from the answer: could the minister be specific about what his previous answers were, given the question is about ventilators in particular?

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister for Health and Wellbeing, you can choose to answer that if you wish.

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:04):** I have nothing to add to my previous answers.

#### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS (15:04):** My question is directed to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Will the minister update the council on the state government's response to COVID-19?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:04):** I thank the honourable member for his question. The COVID-19 pandemic is serious. This can't be said often enough. The Marshall Liberal government has a strong plan to respond to COVID-19 and is putting in place the measures we need to prepare South Australians based on the best advice of our public health clinicians.

On Sunday, the Premier announced a major emergency, requiring everyone entering the state, including residents, to self-isolate for 14 days. Consistent with other jurisdictions, we have closed restaurants and bars and implemented strict controls on social distancing at indoor and outdoor events.

These strong measures have been accompanied by a raft of health measures. So far, we have opened 18 clinics across metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia for dedicated COVID-19 testing. We have tested over 17,000 South Australians, one of the highest testing rates per capita in the world. We have identified three sites at dedicated facilities to be part of our COVID-19 response, with over 70 beds secured at College Grove, the old Wakefield hospital and the Repat.

This is not just an issue of the government's response. The whole community needs to respond to the challenge of COVID-19. This includes social distancing and the practice of good

hygiene, as well as compliance with orders regarding self-isolation. These measures can go a long way to flatten the curve of COVID-19.

One excellent example of a community pulling together at this time can be seen in the work put into the dedicated facilities that the government has secured. Last week, the Premier and I announced the opening of the old Wakefield hospital as a dedicated COVID-19 facility. A significant contribution was made to this through the generosity of Rotary. I pause and make the point, and acknowledge the contribution that the honourable member has made to Rotary over the years. I understand that he was given one of the highest accolades of that organisation, a Paul Harris Fellowship.

Rotary is a longtime friend of Australian health. Rotary has a dedicated fund that supports health, both health research and health services. On this occasion, their generosity was expressed by donating a variety of medical equipment, including 141 beds, 12 ECG monitors and seven ventilators, allowing early establishment of a COVID-19 facility in our state. This very generous donation has supported the government's rapid response to COVID-19, making beds available for those who are likely to need them most in the coming months. It is estimated that the value of these beds is around \$0.5 million.

On behalf of the South Australian government, I would like to thank Rotary for their support and generous donation to the state. This is a fantastic example of a community spirit that will help our state and our country to save lives and cope with the looming COVID-19 pandemic. I urge all South Australians to follow this example by doing their bit to stop COVID-19 through social distancing, good hygiene and compliance with self-isolation protocols.

### CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (15:07):** My questions are to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing regarding public health:

1. Is there sufficient personal protection equipment for our health staff, and how many gloves, gowns and masks have you stockpiled for hospital staff?
2. What orders have been placed for more personal protection equipment, who are the orders with, how much has been ordered and when will it arrive?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:08):** I thank the honourable member for her questions. It is no revelation that Australia faces a real challenge to respond to COVID-19 in the context of the supplies we need of personal protective equipment. In that regard, we work closely with the federal government, which is the custodian of the national medical stockpile. South Australian Health has its own stocks of PPE, but there is no doubt that one of the challenges of responding to COVID-19 is ensuring that we have enough PPE.

In that regard, that was one of the key factors that led to a decision being made by the national cabinet and that being announced today. For the information of the house, I will read an excerpt from a press release by the Prime Minister, made earlier today:

The National Cabinet is acting on the advice of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee that from 11.59pm (local time) on 25 March 2020 all non urgent elective surgery will be temporarily suspended. Only Category 1 and some exceptional Category 2 surgery will continue until further notice.

This will apply in both the public and the private health systems.

The commonwealth's Department of Health has ordered over 300m additional masks with 30m expected in the next two weeks, and 1m surgical gowns are on order to build on Australia's stockpile of medical protective equipment. Australian manufacturers have also been engaged to ramp up local equipment production.

By cancelling certain elective surgeries, the national cabinet is acting to preserve resources including protective equipment to help prepare public and private health services to prepare for their role in the Covid-19 outbreak.

So the point I make here is that, yes, we do have supplies, we do have challenges in that regard, so just as we cancel elective surgery during flu seasons, a collective decision has been made on this occasion because we have a collective challenge. The decision has been made to focus our elective surgery effort on the more urgent categories and to protect our protective equipment reserves through the measures that I have outlined.

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (15:10):** Supplementary arising from the answer: is it correct that SA Health's dashboard shows that over the past two days 578 scheduled elective surgery operations were cancelled in the SA public health system?

**The PRESIDENT:** It's interesting how you arrive at that as a supplementary question, but, minister.

*The Hon. E.S. Bourke interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Okay. The Minister for Health.

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:11):** It is hardly surprising.

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (15:11):** Supplementary—sorry, I didn't get to hear the answer.

**The Hon. R.I. Lucas:** 'It's hardly surprising,' he said.

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** Well, that's not a surprising answer. Exactly how many additional elective surgery operations were performed above and beyond what was funded in the past two weeks before today's cancellation of category 3 elective surgeries?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:11):** I am happy to take that question on notice.

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (15:11):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: is the minister aware of reports that the Royal Adelaide Hospital emergency department is already running short of goggles for clinicians, and what steps is the minister taking to ensure availability?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:11):** I'm not aware of the assertion. I will seek advice on that.

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (15:12):** Supplementary arising from the original answer: what is our current stock of N95 masks? Have all public hospital staff working in acute or high-risk areas been fit-tested for N95 masks? If not, why not?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:12):** They've got about 40,000 employees. I must admit, I am not sure how many thousands fit in the honourable member's question category, but it will take some time to ask each of them in relation to the honourable member's question, because she said, 'Have all been fitted?' I don't have that information. I will take that on notice. In relation to the first bit of the question, honourable member, would you mind reminding me?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** What is the current stock of N95 masks?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE:** I am happy to take that on notice, too.

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:12):** My question is to the Treasurer. What role, if any, is the Board of Treasurers undertaking in relation to cooperating on measures to combat the impacts of the coronavirus?

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (15:13):** As the Premier has indicated, the national cabinet has taken the preeminent role in terms of trying to coordinate state-based responses to the coronavirus pandemic. The Board of Treasurers, which has been operating for a year or two now—originally chaired by New South Wales Treasurer Mr Perrottet, chaired by me last year and now very capably chaired by comrade Tim Pallas from Victoria—is working assiduously together in terms of trying to see a coordinated and cooperative response between Liberal and Labor state and territory governments.

There has been an extraordinary level of cooperation. We have essentially teleconferenced almost twice a week in recent weeks. We just completed a teleconference with federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg at lunchtime today in terms of looking at coordinated responses right across the board. The states and territories are all looking at recovery and stimulus packages. They all come under different names.

Nevertheless, they try to address the key issues, firstly in trying to support our hardworking health colleagues in terms of providing support and, more importantly, funding for the important work that they are undertaking on our collective behalf, but secondly in terms of working together with all other ministers right across the board in terms of the economic recovery and trying to protect as many jobs as we can and to protect those who unfortunately may well have lost jobs.

The state government has announced its first stimulus package and, in the not too distant future, it will announce a second stimulus package. In all of that we have consulted with the Board of Treasurers in terms of trying to get the greatest degree of consistency. To be fair, both Liberal and Labor treasurers have been quite frank in sharing not only what they have done but what they are contemplating doing, and that has certainly assisted me, on behalf of the South Australian government, in contemplating what we might need to do in South Australia so that we are not significantly out of step in relation to what is being done in other states and territories.

Nevertheless, we are all different. We have a different capacity to respond but there are also differing needs in some of the states and territories, which has been acknowledged in slightly different responses to the industry and sector pressures we are each adopting. The most recent area where a lot of work is being done is in relation to the complicated area of both commercial and retail tenancies as well as residential tenancies. A lot of work is being led by a number of jurisdictions.

There is no conclusion to those views as yet, but the governments—both Labor and Liberal—have acknowledged that this is a big issue, given that the pandemic is going to be with us for a little time. There are businesses going out of business, and the issue of their retail tenancies and what governments might and might not do in terms of response will be a key issue not only for the tenants but also for the landlords in those circumstances.

## CORONAVIRUS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (15:16):** My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing regarding public health. Can the minister inform the chamber whether there has been a specific advertising campaign considered for the current COVID-19 crisis, and whether any new advertising creative product for this crisis has been produced in the past few weeks?

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:17):** Yes, I certainly can. This government appreciates the importance of getting timely information out to the community, and that is why on the Sunday before last there was an eight-page wraparound explaining to people how they could be part of the response to COVID-19 in terms of personal hygiene, social distancing and the like as well as the way people should go about seeking a COVID-19 test if they needed one.

Also, I think it was only last Sunday that the Stop the Spread campaign started in South Australia. That campaign is building on a message that SA Health has been putting out to the community for, I think, a year or two now but which has been refocused to relate to coronavirus. A lot of the personal hygiene issues that relate to influenza also relate to COVID-19.

Public messaging is also being done by the commonwealth, which we are seeking to complement, and public health authorities have been working with multicultural communities. In particular here I would like to acknowledge the work done by the Hon. Jing Lee to help connect the Chinese community, in particular, but a whole range of multicultural communities to the public health message. Through her support some particularly useful information is going to be made available in a whole range of languages.

Public messaging has also been strongly supported by the use of Facebook campaigns. A lot of the community updates are provided on live streamed Facebook presentations, and SA Health is going out of its way to seek to have a Deaf Can:Do translator to put the message to the widest possible community in South Australia.



We certainly have a range of media being used. I think the Stop the Spread campaign is everything from radio to bus shelters, because it is very important to make sure that we reach people who might not otherwise proactively engage in seeking information. We will continue to use social media advertising as well in a lot of unorthodox, to be frank, locations. It wasn't an SA Health message, but even one of my music streaming sites had a COVID-19 message. In a global pandemic we need to try to use a global reach to get the message out. SA Health will continue to do that.

*Matters of Interest*

**CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (15:21):** In many ways it is hard right now to find the words for this matter of importance, to find the words that best describe the loudest and most deafening sound of the impact of these unprecedented times we are faced with—and that is silence. I have for many years called the CBD my home. When I say 'my CBD' I do not just mean the bricks and mortar of my home; I mean the square I have surrounded my family with: North, South, East and West Terrace.

The hum and vibrancy of our streets connecting our cafes, restaurants, pubs and office buildings are the bones of this great city that I love calling home. But the vibrant and bustling morning streets in my community that are usually crowded with families running to the school gate, queueing for coffee and rushing to get to work have been replaced by a deafening sound of silence. It is a silence I wholeheartedly support, the silence that is protecting our community. It is this silence that is replicated across all communities locally, nationally and internationally.

But it is not just the worries about the health of our community that is keeping us up at night. It is also that silence—the silent cafe, the silent restaurant, the silent gym, the silent pub and the silent office block. There will not be a single individual who will not be confronted by the deafening sound of this silence. We have all seen the disturbing footage of queues circling around Centrelink offices, a sight that reminds us of the cost this invisible act of war is having on the world: the real stories; the real people this crisis is crippling day after day.

They are people like David, who spoke with my office over the phone yesterday. David is a photographer who has had all his future projects postponed indefinitely. He joined the tens of thousands of Australians around the country in Centrelink queues in the hope to secure much-needed funds. Also like many, David did not reach the front of the line. He did not speak to anyone. David is renting. He lives alone and has been living week to week. Because of his projects being cancelled, he does not know if he will be able to pay the rent at the end of this week. He is relying on his family, some of whom have already lost their jobs, too.

Unfortunately, David is not alone, and the queues will get much worse before they get better. We know a job is more than just putting money in your back pocket. A job provides a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose. This will be a difficult time not only financially but mentally for people in the growing Centrelink queues. My thoughts are with David and those who join him in their wait for support.

But the silence is not everywhere. It is not in our supermarkets, in our hospitals or in our schools, and there is no silence facing our emergency staff, for it is the front-line workers who will get us through the coming days, weeks and months, the same workers who will forgo seeing their loved ones to keep us safe and put food on our tables. Rarely do I echo the words of the Treasurer, but these are extraordinary times. Yesterday, the Treasurer thanked our health public servants at the front line of this crisis, but I would like to expand on who our front-line workers are who are tackling this crisis.

Thank you to our doctors, nurses, SA Pathology staff and all medical staff for testing, caring and supporting the unwell. Thank you to the public servants who are finding new beds and buildings to house the sick. Thank you to our police, who are protecting our borders, streets and neighbourhoods. Thank you to our teachers, who are soldiering on to keep our young minds active and strong. Thank you to our cleaners, who are helping to protect us from the invisible attack, and thank you to our supermarket workers who are often kids, who are also working in extraordinary conditions and being confronted with panic buying, abuse and disrespect for social distancing.

A nurse goes to work expecting to save a life. A teacher goes to work expecting to change a life. A police officer goes to work expecting to help a life, and a supermarket worker goes to work to help feed a life. If we can all be that loud voice that breaks the silence many are experiencing, let the loud voice be to remind everyone we are in this together.

### **CORONAVIRUS**

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (15:26):** We are indeed in a time of crisis. It is something that none of us could have foreseen, none of us have expected, and all of us are grappling with as we speak. We know that the information changes not just daily but hourly. We know that the guidelines change just as regularly.

As at 4pm yesterday, our borders were closed. The borders of South Australia were closed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 into our state, and this was a move supported by the opposition. Indeed, it was called for by Peter Malinauskas, the Leader of the Opposition, on Sunday. We were told this was done on the advice of South Australian health specialists, and of course it requires all people entering South Australia to isolate for 14 days from their arrival. These are essential measures that we need to ensure that the spread of this virus is contained or slowed down.

However, I want today to speak particularly about the impacts on cross-border community members. For those who do not live near a border, you might wonder who they are. These are people who live on a town or a property on one side of the border but regularly go to the other side of the border, perhaps for work, for school or for other essential daily tasks. Indeed, I used to be one of these. I lived in Strathdownie over the Victorian border but attended school in Mount Gambier. My father worked in Mount Gambier and so on.

The confusion for cross-border members of the community is immense at the moment. The border controls operated from 4 o'clock yesterday, but people are unsure how they are to obtain the exemptions if they are indeed a member of a cross-border community. The exemptions are there, but how to access them is incredibly confusing. There was advice that the health department's 1300 number included advice for people seeking exemptions. That was in relation to interstate travel bans as well as other matters. However, that number asked callers to put their request in writing with as much detail as possible about the exemption request and to email that to [sacovid19exemptions@sa.gov.au](mailto:sacovid19exemptions@sa.gov.au).

People who live or work near or across the border and need to seek an exemption, we were told, should send it to that email address. However, if one now sends an email to that address, we receive a message: 'Delivery has failed. Mailbox unavailable.' We have now seen advice that the department is shutting down that inbox and instead that people should go to [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au). This site does have a section on COVID-19 with a list of topics, one of which is Australian border closure details. One follows that through on the website and instead simply gets a copy of the declaration.

This is incredibly confusing for local people and incredibly distressing. People are already concerned that their jobs are at risk, or may have partners or other family members who have already lost their jobs, and they are absolutely frantic about the ability to keep their jobs, yet this border control is so totally confusing for them and there is no clear direction of what they should be doing.

I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to SAPOL at this difficult time. We want to pay tribute to all of the workers across many, many different service providers, but SAPOL is working incredibly hard under incredibly difficult circumstances and I want to pay tribute to them. But the government needs to provide clarity both to SAPOL and also to the many people who do live on one side of the border and yet go to school or work or other essential services across that border. I hope that the government will provide clarity soon because this is adding to the stress and distress of many regional residents.

### *Bills*

#### **CORONERS (UNDETERMINED NATURAL CAUSES) AMENDMENT BILL**

##### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 24 March 2020.)

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (15:32):** I rise to thank honourable members—or an honourable member I think—for their contribution to the second reading of the Coroners bill. The reason for the slight delay is that you are going to have to look at me as the Hon. Connie Bonaros because I am about to—on the honourable member's behalf, given her inability to be here this afternoon—summarise the views that she would wish to put on behalf of herself and SA-Best in relation to the Coroners bill.

**The Hon. E.S. Bourke:** You need to put on some high heels.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS:** I think it is fair to say the honourable member believes this to be the second best option. Clearly, she would prefer to be here but I did give an undertaking that I would do my very best to try to faithfully represent the views that she would wish to put, albeit not quote her word for word. The remainder of this contribution is a summation as best as I can of the honourable member's position on the second reading of the Coroners bill on behalf of SA-Best.

The member, Ms Bonaros, acknowledges that we live in unprecedented times and that SA-Best will do everything it can to support responses to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The honourable member points out that she had a Coroners (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill on the *Notice Paper* in 2019 and for the past 10 years or so has been a strong and outspoken advocate for sweeping reforms to the Coroners Act 2003. Had she not been absent from the chamber this week she was intending to give notice of the reintroduction of her 2019 bill as a 2020 bill, to which the government's bill before us today could have been a simple amendment.

The honourable member points out that, as the Attorney-General has noted, her bill was developed some months ago, well before the outbreak of COVID-19 and its impacts were contemplated. The member points out that the Coroner had requested changes some time ago and the Law Society of South Australia was given a draft of the bill on 27 February 2020. The member said:

Of course SA-BEST will not stand in the way of urgent legislation, but it is somewhat disappointing that we only became aware of this Bill yesterday when it was tabled in the House of Assembly, and we are being asked to vote on it today with no briefing and 24 hours to consider it.

I interpose here, and this is me speaking rather than the honourable member: as I understand it a briefing had been offered but the honourable member was obviously unable to take up the offer of the briefing. I return to the Hon. Ms Bonaros' contribution where she said that she would expect the government to be open to revisiting the wider suite of reforms required to the Coroners Act 2003 and the actual impacts of this bill at a later time. The honourable member said:

We recognise we have to support the Bill as it is, however, we would have liked to see a provision for a review and a sunset clause in the Bill, especially since it is retrospective in its operation—that is, pre COVID-19.

The honourable member said they would have also liked to have seen the suggestion of the Law Society of South Australia for a safeguard clause requiring the Coroner to provide a brief report of the reasonable grounds on which he, the Coroner, has based his decision that it was an undetermined death by natural causes to have been included.

The honourable member points out that the sign-off of the senior available next of kin should have been markedly improved as this person is placed in a very powerful position in the bill. The honourable member says it was of some comfort that the Coroner can still pursue an investigation even if the senior available next of kin does not support it. The honourable member then goes on to say, and I quote:

Nevertheless, SA-BEST supports the Bill because we have long recognised the Coroner's workload was already untenable on the inadequate budget it is allocated by this Government.

I will not respond, Mr President, with my views in relation to that. The honourable member then said:

We also recognise that Forensic Science SA pathologists have been straining under their workload and limited budget for some time.

COVID-19 is going to have huge resourcing implications for both the Coroner's Court and Forensic Science SA services and we support anything—

that is, the honourable member's party—

we can do to assist them throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The honourable member concludes by saying that it is still her intention to reintroduce her bill and work through all of the issues confronting the Coroner's jurisdiction and their broader implications on our community. Her bill, she indicates, will include a review of these provisions post COVID-19. With that, Mr President, I hope the Hon. Ms Bonaros, on behalf of SA-Best, believes that I have fairly represented and re-presented her views to the chamber in relation to the position on the bill.

The bottom line is that whilst she has expressed some concerns she, as I said and I quoted, nevertheless supports the bill—'nevertheless, SA-BEST supports the bill,' etc. With that, I conclude my contribution on the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

*Committee Stage*

Bill taken through committee without amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (15:40):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

**SUPPLY BILL 2020**

*Introduction and First Reading*

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

*Second Reading*

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (15:42):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Given the extraordinary circumstances, I will actually read the second reading to members in the chamber. It is not a very long one.

A supply bill is necessary to be enacted as soon as possible to provide appropriation authority from the beginning of the financial year until the Governor's assent is given to the Appropriation Bill 2020. The Appropriation Act 2019 expires on 30 June 2020. The Supply Bill 2020 provides interim appropriation authority from 1 July 2020 until the Appropriation Bill 2020 is passed.

The bill is required in order to respond to the delay in the 2020-21 state and commonwealth budgets, as agreed by national cabinet, to mitigate risks associated with any possible delays or issues arising from COVID-19 and to enable the operations of government to be paid for for the period from 1 July 2020 until the Appropriation Bill is approved.

This bill provides additional time and flexibility for the passing of the 2020 Appropriation Bill. In the absence of special arrangements in the form of the supply act, there would be no parliamentary authority for expenditure between the commencement of the new financial year and the date on which assent is given to the main Appropriation Bill. The amount being sought under this bill is \$15.336 billion. This amount is based on the budgeted appropriations that were required for the 2019-20 financial year.

In adding a few words to the Supply Bill second reading, I want to acknowledge the consideration of the Leader of the Opposition in another place, Mr Malinauskas, and in particular the shadow treasurer, Mr Mullighan. They, at very short notice, considered the government's request in relation to the bill and at very short notice expedited its passage through the House of Assembly today. Probably in no other circumstances has either a government asked for such a large sum of money nor an opposition expedited its passage through the state parliament.

The fact that we are facing an unprecedented situation in relation to COVID-19, one where we have the federal budget being delayed until October, all state and territory governments, even a

couple that are facing elections between now and then, have agreed to delay their state and territory budgets until after the federal budget, which means that we will not see our budget here probably until November at its earliest, possibly even December, but I hope it will be some time in November.

The normal passage for appropriation bills, appropriately, with estimates committees in the House of Assembly and other considerations, means that there is a slim chance it might pass before Christmas, nevertheless there is some chance it might extend over to the February session in 2021. The extraordinary circumstances that governments confront at the moment is that the precise nature of the Appropriation Bill later this year is impossible to predict at this stage. Governments at this stage—state and federal, Labor and Liberal—are simply writing cheques to meet the extraordinary extra costs that the health system requires in combating the unprecedented nature of the coronavirus pandemic.

Governments, state and federal, Liberal and Labor, are also writing almost unlimited checks in trying to cope with the job losses, the industry losses and the impacts right across the board that we are only just beginning to see with the coronavirus pandemic, as businesses and industries shut down, close down, either forcibly because of a government decision or as a result of the inevitable impacts of people not being able to get around to do the things they might otherwise do and spend in the way they might otherwise spend. This sum of money is extraordinary at \$15.3 billion. It is significantly higher than any other supply bill because the supply bills in the past have really only had to cater for four or maybe five months of supply until the appropriation bill is passed.

I conclude by thanking again the assembly members of the opposition and the crossbenchers. I also thank the Hon. Mr Maher, who has carriage of the bill as Leader of the Opposition in this chamber. I also thank the crossbenchers, who are unable to be with us today, in acknowledging the importance of being able to continue to pay doctors, nurses, teachers and police and providing essential public services for a period of perhaps nine to 12 months as we cope with the global pandemic. With that, I thank honourable members for their forbearance and for their indication and willingness, as I understand it, to support the bill and the passage of the bill in an emergency fashion today.

#### Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1 is formal.

Clause 2 provides relevant definitions.

Clause 3 provides for the appropriation of up to \$15.336 million.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (15:48):** I rise briefly on behalf of the opposition to indicate our support for this bill and for its passage through the council today. I note this bill was introduced in the House of Assembly this morning, passed shortly thereafter and only came to us in recent minutes. Whilst the procedure is highly unusual for the appropriation of such a large sum—some \$15.3 billion—to be approved in such a remarkably short time frame, we are all keenly aware of the unprecedented times we find ourselves in.

The opposition has been advised that the state budget will be delayed in line with the commonwealth's decision to defer the 2020 federal budget. Given this situation, it is important that a supply bill of this nature be passed to ensure the continuing function of government-run services, particularly during the current public health emergency. Public servants must be provided their wages, invoices must be paid, and grants must be allocated in the usual way. We recognise that this is particularly true in the uncertain economic environment which we face. The opposition reiterates our call for additional stimulus to be provided by the state government, particularly given that supply will be secured with the passage of this bill.

The pandemic situation raises economic challenges for people from all walks of life. As governments across the country take measures to slow the spread of the virus we are all having to adjust to the new ways of life. Businesses are closing their doors, with the flow-on affecting thousands of workers across the state and their ability to make ends meet. Families are facing growing uncertainty and anxiety, and the state government must ensure adequate stimulus is provided not merely for the bringing forward of already planned expenditure but for new funds to support households, individuals and businesses to survive.

In providing the government with unprecedented financial capacity to respond to this crisis, the opposition notes the importance of parliamentary oversight of the executive. This chamber and the other place are critical to ensure that the laws are made and amended and that we not only provide more funds but that they are spent to the greatest benefit of our community. Just like we are asking others to work and ensure that our society gets from one end of this crisis to the other, each of us has an obligation to do our jobs as well as we can. In closing, I reiterate that the opposition supports the Supply Bill and looks forward to it passing very swiftly.

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (15:50):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his indication of support for the bill.

Bill read a second time.

*Committee Stage*

Bill taken through committee without amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (15:52):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

**THE WYATT BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION INCORPORATED (OBJECTS) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Introduction and First Reading*

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

**CORONERS (UNDETERMINED NATURAL CAUSES) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Standing Orders Suspension*

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (16:01):** I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable the Clerk to deliver the messages and the Supply Bill and the Coroners (Undetermined Natural Causes) Amendment Bill to the Speaker of the House of Assembly whilst the Legislative Council is not sitting and notwithstanding the fact that the House of Assembly is not sitting.

**The PRESIDENT:** There being an absolute majority present, I will accept the motion.

Motion carried.

*Adjournment Debate*

**SITTINGS AND BUSINESS**

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (16:02):** I move:

That the council at its rising do adjourn until Tuesday 7 April 2020.

In speaking to this motion, I outline to the honourable members who are here the reasons for it. As honourable members will know, we have a planning meeting late on a Monday afternoon, which was just two days ago. At that meeting I outlined to all members and, I think, representatives of some members who were unable to be with us on that particular occasion that it was the government's intention, at least in the Legislative Council, to be sitting for the three days. Members will recall that some Labor members, I think, were indicating a willingness to speak on a couple of bills for Thursday of this particular week.

What has occurred in the interim has been a range of things. Firstly, unbeknownst to me, two further crossbenchers were unable to be with us yesterday and for the remainder of the week. I think I found out mid to late morning that another two crossbenchers—therefore, all five crossbenchers—were going to be unable to be with us in relation to participating in proceedings of the council.

Each of them in a number of ways indicated their unwillingness for various bills to proceed whilst they were unable to be with us. My advice is that all five members are going to be unable to be with us tomorrow to participate in the proceedings of the Legislative Council. I might say, and I

am sure I speak on behalf of all members, that I wish all of those members well in relation to whatever issues they are confronting.

The other issue that has occurred is as a result of national cabinet meetings and the various decisions which were occurring at a rapid pace in relation to various stages of national lockdowns and border closures. It was imperative for the government to do what has just been passed in the assembly and the council, which was to pass a supply bill through both houses of the parliament.

We understood the enormity of what was being asked of the parliament, in particular the opposition members. In the discussions I had with the Premier this morning, who had spoken to the Leader of the Opposition, the government's position was that we knew the enormity of the task but, whilst the government's preference was to have the bill passed by both houses today, the alternative option would be to come back tomorrow to pass the Supply Bill. I have already acknowledged and thanked the leaders of the opposition in both houses and the shadow treasurer for their willingness to support the passage of the Supply Bill through both houses today, which was the main work that had to be done this week.

As I have acknowledged privately to the Leader of the Opposition in this place, I apologise for any inconvenience to him, and to you, as opposition colleagues. It is certainly not our normal way of doing business. You have my assurance of that. As I indicated to the Leader of the Opposition, I am the first to acknowledge that the government does not control the numbers in this particular chamber. If the majority—the opposition and the crossbenchers—by way of vote choose to vote differently, it is entirely their prerogative and we would respect that particular decision of those members of the chamber. We acknowledge that. It is a decision that you as members of the chamber can take.

As best as I am advised—and this is a moving feast—my understanding of the email that I have seen from the Greens indicated that they would vote against any motion which adjourned the council later than the next scheduled sitting week, which was the week beginning 6 April. The Assembly of Members is intended to be on Tuesday, 7 April at 10am for the election of the replacement of the Hon. Andrew McLachlan. As the Labor Party would know, you have for four sitting weeks agreed to a pair for the absent Mr McLachlan. We now have a proposed replacement for Mr McLachlan, and it was proposed to have an Assembly of Members on the morning of 7 April, which is our next scheduled sitting week.

I have seen an email and my whip has advised me, and I take him at his word, that he has had advice from SA-Best that they would support an adjournment to the next sitting week. I am unaware of the position of the Hon. Mr Darley. I indicated to the leader and to the Opposition Whip that, if they wanted a suspension of standing orders, to speak to the five crossbenchers to indicate whether or not they supported the motion to adjourn to 7 April. I would support a suspension of the sitting of the council for a few minutes, or for however long you need to consult with them, if you so choose. I am quite prepared for you to have that consultation, if you wish.

It is the government's position that the assembly has now adjourned, with no division I am told, to 7 April to do its business. It is the government's position and it would make sense that we would adjourn to 7 April for the same purpose to see whether or not there is any urgent legislative work that we need to do in relation to the coronavirus on that particular day, and given that it is highly likely we will be having an Assembly of Members in the morning for the election of the replacement member in the Legislative Council.

Finally, I place on the record that at the meeting of treasurers today I did a quick round robin of the other parliaments. I do not believe we are out of step—we have not taken our next step yet—but the federal parliament and the Tasmanian parliament have both adjourned until August. The Victorian parliament and the Queensland parliament, both under Labor governments, have advised me that they may well meet for one more day to pass urgent legislation and then it is likely to go into a significant adjournment of their state parliaments.

The New South Wales Treasurer advised me it was likely that they would do the same. The Western Australian Labor Treasurer, Ben Wyatt, advised me they were likely to do the same as well, that is, to maybe meet for a day to pass urgent legislation and then to have the parliament sit in abeyance for a period as we, hopefully, move through the worst of the coronavirus pandemic.

So they are the circumstances in the other jurisdictions. That will be a decision that we will have to take either tomorrow, if we reconvene tomorrow, or 7 April, if we reconvene 7 April, as to the length of any adjournment of the parliament, whilst always acknowledging that, if there is urgent legislation, there are provisions for the parliament to be reconvened in an emergency to pass legislation or consider something that might need to be considered.

For those reasons, I apologise to the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition Whip for the late advice. It has been a very quickly moving feast, from my viewpoint, in terms of what happened. I only found out in the early afternoon after they passed the Supply Bill. My question to the whip was, 'What day did they adjourn to: was it tomorrow or 7 April?' and he advised me they had adjourned to 7 April and that there had not been a division on it. I do not know whether there was any position put by the opposition. The Leader of the Opposition in this chamber may or may not know what position they put in relation to it.

With that, I am in the hands of the house. As I said, the offer of suspension, to allow you to consult with the crossbenchers if you wish, is there for you. We are not intent on trying to sneak anything through on a vote. I am not even sure what the numbers are without the five crossbenchers here. We would have to work out a pairing arrangement in relation to an understanding of their pairs if there was to be a division on this vote anyway. With that, I move the motion on behalf of the government.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Leader of the Opposition) (16:11):** I rise on behalf the opposition to express some disappointment at the way this has been handled today. I think most people have generally regarded the way the Leader of the Government has run this chamber as being conducive to the effective management of this chamber. I know, as the leader stated, as of Monday it was the intention to sit as per normal for three days this week. During the course of this afternoon, I have been asked by members of the Labor opposition, 'Will we be sitting tomorrow?' to which I could only go on the information that had been provided by the government as a definite yes.

I note that the leader said that earlier this afternoon it became apparent they were not going to be sitting. It is disappointing that the Leader of the Government did not see fit to consult with the opposition when he found out it was unlikely to be sitting, but instead consulted 15 minutes ago as we were about to move into this motion. I take the advice on face value as to the Greens' and SA-Best's view that they would not oppose adjourning until the 7 April sitting date, so on that basis we will lodge our objection to it but we will not be dividing on this motion, understanding where four of the five crossbenchers sit on this motion.

I would, however, appreciate if the Leader of the Government, who I presume gets to sum up this motion, might indicate what the current view of the government is about sitting beyond 7 April, noting that the history of the South Australian parliament has been one that has continued on during times of great upheaval. I think during both World Wars the South Australian parliament sat. During the last great epidemic, the Spanish flu, the South Australian parliament sat.

We would like to know what the government's current intention is with the sitting of the South Australian parliament and also what the intention is on that Tuesday when we come back. If there is to be a joint sitting, will there also be a question time that day in addition to considering any urgent legislation? What opportunity will the opposition or crossbenchers have in relation to moving and prosecuting legislation they consider urgent to deal with this crisis?

With those words, we are disappointed in the way the government has chosen to handle this. We would like to have come back tomorrow. Question time is a very important way to hold an executive accountable and in times of great crisis when great decisions need to be made, in some ways that becomes even more important. Knowing where the numbers are, we will not divide on the motion to not sit tomorrow but would appreciate those few questions about the government's current intention to sit beyond that first sitting day, what the government intends to happen on the first sitting day, particularly in relation to question time and the ability of private members to move motions or move legislation themselves.

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (Treasurer) (16:14):** I thank the honourable leader for a very fair contribution to the debate. I have just had a text from the Hon. Tammy Franks, who is either watching us—she must have better things to do—or else someone has told her, and she has indicated she



supports the adjournment until 7 April. So I can say that I have had a text directly from the Hon. Tammy Franks, and I say to the Hon. Tammy Franks: you should get on with your life and we all wish you well.

In relation to the honourable member's questions, I will give an undertaking on behalf of the government that it would have been something that I would have fought for from opposition, that if we adjourn to 7 April, we will have a question time in the Legislative Council. I do not support the notion. There have been occasions in the past where parliaments have rolled across from the Thursday to the Friday and there has not been a question time. I always opposed those. If we are having a new day, it is a new day, and there will be a question time and we will be answerable to the opposition for questions. I will not be as generous in relation to considering private members' bills being rushed through or whatever, but you can try whatever it is you wish in relation to that if you get the numbers, but of course it is only the Legislative Council.

In relation to the government's position, I think one of the advantages of adjourning until 7 April—and I know a couple of the other states are saying they are going to sit for one more day, which is tomorrow, and then adjourn for five months—is that, in this sort of circumstance, and my experience tells me, and my brief experience of this particular pandemic is, we are continuing to see things that might need to be changed or amended to give powers to either the state coordinator or to the public health officer, or whoever else it might happen to be.

We have just not envisaged some of the circumstances, and Crown law being as assiduous as it is says, 'Well, look, that's a great idea but this particular legislation prevents it.' One of the areas that I indicated in question time that governments are looking at is in relation to commercial tenancies, which is—the commercial tenancies or whatever it is, I forget the correct name for it—the act that governs commercial tenancies. Depending on what national cabinet agrees and various state governments agree, we may or may not require some temporary short-term amendments to landlord and tenant legislation to try to keep some small businesses operational.

As the member will know, one of the shadow ministers from another house implored me during the five-minute break, when we got a coffee, that shadow minister was being inundated with concerns about people in one particular industry sector, businesses who were facing ruin because of the current attitude of landlords in relation to the tenancies that they have, and asking me on behalf of the government whether we were prepared to have a look at doing something in relation to those commercial tenancies.

We are aware of those concerns and the national cabinet is looking at them. We are not sure what the solutions are, but potentially some of the solutions involve emergency changes to legislation which might be limited to the period of the coronavirus pandemic. There might be others as well in relation to urgent legislation, which might need to be considered. I would hope that if the government had urgent legislation that we were in a position where we have consulted with the shadow ministers and the Leader of the Opposition in relation to the work that might be done on 7 April. It at least gives us time beforehand. Cabinet would meet on that particular Monday to have at least advised the opposition and crossbenchers that there is going to be an attempt by the government to amend this legislation for these particular reasons. That would be my wish. It at least gives us some time, if we adjourn to 7 April, to consider what might need to be done urgently.

The final question the honourable member asked is: what is the government's intent? The honest answer is that there is no government intent at this stage. It is certainly as I recounted to the house in the quick discussion that I had with other governments at lunchtime today. There is no other house in the commonwealth that is currently contemplating sitting in an ongoing fashion between now and the end of the year, and that is Labor, Liberal, state and federal. I think I ran through the quick summary that the ministers and treasurers gave me at lunchtime today of their governments' intentions, so I will not run through them again.

Ultimately, that is a decision for both houses again. If the government has the numbers in the assembly, it could ensure that the house meets at the particular times it chooses—if it has the numbers to do so. If the Legislative Council voted differently we again acknowledge that we do not have the numbers in this chamber, etc.

There seems to be an overwhelming unanimous view—with the exception at this stage of South Australia, because we have not indicated our position—of whether or not it is advisable for parliaments to sit over the coming months, other than for emergency legislation. However, that is a decision that we have to take on 7 April, and there may well be discussions between the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. Those discussions will take place at a higher pay grade than I have in relation to the Premier and the government's intentions and the Leader of the Opposition.

With that and in concluding the debate, as I said, I thank the honourable leader for the nature and the tenor of the contribution he made and the fact that he indicated that there will not be opposition, whilst expressing some reservations about the process. I acknowledge that and look forward to seeing all members hopefully happy, healthy and hearty on 7 April.

Motion carried.

At 16:21 the council adjourned until Tuesday 7 April 2020 at 14:15.