

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, 31 May 2022

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens)** took the chair at 14:18 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.

Bills

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC HEALTH (COVID-19) AMENDMENT BILL

Assent

Her Excellency the Governor assented to the bill.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Hon. K.J. Maher)—

Regulations under Acts—

Native Vegetation Act 1991—Repeal of Regulation 23A—Clearance in Flinders Chase National Park

Fair Trading Act 1987—Review of Ticket Scalping Provisions—Report by Consumer and Business Services

Interim Report by the South Australian Law Reform Institute on the review of the Mental Health Act 2009 (SA)

Progress of devolved governance in the SA health system: Review of the Health Care Act 2008

By the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development (Hon. C.M. Scriven)—

Corporation By-Laws—

Copper Coast—No. 7—Waste management

Regulations under Acts—

Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012—Reporting Requirements

Report on the review of 2019 Management Plan for the South Australian Charter Boat Fishery—Outcomes—Dated April 2022

Ministerial Statement

NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR REPROFILE

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:22): I table a copy of a ministerial statement relating to the north-south corridor reprofile made earlier today in another place by my colleague the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport.

BROMPTON GASWORKS INDEPENDENT REVIEW

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:22): I table a copy of a ministerial statement relating to the Brompton Gasworks independent review made earlier today in another place by my colleague the Minister for Housing and Urban Development.

*Question Time***NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR**

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:31): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Primary Industries about the delays to the north-south corridor project.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: On 28 May 2022, it was reported that the Minister for Transport was delaying the north-south corridor project by 12 months. My question to the minister is: can the minister please explain what Labor's 12-month delay of the north-south corridor road upgrade means for the regions?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:32): I thank the honourable member for her question and her interest in regional transport. The north-south corridor, of course, is a responsibility of the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport in the other place. I am more than happy to refer that question to him and seek his input into the potential impacts in terms of both positive and negative impacts of this corridor, which of course is an important freight route for people throughout the state as well as interstate. I will refer that to him in the other place and bring back an answer to the chamber.

STATE BUDGET

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:33): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development regarding the upcoming budget. Can the minister confirm to the people of South Australia that funding to her department for FTE programs or services will not be cut by her government in the upcoming state budget?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:33): I thank the honourable member for her question. I think today is 31 May and I think the budget is being handed down on 2 June. Of course, it is always possible that—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —there is a mistake with those dates. I don't actually have a calendar right in front of me—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —but I think it is on the parliamentary sitting calendar when the budget will be handed down. I am very confident that that is—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —on Thursday, and when that budget is handed down I am sure the budget papers will be a source of great enlightenment for the honourable member, the Leader of the Opposition.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I am sure she will look forward to perusing those. I am sure the budget as delivered by this government will be to the point, to the future of South Australia, not just for the next four years but for future generations, because of course the Malinauskas Labor government, when in opposition, went to the electors of South Australia talking about a vision for the future. We weren't there ignoring the regions, we weren't there ignoring peak bodies, we weren't

there ignoring those who had a difference of opinion to ourselves, because we think it's important to be inclusive of those with other opinions. What I hear over and over—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I hear the opposition laughing about the idea of being inclusive to those who have different opinions. Of course, that's quite representative of the former Liberal government and their attitude. We hear from business groups, we hear from individuals, we hear from peak bodies, we hear from people throughout the state that the former Liberal government didn't want to hear any opinions other than opinions that aligned with their own, which is no doubt why those members opposite are laughing about the concept of actually listening to them. To come back to the particular question, the budget is on Thursday, and I look forward to further questions after the budget has been released.

STATE BUDGET

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:35): Supplementary: so the minister cannot confirm that there won't be any budget cuts to her department?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:35): I note that I think it is a confusing question in terms of double negatives. However, what I can tell the honourable member is that the budget is revealed when the budget is revealed, and the revealing of the budget will be on Thursday.

On Thursday there will be budget papers. There will be a budget speech. I appreciate that there are a number of new members and they perhaps do not realise that things are not ruled in and out of a budget before the budget is handed down, but I do suggest perhaps the honourable Leader of the Opposition would like to talk to the former Treasurer, the Hon. Rob Lucas, who was in this place for so long—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —and I am sure—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I was suggesting that perhaps the Leader of the Opposition might like to consult with the former Treasurer, the Hon. Rob Lucas, if she is not sure of how the processes around the budget do occur. I certainly would make no criticism of her, if that's the case—we are all new to this—but I think it's important that she realises that it would not be at all appropriate to either rule things in or rule things out.

The Hon. N.J. Centofanti interjecting:

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I now hear the honourable Leader of the Opposition saying it would be outrageous to rule things in and rule things out, and I agree with her on that: it would, indeed, be outrageous, which is why, obviously, I cannot answer her questions about the budget in anticipation of the budget.

STATE BUDGET

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (14:37): Supplementary: is the minister doing anything to protect her department, a very key department, from massive cuts under the new government?

The PRESIDENT: Minister, you can choose to answer that, if you want. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition, third question.

REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:37): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development about the Regional Growth Fund.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: The Regional Growth Fund includes \$10 million for the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development to commit to strategic regional growth projects, which is open year round for applications, and a \$10 million Opening our Great Outdoors pool over two years, 2021-2022 to 2022-23. My questions to the minister are:

1. Has the minister received any strategic regional growth project applications since her appointment and, if so, how many?
2. Will the Malinauskas Labor government continue the Marshall Liberal government's commitment to support economic-generating regional tourism initiatives through the continuation of the Opening our Great Outdoors funding pool for 2022-23 and maintain the current level of funding allocated to this program?
3. Will the Malinauskas Labor government commit to the continuation of the Regional Growth Fund at the current funding levels beyond the current financial year?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:38): I thank the honourable member for her question. The Malinauskas Labor government will continue to invest in regional areas through the Regional Growth Fund, including a focus on projects that act as enablers to regional industries. We want to see regional industries and the Regional Growth Fund assisting in growing jobs and in strengthening those regional communities. The Malinauskas Labor government will maintain the \$15 million per annum for regional development funding. Members might recall—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The minister will continue to answer the question.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: And if I had been allowed to continue, I would have said: the Malinauskas Labor government will maintain the \$15 million per annum for regional development funding, as outlined in our pre-election commitments. Applications to the Regional Growth Fund will be considered in light of the change of government and the budget context. Now, of course, the government looks forward to building on its own strong track record in investing in regional communities. From 2014 to 2018—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —the regional development fund grants program—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! I can't hear the minister. I want to hear the minister. Please, continue.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: From 2014 to 2018, the regional development fund, as it was called then, had a grants program that drove economic growth and productivity by investing in regional infrastructure, creating jobs and new opportunities for regional South Australia. As a result of the then Labor Premier's agreement with the regional development minister, the Hon. Geoff Brock MP, the funding available through the RDF grants program increased from \$1.6 million per annum to \$15 million per annum.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: The broad objectives of the regional development fund grants program were to support regional economic development by creating new jobs and improving career opportunities; provide better infrastructure facilities and services; strengthen the economic, social and environmental base of communities; support the development and delivery of projects; and leverage funding and investment.

We saw a number of announcements just prior to the election—and when I say just prior, I mean very close to just prior, as in the week or a couple of weeks beforehand—on a number of different programs. It is interesting to note that a number of those have had, it would seem, very little background information provided and some of them seem to be more akin simply to election announcements rather than a well thought through policy that would really look at how things would enable regional industries to grow in their jobs and strengthen those regional communities.

I have had feedback in regard to the way that the former Liberal government did treat a number of different grant programs. In terms of the Regional Growth Fund going forward: as I mentioned, we will maintain our election commitments.

REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:42): Supplementary: will the minister be honouring those applications that were approved prior to the 2022 state election?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:42): If the honourable member would like to provide a list of the specific programs or projects that she's referring to, I'm happy to take that on notice. The reason I suggest she might like to do that is that the question arises over what was a commitment: just an announcement? Is that a commitment? Is that what she's referring to? In terms of those that are signed off, if they are already signed off and there is a deed in place, then obviously they will continue.

REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:42): Supplementary question arising out of the original answer: can the minister advise what the regional export growth was from 2014 to 2018 as a result of that particular fund?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:43): That doesn't relate to the original question.

The Hon. J.M.A. Lensink: Yes, it does, because you referred to it.

The PRESIDENT: Minister, you did refer to the 2014-18 period. You can answer it how you see fit.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I think I've already answered that.

GIANT AUSTRALIAN CUTTLEFISH

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (14:43): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister inform the chamber about the actions the government is taking to protect the giant Australian cuttlefish?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:43): I thank the honourable member for his question and his interest in this iconic species. It was my pleasure last week to be in Whyalla with the local member for Giles, the Hon. Eddie Hughes MP, to announce that the giant Australian cuttlefish would once again be protected in the northern waters of the Upper Spencer Gulf.

The giant Australian cuttlefish does live up to its name: it is the largest of all the cuttlefish species, with males growing to a particularly big size, I'm told, of up to 50 centimetres long and weighing up to 10 kilograms. I was told by Matt, who runs the Cuttys glass-bottom boat tours, that they get closer to a metre long, and I did see some quite large ones while I was there in Whyalla. However, Matt did also advise that he doesn't let facts get in the way of a good story, so I don't know if he is spinning me a line or not, but certainly the giant cuttlefish are significant in their size.

Giant Australian cuttlefish can be found across most southern coastal waters of Australia and from the Ningaloo Reef in WA to the east coast of Queensland. Each winter, tens of thousands of giant Australian cuttlefish aggregate to spawn on a discrete area of rocky reef in the Northern Spencer Gulf. 'Why is this special?' you might ask. I am glad you asked. The dense spawning aggregation of giant Australian cuttlefish is the only known event of its type anywhere in the world—the only known event of its type anywhere in the world.

During the breeding process, male cuttlefish put on an amazing display of colours and shapes to attract a mate. It makes for a spectacular show. The natural phenomenon and the sheer numbers of the species that congregate in the waters of the Upper Spencer Gulf make this a tourism drawcard for our state and, in particular, the regional areas around the Upper Spencer Gulf, particularly Whyalla. In one of the great nature-based experiences not only in the state but the world, many tourists and locals alike brave the cold winter waters and snorkel or dive amongst the giant Australian cuttlefish during the spawning aggregation.

The Hon. S.G. Wade: What's the government doing?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I am told that if you are moving slowly enough you can get quite close to these majestic creatures because they tend to have one thing and one thing only on their mind: they are said, because of that, to appear oblivious to humans who take the opportunity to watch this amazing spectacle. Of course, it is a case of respecting their space and most certainly looking but not touching.

Visiting Whyalla last week, we were fortunate to experience this world-class phenomenon aboard Cuttys boat tours on their brand-new glass-bottom boat. Much as I would have loved to have braved the cold winter waters of the Upper Spencer Gulf last week and dive in to see these amazing creatures, I thought it best on this occasion to stay dry and warm. I can say, though, that I didn't miss very much of this extraordinary experience because the glass-bottom boat gives you an amazing perspective and full appreciation of what we witnessed with these incredible creatures. It was a wonderful reminder of the importance of this closure to the region and the many visitors who will be able to visit Whyalla throughout the cuttlefish aggregation season from May to August.

The giant Australian cuttlefish has been subject to protection for many years through a permanent cephalopod fishing closure from Point Lowly to Whyalla. This closure also includes squid and octopus within the protected zone. However, numbers over the years have fluctuated and, in 2013, SARDI reported that the giant Australian cuttlefish population had decreased by approximately 90 per cent over a 13-year period—a decrease of 90 per cent. In response to this, in April 2013, the then government put in place a spatial closure of the fishing of this species in waters north of a line between Arno Bay and Wallaroo.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: The fishing closure expired in February 2020 under the former Liberal government.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: No doubt this is the crux of the reason we are having so many interjections from those opposite, calling out and interjecting because they are ashamed that the former Liberal government failed to continue this closure. If they are not ashamed, they should be—they certainly should be. This is an iconic species and the former Liberal government failed to continue the protection of cuttlefish that had been so successful in restoring their numbers.

The annual assessment of the giant Australian cuttlefish in 2021—that is, the year following the former government letting the spatial fishing closure in the Upper Spencer Gulf expire—saw the lowest number recorded in seven years, at approximately 107,847 individuals, which I am advised was down from 247,146 the year prior to the ban lapsing on the Liberals' watch. So I am very pleased to say, in answer to the Hon. Mr Wade's question about what the government is doing, that the Malinauskas Labor government has delivered on its election commitment to reinstate the spatial closure of fishing for giant Australian cuttlefish in the Upper Spencer Gulf.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: That's right. This will assist to protect and preserve one of the natural wonders of South Australian marine life and support the huge potential that exists for nature-based tourism in places such as Whyalla. Importantly, the spatial closure of fishing for cuttlefish—so that's that large closure—will not impact on fishing for calamari, particularly in the marine scale fishery, as they can continue to be harvested in the area of that large closure.

I am advised that previous cuttlefish fishing closures in the Upper Spencer Gulf have not appeared to reduce the harvest of calamari. This decision aligns with a significant investment by governments and the Whyalla city council over the years in tourism infrastructure to support and facilitate the numbers of people who want to share in this experience.

By ensuring that the cuttlefish are protected in an area of such importance to their life cycle and breeding it is hoped that their numbers cannot only remain sustainable but grow further. This is vitally important to the regions around the Upper Spencer Gulf, which need this shapeshifting, colour changing chameleon of the sea—shall I say that again, this shapeshifting, colour changing chameleon of the sea; it was just such a good description—to continue to thrive, bringing with it more tourists to the region who can enjoy the experiences to be had both in the water and on the land.

I would like to thank the honourable Eddie Hughes, member for Giles, for his tireless advocacy for this change, on behalf of his constituents. I would also like to recognise his achievement—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —in having the cuttlefish closure put back in place, which is good news of course for the cuttlefish but also for tourism and jobs in his electorate, and in our state. The Whyalla City Council was also very active in the space, and they are doing an excellent job in terms of maximising the tourism benefits of the cuttlefish closure.

The PRESIDENT: Just before we go into supplementary questions, minister, that was an extremely long Dorothy Dixier. You got a fair bit of leeway because it was about Whyalla, but I can't be that parochial and partial all the time. So I expect those Dorothy Dixers to be within that four to five-minute range.

The Hon. C.M. Scriven interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: No, I can't be biased all the time about Whyalla. So supplementary question from the Hon. Mr Pangallo.

GIANT AUSTRALIAN CUTTLEFISH

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:51): I note that the Premier today at a hydrogen conference has announced that they are seeking expressions of interest—

An honourable member interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: This is a supplementary; you've just got to ask your question, Frank.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: —about the mystical hydrogen plant. Labor's preferred option is Point Lowly, where we know the cuttlefish gather. Can the minister provide assurances that should this mystical plant proceed there will be an EIS conducted to ensure that cuttlefish and their breeding ground will not be endangered either by the hydrogen plant or the proposed desalination plant that is also slated for that area?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:52): I thank the honourable member for his supplementary question, and I am very confident that all the environmental protections will be in place, the assessments and appropriate conditions will be in place, before any projects, including those that the honourable member refers to, will proceed.

GIANT AUSTRALIAN CUTTLEFISH

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:52): Supplementary: did the minister consult with either the recreational or the commercial fishers before reinstating the temporary closure?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:52): There are a couple of things to note, first of all to remind honourable members that this spatial closure was in place until it was allowed to lapse under the

former Liberal government. So it had been there for many years, since 2013, as I mentioned in my answer to the original question. It was also publicised as a pre-election commitment and therefore all of the sectors were aware of that decision and that that closure was being put into place.

GIANT AUSTRALIAN CUTTLEFISH

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:53): I have a supplementary question arising from the original answer: is the minister aware of any current or former members who may have partaken of eating the giant Australian cuttlefish?

The PRESIDENT: I am not sure that that—

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:53): I am not sure that that arises from the original answer, but—

The PRESIDENT: That's actually taken my breath away.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —I am also happy to say that I am unaware of the specific eating habits of most of my colleagues, whether those colleagues be on this side of the chamber or on the other. If the honourable member would like me to run a survey of members' eating habits—maybe that are eating fresh oysters—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: Perhaps we can talk about whether lobster is better than some other fish, whether we prefer flake or whether we prefer squid. I am not quite sure what the purpose of such a survey would be, but it is certainly very—

The Hon. E.S. Bourke interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: Indeed, the Hon. Ms Bourke points out that the Hon. Mr Ridgway, former member of this place, likes prawns. But in terms of answering questions about members' eating habits, I think that is just a tad beyond the realm of members in this place.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: Supplementary.

The PRESIDENT: Well, they'd want to be good.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: It's always good, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

GIANT AUSTRALIAN CUTTLEFISH

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:54): Supplementary: did the minister receive specific departmental or SARDI advice about whether the temporary closure was necessary for the protection of the cuttlefish?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:54): As I mentioned in my original answer, the numbers following the lapsing of the closure under the former Liberal government—in fact, I do wonder if any members at all have eaten cuttlefish under that lapse of that closure, but anyway that's another point. However, I did refer in my original answer to the numbers that had decreased by such a substantial amount to be the lowest for many years, and that is why it's important to protect this iconic species, and that's why we have reinstated this spatial closure.

HAMPSTEAD REHABILITATION CENTRE

The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:55): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney representing the Minister for Health a question about Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: The government has quietly set about opening more beds at the Hampstead Rehab facility to cope with demand across the entire public health system as a result of COVID-19. The objective, I'm told, is to free up more beds at the RAH, Flinders Medical Centre, Lyell McEwin and The QEH hospitals by shifting longer term patients to Hampstead. Frontline clinicians at Hampstead, I'm told, are becoming increasingly concerned however that the increase in patients has not equated to an increase in staffing levels—doctors or nurses. They fear that patient-staff ratio problems will worsen as winter hits and more people are hospitalised with influenza. My questions to the minister are:

1. How many beds in total are now available at Hampstead compared to the total increase on its previous capacity?
2. How many FTE doctors are currently employed at Hampstead and how does that compare to staffing levels before the bed capacity was increased?
3. How many FTE nurses are currently employed at Hampstead and how does that compare to staffing levels before the bed capacity was increased?
4. Is the government planning to increase both doctor and nursing levels at Hampstead given the increase in patients and the status of patients being shifted to Hampstead in terms of the acute or subacute nature of their medical conditions?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:57): I thank the honourable member for her questions and will refer them to the Minister for Health in another place and seek that a reply be brought back.

BAROSSA CONTEMPORARY FESTIVAL

The Hon. J.S. LEE (14:57): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development a question regarding the Barossa region.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.S. LEE: *The Advertiser* reported on 21 May that the funding for the Barossa Contemporary Festival was axed by the Labor government just one year into its three-year contract and that funding, worth around seven figures, has been cut off effective immediately. The festival was a key plank of the SA Tourism Commission's Bloom events campaign and was designed to promote the Barossa region's food, wine and art with live performances, dining experiences and art installations across the towns of Seppeltsfield, Angaston, Nuriootpa and Tanunda. My questions to the minister are:

1. Has the minister been consulted by the Minister for Tourism that this regional event would be axed?
2. Has the Minister for Regional Development advocated for the reinstatement of the funding for this event, which was designed to promote visitation to the Barossa region?
3. How many other regional events will be terminated by the Labor government?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:58): I thank the honourable member for her question. Of course, I visited the Barossa very recently in one of my visits to regions, something that I think is incredibly important to do, as has been alluded to before. Unfortunately, the former Minister for Regional Development didn't seem to like being in the regions very much, but I'm very pleased to be able to address that and the Barossa was one of the early visits that I made following my visit to the Riverland, of course.

In terms of the specifics that the member refers to, I'm sure any decisions around continuing events would be based on a sound analysis of the success or otherwise of those events: whether they brought economic activity, what the attendances were and so on. I am happy to refer her question to the minister in the other place and bring back further information, if that is available, and share that with the chamber.

BAROSSA CONTEMPORARY FESTIVAL

The Hon. J.S. LEE (14:59): Supplementary: the minister mentioned about analysis. Can the minister bring back to the chamber the costs and benefits analysis of axing such a program?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:59): I have already indicated that I am happy to make inquiries of the minister in the other place and bring back information to the chamber.

BAROSSA CONTEMPORARY FESTIVAL

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:00): Supplementary: was the minister informed by the Minister for Tourism that this regional event would be axed?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:00): As I mentioned, I think the minister would make all the decisions in regard to the continuance or otherwise of particular events based on a variety of information, particularly around attendance numbers, particularly around economic benefit.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I know that the minister has excellent relationships with many stakeholder groups, particularly the tourism associations in the variety of the regions, as well as a number of stakeholders here in the capital city. Of course, she is happy to be able to listen to stakeholders' views, something that the former Liberal government clearly never bothered to do, and she will make her decisions based on that sound analysis.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:01): My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Will the minister inform the council about the importance of National Reconciliation Week?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:01): I thank the honourable member for the question. I know the honourable member is and has spent much time before as a member and indeed the Chair of the Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee and takes a great interest in these areas.

As the chamber might be aware, we are currently in the middle of National Reconciliation Week, which began on 27 May and ends on 3 June. This year's theme is 'Be Brave, Make Change', a call to action for Australians to tackle the unfinished business of reconciliation. Importantly, this call is aimed at all of us. It is a recognition that individuals, organisations, communities and governments all have a role to take action and advance the work of reconciliation. There is much work to be done on that and Reconciliation Week highlights the opportunities to make further advancement.

We must be brave, as this week's theme suggests, and make that change. I am pleased to be part of a government that is committed to making that change, as I have outlined previously in this place. Reconciliation Week is also a reflection on the changes that have already been made in society. The start of Reconciliation Week each year is 27 May, which is the anniversary of the successful 1967 referendum, which saw Australians vote overwhelmingly—in fact, over 90 per cent of Australians voted in favour and in support of Aboriginal people being recognised in the census and to allow the commonwealth parliament to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The end date of National Reconciliation Week each year is 3 June, being the anniversary of the High Court's decision in the Mabo case, which was in 1992, exactly 30 years ago in a few days (on Friday). That case successfully challenged the idea of terra nullius, the idea that this land was owned by no-one before European colonisation. Reconciliation Week began in 1993 as a week of prayer for reconciliation before formally being launched as Reconciliation Week in 1996.

Those of us who are old enough to remember, in the year 2000 more than a quarter of a million people walked across the Sydney Harbour Bridge as part of the Walk for Reconciliation in a

very strong display of support for this movement. Since then, there has been an annual opportunity for all of us to reflect on the work of reconciliation and commit to the next steps.

I want to particularly acknowledge all of those honourable members from this chamber, and indeed our colleagues in the other place, who have been out and about this week at reconciliation events in their local community, in the city and in the regions. I thank you all for giving your time to this important work and I encourage us all to do what we can to promote the cause of reconciliation.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:04): Supplementary: in the government's view, what specific actions and steps need to be taken and completed in order for reconciliation to be achieved?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:04): I thank the honourable member for his question and it is a really good question. I don't think there are three things or 10 things or a list that has to be done and reconciliation is definitely achieved. It is a process and it is not something that you tick a few things and everything is completed and changed.

I think I might just reflect on how far we have come, just in the years I've been involved in my lifetime. I know that one of the great benefits of reconciliation that I've seen over my lifetime is a shift in attitudes of non-Aboriginal Australians taking pride in sharing this land with the oldest living culture that the world has today.

I think that also has allowed many Aboriginal people to feel more comfortable taking pride in who they are and their culture and I think those have been some of the great benefits of the reconciliation process. So in answer to the honourable member's question, there are many more steps we can take.

I think policies like the Stolen Generations Reparation Scheme and when South Australia was, I think, the second parliament to say sorry under former Premier and Aboriginal affairs minister Dean Brown in 1997 after the Bringing Them Home report was tabled are demonstrable steps in the process of reconciliation. I don't have a list to say this is what we do and it's done, but much of what we do in this place in Aboriginal Affairs contributes to that process.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:06): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question without notice to the Minister for Regional Development.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C.M. Scriven: About?

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS: About the topic of housing affordability. Don't worry, minister, it's not the budget. As reported in *The Advertiser* on Saturday, the quarterly HOOD.ai tenant report has identified areas where rent costs are skyrocketing. The report showed that rural and regional areas are some of those that have seen the steepest rent increases over the last years in areas such as Kapunda, Mount Gambier and McLaren Flat.

Last week, the Mount Gambier *Messenger* reported that in Mount Gambier the cost of renting a house has increased by 7 per cent since January, while renting a unit has increased by 4.7 per cent. For some renters, that is an extra \$30 a week that they are having to pay to keep a roof over their head.

With vacancy rates in Mount Gambier at 0.25 per cent, rising rental properties added to low vacancy rates are pushing people towards homelessness. In recent weeks, my office has received calls from constituents who are struggling to find rental accommodation. One constituent told us of the McLaren Vale Lakeside Caravan Park, where a number of people are now living after being displaced from rental accommodation. These people have jobs, but they are unable to find a place to rent.

My question to the minister therefore is: is the government aware of these reports and what strategies are being adopted to address these?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:07): I thank the honourable member for his question about an incredibly important issue which is faced not only here in Adelaide but throughout our regional areas. This is something that I have been hearing about firsthand on my various visits to regional areas and of course the honourable member referred to Mount Gambier, which is my home area.

I, too, am hearing these stories, these incredibly difficult stories to hear, of incredibly difficult circumstances. As the honourable member mentioned, or perhaps alluded to without saying so in so many words, I think often people think of homelessness as those who are in desperate financial circumstances, people who don't have work and don't have other social supports, but as he has rightly pointed out, in many cases because of the huge increases in rentals over the last couple of years in particular, there are people who have full-time jobs who still can't afford to rent.

I have heard of people turning up to an open inspection for a rental in Mount Gambier and there being 50 other applicants. I was speaking a few weeks ago at an event and afterwards one gentleman who came up to speak to me said that he had moved to Mount Gambier—again, in this case Mount Gambier—last year. He was working in mental health, which is an area of very high need and regional areas find it very difficult to attract health professionals and retain them. He was loving Mount Gambier. He wanted to stay, and yet for six months he had been without his own house or unit. He was unable to acquire a rental, despite the fact he was a quite well paid health professional.

Similarly, I have heard of two teachers who were working in the local high school, who were very happy to be there. Again, they loved Mount Gambier, because of course Mount Gambier is one of the best places in the state. However, they spent two terms living in a caravan in a caravan park, and that is not something that they wanted to continue to do, which is entirely understandable. Unfortunately, my region has now lost those two teachers, who have returned to, I think it was, Melbourne.

In terms of the Malinauskas Labor government's commitments in regional housing, of course we have made commitments to 150 new homes in regional areas, the building of those, and this is on top of bringing homes back up to the standard that is needed. Some of these homes have spent months or even years vacant. Unfortunately, those issues weren't addressed sufficiently by the former government.

This is in addition to our maintenance blitz on 3,000 homes across the state. Those particular initiatives that I have mentioned are all being funded with new money. That is a part of our commitment, and of course the Minister for Human Services in the other place is working very hard and very diligently on social housing, and across the term, because housing touches many portfolios, we are looking at ways to increase the housing stock both for purchasers and for renters.

The regional development associations across the state have also done a lot of work over the last couple of years in trying to address this issue, and so with my regional development hat on I will continue to work with them and my other parliamentary colleagues to continue to try to address this very important issue.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:11): Supplementary question: does the minister concede that building just 150 new homes in the regions is insufficient? Will she be advocating for her colleagues at a state level to build more housing in the regions, and will she be advocating for the Albanese Labor government to invest more money in public housing in South Australia?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:11): Thank you for the supplementary question. I think we need to take all the steps that we possibly can to address this issue. As has been mentioned, it is rental housing, it is affordable housing to buy. It is all sorts, all types of housing. It is executive level housing in regional areas as well. All of those are facing a lack of supply, and so we need to use all the mechanisms we possibly can to address these issues.

Certainly, that will include liaising with the new federal government, the Albanese federal government. I don't think the announcement about who is getting what portfolio federally has come out yet, unless it has been today and I haven't had a chance to catch up with the latest news, but I

will certainly be working with my state parliamentary colleagues and federal ministers to try to address this issue.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:12): Supplementary: when will South Australians see shovels in the ground on these social homes committed by the Labor government in regional areas?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:13): I am happy to take that question on notice and refer it to my colleague in the other place.

WINE INDUSTRY

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (15:13): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development regarding the wine industry.

Leave granted.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: According to the Department of Primary Industries and Regions' website, South Australia contributes almost 80 per cent of Australia's premium wine production and in 2019-20 South Australia's wine industry generated \$1.98 billion in revenue. In a recent press release, the Premier stated that he would turn his mind to how to help the industry, which has recently reported a drop in export figures. My questions to the minister are:

1. What support will the Labor government commit to providing the wine industry to ensure that this critical industry continues to be supported by the government?

2. Can the minister provide assurance that the government will support the wine industry, which is crucial to South Australia's economy, considering there were no trade-related election commitments made?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:14): I thank the honourable member for her question. Certainly, in terms of the importance of the wine industry to South Australia, I have no disagreement with the honourable member on that basis. The fact that South Australia does indeed produce 80 per cent of the premium wine I think is an incredible boost, both to our status but of course also to our economy.

A few weeks ago I was up in the Barossa with the Premier, looking at a lot of innovations in the wine industry. That was with the Treasury Wine Estates opening of some new facilities that they have, which were very impressive. The Minister for Trade, who of course is in the other place, has been very involved in turning his mind to these issues. He, indeed, was at a round table in the Coonawarra last week, and I understand he was received very well. It's important that ministers do get out into the different areas to ensure that they are hearing firsthand from producers and growers what their issues are.

Of course, some of the ongoing trade tensions with China have been a huge challenge for the wine industry. What I am very glad about is that going forward, with now the Malinauskas Labor government, we will be strongly advocating to our federal counterparts, to the federal government, to try to do everything they can to assist with alleviating those trade tensions, improving the relationships whilst obviously maintaining our strong stance on human rights, and ensuring that there are positive moves in terms of relief for the wine industry, who have been so hard hit by the trade tensions as well as other events, such as weather events.

CITRUS INDUSTRY

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (15:16): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister please update the house on the recent Citrus SA launch?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:16): I thank the honourable member for his interest in this

important industry. I appreciate their ongoing concerns about the citrus industry and supporting businesses both large and small.

I had the pleasure last week of officially launching the 2022 SA citrus season in Nuriootpa. Of course, this marks the official start of the citrus season. The event was held at Barossa Fresh in Nuriootpa and was attended by many stakeholders in the industry, including Mark Doecke, who is Chair of Citrus SA; Jeff Knispel, Managing Director of Nippy's; Angelo Demasi, CEO of the South Australian Produce Market; Dylan Murdoch, food division leader at Barossa Fresh; and of course the well-known Callum Hahn, who is a brand ambassador for Pick A Local, Pick SA! and a well-known former *MasterChef* contestant.

In fact, Callum did an amazing job of demonstrating making a soufflé. He made it look very easy, but I am glad to say he didn't encourage me to join in with that part, because that would have destroyed the soufflé in seconds, I'm quite sure.

I would like to congratulate both Citrus SA and Pick A Local, Pick SA! teams for organising this event because it raises both the profile and awareness of this valuable industry. Members may be aware that in 2020-21 the South Australian citrus industry produced 168,931 tonnes of citrus, with a farmgate value of \$128 million. Of course, South Australia is a major producer of horticultural products and recognised for its excellence in environmentally clean, safe and advanced agricultural production.

Our produce has a reputation as some of the best in the world. I did have the opportunity, I am very pleased to say, to sit down and speak with some of these key stakeholders in the citrus industry and listen to their thoughts on how to continue to grow the citrus industry and to provide certainty for this key sector.

As members hopefully are aware, the citrus industry in recent years has faced many challenges including an extended period of workforce shortages, due in part to the restrictions on travel and migration as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, increased costs due to international factors and also increased costs to adhere to new movement protocols required by fruit fly outbreaks.

When speaking to members at the Citrus SA launch, I emphasised the importance that the state government has put on a strong and effective biosecurity system in our state. We know that it is essential for protecting South Australia's reputation for exceptional food and wine and for maintaining and increasing access to international and domestic markets. Members will be aware that South Australia is the only mainland state that remains fruit fly free, and that of course is thanks to combined efforts from both government and industry.

The Malinauskas Labor government remains committed to maintaining our fruit fly free status, and we are continuing the efforts to eradicate this pest from multiple sites in the Riverland, which is home to citrus production in South Australia. The citrus industry is vital to our state, is a key employer in the Riverland and provides an enormous economic output to the regions, and I am delighted that I was given the opportunity to launch the new season and celebrate all things citrus in our state.

CITRUS INDUSTRY

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:19): Supplementary: is the minister committed to ensuring zero tolerance measures are adequately resourced and in place?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:19): I thank the member for the supplementary question. Of course, the Yamba quarantine station is another place that I visited in my first regional visit outside of my own area back in the first weeks of this government. The zero tolerance policy in terms of bringing fruit into South Australia will be maintained, and of course the government has put in resources to ensure that the fruit fly response continues and is adequate.

CITRUS INDUSTRY

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:20): Supplementary: will the minister support a quarantine station in Ceduna?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:20): Thank you for the supplementary question. I don't think I've seen a business case in terms of a quarantine station in Ceduna. I'm happy to refer it to my department and see whether there is something forthcoming, and then that can have further consideration.

CITRUS INDUSTRY

The Hon. J.S. LEE (15:20): Supplementary: now that we have a new federal government in place, what trading agreement or agreements will be reviewed and what consultation will there be by you as a minister with the federal government to talk about the growers' industries and—

The Hon. C.M. Scriven: Talk about the what industry?

The Hon. J.S. LEE: To the orange growers—about these trading agreements, if any?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:21): Thank you. I'm not sure that really relates to the launch of the citrus season, but just very briefly I'm happy to answer that. Of course, I will be liaising with whoever our new ministers are that have portfolios that relate to my portfolio, as I'm sure my other state colleagues will be doing.

I think what we can look forward to is a twofold approach to the state and federal relationships. We won't be just laying down and rolling over whenever the federal government says something. What we will be doing, in the first place, is advocating and consulting and actually having a healthy partnership and, secondly, if the interests of our state and the interests of the industries within our state and the citizens of our state are not being supported by the federal government, we will be standing up for our state. We will be willing to take it to the federal government and stand up for our state.

I appreciate, of course, that this is in very stark contrast to the behaviour of the former Liberal government and former Premier Marshall.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: We know that part of the reputational issue that the former Premier had and the former Liberal government had—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order, the Hon. Mr Wortley, Leader of the Government! Continue. Are you nearly finished?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: We know that part of the reputational problem that the former Liberal government had and part of the reputational problem that former Premier Steven Marshall had was that they would not stand up for South Australia's interests.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Wortley, Leader of the Government!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: Indeed, as the Hon. Mr Maher says—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Lee!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —the federal government would make cuts, and what did we have from the former Premier? He was the smiling quokka. I can assure you that Premier Malinauskas, the member for Croydon, is not someone who will be smiling and nodding behind while South Australian interests are destroyed. He will not be smiling and nodding and bowing his head because, 'Oh my goodness, the Prime Minister has deigned to come and visit this little outpost of South Australia.' That is not the view that we have of our state. That is not the view that those on this side of the chamber have of our state.

As opposed to those opposite, we know that South Australia has huge economic potential. We know that South Australia well and truly punches above its weight on almost every criterion one could ask, and we know that the role of a Premier is to lead. The role of a Premier is to show leadership. I'm very pleased that under Peter Malinauskas we have a Premier who will lead, we have a Premier who will stand up when necessary to the federal government, and we have a Premier that all South Australians can be proud of.

PATIENT ASSISTANCE TRANSPORT SCHEME

The Hon. S.L. GAME (15:24): I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to asking a question of the Attorney-General representing the Minister for Health and Wellbeing concerning the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.L. GAME: The Patient Assistance Transport Scheme, colloquially known as PATS, has been a lifeline for South Australian regional people needing expert medical care and treatment for decades, providing a rebate when a patient and escort reside more than 100 kilometres away from the nearest treating specialist, a treatment is claimable under Medicare and any benefits from a private health fund have been exhausted. The rebates of this important scheme have not been updated to keep in line with current and rapid inflation. Can the minister please advise when regional South Australians needing transport and accommodation cost assistance for life-saving care are going to receive adequate rebates to real expenses?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:25): I thank the honourable member for her question in relation to the PAT Scheme, and I will refer it to the minister in another place and bring back a reply.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS

The Hon. L.A. CURRAN (15:25): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development a question regarding genetically modified crops.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L.A. CURRAN: In 2020, after a 16-year ban on GM crops in South Australia, changes to South Australian legislation, led by the then Liberal government, passed both houses of parliament to allow GM food crops to be cultivated in South Australia, except on Kangaroo Island.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. L.A. CURRAN: My question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development is: can she assure the farmers of South Australia that she and her government will continue the commitment made by the Marshall Liberal government and continue to allow GM food crops to be cultivated in our state?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: I call the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development and not the Hon. Mr Wortley.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:26): I thank the honourable member for her question. As she rightly points out, lifting the GM moratorium has allowed GM crop varieties to be cultivated and marketed in South Australia on a level playing field with the rest of mainland Australia. The then Labor opposition supported the legislation that passed through parliament in 2020, after of course we proposed some sensible amendments.

In 2021, commercial genetically modified food crops were grown in South Australia for the first time. I am advised that the first crops of an estimated 25,000 hectares of GM canola have now been harvested, delivered to segregated silo storage and exported to market. With the 2022 cropping

season almost upon us, I am told that more farmers are now intending to sow GM canola for the first time and those who sowed the crop last season have found it to be a profitable inclusion in their cropping program and have committed to increasing the area of GM canola this year.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:27): Can the minister answer: how many exemptions to GM crops have been granted by the previous government, and is the current government considering exemption applications?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:27): I thank the member for his supplementary question. I am aware of course that there is still a moratorium on growing GM crops on Kangaroo Island. I am not myself aware of other exemptions, but I am happy to make inquiries and come back to the honourable member to answer that question.

The PRESIDENT: A further supplementary.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:28): They were Labor's amendments actually, where various regional areas—

The PRESIDENT: Sorry, can you start again?

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: They were Labor's amendments, minister, about various regional areas.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Pangallo, you've got to just ask a supplementary question—no commentary.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: There are other regional areas and council areas that could actually apply for exemptions. Can you provide any figures, if there are any, of how many have been granted, have been rejected, and are there any in the works at the moment?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:28): I thank the honourable member for providing more clarity around his question. I think what he is referring to is that, before the bill was passed into law, Labor's amendment said that councils who wish to opt out and keep their moratorium should be able to do so and present a case for consideration. That consideration was in the scope of the minister, and the minister of the time refused to accept any of those exemptions.

I know the bill passed in 2020 but I can't remember what part of the year it was. It has now been in place for some time. So all of those were rejected by the former minister and growers in many of those areas have now planted genetically modified crops.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:29): Supplementary: can the minister assure farmers that her government will continue the commitment made by the Marshall Liberal government to continue to allow for GM food crops to be cultivated?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:29): I thank the honourable member for her supplementary question. However, this is not a commitment by anyone. This is currently in law. So we have legislation that was passed. The final legislation was supported by the then Labor opposition and that—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Bourke and the Hon. Ms Centofanti, listen to the minister, please.

The Hon. N.J. Centofanti interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order, leader! You are reminding me of the bad old days, leader. Don't spoil your copybook.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: So the Genetically Modified Crops Management (Designated Area) Amendment Act 2020 was assented to on 15 May 2020 and then it lifted the moratorium on GM crops on mainland South Australia from 15 November 2020. As the honourable member would be aware, if she wants to bring forward some changes to that legislation, or any of her parliamentary colleagues wish to do so, they would need to give notice and introduce a bill to do so.

The act as it stands is, as we know, allowing the moratorium to continue on Kangaroo Island, while on the rest of South Australia, so mainland South Australia, one can grow genetically modified crops. That is the law, that is not about commitments, that is simply the law as it stands. We need to be very conscious of the fact that people have grown genetically modified crops and in fact it has proven to be very worthwhile for them, from the feedback that I am receiving, because of course I meet regularly with a number of different stakeholder groups, including those involved in growing canola and other crops, and in terms of the feedback that I have received they have been quite content with the law as it stands.

Parliamentary Committees

COVID-19 DIRECTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:32): I move:

That pursuant to section 22 of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991 the following members be appointed to the COVID-19 Direction, Accountability and Oversight Committee: the Hon. E.S. Bourke, the Hon. R.A. Simms and the Hon. S.G. Wade, and that a message be sent to the House of Assembly in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

Motion carried.

Motions

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:32): I move:

That this council—

1. Notes the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report confirms that greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, and current plans to address climate change are not ambitious enough to limit warming to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels—a threshold scientists believe is necessary to avoid more catastrophic impacts;
2. Notes that around the world, climate change impacts are already causing loss of life and destroying vital ecosystems;
3. Declares that we are facing a climate emergency; and
4. Commits to restoring a safe climate by transforming the economy to zero net emissions.

I put on the record today the Malinauskas Labor government's strong support for recognising that in this state, throughout the country, and indeed across the planet, we are undeniably facing a climate emergency. For decades we have known that climate change is real and that it has the potential to have catastrophic effects on our planet. It is, undoubtedly, human activity that is causing this devastation to our planet. So it goes without saying that we must act urgently to halt climate change and undo the damage already done.

By declaring a climate emergency in this manner we are not just recognising the global climate emergency but we are also reconfirming our commitment to take real and tangible action to tackle climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was formed in 1988, a year that saw, amongst other things, fires in the Amazon rainforest that shocked the world. More than 30 years later, natural disasters, including floods and bushfires, continue to worsen in severity and increasing regularity, devastating our continent and the world. We really should have been awake to how our climate was changing many years earlier.

The Climate Council's most recent report has identified that climate change is creating an insurability crisis in Australia. By 2030, according to the report, one in 25 properties across Australia will become uninsurable. The effects of inaction on climate will also be felt concerningly close to home with the report ranking the federal electorate of Hindmarsh, in Adelaide's western suburbs, as the 10th most at-risk electorate in the nation where, according to the report's findings, one in seven properties is set to become uninsurable this decade due to risks of flooding.

Unfortunately, the bleak forecast on our global futures does not stop there. The most recent IPCC report indicates that Australasia will continue to experience more hot days, fewer cold days, the retreat of snow and glaciers, rising sea levels and greater ocean acidification. In Australia these significant changes to our climate will see an increase in heat-related deaths amongst people and wildlife, the loss of natural and human systems in low-lying coastal areas through sea rise, the loss of coral reefs, kelp forests and associated ecosystems due to ocean warming, a decline in agricultural production, and increased stress in rural communities due to hotter and drier conditions.

These challenges alone ought to be and are enough to demand a response from our elected representatives, but the threat to our communities demands that we act now. The Malinauskas government, of which I am proud to be a part, is committed to taking real action on climate change and has made it a priority by putting the climate change portfolio within the responsibilities of the Deputy Premier.

South Australia already has a strong reputation for leading the nation and the world when it comes to renewable energy. For 16 years, under a South Australian Labor government, our state led Australia in renewable energy generation, moved away from reliance on fossil fuels and built the world's first big battery. To build on this legacy, the new Malinauskas Labor government will build a hydrogen power station, an electrolyser, a storage facility and will create new jobs in the industry in South Australia.

The Hydrogen Jobs Plan will harness South Australian renewable energy to supply cleaner and cheaper power to South Australians. We will also scrap the former Liberal government's electric vehicle tax to help encourage more South Australians to buy an electric car. We will do this by repealing legislation to ensure that it does not come into effect while keeping current incentive programs in place.

There is no time to waste: real action must be taken now. Under current global emission reduction policies, projected global warming will leave many of our regions' human and natural systems at very high risk and beyond a state of repair. That is why the state government will also update the Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act to reflect short-term targets, while also considering carbon budgets and government adaptation plans as part of the update.

We see our climate crisis as an opportunity for jobs in this state, with our abundance of wind, solar and other renewable resources. We know that Australia can and should be a world leader in the low-carbon economy. We have the natural resources and the people to be a renewable energy superpower. We, along with many others on the Labor side in this chamber, have been listening to these calls from the community and the experts and so we continue to listen to the scientists who have been aware of these issues for so long but have sadly been ignored.

I acknowledge that during the last parliament this council supported a motion from the Hon. Mark Parnell, declaring that we are facing a climate emergency. I also note that the then Liberal government opposed that critical declaration, but we hope that it will see bipartisan support this time. I am glad that in the last parliament this council saw fit to support the motion, and I hope today this council supports the motion that we have before us. It is far too late not to do something. I commend the motion to the council.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:39): I rise to indicate that I am the lead speaker on this motion for the opposition and in doing so I give notice to the council that I am moving to amend the motion by:

Adding in the words 'including biodiversity decline' after the words 'catastrophic impacts' and then deleting all the words after 'climate emergency' and inserting the words:

4. Declares that a pathway to curbing these impacts will require swift action;

5. Notes that addressing the changing climate presents significant economic, employment, innovation and technological opportunities for South Australia, and that these opportunities should be actively pursued and supported; and
6. Commits to action to help restore a safe climate by:
 - (a) transforming the South Australian economy to zero net emissions by 2050 and to 50 per cent by 2030; and
 - (b) quarantining the Department for Environment and Water from budget cuts.

The new motion should now read:

That this council—

1. Notes the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report confirms that greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, and current plans to address climate change are not ambitious enough to limit warming to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels, a threshold scientists believe is necessary to avoid more catastrophic impacts, including biodiversity decline;
2. Notes that around the world, climate change impacts are already causing loss of life and destroying vital ecosystems;
3. Declares that we are facing a climate emergency;
4. Declares that a pathway to curbing these impacts will require swift action;
5. Notes that addressing the changing climate presents significant economic, employment, innovation and technological opportunities for South Australia, and that these opportunities should be actively pursued and supported; and
6. Commits to action to help restore a safe climate by:
 - (a) transforming the South Australian economy to zero net emissions by 2050 and to 50 per cent by 2030; and
 - (b) quarantining the Department for Environment and Water from budget cuts.

A changing climate can have significant impacts on South Australia. For example, our state is highly reliant on the River Murray, where I live, for a large proportion of its drinking water supply and agricultural production. Because of this, impacts from a changing climate on water inflows therefore could have significant economic and social impacts to our cities, towns and our regions.

A changing climate can also impact our ecosystems and the biodiversity within them. This is a widely accepted and held view of many South Australians. There is also a held view that we can do more, swiftly, to address climate change, but there is also a widely accepted and held view amongst South Australians and the wider business community that addressing climate change should be based on real action and not simply be hollow virtual signalling.

There is also a view that we should pursue climate change related opportunities, including significant economic and innovation opportunities facing this state. We should also include adaptation strategies, but noting that some climate impacts will be unavoidable. On this basis, the motion is not supported in its current form and instead we move to make amendments to reflect these more contemporary views.

The amendment I am seeking to make to No. 1 is about biodiversity decline. Biodiversity decline is a serious climate change issue which is often ignored. There are significant implications to South Australia and the nation from species decline and it should be noted in the motion. There are essentially no proposed changes to Nos 2 and 3, except to remove the word 'and' from No. 3.

We are seeking for there to be an additional two provisions in the motion and in doing so we are acknowledging that addressing climate change is well beyond esoteric slogans and alarmism. Addressing climate change takes government leadership, with a capacity to deliver real action through an intentional focus on tangible outcomes and a commitment to engaging with the community, businesses and the market.

For example, the previous Liberal government put in place a clear action-based pathway for responding to climate change. In December 2019, it released its Directions for a Climate Smart South Australia with a goal of net zero emissions by 2050. In the opening of the 2020 parliament, it then set an interim goal to reduce emissions by at least 50 per cent by 2030. In December 2020, it released the most powerful vision for climate action by any South Australian government in history, developed with input and advice from renowned climate change expert, Professor Ross Garnaut.

The Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2025 includes 68 actions across seven focus areas and shows that South Australia's action-based response to climate change could achieve a level of renewable energy that is more than five times the current local grid demand by 2050. In the absence of real action, the proposed motion could simply be seen as virtue signalling. It must also be recognised that climate change presents not only threats but significant opportunities for South Australia. Our climate action plan and Professor Ross Garnaut have shown us this.

Climate change is no longer simply an environmental issue. This was the case for decades, with climate change roots focused on the impacts that human-induced accelerated climate change could have on the natural environment. However, in recent years, climate change has moved to also become a core economic and social issue, with the business community taking a key role in formulating climate change solutions.

This has resulted in significant economic-related opportunities for South Australia. The presence of these opportunities must be acknowledged and encouragement given to further pursue them. In this respect, the proposed motion falls short. The revised motion takes into account the significant economic, employment, innovation and technological opportunities before our state from addressing climate change.

Finally, the original motion commits the house to restoring a safe climate. This statement fails to recognise that some climate impacts may be inevitably permanent. It also overreaches the ability of this and any future South Australian state government to correct negative climate impacts that may arise from other jurisdictions' actions across the globe. At best, we can (and it is proposed we should) commit to help restore a safe climate. The revised motion reflects this.

The original motion committed the house to transforming the economy to net zero emissions. It is assumed that 'the economy' refers to the South Australian economy rather than the broader Australian economy, which this house has very little influence on. The revised motion reflects this. The original motion did not include a time frame for achieving zero net emissions. In theme with taking action-based responses to climate change, the well-publicised targets of the previous Liberal government have been inserted into the revised motion.

Finally, but most importantly, the Department for Environment and Water plays a significant role in the state's response to climate change. It would be perverse in the face of an emergency to allow this agency to be the subject of Labor's Public Service budget cuts—now or into the future of this current parliament. Therefore, the revised motion simply corrects this perversity by quarantining DEW from budget cuts. With these words, I move my amendment.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:47): I rise to speak in support of this motion to declare a climate emergency. I will speak to the merits of the motion, but first I want to address the amendment from the Leader of the Opposition and indicate that the Greens will not be supporting that amendment.

Rather than what the honourable member contends, that amendment would actually rob this motion of its veracity by inserting a clause that says that we will transition to net zero emissions by 2050. It would lock this council into supporting the inadequate policy position of the failed Morrison government. Might I say that the people of Australia have made their views on that known quite recently, just a few weeks ago, where we saw the Teal Independent revolution sweeping our nation and where we saw record support for the Greens in traditional Liberal held areas.

A big factor there was the failure of the Liberal Party, under the leadership of failed Prime Minister Scott Morrison, to deal with climate change seriously, to address the challenge head on. Quite frankly, Australians do not want politicians talking about what is going to happen over in the never-never in 2050. I might as well say I am going to cut out carbs, I am going to cut out sugar and

I am going to cut out booze, so that I can do it by 2050 and look like Premier Peter Malinauskas. Anyone can make those pledges—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS: —by 2050. We need to actually take action now. The Liberal Party has really missed the mark with this amendment, so we will not be supporting it.

To speak to the motion that has been put forward by the government, which we welcome, this is really about South Australia joining other jurisdictions around the world in recognising the seriousness of climate change and resolving on the need to act. In South Australia we have seen the effects of the climate crisis firsthand. We have seen drought, we have seen fire, and this is only just the beginning. Everybody will be affected by climate change.

We talk a lot in this place about the great disruption that has come from COVID-19, but really COVID-19 will be the curtain-raiser for the climate crisis in terms of the disruption and what that means for every element of our society unless we take action. The IPCC report tells us that we are not doing enough to curb climate change emissions this decade. The 2022 IPCC report warns that cascading, compounding and aggregate impacts are projected to grow due to concurrent increases in heatwaves, droughts, fires, storms, floods and rising sea levels.

Major impacts across multiple sectors could disrupt supply chains to industries and communities and constrain the delivery of health, energy and water. The impacts will not just be environmental but socio-economic as well. The cost of inaction outweighs the cost of action and now is the time for us to do something decisive. If we continue without substantial and effective action, we will see more health impacts from air pollution, we will see climate refugees who have lost their homes due to fire or flood, and we will see less rainfall for our primary producers.

These past decades of inaction and incrementalism have taken us past one degree of global warming and are driving us towards a world that is potentially even three or four degrees hotter. The last time there was this much carbon dioxide in the air was at least 2.6 million years ago, before humans existed. Back then, temperatures were more than three degrees warmer. Many, if not all, of the emergencies will already create casualties and damage before they are met with a response, and this is particularly the case when a response is unreasonably late. We risk finding ourselves in that situation if we do not act now.

I know that many people feel held back at the moment by despair and panic, but this is not the time for panic; this is the time to keep our heads, to show our strength and to fight to protect all that we can, not to hesitate, not to give up and not to despair. This is the time for us to roll up our sleeves. We need to plan and we need to speed up our actions and ensure that we reach zero net emissions as soon as we can. The Greens are campaigning for that to happen in 2035, not in 2050, not over in the never-never. All political parties in this place need to work together to make that happen.

In my time as a councillor at the City of Adelaide, I successfully moved a motion to declare a climate emergency back in 2019, and currently 16 of South Australia's local government jurisdictions have declared climate emergencies. In that same year, my predecessor, the Hon. Mark Parnell, moved a similar motion to declare a climate emergency in this place. While it was passed, it was stalled in the House of Assembly. The Greens want to recognise the work of Mark Parnell in bringing the climate emergency declaration to this place in 2019 and his efforts to try to make the South Australian parliament the first jurisdiction in the country to declare a climate emergency.

In that same year, we were pipped at the post by the ACT. They became the first territory to do the same and they successfully passed a declaration through both houses. Again, that was moved by one of my Green colleagues, Minister Shane Rattenbury. I also note that Greens leader at a federal level, Adam Bandt, has previously moved a Climate Emergency Declaration Bill in the federal parliament, which was rejected by the Morrison government. This, of course, was the Prime Minister that famously brought in a piece of coal, such was his indifference towards the climate crisis.

It has been baffling in the past to hear people such as the now Leader of the Opposition, David Speirs, dismiss the declaration of a climate emergency as being purely symbolic, as if symbols are not important. If we refuse to acknowledge that we are in the middle of an emergency, we will never act with the urgency that we know is required so that we can deal with this existential threat.

Globally, climate emergency declarations have been made in 2,094 jurisdictions and local governments covering one billion citizens. While the Greens recognised that a motion on its own is not going to solve the climate crisis, this parliament as an institution recognising the seriousness and scale of the problem is a big and meaningful step towards real action. I do want to acknowledge the leadership of Deputy Premier and environment minister the Hon. Susan Close in this regard. We really welcome the House of Assembly bringing this forward.

This is not the end of the matter. This is the beginning of a much deeper conversation around how we respond to the climate crisis in our state. We in the Greens have been arguing for a long time around the need for a Green New Deal that ensures we address climate, along with growing inequality. We need to invest in green jobs, we need to build and retrofit sustainable homes, we need free and frequent publicly owned public transport, we need an emissions target of at least 75 per cent by 2030 and we need to reach net zero by 2035. The year 2050 is just far too late. Now is the time for action. With that, I commend the motion.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:56): On behalf of SA-Best I rise to speak in support of the Attorney-General's motion declaring a climate emergency and seeking a commitment to the restoration of a safe climate by transforming the economy to net zero emissions.

The climate emergency is also a health emergency, something that does not always immediately spring to mind when talking about climate change. It affects the social and environmental determinants of health: clean air, safe drinking water, sufficient food and shelter. It is the single biggest threat to humanity.

The 2018-19 Australian summer was the hottest on record. Our surface temperature has increased by almost a degree since 1910. The direct impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident. Extreme weather events like bushfires, heatwaves, extreme rainfall events, storms and floods are causing physical trauma, death and destruction. Then there are the indirect impacts on health: air and water pollution, rising sea levels, accessibility to food and shelter, leading to heart and lung diseases, under-nutrition and mental illnesses.

In Australia the death toll from heatwaves has exceeded that of any other environmental disaster. They have been dubbed the silent killers, especially where a person has underlying health issues, and deaths are not always identified as health related. We know, too, bushfires are being exacerbated by heatwaves, changing weather patterns and droughts, and the health impacts of such bushfires are severe and long lasting.

In addition to the direct impacts, like burns, heat stress, injury and death, there are also serious indirect impacts, including significant short and long-term mental health impacts, societal disruption and loss of basic services, such as GP care, housing and basic provisions. Bushfires can affect water quality, especially when followed by heavy rainfall, which I am told mobilises ash and other soluble nutrients from the burnt and devegetated ground into water catchments and drinking water reservoirs.

The stress of bushfire affects people psychologically, socially and economically. In addition to the threat to human life, we know that properties are lost, animals and pets are lost, livestock is killed and livelihoods are threatened. These compounding impacts contribute to mental health disorders. Bushfire smoke does not just contribute to climate change, it contributes to lung conditions, such as asthma, and diseases of the heart and brain, amongst others. The health effects are endless.

In 2019, 25,000 people were displaced by weather-related disasters in Australia, primarily bushfires. In early 2020, bushfires triggered 47,000 displacements, counting an upward trajectory since 2008. Warmer temperatures and heavier rainfalls are causing mosquito-borne infectious diseases to thrive.

Biodiversity is declining at unprecedented levels, unbalancing health ecosystems. Marine biodiversity and ecosystems are bearing the brunt of ocean warming and acidification, which in turn

impacts our health. Although Australia currently has enough food supply and produces far in excess of what it consumes, it is also considered one of the most vulnerable agriculture sectors globally because of climate change. I, for one, find that a terrifying thought.

The United Nations predicts that world population will exceed 11 billion people by the end of the century. That is a lot of mouths to feed. Yet, 30 per cent of food we purchase ends up in landfill—that is about five million tonnes, or over 140 kilos per person each year in landfill. Food waste costs farmers over \$3 billion per year. While 70 per cent of food that we waste is perfectly edible, one in six Australian adults has not had enough to eat in the last year and 1.2 million children have gone hungry in the same period. Annually, 17.5 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions is generated just from food wastage, excluding food that is exported, and is equal to annual emissions from our highest coal-fired power station.

Medical experts are calling on all of us to see climate change not just as an environmental issue but as a health issue with seriously devastating consequences, and they are predicting a catastrophe if the climate is not restored. Why? Firstly, they, more than any other group, see the human toll that I have just articulated for you and, secondly, because we know that climate change is disproportionately felt by the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in society and exacerbates health inequalities, especially amongst our Indigenous communities.

Extreme heat, for example, is felt most by the aged, pregnant and breastfeeding women, young children, people who consume certain medications, people who are socially isolated and people who have reduced mobility, limited housing options in terms of air conditioning, or limited transport options. We know, too, that heat poses an extra risk to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people due to the high frequency of heat-sensitive chronic diseases such as cardiac and renal conditions.

According to the World Health Organization, malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress caused by climate change will result in an extra 250,000 deaths between 2030 and 2050 alone. The direct cost to health, excluding health-determining sectors such as agriculture and water sanitation, is estimated to reach \$US2 billion to \$US4 billion by 2030. It has warned that climate change threatens to undermine the last 50 years of health advancements. As always, developing countries, those with weak infrastructure and weak and substandard healthcare systems, will be the least able to cope without assistance and support.

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) has been saying it for a number of years. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners has called it a 'key public health issue'. There are thousands of doctors and health experts Australia-wide who have signed a petition calling for immediate change. Their associations are doing their bit to educate the medical fraternity as a whole—not only about the immediate consequences of climate change for patients and their health but also the need for longer term action.

For many years, Doctors for the Environment Australia have been advocating for all governments throughout Australia to formally declare a climate emergency and to urgently undertake a re-evaluation of priorities to end self-destructive practices. Everything I have said today has come from the policy documents not of environmentalists per se but rather our country's medical fraternities. In the words of Doctors for the Environment Australia, and I quote:

Knowing that climate change constitutes a public health crisis, knowing that solutions are available, knowing that we only have a short time to act to prevent runaway climate change, doctors are appalled and frightened by the ongoing refusal of politicians to take necessary action.

We must recognise climate change for the emergency that it is.

The change in the climate due to greenhouse gas emissions is accelerating, bringing with it more frequent and severe extreme weather events, an increase in infectious diseases, allergic and respiratory diseases, and the risk of global food shortages.

Doctors and other medical professionals are at the coalface of the physical and mental trauma caused by climate change, and they are foreseeing the worst. Of course, they are also in the unique position of being able to predict better than anyone the benefits climate policies can have on our healthcare systems beyond their intended impacts on the climate.

The AMA argues that these health benefits should be promoted as a public health opportunity with significant potential to offset some costs associated with addressing climate change, and that the health impacts of climate change and the health co-benefits of climate mitigation policies both bear economic costs and savings. As such, it is important that any economic evaluations of the costs and benefits of climate policies incorporate the predicted public health impact accrued for such policies and the public health costs of unmitigated climate change.

It is not dissimilar to, in fact it is associated with, the same argument that I know we have all heard put to us in relation to preventative health: the long-term benefits always outweigh up-front costs. There are a multitude of reasons why we ought to be considering climate change from a health perspective. These are but a few and they are led by medical experts, and I think it is important that they be placed on the record.

South Australia's health system has been in a state of crisis for years, made even worse by COVID-19. If ever there was a time to heed the advice of our medical profession, this is it. If you are not convinced by the science, then I for one would encourage you to better appreciate climate change from a health perspective. It is something that impacts each and every one of us. There is no question that this is the biggest global emergency of our lives and the lives of every generation that follows.

If we do not listen to the experts, the health specialists, the scientists, the medical professionals, the evidence before us, then our planet and our life support system is doomed and so are we. We cannot buy a new planet. Profit cannot continue to be the priority of successive governments or any government.

For the record, I indicate SA-Best will not be supporting the amendments that have been put by the opposition, for the same reasons that the Hon. Robert Simms has already outlined in his contribution. With those words, I indicate SA-Best's wholehearted support of this motion.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (16:08): I thank honourable members for their contribution to this very important motion. In summing-up, once again I want to mention, as the Hon. Robert Simms has, the leadership that our former colleague the Hon. Mark Parnell has shown on this matter. For the benefit of the chamber, I indicate that we will be joining with the Greens and SA-Best in not supporting the amendments put forward, for very similar reasons but also because we do not want to delay the passage of the motion as we consider the amendments. We think it needs to happen yesterday, so we want it to happen today. With that, I commend the motion to the chamber.

The PRESIDENT: There have been amendments to the motion moved by the Hon. Ms Centofanti. I will put, as the first question, that the words proposed to be inserted in paragraph 1 by the Hon. N.J. Centofanti be so inserted.

Question resolved in the negative.

The PRESIDENT: I will put that the word 'and' in paragraph 3 and all of paragraph 4 as proposed to be struck out by the Hon. N.J. Centofanti stand as part of the motion. If you are against the Hon. N.J. Centofanti, you will vote yes.

The council divided on the question:

Ayes 10
Noes 5
Majority 5

AYES

Bonaros, C.
Maher, K.J. (teller)
Pangallo, F.
Wortley, R.P.

Bourke, E.S.
Martin, R.B.
Scriven, C.M.

Hanson, J.E.
Ngo, T.T.
Simms, R.A.

NOES

Centofanti, N.J. (teller)
Hood, D.G.E.

Curran, L.A.
Lensink, J.M.A.

Game, S.L.

PAIRS

Franks, T.A.
Girolamo, H.M.

Wade, S.G.
Pnevmatikos, I.

Hunter, I.K.
Lee, J.S.

Question thus agreed to; motion carried.

*Bills***CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (HUMAN REMAINS) AMENDMENT BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 5 May 2022.)

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (16:14): I rise to make some remarks in relation to this bill. I am pleased to be able to speak on behalf of the opposition and indicate that we will be supporting the Criminal Law Consolidation (Human Remains) Amendment Bill 2022. The bill creates, in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935, four new offences for concealing a body.

A key element of most crimes is the concealing of evidence by lying or concealing evidence such as a weapon or a body. Currently, if an offender concealed a body in a murder or manslaughter case, this is considered during sentencing but may not always be specifically mentioned in sentencing remarks and any extra period or imprisonment given for the concealment is usually not specified. Given the concealment of a body can destroy vital evidence and is very distressing for the victim's family, there is a strong argument for improving the law in this area.

Following the introduction of a similar bill last parliamentary session, the former Liberal government consulted further with the DPP and SAPOL, which resulted in amendments that passed this place in February this year. Those amendments were to increase penalties for section 177 to 15 years, increase the penalty for section 178 to 15 years, and increase the penalties for section 179(1) and 179(4) to five years, and, secondly, where a person is convicted of a section 177, a separate cumulative penalty must be imposed.

The opposition is pleased to see that the government has progressed this bill with those previous amendments moved by the former Marshall Liberal government. With those remarks, I support the bill.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:15): I rise to support this bill on behalf of the Greens. The Greens believe that all South Australians have a right to a safe, peaceful and ecologically sustainable existence free from crime. It is really important that our justice system protects the cultural and social needs of families of victims of serious crimes. It is a despicable thing to conceal, to mutilate or to interfere with human remains. It is a truly heinous act.

The suffering faced by families of victims where the body has been concealed or defiled must be considered by this place. We need to consider that people have a right to enact their cultural and social burial practices without having to deal with the added trauma that comes with human remains being defiled or concealed or interfered with in some way.

This bill ensures that there are suitable offences for concealing, mutilating or otherwise interfering with human remains. We consider what has been proposed here by the government as being a plugging of a gap in our legislative regime in South Australia. We supported this bill when it was proposed by the then Leader of the Opposition in this place and we will be supporting the bill now that it has been proposed by the Labor Party in government.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (16:17): I rise to speak on behalf of SA-Best on the bill and indicate our support for the bill which, as we have heard, seeks to introduce new offences to close a legislative loophole in our criminal laws for crimes related to the disposal, concealment or interference with human remains and, in doing so, echo the sentiments just expressed by the Hon. Mr Simms. It is a truly unimaginable and heinous crime, let alone thought, that anyone would interfere with somebody's remains in any way.

It builds on the work of the Attorney-General, who introduced a similar bill while in opposition last year, though I note that the maximum penalties exceed the previous bill quite significantly. Recognising these very serious crimes in their own right has been at the top of the priority list of the Homicide Victims' Support Group for a number of years. I understand these new offences also have the wholehearted support of the Commissioner for Victims' Rights and SAPOL.

As I said, disposing of, concealing or mutilating a body can give a significant forensic advantage to an offender for completely heinous reasons. In some cases where an offender has been found guilty of manslaughter or murder, family and friends may never know what really happened to the deceased. They may be prevented the opportunity of laying to rest the body of their loved one or from seeing them for the last time, and that is an unimaginable thought for any of us.

The bill sets a maximum penalty of 15 years' imprisonment, up from 10 years in the previous bill, for concealing, mutilating or otherwise interfering with human remains. The court may impose a cumulative sentence on the head sentence of a person found guilty of causing the death of a person other than murder.

For a person found guilty of murder, mandatory life imprisonment itself cannot be interfered with, but destroying human remains to pervert the course of justice could be taken into account by the court in setting a non-parole period. It may also be extended if remains are found at a later date, even if that occurs after the person has faced the original charges and has been found guilty of those.

I have to admit, I was not aware before that previous bill was introduced that this was not an offence in South Australia. In fact, I was quite surprised by the fact it was not an offence and I think most of us would be forgiven for thinking that something so terrible does not already exist on our statute books, such is the logical nature of the changes that we are contemplating.

The bill also creates the offence of defiling human remains, and that will carry a maximum term of imprisonment of 15 years, up from five years in the previous bill. A further specific offence is created for failing to report finding human remains to a police officer as soon as is reasonably practicable, with some exceptions, such as reporting requirements already under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, or if a person believed it was already reported to the police or the Coroner.

The maximum penalty for failing to report has been raised from the previous bill from two years' to five years' imprisonment. There is also a provision for a judge or jury to find a defendant guilty of an alternative verdict if, for example, the mental element of the higher charge of destroying remains to pervert the course of justice is not made out. In that case, it will be open to the court to find the defendant guilty of the lesser charge of defiling human remains or failing to report.

The government filed a very sensible amendment last week to ensure section 178 replicated the physical conduct in section 177 to ensure a crime is still captured in the event the mental element could not be established. I understand there have been 28 examples where a body has been disposed of in South Australia since the year 2000. In speaking on the bill last year, my colleague the Hon. Frank Pangallo mentioned some of the cases, including the infamous bodies in the barrels murders and the horrible death of two year old Khandalyce Pearce-Stevenson, whose remains were found in a suitcase on the side of the road five years after her mother's body was located at the Belanglo State Forest in New South Wales.

In some cases, concealing the body has meant a person has been, as we have said, able to evade apprehension and has been freely living in the community, such as in the case of Geoffrey Adams, who murdered his wife and buried her under concrete in the backyard of the family home on Yorke Peninsula, evading detection for four entire decades.

My colleague also spoke of Daniel Hind, whose body was hidden in a wheelie bin for two months following his death in 2015. Investigators were denied valuable evidence that could have led

to a murder conviction. Instead, his killer was sentenced to five years and 10 months non-parole for manslaughter. In his victim impact statement to the court at the time of his son's killer's sentencing, Mr Hind said:

Your blatant lies when arrested and utter disregard for Daniel after you killed him convinced me that you are a heartless human only driven by your own interests.

In addressing her son's killer, Mrs Hind said:

Mr Seymour you killed my eldest son. Not only did you do that, but you left him alone in the most horrific way. You disposed of him like he was nothing, like rubbish.

She went on to say:

You left Daniel for so long alone in that paddock while you continued on with your daily life, you took away the opportunity for me and the rest of Daniel's family to be able to look at him and say goodbye.

That really breaks my heart and I will never forgive you for that.

They are the sorts of wrongs that we are trying to address through this bill. It is clear these crimes compound the grief of the loved ones of the deceased and should be punishable in their own right. In relation to the penalties in this bill, I think it is fair to say we support sentences which reflect the seriousness of the crime and provide a strong deterrent for would-be offenders, noting the strong penalties in the Statutes Amendment (Child Sex Offences) Bill that passed this place last week, which we supported.

I will have some questions about the government's plan to fund our prison system should its modus operandi be to lift sentences across the board—if only it could be that simple. I look forward to hearing the government's plans to adequately resource our prisons. In the meantime, I indicate our support for this bill.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (16:24): I thank honourable members for their contribution and indicated support for the bill. As has been outlined, there are two amendments to the bill that have been suggested by my department. The first one is a very simple typographical error where it said 'and' but ought to have said 'any' and the second one, as outlined by the Hon. Connie Bonaros, allows the proposed new section 180 to actually have proper effect by allowing for that alternative verdict. With that, I commend the bill to the chamber.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clause 1.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: The only contribution that I would make is in relation to the points that I made about funding our prison systems. There is no question that we are supporting stronger penalties where they are appropriate and we do so wholeheartedly, but the flipside to that is contemplating what the government's plans are for future funding of our prison systems to take into account those sentences and what plans this government has to address the adequate resourcing of our prisons.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I thank the honourable member for her question. I know that in the last four years, and certainly in the 16 years of the previous Labor government before that, there have been expansions in various of our prisons right around South Australia. I know if legislative change sees significantly more demand for places in prisons, and have in the past made those changes, I can seek from the corrections minister what are contingencies into the future, if they have them, and maybe get the minister to talk directly to the honourable member, if needed, about where plans might be in the future.

Clause passed.

Clause 2 passed.

Clause 3.

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

Amendment No 1 [AG-1]—

Page 3, line 12 [clause 3, inserted section 176(2)]—Delete 'and' and substitute 'or any'

As I outlined in my second reading sum-up, this simply deletes the word 'and' and puts in the word 'any'. It refers to 'any other act' and was a typographical error that I thank my department for spotting and changing.

Amendment carried.

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

Amendment No 2 [AG-1]—

Page 4, lines 19 and 20 [clause 3, inserted section 178(a)]—Delete paragraph (a) and substitute:

- (a) knowingly destroys, removes, conceals or alters human remains; or
- (ab) knowingly mutilates or defiles human remains; or

Again, as I outlined, this imports language into section 178 so that it makes it clear that the provisions in the proposed section 180 being able to find an alternative verdict can be properly applied.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: Would the honourable member be able to expand on how this provision has some effect?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: This amendment makes minor changes to the type of conduct that is covered by the offence in section 178, to correct an anomaly that was identified by my department. At present, the conduct of concealing, removing or altering human remains is not included or covered in the section 178 offence. That type of conduct is only covered in the section 177 offence.

Therefore, if a person is charged with the section 177 offence because they have concealed, removed or altered human remains but the mental element cannot be made out, that is, it cannot be satisfactorily proved it was for the purposes of perverting the course of justice as applied by section 177, the alternative verdict provision in section 80 may not be able to be used. This is because the type of conduct committed by the person concealing, removing or altering is not currently covered, or the words are not in section 178. Therefore, this amendment will absolutely ensure that knowingly concealing, removing or altering human remains is covered in section 178, allowing an alternative verdict to be used in accordance with section 180, where that is appropriate.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (16:30): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

CROSS BORDER COMMISSIONER BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 5 May 2022.)

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16:32): I rise to speak on the Cross Border Commissioner Bill and indicate that I will be the lead speaker on this bill. At the outset, I want to note that we will be supporting this bill, notwithstanding that I will be moving amendments to improve this legislation. Those on this side of the chamber, as Liberals, believe in free enterprise. We are committed to removing barriers to trade and promoting the free flow of goods and services.

This bill would establish a cross-border commissioner to identify key barriers for economic development in the cross-border regions. This bill would establish a cross-border commissioner to advocate for a simplified regulatory environment for business growth and labour mobility in the cross-border regions. Both functions have the potential to deliver significant benefits: benefits to trade, benefits to a freer flow of goods and services, benefits that support our belief as Liberals in free enterprise.

This bill would also establish a cross-border commissioner to facilitate better access to services for cross-border communities, services that include education, justice, health and community services; better access that would improve the lives of many cross-border residents who confront challenges each day because of that invisible line that they cross to move livestock from one paddock to the other, that invisible line that stops the school bus from collecting its students, that invisible line that forces firefighters to switch radios or channels.

We acknowledge the unique challenges that cross-border communities experience in their daily lives because of different regulations and legislation between states and territories. It is certainly something that has been a part of my life as a Riverland resident and of my community's life. I have experienced my own challenges, faced as a veterinarian living in a border community, working both in South Australia and in Victoria, not to mention the incredible difficulties that my community faced during the height of the pandemic when movement was restricted across the border.

Often, families were literally physically separated from one another for months on end, with one parent at home just across the border on the farm working and the other parent having to move into town on the other side of the border to allow children to continue to attend school. This put tremendous stress, both financial and emotional, on those individuals affected, and they are still recovering.

We recognise the opportunities and potential benefits that a cross-border commissioner could deliver. I would like to acknowledge the member for Mount Gambier for his continued advocacy in this area. The member for Mount Gambier first encouraged parliament to consider the appointment of a cross-border commissioner in 2018 during a contribution he made in the other place. As the local member for a cross-border community, it comes as no surprise that he would seek out opportunities that have the potential to streamline processes and reduce red tape for residents and businesses. As a good local member, he is advocating for his community.

I noted earlier that those on this side of the chamber, as Liberals, believe in free enterprise. We also believe in working towards a lean government that minimises interference in our daily lives, a government that avoids stifling structures and bureaucratic red tape. So whilst we will be supporting this legislation, we do so with caution. We do not want another expensive layer of impotent bureaucracy. We do not want an election commitment ticked off, a job for the boys, a ribbon to be cut on the new office and a self-indulgent annual report seeking to justify it all.

If the government is going to commit \$2 million of taxpayers' money, and if the government is going to deliver on the expectations of the community, then it is incumbent upon them to ensure the cross-border commissioner can do more than just advocate for cross-border communities, because in this role we already have the role of a member of parliament, as so effectively demonstrated by the member for Mount Gambier, as well as the member for MacKillop, the member for Hammond and the member for Chaffey, to name some of those hardworking, diligent members of parliament who represent cross-border communities.

It is incumbent upon the government to ensure that the cross-border commissioner has the necessary resources, structure and accountability to achieve tangible results that deliver measurable improvements for residents in cross-border communities. Anything less is a waste. Anything less risks nothing more than a duplication of government and bureaucracy. Anything less, and our focus should instead be zeroed in on improving upon the way departments are run, decisions are made, resources allocated and the attitudes and motivations of the public servants responsible for the development and implementation of policy, procedures, and legislation.

I note that New South Wales appointed a cross-border commissioner in 2012 and Victoria appointed a cross-border commissioner in 2018. Both jurisdictions do not have legislation to support the position. Therefore, if we are going to legislate for this position, a very important position

nonetheless but not one that any other state has legislated for, we need to ensure that the legislation adequately reflects community expectation and is based on outcomes rather than a series of talkfests.

I will be moving several amendments in my name so that this bill is necessary and will do more than just add another layer of bureaucracy. The minister has confirmed that the office of the commissioner will be based in Mount Gambier. We believe that the legislation should ensure not only that the commissioner's office is based in Mount Gambier but that the cross-border commissioner is a resident in a cross-border community.

Lived experience is critical. Those of us who live in the regions know that the last thing country people want or need is someone from Adelaide's CBD trying to tell them how they should be living their lives. In our opinion the commissioner must reside in a cross-border community to really understand the issues that cross-border communities face. It is as simple as that.

We also believe an independent review of the operation of this act should be conducted after this act has been in operation for a period of two years and at the end of each period of five years thereafter. The review will determine if the objectives of the act remain appropriate and how effective and efficient the cross-border commissioner has been in meeting its objectives.

We believe the commissioner should have the power to require information from agencies or departments relevant to the performance of the commissioner's functions, a provision that is consistent with the Small Business Commissioner Act 2011 and the Commissioner for Kangaroo Island Act 2014. Finally, we believe the commissioner should be responsible for preparing, and keep under review, management plans setting out:

1. The proposal of the commissioner in relation to the provision of infrastructure, the effective delivery of services and other matters relating to cross-border communities;
2. The priorities that the commissioner recommends be pursued in order to implement the proposals; and
3. Strategies for consulting and engaging with persons or bodies whose cooperation is required for the effective implementation of the proposals.

The cross-border commissioner should be more than just a mechanism for identifying and considering the complexities and challenges experienced by cross-border residents. The cross-border commissioner should be a mechanism for prioritising, initiating and effecting change that removes barriers to trade and removes barriers to a free flow of goods, services and people.

Without a management plan, there is also no legal means by which the commissioner must seek the views of the local community, whether that be the local council that may be directly affected by a proposal by the commissioner, or a mum-and-dad business, or indeed an individual member of the community. In the current bill, there is scope for an annual plan and for the commissioner to:

...work and engage with all tiers of government, business and the community to ensure the needs of cross-border communities are considered in the development and implementation of policy, procedures and legislation...

However, there is no clear requirement—or rather, no clear minimum requirement—as to the level of work or engagement that the commissioner must undertake with that cross-border community. I would have thought, at the very least, the commissioner should be legally bound to seek the views of the local council in relation to a proposal and must, by public notice, inform the community about the proposal and invite interested persons to make a written representation on that proposal.

Whilst I am sure that any hardworking cross-border commissioner would always take the views of the local community into account, we on this side of the chamber believe that should not be left to the discretion of the individual commissioner, particularly given we are going to the trouble of legislating for this position. If we are going to do this, let's get it right.

Simplifying red tape will improve the lives of cross-border businesses and residents, but improving local infrastructure has the potential to generate exponential growth of local industries. The cross-border commissioner should be ambitious in its scope. We should demand it and the community should expect it. We would also suggest that the cross-border commissioner be an active

participant in, and should be part of, the Emergency Management Committee where appropriate going forward. This would enable cross-border communities to have a voice at the table when dealing with any future pandemic management decisions.

Whilst the challenges for cross-border communities have always existed, we recognise that since the COVID-19 pandemic there has been increasing and widespread regional support, and indeed support across the state, for a cross-border commissioner. Local communities want a mechanism that they can work with and that can work with businesses, community organisations and all tiers of government to address the challenges they face in their daily lives and the barriers they experience to growing their local economy. But let's make sure we establish something that can meet their expectations.

Communities along South Australian state borders interact closely with communities that exist just over the border. We recognise the challenges that flow from that close interaction and the need for greater efforts to improve the experience of residents in those communities. We look forward to those in this place considering and supporting our amendments to ensure the cross-border commissioner is more than a paper tiger and that it does indeed help to improve outcomes for people and businesses in cross-border communities like my own.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:44): I rise in support of this bill on behalf of the Greens. I recognise that the opposition have amendments and will certainly consider those and look into the detail of those over the next few days. Broadly, we do support this bill, and I want to commend the government and the minister, the Hon. Clare Scriven, for putting this forward because it is an important innovation and something that the Greens have been advocating for and something that many in the community have been advocating for as well. We certainly welcome the commitment that the new government has made in this regard.

As has been stated, we recognise that cross-border communities face complex issues. People and businesses in those communities can often fall through the gaps in terms of living on the edge of different jurisdictions. Many people in these communities live in one state and can go to school in another. They face challenges in terms of medical appointments. It might be that they go to see a specialist who is based in another state.

We saw some of the complexities emerge during the bushfires in 2019-20. There were significant issues in terms of jurisdictions that were confronted by the CFS and emergency services. These things were problematic and they need to be addressed. I think that is an area where this new commissioner could play an important role.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw real challenges for people in these communities where they were forced to interact between complex rules in different states. That created a lot of uncertainty and anxiety in those communities. Again, I see the commissioner being able to play a really important role in terms of addressing some of those issues and ensuring that communities are not falling through the gaps in terms of the laws of different jurisdictions.

It is worth noting that the lives of many people who are in cross-border communities are lived in more than one state. The Greens believe that there should not be barriers to them being able to access the public services that so many of us take for granted in metropolitan South Australia. They should not be discriminated against on the basis of the community in which they reside. They should not be discriminated against simply because they fall between different jurisdictions.

Under this bill, a new cross-border commissioner would be established. This commissioner would look at a number of these issues as presented to them by the parliament. We see this as being a real opportunity to improve the lives of those living in cross-border areas and a real opportunity to reduce the barriers that can result from these multijurisdictional issues.

Both New South Wales and Victoria have cross-border commissioners already in place. According to the Victorian Cross Border Commissioner, residents, businesses, local governments and other organisations bring hundreds of issues to them, demonstrating a need for such an institution for South Australian communities. A South Australian cross-border commissioner could work collaboratively with their counterparts in other states to ensure that these communities have equitable access and opportunities and to ensure that there is seamless service delivery, and we certainly welcome that.

I note the honourable opposition leader's comments regarding ensuring that this role is not a paper tiger. We certainly agree with that, but we want to make sure that they are not just a paper pusher either. We do not want them to be caught up in red tape and confined by too much complexity in terms of the legislative framework as well. It is certainly in that spirit that we will consider the opposition's amendments. As I say, we are supportive of the bill. I commend the government for putting it forward and we look forward to the committee stage.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (16:48): I rise on behalf of SA-Best to speak about this bill to establish a cross-border commissioner. We support it in principle. The need for this type of position became evident during the state's sudden border closures during the worst stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, that is, in the pre-vaccine era and before the state hit its high ratio of vaccination in our population.

The State Coordinator, as we know, had to make some difficult, tough and immediate decisions that did not sit well with or suit border communities in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales, particularly the more populous regions in the South-East, the Riverland and around Broken Hill.

Those decisions failed to fully consider the close business ties and social networks as well as the needs of those communities for health services, business, employment, emergency services and education, on both sides of the borders. Various state laws and regulations also added a complex layer to the frustration that restrictions imposed.

We also experienced situations where South Australians attempting to return home from interstate suddenly found themselves stranded on the wrong side of borders for weeks. Their complaints on their urgent need to get to their homes were not addressed in a timely or organised manner. There were mercy medical flights that were either stalled, diverted or had to be abandoned. Freight was banked up for kilometres. There was also a fatal accident involving trucks on the Victorian side.

Should the misfortune of a catastrophic pandemic like COVID befall us again I would truly hope that the government of the day, or whomever is in charge of these decisions, does not shut out the rights of people to return to their state, to their homes and to their families. I would like to acknowledge the strong advocacy by members of parliament, state and federal, whose electorates straddle borders in raising concerns of their constituents, as well as those just across the borders, during the maddening times of the pandemic. These are members like Troy Bell, Nick McBride, Tony Pasin, Senator Anne Ruston, Rowan Ramsey, the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, the Hon. Clare Scriven, Tim Whetstone and Adrian Pederick. Their loud voices for reason and compassion led to action and a more commonsense approach in difficult, frustrating and sometimes heartbreaking times for their communities.

However, it has become abundantly obvious that there is merit in having cross-border commissioners who can act for their communities on a range of issues that are often peculiar to their regions and their way of life, from accessing health facilities, digital infrastructure, education, emergency services and employment, through to sporting and cultural events that border communities do share.

There are also laws and regulations which differ across borders that can be a barrier to service delivery and would require cooperation and coordination between the affected states. I will note that mutual recognition legislation, recently passed, does come into force in July which removes red tape and restrictions on a range of qualifications gained in different states.

The cross-border commissioner can help deliver positive social and economic outcomes by acting as a conduit for their communities and making them better places to live. With borders to South Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania, across Bass Strait, encompassing some 300,000 people, Victoria recognised the need for its commissioner in 2018 and it appears to have been working quite productively with New South Wales, which has had its commissioner for 10 years.

Both states have a non-binding memorandum of understanding to enable them to work collaboratively. South Australia, on the other hand, shares five land borders, with Western Australia, the Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. I would expect our minister will

be seeking a similar MOI with those states and territories and perhaps she can elaborate more on this during the debate.

The opposition has flagged some amendments to this bill, which we are considering. They include clarifications on how the agency will work, a requirement for the exchange of information between government departments and individuals, the preparation of strategies and management plans, and that the appointed commissioner must at least reside in a border community, which SA-Best fully endorses. In this case, should the bill proceed, the government proposes the head office will be in the South-East in Mount Gambier. But, as I have pointed out, our commissioner is certainly going to be a very busy person dealing with five border communities. I commend the bill to the chamber.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. H.M. Girolamo.

Address in Reply

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 19 May 2022.)

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (16:56): I rise to give my Address in Reply to the speech made at the opening of the Fifty-Fifth South Australian Parliament by the Governor, Her Excellency the Hon. Frances Adamson AC.

Before I do, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Mr Stephens on his election to the position of President and I hope that, as required by our laws, he remains truly independent without fear or favour. I would like to congratulate all those members who were returned to this chamber and I would like to congratulate those members who came to this chamber through a casual vacancy on their election to this chamber. I would also like to congratulate all new members of this chamber. I acknowledge the success of the Greens, which achieved a position in this chamber in their own right. I congratulate the One Nation party for the election of their first member to this chamber, and I look forward to working with the Hon. Ms Sarah Game over the next eight years.

The government has made special mention of the need for courage and vision in these challenging times and to be unafraid to make bold decisions. I believe this is the model on which Labor was built and it has never been more important than it is now. Showing courage and vision is the least we can do, considering the sacrifices made by South Australians over the past two years—often those who have been least able to make them—and the health workers, emergency workers and volunteers on the frontline during the pandemic.

I agree with the Governor's sentiments in commending the many and various workers, including police, healthcare, emergency and transport workers, which is all the more reason that we cannot afford to undermine their efforts with poor decisions such as those made to open the borders three weeks before Christmas.

Like many of my colleagues on both sides of the floor I congratulated the Marshall government when it acted responsibly under pressure during the pandemic. That is why I feel I can say with a bipartisan mentality that they dropped the ball a few times later in their term. Regardless, it is time for looking forward, not backwards. We all need to pull together to ensure that we not only see off the COVID era but that we also see in the many opportunities that lie before us.

The Governor is right in saying that South Australia has always been a big picture state. While the other side has certainly contributed to the state that we have become, it was the efforts of the Labor government during the Dunstan years that put us in the international spotlight. There were massive, well overdue advances in health, education and the arts, a push towards creating the multicultural society we now take for granted and even the establishment of the world-renowned South Australian Film Corporation and the landmark films it produced to put Australian cinema on the map.

We cannot rest on the record of past achievements. There are now major challenges ahead, from health, infrastructure and the economy to possibly the biggest challenge of them all: the environment. Going forward, Labor is the only one of the two major parties that take climate change

seriously. While the conservatives have for years argued that environmental advances can only be done at the expense of the economy, Labor has always argued the opposite.

It is Labor's initiatives that will upgrade the electricity grid and drive down power prices by \$275 a year for the average household and we have the national electric vehicle strategy to make electric vehicles cheaper. Labor is the party that federally will invest \$3 billion in the green metals of steel, alumina and aluminium. They will roll out 85 solar banks across Australia and install 400 community batteries across the country.

We are the party that sees the unarguable need for apprenticeships in the new era—10,000 of them. We are just as committed at a state level and agree with the Governor that a good environment and a good economy are not mutually exclusive and they can in fact coexist. The environment is no longer a supposedly costly ideal we cannot afford, it is the opportunity we cannot afford to ignore.

South Australian Labor's Hydrogen Jobs Plan will provide massive opportunities. The 250-megawatt hydrogen electrolyser facility and the 250-megawatt hydrogen power station will be a world-leading technology. The 3,600-tonne hydrogen storage facility will accommodate Hydrogen Power SA, which will be operational by 2025. This will not just continue our world-leading practice in clean energy transmission, it will also support business and industry by delivering those sectors lower priced energy.

Through the initiatives of South Australian Labor, this state went from supplying virtually no renewable energy in 2002 to more than 50 per cent in 2020. That allowed us to go from an importer of energy to an exporter to the larger Eastern States, and the projection going forward is that those numbers will increase significantly.

The Governor talked about three of the great pillars of a strong, resilient society: health, education and the environment. As the party that acted on a need for a new hospital and created a world-class facility, as the party that always injects more money into education and the only major party to take our environmental needs seriously, we are well placed to ensure a healthy and prosperous future.

After four years of ambulance ramping that could have and should have been addressed earlier in the former government's term, Labor will ensure another 350 paramedics and ambulance officers to help make this a bad memory. Not only will there be additional ambulance crews, they will be based across the state, from the metropolitan precincts to the much-needed rural areas.

The addition of 100 more doctors and a further 300 nurses goes hand in hand with the establishment of 300 new hospital beds across the state. It is no good having one of the best hospitals in the world if we do not have enough highly skilled professional people to work in it. We are introducing legislation to overhaul the Emergency Management Act so it actually works during times of emergency.

SA Labor is committed to addressing the growing scourge of untreated, unrecognised mental health issues. Now we are in government, Labor can make good on its pledge to invest \$182 million towards mental health initiatives. For so many years overlooked, ignored or even intentionally dismissed, mental health has become one of the major issues of modern society.

One in 25 people who go to the emergency department are suffering mental health illnesses. We cannot ignore it any longer and in fact we need to be proactive in addressing it. This initiative will bring up to 100 more beds for mentally ill patients. This commitment has been welcomed by the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists.

We will act on education. We will introduce modern, 21st century subjects—not just electives—into primary and secondary school curriculums so that our young people leaving school are well placed to go into tertiary studies needed for the ever-advancing cyber industries. That will enable them to move into rewarding careers at the forefront of that changing technology. We need to put measures in place so that children in school can now work toward careers in the expanding areas of cyber technology and defence.

It was Labor that ensured the submarine industry got started in this state through a lot of hard work and negotiation in the 1980s. We need to make sure that young South Australians have every opportunity to build careers there. Of course, the submarine industry will bring people from interstate and overseas, but we need to ensure young South Australians can compete strongly for those jobs.

Whether it is education, health, the environment, infrastructure or transport, Labor has always been the South Australian government of vision. We addressed one of the worst road systems in Australia and set the many South Australian South Road upgrade projects in motion. Instead of doing things by half, quite literally, the north-south corridor, including the South Road Superway and Northern Expressway, were launched under our watch.

We brought AFL football and all the crowds that come with it to the city while many on the other side argued that it was unnecessary when we had a perfectly good oval on primary residential land at West Lakes. We made one of the decisions that helped Adelaide grow as a vibrant and international-standard city.

While many argued vehemently that we did not need a footbridge across the Torrens and that people could just walk to King William Street and create massive safety and traffic issues, or just go home after the football, we had the vision to understand the value of such a seemingly unimportant project. The football and that bridge brought people back into the city in huge numbers and to accommodate that interest and enhance the experience, Labor brought about initiatives to open the western side of the city.

We encouraged the creation of new cafe and restaurant precincts, which led to our own laneways culture. If you want to see whether football, the footbridge and the support for local restaurants have worked, take a walk on any weekend from the Casino and Festival Centre to the Leigh Street and Peel Street dining precincts.

These changes and improvements are the same ones that the Liberal politicians opposed. Strange, is it not, that when a photo opportunity has been needed, these same people happily had their photos taken alongside the Torrens, flanked by the Oval and the hospital district to show Adelaide at its best.

What else did Labor do? We moved the hospital. We took the tired, outdated and health compromised Royal Adelaide Hospital away from prime land in the East Parklands and created a world-class medical precinct on land that was going to waste on the north-western side of the city. What did we not do? We did not build a one-way Southern Expressway that was the brunt of jokes around the country.

This is a project that all taxpayers paid for, not just those living in the south, but often never got to use it because of where they lived or what time of the day they were heading north or south. Instead, we fixed it. Now every South Australian motorist gets to use it and many hours are cut off the weekly commute to and from the city. The by-product of course, which anyone with any vision would know, is that it helped the southern suburbs flourish.

While on matters that have required desperate, overdue attention, Labor will take active measures to address domestic violence. We will ensure it is never dismissed simply because there are no visible signs of duress. We have already introduced a bill to do away with the \$297 fee the victim of domestic violence has been asked to pay in order to impose an interim intervention order on the perpetrator. This is a gravely serious, heinous situation and we are committed to doing a lot better.

Labor will push new ideas while remaining devoted to traditional success stories. While once we hung our hat on world-class wine produced in the Barossa Valley, we can now boast wines produced at McLaren Vale, Clare Valley, Adelaide Hills and the Coonawarra as well as other burgeoning regions. We need to support and protect these success stories so they continue for generations to come.

Labor will pump \$40 million into the tourism sector to ensure that we do not miss out on opportunities while also supporting the events that are already here. We will be targeting the 2027 World Cup matches, Socceroo World Cup qualifiers, matches featuring English Premier clubs, even

US Major League Baseball teams. Instead of cancelling a motor racing event that attracts people from all over Australia and overseas at the first sign of it being too tough during a pandemic, we will embrace our great events and we will support them. This means the Adelaide Festival, the Fringe, WOMADelaide, Writers' Week and the Cabaret Festival will not be put into the too-hard basket at the first sign of trouble. Labor will support all of these initiatives to ensure they remain great South Australian events.

As the Governor said, this parliament is one that will provide one of the proudest initiatives in South Australian history by making a well overdue treaty with the First Australians. Establishing the Aboriginal Voice to Parliament and the truth-telling process is something that all South Australians, First Peoples and many generations from all over the world that make up our society can rightly embrace. It will bring us together.

Labor is also committed to introducing wage theft legislation to create criminal penalties for persistent and deliberate underpayment of workers, including wages and superannuation. It does seem a bit ironic that if a worker steals from an employer they could end up in jail, but if an employer steals a far greater amount from employees there is no law to say that they have committed a criminal act. This will be overcome in the next session of parliament.

That is what this Fifty-Fifth South Australian Parliament will strive to achieve, bringing all South Australians together as we embrace the best of our history, work as one with the rich opportunities at hand and build an exciting, enduring future.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (17:12): Today, I rise to speak to the Address in Reply motion. I thank Her Excellency, the Hon. Frances Adamson AC, for opening the Fifty-Fifth Parliament and for her address. I would like to take this opportunity to first congratulate our new President, the Hon. Terry Stephens, on his election. I would also like to offer my congratulations to the Labor Party on their successful election campaign, in particular my fellow members in this place, the Attorney-General, the Hon. Kyam Maher; minister the Hon. Clare Scriven; and assistant minister the Hon. Emily Bourke.

I also congratulate the Hon. Reggie Martin and welcome him to the Legislative Council. I am very much looking forward to working with you. I also extend my congratulations to the Hon. Sarah Game. Unlike in the other place, I am proud to say that in my experience the crossbench have proven to be wonderful and constructive colleagues, and I am looking forward to continuing to be constructive and collaborating with fellow members across the chamber. In the other place, I also congratulate all new members on their election wins and welcome them to parliament.

Whilst the election result was not what we wanted, we the Liberal Party are back stronger and more united than ever. We have a good balanced team with the right mix of real-world experience. We have on our side four years of ministerial experience. We have all developed a new set of skills that came with successfully managing South Australia through a worldwide pandemic. We have corporate experience, life experience and government experience, and one thing in common with all of us is we all want what is best for South Australia, our futures and our children's futures.

To my new Liberal teammates in the other place, Ashton Hurn MP, Penny Pratt MP and Sam Telfer MP, and to the Hon. Laura Curran sitting here with me in the Legislative Council, my friend and now colleague, I know that you will make an incredible and long-lasting contribution to our state and our party. Sadly, the election saw friends and colleagues no longer in parliament with us. To Paula Luethen, Richard Harvey, Rachel Sanderson, Corey Wingard, Dan van Holst Pellekaan and Steve Murray, I wish you all the best in the next chapters, and I know you will continue to achieve great things.

To Carolyn Power, my friend and support in this place, I will miss our chats, but I know that our friendship will continue on well past our political journeys. To those who retired at the election, I thank you personally for your service to the state and to our party. You have left a huge impact and legacy for years to come. In particular, I would like to mention Peter Treloar and John Dawkins. Rob Lucas, the Father of the House, has been not only my colleague and mentor but also a wonderful friend to me and my family.

To Stephan Knoll, one of the best, you left this place far too soon and will be dearly missed by everyone. Steph and I started in Young Liberals together nearly 20 years ago. Your support and friendship has been very much appreciated, and I know you will continue on as you enter the next chapter of your life. I know that you cannot wait to spend more time with your beautiful girls.

To Steven Marshall, the leader of our party for so many years and the Premier who guided us through the most unprecedented times—bushfires, fruit fly and a worldwide health pandemic—your leadership, vision and determination to do the best for South Australia was never in doubt. Now you can enjoy spending time with the good people of Dunstan and continue to be the best representative for them in the parliament.

I think it is also important to acknowledge those who put themselves forward as candidates for the state election. I would like to pay a special thankyou to Ursula Henderson, Ben Hood, Rowan Mumford and Alex Hyde. Your support of our party does not go unnoticed, and I would very much encourage those who were not successful to look towards 2026.

I would like to specifically acknowledge Jordan Dodd, our incredibly hardworking candidate in Badcoe. Jordan worked tirelessly during her entire campaign, and it was my pleasure to work very closely with her throughout, doorknocking or chatting with constituents at local shopping centres. She has an incredible ability to help and drive change in her community, and I look forward to seeing what the future brings for Jordan.

Now to our current party and the future of our party. Our leader, the Hon. David Speirs MP, brings with him a passion for change and a drive to be better than we were before. He achieved more in his four years as Minister for Environment and Water than many of his predecessors did. He is the most committed local member and a man who never stops striving for more for both our state and our community.

In this house, to our leader and my friend the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, congratulations. She is a wonderful leader, support and role model to all of us. She has always been so supportive of me during my political journey, and I thank her for her ongoing support and look forward to working closely with her into the future.

I am honoured and privileged to have been given the opportunity to serve as shadow minister for finance, trade and investment and the circular economy. Each of these areas are key in making South Australia a better place to live, work and raise a family. I am looking forward to working closely with Matt Cowdrey MP, our shadow treasurer, and the Hon. David Speirs MP, shadow minister for the environment and small business.

I am proud to say that our party has taken a slightly different approach to our shadow cabinet and has chosen to focus the portfolios on the areas that are important to us and the people of South Australia rather than mirroring the portfolios the government has adopted. Dedicating a team to health shows the importance of this topic, making sure that everyone's voice is heard right across the state when it comes to health management and changes to legislation.

I look forward to working closely with the shadow minister for health, Ashton Hurn MP; shadow minister for regional health and wellbeing, Penny Pratt MP; and Tim Whetstone MP, who is taking on the important portfolios of mental health and suicide prevention.

We have a team of shadow ministers responsible for the betterment of the regions: the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, responsible for regional South Australia; Penny Pratt MP in the other place, responsible for regional health services; Sam Telfer, responsible for regional population growth; and Adrian Pederick, responsible for regional roads. This goes to show the importance we place on the regional areas of our state and the role they play in keeping us moving and growing.

During our time in government, the South Australia Liberal Party had some key focuses on the economy, health and education. We wanted South Australia to be a place where people wanted to come and do business, grow their careers and bring their families with them. When we came to government in 2018, South Australia was in an ongoing 'brain drain' with young people leaving their home state for, more often than not, the Eastern States or overseas to pursue their career goals.

In 2020, Victorian Premier Dan Andrews said, 'I don't want to be offensive to South Australians, but why would you want to go there?' Less than a year later, and for the first time

in 30 years, we started attracting more people from other states rather than losing them. This was a milestone in our recent history and one that we hope will continue on into the future. Under a Liberal government, Adelaide was also named as the most livable city in the country and the third most livable city in the world. I am biased, being South Australian born and bred, but in my eyes it was never in question.

In 2018, prior to the election in South Australia, our taxes were far too high, our power prices were amongst the highest in the world, we were expected to put up with very unreliable power sources, and our water prices continued to rise each year irrespective of water security. During our time in government, the Marshall Liberal government eliminated payroll tax on small businesses, slashed the emergency services levy on families and businesses, and cut water bills, while providing support to families and businesses during COVID-19. I can only hope that the Labor Party chooses to focus its attentions on these areas for the benefit of all South Australians.

In the Governor's opening speech, she highlighted that the pandemic has changed all of our lives, but that it has also presented opportunities for our state to not simply recover but to prosper as never before. The Marshall Liberal government successfully managed our state through a worldwide pandemic, and we have kindly left a legacy to the Labor Party of the lowest unemployment rate in 40 years, a booming economy and record trade levels.

We will not stand by on the sidelines and watch all of this hard work crumble. We will not watch South Australians pay higher household taxes. We will not let the Labor Party allow the brain drain to return. We want young people to stay here in South Australia or, better yet, we want to entice them to move here from interstate. We need the government to keep providing us incentives to do so, creating jobs in exciting industries and making sure our state is vibrant and full of life.

We will interrogate their policies and question their spending. The Liberal Party will represent the constituents in parliament and make sure their voices are heard. We will make sure we are accessible right across the state to anyone who reaches out. We will be the representatives that South Australians need and deserve.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. K.J. Maher.

At 17:23 the council adjourned until Wednesday 1 June 2022 at 14:15.