

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**Wednesday, 20 March 2024**

The PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens) took the chair at 14:16 and read prayers.

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

Parliamentary Procedure

ANSWERS TABLED

The PRESIDENT: I direct that the written answers to questions be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

Parliamentary Committees

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (14:17): I bring up the 40th report of the committee.

Report received.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Amendment 2023
Report on the Operation of the Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction
Act 2007 (South Australia)

Ministerial Statement

ROBERTS, MR J.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:18): I table a copy of a ministerial statement made in the other place by the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis on mining figure John Roberts.

Leave granted.

Question Time

FARM WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:19): It won't surprise you that I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Industrial Relations a question about farm work health and safety.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: There have been three extremely serious farm workplace accidents in South Australia in the space of less than two months. In February, two people in separate incidents were crushed and killed by their own tractors. This month, a farm worker received critical injuries after being run over by a harvester sweeper. I note there is a 'Farmers' Guidebook to work health and safety' published in May 2017 and available on the SafeWork SA website. We are not in the habit of telling farmers how to do their job but given the rise in serious incidents, which includes a loss of life while in the workplace, my questions to the Minister for Industrial Relations are:

1. Does the minister have plans to review and update the 'Farmers' Guidebook to work health and safety'?
2. How is the current information including the guidebook distributed and promoted amongst the farming community?
3. Does the Minister for Industrial Relations agree that a targeted safety awareness campaign in regional areas is due?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:20): I thank the honourable member for her questions and I agree with her in many respects in what she said in relation to the questions. Workplaces, no matter where they are, be they primary industry workplaces on farms, primary production workplaces in food processing factories, or any other workplace, people should feel that they will finish their day's work and be as safe as when they went into work. Any loss of life, particularly in an accident at work, is one too many.

Of course, anyone conducting a business undertaking has a responsibility to provide a safe workplace. That is a fundamental part of our occupational health and safety laws. That applies equally whether it be a workplace as a farm or a workplace as a building site. I know SafeWork SA, which is the regulator in South Australia in terms of occupational health and safety, has a number of roles. One of their roles is as regulator, and they conduct prosecutions for failure to provide a safe workplace, but as the honourable member has pointed out they also have a role in terms of education and providing guidance to workplaces about how to best meet their obligations to provide a safe workplace.

I know that SafeWork SA regularly provides updates in various ways to a whole range of industries. I am happy, and I will undertake to go away and at my next SafeWork meeting that I have regularly with the regulator, to talk about primary industries. I am pleased too that, after very substantial cuts during the last term of the Liberal government, we have restored nearly all of the funding for positions in SafeWork, which does such critical work in keeping people safe in South Australia.

CHILD SEX OFFENDERS

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:22): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General regarding child sex offences.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: In the District Court cases listed on 19 March 2024, seven out of the 30 cases were related to child sex offences or child exploitation material. That is approximately 23 per cent of all cases on that day alone. My question to the Attorney is: does the government have any intention to introduce legislation or policy to reduce the alarming prevalence of child sex offences?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:23): I thank the honourable member for her question very much and I would be most pleased to answer this because I think that has been the hallmark of some of the policies and the legislation from opposition that we introduced and certainly some of the legislation that we have been proactive with since we have been in government.

Since we have been in government, we certainly have dramatically increased the penalties that apply to a whole range of child sex offences, in some cases almost tripling the potential penalties that people face. This serves a twofold purpose: firstly, a purpose of making sure that those who commit these sorts of crimes spend more time in jail and away from society where they can cause harm, but also as a deterrent to engage in this sort of heinous behaviour.

In addition to increasing a whole range of penalties, we have a number of election commitments that we will be fulfilling during this term to make sure that the horrendous effects from people who prey on children are lessened and people spend more time in jail.

FIRST NATIONS VOICE ELECTIONS

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:24): My questions are again to the minister in his capacity as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on the state-based Voice elections. Does the minister concede that a low voter turnout may be due to the lack of promotion of the state-based Voice elections by the Malinauskas government, and can the minister outline the spend on the promotion of the state-based Voice election process itself, compared to the spend on the promotion of the passing of the legislation in February 2023?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:24): I thank the honourable member for her question. I don't have an exact breakdown of the amount that was spent on the information for informing people about the state-based Voice. I know the Electoral Commissioner did a very substantial amount of work, particularly in remote and regional South Australia, promoting and trying to build an understanding of the Voice elections that were coming up.

I know the honourable leader's colleagues asked a couple of questions about this yesterday, and we don't have final figures in terms of the number of people who have voted, but I have said in this chamber before, as I said yesterday, we are tempering our expectations on turnout due to a number of factors. One of them, as I outlined yesterday—and certainly speaking to a number of people in the Aboriginal community and their feedback, and I think the Electoral Commission and the Commissioner for First Nations Voice has got—is some level of fatigue after the referendum last year. I suspect it will impact on voter turnout.

It is also the case that this is the first time we have tried this particular sort of election in South Australia, and the only rough comparison we have were the ATSIC elections that were held in the 1990s—four ATSIC elections during the course of that decade, where turnout, as I think I mentioned yesterday, started at just over 2,000 votes in South Australia and went up to just over 2,500 votes in South Australia.

If we can get anywhere near what ATSIC was able to achieve in the 1990s, particularly coming so soon after the referendum, I think that would be a very good result, also noting, as we have before, the quite remarkable engagement in terms of nominations, with 113 nominations. Compared per capita to the nominations for the 47 lower house seats of state parliament, which saw Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people nominating in excess of 2,400 per cent greater than the 1.4-odd million South Australians who nominated for the available seats in the lower house in the South Australian parliament.

FIRST NATIONS VOICE ELECTIONS

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:26): Supplementary: has the minister been briefed on any estimated number of voter turnout since the elections on the 16th?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:27): As I said, I don't have final figures. I have had some very rough figures, but we are still waiting on postal votes and I wouldn't want to talk about figures until we have final figures. I know that there were people who were at polling booths who have also said that the—I think there were 32 polling booths on the Saturday. Some of those were quite busy and some of those were not very busy at all.

Certainly, I went to a couple to talk to people on the Saturday. Tauondi College in Port Adelaide had a steady stream of people coming through. Not far from there, there was the Cheltenham Community Centre, a booth that seemed very, very slow, and I guess again there will be things that will be learnt from how far apart polling booths are in terms of how busy they will be, but I certainly will be happy when there are those figures to provide an update.

FIRST NATIONS VOICE ELECTIONS

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (14:27): Supplementary question: has the minister sought an update or briefing on voter turnout from Saturday specifically and, if so, what numbers were provided?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:28): Once there are final figures I will be happy to provide them.

PREMIER'S EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Hon. M. EL DANNAWI (14:28): My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector. Will the minister inform the council about the recently announced winners of the Premier's Excellence Awards?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:28): I thank the honourable member for her question. I would be most happy to provide information about the recently announced winners of the Premier's Excellence Awards, which sees tribute being paid to all of the substantial and excellent work happening throughout the public sector.

The Premier's Excellence Awards, as I have mentioned in this chamber before, are a fantastic platform for the acknowledgement and appreciation of the exemplary work that delivers positive outcomes for the people of South Australia in line with public sector values. It is the highest reward and recognition program that is open to all South Australian public servants.

I was proud to be able to inform the council a few weeks ago of the flavour of just some of the finalists within my portfolio areas, who are amongst the 177 nominations across more than 30 agencies. The nominations were narrowed down to 33 finalists; then on Friday 8 March the deserving winners were announced.

The Excellence in Service Delivery category for individuals was won by Phil Hesse from the SA Housing Authority. Phil has responsibility for the design, construction and maintenance of homes across South Australia's remote Aboriginal communities. Those who work with Phil note that he works in a culturally inclusive manner and ensures housing design includes cultural and environmental elements that are developed through community consultation and centres his work around being proactive and ensuring that planned maintenance is a priority.

The team award in that category was awarded to the flood recovery team in DPC and DIIS for their work over the last 12 months since the 2022-23 flood event in South Australia. The award recognised their careful planning and multilayered approach to recovery as well as their swift mobilisation.

The winning individual in the Driving Innovation category was Alexandre Santos, a senior specialist at the Central Adelaide Local Health Network whose work has transformed the quality of health care received by cancer patients undergoing radiotherapy treatment. The award-winning Driving Innovation team was the Royal Adelaide Hospital's immunotherapies team, led by Professor Michael Brown. The immunotherapies team have developed innovative, world-first therapies for cancers using targeted antibodies and cells.

The individual award in the Building South Australia's Economy category was awarded to Bettina Venner, who is the Manager of Supply Chain Development at the Industry Capability Network. The network has been at the forefront of identifying businesses that will be able to contribute to the future of hydrogen and renewables in this state.

The Building South Australia's Economy team award was jointly handed to two winners: the Department for Education's Industry Engagement Team, which partners with industry and employers across SA to develop opportunities for students to be exposed to their industry of choice and to expand awareness about various industries that are growing in South Australia; and the other winner was the South Australian Defence Industry Workforce and Skills Taskforce, which is dedicated to ensuring the necessary support for the delivery of some of South Australia's most complex defence projects.

The Leadership in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion individual award went to Dianna Smith-McCue, who is the Director of Consumer and Community Engagement at the Women's and Children's Health Network and whose family-centred approach has a commitment to understanding

individual needs and preferences. She has also established the first Aboriginal consumer working group to enhance connections between the Aboriginal community and their healthcare rights.

The team category went to the Port Augusta YES Centre at the Port Augusta Secondary School, which promotes a flexible learning model of schooling with a personalised approach to encourage those with diverse classroom needs to continue to grow in their learning environment.

I was delighted to see Ali Abdullah-Highfold, whose work I informed the council about a few weeks ago, was named the individual winner of the Connecting Communities category. Ali undertakes important work at the South Australian Museum as a family and community history consultant. I also informed the council previously about the work of the Aboriginal education team at Para Hills High School, who have been named the winners of the team award.

Finally, the Emerging Young Talent individual award was presented to Nichola Goult of Service SA, who has been instrumental in addressing the escalating threat of cybercrime by overseeing the implementation of two-factor authentication in the mySAGO app as well as playing a pivotal role in the agency's response to assisting customers impacted by the Optus data breach.

These winners, along with all the finalists and nominees, represent outstanding work across the public sector. It is a group that I am very proud of, and I thank them for all their work day in day out in what they do in the service of South Australians.

ADELAIDE CITY COUNCIL RATES

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:33): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question without notice to the minister representing the Minister for Small and Family Business on the topic of differential rates and the impact on businesses.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS: Last week, the Adelaide City Council revealed that it is considering a 7.4 per cent rate rise and increases in fees to cover high costs for services and asset renewal. This morning, Channel 9 reported that rate hikes will hurt small businesses, which may need to pass those increases on to customers, with a coffee shop owner concerned about the effect it will have on the cost of doing business in the city.

According to *The Advertiser* on 16 March, Adelaide has already seen 12 small businesses closing their doors in the city this year alone. Meanwhile, big businesses posting major profits are able to absorb rate increases more easily than small local businesses that have a lower turnover. My questions to the minister, therefore, are:

1. What support is the government providing to small businesses in the CBD to stop them from closing their doors?
2. Would the government consider giving the City of Adelaide the ability to charge differential rates to businesses based on profit margins so that small businesses are insulated from rate rises?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:34): I thank the honourable member for his questions. I will pass them on to the minister in another place and bring back a reply.

VICTIMS OF CRIME FUND

The Hon. J.S. LEE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:35): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Attorney-General about the victims of crime compensation fund.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.S. LEE: An article in *The Advertiser* released on 19 February 2024 reported that the Victims of Crime Fund has increased to a record \$200 million, while expenditure of the funds was only at \$61 million for 2022-23. Despite the Victims of Crime Fund increasing year on year, some victims are still not receiving the support they deserve. Kylie Bailey, a survivor of child sexual assault,

was refused assistance due to a technicality, in spite of the fact that her abuser was unanimously found guilty. She said:

I think the fact that the Victims of Crime Fund is sitting at \$200 million is a joke...there is so much healing that could come from the funds being used where it is needed most. I felt upset, angry and once again let down by the system.

It is a fund designed to help victims, but even with a record-breaking bank balance a child sex abuse victim could not get a psychiatrist. My questions to the Attorney-General are:

1. What response would the Attorney-General provide to victims of crime like Kylie Bailey?

2. Will the Attorney-General commit to closing the loopholes that prevent victims of crime from receiving compensation that is due to them?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:37): I thank the honourable member for her question—it is very similar to questions her colleagues have asked over the past few weeks. I can reiterate that, yes, there is a balance of around \$200 million in the Victims of Crime Fund at the moment.

I also note, as I have outlined in only the last few weeks, that from time to time very significant amounts come out of the Victims of Crime Fund and there needs to be a balance to make sure it can accommodate those, for example, the \$146.4 million in 2017, 2018 and 2019 for the National Redress Scheme, which had about \$25 million put towards it more recently.

I also note, as I did previously—I think I informed the chamber—that between 2022 and 2023 more money went out of the fund than came into the fund, so more money paid out to victims for the purpose of helping victims of crime than was accumulated through primarily the victims of crime levy that offenders pay.

Between 2022 and 2023, \$61.5 million was expended from the fund and \$60.7 million came into the fund that year. If the honourable member has what she considers to be a specific loophole, I would be more than happy to address it and I invite the honourable member, maybe in a supplementary question, to address the loophole she is referring to.

LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (14:38): My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the minister update the council about the recent significant retirement from the Legal Services Commission?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:38): I would be most happy to. I informed the chamber very recently about the retirement of Gabrielle Canny, who announced retirement after 11 years as the head of the Legal Services Commission, and a stellar time before that in senior roles in the Legal Services Commission. But another very significant retirement took place at the commission recently.

Greg Mead retired at the end of last year, drawing to a close a quite remarkable 37 years of exemplary service to the Legal Services Commission. In 2005, Mr Mead was appointed as the Legal Services Commission's chief counsel. Those who have previously held the position of chief counsel at the Legal Services Commission have included names that will be well known to many, such as the Hon. K. Duggan AM KC, the Hon. S. Tilmouth KC, the Hon. B. Jennings KC, the Hon. M. Gray KC, and the Hon. M. Shaw KC.

Mr Mead was instrumental in the introduction of the legal practitioner panel system, developing merits testing for legal aid applications, and protecting the confidentiality and legal professional privilege of clients. Over 30 years ago, he started the voluntary After Hours Custody Service, which provided advice to persons who are in police custody and charged with serious offences. In such cases, police officers contact the service and arrange for the person in custody to speak with one of the solicitors to provide legal advice over the telephone. In very serious and complicated matters, such as murder or if the client has special needs, then a solicitor will attend the police station to provide advice in person.

The After Hours Custody Service provides access to legal advice to persons who are vulnerable and in police custody and who would not generally have access to legal representation. The Criminal Law Practice Division still operates the service to this day. The service is run by volunteers from the Legal Services Commission, ranging from junior legal staff to the most senior legal counsel. Testament to this, even after his appointment as chief counsel, Mr Mead would continue to be rostered on for overnight duties on the After Hours Custody Service roster, and it is a testament to the generosity of the staff of the commission that this voluntary service is provided 365 days of the year.

Mr Mead embodied the spirit of generosity and inspired it in others. An enduring figure in the courtrooms of our state, those who have worked under him at the commission have fond memories of his gracious presence and keen legal mind. It is not a big stretch to say that he has shaped a large part of a generation of criminal lawyers. Appearing as senior counsel in the most serious of trials and appeals, Mr Mead was renowned for his courteous demeanour even while defending his clients with utmost tenacity.

Mr Mead's expertise was recognised when he was appointed senior counsel in 2010. Last year, Mr Mead was jointly awarded with the Law Society of South Australia's Justice Award. Like with Ms Gabrielle Canny, as I did recently in this chamber, I certainly wish Mr Mead all the best in his retirement and thank him for his tireless service stretching over 37 years to the people of this state.

IMMIGRATION POLICY

The Hon. S.L. GAME (14:42): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Attorney-General, representing the Premier, regarding immigration in South Australia.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.L. GAME: The federal government has ramped up immigration to record-high levels at the very time the supply of the housing market is choking. Australia's population grew by a record 680,000 people in 2023, but new homes built over the same period stagnated to a paltry 170,000 in comparison.

The immigration policy of the federal government is driving the collapse in the rental vacancy rate, now at record lows. It is putting pressure on the state government, which is already struggling to provide essential services like health, education and infrastructure that will meet the needs of the South Australian community. My question to the minister is: will the South Australian government stand up for South Australians to cap immigration and avoid an explosion of housing prices and further increases to the cost of living?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:43): I thank the honourable member for her question. I will refer it to the minister responsible and see if there is a reply that can be brought back.

CHILD SEX OFFENCES

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:43): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General regarding child sex offences.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: In May last year, there were a number of articles which came to public attention about the increased prevalence of 'sextortion', where a minor is convinced by another party online to share nude photos and then blackmailed into paying the other person in order for them to not share the nude photo at large.

1. Can the Attorney-General outline what actions the government has taken since May last year to address these sorts of crimes?
2. Is there a form of government education to enforce protections for minors who may be at risk?
3. What reparations would be available for minors who have been victims of sextortion?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:44): I thank the honourable member for her question. Certainly, one area that we are currently looking at as a government is the new forms of technology and the ways that can involve, particularly in sex offences, increasing victimisation and creating new victims. With every evolving method of communication, there are new ways that we certainly have to look at how that might change the laws that we have and that we apply.

In relation to what support or what might be available to victims, there are a range of things that would be offences already in terms of the production of illicit material involving a child. If someone is convicted in relation to that there is an ability to apply in terms of the victims of crime compensation scheme. There is also a possibility of a request for ex gratia payments under that scheme.

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY LAWYERS

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (14:45): My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney please inform the council about the grand opening of WestSide Community Lawyers new head office?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:45): I thank the honourable member for his question. I would be most pleased to inform the chamber about developments in WestSide Community Lawyers and the services they provide. Recently, I was joined by Attorney-General Chris Sumner; the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity, Jodeen Carney; Port Adelaide Enfield Mayor, Claire Bowen; and Michelle Ford, the CEO and managing lawyer at WestSide, for the opening of their new head office in Port Adelaide.

For around 50 years, WestSide Community Lawyers has provided critical and quality legal services to those who may otherwise go without access to legal assistance. With a broad outreach of service delivery, WestSide provides legal services in the west of Adelaide and regionally in the Barossa, Yorke, Mid North and outback regions across South Australia. I was fortunate a couple of years ago to visit their office in Port Pirie.

Through both state and commonwealth funding under the National Legal Assistance Partnership, WestSide provides a wide range of legal services, including a generalist legal service and services in family law and family violence, as well as a mental health program, including the litigation guardian service, amongst a range of services.

In mid-2022, the community legal centre sector held a series of workshops to look at how legal services could be best provided in conjunction with other community legal centres, such as WestSide. WestSide has already generously contributed to this work of looking at a service delivery plan, and I would particularly like to thank all those who have been involved in looking at the legal needs assessment plan in terms of community legal centres in South Australia.

REVIEW OF HARASSMENT IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT WORKPLACE

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:48): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Minister for Public Sector on the topic of the equal opportunity commissioner's recommendations about the parliamentary workplace.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: Recommendation 14 of the equal opportunity's review of sexual harassment in this parliamentary workplace recommended for a SafeWork SA audit to be conducted across the parliamentary workplace. To my understanding this has not yet happened over three years later. I also understand that recommendations have come from the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment to undertake a workplace satisfaction survey of this parliamentary workplace by February 2024. For those playing at home, that would be last month. My questions to the minister are:

1. If it actually happened, when was the workplace satisfaction survey of this parliamentary workplace undertaken and what were the results from that?

2. Has a SafeWork SA audit been undertaken of the parliamentary workplace in the last four years, as recommended by the EO commissioner?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:49): I thank the honourable member for her question, her keen interest in this area and her efforts to make progress in this area. I know the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, whose office forms part of the portfolio area of the Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, has provided support to particularly the parliament in making these reforms.

In relation to SafeWork's involvement, I don't have information about a report having been conducted, but I am happy to make inquiries in relation to that particular issue, but I do note that many of the recommendations were directed at what parliament can do better. I think the report itself and the recommendations show a clear indication as to why parliament has to do better, and I know that the officers within parliament are taking steps towards that.

REVIEW OF HARASSMENT IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT WORKPLACE

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:50): Supplementary: is the minister concerned that a SafeWork SA audit of this parliamentary workplace hasn't been undertaken in the last four years as recommended by the EO commissioner?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:50): As I said, I will have a look at those recommendations and follow that up with SafeWork.

AUTISM STRATEGY

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (14:50): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the parliamentary secretary and Assistant Minister for Autism questions on the Autism Strategy.

Leave granted.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: The Autism Strategy released in draft for consultation on 4 March outlined a range of different areas of focus. My questions today relate to focus area 2, being positive education experiences. The strategy indicates, and I quote:

We want the South Australian public education system to champion Autistic Children and students to thrive in the educational environment, to receive the right supports for them, and feel empowered to succeed.

My questions to the parliamentary secretary are:

1. How many children living with autism are currently not attending school on a regular basis?
2. Has there, or will there be, added focus on flexible learning, including offering alternative school structures and reduced hours?
3. What is the department undertaking to re-engage these children who may have experienced trauma associated with the school environment?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (14:51): I appreciate that the honourable member has seen that the draft strategy is out, and I hope she is participating in it. As those questions are relevant to the education minister, I will refer them to the education minister, but I strongly encourage the member to participate in the draft strategy.

VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICE

The Hon. J.E. HANSON (14:52): My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the minister inform the council about the new General Manager of Victim Support Service?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Attorney, answer the question. I didn't hear it.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:52): I thank the honourable member for asking a

question about the organisation Victim Support Service, more commonly known as VSS. I would be more than delighted and thank the member for the opportunity to inform the chamber about a new era for VSS.

I am pleased to announce the recent appointment of a new General Manager of Victim Support Service, Mr Michael Chant, who started his role only on 18 March this week. Mr Chant's appointment takes on the role of his predecessor, Ms Sarah Scammell, who occupied the role for a number of years, having made significant contributions to the service's outstanding delivery to victims of crime in South Australia.

Ms Scammell leaves VSS with a strong legacy of effective, victim-centred leadership, further building on the many successful victim support services that VSS delivers. I would like to take this opportunity particularly to acknowledge and thank Ms Sarah Scammell for all her work during her time as general manager and wish her all the best for the future.

With a wealth of experience in leadership and a passion for helping to empower others, I look forward to Mr Chant's continuation of Ms Scammell's valuable leadership and leading the many services that VSS continues to deliver. Upon winning the position, Michael Chant said, and I quote:

I'm honoured to join such an important organisation and endeavour to put my heart and soul into steering it towards an even more fruitful future to truly help victim-survivors of crime and abuse in South Australia.

Mr Chant is an enthusiastic and accomplished CEO bringing over 30 years of experience in leadership development, particularly in the corporate world, to the VSS team. His experience spans charity, education and social services where he honed his skills in leadership, strategic planning and governance.

Having been in operation for more than 40 years, Victim Support Service South Australia is an expert service, assisting victims of crime to navigate South Australia's judicial system, in providing tailored support to survivors in areas such as institutional childhood abuse, by offering trauma-informed therapeutic and practical services. Included amongst the significant work the service has undertaken in this past year are:

- establishing a VSS Consultative Committee within the existing volunteers program;
- a student placement program;
- a thriving Court Companions program;
- a newly founded Safer Spaces program providing confidential telephone support to victims; and
- diversification across the state achieved largely through the introduction of a self-sustaining model, including fee-for-service corporate training.

VSS is currently funded by the Attorney-General's Department, which this current government reinstated after the funding was dramatically decreased by the former Liberal government. These critical reinstated funds have gone towards VSS's delivery, particularly of the Court Companions program and the Safer Spaces program.

I wish to thank Ms Scammell for her services to victims in South Australia and look forward to Mr Chant's contribution.

TAXI INDUSTRY

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:56): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Primary Industries, representing the Minister for Transport in another place—she is not here today so it will have to be the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Transport in another place—a question about compensation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: This week, I urged the state government to compensate taxi hire plate owners for financial losses to their businesses and plate values caused when global rideshare company Uber was allowed to operate illegally in South Australia in 2015. My call followed the

announcement that Uber has agreed to pay \$272 million in compensation to about 8,000 Australian taxi and hire car drivers, operators and licence holders for their loss of income and licence values when the rideshare giant disrupted the Australian taxi industry.

South Australia was not included in the class action because the Department for Infrastructure and Transport claimed it could not find or provide any records of Uber's entry into South Australia to assist the local industry to be part of the class action. The South Australian Taxi Council president and former Speaker of the House of Assembly, John Trainer OAM, sent me a statement yesterday on the issue, which I now seek to table.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: In it he said, in part, and I quote:

In all my decades of community involvement I have never been so angry and disgusted as I am right now.

We tried to be part of the class action that concluded yesterday but unlike in other States our Transport Department refused to provide the necessary documentation.

We believe that DIT lied to us, blocked our FOI applications, and then deceived the Ombudsman when we complained.

I also wish to table minutes of Taxi Council meetings from 2019 in which department executive, Ms Emma Kokar, told the council to get Maurice Blackburn, the law firm handling the class action, to contact her for information needed for SA plate owners to join the national action. When a Maurice Blackburn lawyer called Ms Kokar, the lawyer was advised that the department had no information that they could help with. I wish to table those minutes.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: Adding insult to injury, the department yesterday said that the South Australian taxi industry can now take its own action against Uber. That will cost an unrealistic \$35 million and take more than five years to be finalised—ludicrous when evidence needed has not been disclosed. My questions to the minister are:

1. Will the minister now compensate South Australian plate owners for their financial losses arising from Uber's illegal entry and operation into South Australia from 2015 and, if not, why not?
2. Since the compensation announcement earlier this week, has the state government sought legal advice on similar action being launched in South Australia?
3. Why was the government still issuing plates in 2015 valued in excess of \$300,000 each when it had already been in secret negotiations with Uber in late 2014 about entering the market?
4. Can the minister explain how records, notes, emails, phone records and other communications between the then Labor government and a large multinational and Nasdaq publicly listed company wanting to do business in South Australia could possibly go missing, as claimed by his department in freedom of information applications and other requests by the Taxi Council?
5. Finally, will he now instigate an inquiry into the incompetence of his department, and how can the public have confidence that information relating to other important matters is not lost or destroyed when inquiries are made?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:00): As the minister representing today the Minister for Primary Industries representing the Minister for Transport, I will be sure to have that passed on to the minister in another place to bring back a reply.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The PRESIDENT: I acknowledge in the gallery the former Deputy Premier and minister, the Hon. Graham Ingerson.

*Question Time***CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:00): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs, regarding South Australia's construction industry.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: It is not my normal practice in this place to ask questions of that minister that are primarily the responsibility of a minister in the other place—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: Indeed—but I have been approached by a number of constituents on this issue seeking a response from the government as they are quite concerned and understandably so. That is, data from the Australian Securities and Investment Commission has revealed that some 2,349 construction companies have collapsed over the last year alone, including several major South Australian builders within those statistics.

It was recently reported in the media that the Housing Industry Association of South Australia is calling on the state government to introduce a scheme similar to that which has been implemented in Western Australia whereby building companies are able to access interest-free loans of up to \$300,000 to complete new builds that remain unfinished after some two years. In Western Australia the \$10 million allocated to the scheme is expected to assist up to 600 home owners who would otherwise be in extreme difficulty.

My question to the Attorney, representing the minister in the other place, is: will the state government respond to the calls from our residential building industry stakeholders and examine a scheme similar to that in Western Australia? If not, what is the government's plan to address this serious situation?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:02): I will be happy to pass those on to the minister in another place, and I do that very gladly, for every time the Hon. Dennis Hood gets up it sends a shiver of fear down the spine of ministers in the Labor government. As I have said, he is the only one we have ever feared so I am just very grateful that question was not directed to me because it could have been my undoing.

LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION

The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:02): My question is to the Attorney-General. Can the minister update the council about recent appointments to the Legal Services Commission?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:02): I thank the honourable member for his question and it complements very well the question I had earlier about Mr Greg Mead and his very significant 37-year contribution to this state, and also the retirement of Gabrielle Canny, who for more than a decade was head of the Legal Services Commission and has now left, as I talked about before.

There have been two recent appointments who will very substantially bolster the ranks of the leadership of the commission, indicating just how in demand the commission is as an employer of choice in South Australia's legal profession. As I have mentioned before to this chamber, talking about the Legal Services Commission, they have delivered something like four million legal assistance services to South Australians since they began operations in 1979.

A large proportion of these advice services are provided under the guidance of the manager for legal information and advice, a role to which Tania Sulan has recently been appointed. Ms Sulan joins the commission with extensive legal practice, business transformation expertise and experience, along with a passion for community service and social justice outcomes. She has made an invaluable contribution to South Australia's legal assistance sector as chair of JusticeNet SA.

Ms Sulan spent over 16 years at legal finance and risk management service Omni Bridgeway where she held the roles of managing director, transformation, and chief investment officer, among other roles. Before this, she worked as a solicitor in both Australia and the United Kingdom.

In addition, Mr Jeff Powell joins the commission as chief counsel with extensive legal practice and counsel experience having worked at the independent Bar since 2006. Mr Powell has experience in the conduct of complex criminal trials in the District and Supreme courts of South Australia and has also appeared in the Magistrates Court, Family Court, the South Australian Employment Tribunal and in environmental prosecutions, both at different times of his career for the defence and prosecution.

Mr Powell is very well placed to provide direction to employees in the Legal Services Commission, having been an instructor in the criminal advocacy program of the SA Bar Readers' Course since 2018. Before joining the independent Bar, Mr Powell held positions within the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Crown Solicitor's Office. Mr Powell steps into the role of chief counsel following, as I said earlier today, the retirement of Mr Greg Mead after 37 years.

The calibre of these recent appointments to the Legal Services Commission is a clear indication of the high regard in which the commission is held. I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Powell and Ms Sulan and look forward to the contribution they will no doubt make over many years.

JENKINS, MRS A.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:06): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General about the abduction and murder in Malaysia of Adelaide grandmother Anna Jenkins in 2017.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: As the Attorney-General and others in the chamber know, I have been advocating and supporting Mrs Jenkins' family in the pursuit of justice and answers for their beloved mother. That pursuit took another blow recently when a Malaysian High Court judge said the family should be 'grateful' to property developers who covered up the discovery of her body, reburied it and instructed workers not to say anything.

In a further insult, the judge declared that Mr Jenkins had no legal right to file the lawsuit and ordered him to pay the developers' legal costs of about \$US8,000 before he can lodge an appeal, adding to the more than \$600,000 the family has spent so far looking for justice. Despite this deplorable attitude shown to Mrs Jenkins' family by Malaysian authorities, both the federal and state governments are still doing little to assist them.

Frustratingly, four questions that I have previously asked the government on this important issue remain unanswered months after being asked, and today I have more. My questions to the Attorney are:

1. You revealed in this place earlier this month the current balance of the Victims of Crime Fund was an astonishing \$207.9 million as of 31 January. Why cannot a minute portion of that be given to the Jenkins family to lighten their financial burden and allow them to continue their pursuit for justice?
2. Is the government similarly outraged and frustrated at the contempt shown by the Malaysian authorities to the family?
3. Is the government prepared to write to the Malaysian government voicing its continuing concerns over the handling of this matter?
4. Will the government now go to the State Coroner seeking an inquest in South Australia?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:08): I thank the honourable member for his questions. In relation to matters being handled by the Malaysian judicial system, it is a plain fact that we cannot interfere and force the Malaysian judicial system to take any particular steps. I have had the benefit

of meeting with Greg and Jen Jenkins, the children of Anna Jenkins, and certainly I was left very impressed by the amount of effort and work that they have done in terms of finding out exactly what happened to their mother. Certainly we have, as a South Australian government, made representations, particularly during some of the coronial processes, to Malaysian authorities.

In particular, in relation to the other two questions—whether the State Coroner will investigate—I have certainly referred it to the State Coroner and that is, as it should be, a matter for the independent State Coroner to make a decision about whether to hold an inquest or not.

In relation to victims of crime, as I have previously told the honourable member and perhaps the parliament, I think it was in the middle of last year that either I or my department wrote to Greg and Jen inviting them to consider making an application, and I can inform the chamber that they have now, in January of this year, made that application through their solicitor—an application for victims of crime compensation, which, as it necessarily is, is being reviewed.

As I said, having personally met with Greg and Jen, I certainly have a great degree of sympathy for the situation, through no fault of their own, they have found themselves in.

JENKINS, MRS A.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:10): Supplementary: has a response been given to the family, and what is it?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:10): My understanding is that it was in January of this year that an application was being made and that application is now being processed and assessed, so I would be very keen—and I'm sure it will be the case that as soon as that can happen that will occur.

FIRST NATIONS VOICE ELECTIONS

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (15:11): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs regarding the First Nations Voice elections.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON: On the SA Voice election website, under 'Counting the votes', it says, and I quote:

Counting of the votes will commence from Monday 25 March...

And that:

Counting will continue through the week and may require further counting into early April following the Easter Break.

More information about how and when votes are counted will be provided soon.

Given the election was held on Saturday, four days ago, my questions are:

1. Why is there no updated information publicly available on the government website as to when counting will be completed?
2. Has ECSA been provided with sufficient resourcing to manage the state First Nations Voice elections?
3. Does the minister have confidence in the commissioner?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:12): I thank the honourable member for her questions. As I informed the chamber yesterday, it's my understanding that postal votes still have a time to be received. I think it's at least until the end of this week that postal votes can be received by the commission.

As I outlined yesterday, this is a proportional representation election, where you have to know the exact number of formal votes that are cast to work out what the quota is before you can

start counting it. It differs very significantly to counts that we see starting on the night for lower house seats, where you can start an indicative count and even get on the night an indicative two-candidate preferred outcome, because you don't have to calculate a quota which can only be derived from the number of formal votes that are cast.

The method that we use in this proportional representation system is a single transferable vote system. I think in the SA Legislative Council it's the Inclusive Gregory method of single transferable vote system where the quota is derived from dividing the total number of formal votes by the number of positions available plus one to work out the quota. So there is a very logical and obvious reason why you can't start a count until you have all the votes, and with postal votes still arriving you need to be able to do that.

In terms of resources provided, yes, there were lots of discussions with the Electoral Commission about what was going to be needed. There were dozens and dozens of places where there were early voting centres and mobile voting centres. I know mobile voting centres were held in communities across South Australia, including Kalka, Pipalyatjara, I think Kanpi, Amata, Pukatja, Umuwa, Kaltjiti, Mimili, Iwantja, Nepabunna, Point Pearce, Yalata, Oak Valley—I believe there was an early voting centre—to name just a few of the very remote locations that the Electoral Commission was provided with resources to hold the elections. So certainly there were significant resources.

As I explained yesterday and as I hope I have explained so that the member has a reasonable grasp and understanding, you can't start a count of a proportional representation election until you know for sure how many formal votes are cast.

FIRST NATIONS VOICE ELECTIONS

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (15:14): Supplementary question: can the minister advise why there is no updated information on the website, as per my original question?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:14): I am not sure what information is on the website.

FIRST NATIONS VOICE ELECTIONS

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:14): Supplementary question from the original answer: would it be in any way appropriate for the minister to intervene in the Electoral Commission's undertaking of the Voice to Parliament voting process?

The PRESIDENT: You can answer it, but I don't know that it is a supplementary question.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:15): I thank the honourable member for her question. I did extensively traverse the election process for the First Nations Voice election. As the Hon. Tammy Franks is well aware, and I think some others may be aware, the Electoral Commissioner is an independent statutory position and undertakes their function independently from government.

AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:15): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General on the topic of raising the age of criminal responsibility.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS: The government recently announced a discussion paper regarding increasing the age of criminal responsibility. Can the minister provide an update to the parliament on the community engagement in relation to that discussion paper and when can we expect to see this matter progress in the parliament?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:16): I thank the honourable member for his question and do note that he has had a very significant interest over a very long period of time in relation to the minimum age of criminal responsibility. To his direct question about how it is progressing, I think

it is 25 March that the consultation closes, after having released the discussion paper earlier this year. The discussion paper proposes options that may be available.

As the discussion paper makes clear, this government has made no decision on what it may or may not do in relation to the issue of raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility. Once the discussion paper closes there will be, as there has already been, significant work to do to have a look at the comments that have been provided. It is a complicated area of policy and a complicated area of law—one that the honourable member has asked numerous questions about during this term of parliament.

I have indicated that a significant body of work has been undertaken, and that is reflected in the discussion paper and complexity of the issue as outlined in the discussion paper. Once the consultation closes, I can't give a definitive time frame, but it will be a substantial period of time to have a look at the issues that have been put forward.

Certainly, jurisdictions around Australia are now moving, as they are internationally, to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility. We have seen that already occur and be implemented in the Northern Territory, where the age has been raised to 12, with a commitment to progressively raise it to 14. Victoria made an announcement not long after its state election last year that it would be raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility. I am not sure where the legislation is but I think the first jurisdiction in Australia to announce that it would do that was the ACT some time ago.

As I have outlined before, it is an area that has been of significant interest to all jurisdictions, with all attorneys-general from around Australia committing to doing work on what models might look like and what the issues around raising the minimum age would be. This work started with my predecessor, the former member for Bragg and former Attorney-General Vickie Chapman, looking at the issues that might need to be addressed. So it is work that has traversed a couple of governments already in South Australia and will continue.

ABORIGINAL HOUSING STRATEGY

The Hon. B.R. HOOD (15:19): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs regarding home ownership.

Leave granted.

The Hon. B.R. HOOD: One of the six strategy pillars of the South Australian government's Aboriginal Housing Strategy 2021-2031 document prioritises home ownership. The inability to buy a home on traditional lands was cited as a key concern by those who were engaged. It has been suggested that enabling home ownership on traditional Aboriginal lands would reduce reliance on social housing and incentivise and attract investment to build new industries on country.

The governments in the Northern Territory and Western Australia are pursuing home ownership schemes on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders living in remote communities held under Aboriginal land trusts. My questions to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs are:

1. What legal impediments currently exist to enable home ownership schemes in South Australia's Aboriginal communities?
2. What investment has the state government made to date to deliver on strategy pillar 6 to overcome the inability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to buy homes on traditional lands?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:20): I thank the honourable member for his question. Certainly, it is something that is occasionally raised and something that I know the former Labor government has undertaken some work in having a look at. There are a number of different types of ways of, effectively, communal ownership of Aboriginal land.

I think what the honourable member is talking about is most closely reflected in the Aboriginal Lands Trust, the historic piece of legislation in 1966 that was the first Aboriginal land rights legislation we saw anywhere in Australia that continues to this day that has about half a million hectares held in trust for the benefit of Aboriginal communities.

I think I have informed this chamber before that a large portion of those lands held in trust are former missions around Australia—Point Pearce, Davenport, Point McLeay (now Raukkan), Yalata, Gerard, and many of the early missions. There are very different views and it is a very complicated area about whether you seek to disturb that, effectively, communal title that sees land protected.

There are concerns raised that once it's no longer held in trust it can be lost for ever for the benefit of Aboriginal people and Aboriginal communities, but it is certainly something that there are members of communities who would like to investigate some form of, whether it's fee simple Torrens title land or land held by the Aboriginal Lands Trust, or whether there is something in between those two forms of landholding that might be possible.

The other one that is even more complicated is the freehold lands in South Australia: Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara lands or the Maralinga Tjarutja lands that are held by legislation for the benefit of Anangu in those areas. That would require very substantial and complicated legislative change to consider those. But it is something that has been raised and I know it's something that governments have considered.

As the honourable member pointed out, particularly in Western Australia there is a program of work that is designed to look at where there are opportunities for lands held in trust, which is more akin to our Aboriginal Lands Trust in South Australia, to see if there is a form of landholding that might give greater opportunity, particularly to borrow against the land to unlock some of the wealth that Aboriginal people have in landholdings that's not reflected in the advantage they face in our community today.

Personal Explanation

GENDER DYSPHORIA

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:23): I seek leave to make a personal explanation in response to comments made in the chamber yesterday by the Hon. Tammy Franks.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: While I was asking a question about a report, which I tabled and which revealed evidence of malpractice and violation of medical ethics within the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), I stated that the Labor government had voted not to support my proposed inquiry into gender dysphoria. The Hon. Tammy Franks interjected in a point of order, accusing me of misleading the chamber—in other words, the parliament—and that there was no vote on that inquiry. Obviously, she meant in this chamber.

As all members knew, I had already withdrawn the vote on my motion in this chamber because, as I correctly said in my question, the Labor government had voted not to support it in caucus. I never said the parliament or the chamber had voted, just to be clear. Not only did caucus vote not to support it or put it to a conscience vote but the Premier himself made public statements to that effect.

To wrongfully accuse me of misleading the chamber is a serious slur when the member should have and would have known the context of my comments had she shown me the courtesy to complete my question. What I said was not false or misleading but factual. I would ask the member to retract those comments that I misled the chamber and apologise.

GENDER DYSPHORIA

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:24): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: Yesterday in this place, I pointed out that the Hon. Frank Pangallo's select committee on gender dysphoria motion had not gone to a vote in this place. I believe it is still on the *Notice Paper*. I noted at the time that the Hon. Mr Pangallo was misleading the chamber should he have claimed that the Labor Party somehow voted down his motion that is still on the *Notice Paper* and so, as such, I asked that I be referred to a Privileges Committee where we

can adjudicate this situation and, if not, then the Hon. Frank Pangallo, as I asked yesterday, be referred to a Privileges Committee so that we can adjudicate this situation.

The PRESIDENT: You have made your personal explanation and so has the Hon. Mr Pangallo. I now call on members to make statements on matters of interest—

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: Point of order: I have now three times asked for a Privileges Committee to be established and so I would ask that that be taken under consideration on motion today.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Franks, you will need to move a motion that the matter be sent to a Privileges Committee.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: I will do that, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: Is that seconded? It is not seconded, so we will move on with—

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: Mr President, I seek your advice on whether or not I need to give notice for that or whether, as a procedure, I can simply move it.

The PRESIDENT: In the interests of moving things along, perhaps, the Hon. Ms Franks, you will give notice that you will move the motion and then we can seek some clarity and get back to you.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: I give notice that I intend to move a motion to refer myself to the Privileges Committee of this place to be established to investigate whether or not the select committee on gender dysphoria, put before this place by the Hon. Frank Pangallo, has been voted on in this session of parliament.

Matters of Interest

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (15:27): The first successful kidney transplant operation to take place in all of Australia occurred on 21 February 1965. It was a Sunday, which was quite unusual, but as it turns out it was in fact deliberate. The donor of the kidney was a person not related by blood to the recipient, which was also extremely unusual for the time. The donor was the recipient's father-in-law. This was a remarkable act of love and sacrifice from one family member to another. Prominent transplant surgeon Peter Knight was recruited from Boston to lead the endeavour.

There was some degree of public outcry at the time, with views that the concept of unrelated transplant was immoral and concerns that the complex and experimental surgery could kill both patients, and that is why the operation took place on a sleepy Sunday to avoid some attention. After all, during this era, the early mortality rate following transplants was as high as 50 per cent.

But in defiance of expectation and because of innovations in the new field of immunosuppressive therapy and the skill of the surgeons, the successful transplant lasted for 11 years before the kidney ultimately failed and the patient had to recommence dialysis. During those 11 precious years, the recipient was able to live a normal life. He resumed full-time work and, crucially, he was able to be with his young family as they grew up.

The achievements of the hospital that performed this kidney transplant operation helped to progress and ultimately to transform the global science of organ transplantation. I wonder whether members are aware that what I describe—this Australian-first, globally remarkable event—took place in two operating theatres within the obstetric wing of our own Queen Elizabeth Hospital. But this is not a speech about kidney transplants.

Today, it is my privilege to highlight and celebrate that 2024 marks the 70th anniversary of The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The QEH opened in 1954 as a maternity hospital. Originally designed to service the western suburbs, The QEH is now widely utilised by patients from the central northern region of Adelaide.

In the lead-up to the 2002 state election, Mike Rann campaigned in opposition against Liberal plans for its privatisation, and The QEH was the beneficiary of consistent investment from both the Rann and Weatherill Labor governments, with many millions of dollars and significant efforts

dedicated towards its expansion and redevelopment over nearly two decades. The strengthening of The QEH capacity and capabilities continues under the Malinauskas Labor government.

Construction of 52 new beds at The QEH is nearing completion. The \$314 million clinical services building will feature a modern emergency department almost 50 per cent larger than the current ED, with a new three-bed rapid assessment zone to shorten the waiting time for patients and to streamline patient flow through the ED and the hospital. The new ED also features a four-bed mental health safe assessment area, providing a safe, therapeutic environment for mental health patients requiring assessment and treatment within the ED.

The clinical services building will also include 12 state-of-the-art operating theatres with advanced digital technology to assist in surgical decision-making and treatment. Other features include a larger 14-bed ICU, a new MRI machine and two CT scanners, as well as a new procedural suite and cardiac catheter lab. I am proud to be part of a government that believes in investing in our health system and does not believe that new hospital beds represent wasted money.

In addition to that broad sense of pride, The QEH holds a very special place in my heart. My elder sister Cindy was born very premature at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital over 50 years ago—an era when outcomes for very premature babies could be fairly bleak. Cindy was not expected to survive and was given the last rites not once, but twice, as the teams at The QEH did all they could to help her. With their devotion, care and skill, Cindy pulled through. My family has ever since had a close connection to The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It was always my parents' charity of choice. They gave back because of what The QEH gave to my family.

I warmly commend and thank The Queen Elizabeth Hospital's staff and leadership, past and present, for all they have done, all they do and all they will do in providing necessary and important healthcare services for South Australians. From a suburban maternity hospital to a surgical pioneer to a sizeable teaching hospital in a modern health system, I hope the next 70 years may hold even greater things.

PAULINE HANSON'S ONE NATION

The Hon. S.L. GAME (15:33): One Nation is not just a political party that bills itself as having the courage to say what most people are thinking. We are a party that stands for Australia and Australian values. I am proud to defend our constitution and stand up for the individual rights and fundamental freedoms of all Australians.

We have seen the calamity of the Malinauskas government putting politics before people, with its rushed, ill-conceived and deeply unpopular state-based Voice, a Voice 64.7 per cent of South Australians do not want on a national level. One Nation hears you and will continue to fight for all South Australians—every cohort, regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion, creed, language, political or other opinions, or national or social origin.

We continue to break the chains of political correctness and, as a minor party, One Nation endures as an influential force in the state's political and cultural landscape. To all South Australians who rightly grow disenchanted with the self-interested two-party system, One Nation offers an alternative grounded in common sense and equality of opportunity—the opportunity for every citizen's voice to be heard.

South Australians are concerned about the spiralling cost of living. We have the fastest growing inflation in the nation. According to the September quarter 2023 consumer price index, food is up 8.2 per cent, housing is up 10.4 per cent, electricity is up 18.2 per cent, insurance is up 17.3 per cent and gas is up a staggering 28 per cent.

I believe in individual responsibility and that the individual can change their circumstance. We need to encourage our children to work hard to achieve what they want. Nobody should expect anything to be just given to them. With a good work ethic and right attitude anything can be achieved, but for children and young people who go off the rails, early intervention is key. However, while other states are investing in prevention, South Australia remains focused on crisis.

In South Australia, 132,000 people are living in poverty, including 22,000 children. It is unacceptable that investing in prevention is not a priority for the Malinauskas government. This will

assist many of the children living in unstable or unsafe environments who often do not have the bare resources to engage adequately with school. It will better equip parents who are subjected to the stresses of unaffordable housing, insecure employment and rising costs of living.

Disadvantage is embedded early, with many children starting school aged five already behind their peers and too often with undiagnosed disabilities. It is in the interests of society to remove these barriers and allow everyone to be on a level playing field. This is essential for social cohesion, innovation and creativity.

I want to see this government getting back to supporting family values and the mental health and wellbeing of all South Australians, none of which will be achieved by the race-based Voice to Parliament. All children should receive the same education opportunities and subsequently the same employment opportunities. There are many factors involved here, including a cohesive society, a thriving economic environment, the right to safety and protection, well-resourced schools and quality teachers.

One Nation is passionate about mental health and increasing accessibility to low barrier, face-to-face mental health services, particularly in our neglected regions. The Malinauskas government continues to adopt an increasingly woke agenda, assisted by a punctured Speirs-led opposition eroded over a generation of continually being steamrolled by state Labor. I call on all South Australians to back One Nation as an effective opposition in South Australia. One Nation backs the government to provide an infrastructure of care to enable citizens to flourish socially and economically. One Nation supports social security that enables citizens to create their economic security.

The most important priority of government is education, requiring investment in an entire infrastructure of child development from pregnancy through to the beginning of formal schooling, including child nutrition and health, parenting classes and home visits. Our education system should focus more on including the important role of the father. Too often this role has been overlooked and consequently support for fathers and the role they play has diminished.

Instead, we see a focus on gender fluidity, sexualising our children from a young age and taking away their opportunity to discover for themselves who they are. Radical left agendas, pushed by minority groups who define themselves by their sexuality, are indoctrinating children in a way that is causing, in some cases, irreversible harm.

One Nation believes it is the responsibility of the government to support families by listening to the voices of all South Australians to ensure that policies, frameworks and standards for health and wellbeing are in place and acted on, to guarantee that roads and infrastructure are in place and in good condition so that people can travel safely and efficiently, to provide benefits to people who need them and enforce laws to protect people from violence and other unfair treatment.

I represent One Nation because I want to advocate for all South Australians. I am passionate about creating opportunities and I am determined to be an effective voice for everyone.

EDUCATION STANDARDS

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (15:37): Today, I address a serious matter of concern that has been raised by many parents and groups within our community—the state of our education standards in South Australia. Concerns are often raised with me that South Australian students are lagging their national counterparts in foundational skills. This discrepancy not only hampers their academic process but also their ability to navigate life's challenges effectively.

Parents, caregivers and teachers have raised with me that there is a decline in student engagement and that increased wellbeing issues indicate a deeper crisis. We continue to see an alarming increase in mental health issues amongst students, coupled with a decrease in overall school satisfaction. This environment not only stifles educational achievements but also impacts the holistic development of our youth.

Equity in education remains a persistent challenge. Students from rural and remote areas, as well as those from disadvantaged backgrounds, continue to face significant barriers to accessing quality education. The digital divide, exacerbated by the recent global pandemic, has highlighted the

critical need for accessible educational technologies and resources for all students, regardless of their socio-economic status.

We must also address the issues of curriculum relevance. It is imperative that we equip our children with not only academic knowledge but also critical thinking, creativity, adaptability and resilience. Further concerns are regularly raised with me about the content of the curriculum, specifically around sexual education and gender ideology being taught in schools at younger and younger ages, often without parents being made fully aware of the contents. Parents must be included in the conversation around the curriculum being delivered to their children. Parents must be able to monitor what their children are being taught, and parents must be comfortable that schools are teaching relevant subjects that will set their children up for success.

Today, I would like to highlight two parent-led organisations, firstly, 4TheKids, a community of South Australian parents, grandparents, carers and educators with a vision for greater education standards for South Australian children and young people. They aim to ignite a culture of excellence in education in both moral and academic standards, advocating for excellence in education. They have been holding grassroots forums with expert panels highlighting what can be done to improve our education system with the ultimate goal that we do not trail behind other states and countries, to ensure we are setting up the next generation for success.

Concerns raised by parents and teachers to me often relate to the distractions within the education system, not on the more traditional educational topics. We all know that maths, science, English and literacy need to be the focus. This is what 4TheKids is focused on. I would like to thank Natacha Carabelas, Lana Gelonese, Belinda Crawford-Marshall and Leah Blyth for their great work advocating for better education standards and supports for our parents and our children. I look forward to continuing to work closely with these great organisations and advocating for concerned parents, teachers and students alike.

Secondly, Guardians SA. I had the opportunity to meet with Guardians SA recently and Rose Irranca and Rachel Read to discuss this parent-led organisation. Guardians SA is an action group with over 12,000 followers that aims to protect and empower students and fellow guardians with information and to help with the formation of local, community-led groups to support each other and their rights right across the state.

Concerns continue to be raised by parents about what is being taught in schools relating to sexual education and gender ideology. I am of the firm belief that parents should always be aware of what is being taught and being able to assess if their child is ready for these conversations. Guardians SA is currently working in collaboration with 4TheKids to host parent forums to assist parents in advocating for the best possible outcomes for their children. More work is needed to improve the collaboration within this area. This is why I commend parent-led organisations such as 4TheKids and Guardians SA, which are listening to parents, listening to children and advocating for what they would like to see changed and improved in our education system.

LYMPHOEDEMA

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (15:42): This month, a tireless South Australian woman is in Canberra bringing attention to the plight of those people, mainly women, who have beaten breast cancer but still have a lifelong struggle ahead of them. Monique Bareham found that overcoming breast cancer a decade ago simply brought on another condition that will impact her for the rest of her life. No sooner had she beaten the cancer than she was diagnosed with lymphoedema, a chronic and incurable condition caused by damage to the lymphatic system. For those who go untreated, the condition can make their arms and legs swell uncontrollably and leave them housebound.

What was Monique's life sentence, though, has become a lifeline for women all around Australia. Now President of the Lymphoedema Association of South Australia, her story brings attention to the thousands of women and even men suffering from this condition. Monique is in Canberra for a parliamentary Friends of Lymphoedema launch. It is a bipartisan initiative which aims to keep improving awareness and treatment of the condition. Lymphoedema is an insidious disease and it is so cruel that it comes mainly to those who have already gone through breast cancer.

For breast cancer survivors who have gone through the chemotherapy, radiology and sometimes even the removal of their breasts, this is yet another cross to bear. Lymphoedema also affects men who have had other forms of cancer and can even affect children who are born with the condition, but mainly it affects breast cancer survivors. Around 300,000 Australians will suffer from lymphoedema at some stage of their lives, with the condition ranging from mild to very debilitating.

Every year, about 10,000 people are hospitalised as a result of the condition. It is not fair that these people are then confronted with this condition, which occurs because the cancer has damaged the lymph nodes or the cancer treatment has required their removal. Left untreated, lymphoedema can affect their ability to move and can cause skin infections, sepsis, leakage of fluid through the skin, and even a second bout of cancer.

Fortunately, Monique has been a crusader in ensuring that people with lymphoedema receive the correct treatment. By treatment, that means they receive the necessary medical aids and garments essential to controlling the condition. Compression bandages, including tailored compression garments, are essential in controlling the swelling. Lymphatic drainage massage is another treatment for those with a build-up of fluid that can become so bad it cracks the skin to find a way out.

Those aids, garments and treatments were not subsidised, which often meant that they were unavailable to sufferers in South Australia, until Monique got involved. She lobbied hard to bring attention to the plight of sufferers who could not get a subsidy to purchase essential garments, receive the right treatment and have a chance for a comfortable life. For many who are unable to work, this meant that they could simply not afford them.

This is not about party politics. Both major parties have done their bit to advance the cause and help out sufferers. After years of campaigning, while dealing with her own issues, the work of Monique and others finally achieved a result. In 2020, these essential items and services became subsidised here. I am pleased to say that the South Australian health minister, the Hon. Chris Picton, has been very supportive of Monique in her quest to improve supply, and recently increased the subsidy.

Monique Bareham is not just an inspiration, she has become a gateway for women suffering with this incurable condition, enabling them to navigate their way to a fulfilling future. In 2022, her efforts earned her the South Australian nomination for the Australia Day awards local hero. Monique Bareham is still working as hard as ever to bring the condition of lymphoedema to the public consciousness and do whatever she can to improve the life of those living with it. For that, she deserves our ongoing gratitude and recognition. For every other South Australian woman, man and child who has to go through this debilitating and insidious disease, we can be particularly thankful that we now have access to treatment.

CRIME RATES

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:47): I rise to bring to the chamber's attention a very important matter, and that is that over the last 12 months South Australia has unfortunately experienced a significant spike in criminal activity. It is not just anecdotal evidence that suggests this, but in fact the official South Australia Police statistics have confirmed the following:

- Robbery and related offences have gone up by a staggering 23 per cent;
- Shop theft has surged by 31 per cent;
- I think, concerningly, assaults on police in the last 12 months alone have risen by 31 per cent;
- Homicides are up by 17 per cent;
- Serious assaults resulting in injury have increased by 16 per cent;
- Abduction, harassment and other offences that are related have also seen an 18 per cent rise;
- Family and domestic violence has risen by 11 per cent;

- Aggravated sexual assault has increased by 8 per cent; and
- Sexual assault itself is up by 6 per cent.

Outside of those, perhaps the worst crime of all, murder, has also increased, although statistics on that are not clear. There is rarely a day that passes that we do not learn of another violent offence or crime spree occurring in our CBD, suburbs or regional areas. In the past couple of months, we have had far too many instances of South Australians being the target of criminal activity, as these statistics bear out.

In just the last week, we have heard that some Rundle Mall employees are terrified of going to work because of violent thieves who are harassing them and, in some cases, being violent with them. There have been some frightening instances of shoplifters wielding weapons and terrorising staff. On one sad occasion, a 45-year-old man brandished an axe in Rebel Sport, the store in Rundle Mall, and threatened to 'smash the retail assistants and burn the place down'. On another occasion, a 15-year-old girl knocked an employee out with a stool from the floor of the store at Foot Locker that she was in.

Last month, there were reports of the brutal stabbing of a 12-year-old boy allegedly by another 13-year-old boy who was out on bail for numerous other serious charges, including two previous breaches of bail, serious criminal trespass, aggravated assault and two counts of robbery and driving without consent. A 15-year-old boy was also involved, was charged and then—you would not believe it—bailed.

On that same day, we are informed of social media pages that were created to glorify violence in Ceduna, where over two dozen videos of violent brawls were posted that were captured in the area's streets, in their parks, on buses, at schools and at sporting facilities. It is important to note that locals have said they have noticed a significant increase in violence, theft, break-ins, alcohol abuse and domestic abuse since the cashless debit card was abolished, after it had been introduced by the former Liberal government.

Just a few days prior to that report, *The Advertiser's* headline read, in large bold letters, 'Teens out of control', with articles detailing how shop owners are being plagued by break-ins across our suburbs, with particular reference to a spate of incidents in metropolitan Adelaide, throughout Torrensville, Greenwith, Para Hills and Findon. Earlier in the month, we were also made aware of six youths ranging in age from just 11 to 16 who were caught by police after being seen running from a cafe with stolen food items in their possession in the very early hours of the morning.

Of course, this is just a small snapshot and some specific, almost random, examples of what our constituents have been experiencing in the space of a handful of weeks in South Australia. I am sure we would all agree that South Australians deserve to feel safe and secure in their homes and their workplaces and their schools and as they go about their ordinary daily lives, but in the minds of many this is simply not the case.

The attrition rate in our police force is undoubtedly a major factor in the unacceptable crime levels. We all know that a visible police presence prevents antisocial behaviour, and the ability for patrols to respond to incidents in a timely manner is critical to maintaining law and order. Further, offenders should not be let back into the community on bail so swiftly and so easily as it seems they are. I have raised this matter time and time again during question time, as we all know, yet bail breaches continue to occur and reoffending whilst on bail is occurring far too frequently.

The state government also needs to ensure the Department for Correctional Services is adequately staffed to deal with violations of home detention orders, particularly during the night hours, when it is alleged that breaches are not being attended to due to a lack of staff. Naturally, legislation should be reviewed and overhauled so that appropriate penalties are in place to deter would-be criminals from committing offences in the first place. Importantly, addressing the root causes that drive both youths and adults to offend is vital.

The safety of South Australians should be absolutely paramount to this government, and it is my hope that this state Labor government acts without delay to lower our state's unacceptable crime levels by engaging every possible preventive and combative measure to this end and, in doing so, I assure them of opposition support.

CHILD EXPLOITATION

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:52): Just yesterday, this parliament passed historic laws safeguarding child workers, reaffirming our commitment to protecting the most vulnerable among us. In this digital age, our vigilance must extend beyond physical boundaries to the virtual realm, where unseen threats lurk behind screens and keystrokes. The 24/7 presence of technology has opened new avenues for predators to infiltrate our homes, our lounge rooms and our children's bedrooms at any hour, posing an imminent danger to our children.

A recent study conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology sheds light on the alarming reality that confronts us. Shockingly, 12.4 per cent of a pool of 10,000 people who were active on dating apps received solicitations to facilitate child exploitation or abuse—that is one in eight Australians accessing dating apps. These requests ranged from soliciting photographs of children to pressuring for explicit imagery or even attempting to arrange inappropriate meetings with those individuals and children.

Predators are offering to pay for photographs or videos of children known to the app user, including their own kids and others known to them. Disturbingly, they are asking for information like breast size or whether a child had their period. We can only assume the proliferation of requests means it is working at least some of the time.

It seems both men and women are equally being targeted, as perpetrators exploit the anonymity afforded by online platforms. You would ordinarily expect men would be making these requests of women in most cases, but it is also the case that men are posing as women and making these disturbing requests of men. It is a stark reminder that in a digital landscape identities are easily obscured.

While I am told that efforts have been made to improve the security of dating apps through the optional ID verifications, the onus of course lies on parents and caregivers to remain vigilant. Cyber safety experts caution against sharing images of children online, emphasising the inherent dangers posed by the proliferation of artificial intelligence tools that can manipulate innocent images into something more sinister in mere seconds.

Even the seemingly innocent act of sharing a child's photo can unwittingly expose them to untold risks. I have spoken in this place at length previously about childlike sex dolls, which we as a parliament have banned, and the fact that anyone can download a photo of one of our children that we have innocently uploaded to Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, or wherever else it may be, only to learn that predators can take those photos and make childlike sex dolls that resemble one of our children. That should be enough to spark fear in all of us, knowing that if we were to upload a photo of our child online it could be used for those sadistic purposes.

We are leading the way in terms of our child exploitation laws here, and by adding childlike sex dolls into our definitions of child exploitation material we are certainly leading the nation. I will end by flagging that I will also be introducing a further bill into this parliament in the coming weeks to ensure that our laws are evolving with the ever-changing landscape of innovation, specifically the proliferation of deep fake technology—yet another issue that we are now having to confront.

These sophisticated manipulations of video and audio are capable of deceiving even the most discerning eye and ear. Our legal frameworks must adapt swiftly to address the profound implications of deep fakes, particularly when it comes to our kids and our most vulnerable, and I look forward to speaking again on this very important issue in due course.

LITTLE AMAL

The Hon. M. EL DANNAWI (15:57): Last week, Little Amal was welcomed by Adelaide for the first time during the 2024 Adelaide Festival. She is part of a project named The Walk, which celebrates human migration and cultural diversity. At the heart of The Walk is Little Amal, a 3.5 metre puppet of a 10-year-old Syrian refugee girl, who has become a global symbol of human rights. Her journey began in 2021, when she walked from the Syria-Turkiye border to the United Kingdom. Since then, Amal has travelled to 160 towns and cities in 16 countries and has been welcomed by millions on the streets and online.

Her travels draw attention to the millions of children fleeing war, violence and persecution around the world. Her urgent message to the world is: don't forget about us. The project has not only raised \$1 million to provide urgently needed support for refugees and displaced children globally but has also inspired hope for displaced people everywhere.

The impact of Amal's journey to tell the refugees' story of potential hospitality and kindness was made especially clear to me when I attended an event on behalf of the Hon. Zoe Bettison, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, at the Adelaide Secondary School of English. The school was chosen by Little Amal for an extra special visit and for good reason. Adelaide Secondary School of English is a government school that offers intensive English language programs to prepare secondary aged migrant, refugee and newly arrived international students for entry into mainstream high school, study pathways or work. The school comprises over 50 different languages and cultural groups, including students from Columbia, Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine. Sometimes students even speak a mixture of languages to better understand each other.

We heard stories from a number of students, some who had entered Australia as refugees fleeing conflict and others as migrants in search of a better life. One student recounted her journey fleeing Afghanistan and living in Pakistan as a refugee, where she described losing hope for the future as she was denied the right to education. When her family moved to Australia in 2023, she said it felt like she was being given a second life.

Another student, from Syria, recalled being denied basic rights as well as being bullied at school due to her refugee status while living in Jordan. When her family arrived in Adelaide in 2022, she said that it was wonderful to have her basic human rights restored and that she is grateful to call this beautiful city her home.

Every student who spoke shared the feeling of hope, resilience and optimism, despite adversity. Every teacher working at the school shows extraordinary understanding and dedication to making the students' transition into Australia easier. Through changing the narrative surrounding refugees and migrants towards the contributions and potential they carry with them, little Amal invites communities to embrace and honour refugees and migrants.

Ensuring everyone has access to basic human rights, dignity and respect, especially those belonging to vulnerable and marginalised communities, is crucial. I am so pleased that the Malinauskas government is offering support to any new arrivals fleeing conflict in the Middle East and Ukraine. The assistance covers financial support in accessing health services, education, housing, food and transport, as well as mental health funding to support issues arising from conflict. It is great to see Australia open its heart to people coming to our nation seeking safety and opportunity. Let us continue to embrace and strengthen awareness, empathy and conversation.

Motions

GENERAL PRACTITIONER PAYROLL TAX

The Hon. C. BONAROS (16:01): I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises the significant impact that the cessation of the payroll tax amnesty for independent general practitioners will have on South Australians;
2. Acknowledges that the discontinuation of the amnesty threatens to exacerbate existing workforce challenges and reduce access to essential healthcare services for many South Australians;
3. Acknowledges the potential consequences of an average fee increase of \$12 per standard consultation comes at a time of heightened cost-of-living concerns, further burdening individuals and families;
4. Recognises that such a financial strain may drive patients towards already overcrowded emergency departments, or deter them from seeking health care altogether; and
5. Calls upon the Malinauskas government to extend the amnesty until 30 June 2025 and pause any retrospective payroll tax bills for independent general practitioners to facilitate meaningful consultation with stakeholders to collaboratively work towards a long-term solution that prioritises the wellbeing of South Australians.

The imposition of payroll tax on the wages of independent general practitioners is not merely a bureaucratic measure, it is a decision that could exacerbate the existing healthcare crisis and place an insurmountable burden on both practitioners and patients alike.

I know that our Treasurer would try to convince us that that is not the case but I respectfully disagree, as does probably every person who has looked at this from their perspective. We are all too familiar with the challenges that plague our healthcare sector. If you are not in this state and familiar with them then the only explanation is that you have been living under a rock because I cannot think of a single household that I have spoken to that has not been impacted in one way or another by the healthcare crisis.

The recent report by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, entitled *General Practice: Health of the Nation 2023*, has shed light on the dire circumstances faced by our GPs. Burnout, shortages, chronic underfunding and overwhelming workloads have become the norm. More GPs are contemplating premature retirements, further straining an already stretched system.

I note that, as a specialty, the selection of GP has fallen from something like 50 per cent in this state to around 11 to 13 per cent. Those doctors who are choosing different specialties are not doing that because they are not interested in being GPs. The frank reality is they are saying to themselves, 'Why on earth would I choose general practice as my specialty and take everything on board that comes with that?'

That is an alarming statistic, which has been presented in various forums in this place and committees and publicly as well, but we know we are now at the point where we are crying out for general practice specialists and, I suppose from the doctors' perspectives or from the association's perspectives, not doing enough to ensure that our doctors choose general practice as their specialty as they are lured towards more favourable specialties instead.

More GPs, as I said, are contemplating retirement. That is also impacting those statistics that I have pointed to, and they are not doing so simply because they want to sail off into the sunset after a lifetime of work. Frankly, anecdotally at least, the evidence coming from those GPs is that working in what has been a broken system for a very long time has taken its toll on them.

Amidst this turmoil, the looming imposition of payroll tax is only adding fuel to the fire. The lack of clarity and consistency in how each state and territory is approaching this issue has only compounded the confusion within the general practice community. We have statistics from the RACGP that reveal nine out of 10 Australians rely on GPs for their healthcare needs annually. The imposition of payroll tax adds yet another barrier between patients and the care they require.

Make no mistake, the true impact of the South Australian government to end the amnesty will reverberate through our communities. The Treasurer might question, but I am certainly not questioning, that there is likely to be an average fee increase of \$12 on a standard consultation. That may seem trivial to us on paper, but for many it could mean the difference between seeking timely medical attention and ignoring potential health concerns until they escalate into emergencies. It will inevitably result in increased presentations to what we know are already overflowing emergency departments across the state.

We find ourselves in a cost-of-living crisis, where every dollar matters to individuals and families. We spend hours upon hours in this place speaking about that cost-of-living crisis. The imposition of payroll tax will not only exacerbate their financial burdens but it will further widen the gap between those who can afford health care and those who cannot. We already know that people are leaving private health insurance in droves because they can no longer afford it.

This motion is calling for a pause on retrospective payroll tax bills for independent GPs, coupled with an extension of the amnesty to allow discussions to take place. In an ideal world, independent GPs should not be subjected to payroll tax on their earnings, but of course we have these interstate rulings. The government has now had a whiff of a new revenue stream, which may prove difficult to stop altogether.

I will say also that I am offended at the suggestion that these rulings have taken place in other states and that we do not have an option and we have to adopt them here and that we have been generous enough to offer an amnesty to doctors and there are a great deal of doctors who

have signed up to that amnesty. They have signed up to that amnesty because the alternative is having to pay back payroll tax over five years retrospectively, which they know they simply cannot afford to do. It is almost like putting a gun to their head and saying, 'Sign up to the amnesty and be liable from 1 July or do not sign up and be liable retrospectively.'

Make no mistake, the person who is going to pay that payroll tax bill is you and me—it is everybody in this place who visits a doctor and will now have to fork out an extra \$12 or \$15 for that visit because it is unrealistic to expect that those GP practices can keep absorbing costs.

When it comes to payroll tax generally, we know there is an issue, and it is an issue that I raised in a motion in this place that in due course I will bring to a vote. It is not just GPs who are being impacted by these determinations that are made in another jurisdiction; it is the entire allied health sector. I have had physios come and speak to me, dentists come and speak to me, specialists come and speak to me. Every medical group in the allied health profession is impacted by these determinations.

Frankly, it is hard to describe them as anything other than a cash grab. This is not money that the government intended to get as a result of payroll tax—and we get \$1.7 billion a year in payroll tax in this jurisdiction. Over the forward estimates that figure is expected to grow to \$1.97 billion. That is \$5 million a day that we are making in this state from payroll tax. Now we are getting another windfall gain as a result of these determinations. That is going to see that number increase at the expense of whom? At the expense of employment, of businesses being more viable and practices like our GPs having to somehow find a way and a means of absorbing these extra costs in the midst of what we all know is a cost-of-living crisis.

It is extraordinary that the Treasurer would suggest the determinations have been made and we cannot do anything about them. WA and Queensland found something to do about them. They have absolutely found a way to do something about them. In one jurisdiction, they have said, 'We are going to sit tight because we know one thing for sure: this is giving rise to legal challenges.' Those legal challenges that are on foot we know are going to take two or three years. So, if in the event of two or three years down the track these challenges are, for whatever reason, found to be valid, I cannot see a day when the Treasurer is going to say, 'I am really sorry. We are going to retrospectively now refund all that money to you.'

What we have said and what we are pleading for this government to do is pause, take a moment to breathe, like they have done in WA, and extend this out until June next year to allow enough time to have reasonable discussions with the medical fraternity and GPs in particular, and everyone else who is impacted by this, about the impact it is going to have, because ultimately it is us who are going to wear the costs.

I know that governments and successive governments are absolutely addicted to that quick fix of money that makes its way into their coffers, but at the expense of whom? What is clear from everything that has been provided to us is that, in this instance, it is going to come at the expense of our healthcare system and those individuals who are seeking health care. You would be an absolute fool to think or even to imply, which is what the Treasurer has done, that this is unlikely to have an impact on our ramping and emergency departments and health care overall. That is a foolish and cheeky thing to say when we know that absolutely everything we do right now is dire in terms of keeping the strain as much as we can off our EDs and off the ramping crisis.

If I were a GP, I would be offended at comments from anyone in this place who suggests that this is not likely to have an impact. The only thing that is likely to happen, the only thing that is going to happen or is guaranteed to happen as a result of this is the lining of the coffers of state government budgets at the expense of the community. That is guaranteed, and no Treasurer can stand in this place and guarantee that this is not going to result in an increase to your bill at your GP. No-one can guarantee that this is not going to have an impact on the healthcare crisis. No-one can guarantee that this is not going to have an impact on emergency department presentations.

In fact, according to figures that have been received—I have these figures here and I will quote them for the record because I think it is important that people know this—a HotDoc survey of more than 1,800 patients about the likely impact of payroll tax changes on attendance revealed that more than one in a quarter, that is 28 per cent, would see their GP less frequently if fees increased,

with 7 per cent saying they would stop going altogether, and 4 per cent of patients saying they would attend, guess where, an emergency department. That is where they would attend: an emergency department.

We have further results from that survey showing that margins within general practice are extremely tight, with an average of 5 per cent. Practices cannot absorb the extra cost, the extra tax—a tax that was unanticipated by this state government. Therefore, the cost will need to be passed on to patients, with an average fee increase of \$12, as I said, and the average out-of-pocket fee in Greater Adelaide increasing to about \$50-odd from \$38, during a cost-of-living crisis.

The correspondence we have notes that in 2021-22, there were over 12 million attendances to GPs in SA. If 4 per cent of those attended an ED, an emergency department, the cost to the taxpayer would be approximately \$288 million. There would be even further pressure on our emergency departments, and the ramping crisis would worsen. It is expected that that \$288 million will translate to something like 468,000 additional presentations to our EDs.

I do not know how any Treasurer could stand and look the public in the eye or get on the radio or on TV and say, 'It is unlikely that this will impact our health crisis.' I do not know who we think we are kidding, but I can guarantee you that GPs are very worried, and they are worried for good reason. It is not enough to say, 'Well, they're doctors. They can absorb this. They have had an amnesty; 250 of them have signed up to the amnesty. They had their chance to not have to pay this retrospectively.'

That is not good enough, because the associations that are representing their members know what will happen ultimately if this proposal goes ahead. They are not asking for the world. They are saying, 'Give us more time, government, to negotiate with you. Give us more time to find another solution. Pause, so that we can see what the other states are doing.' It is also false to suggest, as has been suggested, that we are just falling into line with the other jurisdictions, because we are not falling into line with Queensland and we are not falling into line with WA.

WA has taken on board the concerns that have been raised and has said, 'You know what, we're going to sit back, take a breath, and pause this for another year so that we can see what the knock-on effects will be and what the challenges to these determinations are likely to result in.' That is what other jurisdictions are, in fact, doing, and it is what our doctors here—the AMA and the RACGP—have asked this government to do. It is not enough to just say, 'We have given you an amnesty. Your time is nearly up. We have to keep moving.' That does not cut it.

If there is one thing that we have learnt, or we should have learnt by now, it is that short-term fix ultimately costs the community a lot more than anything we have managed to get in terms of a windfall gain as a result of implementing something that is so uncertain. We also know from that same survey that in Greater Adelaide only 11.4 per cent of standard GP consultations are bulk billed, compared with a national average of 28.7 per cent in cities. Bulk billing will become even harder to access, as it will become financially unviable for that 11.4 per cent who are able to offer it now.

We know that 16.5 per cent of GP clinics have indicated they are likely to close, which equates to 57 clinics in the Greater Adelaide area. These are all based on surveys that have been undertaken, and the results of which we have. We know that there is a survey from the RACGP which shows that 35 per cent of GPs would consider moving interstate. Imagine that—they are going to pack up from Adelaide and move interstate. They will probably move to WA or Queensland for a favourable payroll tax setting.

South Australia will become the less favourable jurisdiction for GPs and this of course will exacerbate the one thing that we are all talking about in here being hellbent on fixing and that is workforce shortages. The letter that I have is co-signed not just by the RACGP but the Rural Doctors' Association of South Australia, the ACRRM, PMASA, the AMA, the Chinese Medical Association of South Australia, ACMA and Primary Health Care GP Committee and the Primary Care Business Council (PCBC).

It is not an unreasonable ask. They are not saying, 'We don't expect anything to come of this.' What they are saying is, 'Can we please have some more time to negotiate this with the government?' They are not the only ones. I can guarantee you they are not the only ones asking for

this pause, because if you think this is going to stop at the allied health professions, you are very mistaken. I know that the Treasurer is well aware that it is not going to stop at the allied health professions, but I appreciate the subject of this motion in particular.

I have comments here about those figures that I referred to including the 486,000 additional presentations to ED likely to result in a cost blowout to the budget of \$268-odd million. Dr Ben Hurst, Chief Executive Officer of HotDoc has stated:

The State Government has introduced a patient tax at a time when households are enduring sustained cost of living pressures, with many families already finding it difficult to pay for everyday essentials such as groceries, petrol and utilities.

HotDoc is fearful many families, especially those that are socio-economically disadvantaged, will forego seeking care from their GP and load up the emergency departments at hospitals at a time when they are already overburdened and under staffed.

This financial cost of the application of payroll tax on medical clinics will eat into the Federal Government's recent Medicare incentive that was aimed at tripling the incentives paid to doctors for bulk billing vulnerable patients...It will put at risk Medicare funded doctors' visits for children, concession holders and pensioners.

We have a further quote from RACGP's chair, Dr Goodson, who states:

The data from HotDoc supports our concerns that the SA government patient tax—

and that is what it is—

on general practice will lead to unsustainable pressure on our emergency departments, which will inevitably cause a further worsening of ramping in our state. General practice is the most efficient part of our health system and GPs keep people out of hospitals. Why would a government elected on a health agenda make access to GPs more expensive and difficult for South Australians?

That is a question we are all asking ourselves too. Why indeed would they do that for a short-term fix, a short-term hit of payroll tax that they never foresaw they were going to receive, because that is how this situation arose?

In WA, as I said, the RACGP in that jurisdiction has managed to secure an important confirmation that the Western Australian government does not intend to change the way its existing payroll tax provisions apply to general practice. So that jurisdiction has looked at these determinations and they have come up with apparently what we cannot come up with, that is, a different answer. We have been told, 'The horse has bolted. The determination has been made. It is going to apply in every jurisdiction,' but we have an ironclad guarantee in WA that that is not going to be the case in that jurisdiction.

We have a Queensland example before us, which is going to deal with this situation differently as well. In that jurisdiction, we will have until 2025 to review arrangements around payroll tax and then make voluntary disclosures in line with what we have done, so basically an amnesty, which extends for at least a year longer than it does in South Australia.

Five years of retrospective payroll tax is an extraordinary imposition on any business. Expecting any business to be able to absorb five years' worth of payroll tax because you have shifted the goalposts and found another way to increase your payroll tax liability is going to have an extraordinary effect on every business, whether it be a GP or a dentist or a physio, that is captured by these changes.

I note that in my office I have had discussions not just with GPs and the medical fraternity specifically but also physios. I have correspondence from physios who are equally impacted and concerned about the changes. I know that, just based on discussions I have had with a physio clinic operating in South Australia, which has done its due diligence and looked at what this would cost them, that they have gone to their accountants who have said, 'Well, that's going to cost you an extra \$170,000.'

I am talking about physio practices that have just come out of COVID and managed to pay off their overdrafts as a result of what was a very difficult time and get back on the front foot, only to learn now that they are going to have a retrospective payroll tax worth over \$150,000 added to their payroll tax liabilities. How on earth we can expect businesses to absorb those sorts of figures is beyond my comprehension. Payroll tax is, frankly, beyond my comprehension. The fact that we tax

businesses for employing more people and creating more economic activity is beyond my comprehension, but that is another issue altogether.

I will remind honourable members again that \$1.7 billion a year is what businesses today are contributing to payroll tax in this jurisdiction. That figure is already forecast to grow to just shy of \$2 billion. These determinations will see that figure grow even further. That is \$5 million a day that every business in this state is paying in payroll tax in this jurisdiction.

Doctors are saying that if something does not happen here, if something does not give, it is patients who will ultimately have to foot the bill and pay for that patient tax because general practices simply cannot afford to absorb that cost. We are already on our knees. We are already being squeezed as hard as we can be squeezed. Any incentives that have been given to us by the feds are likely to be done away with, and what we are asking or pleading the government to give us is a further reprieve so we can work through this issue logically and reasonably.

In what universe that is too much of an ask, I do not know, but I certainly indicate my full support to those who have taken this issue on, particularly the RACGP and the AMA, which are trying their level best to ensure above everything else—because this is the part that gets lost in this debate the most—that this patient tax does not have a negative impact on our health crisis. We still have a health crisis in this jurisdiction. We still have a ramping crisis in this jurisdiction. We still have an emergency department crisis in this jurisdiction. This measure that the government is proposing, which they say there is no solution to, is going to exacerbate those crises.

I note in closing that my colleague the Hon. Rob Simms has introduced a different motion on the same issue, and I am sure he will speak to it more from a cost-of-living pressure type front. I thank the Hon. Rob Simms for getting on board with this issue, as I am sure the RACGP and others do. I am really looking forward to considering the issue of payroll tax overall in this jurisdiction through an inquiry into payroll tax, which is already on the *Notice Paper* and which I know these same bodies that have reached out, certainly to me, about this issue are keen to see get off the ground, because they would like a reasonable and rational discussion about how we deal with payroll tax in this jurisdiction. With those words, I commend the motion to the chamber.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

Bills

PARLIAMENT (JOINT SERVICES) (CLERKS) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (16:31): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Parliament (Joint Services) Act 1985 and to make a related amendment to the Constitution Act 1934. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (16:32): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I rise today to introduce the Parliamentary (Joint Services) (Clerks) Amendment Bill 2024. South Australia is now out of step with almost every other state in the country regarding the employment and appointment of the clerks of our parliaments. In almost every other state and also in the commonwealth parliament all clerks are appointed under a specific parliamentary service act. These statutory authorities not only identify the appropriate appointment processes but also outline modern employment procedures, including relevant qualifications, term periods and minimum required experience.

This seems appropriate, given this is taxpayers' money that is being spent here and their job is not only administrative but they also act as the principal adviser to the President, Speaker and members on issues of parliamentary law, procedure and practice. Currently, our appointment of clerks on a legislative level are filled through section 58 of the Constitution Act, and that specifies that the only requirement is that they are a 'suitable person'.

Today, I am introducing a bill to move this process from the Constitution Act to the Parliamentary (Joint Services) Act and provide the specifics as to what should be required of a clerk both before their appointment, including the recruitment processes and essential criteria, and also requirements of their employment, including remuneration and performance reviews.

Standard practice in the South Australian public sector requires performance outcomes and deliverables through executive appointments be set out in a performance agreement. This includes both whole-of-government and agency-specific priorities. As such, all employees, including executives, are required to undertake two formal performance reviews a year.

Currently, there is no requirement for clerks to undertake any performance reviews, nor are they subject to any performance outcomes, deliverables or key performance indicators. In 2024, this is not acceptable. While we all know parliament is a unique workplace, this does not mean it should be completely dismissive of modern workplace practices and employment standards. This legislative change to the Parliament (Joint Services) Act will also mean that the Equal Opportunity Act and the Fair Work Act will apply.

I now turn to the specifics of this bill. Part 1A will establish the offices of both the Clerk of the Legislative Council and the Clerk of the House of Assembly. Within this office, a number of processes will be entrenched. This includes terms and conditions for appointment of the clerks under section 4C, instituting a four-year term limit, an appropriate qualification in law, and extensive knowledge and experience in parliamentary law, procedure and practice. This section also outlines advertising and vacancy requirements for the clerk's position.

Section 4D will establish that the remuneration for all clerks will be determined by the Remuneration Tribunal of South Australia, subject to an annual review, with an accompanying section 4F, which details an annual performance review to be undertaken for each clerk. Under the Constitution Act, currently the chief clerks of either house can be removed by the house for which they are an officer.

Similarly, the new section 4G will provide a process where a motion can be passed to terminate the appointment of the clerk where at least six sitting days' notice has been provided. This termination has to be related to either contravention of a condition of appointment, misconduct or failure or incapacity to carry out official duties to a satisfactory standard. As such, this section also allows for either the President or Speaker to suspend the clerk pending the passage of that motion.

South Australians rightfully expect the parliament to employ staff and operate the workplace by modern and transparent means, and not still do it the way it was done back in 1857. This bill is an appropriate step in the right direction and ensures their work is meeting the needs of the parliament and their salaries are in line with community expectations.

I now seek leave to table a few documents for the benefit of consideration of this particular piece of legislation, namely, the position descriptions of the New South Wales Legislative Council for the Clerk of Parliament, the Deputy Clerk or Black Rod and the Assistant Clerk's position.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: I draw members' attention to those documents and note that, for example, the position description, which is quite well articulated, notes that for the New South Wales Legislative Council:

The Clerk of the Parliament and Clerk of the Legislative Council...provide expert and authoritative advice to the President, Ministers and Members of the Legislative Council and its committees on parliamentary law, practice and procedure.

The Clerk, as chief executive of the Department of the Legislative Council, is responsible for the strategic direction and effective performance of the Department. The Clerk works collaboratively with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, the Chief Executive of the Department of Parliamentary Services, and the President of the Legislative Council and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, as the Parliamentary Executive Group, to support the achievement of the Parliament's strategic priorities.

The core requirements are:

1. Expert understanding and application of parliamentary law, practice and procedure of the Legislative Council.

2. Expert knowledge and extensive experience in the parliamentary chamber, at the Table and in advising parliamentary leaders and Members on parliamentary law, practice and procedure.
3. Expert people management and development skills including the ability to engage and motivate staff and develop potential in others, through providing effective feedback, promoting a positive workplace culture and maintaining employee wellbeing.
4. Expert leadership skills to communicate goals, priorities and vision, inspire direction and purpose, and recognise achievement.
5. Expert management skills including strategic, corporate, financial and project planning skills and the ability to manage budgets and secure appropriate resources to enable the effective performance of the Department.
6. Expert communication skills including the ability to effectively negotiate, consult with and provide authoritative advice to a wide range of stakeholders in high-pressure situations, and deliver presentations and training.
7. Expert writing, editing, research, conceptual and critical analysis skills including the ability to comprehend complex issues and legislation.
8. Expert strategic judgment, integrity, tact and impartiality to make critical decisions in a political context while maintaining confidentiality and retaining the trust of Members in a high-stakes environment.

It goes on to outline the duties and the key outcomes and accountabilities, including those within parliamentary procedure, leadership, representational responsibilities and also a Legislative Council competency scale at (1) foundational, (2) competent, (3) proficient, (4) advanced, and (5) expert.

I think this is a really useful tool for our parliament—which has not updated our processes in this area since, and I will repeat it, 1857—to take strides forward to ensure a professional and appropriate workplace that South Australians would expect. With that, I seek leave to conclude my comments.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Motions

GENERAL PRACTITIONER PAYROLL TAX

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:40): I move:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges that:
 - (a) the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners South Australia (RACGP SA) has launched a campaign for the state government to stop applying payroll tax to general practitioners; and
 - (b) South Australia is in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis and many people are already struggling to cover the costs of essentials like medical appointments.
2. Notes that:
 - (a) the patient engagement platform HotDoc has released figures that show that 95 per cent of clinics are planning to increase patient fees by an average of \$12 per appointment in response to the payroll tax and only 28 per cent of patients would continue to see their regular GP (albeit less regularly), if fees increased; and
 - (b) the Queensland government has provided a payroll tax ruling clarifying that patients' fees paid directly to a GP for their services would not be subject to payroll tax.
3. Calls on the Malinauskas government to align with the Queensland government's approach to rule out payroll tax on patients' fees paid directly to GPs for their services.

This is a really important issue for this parliament to deal with. I note that the Hon. Connie Bonaros advanced a motion on a similar topic and I certainly share the concerns that she has expressed, but this motion from the Greens goes a little bit further than that because we are not just calling for an amnesty, we are calling for the Labor government to go a step further and that is actually rule out applying this payroll tax to GP services.

Queensland has done that. They have actually provided a payroll tax ruling that clarifies that patients' fees that are paid directly to a GP for their services would not be subject to a payroll tax. Well, the patients and medical practitioners of our state do not simply need an amnesty—in effect, a stay of execution—what they need is certainty going forward and for this money grab to be ruled out.

I understand that the state Labor government are in a difficult financial position. I understand that and that is through no fault of the government. We know of course the significant costs that have been associated with managing COVID, not just here in our own state but right across the country. But budgets are about choices and this government does not have to go down the path of slugging medical practitioners, and slugging, by extension, patients with increased fees. There are lots of other alternatives.

The Greens have referenced previously work of the Australia Institute, which finds that there was about \$150 million that is going to fossil fuel companies in subsidies, direct money from the state government. That money could be put into our health system to deal with the crisis that we are facing. That would be an appropriate course of action, rather than a money grab that is going to cause vulnerable South Australians to be paying more to go to see a doctor. That is not something we want to see.

The Greens certainly support the campaign of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners for the government to stop applying payroll tax to the work of general practitioners, indeed all healthcare professionals. We are concerned that going to the dentist could also become more expensive in South Australia should this medical tax get the green light from the Malinauskas government.

I want to reference some of the work of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). They claim that the payroll tax for GPs would result in higher fees for patients, reductions in bulk billing or more GPs leaving the workforce. That, of course, would not be a good outcome for patients or the medical profession in general. We look at that with the backdrop of the ramping crisis that is getting worse and worse in this state.

Some might say, 'Do not trust politicians when they talk about dealing with these matters.' I will not repeat the phrase, but some say, 'That is all BS'. The reality is that people do rely on parliaments to deal with these sorts of matters. People do rely on governments to solve these sorts of matters and they do not expect budget black holes to be plugged by the sick in our community.

Out-of-pocket costs for medical services are rising and South Australians are unable to afford basic health care and the Greens believe, of course, that everybody is entitled to that. Last year, a Productivity Commission report showed that there was a 50 per cent increase in Australians who delayed or avoided seeing their doctor because they could not afford it. That was up by 2.4 per cent of people to 3.5 per cent. At the same time, GPs are increasingly being forced to stop bulk billing to ensure they can afford to stay afloat.

That same report also revealed there are approximately three million avoidable presentations to public hospital emergency departments that could have been handled by a GP. The reality is that if we do not fund GPs appropriately, if we do not invest in preventative care, you are going to see more people presenting in emergency and we know that our hospital system is already struggling to cope.

As we face both a cost-of-living crisis and an emergency health system at full capacity, we need to be looking at what we can do to relieve the pressure, not just compound it. In June last year, the Treasurer issued an amnesty on payroll tax to tenant GPs to 30 June of this year. This came after the Supreme Court of New South Wales Court of Appeal found that tenant GPs who pay a percentage of their earnings to a clinic rather than being paid a wage count as employees for payroll tax purposes.

The decision by the New South Wales court caught practices by surprise and according to the RACGP gave them no choice but to raise patient fees. The state government amnesty was welcomed by the RACGP to give them time to work through the implications for tenant GPs.

It is my understanding that it is not just general practitioners who fall into this category. Yesterday, a dentist contacted my office and reported that dental and psychology practices are also

potentially impacted by this ruling, so the Greens call on the government to rule out applying this new tax not just to GPs but also to medical practitioners. It is important that we consider the impact that this could have on our health system in the middle of this health crisis.

Data from HotDoc reveals that 95 per cent of clinics are planning to increase patient fees by 12 per cent in response to this payroll tax. That is a terrible outcome for patients who are already feeling the pinch. Research from The Pharmacy Guild of Australia has shown that 48 per cent of patients would move to a different GP if they stopped bulk billing. Any sensible person would look at this and realise that this will end up with bulk billing facilities being overrun and being more burdened than they are at present. It will also result in patients either delaying their health care or forking out money they cannot afford to pay for the services they need.

On 21 February this year, the Queensland government issued its own ruling that patient fees paid directly to a GP for their services will not be subject to a payroll tax. The Queensland ruling applies to medical centres where medical practitioners are conducting business or providing medical services and I note that this would capture dentistry, psychology and other medical services in addition to GPs.

This motion aims to put into action the calls from the RACGP for the Malinauskas government to match Queensland to exempt medical practitioners from payroll tax both to support healthcare professionals and to also ensure patients are not being slogged for extra fees in the middle of this cost-of-living crisis.

This is a government that was elected on a platform of fixing our health system. Well, you cannot fix our health system if you price South Australians out of getting in to see a GP. You cannot fix our health system and you cannot get ramping under control if you make it more difficult to get in to see a doctor, dentist or psychologist.

All of these things are fundamental to our health system, and we cannot see South Australians being priced out of getting the care that they need. So I really urge the Malinauskas government not just to extend the amnesty but to actually rule it out, knock the nail on the head and bring this matter to a close so that there is certainty for our medical professionals and certainty for vulnerable people in our community: the sick who need the support of those professionals.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. R.B. Martin.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:50): I move:

That this council—

1. Congratulates the Malinauskas government on reforming the Residential Tenancies Act in 2023 to strike a better balance between renters and landlords but recognises that more action is needed to curb soaring rent prices.
2. Notes that:
 - (a) Australia is experiencing the worst rental crisis in 17 years with the latest PropTrack data revealing rent prices in South Australia have increased between 10 to 30 per cent across 92 suburbs over the last year; and
 - (b) Shelter SA's 2022-2024 survey of landlords, tenants and real estate agents revealed that 'rent bidding' allowing landlords to accept offers above the asking price is still prevalent in South Australia.
3. Calls on the Malinauskas government to:
 - (a) freeze residential rents for two years and cap any future increases in line with inflation; and
 - (b) ban rent bidding in its entirety by prohibiting landlords and real estate agents from accepting offers above the asking price for a residential tenancy.

This motion congratulates the Malinauskas government on the well overdue reforms that were made to the Residential Tenancies Act in this parliament last year. I want to put on record again my appreciation to the Malinauskas government—Minister Michaels and also the Premier, with whom I worked closely on those reforms—because the government did action many of the issues that were

outstanding in the rental market. They addressed many of the issues that were concerning advocates in this space.

But the one area where they did not take action, where they were found wanting, was on the issue of rent prices, so this motion calls on the Malinauskas government to implement an immediate rent freeze for two years with any future increases to be kept in line with inflation, and also calls on the government to actually rule out rent bidding.

Members might recall that in their first tranche of rental reforms the Malinauskas government introduced an amendment to end the so-called practice of rent bidding. What they did was prevent agents and landlords from being able to advertise properties in a range. Their view was that that was contributing to the spiralling cost of rental properties. I agree with that, but what the government did not do was actually extend the principle to also say, if you are an agent or a landlord, you will not be able to accept an offer above the asking price.

I asked questions of the government about this in the committee stage of the bill, and I thought it might be useful to revisit some of the things that were said from *Hansard* because the Greens are often ahead of these debates. We did warn at the time that what the government was doing was not going to actually address the crisis that we faced in terms of unscrupulous conduct, in terms of people driving up prices by making offers below the counter.

Unfortunately, according to the latest data that Shelter SA have released, 28 per cent of respondents are still participating in rent bidding and 8 per cent of respondents are paying additional bonds contributing to the rise in median rents. That is their report that has been conducted over the last two years. That is concerning because the Malinauskas government assured us all that they were putting an end to this practice last year.

I will just revisit some of the exchange from *Hansard*. I said to the Hon. Kyam Maher, who was representing the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs in the committee stage of this bill:

Many speakers on behalf of the government have talked about the bill banning rent bidding. Could the minister explain to me how precisely the bill bans rent bidding when landlords and real estate agents are still able to accept an offer that is made above the asking price?

The minister replied:

On my advice, what this bill proposes is that it will not allow landlords to solicit offers of higher rates than what is advertised. It will not stop acceptance of higher rates, but it will prohibit the soliciting of rates higher than what is advertised.

Then I went on to say:

Yes, I accept that, but how precisely does this ban rent bidding? Is rent bidding only the practice, in the government's mind, of advertising for rents higher than the asking price? Surely the bidding is when the individual is able to actually put in a bid that is higher than the asking price. Can I ask why that is not addressed?

The Hon. Kyam Maher said:

I thank the honourable member for his question. I do not have a lot more to add, but what this bill does do is prohibit the soliciting or asking for higher prices. It does not prohibit the acceptance of it, but it prohibits asking for that and therefore promoting people to do that.

I went on to ask the minister:

Webster's Dictionary defines a bid as 'to offer a price for payment or acceptance' or as a verb 'to make a bid; to say what one will pay'. In light of that definition, how precisely does the government's bill ban rent bidding if actually all it is doing is banning the advertising of a rent price above the asking price?

The Hon. Kyam Maher replied:

I am advised that in effect what this legislation does is ban the practice by agents: that is, it stops agents going out to solicit or attempt to have potential tenants offer higher amounts.

I went on to press the minister:

The Webster's Dictionary definition of the word bid is 'to offer a price for payment'. Does the minister therefore concede that the bill does not actually ban the bid?

The minister responded by saying that this was some semantics. But, as I have said, the advice is that it stops landlords engaging in this sort of behaviour. I will not go on, Mr President, because I think you get the point. The point is that what the government did, did not actually stop rent bidding and, as a result, the practice is still prevalent in South Australia. So the government needs to close that loophole and that is what this motion is calling on them to do.

I want to talk a little bit about the need for a rent freeze. It is clear that Australia is in the midst of the worst rental crisis in nearly 20 years. The data tells us that story. Data from PropTrack has revealed that rent prices in South Australia have increased by 10 to 30 per cent across 92 suburbs over the last 12 months. Median rent prices in Adelaide in the past 12 months have risen 13 per cent, far exceeding the 4.8 per cent rise in CPI, and the 4 per cent rise in the wage price index in the 12 months up until December 2023.

Of the nearly 20,000 renters in South Australia, roughly a third are experiencing rental stress. Rental stress is defined as housing costs exceeding 30 per cent of a household's gross income, with 38 to 60 per cent representing severe unaffordability, and 60 per cent or more indicating extreme unaffordability. For low income renters in South Australia the problem is even worse. Two-thirds of those households spend 30 per cent or more of their income on rent, according to PEXA and LongView. I should clarify that I think those figures relate nationally but it would be the same here in our state. Nearly 28 per cent of people aged 45 to 54 rent today, compared with fewer than 20 per cent back in 2001. Among those aged 55 to 64, 21.6 per cent are renters, compared with 15.7 per cent more than two decades ago.

The changes that the government made to the Residential Tenancies Act, working in partnership with the Greens here in this place last year, were a good start, and we welcome that. I note the disappointing opposition of the One Nation party and others to those reforms that are really helping vulnerable South Australians. But the changes have not gone far enough. More action is needed to curb soaring rent prices. Renters desperately need a break. We cannot have another two years like the two years that we have had.

Sometimes when I talk about rent freezes and the like, people think that I am being incredibly radical—and I see the Hon. Heidi Girolamo is smiling there—but I want to refer to the Liberal Party's own policy in the state of Tasmania, where they are in the middle of an election campaign. Part of their housing plan is to provide a \$200 a week cash incentive and guaranteed rental income for two years to 500 property owners who cap their rents between 25 and 30 per cent of the median rate.

If it is good enough for the Liberal Party in Tasmania, surely it should be good enough for the Malinauskas government in South Australia. That bastion of left-wing politics over in Tasmania that is the Tasmanian Liberal Party is telling the Malinauskas government or setting the signpost for the Malinauskas government in South Australia.

This is not a radical idea. We have had rent freezes in the past. Indeed, the Greens worked with the previous Marshall government and in particular Minister Vickie Chapman, to secure the passage of a rent freeze during the COVID period through this chamber, and it is time for us to do so again, to give renters some relief and then to cap rent increases in line with inflation going forward.

We could also look at the Liberal Party proposal from Tasmania, that radical left-wing clique that makes up the Tasmanian Liberal Party, and my old mate from federal politics, Eric Abetz, who is always at the vanguard of these left-wing debates, I am sure would agree. It is an important issue and we need to see leadership from this parliament so that we can provide support to South Australians who are struggling to put a roof over their head because that is a fundamental right of each and every person to have a place to live, a roof over their head and a place to call home. With that, I conclude my remarks.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

SEAFOOD GROWTH STRATEGY

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (17:01): I seek leave to move the motion standing in my name in an amended form.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: I move:

That this council—

1. Celebrates that the Seafood Growth Strategy 2021-2031, developed with industry, is a 10-year plan that aims to drive growth and opportunities for a sustainable and profitable seafood sector;
2. Acknowledges the strategy is underpinned by seven key pillars: support, unity and resources; seafood products and production; security of access and investment; industry promotion and communication; capacity building, education and training; strategic research, development and extension; and technology adoption and innovation;
3. Encourages South Australians to take a moment to consider the people behind the fish and support our fishers by enjoying seafood caught locally; and
4. Calls on the Labor government to release the priorities and activities for the Seafood Growth Strategy over the next two years.

The Seafood Growth Strategy for South Australia 2021-2031 is an example of strategic industry planning that has successfully harnessed the voices of industry stakeholders and directed the input into a solid action plan. This strategy was a partnership between the Marshall Liberal government and the seafood industry, and one that we are proud of.

As mentioned in the plan, South Australia's seafood industry directly employs approximately 6,000 people and generates \$469 million in revenue from the wild catch and aquaculture sectors. It is estimated that more than 277,000 recreational fishers enjoy wetting a line in this state, with considerable flow-on benefits from recreational fishers in terms of tourism and retail business.

South Australian fish species such as bluefin tuna, southern rock lobster, abalone, King George whiting, Pacific oysters, snapper and many others are highly prized as premium seafood locally, interstate and internationally, in particular in Asian markets where we enjoy the advantage of close proximity to their markets.

The aim of the strategy is to sustainably drive growth in the South Australian seafood industry, with planned growth of 3 per cent per annum and the goal of reaching \$23 billion net value by 2031. The plan specifies that this growth would be underpinned by research, innovation and a skilled workforce. The strategy includes provision for cultural fishing practices for Indigenous communities and recognises Aboriginal fishing as a unique fishing sector in South Australia.

The 2020 formation of the Seafood Advisory Forum to drive this process brought together stakeholders from across the seafood industry, including commercial, recreational, aquaculture, charter fishing, Aboriginal fishing, marketing, research and development, processing, fish processors, as well as others.

This forum was tasked with developing a shared understanding of the seafood sector and identified commercial opportunities for growth and development of the sector through a collaborative approach between the various stakeholder groups. It was asked to develop an overarching strategic plan for the seafood industry and was also asked to identify a vision, achievable goals and strategies to achieve the desired growth.

The Seafood Growth Strategy plan articulates seven key pillars that support the aims of building the growth and expansion of the state's seafood sector, namely, (1) support, unity and resources; (2) seafood products and production; (3) security of access and investment; (4) industry promotion and communication; (5) capacity building, education and training; (6) strategic RD&E; (7) technology adoption and innovation.

The issues addressed under these pillars include, under pillar 1, support unity and resources, which is really about the importance of co-management of resources and ensuring that that is key, with a closer relationship between industry and government. The recommended action to establish a seafood advocacy body in South Australia has been achieved with the formation of Seafood Industry South Australia last year, enabling industry-led collaboration with government. There is also a special effort to ensure Indigenous participation and engagement on growth plans and opportunities in the sector.

Under pillar 2, seafood products and production, there really needs to be a strong focus on seafood products, exploring new markets, innovating and adding value to South Australian seafood exports. It is important that we review the ecological sustainability of the industry, while exploring efficiencies and opportunities for growth, and making sure that we are adding value to the recreational fishing sector by ensuring healthy fish stocks, and encouraging the growth of aquaculture industries through measures that promote growth and development.

Under pillar 3, security of access and investment, it was found that the Seafood Growth Strategy encouraged investment in the seafood industry by ensuring a transparent and rigorous regulatory framework, and a review of the Fisheries Management Act 2007 to ensure a flexible and effective management environment. We need to be developing biosecurity strategies to minimise issues with water and movement of seafood products, as well as encouraging better logistics and transport to improve movement of seafood products and explore cost efficiencies. It is important to review regulatory framework for processor registrations to ensure that health standards are maintained.

Under pillar 4, which is industry promotion and communication, the industry have been developing protocols that promote South Australian seafood locally, nationally and globally, and raising awareness of the unique product quality and health benefits of South Australian seafood. It is important that we leverage the tourism potential of the seafood industry and add value to the recreational and charter sectors.

The industry has also been working hard to develop and deliver innovative and effective marketing campaigns that really promote South Australian seafood and build trust and respect in the industry, and to also ensure that the wider community has access to accurate information about fishing and aquaculture.

Under pillar 5, capacity building and education, this pillar really involves building skills, competencies and abilities to ensure that the industry remains commercially competitive and agile to deal with change. The industry is working to ensure a skilled workforce to deliver high-quality training and retention of capable staff.

Under pillar 6, strategic research development and extension (RD&E), it is critical that government work with industry to identify key research gaps and opportunities for RD&E to drive innovation and development of the sector. This should not and cannot be government led. This must be industry led, with government working alongside and with industry. It is important to acknowledge that in this seafood strategy there is recognition of inclusion of all sector catch data in stock assessment reports.

Last, but certainly not least, pillar 7 is about technology adoption and innovation. This pillar is really about driving the adoption of cost-effective technology innovations that improve seafood sustainability, productivity, traceability and, of course, profitability. It is about forecasting the impact of climate change on aquatic populations and developing new technology to ensure traceability to offer benefits in market expectations, biosecurity and origin promotion. Finally, it is about building expertise and confidence in the adoption of technology through training and the development of user-friendly apps and programs to enable efficient collection and dissemination of data and information.

The Seafood Growth Strategy concludes with a statement of commitment, including operational plans, in how this strategy will be implemented. There is strong recognition that for the strategy to succeed it must be supported by strong collaboration and engagement across all stakeholder groups, including government.

Can I just say, unfortunately, how quickly things can change under a change of government. Despite the Seafood Growth Strategy 2021-2031, today our commercial fishing sector faces unprecedented turmoil, a situation exacerbated by a minister who, rather than standing as a champion for their cause, seems to have turned her back on the sector.

Despite repeated calls for transparency and dialogue, critical documents are being kept away from critical stakeholders who, unlike in the development of the Seafood Growth Strategy 2021-2031 document, are not engaged properly on matters affecting their livelihoods. Proper process and

engagement appears non-existent, and even the most straightforward questions posed in parliament are met with silence.

The Seafood Growth Strategy 2021-2031 specifies that growth can only be achieved through innovation and a skilled workforce. Both of those are at stake. The commercial fishing sector is buckling under financial strain worsened by a botched cost recovery review that the minister has fumbled disastrously. It is a classic example of how not to engage with stakeholders, showcasing a masterclass in mismanagement.

Fishers, some of whom have been in the game for generations, are telling me that they have had enough. It is clear the minister has lost the confidence of the entire sector, leaving us adrift in uncertain waters. The situation is a stark contrast to the development of the Seafood Growth Strategy 2021-2031, which brought together stakeholders from across the seafood industry, including commercial, recreational, aquaculture, charter fishing, Aboriginal fishing markets, research and development, processing and fish producers.

It is time to reset the compass. As South Australian consumers we can all do our bit, and we should take a moment to consider the people behind the fish we so love. We should support our fishers by enjoying seafood caught locally and supporting their local fishing sector. Mr President, I know that you are an avid supporter of our fishermen in that instance.

By choosing locally caught seafood we are not just indulging in the freshest of flavours; we are also casting a vote for the hardworking fishers who are contributing to the sustainability of our marine heritage. We must also demand that the Labor government release its priorities and activities for the Seafood Growth Strategy over the next two years. This is critical.

The sector desperately needs recognition, it desperately needs support and it desperately needs certainty, now more than ever. It also desperately needs leadership from the minister in this place. It is time to stop the inaction. It is time to stop the secrecy. This sector deserves more.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

WATER BUYBACKS

The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:13): I move:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges that South Australian irrigators have given up enough high-security water for the environment; and
2. Acknowledges that any further water buybacks by the commonwealth government will have a negative economic and social impact on basin communities in South Australia.

Labor's deal with the commonwealth, known as Bridging the Gap water recovery, has thrown rural and regional areas in South Australia under the bus and will add to the cost-of-living crisis as the price of fresh vegetables and fruit skyrockets. The deal, done in August 2023, means water typically used in farming will stay in the Murray River and then flow out to sea. If the Labor government cared for the environment as they say they do then they would lower the level of immigration into Australia instead of taking water away from food and fibre production.

The Bridging the Gap water recovery target of 183.8 gigalitres a year, or 183.8 billion litres of freshwater, represents close to 50 per cent of all South Australian River Murray class 3 water remaining for irrigation. We know from previous water buybacks the socio-economic impacts of this deal will be grave. As farming declines, so too will the rural and regional population decline. As the population declines so, too, will services and resources for people in rural and regional areas of South Australia.

Schools will close, banks will close, doctors will move away, irrigation supply businesses will shed staff, suicides will increase and the death cycle will turn again—a death cycle created by a city-centric Labor government. No other conclusion can be drawn from the decision to use taxpayer-funded buybacks to take even more productive water and basin properties out of use in the name of environmental flows.

Our state government's water minister, Dr Susan Close, seems to have a tin ear to the concerns of irrigators and industry figures in places like the Riverland, where the spectre of another round of water buybacks has an already struggling community, still recovering from the 2022-23 flood, fearful of what lies ahead. The minister and her federal counterpart are careful to say that water will only be purchased from willing sellers, but given the circumstances of many irrigators across different crop types we all know this is not true. Water will in fact be purchased from desperate sellers, and who can blame them for wanting to exit their respective industries for a handsome payout, given the current struggle of supply and demand, falling prices paid to them and skyrocketing input costs, like electricity.

The reports from locals on the ground in the Riverland are overwhelming. Buybacks will take irrigated properties out of production and create additional economic and social problems. We saw this the first time around when properties were mothballed and basin economies took a hit, despite claims to the contrary made in the final report of SA's somewhat insular royal commission.

In defending the return to buybacks, Minister Close describes any suggestion, however well-credentialed the source, that buybacks adversely impact communities as a myth. Why then did she reveal in the same media release no less that the Albanese government has set aside \$20 million for South Australia to deal with any legitimate impacts on communities? Why would money be set aside for something we are assured will not happen? A while ago I saw a farmer in northwest Victoria, who refused to sign up to the new deal, speaking about the likely impact of buybacks, asking whether people realised what they would mean. In short, it will mean less Australian fruit, vegetable, nut and fibre production and less production of grapes from our winegrowing engine room.

It has been estimated that up to 100,000 hectares of horticultural production effectively could be shelved. Even federal water minister Tanya Plibersek conceded that there will in fact be social and economic impacts, pledging to minimise them. If everyone else can see what buybacks mean, why cannot our own South Australian water minister? The actions of the Labor government show they do not understand about people living and working in rural and regional South Australia.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

LIBERAL OPPOSITION

The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:17): I move:

That this council calls on the Liberal Party of South Australia to provide the legitimate opposition South Australians deserve.

The members sitting on the benches opposite a government form the opposition. I say that because I am concerned they have forgotten. The proper working of a democracy in a two-party system requires the opposition to fulfil the duty to oppose the government by testing, probing and criticising government policies, but also, importantly, to show voters what an alternative government might look like. The opposition is not doing its job, and the voters know that. The Liberals might be able to hide from voters, but they cannot hide from me: I am only telling them what is being said behind their backs.

I know the opposition benches are familiar and familiar is comfortable, but we are not here to be comfortable. The public remains unclear on how the Liberals would lower electricity prices. People want to know if they have a plan to ease the cost-of-living burden. They talk about the government's failed promise to fix ambulance ramping, which reflects a wide range of other problems inside hospitals, including the ability to move people into other care once they are well enough to leave. What they have not articulated is what the Liberals are going to do about it.

How will the Liberals address the fact that people in mental health crisis end up in A&E and take up so much time, when specialist services are what is needed? Where do the Liberals stand on getting more doctors working in rural and regional areas? What is the Liberal's plan to fix the housing crisis? They talk about needing a standalone Minister for Child Protection: again, what do the Liberals suggest the minister will do to fix the child protection system? Where do the Liberals stand on men's health, for example—none of them accepted an invitation to the International Men's Day I arranged. Unfortunately, nobody can hurt the Liberal Party of South Australia as much as they can hurt themselves. I would like to see the Liberal Party succeed, but things need to change.

The Hon. Tom Koutsantonis, member for West Torrens, may desire the accolade of being the individual who has single-handedly inflicted the most damage on the Liberals, but in my opinion he is currently being pipped at the post by our members opposite. You see, one of the problems with the Liberals is the sense that they should be supported because, well, they are liberal after all. It does not work for the public and it does not work for me.

Support is built through building relationships and doing the groundwork. The Liberals need to come up with their own good ideas rather than trying to piggyback those of the crossbench. The honourable Leader of the Opposition in the upper house has taken the unusual step of wasting a question in question time, intended to hold government ministers to account on behalf of the South Australian public on a failed attempt to attack One Nation energy policies.

The honourable member has wrongly represented my views to the public on water trading, while attempting to ride my coat-tails with repealing the State Voice, all of course while simultaneously trying to throw me under the bus, figuratively speaking. I am told the Liberals want to work together with One Nation, collaborate, stand together on issues we share—you know, for the public's sake. Forgive me but I do not believe it. The Liberals have made it clear they will misrepresent One Nation to the public.

The Liberals have put on record that they support the One Nation Voice repeal bill, yet instead of getting behind One Nation petitions to repeal the State Voice, the Liberals started their own competing petition with no mention of One Nation's efforts.

The Hon. B.R. Hood interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. S.L. GAME: One Nation was deliberately and intentionally excluded from events with those opposite to promote opposition to the Voice. After observing me like a canary down a coal mine, the Liberal machine attempted to erase my efforts from conversation. I have had a petition against the division in this state since February 2023. If it was not strange enough of the Liberals to have a petition for a bill they do not have, even stranger is the fact that the Liberals have not committed to repealing the State Voice if they come to power. I will acknowledge that with the current outlook there is a slim chance the Liberals will get government anytime soon, but still it would be helpful—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. S.L. GAME: It would be convenient to put it to a vote because there are not the numbers in the chamber for it to pass and that would get you off the hook, since you have not made it clear to the public where you stand on this issue. I do not know why you keep landing yourselves in it.

The Hon. L.A. Henderson: We are on the record as supporting your bill, Sarah.

The Hon. S.L. GAME: But you are not on the record—

The PRESIDENT: Order! Interjections are out of order and you are not supposed to respond to interjections. Just continue.

The Hon. S.L. GAME: I will acknowledge with the current outlook there is a slim chance the Liberals will get government anytime soon, but still it would be helpful to know where the Liberals stand on the issue just in case. Concerningly, the Liberals, after all the toing and froing in the chamber and squawks about, 'Not enough detail,' finally settle the no for now vote while simultaneously shooting down my amendment to limit the number of committees the Voice could establish. The message seems clear: the Liberals' position is if we are going to have a State Voice, let it be as big as possible.

To be fair, the Liberals are completely committed to assessing the State Voice over the next couple of years and then completely committed to, well, not much, which is another problem plaguing the Liberals. In regard to water trading, I say to the honourable member: when we are on the same

floor, same corridor, it is embarrassing and unacceptable to not check my water trading policies before seeking a cheap newspaper headline in a local paper based on fiction.

It is a shame the Liberal Party could not simply support my bill on politicians' water ownership like all the other members in the place did. Instead, they used social media to take petty swipes and try to piggyback on the idea while slandering me in *The Murray Pioneer*. Get your headline on your own ideas. I encourage the opposition to put their heads together and come up with something.

It is important to be balanced here, so let's be clear: despite not one single Liberal member in this place accepting an invitation to my International Men's Day last year, one must acknowledge the Liberals do support women at least, especially women out there trying to make a difference. The Hon. David Speirs made this clear recently with his news address on the Dunstan by-election when he said:

How about the Premier of South Australia pull Tom Koutsantonis into line and say no we support women in public life and we are not going to have this bully like behaviour perpetuated by their side of politics because, quite frankly, I'm sick of it, my team are sick of it, South Australians are sick of it, [and] the people of Dunstan are sick of it.

If only the honourable Leader of the Opposition of the upper house had gotten the memo before her Sky News appearance and email to the *Murray Pioneer*. The Liberal Party are working hard, despite only having two Liberal women in the lower house, to counter the perception that they were once a party that had a longstanding problem with women.

The Liberals say they support women and lift them up—unless of course you happen to be a One Nation woman capable of coming up with ideas supported by the public, ideas for legislation demanding politicians declare their water ownership and ministers declare their travel expenses and repealing the State Voice nobody wants unless you are a bureaucrat. These types of proactive actions by a woman will find you as the Liberals' number one target.

Let's not forget the time the Liberals thought twice about putting my ministers' travel bill to the lower house. We only need to look at the *Hansard* to see the lack of jubilation on the day it passed both houses. Forget the public and their need for scrutiny of public spending. If the Liberals are upset, the public can wait until the Liberals get their own back.

Despite all this, I am open to collaborating with the Liberals in this place. It is what the public deserves on issues that should unite us, but I will not be subjugated into it. It may be one up against 31, but that will not stop me from standing up for myself and standing up for the South Australian people.

My tips to the Liberals are: stop your jollyng with the left side of politics, commit to something, get your headlines from your own ideas and not hijack those from the crossbench, and leave the role of bringing down the Liberals to the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis, member for West Torrens.

Let me be clear: the Liberal Party does not dictate which media outlet I appear in, and they do not decide when I call my bill to a vote. Liberals, if you truly wanted to work together, support the Voice repeal bill petition instead of competing—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. S.L. GAME: Exactly—another bill you want brought in that is going to crash. It is not in the interests of the public.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. S.L. GAME: Liberals, if you truly want to work together, support the Voice repeal bill petition instead of competing with it. Stop chasing petty political headlines and start chasing your own ideas. I call on you to resist the infighting culture of the Liberal Party and focus on what the people of South Australia want from their representatives.

Weak opposition parties are bad for any democracy because the governing party will have less incentive to govern the interests of all people. The Liberals sit on the opposition benches, but

they are not doing the job of an opposition party. I want the situation to change. Our democracy, our freedoms, our prosperity and justice for all depend on the Liberals stepping up and doing the job they are elected to do.

When the opposition give their attention to undermining One Nation, they misunderstand their role, and they miss the opportunities that come with being an opposition and working with One Nation on common interests. I say to the Liberals, constant infighting is political death. I call on the opposition to show voters what an alternative government might look like. There is no other greater pressing issue for our democracy right now.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (17:27): I thank the honourable member for bringing this motion to this chamber and I regret the fact that there is such a clear and demonstrated need for her to do so. I am sure the honourable member speaks on behalf of so many in the community when she talks of her frustration and disillusionment with this so-called alternative government that is before us today.

I thought I might set out what it is that the Australian public deserve from an alternative government and what the Westminster system demands in exchange for its effectiveness, but it is actually someone else who spelled it out for me, so I will quote him instead. He said:

...it is not the role of oppositions to diminish the state we live in, to pull down individuals, to pull down business opportunities, to trash reputations... [It is to] ensure that our vision is in step with what the people of South Australia want from their alternative government.

They are the words in May 2022 from the Leader of the Opposition in another place, the Hon. David Speirs. What lofty ideals he committed to back then and what a wonderful job description he laid out for himself and his team, but what an absolute shame and disgrace that two years in the so-called alternative government has fallen so far short of what a genuine opposition should be and what the people of South Australia actually deserve.

During the one full term of opposition that Labor has faced this century, we seized the opportunity to participate in a genuine contest of ideas, putting forward to the South Australian public our strong, well-developed policies that laid the foundations for Labor's vision for the future of this state. Importantly, we were a constructive opposition. We did not criticise or obstruct unnecessarily.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: During the COVID-19 pandemic, when the then opposition leader and now Premier offered unprecedented and bipartisan support, it showed the people of South Australia what a genuine opposition can do.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It showed the people of South Australia what a genuine opposition can do. Labor in opposition showed how constructive opposition can work to better the fortunes of South Australia, in a complete and utterly contrary manner to what we are seeing from the current opposition.

The now Leader of the Opposition, the member for Black, promised us all in May 2022 that they would let us know what the Liberal Party's vision was for South Australia, and this vision would be in step with the people of South Australia and what they want from an alternative government. Two years down the track and the question still remains: is there a vision? Are there policies? What does the alternative government actually stand for?

I dearly wish I could point to a single policy from the opposition that gives any indication about what they stand for. On health, they are blank; on housing, nothing; cost of living, zero; and on energy, no policy.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I thank the opposition for proving the point I am trying to make here very well. It is all yelling but no policy—not a tiny little bit.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is disappointing but not surprising that the Liberal Party is so utterly rudderless when it comes to policy. I do not like to give advice to the Liberal Party. I do not like to help them out.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: If I was taking this very narrowly, I would say it is not in our political interest to have an effective opposition, but that is not good for this state and that is not what I want for South Australia. I would like to see an opposition who has released a single policy. I would like to see an opposition who is effective. I think that is good for South Australia. Although it is not in our own narrow political interest, I think that is what South Australians deserve.

But it is not surprising. We have a Leader of the Opposition who does deals that are totally antipathetic to our state's interests, described in a royal commission on the Murray-Darling Basin as doing deals that are totally adverse to the interests of South Australia. So it is hardly surprising that, when you do not have the interests of South Australia at the forefront of your mind, you do not have a single policy for South Australians at all yet.

We have a Leader of the Opposition who capitulates, capitulates so severely to the Eastern States that a royal commission found he was almost certainly in breach of the Ministerial Code of Conduct. It is not a leader fit to provide the opposition that South Australia deserves, and it is not a leader that is fit to go to the 2026 election, who capitulates in such a way. South Australians deserve a choice. They want to have representatives who want more for our state and actually have a plan.

Under this Labor government, South Australians can see that we have a plan for this state. In our one full term in opposition this century, we laid out a positive plan. We were a constructive opposition that put ideas forward for South Australians. On the other hand, we have a so-called alternative government that is busy fighting against themselves.

We remember that, very recently, they fought a culture war against the former version of themselves. Who could forget the Liberal Party in the Legislative Council focusing so solely on the one issue they cared about, the thing that they were willing to go on the hill and die over—fighting against gender-neutral language in the standing orders—finding out that they had been beaten by their own former wizard of woke, Rob Lucas. They were fighting the ghost of Rob Lucas from 20 years ago, who had done the exact thing that they were willing us not to do. This is how focused the opposition are on themselves: fighting with the Hon. Rob Lucas from 20 years ago. It is hardly surprising that they have nothing to say about South Australia, hardly surprising at all.

This is a Liberal Party captained by the great capitulator, the great capitulator who so fundamentally misunderstands our century-old system of government that previously, when addressing a church congregation, he said, 'The idea of the separation of church and state—forget about it.' Forget about it—the idea of the separation of church and state. If only the Liberal Party were as passionate about upholding the fundamental pillars of democracy in the Westminster system, or even holding true to their core values that we saw way back in the last century, that they would not fight themselves from 20 years ago on standing orders.

This is a Liberal Party that we have seen in recent times completely steered and taken over by the anti-vaccination crew, who are all too happy to pick battles and stop the most senior woman in federal parliament—from the Liberal Party in SA—and be relegated under someone who leads the anti-vaccination political movement in South Australia.

Their Senate preselection process on the weekend tells you every single thing you need to know about why they are so unfit, so dramatically unfit, to even be an alternative government, let

alone be a government. It is a Liberal Party that so spectacularly failed in its duty and its promise to offer credible alternatives, to offer ideas, to offer policies, and to offer South Australians what they so deserve in an opposition, that we will be supporting this motion.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (17:35): I move to amend the motion:

Leave out all words after 'That this council calls on' and insert 'all parties and members to work hard to fulfil their obligations to the people of South Australia with dignity, prioritising the needs of our communities at all times.

I rise to very briefly speak on behalf of the opposition on a motion that is partisan, a motion that I do not believe is in the spirit of this place and a motion that, quite frankly, should make the people of South Australia concerned about the motives and priorities of One Nation and the Hon. Sarah Game in this state. This motion is juvenile and it is not fitting for any member in this chamber. We are privileged to stand in this place to represent those who provide us with an incredible opportunity, and for us to be wasting time on such a motion shows a lack of respect to this place and to the people of South Australia.

If the Hon. Ms Game knows anything about politics, she should know that political parties tend to consult with communities, they tend to consult with industry and they tend to consult with stakeholders before releasing policy, something I would suggest she does with her own water trading policy. It seems the member clearly does not understand the difference between water buybacks and water trading in the consumptive pool. I would suggest that she speaks to some stakeholders, as I have done, and I am sure many would be happy to speak to her to ensure that she understands this process.

The member alludes to the fact that I am down the corridor. My door is always open, but the member did not seek to walk down that corridor to my door to ask for my opinion and my advice on her water trading policy before putting it publicly into *The Murray Pioneer*. Yet, she has the audacity to accuse me of not consulting with her before responding to that public policy by the same means. This is an absolute nonsense motion, and we do not believe it is worthy of a vote.

As members of this place we should always be striving to lead by example, to create a positive vision for this state, to be constructive in our criticism, and to accept differing policy views. We need to be able to play the policy, not the person or the people. The Hon. Sarah Game and One Nation would do well to focus not on their own personal vendettas but on the real and pressing need of South Australians who she has been elected to represent here.

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (17:39): I rise to speak briefly today in favour of the Hon. Ms Game's motion, and I do so more in sorrow than in anger. The grand old Liberal Party has fallen on tough times and, 80 years after its founding, it looks little like the party that Sir Robert Menzies would recognise. In just the past few weeks, we have seen members opposite sink to new lows, casting aspersions under the cloak of parliamentary privilege, and the internal dramas that we have all come to expect have now blown up on the federal stage. The talented SA federal Liberal frontbencher, Anne Ruston, has been unceremoniously demoted to number two on their Senate ticket by a male colleague better known for his so-called recruitment than his policy acumen.

But I do rise in sorrow as the public of South Australia deserve better. They deserve better than the continual infighting that we have seen over decades within the Liberal Party. They deserve better than the lack of drive we see so often on the opposition benches, and they deserve better on the policy front, with little to see from those opposite. Fortunately, this Labor government continues to strive forward with an eye on the future for all South Australians. With big ideas, a raft of talent, and a dedication to serving the public of South Australia, this state under Labor is in good hands.

The Hon. J.E. HANSON (17:40): I rise to support a One Nation bill. I never thought I would actually be sitting here saying that.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.E. HANSON: A motion. That is very nice that they are paying attention on the other side; that is very good. Just two short years ago, three-quarters of the parliamentary Liberal Party downstairs voted to support its leader in the other place by a margin of 18 for the member for Black and six for the other male candidates. With its fairly, I think, pie in the sky promises of a fresh

and diverse attitude to leadership and a few jokes about maybe needing television subtitles to understand him, the Liberal Party cast itself into a fairly traditional mould, at least for this state, to serve for another term on the opposition benches.

Frankly, after two years, sadly I have to say, I am kind of pleasantly surprised by how things are going over there. If anyone has ever seen the film *Moneyball*, there is a quote in that film that I think bears some good listening to, and that is, when your opposition is making mistakes, do not interrupt them. They are giving you an out, say thank you. So I guess it behoves me right now to say, thanks, guys.

There is something very odd about wanting to be elected to get behind the wheel of our state but then taking your hands off that wheel in your approach to doing it. The comparison is pretty stark when you look at the preparation of Labor after two years in opposition, and the preparation of this Liberal Party as it stands right now. From health to education, public transport to water, the environment to energy, to even the very nature of who might actually get a say in this parliament, the Labor Party had announced policy while in opposition.

Two years out, we stood in this place and we said, 'We're ready.' There was no doubt in the community, we were ready. The Liberal Party as it stands right now cannot say the same. The Liberals are yet to release a policy on health—pretty critical that. Instead, their leader describes ramping as, quote, 'a political opportunity'. That is right: a political opportunity. Did he mean it? You bet he did. The opposition leader further said that Labor's policies of opening more beds and rebuilding the health system are probably wasted money—probably wasted money.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.E. HANSON: 'Ask any South Australian', says the Hon. Ms Lensink. What has changed? What has changed since the Liberals cut nurses and hospital funding when they were in government? Very little it seems. Worse than this, it is truly unclear what they actually do stand for. So in two years, the Liberals have opposed rental reform, education reforms and buybacks in water. The Liberals have opposed tax reform, opposed popular events like the Gather Round, LIV Golf or the Adelaide 500, and they said we could not hold Westfield to account for car parking in shopping centres.

Whatever it is, whatever the policy issue, it seems that the Liberal Party will be against our ideas. Apparently, sometimes they decide they are actually not that keen to do much of anything about it, unless of course it is a policy issue that provides them with a political opportunity. Indeed, as recently as this week, all other real issues of normal people aside, in the lead-up to a by-election no less, we see the Liberals openly fighting amongst themselves about positions on a Senate ticket.

It is bizarre that there are reports that the leader will put his job on the line over something as remote to the average South Australian's consciousness as a Senate ticket spot, but will not put his neck out for putting forward actual policy that his party can take to the people of this state.

The question is here. It has arrived in the minds of many, both in here and outside of here. What have the Liberal Party and its opposition leader actually been doing? South Australians know. We do not need a leader that sees political opportunities when confronted with genuine, meaningful problems like ramping, like people wondering where their children might live or how people will afford to feed their family.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.E. HANSON: You can hear them, Mr President—lots of opinion, no policy. You can hear them. We hear them here every day. The Leader of the Opposition is happy to say these problems are important, just like they are here. He is happy to admit that they are complex. But what would he do to address them? You know what? He does not know. He is actually not sure, which must be so deeply frustrating, so very deeply frustrating for those on the opposition benches who actually have ideas that they might otherwise seek an opportunity to put forward.

But ideas really are not this opposition's thing under the current leader. Does anyone think taking a hands-off approach to hands-on problems actually works? You cannot shrink your way to

growth, and you cannot hide your way into government, and if the Leader of the Opposition takes the Liberals to the next election—if he makes it that far—he will find that out for himself.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (17:46): I think I am going to be brutally blunt here. I must say I am disappointed and gobsmacked at the depths that this motion reaches. It is bizarre, it is embarrassing, it is puerile, mindless political sniping that achieves nothing and reflects badly on the already poor image of parliament, and on this chamber and its members, and on the other place. It serves no purpose, and I am sure the public of South Australia would be outraged listening to this debate and to the level it has descended to, wasting all our time when there are far more serious issues impacting on our community right now.

Cost of living is foremost in the minds of every Australian and South Australian families. They are our constituents who cannot afford to buy groceries, pay their rent or mortgages, fearful of the next power or water bill rolling up into their letterboxes. For young people, their dream of buying a home is now an impossible dream. Homelessness is at levels never before seen. There is a skill shortage, which means all those major projects that Labor keeps trumpeting about, like AUKUS, will be desperate to find qualified people to fill those crucial jobs.

Our health system is bursting at the seams and is on life support. Construction companies and small businesses are closing down or going broke. Just take the story of Sandip Silwal in today's *Advertiser*. He is so desperate to keep the doors open of his Italian restaurant, Rusco & Brusco on Magill Road, that he now has to do everything. He cooks, he serves, he washes the dishes just to try to keep those doors open.

Retailers and shopkeepers are in the grip of a shoplifting epidemic, something that I have not even seen in my years as a journalist or since serving in this place. There are problems in aged care. I could go on listing the most pressing things that are hurting South Australians right now. Do you really think they give a toss about what Ms Game thinks about the opposition's performance or even One Nation's Trumpian politics? 'Haven't they got anything better to discuss or debate instead of flinging mud at each other?' people would say listening to this debate today. Does the honourable member think she is the only one here pulling their weight?

Her motion is political grandstanding for the sake of getting in cheap shots and a headline or a spot on Sky. Then of course there are her cheerleaders gleefully throwing their grenades from the government benches. I just cannot believe the amount of air the Hon. Sarah Game blew into the tyres of the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis. There is so much air in there—or hydrogen maybe—that they would need to anchor him down so he does not float across South Australia.

I have often spoken about improving the standards of parliamentary conduct and trying to retain a skerrick of respect from the people we have been elected to serve. I feel honoured and proud to be in this position that carries great responsibility. I have always strived to do my best, representing the interests of South Australians and the constituents who seek my help when they have nowhere else to turn. Let me correct the honourable member in her speech. This is not a two-party system. There are actually two other parties in this place.

As I said, I just do not understand what the purpose of all this whining nitpicking is—you have to question the timing of it all with a by-election coming up—or just what her sulking words are all about. Perhaps there is a clue in those sulking words that she does not seem to see eye to eye with the Liberal Party.

I cannot support this motion. I would not have even supported if it was reversed and targeted at the Labor Party or the government. I just could not do that, simply because of the level that this place has descended to. All I can say is that, while I will not be supporting the motion, I will support the Liberal one because that is what we are trying to achieve in this place: a level of conduct to win back the respect of the people of South Australia.

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (17:51): I was not going to speak today, but I find myself ever so wanting to. I guess we have spoken a lot today about policies and directions that a government can take when leaders take bold decisions—bold decisions like creating a position for the assistant minister to be a world leader, having a role that is not in any other government anywhere else in the world. You would think that would be something that would be celebrated. In South Australia we have

a government that is willing to focus on the largest disability group in our state, where we have the largest autistic community anywhere in our country as a proportion. Unfortunately, that is not reflected by this opposition.

In an interview, the leader of the Liberal Party in the other house said very clearly that it is virtue signalling when you do things like creating the role of Assistant Minister for Autism. He said, 'You know...the idea that governments pick certain things to appease a particular cohort of people.' Particularly trying to appease a cohort of people who are the largest disability group in our state is not what I would say is virtue signalling, but that is what the leader of the Liberal Party said.

Further, he says, 'it is the responsibility of education and the education minister and to an extent the health minister and the disability minister'. His thinking that it is the education minister's responsibility to support the autistic community really does show that this is a person who does not understand the autistic community. You are born autistic, and you will pass away autistic. It is beyond the role of the education minister. He further goes on to suggest, 'But the idea that we have one minister for that doesn't sit with me particularly comfortably, and that's why I haven't reflected that in my shadow ministry.'

So to the autistic community I say that the Leader of the Opposition does not think this role should be here and that they should not have a voice in the community. I think everyone here should be very concerned that we have been able to become a nation leader, a world leader, in what we have been able to achieve for the autistic community here but that we have an opposition that does not think it should exist.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (17:54): I rise very briefly to support this motion. I note that it calls on the Liberal Party to be a legitimate opposition. I observe that in this place we spent countless hours wasting time, I believe, because of lies told to the community about Australia Day and ANZAC Day supposedly being cancelled by previous legislation of this place when it was patently not cancelled.

Indeed, I note the words of the Leader of the Government in this place who reflected on the angst this caused with the RSL, particularly in late December and January just past, in the summer break. Minister Maher spoke to the President of the RSL in South Australia, Mr Dave Petersen, who had spoken also on radio talking about his frustration that veterans were calling him late into the night thinking that ANZAC Day had actually been completely cancelled. When it was explained to the RSL and Mr Petersen what had actually happened, he then posted on the RSL website:

The new legislation, despite suggestions otherwise, was not intended to, and did not, strip ANZAC Day of its name. Rather the legislation is for the administration of public holidays regarding industrial relations law (i.e. how much someone gets paid for working on ANZAC Day).

The RSL's attempts to console their members—because they would have been rightly outraged had we in this parliament somehow cancelled ANZAC Day—needed to be even further clarified by this parliament revisiting that legislation to give comfort to the public of South Australia that the Liberal Party's lies over summer were not true. So if you want to talk in this place about wasting parliament's time that is my first example that leads me to give support to this motion today.

The second example is the so-called picnic tax. I have read out in this place the letters from Judy Potter, the chair of the Botanic Gardens relevant body—I cannot remember the exact title of that—

The Hon. I.K. Hunter: Board.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: Thank you, the Hon. Ian Hunter—the chair of the Botanic Gardens board, who wrote not once but twice to the member for Bragg asking him to literally stop lying and saying there was going to be a picnic tax when there was never going to be a picnic tax, again causing fear and trepidation in the community through illegitimate means.

I note also that it is hard to tell the difference these days between the Liberal opposition and One Nation at the best of times, with not just the wizard of woke, who got rid of gender-neutral language some decades ago, the Hon. Rob Lucas, but all sorts of shenanigans where they are far less likely to talk about the cost of living than they are to be talking about culture wars. It is hard to

recognise the moderates in this Liberal Party that we find before us, and certainly those days of talking about a blue-green alliance are long gone.

I note also the resignation from the Liberal Party in the other place of the member for MacKillop, citing dark factional forces, and I ask the Liberal opposition in this place whether those dark factional forces are a useful thing to bring to the floor of parliament or whether they are better kept in the back rooms of the Liberal Party machine.

It is a strange sort of machine right now. I make no comment on whether or not Senator Alex Antic or Senator Anne Ruston are at the top of the ticket. That is for the Liberal Party to decide in their wisdom. It was done through democratic means. But what I would say is that we have spent a lot of time talking about these things and very little time talking about policy in the Dunstan by-election.

I would love to have seen the Liberal Party back the Greens' call for the Kent Town pocket park, which would be the only piece of green space for the residents of Kent Town, who are closed in on all sides by a lack of green space and are desperately calling for all political parties to quarantine that little bit of Bureau of Meteorology land to give them some space so that they can have a bit of shade, give their children somewhere to crawl or toddle on the grass, and enjoy what nature has to offer in that particular part of the electorate. But no, for the seat of Dunstan, what we have seen in this place is the tabling of the Labor candidate's personal Gmail correspondence between herself and her husband. That was certainly, I think, not a legitimate political tactic.

I also call out and note that in conversations about whether or not the Greens should support this motion, I was asked whether we would support a similar motion on the Labor Party. I point to, and I can see, two members here on whom I have voted no-confidence motions: three times for one member and one time for the other member. It is time now to co-design a new engagement paradigm and bring the standards of this place up to ensure that picnic tax lies, ANZAC Day lies and lies about supposed culture war intentions of benign pieces of legislation are no longer the standard debate in this place and that we get back to the business of things like the cost of living and the climate crisis.

With that, the Greens will support the motion, strange as that may sound. The wording of the motion is something that we can see our way clear to supporting because, at the moment, the Liberals are not a legitimate opposition. It does not reflect, of course, on the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, who is currently one of the few Liberal members of parliament who I do have a reasonable amount of respect for. It does, however, reflect on the way that this Liberal opposition is currently operating with other members of this parliament, and so I think it is a legitimate wake-up call.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Game to conclude the debate.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: Sorry, I am not listed to speak.

The PRESIDENT: No, you are not listed.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: Well, I would like to.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Bonaros.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (18:01): Thank you, Mr President. I note that I did not get the same reception that the Hon. Tammy Franks just received when she stood on her feet to speak, but I thank you again for the opportunity.

I start by saying that anything we say today in this place in response to this motion, from where I sit, pales into insignificance compared to the headlines that we have seen in recent days involving the Liberal Party during a by-election for a seat that I consider the Liberals desperately need to keep hold of. It pales into insignificance compared to some of the comments that have been made publicly by members of the Liberal Party amongst their own members. I, like the Hon. Tammy Franks, make no judgement about who takes what preselection in the Liberal Party—that is a matter for the Liberal Party—but I do note that, once again, we have this ventilation of those issues at the worst possible time.

I will say at the outset—and I am making these comments listening to what other honourable members have said—that I, for one, have enjoyed a strong working relationship with the Leader of

the Opposition in this place, just as I have a strong working relationship with the Leader of the Government in this place. I have not taken that for granted at all, and I do not intend to take that for granted.

I would be lying if I said—and the record speaks for itself—that I have not come in here time and time and time again to ventilate my frustrations with the Liberal Party, not as the Liberal Party but as the opposition that we have before us. I think I did so when we first came to this place after the election and we lost a Liberal member from the floor of this place. I think I did that again in recent months when we debated the university merger. I think I did it again when we debated the Supreme Court bill. I think I did it again—in fact I do not think, I know I did it again and again—when we debated IR laws.

I did it again when we copped the flak for changes to the Public Holidays Act and changes to the picnic tax, based on so-called facts that were aired publicly by the Liberal Party, which I know I had to defend—and the Hon. Tammy Franks also said she had to defend—publicly because our position in here was misconstrued by the Liberal Party. I do not have to agree with the reasons the mover of this amendment has put this motion. In fact, I support the Leader of the Opposition's position when it comes to water entitlements and I think that is a good position to hold. I do not have to agree with her motives for moving this motion. I certainly do not have to agree that we come in here all the time using our time wisely.

If we refer and reflect back on the debate that happened all of two weeks ago, there was a line-up of members opposite who were willing to have a crack over changes that we made. I think one of the members during that time heard from me what I thought about her comments in relation to the way she refers to people in this place, but there was a line-up of speakers who were willing to misconstrue our positions when it came to the public holiday debate, a debate again that we had to publicly defend outside of this place. There was no mention then of the time that was taken in this place.

The reality is that this is politics. We come in here, and we do not all share the same ideologies. The only partisanship that exists is when we put our minds together and come together on good, meaningful reforms. Aside from that, yes, we share different ideologies and do not always agree. It would be absolutely naive of any of us to come in here and say that we support or do not support this motion for reasons based on partisanship. This is, after all, politics. I do not share, obviously, the views of the mover in relation to issues she has ventilated today around the Voice or water buybacks—I do in terms of the water register amendments we put through. Everyone has a different position in this place.

But do I think we have had an effective opposition in the state? It has been hard work with the opposition in this state since this government took power. There is no denying that. I have said that this Premier rules with an iron fist. I have said that in this place time and again—he does. This is a well-oiled machine, and it is hard to get traction when you are working in this environment and do not as a crossbencher and an opposition come together on issues. That has been reflected in this place through the votes time and again.

It would not be fair of me to stand up and say that I think we have had an effective opposition, because many of the things we lose on each and every day stem from the fact that we simply cannot get them through this place with the numbers that we need to get them through. Notwithstanding that, I make the point that I appreciate the leader's position in this debate, but this is, after all, politics.

I point to the fact that we have a by-election going on at the moment, and what was a Liberal seat is up for grabs. In the moment that you would think we would see some unity from the opposition and some rallying together, the headlines have been nothing but. From where I sit that is disappointing. It is disappointing that we have these issues time and again being aired publicly in the way that they have been at the expense of someone I consider to be a candidate who probably would make a good member in parliament. All that is overshadowed by what we have become used to, and that is a lot of infighting at the expense of, sometimes, what I consider to be good public policy.

I note that the honourable member is moving an amendment to this and I note again for the record that I do not see this motion as an affront to the Leader of the Opposition in this place or the working relationship that many of us have shared with her, but my position in relation to that

amendment—and I will make that clear now before we get to it—is simply that I will not be voting on the amendment. I will choose to abstain from voting on that amendment today. I make that clear for the record now. The rest will be what it will be.

The Hon. S.L. GAME (18:10): Thank you to the honourable members who contributed. I just want to comment briefly on some of those contributions. Regarding the contribution from the Hon. Frank Pangallo about this being a waste of time, I do feel that I need to state that the Hon. Frank Pangallo has almost wiped out the entire parliament by keeping us here for many hours, away from our families and almost non-functional the next day, so I do take objection to the fact that I cannot air my concern about such an important topic as ensuring we have democracy and a viable opposition.

The Hon. Frank Pangallo also stated that there are more important issues, such as cost of living, the housing crisis and so on. I do agree that they are very important issues. They require members to fully fulfil their role in this place, which is why I brought the motion forward. I thank the Labor government for expressing their shared concern.

To the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, I would say that it makes me sad actually to see hurt feelings. That is never the goal, but I will say that it does seem there is one rule for the Liberal Party and one rule for everyone else. The Liberals have thought nothing of isolating One Nation when they should be collaborating for the public interest. I would ask the Liberal Party to make clear their position for the public on repealing the State Voice were they to obtain government, because that is not clear from my consultations. I hope that we can see the Liberal Party pick themselves up, carry on and improve.

The council divided on the amendment:

Ayes7
 Noes.....9
 Majority2

AYES

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

Girolamo, H.M.
 Lee, J.S.

Henderson, L.A.
 Lensink, J.M.A.

NOES

Bourke, E.S.
 Hanson, J.E.
 Martin, R.B.

El Dannawi, M.
 Hunter, I.K.
 Ngo, T.T.

Game, S.L. (teller)
 Maher, K.J.
 Wortley, R.P.

PAIRS

Hood, B.R.

Scriven, C.M.

Amendment thus negatived.

The council divided on the motion:

Ayes12
 Noes.....7
 Majority5

AYES

Bonaros, C.
 Franks, T.A.
 Hunter, I.K.
 Ngo, T.T.

Bourke, E.S.
 Game, S.L. (teller)
 Maher, K.J.
 Simms, R.A.

El Dannawi, M.
 Hanson, J.E.
 Martin, R.B.
 Wortley, R.P.

NOES

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

Girolamo, H.M.
Lee, J.S.

Henderson, L.A.
Lensink, J.M.A.

PAIRS

Scriven, C.M.

Hood, B.R.

Motion thus carried.

Bills

**STATUTES AMENDMENT (NATIONAL ENERGY LAWS) (WHOLESALE MARKET
MONITORING) BILL**

Introduction and First Reading

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

At 18:23 the council adjourned until Thursday 21 March 2024 at 14:15.

*Answers to Questions***HOMESTART**

323 The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (7 February 2024). Can the Treasurer advise:

1. How many HomeStart reverse mortgages were applied for in 2022 and 2023?
2. How many HomeStart reverse mortgages were approved in 2022 and 2023?
3. How many HomeStart reverse mortgages fell into arrears at some point 2022 and 2023?
4. How many HomeStart reverse mortgages began recovery action for default in 2022 and 2023?
5. How many HomeStart reverse mortgages have completed recovery action in 2022 and 2023?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

1.

Calendar Year	Application Submitted
2022	150
2023	256

2.

Calendar Year	Approved	Settled
2022	139	132
2023	232	220

3. HomeStart's 'reverse mortgages' are known as the Seniors Equity Loan, and available for borrowers aged over 60. These loans cannot fall into arrears as repayments are voluntary. A borrower can choose to make repayments at any time, or defer repayment until the house is sold, the last borrower moves out, or passes away. HomeStart's Seniors Equity Loan has a 'no negative equity guarantee' which means the loan balance cannot exceed the value of the property.

4. Four.

Recovery action for default is typically only required for a Seniors Equity Loan where the executor of a deceased estate fails to take the appropriate steps to pay the debts of the estate.

5. One.

AUTISM INCLUSION TEACHERS

325 The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (7 February 2024). Can the Minister for Education, Training and Skills advise:

1. At the beginning of term 4 2023 how many schools did not have an autism inclusion teacher?
2. Please provide a table by 'region' of the schools without an autism inclusion teacher at the beginning of term 4 2023.
3. At the end of term 4 2023 how many schools did not have an autism inclusion teacher?
4. Please provide a table by 'region' of the schools without an autism inclusion teacher at the end of term 4 2023.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Minister for Education, Training and Skills has advised:

1. Autism inclusion teachers (AIT) were appointed to all but two schools during 2023. As with many school-based roles, schools experience vacancies during the year, which meant supporting the onboarding of new AITs throughout 2023.

Ceduna Area School and Koonibba Area School were the only primary schools that did not have an AIT at some point during 2023 school year.

Noting the normal variances experienced throughout the year, there were five schools that did not have an AIT specifically at the start of term 4 (week 1).

2.

Education Portfolio	Schools without an AIT Week 1 Term 4
Gawler 2	Blyth Primary School
Murraylands	Mypolonga Primary School
Noarlunga 3	Pt Noarlunga Primary School
Port Lincoln 2	Ceduna Area School Koonibba Area School

3. As with question 1, there were only two primary schools that did not have an AIT at some point during the 2023 school year.

Noting the normal variances experienced with workforce changes, there were four schools that did not have an AIT at the end of term 4 (week 10).

4.

Education Portfolio	Schools without an AIT Week 10 Term 4
Gawler 2	Blyth Primary School
Noarlunga 3	Pt Noarlunga Primary School
Port Lincoln 2	Ceduna Area School Koonibba Area School

PAYROLL TAX

329 The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (22 February 2024). Can the Treasurer advise:

1. Has the Treasurer received any advice or modelling regarding extra revenue the new treatment of payroll tax on contractor general practitioners will generate for the state government?

2. If advice or modelling regarding the new treatment of payroll tax on contractor GPs was received, how much revenue is expected to be generated for the state government?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised

I have not received any advice or modelling regarding extra revenue of payroll tax on contracted general practitioners will generate for the state government.

The current payroll tax legislation has been in place for over 15 years and there is no new treatment of payroll tax on contractors, including to general practitioners.

PAYROLL TAX

330 The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (22 February 2024). Can the Minister for Health and Wellbeing advise:

1. How many general practices in South Australia are currently paying payroll tax?

2. How many additional general practices will be required to pay payroll tax after the one-year amnesty ends following the 2023-24 financial year?

3. How many general practices in South Australia successfully signed up for the payroll tax amnesty and will any be required to pay payroll tax retrospectively?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

There are approximately 100 general practices paying payroll tax currently.

I am advised that 283 medical practices have applied for the amnesty.

Medical practices that successfully applied for the amnesty will not be required to pay payroll tax retrospectively on contracted general practitioners.