

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

### Wednesday, 17 September 2025

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*

#### PAPERS

The following paper was laid on the table:

By the President—

Judicial Conduct Commissioner—Report, 2024-25  
[Ordered to be published]

*Parliamentary Committees*

#### PRINTING COMMITTEE AND PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:17):** I bring up the joint report of the Legislative Council Printing Committee and the House of Assembly Publishing Committee.

Report received.

*Question Time*

#### TABLED DOCUMENTS

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:18):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs regarding tabled information in the Legislative Council.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** On 19 August, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs tabled a document in this place containing inaccurate information about plankton counts. That error was only identified after media questioning and a second document had to be tabled on 2 September correcting the record, citing administrative error and human error in the collation and recording of data.

Yesterday, both Minister Scriven and the Attorney-General himself stood in this chamber and stressed the importance of accurate, factual and truthful information being provided to parliament, parliamentary committees and the public. So my questions to the Attorney are:

1. How does the Attorney reconcile his own statements about the importance of accuracy with the fact that his government tabled documents—in fact, he tabled documents—in this place that were just plainly wrong?
2. Will the Attorney apologise for misleading the parliament and the people of South Australia?
3. As accuracy is critical, will he also apply the same standards to himself and accept responsibility for tabling false information?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:19):** I thank the honourable

member for her question and the invitation to point out the very, very stark difference between what this government has done and the actions of the Hon. Frank Pangallo, the very, very stark difference, when government officers from PIRSA prepare a report and an individual public sector officer makes a mistake in some way in how it is done. We value the public sector, unlike those opposite, as compared to what appears to have happened with the Hon. Frank Pangallo, who deliberately made things up. There were things that were tabled—

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** Point of order.

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Mr Pangallo has a point of order. We are obviously having a few issues with the clock at the moment, so we will work around that.

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** That is just untrue, absolutely untrue.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** I am just asking the Attorney to withdraw that remark. There is no evidence of that all. No evidence at all. It's his opinion.

**The PRESIDENT:** Attorney, have you finished your answer to the question?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER:** No, sir, I certainly have not, because I think this is a very important issue that's raised. The Hon. Frank Pangallo has been asked to clarify where these documents that he gave Budget and Finance can be found. It appears one of them—because the author of one of them has been contacted and that author said they never wrote anything of the sort. So how you can not describe that as just made up is beyond me, is clearly beyond me.

You have a departmental officer from the public sector whose work we value, unlike many of those from the opposite side, making some sort of administrative error compared to making up a reference that the author said doesn't even exist. It is stark, dramatic, worlds apart in these things.

#### TABLED DOCUMENTS

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:22):** Supplementary.

**The PRESIDENT:** It is going to be challenging for me to rule on a supplementary question when I could barely hear any of the answer because of the loud interjections. Have a go at it, and I will see if I can allow it.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** Does the Attorney believe members of parliament are unable to correct the record?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:22):** No, that is a very good supplementary. I think members of parliament should correct the record, and if members of parliament have just made it up—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER:** —they should say so.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER:** If they just made it up, they should get up and say, 'Look, I made it up. I had no idea what I was talking about, and I just made it up.' If that's what they have done they should absolutely get up there and do that. It is fundamental that they do that.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER:** It is fundamental that they do that. So, yes, I completely agree: if members of parliament have just made it up they should correct the record. The alternative is that—here's what else they could do—when they are held to account they could duck and weave. They could hide in their room. They could be nowhere to be found. They could refuse to give an interview. So, yes, there are very different options that you can do.

#### TABLED DOCUMENTS

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (14:23):** Supplementary: does the Attorney admit his error, as outlined by the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, and will he apologise for it?

**The PRESIDENT:** I am not sure that the Attorney—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Excuse me, just hang on. I am not sure that the Attorney actually referred to that at all in his answer, but then I couldn't really be sure as to exactly what was said because of the shouting and screaming.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:23):** When something is tabled and there has been an error by someone in the public sector that they have notified I am happy to come in and make sure that's corrected. That is very different to a member of parliament making something up—having an author say, 'I have never authored a paper that someone's referred to.'

They are stark, stark differences, and I thank the Hon. Dennis Hood for allowing me the opportunity to reiterate that. I am not sure what he has got against the Hon. Frank Pangallo that he wants me to stand up and say it again, but there are stark differences. When a member of parliament may have just made it up they should man up and say so.

#### PRIVACY BREACHES

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:24):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General about egregious privacy breaches by his government.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** In March of this year the Hon. Frank Pangallo asked the Attorney-General a series of questions about a report by the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal, tabled by the Attorney in this place and by Deputy Premier Dr Susan Close in the other place in November 2023. As a direct result of the tabling of that report, it has been strongly argued to the opposition that it was obvious that neither the Attorney-General nor the Deputy Premier had read the document, nor were aware of the damaging contents, as neither would have been tabled if they had read those documents and thus discovered the significant privacy breaches.

In error, the names of more than 20 legal practitioners, whose matters either had not been heard or finalised, were published for all the world to see, when they should have been kept confidential rather than breaching their privacy. Unfortunately, this serious breach had implications. The then presiding member of the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal, Maurine Pyke KC, admitted to the error and requested an inquiry, and significantly and very unusually that the report be, and I quote, 'uplifted', but the damage was done.

Whilst the Attorney-General and the Deputy Premier may claim this to be another administrative error, it is by any measure a very grave one, where neither the Attorney nor the government has yet to account for or give even a partially satisfactory justification for this serious privacy breach a full six months later. My questions to the Attorney are:

1. Why has the Attorney not yet explained how this serious error in breaching confidentiality and privacy occurred, despite the passage of a full six months?
2. Has the Attorney carried out an inquiry as requested, and when can we expect that report?

3. Has the Attorney or the Deputy Premier apologised to those legal practitioners who have been embarrassed by his and Dr Close's serious blunder?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:26):** When I am provided documents to table, I tend not to remove pages from them. What I don't do either is make things up. This again stands in stark contrast. There is a report—and I can see what they are doing. Do you know what? I don't often praise—

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** Point of order: we are 10 minutes in, we have people sleeping on the street and an algal bloom that is destroying our state; is this really the number one issue of discussion for the day? Relevance, Mr President?

**The PRESIDENT:** I am sorry, but that's not a point of order.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER:** I do take the Hon. Robert Simms' point, and I will be very brief on this. I don't often congratulate or pay tribute to members opposite, but I will acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition for her attempts to run a protection racket for the Hon. Frank Pangallo, to try to cover up his mistakes, to try to divert attention from them. I think it is a very honourable thing to do. While for 24 hours the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Hartley, has been ducking and weaving, I think it's admirable that the leader here is trying to at least protect the Hon. Frank. Pangallo and protect the member for Hartley.

We saw this yesterday, and, again, I will not often pay credit, but we saw the Hon. Ben Hood yesterday—and again I will pay credit to the Hon. Ben Hood for fronting the media when the Hon. Frank Pangallo and the member for Hartley refused to. They were in hiding. The Hon. Ben Hood couldn't answer questions about having talked with the Hon. Frank Pangallo, but I congratulate him for giving it a go.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Your next question, the honourable Leader of the Opposition.

#### SARDI FISH DEATHS

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:28):** I seek leave to provide a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries about the fish deaths at the South Australian Aquatic Sciences Centre.

Leave granted.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** Oh, not sure those emails are suggesting that.

**The PRESIDENT:** Leader of the Opposition, ask your question.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** In February of this year, this chamber resolved that there should be an independent investigation into the fish deaths at the South Australian Aquatic Sciences Centre, at arm's length from potential government influence. On 3 September this year—and I implore the minister to note that date—the opposition received FOI documents, which revealed internal departmental emails suggesting significant alterations to the government's own investigative report, which was quietly dropped on the Friday afternoon of Gather Round.

Internal departmental email conversations reveal the initial draft, written by SARDI scientists, suspected dredging was the cause of the fish mortalities. That draft was then circulated to DEW and the EPA seeking feedback and contribution, with the final version coming to a completely different conclusion than the initial investigative report. FOI requests for earlier drafts of this report—there are six of them—have been refused, citing cabinet-in-confidence. My questions to the minister are:

1. Why are drafts of an investigative report, of which the final was released publicly, deemed cabinet-in-confidence?

2. If indeed the alterations were simply addressing additional information or spellchecks, as the minister has stated on radio, why won't the minister release those previous drafts of the investigative report if there is nothing to hide?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:30):** I thank the honourable member for her question. Again, we see this whole theme of conspiracy theories which is obviously spreading from the Hon. Frank Pangallo. We have conspiracy theories from the Hon. Nicola Centofanti now—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** —as well as the Hon. Frank Pangallo. If the opposition is saying that the policy across government should be that cabinet-in-confidence documents are not in confidence and they are willing to open up all of their cabinet documents from when they were in government, then let's hear that as their policy.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The Hon. Ms Girolamo, the Hon. Mr Hunter, let's listen to the minister.

**The Hon. K.J. Maher:** He is okay.

**The PRESIDENT:** Attorney, come on.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Attorney! I am listening to the minister. Come on.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** So if those opposite suggest that documents should not be cabinet-in-confidence then I assume they are going to be quite willing to open up their four years in government of cabinet documents.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I do appreciate that apart from one of the members opposite, none of those opposite have ever been in government as ministers so they don't necessarily understand the process of getting documents to cabinet. Cabinet-in-confidence means that they are going to cabinet and they are in confidence. The name does certainly give a hint.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Enough! Finish your answer, let's move on.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I suggest that those opposite should stop searching for conspiracy theories and start focusing on the big issues.

### SARDI FISH DEATHS

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:32):** Supplementary: can the minister outline whether it is possible for cabinet to release cabinet-in-confidence documents should they so choose?

**The PRESIDENT:** We did talk about cabinet-in-confidence documents so I will allow the supplementary.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! You can answer it how you see fit and then we are moving on to the Hon. Mr Wortley.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:33):** My understanding is there are extremely rare circumstances where someone such as, I think, the Auditor-General can request this. But my question is: are those opposite suggesting that all cabinet-in-confidence documents should cease to be so and, if not, why not? They could ask, 'What have they got to hide?'

**BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (14:33):** My question, much to the horror of the Hon. Mr Robert Simms, is to the Hon. Frank Pangallo.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY:** It is standing order 107. Will the honourable member explain: is it an administrative error to give a parliamentary committee a reference to an academic paper which the purported author has confirmed doesn't exist?

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Mr Pangallo, if you choose to answer it you can.

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:33):** I note that the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis now calls me a 'rogue'. Being called a rogue by Tom Koutsantonis is like me calling him George Clooney—or is it Looney? Here is what we are getting from Labor: it is just nasty, lying, bullying Labor. Watch the news tonight.

**NATIONAL CLIMATE RISK ASSESSMENT**

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:34):** Sorry to draw the chamber's attention away from the riveting issues of documents. I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question without notice to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development regarding the National Climate Risk Assessment.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** This week, Australia's first National Climate Risk Assessment was published. It warns of widespread impacts from sea level rise, an increase in heatwave deaths, and major impacts to nature, even under a best-case scenario. The report identified six nationally significant climate risks for primary industries and food. These include reduced crop productivity, negative impact on animal welfare and livestock operations, localised food insecurity, and migration away from high-risk regions. The federal climate change minister, Chris Bowen, has said:

One thing that is very clear from this climate assessment is that our whole country has a lot at stake.

The cost of inaction will always outweigh the cost of action.

My question to the minister, therefore, is: given the impact on South Australian regions, has the minister read the National Climate Risk Assessment report and if not, why not? Will her government finally commit to axing all subsidies to the fossil fuel industry?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:35):** I thank the honourable member for his question. The National Climate Risk Assessment report he mentioned came out, I think, earlier this week—maybe yesterday or the day before yesterday. No, I haven't read it at this time. What I can say, though, is that we have a very significant dedication to reducing emissions in pursuit of reducing the climate challenges that we currently face.

I think I have spoken before in this place, for example, about the net zero emissions agriculture projects. A total of \$8.4 million over five years was committed towards new research, development and extension initiatives that will deliver solutions towards a net zero agriculture future. As part of that particular initiative, SARDI is involved in research and development in methane mitigation in livestock and agronomic practices to reduce emissions and improve carbon sequestration.

SARDI is also working with industry partners, such as farming groups and agtech startups, to pilot and test innovative technologies or practices at research centres or on private farms. It is participating in research and extension projects as a tier 2 partner in the net zero emissions from the Agriculture CRC and working with the Grains Research Development Corporation (GRDC) to develop and implement a low emissions intensity farming systems initiative.

SARDI is also investigating partnerships with research and development corporations and other research organisations or private technology enterprises to leverage specialised expertise in allied research and development areas, such as remote sensing, machine learning and AI. That

particular net zero agriculture initiative is expected to leverage commonwealth and industry contributions as well.

I use that as an example of the commitment towards addressing the climate challenges that we have. I would also like to emphasise that a number of the agricultural peak bodies are also doing work in this space. We are very pleased to be able to partner with them, either directly or indirectly, in many of their initiatives, as well as trials.

#### **JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LEGALISATION OF MEDICINAL CANNABIS**

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:38):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Leader of the Government, both as that and in his role as the industrial relations minister, on the topic of response to the interim report of the Joint Committee on the Legalisation of Medicinal Cannabis.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS:** The interim report of the Joint Committee on the Legalisation of Medicinal Cannabis was now tabled over a year ago, on 12 September. It had many recommendations that covered areas of health, transport and IR of particular significance to those in our community who are patients who require medicinal cannabis, often to keep their jobs or to get to their jobs, or indeed simply to function and have quality of life. My questions to the government are:

1. Why has the government not yet responded to this important committee and given feedback on the recommendations?
2. Have you or your department prepared a response with regard to the industrial relations recommendations in that report?
3. How much longer do patients in this state have to wait for the Malinauskas government to give them the supports that they deserve?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:39):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I don't have the information on me about where any government response is specifically up to. Much of that falls outside my portfolio, but I will take that on notice to bring back a response for the honourable member.

I do note and appreciate the honourable member's leadership in this role. I know with the former Labor government under Premier Jay Weatherill there were some nation-leading reforms that the honourable member helped to spearhead, both in the use of medicinal cannabis in South Australia and also the use of textile and building materials with industrial hemp. I am happy to follow up and find out where that's up to.

#### **SARDI FISH DEATHS**

**The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:40):** My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries about fish deaths at the SA Aquatic Sciences Centre. Can the minister categorically rule out dredging conducted under the Adelaide Beach Management Review as being responsible for the fish deaths at the SA Aquatic Sciences Centre? Yes or no?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:40):** There is no direct evidence linking the two, and I refer the honourable member to my multiple answers on this topic previously, as well as the report.

#### **SARDI FISH DEATHS**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:40):** Supplementary.

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

**The PRESIDENT:** Attorney!

**The Hon. K.J. Maher:** It's going to be difficult.

**The PRESIDENT:** Attorney! How about I adjudicate on this? I will listen to the supplementary question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Ask your supplementary question and I will listen to it.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** How can the minister be confident in her answer and say there is no direct evidence linking the dredging trial and the fish deaths when her department didn't test water quality for hydrogen sulphide?

**The PRESIDENT:** Not even close to a supplementary question.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** May I answer it anyway, Mr President?

**The PRESIDENT:** Well, answer it, minister.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:41):** These matters have been well aerated during the many, many months that the opposition has been raising this. We know that they are seeking to have some kind of conspiracy uncovered, but we also know that they don't need evidence. They think it's fine to come to a conclusion without evidence.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I guess, very similar to the Hon. Frank Pangallo, they would like to just make up the evidence, but they are not doing that. Acknowledging there is no direct evidence, they say, 'Doesn't matter there is no direct evidence. We think it was it anyway.'

#### TABLED DOCUMENTS

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON (14:42):** Pursuant to standing order 107, my question is to the Hon. Frank Pangallo. Will the honourable member explain the relevance of a document he tabled yesterday, which was entitled 'A review of harmful algal blooms (HABs) and their potential impacts on desalination facilities', given that this is the opposite situation to his claim that the desalination plants have impacts on algal blooms?

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:42):** Gladly, I will explain it.

**The Hon. K.J. Maher:** Are you going to get ChatGPT to do that?

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** Again, it shows that neither of you have even read the *Hansard* to see the transcript of that hearing, where in fact I actually asked twice—twice, I asked—the PIRSA officials that were there, that in fact algal blooms do have an impact on the operations of desal plants and can cause damage. So my response to you is: you, Mr Koutsantonis, Mr Maher—

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Mr Maher.

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** —instead of coming up with your confected questions at something that is so trivial, read the *Hansard*. Same for the minister: read the *Hansard*.

#### TABLED DOCUMENTS

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON (14:43):** Supplementary: is it the Hon. Mr Pangallo's position that the documents he tabled back up his claims?

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:43):** What claims?

#### NATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA BAN

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:43):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney questions regarding not algal bloom, but the enforcement of the national social media ban.

Leave granted.



**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** There was a media release—I think it was yesterday—attributed to the Premier, on the eSafety Commissioner's guidance and expectations for platforms to comply with the federal ban on under 16s accessing social media. The release makes note that this is an initiative of our own state government's design, quoting:

Last year, the Malinauskas Labor Government released a report outlining its plans to implement a social media ban for children in South Australia—and made the case for nationally consistent legislation.

That is something which I supported, for the record. ABC News reports that under these rules, social media companies will be required to take reasonable steps to prevent under 16s from having accounts, and it will be left to the platforms to verify age and manage compliance. As highlighted in the ABC's analysis, there are serious questions about whether relying on the companies themselves is sufficient, particularly given their past record on safety, privacy and enforcement. As such, my questions to the Attorney are:

1. What oversight or enforcement powers is the government intending to exercise to ensure they actually comply with the new minimum age rules?
2. If penalties fail to prevent underage users from gaining access, what penalties or consequences will apply, and which authority will actually be responsible for holding them to account?
3. Should South Australian parents and young people hold confidence that this law can actually genuinely protect children online, as opposed to simply outsource that responsibility to multinational platforms which, for the record, have patchy records on compliance?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:46):** I thank the honourable member for her question, and it is indeed a good question. I might take a little bit of time going through the history of this and South Australia's involvement, and then talk a bit more about my understanding—and I am happy to bring back further information if I need to add to it—of how the federal ban will work and, in particular, the reason why, the platform's involvement and the duty of care that's created for them.

Certainly, it's something that we led in South Australia. The Premier announced that we were interested in looking at restricting young people's access to social media. I think it was rightly pointed out that our current generation of young people are having an unprecedented experiment upon them in terms of what social media does, how it's used, how the algorithms keep feeding addictions or a continued use of social media, and some of the very harmful effects social media has on young people.

As a government, we were very honoured that former Chief Justice of the High Court, Robert French, now at the University of Western Australia, agreed to provide a report on how a ban might look and the law around regulation of social media in jurisdictions in other places around the world. From memory, the report was a couple of hundred pages long. The former Chief Justice had finished the report and I had the opportunity at the time to have a meeting with him to go through what was being suggested in the report. It is an exceptionally thorough piece of work. It is probably one of the best texts and references on the law in relation to social media produced in Australia.

What the Chief Justice looked at was how such regulation might be enforced. One option is to have government mandate how you restrict access to social media. I don't think governments have always had the best track record at trying to stay ahead of technological developments in these rapidly developing areas. What was suggested by the former Chief Justice was the creation of a duty of care to these platforms not to have children use them, to put it on them to find the ways, the technologies, and the means to stop children using them, and then have very significant penalties if those outlets breached that duty of care.

South Australia having commissioned the report, the Premier was very keen to see if it's something that wanted to be taken up federally, and we are very pleased that this is a suggestion that has been taken up by the federal government in a pretty similar way, as I understand the working of the legislation. I think, from memory, it comes into effect maybe 10 December in Australia. As had been suggested by the former Chief Justice, it creates that duty of care.

It is not a government mandating: this is how you have to stop young people accessing social media. You create that duty of care for the platforms to make sure that they don't and, if they breach it, there are very significant penalties. I don't have in front of me what the penalties are, but they can run into very large amounts, multimillion-dollar penalties, I think, if I am remembering correctly the report we had done in South Australia.

Off the top of my head, but I am happy to go back and check, I think it is the national eSafety Commissioner who regulates this. Really importantly, one of the things that the Chief Justice's report pointed out is that it is not only the potential fines and the obligation on the platforms to make sure children are not using them but it empowers parents in a way they have never been empowered before in relation to telling their children that, no, they can't use these things.

I am really pleased that what we started in South Australia, the report that we commissioned, is being picked up nationally. I have no doubt this will make a positive change for the next generations who are coming through, who are exposed to things that I do not think anyone properly understands the effects of. This is coupled in South Australia with other developments, like our restriction on mobile phone use in schools. It is something that we have led in South Australia, and I think it will have positive effects for generations to come.

#### NATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA BAN

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:50):** Supplementary: given 16 and 17 year olds will be able to access this technology, will Service SA be changing their policies with regard to proof of age cards, which a young person currently can't access until they are 17 years and 11 months?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:50):** As I have outlined, this will be for social media platforms to develop and have the duty of care to do that. I would be surprised if a proof of age card, which is a physical document, was the way they would do that, but as I have said, it is up to the platforms to implement it.

#### NATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA BAN

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:51):** Supplementary: if the Labor government thinks children under the age of 16 are old enough to be tried like bikies under its draconian new laws, why are they not old enough to go on social media?

**The PRESIDENT:** I never heard anything about bikies in the Attorney's answer. You can answer it if you want, Attorney.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:51):** I thank the honourable member for his question. They are two very, very distinct issues. We traversed this in some detail yesterday in terms of laws we are proposing to try to intervene to stop people—not just young people but all people—coming into more contact with the criminal justice system by disrupting the serious offences that street gangs commit.

#### NATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA BAN

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:51):** Final supplementary: given some of the concerns that have been raised by the media and others in this place, is the government committed to continual review of the policy to ensure that, whatever advocacy we are doing at the federal level, it is keeping pace with the issues that arise around continued access to social media?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:52):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I think I understand it, but if I answer in this way: we as a state government will be keenly watching how this rolls out, and anything we can do to help or make suggestions to make it as effective as possible, we certainly will.

#### COMMERCIAL FISHER LICENCE FEES

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD (14:52):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries regarding commercial fisher licence fees.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD:** Today, a number of commercial fishers have received a tax invoice for their commercial fisher licence fees, although within that PDF of the tax invoice or the email itself there is no information supplied on how to apply for fee relief. Does the minister consider this an oversight, and does she consider that it would be a good idea to include information on how commercial fishers could apply for fee relief, considering the algal bloom is still continuing?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:53):** I thank the honourable member for his question. The invoices would be issued, and my understanding is that fishers have been made aware of how they can apply for fee relief; however, I am happy to check that with the department to see what mechanisms have been used. I would certainly encourage anyone who has received their invoice who considers they may be eligible for fee relief to contact the department.

They can look on the PIRSA website and it has all of the information, as I understand it, or indeed the algal bloom website, which is the one-stop shop for information in regard to the algal bloom. I would encourage people to apply even if they have questions over whether they are eligible. What we have been able to say is that this is an emerging situation with the algal bloom and therefore, in terms of the grants and assistance available, we have certainly tried to be flexible. So if people think they are just going to miss out for whatever reason, they are still encouraged to apply and then that can be considered in its fullness.

#### COMMERCIAL FISHER LICENCE FEES

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:54):** Supplementary: can the minister please inform the chamber how these fishers have been made aware directly of the ability to apply for a fee waiver and is the minister concerned about, quite frankly, fishers' mental health receiving these licence fees today, given many of them have been unable to catch any quota for some months?

**The PRESIDENT:** The first part of the supplementary question I think is in order. The second part about mental health, I didn't see you going anywhere near that, so provide an answer if you can, please.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:55):** I refer the member back to the answer to the original question. I said that my understanding is that they have been advised and I will check what mechanism has been used.

One thing we have certainly been doing is close liaison with the peak bodies that represent the various fisheries. I am aware that those opposite don't seem to value peak bodies very much in any of the agricultural, horticultural or fisheries sectors because they have very little interaction with them, but certainly we have been engaging very closely with the peak bodies since the beginning of the algal bloom. If those opposite would like to actually look at some of the FOIs that they have put in and received they would see that that engagement has been occurring from a very early period in this algal bloom.

#### BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (14:55):** Pursuant to standing order 107, my question is to the Hon. Frank Pangallo.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. T.T. NGO:** Has the Leader of the Opposition in the other place, the member for Hartley, counselled the honourable member about the inaccurate references he provided to the Budget and Finance Committee about the current algal bloom?

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:56):** Unlike Labor, I actually do own up to trivial matters. This is trivial. It's trivial.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** I also have spoken to the leader about it. Honesty is something that South Australians want and they are not getting it from Labor, particularly with the algal bloom and what is happening. We are not getting straight answers and they are constantly having to find distractions to avoid the spotlight on them. There are other distractions as well. We don't know anything about the cost of the LIV Golf course at North Adelaide, how many trees are going to be felled or how much they are paying Greg Norman. The Premier will just not be up-front and honest about the cost to taxpayers about vanity projects like that. The failed hydrogen project—I can just go on and on.

While we are sitting here today, another \$7 million has been paid off in the state's debt that is now hurtling towards \$50 billion. With cost-of-living pressures, people are struggling to pay their power bills, they are struggling with their groceries and we have a government in here that is fixated—fixated—by a few URLs that did not matter.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** I will just finish on this note: the revelations that were made today by the opposition about the Attorney-General and the Deputy Premier's gross breach of privacy of a number of legal practitioners out in the community, they have not answered. They have not come back with a report. They have not apologised to them. I will say this: it should be a sackable offence for the Attorney and the Deputy Premier.

#### **BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:58):** Supplementary.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** The honourable member said that he has spoken to the leader about it. Has the leader spoken to him about it? Has the leader counselled him about his gross negligence in making things up?

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:59):** No.

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Ms Lee.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** How about we listen to the question from the Hon. Ms Lee.

#### **ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (14:59):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs about Aboriginal affairs concerns.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE:** Several groups representing First Nations people have made submissions to the Senate inquiry into the harmful algal bloom, calling for more transparency and culturally appropriate information about the bloom and seeking to be included in decision-making in the response. The Kurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation stated that there has been 'a lack of direct engagement and dialogue with Kurna and other First Nations' people and called for the government to involve Kurna people in the response to 'provide cultural authority and oversight'. Similarly, the director of the Narungga Nation Aboriginal Corporation, Mr Garry Goldsmith, stated that and I quote:

...we have been ignored once again by Commonwealth and State governments to be stakeholders and our rights to caring for Country and remedy in the solutions for the algal blooms.

Mr Goldsmith told ABC news:

At the moment we seem to be at odds with the current system that continues to leave us out on the conversations that are important.

My questions to the minister are:

1. What steps are being taken by the government to engage First Nations communities and incorporate cultural knowledge into the response and recovery efforts for the harmful algal bloom?
2. What role does the minister see for Aboriginal cultural knowledge in shaping the scientific and environmental response to the algal bloom, and how is this being supported across relevant agencies?
3. What specific program support is currently available to Aboriginal corporations or communities to assist with the impacts of recovery efforts related to the harmful algal bloom?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:01):** I thank the member for her question. It is, indeed, a good question. I agree with Aboriginal leaders, including Allan Sumner and Garry Goldsmith about the impact these sorts of things have on Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal people and Aboriginal families. Aboriginal people have been custodians of the lands and the seas of South Australia for tens of thousands of years—thousands of generations—and have managed to do that in harmony with the nature and the land that they live upon, something that stands in stark contrast to the last couple of hundred years of what has happened to the lands and waterways in South Australia and Australia more generally.

It is, as the honourable member has said, important that Aboriginal knowledge is used, and Aboriginal people and organisations are involved in efforts, whether it be the algal bloom that is happening now or in previous events that have happened. I know that during the River Murray flood event the River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation were consulted with in terms of recovery efforts, and I have met with a number of those in relation to that particular aspect. I have certainly had a number of discussions with different Aboriginal groups, individuals and organisations about the algal bloom, but I also know from advice from the environment minister that there is continuing engagement with Aboriginal communities to ensure, as the honourable member points out, that cultural knowledge is part of recovery actions.

I am advised that, in August, the Department for Environment and Water corresponded with the First Nations Voice to Parliament and also 15 native title bodies to provide information on what was occurring. I am further advised that the State Voice to Parliament was formally briefed on 15 September this year. I am advised that the government's Algal Bloom Reference Group is comprised of external stakeholders who provide advice to government and includes First Nations representatives. I am further advised that the Kurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation (KYAC) will be briefed in mid to late September.

In relation to the involvement of Aboriginal groups and organisations in recovery efforts, I am advised that the Algal Bloom Coordination Unit is finalising negotiations particularly with the Point Pearce Aboriginal Corporation regarding Narungga Sea Rangers' involvement in recovery efforts on beaches on the Yorke Peninsula. The honourable member is quite right that it does have a significant impact on Aboriginal people and Aboriginal communities. Their knowledge and their involvement is needed.

### GIANT PINE SCALE

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:04):** I seek leave to make an explanation before directing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development regarding giant pine scale.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK:** In June last year, via social media, the member for Newland stated in regard to the Hope Valley Reservoir that:

...a trail can now be constructed with minimal impact on the environment. Consultation will open shortly on this trail, which will be funded under the Open Space Grant Program.

Just on the weekend, the Liberal Party highlighted that the number of trees infected with giant pine scale has doubled in the past year, with Tea Tree Gully council being advised that nearly 1,400 trees have been cut down, with a further 750 to be expected to be cleared around the Hope Valley Reservoir and the Highbury Aqueduct. My questions for the minister are:

1. In relation to some movement of the mulch to Murray Bridge in relation to this outbreak, what biosecurity protocols are in place to prevent the spread of giant pine scale?
2. Which agency advised that it was safe to move mulch?
3. Can the minister indeed confirm that pine tree mulch which is potentially infected was moved from within the Tea Tree Gully council to Murray Bridge and on whose authority?
4. Has there been any amendment to the proposed trails or the timeframe for the trails to be completed, given the continuous outbreak of giant pine scale in this part of metropolitan Adelaide?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:06):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I have spoken I think in this place on a number of occasions about giant pine scale. Removal of affected trees remains the best known option for eliminating giant pine scale and is regarded as the quickest and most effective eradication method against the pest. Tree removal also assists in stopping the pest from spreading onto other unaffected pines. We also do a buffer zone, usually 50 metres around the infected tree, and that means removing the pine trees in that area. It doesn't mean removal of other trees, because it is the pine species that is affected by giant pine scale.

In terms of the infected trees, they are removed and mulched or ground, and they are quarantined on site prior to removal for processing. It can take up to six months for that to occur in a normal circumstance. I am advised that the time that it is appropriate for that to be quarantined is somewhat dependent on weather conditions, so it won't necessarily be exactly the same for every particular pile of mulch. Strict hygiene and decontamination of machinery and personnel involved with tree removal is undertaken prior to exiting an infected site to prevent the further spread.

Giant pine scale is something that we have been dealing with now for some time. It was quite fascinating to see the Liberals come out complaining that the Labor government hadn't done enough and then pointing to the fact that roughly 1,400 trees have been removed. It is unclear whether they are suggesting that all the trees should be removed. Perhaps they are suggesting all the trees should be removed from the north-eastern suburbs. As usual they come out with an announcement but without any detail.

We have been working closely with industry, again something that those opposite don't bother to do.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I would be very interested to hear, since they are laughing at my comment there, how much they have engaged with the Forest Products Association, which is after all representative of industry. Did they engage with the South Australian Forest Products Association before putting out their media release criticising the government? Do they not accept that industry considers that they have worked hand in hand with government and—to generally quote from some interviews at the weekend—that they consider the government could not have done more?

That is the response from industry. I suggest that those opposite, instead of seeking headlines, actually try to understand the issue and try to work with industry, and then we might be able to get more positive outcomes. Those opposite have shown time and time again that when it comes to biosecurity, they don't see it as something where there is shared responsibility, they don't see it as something where there should be a bipartisan approach, but they see it as something where they can try to get a headline and a political advantage.

What I would say to those opposite is that biosecurity is a serious topic. It affects our industries, whether we are talking about fisheries, whether we are talking about forestry, whether we are talking about grains or other agriculture.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** Because it is serious, they should actually try to work constructively instead of yet again trying to seek cheap headlines.

#### GIANT PINE SCALE

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:10):** Supplementary question: is the minister refusing to answer important questions about what the biosecurity measures are to prevent the spread of this pest, and in relation to the pathways at the Hope Valley Reservoir, because these are important issues to the constituents of Newland and Morialta?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:11):** Clearly, the honourable member wasn't listening as I outlined the treatment methodology.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

#### TABLED DOCUMENTS

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (15:11):** At risk of upsetting my friend, the Hon. Mr Simms, and pursuant to standing order 107, my question is to the Hon. Frank Pangallo.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY:** How does the honourable member reconcile his last answer that he has not been counselled by his leader with this quote that appears in *The Advertiser* online: 'Mr Tarzia said he had explained to Mr Pangallo how the Liberty Party expects better of him'?

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The Hon. Mr Pangallo, answer it if you want to.

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:12):** I actually had a very good conversation with Mr Tarzia in his office, and in fact I apologised to him for my mistake, just as I did in this place.

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

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** We had a good discussion, and that is what it was, and he accepted my apology and that was it.

#### NAPLAN RESULTS

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (15:12):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, representing the Minister for Education, Training and Skills, regarding South Australia's latest NAPLAN results.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. S.L. GAME:** New analysis of 2025 NAPLAN data shows vast differences in the results between boys and girls across our state. For example, over 45 per cent of year 7 boys in South Australia are unable to use punctuation properly, compared with 34 per cent of year 7 girls. The gender disparities are across all four age groups—years 3, 5, 7 and 9—and across all subjects: reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

Back in September last year in this chamber, I also referenced UniSA research which showed SA boys doing worse at almost every level of education than girls, leading to substantially

poorer outcomes for boys and young men compared with females. I asked the government what it was doing to change this trend of poorer outcomes for boys, but always received generic answers applying to all children, so my questions to the Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, representing the Minister for Education, Training and Skills, are specifically regarding boys' education and disparity in their engagement and achievement:

1. What is or has the government done specifically to target boys and their education to improve their outcomes?
2. Does the government think it is acceptable that boys continue to underachieve in their education in this state?
3. What is the government's election commitment to boys and the parents of boys who are underachieving in this state?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (15:14):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I am happy to seek a further response from the minister in the other house.

#### **VARROA MITE**

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:14):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development on the topic of biosecurity and varroa mite.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** On 3 September 2025, the minister issued a statement confirming that PIRSA's Apiary Unit surveillance teams had identified the presence of varroa mite in a managed beehive in Pooginook in the Riverland. This was confirmed by SARDI and was reported to have originated from a consignment of hives from Queensland. The statement also outlined that PIRSA had commenced sampling, implemented treatments and placed restrictions on movement from the site. Given the significant risk this pest poses to the South Australian honeybee population, pollination services and key industries such as almonds, my questions to the minister are:

1. Can the minister confirm whether the consignment of hives in which varroa was detected is still present in South Australia or have they since been moved out of the state?
2. Has PIRSA confirmed whether additional hives from the same Queensland consignment have also tested positive for varroa mite?
3. What biosecurity tracing measures have been implemented to determine whether any hives from this consignment or hives in close proximity to this consignment have been relocated within South Australia before detection?
4. Can the minister provide clarity on what resources, both staff and laboratory capacity, PIRSA currently has available to undertake timely testing and tracing of affected hives?
5. Will the minister and her department be providing weekly public updates via the PIRSA website to industry and the community on the spread, containment and management of varroa within South Australia?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:16):** I thank the honourable member for his question. All beehives connected to South Australia's first varroa mite detection have been removed from the state. The varroa mite detection in a managed hive in the Riverland was made during surveillance activities which have been in place since varroa was first detected in New South Wales in 2022.

Following detection the hives on the impacted orchard were treated with acaricides and sticky mats, which were deployed to support containment. The hives that were on that property were from Queensland and Western Australia and were moved out of the state. According to my advice, the hives in which varroa was detected were from the hives in Queensland. PIRSA has also placed catch boxes across the affected orchard to capture any remaining bees and any potential swarms. Sentinel hives are being installed for long-term surveillance.



There is one South Australian beekeeper with hives located within the 25-kilometre surveillance buffer. That beekeeper's hives are obviously under active monitoring. No varroa mites have been visually observed but samples have been sent to the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) for further examination.

There is a community meeting in Loxton tomorrow, Thursday 18 September, to provide local beekeepers and growers with the latest updates. PIRSA is also engaging directly with all registered beekeepers within the 25-kilometre surveillance buffer to ensure they have access to information and assistance. We do encourage all beekeepers to reach out for additional information and, of course, the first point of call can be the PIRSA website.

There is a new heat map tool on the PIRSA website which shows both positive detections and negative records in the buffer zone and across the state. Beekeepers can check their location by entering their address details into the search bar. The heat map does rely on voluntary contributions by beekeepers, so it is worth just mentioning that caveat, and we do encourage all beekeepers to provide information to PIRSA as quickly as they are able to.

PIRSA will continue to work with the South Australian Varroa Industry Advisory Committee (SAVIAC), South Australian apiary associations, local beekeepers and national counterparts to slow the spread of varroa and support industry through the national transition to management program as well as the South Australian response plan that was developed with SAVIAC, which represents industry, hobby beekeepers and pollination-dependent industries, among others.

All South Australian beekeepers are encouraged to visit the website, where they can get information to inspect their hives regularly using one of the recommended methods—that includes things such as the alcohol wash or the soapy water wash—and report any suspect detections immediately to PIRSA.

#### *Matters of Interest*

### **WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM**

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:20):** Three years ago, on 16 September 2022, the world was changed. Jina Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian woman, was arrested, beaten and died in the custody of Iran's police. Her death was not just a tragedy; it was a spark, a spark that ignited a global movement for justice, dignity and freedom. Across continents, people rose in protest. In Australia, especially in South Australia, we stood shoulder to shoulder with the Iranian community, united by three powerful words: woman, life, freedom—zan, zendegi, azadi.

These three words have echoed through our streets, our hearts and our parliament. They speak to the courage of those in Iran who risked everything: posting online, marching peacefully and speaking out, despite the threat of violence and imprisonment. Their bravery is matched by the tireless efforts of the Iranian diaspora in South Australia. You have rallied, you have written, you have lobbied, you have mourned, and you have never stopped fighting for a better future in Iran.

Because of your persistence, South Australia's Legislative Council became the first parliament in this country to pass a motion condemning the Iranian regime and supporting the Iranian people's call for democracy. That is not just an achievement; it is a legacy. For three years, your voices have never wavered. You stood on the steps of parliament in Adelaide and around Australia and echoed the cries of those who could not speak freely. Your advocacy helped catalyse a decisive shift in this nation's stance. After decades of ambiguity, Australia has finally acted with clarity and conscience.

I am told that for years the Islamic Republic's diplomats weaponised its embassies against its own people, even here in Australia, but recently the Australian government expelled Iranian diplomats and announced its intention to list the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps as a terrorist organisation, a demand this community has championed for years. That is a testament to your persistence, your clarity and your moral leadership.

Last night, to mark this solemn anniversary the Iranian community and I hosted a vigil in this Parliament House courtyard to honour Jina's life and to recommit ourselves to the cause she came to represent. We were joined by the Hon. Tammy Franks MLC, the Hon. Michelle Lensink MLC and

the Hon. Mira El Dannawi, who although on maternity leave came into parliament to stand with us. Each honourable member spoke with emotion and grace in support of the Iranian community.

To the people of Iran: we see you. We believe in your right to self-determination. We honour your resilience and we recognise your pain, not as distant observers but as fellow human beings. To the young girls of Saqqez, of Tehran and of Shiraz, who write poetry under candlelight, who whisper freedom into the wind: your fight is not forgotten. To the mothers in diaspora, who light candles for children lost and children living: you are the bridge between grief and hope. To the men who choose to stand beside the women of Iran, rather than above them: you are the blueprint of a new masculinity born from justice.

To all of you—Iranians and allies alike—who carry this banner forward: do not give up; not now, not ever. To the Iranian community in Australia: you are not alone. Your voice matters. Your struggle is seen and your hope is shared. Together, we will continue to stand for women, life, freedom—zan, zendegi, azadi.

### SARDI FISH DEATHS

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:24):** I rise today to address what is becoming a defining trait of this government—that is, its lack of transparency. Yesterday, in this very chamber, the Minister for Primary Industries lectured us on the importance of accuracy and public information. She accused the opposition of political opportunism, of spreading misinformation and of undermining political confidence.

Today, I want to turn those accusations back on the government itself and examine them in the context of the catastrophic fish deaths at the South Australian Aquatic Sciences Centre. That event decimated our state's aquaculture research and industry support. It caused devastating losses to the snapper restocking program. It destroyed the barramundi hatchery run by a private company next door. Worst of all, after about a 100 per cent mortality rate, the valuable oyster breeding program has now left the state entirely.

The minister has repeatedly stood in this place and declared there was no evidence that dredging contributed to those deaths, yet the timing was no coincidence and the science is clear: dredging can release hydrogen sulphide, a substance highly toxic to fish. Despite this, when the council voted on 19 February for an independent investigation into these deaths, the government simply ignored it. The will of this council and the people of South Australia were brushed aside.

When the final report was eventually published, quietly and tellingly during the distraction of Gather Round weekend, it bore the unmistakable signs of having been edited. Freedom of information requests since obtained make that all too clear. Emails show that immediately after the mass mortality, SARDI staff sought meetings with DEW and the EPA, the very departments responsible for the dredging trial, to discuss dredging as a possible cause.

The original draft of the report concluded that dredging was a likely cause, and certainly the emails suggest just that. But the EPA staff objected. They disputed the findings of that report and in subsequent emails they went so far as to suggest edits to parliamentary briefing notes themselves. Internal EPA meeting notes specifically mentioned sulphides. One note records, and I quote:

Dredge area had posidonia species that created elevated organic matter in the sediment that would have been associated with sulphide that would have caused toxic effect to young fish.

That is not speculation; that is direct acknowledgement of risk. The first draft report was circulated to DEW and EPA on 24 December 2024, with a request for, and I quote, 'comments and contribution'. Despite the obvious conflict of interest, those who oversaw the dredging trial and had the most to lose were invited to shape and amend the report. Later emails even show EPA staff expressing anger at SARDI's findings, with one remarking, and I quote:

The whole report focuses on the AMBRI being the cause and does not include an assessment of other potential risks.

Alternative content was proposed, and, sure enough, the final report contained the conveniently diluted conclusion, and I quote:

No direct evidence has been found to establish that the mortalities at the SAASC were caused by the sand placement and dredging activities.

Contrast this with the private consultant engaged by the barramundi hatchery, who concluded dredging was the most likely cause. That independent report stated, and I quote:

The potential for dumping of dredge spoil to create a plume entrained in the farm's marine intake seems high on the likelihood list to explain these events.

It also said the coincidental timing across the SARDI snapper and oyster systems added further circumstantial evidence and that such events were, and I quote, 'highly unlikely to be repeated in the absence of further dredge spoil dumping'. So whose word should we take? The government's carefully sanitised version, shaped by the very departments under scrutiny, or the independent consultant whose business relied on truth, not politics?

Adding insult to injury, the government has refused to release earlier drafts of the SARDI report, claiming they were prepared for cabinet. That excuse defies logic. Either these drafts were scientific investigations or they are political documents. They cannot be both.

The picture is now clear. The government oversaw a dredging trial that, on the weight of available evidence, could not rule out—and cannot rule out—that it did not participate in the killing of fish and shellfish in its own facility. This government has ignored the will of this council. It has ignored the need for independence and it has sought at every turn to obscure the truth. This is not transparent. It is not accountable. This is a government addicted to manipulation and to spin, incapable of admitting failures and unwilling to put the truth before its own political interests.

## ABORTION

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:30):** I rise today to stand with the over 80 per cent of Australians who support the statement that was polled in 2020 and reported in the *Journal of Public Health* that a woman should have the right to choose whether or not she has an abortion—and, indeed, that is the law of our state—with her medical professionals. It is in the hands of the person who is pregnant and their medical professionals who are treating them to provide that abortion.

I am not alone, and those 80 per cent plus of Australians were heard by this parliament when in 2022, two-thirds of the members of this parliament supported taking abortion out of the criminal code in this state and putting it under health law. The parliament decided and voted to treat abortion as health care, not as a potential crime, but in these last few years, and in these last few weeks, much is changing in this parliament as well as across the nation.

We only have to look overseas at the overturning of *Roe v Wade*, which sent shockwaves through that country, to see why it is sending so many chills down Australian spines that we are yet again debating in a parliament a woman's right to choose, and the fact that abortion should be criminalised rather than treated as health care.

Indeed, *Roe v Wade* and the Trump administration overseas seems to have emboldened forces here in Australia who think that Australian politics is like American politics. I tell you what, they need to do their numbers a little better than that. Here in Australia, we have a preferential voting system. We do not send out our messaging to get out the vote. We do not in this country have a system where it is first past the post and the loudest voice wins, even if they are simply a vocal minority.

Women and girls need compassion and care, guided by medical advice, not politicians pontificating about what would be best for them and their medical treatment. Understanding that health care is the choice of the pregnant person and the medical team is key here. Let's start with some basics. There is simply no such medical procedure as a 'late-term abortion'. Term is term and late-term is not actually a thing but, then again, people are also pretending to be potentially medical doctors in this debate.

I note that abortion can be an incredibly difficult choice, and diagnoses of foetal anomaly in fact are involved in about half the abortions that are performed after 20 weeks' gestation. They include neurological abnormalities, genetic syndromes and cardiac malformations. Do you want a politician deciding what your choices are when you are presented with that medical information? I

imagine most South Australians will say no, but this issue is being put fair and square on a political agenda.

This parliament, for the second time in a year, will soon be debating a second bill around what they call late-term abortion. I have to say it is incredibly disappointing, but I do urge members of this parliament to remember we are not America and that the vocal minorities, while they might have a lot of clout online and while they might raise enormous amounts of money perhaps for individual campaigns or roll out the volunteers for a sitting member here or there or a potential candidate here or there, will not sway public opinion.

I remind members that when it comes to abortion in Australia, religious groups, no matter the denomination, do not overtly oppose abortion. Indeed, data shows that no religious group falls below 80 per cent in support of allowing abortion in some circumstances, and it does not rise above 10 per cent in opposition to it in all circumstances. I note the proponents of the bill that we are potentially debating soon say they want to make abortion unthinkable. The Australian people are not calling for that. They are calling for medical choices to be made by medical professionals and for the politicians to butt out.

### **WAGE THEFT**

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON (15:34):** I rise to speak on something today that I have spoken on quite a bit and, indeed, lots of other members have over the journey. It is a complex matter but something that everyone has come to know by a really simple handle, and that is wage theft. There are many, many Australians who have been subject to wage theft. Indeed, very recently we have seen quite high-profile employers, such as Qantas, have very large claims made against them that have been successful in the courts. The reason they have been successful is that, unfortunately, some employers continue to see wage theft as a business model.

So it is really only fitting that, going back when this government was in opposition, we saw then that we needed to act on this growing wage theft problem. It has been really heartening to see this week that the government was able to take action and put in place a bill that says that one of our state's largest employers, that being the state government, will also be subject to the conceptual idea of civil penalties for wage theft. We did say at the time when we were in opposition that we were going to up the penalties for wage theft in this state, and the bill that we put through just this week actually goes further than that. It says that we are going to have a civil penalty regime just like what we have in the federal system, just like what exists in many other jurisdictions in this state.

That is pretty important. It was really quite heartening that in this chamber we saw pretty bipartisan support for exactly that. We put in the cupboard the old dark days of the Hon. Rob Lucas, who used to really struggle even to say the term 'wage theft'; in fact, I recall during debate he would often refer to it as an 'underpayment' or something else like that. He had struggled even to come to the conceptual device that wage theft was a thing. Thankfully, in large part, we saw those dark days put away, but in the truest conceptual device we are not always able to see the Liberal Party completely ditch their dark old ways.

I do not know if it was out of a misunderstanding or perhaps not quite knowing how wage theft works, but I suspect it might have been more a bit of an attack on unions from the Hon. Mr Ben Hood. We saw an attempt to say, 'Well, workers might not see those penalties.' Let me correct that conception: if a worker is underpaid, under the laws put in place this week, they will get that underpayment back—every single cent of it—because they are the subject of wage theft, and this government has legislated to make sure that, in this jurisdiction, if you are a local government worker, if you are a public sector worker, you will have the same access to the same kinds of laws that exist federally for private sector workers.

So we do not see any worker missing out under the laws we put in last week. Equally, any union that takes those claims is entitled to civil penalties that result from that. The importance of having those civil penalties is outlined not just by someone like me, with the background I have in the union movement, but also by the Federal Court, where we heard Justice Lee say:

...but for the Union commencing and prosecuting, Qantas' contravening conduct would never have been exposed and it would never have been held to account for its unlawful conduct; hence the Union has brought to the

attention of the Court a substantial and significant transgression of a public obligation by a powerful and substantial employer...

That is important and we need to make sure unions do have the right to continue to pursue exactly that—hold people to account. I can imagine some workers standing around a flag back in the day in Ballarat seeking exactly this thing: the right to gather together, to combine together, to hold power to account, and that is what these laws do. That is what a civil penalty is, and I encourage everybody, including the Hon. Mr Ben Hood, to join their union, to be part of that democratic organisation, so they can continue to do exactly that, comrades.

### **MOUNT GAMBIER GP SERVICES**

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD (15:40):** I rise today to speak on an issue that is hitting the people of Mount Gambier hard: the growing GP shortage in my community. In June this year, the Medicare Urgent Care Clinic closed its doors. That closure confirmed what the AMA warned all along: that Urgent Care Clinics risk doing more harm than good if they are not backed up by sustainable long-term planning.

Since then, every part of our health system in the South-East has been under pressure. Today, not a single general practice in Mount Gambier is accepting new patients. The Village Medical Centre, Hawkins Clinic and the Limestone Coast Health Hub have all closed their books. What does that mean in practice? It means the people who should be seeing a GP are being pushed to telehealth services, which many cannot access. Some are even turning to AI, TikTok and other unreliable sources of medical advice.

It means more patients are showing up in our EDs not because they need emergency care but because they have nowhere else to go. That emergency department is already stretched, with staff working under immense pressure. They are abused daily by frustrated patients who face long wait times. This is not fair on patients and it is certainly not fair on the dedicated staff doing their best in impossible conditions.

I want to thank the Village Medical Centre practice manager, Jessie Bilal, for her tireless advocacy on behalf of our community. Over the past four years, Jessie has repeatedly sought solutions to the GP crisis, contacting the PHN, engaging with the local health network and writing directly to Minister Picton and Minister Butler. Despite her persistence, she received little more than automated replies, contradictory advice and letters shuffled between state and federal offices without reply.

Jessie and her clinic have taken it upon themselves to recruit and expand using their own limited services, yet they remain hamstrung by a lack of supervision and support for their international medical graduates and this is a bottleneck the government refuses to address. Her experience reflects the broad frustration of my community, left without answers despite her consistent and commendable efforts.

Thanks to Jessie, I have also been raising the alarm with both state and federal governments for over a year now. I wrote to Minister Picton way back in September last year and then again in August I wrote to Minister Picton and Minister Butler, pointing out that a city of 27,000 people cannot be left with inadequate GP coverage. I stressed that residents should not have to travel hundreds of kilometres just to access basic services. I welcomed the opportunity for dialogue, but unsurprisingly no response came.

On 18 September, I wrote again seeking clarity as to whether there was a plan to reopen the Urgent Care Clinic and, if not, could funds be redirected as grants to private practices for infrastructure upgrades to ensure they could expand services for the community, but again silence. This lack of transparency and accountability is deeply concerning.

Then came reports on 6 September that the health minister personally phoned the Mount Gambier hospital late at night—and this is a Saturday night—directing them to un-ramp ambulances in the emergency department. It is strange that a minister would do that at all, but stranger still given that ramping has been denied as even happening in Mount Gambier by the Premier as reported by ABC South-East. Yet here we have a minister on a Saturday night calling a hospital to demand that

ambulances be unramped, and how was it done? By moving patients through the system faster, regardless of whether wards could actually take them.

Nurses reported patients being transferred to unfamiliar wards late at night. Patients were moved to places where staff simply did not have the capacity to care for them properly. So instead of fixing the ramping that they did not even acknowledge exists, Labor shifted the problem inside the hospital—out of sight, out of mind.

This is no solution; it is a political directive designed to protect the government's image, not the health of patients. And let us remember: this came just weeks after Labor proudly announced six new beds for the ED, beds that clearly have done nothing to stop ramping in Mount Gambier. The people of my city, Mount Gambier, deserve better than a government that hides the problem. They deserve access to local GPs, proper investment in regional health services, and policies that are sustainable, not just headline grabbing.

While GP recruitment is ultimately a federal issue, the state government must acknowledge reality and act in the interests of Mount Gambier because right now 27,000 people in Mount Gambier are being left behind, and if the government will not act, the costs will be borne not in headlines but in the health of real people—our people.

### WORLD SIGHT DAY

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (15:45):** It is something most of us take for granted, but without it we would be lost—quite literally, we would be lost in the dark. Sight allows us to safely navigate our way through day-to-day life and provides us with the gift of seeing sunsets and sunrises, star-filled skies, fine art and the ones we love, to avoid danger by seeing something out of the corner of our eye, and to catch our children taking their first breath. At least that is what those who are lucky to have their sight get to appreciate. Some people never see such things, while others eventually lose their sight through injury or illness.

On World Sight Day, which falls this year on Thursday 9 October, we take pause to celebrate not just our sight but those who commit their lives to giving sight to others. In Australia and New Zealand we can be proud that our own Dr Fred Hollows committed his life to giving sight to communities around the world. Born in New Zealand before becoming an Australian citizen and being named 1989 Australian of the Year, Dr Hollows worked tirelessly to prevent avoidable blindness.

While Dr Hollows died more than 30 years ago, his vision lives on through the Fred Hollows Foundation. Its mission is that nine out of 10 people who are blind or visually impaired do not need to be. The foundation has backed that up by restoring sight or preventing blindness for 150 million people worldwide. Cataracts are a common cause of blindness, as is macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy and eye accidents.

In Australia, we are lucky that conditions such as trachoma can be easily treated through the public health system. That, of course, is not available in many Third World countries and even in the United States where a large percentage of the population does not have access to expensive treatments and surgery. In Australia, though, we have to take advantage of the eye care available. Regular eye examinations are available at optometrists in the shopping malls. They can detect conditions such as glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy at an early stage and allow for timely treatment. It can be the difference between losing and retaining your sight.

Even cataracts, which cause issues ranging from clouded vision to blindness, can often be treated by surgery with the replacement of the lens. For most of us, getting reading glasses or prescription glasses for safer driving is the most significant requirement we will experience. Those of us who have had to get glasses for short or long-term vision can attest to how awkward and debilitating life is without them, so spare a thought for those who lose their sight altogether.

Science is making great headways in the quest to eradicate blindness, but there is still a long way to go. Even accidents such as a rock hitting the eye are more treatable than they were a generation ago. Whereas the piercing of an eye could have at one time often led to its removal, advances in eye surgery are changing that. These advances are helping to save the sight of the kids who did not listen to their parents when they were told not to throw stones or sticks or pine cones.

On 9 October, let us spare a thought for all those who have lost their sight and breathe a sigh of relief for those who have managed to overcome injury or illness in retaining it, and let us commend the scientists, doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals on the frontlines for giving the gift of sight to those who once could never afford it.

### LOS ANGELES 2028 OLYMPIC GAMES

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:49):** I rise today as shadow minister for sport to bring to members' attention something that was reported yesterday in *The Advertiser*. It has been on the drawing board for some time, I am informed, and came as somewhat of a surprise to me. That is the possibility of new and what I would consider fairly radical changes being made to the qualifying system for the Olympics to be held in Los Angeles in 2028 and specifically for the sport of swimming in particular. I am not aware if it extends to other sports. I do not have any information that suggests it does, but it certainly is being proposed or at least contemplated—is perhaps a better way of putting it—for the sport of swimming.

Particularly what is being proposed is the potential overhaul to ensure that extra places are given to refugees and competitors from smaller developing nations at the Olympics in place of so-called powerhouse nations in that sport, which, of course, includes Australia. Australia has a long history of being very successful in the swimming—in the pool, if you like—at the Olympics.

It has been proposed or at least contemplated that the number of places allocated to the so-called powerhouse nations, which includes Australia, be reduced for no other reason than that we are particularly good at it. If that is the case, then I will strongly object to that. Surely, the Olympics is one thing that should be on merit.

It is understood that the proposal will cap the total maximum number of swimmers permitted for Los Angeles at exactly 830; it was previously 852 for the Paris Olympics in 2024. The countries that traditionally dominate the sport will therefore receive a lower percentage of the available spots, with more allocated to swimmers from smaller nations. Places will also be reserved for refugees and athletes from banned countries—I found this quite extraordinary—including Russia, having specific places at the expense of, again to use that term, the powerhouse nations, including Australia, which I think is unfortunate.

Due to the decrease in available places for the fastest Australian swimmers the time standard that will be required in order to qualify for individual events will actually be more difficult than ever for Olympic hopefuls. That is, you will have less places for the so-called powerhouse nations and therefore people within those nations will have to be even faster than they would have had to have been previously in order just to qualify. The number of places for each event will also be limited, as I have just outlined, due to the addition of six new races to the program; namely, the 50-metre backstroke, the 50-metre butterfly and the 50-metre breaststroke for both men and women, so six additional events.

The Chief Sports Officer at the World Aquatics, Mike Unger, had apparently stated when he was interviewed about this matter that by developing the new regime officials were attempting to strike a balance between retaining as many of the best swimmers possible for the games while simultaneously having more countries represented in the sport. No doubt that is a noble aim, at some level at least, but it should not be at the expense of those nations which have traditionally excelled in the sport. Whilst I will appreciate the sentiment, I will respectfully disagree with the overall objective.

Should these changes be implemented, I believe it could lead to a slippery slope, incorporating even more allowances that get taken away from enabling the best athletes in the world to compete against each other. I am of the firm opinion that athletes should continue to be selected for the games based purely on merit and not be penalised for being from any particular nation. This is just not what the Olympics should be. The best of the best should be competing against each other. Indeed, is that not the whole point of the Olympics?

I think Australian swimmers who aspire to be part of the Olympics would be training with the mindset that if they manage to make it as part of the swimming team they will indeed be competing

on the international stage against other swimmers who will challenge them at their level in the sport. The best want to compete with the best. That is what the Olympics are.

I have read with interest comments that have been made by the community in the comments section following these stories being circulated in the media, most particularly *The Advertiser*. Many of them overwhelmingly—90 plus per cent in my estimation of people reading that article—strongly disagree with the intention of this proposed change.

All I can say in the limited time I have left is that it is my sincere hope that this does not eventuate. People want the Olympics to be the absolute peak of its particular sports. They want to see the best athletes in the entire world competing against the best athletes from the rest of the world. It should be that; it has to be that. That is what the Olympics always has been. I think if we change that basic formula, that basic premise, then the Olympics is no longer something that it once was, and that would be a terrible shame in my view.

### Motions

#### REPUBLIC OF ARTSAKH

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:54):** I move:

That this council—

1. Notes that September 2025 marks the fifth anniversary since the start of the 2020 Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) war of aggression by Azerbaijan and reaffirms the South Australian parliament's decision to recognise the self-determination of the Republic of Artsakh;
2. Notes that 19 September 2025 marks two years since the ethnic cleansing of over 100,000 Armenians from the Republic of Artsakh by Azerbaijan after 10 months of siege, blockading the population from food, energy, medical supplies and humanitarian assistance;
3. Calls for the immediate release of 23 Armenian hostages, including leaders of the Republic of Artsakh, currently detained by the Azerbaijani regime, in contradiction to international law;
4. Calls on Azerbaijan to abide by the International Court of Justice's provisional measures handed down on 17 November 2023, and allow for the right of return for all Armenians forcibly displaced from Artsakh under enforceable international guarantees of their security and rights;
5. Calls on Azerbaijan to cease the deliberate destruction of the Armenian Christian and cultural heritage of Artsakh and take transparent steps to ensure the protection of all ancient Armenian cultural and historical sites; and
6. Calls on Azerbaijan immediately to withdraw its troops from, and respect, the internationally recognised borders of the Republic of Armenia.

I rise today to speak on a motion that highlights an issue which all too often does not make the nightly news bulletin: the plight of the Nagorno-Karabakh, known in Armenia as Artsakh. Five years ago, on 27 September 2020, Azerbaijan launched an unprovoked 44-day war against the self-determined territory of Artsakh. Using illegal weapons and funnelling mercenaries into the conflict, Azerbaijan took the lives of 5,000 Armenians and occupied 70 per cent of Artsakh.

The ceasefire that followed never ended Azerbaijan's atrocities, and two years later, on 12 December 2022, Azerbaijan placed the entire civil population under siege. No food, no medicine, no electricity—nothing was able to enter Artsakh for 10 months, even in violation of orders from the International Court of Justice. On 19 September 2023, the unimaginable happened. After starving the people of Artsakh into desperation, a 24-hour lightning military assault resulted in the complete ethnic cleansing of Artsakh within days.

Earlier this year, both sides agreed to a ceasefire, sponsored by the United States, and whilst there are no bullets being fired at this moment this so-called peace simply rewards Azerbaijan for the crimes it committed against indigenous Armenians. To this day, 23 Armenian hostages languish in the prison of Baku, including seven Artsakh leaders, many who stood for the right for self-determination. Their fate is hidden from the world. This is a regime that builds war theme parks to mock the death of Armenian soldiers, a regime that silences dissent at home and exports cruelty abroad. If this is how they treat their own citizens, then imagine the fate of Armenians under their rule.



While hostages suffer in their cold, dark cells, over 100,000 Armenians remain stateless. They have the deeds to their homes, the keys to their front doors, but they cannot return. The right of return is not a request, it is a fundamental human right, recognised by the International Court of Justice in November 2023. Yet, Azerbaijan tramples these rulings with impunity, while the international community too often looks away, as we have seen elsewhere in the world, where the suffering of civilians is explained away, or worse, ignored.

Today, Artsakh, where prayers no longer echo in churches, where Armenian songs are no longer sung in classrooms, where the Armenian language no longer fills the streets, Azerbaijan has turned its hatred against stone and spirit. Churches, monuments, cemeteries, the sacred sites that embody centuries of Armenian life, are being systematically destroyed. This is cultural genocide: history itself is being erased. Let us be honest, Armenians are not alone in this pain, and I think we can all reflect on what is happening in other parts of the world today where that pain is felt.

As someone of very proud Greek descent, I know our communities are bound together by the scars of history. Armenians, Greeks, Syrians and Cypriots share a legacy of displacement, persecution and cultural erasure, and we are not alone. But we also share resilience, dignity and the determination to never let the truth be buried.

What is most harrowing is that Azerbaijan's aggression has not ended with Artsakh, it has spilled over into Armenia itself. In September 2023, Azerbaijan forces invaded Armenian territory, killing soldiers and mutilating women—grotesque acts that perpetrators proudly displayed on social media. Inside Azerbaijan, ancient Armenian cities are being renamed, identity papers rewritten and preparations laid for further erasure. There can be no lasting peace without justice. The right of return must be upheld, Armenian hostages must be released, the systemic destruction of Armenian culture and religious heritage must end and our government must do more than speak platitudes of peace.

I note at this point there is a motion in the other place along similar lines to this one being led by the Minister for Infrastructure, my fellow Greek Australian MP, the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis. I thank him for his support of this motion, together with other members of this place who we will hear from shortly, including the Hon. Tammy Franks and the Hon. Jing Lee. As I said, the systemic destruction of Armenian culture and religious heritage must end. When we pass this motion we send a message that South Australia does not stand idle in the face of injustice. The Armenian Australian community looks to us for recognition, solidarity and moral leadership.

I want to acknowledge and congratulate the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC-AU), which has now established an Adelaide branch, and in particular Koryun, Anna and Elena, who are somewhere in our halls at the moment, listening to these motions as they are being read out in this place. I recently had the privilege of meeting with the ANC-AU upon their first delegation to the South Australian parliament in over a decade. I have known Elena for some time and I was also able to speak to her. She leads the Adelaide branch alongside Michael. Sebastian travelled from the national office in Sydney to be here for that meeting. For the Armenian Australian community to have representation in this state is crucial, and their growing presence here reflects how deeply the Armenian story is woven into the fabric of South Australia.

When the catastrophic Armenian genocide left survivors displaced, families broken and communities destroyed, South Australia raised more funds for Armenian survivors than New South Wales and Victoria combined as part of our nation's first major international humanitarian relief effort. We here in this parliament became the second state jurisdiction to recognise the rights to self-determination of the Republic of Artsakh in February 2021.

Passing this motion—and indeed any other motion, whether it be on Artsakh or Palestine or anywhere else in the world that we might be thinking of today—does not undo the pain. It certainly will not undo the pain of Artsakh, but it will say to the Armenian people here and abroad that their loss is not forgotten, that their rights are not negotiable and that their future must be defended. It will say that South Australians know that silence in the face of genocide is complicity and that our state chooses truth over denial, justice over impunity and peace built on rights rather than on erasure. That is why this motion matters and that is why I am hopeful that it will pass this place with overwhelming and unanimous support. Zito.

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (16:03):** I rise to associate myself with the remarks of the mover, the Hon. Connie Bonaros, and to support this motion. This motion outlines six different facets and I will speak to them not by repeating the motion but by reflecting upon them.

In February 2021, I stood in this chamber to speak in favour of recognising the sovereignty and right to self-determination of the people of Artsakh yet today, thanks to the deafening silence of our nation's leaders and of foreign governments around the world, the Armenians and Artsakh have been stripped of those rights: the right to return to their homes, to live on the land their ancestors inhabited for hundreds of generations, and to celebrate a culture cultivated over thousands of years.

These events prove a painful truth: when aggression and ethnic cleansing are met with silence, they do not cease; they grow. That silence has emboldened Azerbaijan, and now we are watching the bullying and extortion of Armenia itself unfold at the negotiating table. In fact, only last month Azerbaijan and Armenia signed what was hailed as a historic peace deal, but I ask: is this truly peace or is it merely codification of injustice?

The agreement ignores the ongoing plight of the ethnically cleansed Armenians of Artsakh. It contains no commitment to end Azerbaijan's cultural erasure, no demand for the release of Armenian hostages, and no guarantees that the people of Artsakh will ever be allowed to return safely to their homes, as they should.

Worse still, this so-called peace rewards Azerbaijan's campaign of ethnic cleansing with a corridor carved straight through internationally recognised Armenian territory. The parallels between the 1915 Armenian genocide, which saw over 1.5 million Armenians annihilated at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, and today's events are undeniable. What we are witnessing here is a continuation of those same genocidal policies. That is evidenced by the sheer brutality displayed by Azerbaijani soldiers during the conflict, including extrajudicial executions, mutilations, beatings and beheadings of Armenian soldiers and of civilians.

As the University Network for Human Rights reported, over half of these extrajudicial killings were perpetrated against elderly civilians, and nearly a third of the killings took place after a ceasefire had been reached in 2020. The torture and murder of these people were often circulated on social media sites such as Telegram, where you can hear the cheering of Azerbaijani soldiers in the background—utterly horrific.

The most chilling story within this report was the killing of an intellectually disabled woman, Alvard Tovmasyan. When her body was recovered in 2021, forensic analysis revealed that her feet, her hands, her left ear and the tip of her tongue were cut off while she was still alive, and she later died of blunt force trauma to the head. The report identifies dozens of similar cases involving both physical and psychological torture, almost entirely committed against unarmed people, civilians.

The soldiers committed these acts with impunity. Despite investigations and substantial evidence compiled by trusted NGOs and reporters, the Azerbaijani justice system has failed to hold these war criminals to account and no-one has been called to account for these crimes. The fact that these acts have occurred and gone unpunished is not surprising, however. Azerbaijan's government openly promotes racial hatred towards Armenians amongst its people. Prominent Azerbaijani leaders refer to those people who are Armenian as 'a disease', 'cancerous tumours' and 'a virus'. It is horrific, it is othering, it is dehumanising, and it must be called out.

This discourse by Azerbaijan's leaders has inevitably bled into its mainstream society. Words matter, leadership matters, and we can see here that that leadership has led to this. In response to the 2020 conflict, an Azerbaijani football club put out a statement saying:

We must kill Armenians. No matter whether a woman, a child, an old man. We must kill everyone we can... We should not feel sorry; we should not feel pity.

Again, it is just horrific. This hatred is not just limited, of course, to talk; it is seen in state-run programs and policies. In 2020, the Azerbaijani government opened a military trophy park featuring grotesque and degrading statues of defeated Armenians—a military trophy park—and in 2021, Azerbaijan began producing a commemorative stamp showing a split screen image of an Azerbaijani soldier and a man in a chemical biohazard suit standing over a map of Azerbaijan and fumigating the area of Nagorno Karabakh, clearly symbolising the supposed cleansing of Armenians from that region.

With Azerbaijan now occupying sovereign Armenian territory, the cost of silence towards this hatred is mounting. If that silence persists, we may witness the destruction of Armenia itself and the erasure of its indigenous people from a homeland that they have inhabited for thousands of years.

Our silence is complicity. It is why we must speak up and state parliaments like ours have a role to play. Unless the international community, including our own governments, finally step up and speak out and condemn Azerbaijan's litany of war crimes, Azerbaijan will continue to get what it wants, and, dictator Ilham Aliyev's own words that follow will not be challenged:

Erivan [Armenia's capital] is our historical land and we, the Azerbaijanis, must return to these historic lands. This is our political and strategic goal and we must gradually approach it.

We must refuse to let that rhetoric become reality. President Aliyev's declaration that Yerevan is an historical land cannot be allowed to serve as a road map for aggression. The international community of which we are part, including this government, including our federal government and our leadership here in this nation, must take concrete measures and they are concrete measures that this motion calls for.

I do hope that we will see bipartisan support on this matter. The community here are yearning for it. They are looking to us for leadership. I commend not just the Hon. Connie Bonaros for bringing this motion here to this place but also the member for West Torrens and his leadership in the other place today. September is a time of significance for many reasons in regard to this debate—none of them to be celebrated—and I hope that we can all come together to call out what is utterly horrific and stand together as one to end the silence that is currently prevailing against such injustice.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (16:12):** I rise today to support the Hon. Connie Bonaros' motion marking the fifth anniversary of the 2020 Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) war. An anniversary such as this serves as a commemoration of atrocities, with so many innocent lives lost. It can be a very emotional time for the community, and I acknowledge the feelings that the Hon. Connie Bonaros expressed earlier.

I wish to acknowledge the ongoing distress and grief experienced by the Armenian community members in South Australia. I would like to extend my sincere sympathies and prayers to all those in the Australian Armenian community who continue to be deeply, deeply affected by this devastating conflict and the ongoing humanitarian situation in the region.

South Australia is one of two states in Australia to recognise the right to self-determination of the Republic of Artsakh and I hope that the bipartisan support for this motion goes a small way to providing justice and comfort to the community. I would like to commend the Armenian National Committee of Australia for its steadfast advocacy and longstanding commitment to raising awareness of the grave humanitarian consequences of the conflict and the ongoing situation in the Republic of Artsakh.

Earlier this year, I appreciated meeting with Mr Michael Kolokossian, executive director, and Mr Sebastian Majarian, political affairs director of the Armenian National Committee Australia, as well as Elena Gasparyan, to discuss their efforts to promote peace and justice for Armenians in the Republic of Artsakh.

I signalled my strong support for this cause and was proud to join with parliamentary, local government and community representatives and leaders from around the country as a signatory of the Australian Friends of Artsakh network. The Australian Friends of Artsakh supports upholding the rights of self-determination, calls for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and condemns any use of force and suppression against innocent populations in the region.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Armenian National Committee on the relaunch of its Adelaide branch in June 2025. Congratulations to Elena Gasparyan for taking on the leadership of this new SA chapter. Elena is well-known to many honourable members here and she wears many hats within our multicultural community, including that of President of the Armenian Cultural Association of South Australia (ACASA).

I wish to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to ACASA for its diligent work supporting newly arrived Armenians to South Australia and advocating for the Armenian community and broader multicultural community in our state, especially those impacted by this conflict. My thoughts remain

firmly with our Armenian-Australian community as we mark the fifth anniversary of the Nagorno-Karabakh war and call for the peaceful and lasting end to this terrible conflict.

I thank the Hon. Connie Bonaros, the mover, once again for bringing this important motion to the council, and I join the many honourable members here to reaffirm the South Australian parliament's decision to recognise the self-determination of the Republic of Artsakh.

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

### **DROUGHT MITIGATION**

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:16):** I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises that certain South Australian districts remain in a drought that is among the worst in recent times, and that this drought continues to place devastating mental and financial pressures on these communities, including and in particular farmers;
2. Acknowledges that this drought has severely impacted the production capacity of many farmers and food producers, notwithstanding the state government's recently announced assistance packages;
3. Recognises that small dams on farmers' properties can represent an economic lifeline for farmers, enabling them to water their livestock and irrigate their crops;
4. Urges the Malinauskas government to review its farm dam policy to allow SA farmers to have one dam—up to five megalitres in volume, and a wall height of no more than three metres—for every 100 acres of land they own, without needing a permit through Landscape Boards of South Australia;
5. Calls on the government to ensure that the installation of low-flow bypasses on farmers' properties is voluntary and remains voluntary in South Australia; and
6. Calls on the government to ensure that farmers who choose to install low-flow bypasses must do so at their own expense, not at taxpayer expense.

Today, I rise to speak to this motion on behalf of the many South Australian farmers who battled to survive one of the worst droughts on record for certain areas of our state. These farmers did not experience decent rain for many months, and some have conceded that subsequent rainfall events failed to improve their financial circumstances. Preventing farmers from freely and rapidly constructing and maintaining dams on their properties represents an unnecessary self-harm for this state, hence this motion.

Under the current conditions outlined in the Landscape South Australia Act, anyone wishing to construct or modify a dam smaller than five megalitres with wall heights of three metres or less requires a permit for something known as a water affecting activity (WAA). This WAA must be obtained from a landscape board. Meanwhile, anything larger than five megalitres or greater than three metres in height requires development approval from the farmer's local council.

While most of us are aware of delays typically involved with gaining development approvals from local government, this motion is focused on approvals from a landscape board, which is run by the state government's Department for Environment and Water. One of the conditions for applying to a landscape board is that the application must be received at least two months before scheduled construction works.

Given the unpredictable nature of both weather and farming, this two-month condition is problematic but, more importantly, after consulting with stakeholders, it has become clear to us that this lengthy and often exhausting permit process involving a landscape board must be eliminated altogether. Farmers must be allowed to construct small dams to those dimensions—five megalitres or less in volume, wall heights of three metres or less—so they can literally get on with their business of growing and producing food for South Australia.

Allowing this controlled construction condition would allow a number of farmers to continue pursuing their livelihoods at no cost to South Australian taxpayers and at no cost to the state's environment. Indeed, as was pointed out to us, these dams also act as wetlands with their own ecosystems, plus they are flood mitigation ponds and even emergency water sources in times of fire, helping to protect lives, properties, livestock, implements and more.

Dams of this size are environmentally friendly because native wildlife come to drink out of them. One farmer estimated to our office that dams in this state would currently be collecting no more than 1 per cent of our total rainfall. Bypassing the landscape board system and allowing farmers to make decisions like this on their own land makes sense and has no downside. This proposal is about taking action to protect our state's farmers and food producers, just as the government took action to help the sector earlier this year via millions of dollars in two separate support packages.

In addition to relaxing dam restrictions, this motion also addresses growing concerns over low-flow bypasses. These devices divert water away from dams, ostensibly to environmental flows; however, the amount of water they collect for environmental flows is minimal, particularly when contrasted with the cost, which is less water to grow critical-needs food. We have received anecdotal reports that some of these low-flow bypasses are costing taxpayers up to \$50,000 each or even more. We believe the only reason many farmers are agreeing to have them installed is that they have been told that, if they do not have them installed now at taxpayer expense, eventually they will be forced to install them at their own cost.

No wonder farmers are reluctantly signing up; they are effectively being threatened. That is why this motion calls for the installation of low-flow bypasses to remain voluntary in South Australia and for any installed in future to be funded by the individual farmer, not taxpayers. That is a win for farmers and taxpayers and has zero negative effect on the environment. To summarise, the dam section of this plan would not cost taxpayers an extra cent but would save jobs, livelihoods and more, and the low-flow bypasses section of this plan would actually save taxpayers money. Both would help protect farmers and keep them growing critical-needs food.

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

#### **NATIONAL DROUGHT POLICY**

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (16:21):** I move:

That this council—

1. Notes that a national drought policy was established in 1992 to provide a coordinated nationally consistent approach to drought;
2. Acknowledges that throughout the 1990s drought was progressively removed from natural disaster classifications as governments adopted a proactive risk-management framework;
3. Recognises that in 2013 the Intergovernmental Agreement on National Drought Program Reform replaced disaster relief measures with preparedness and resilience initiatives, including farm management deposits and concessional loans;
4. Notes that from 2014 drought was formally excluded from national disaster funding arrangements;
5. Acknowledges that the 2013 agreement was reviewed in 2017, with industry groups calling for greater national consistency;
6. Recognises that in 2018 the National Drought Agreement was signed, continuing the emphasis on preparedness, risk management, and resilience;
7. Notes that the 2020 Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements identified the policy gap created by the exclusion of drought from natural disaster classifications;
8. Notes that algal blooms represent an emerging and unprecedented challenge to South Australia and its regions;
9. Notes conflicting views about whether marine environmental disasters, including the algal bloom event in South Australia, are captured under the existing natural disaster frameworks; and
10. Acknowledges calls for a new national framework for managing significant marine mortality events and marine environment disasters whether through a new mechanism or explicit reform of the existing framework.

The final report of the Independent Review of National Natural Disaster Governance Arrangements, chaired by Dr Robert Glasser and released in October 2024, noted the Australian government's 2011 National Strategy for Disaster Resilience stated that: 'It is uncommon for a disaster to be so large that it is beyond the capacity of a state or territory to deal with effectively.' The Glasser report went on to say:

Those words, and the systems, policies and funding and governance arrangements underpinning them, are now out of date...

The climate is continuing to warm rapidly. We are now entering uncharted waters, where our historical experience in a broad array of areas, including our experience of disasters, is no longer a reliable guide for what lies ahead. This has enormous consequences for how we prepare for these extreme events and for how we structure and manage our national governance arrangements...

The climate science suggests that globally we can anticipate, among other things, more frequent, longer and hotter heatwaves; coastal flood risks from accelerating sea-level rise as well as torrential downpours and intensifying storms causing flooding; altered distribution of pests and pathogens; ocean heating and acidification; hotter and longer bushfire seasons; and longer and drier droughts...

Climate change will dramatically increase the frequency and severity of many of these hazards. The number of record hot days in Australia has doubled in the past 50 years, and heatwaves have become longer and hotter.

Our state has faced devastating droughts over the last two decades, from the Millennium Drought to the severe dry spells of recent years, that have seen once productive paddocks reduced to dust bowls. These are disasters not just of climate change but of community. They lead to stock losses, financial hardship and farm closures, and tragically they contribute to mental health crises in rural and regional areas. Drought might not level houses in a single night like a bushfire does, but it slowly, silently and comprehensively tears at the fabric of communities.

Similarly, our coastal communities are being smashed by an entirely different kind of slow, silent apocalypse, an algal hammer blow to our seafood and tourism sectors. These algal blooms, driven by a complex mix of warming ocean temperatures, nutrient pollution, water movement and climate change, have led to massive loss of our marine wildlife and fish stocks and devastation of marine habitats. For the seafood sector, one of the pillars of South Australia's regional economy, this is an existential threat. For tourism operators in our coastal regions, it is a nightmare scenario, yet still the commonwealth refuses to call it out for what it clearly is: a natural disaster.

Droughts not only exacerbate natural disasters, such as algal bloom. I believe they are inextricably linked to the federal government's reluctance to declare the algal bloom catastrophe a natural disaster. Let me first take the chamber back to the history of drought policy in this country. I am not lecturing anybody on this. I know that we all know this, but I think it is worthy for the record.

According to the commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website, drought policy in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century focused on attempts to droughtproof agriculture by expanding irrigation. In 1971, government policy shifted to recognise drought as a natural disaster. This allowed affected people to be helped through joint commonwealth and state Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, but in 1989 drought was removed from the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements.

A review found that previous drought policy was poorly targeted, it had distorted farm input prices and it worked as a disincentive for farmers to prepare for drought. The response to the review was the National Drought Policy announced in 1992 and the objectives of that policy included encouraging primary producers and other sectors of rural Australia to adopt self-reliant approaches to managing for climate variability. The policy set up assistance programs, including grants and interest rate subsidies, and also income support for farmers within declared exceptional circumstances and areas designated boundaries.

In May 2013, the Australian state and territory primary industries ministers agreed to the Intergovernmental Agreement on National Drought Program Reform, known as the IGA. The IGA recognised that farm businesses needed to prepare for drought, rather than rely on governments' response as an exceptional circumstance. Focus shifted again to concessional loans, a nationally consistent approach to debt mediation and an enhanced farm management deposits scheme.

A preceding report found EC declarations and related drought assistance programs did not, in fact, help farmers improve their self-reliance, preparedness and climate change management. With the IGA, there would be no formal declarations of drought for exceptional circumstances or at any other level, and that is still the case today.

In 2017, a review of the IGA received industry submissions outlining a need for greater consistency and harmonisation across states, more transparency in measuring outcomes and fairer

national support arrangements. The review saw the IGA replaced. In 2018, the Council of Australian Governments signed a new National Drought Agreement, which continued the emphasis again on preparedness, resilience and risk management. It still excluded, though, droughts from national disaster classifications, again meaning no disaster-style relief payments.

Under the current Australian government drought policy, aligned to the National Drought Agreement 2024 to 2029 and I quote the DAFF 2024, Australian Government Drought Plan, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Canberra:

...acknowledges that farming is a business, and drought is one of many business risks that should be planned for and managed. It also reflects that farmers are responsible for making decisions about how to manage their businesses across the drought cycle.

Algal blooms often associated with drought conditions present what we know is an emerging challenge, and are similarly not adequately being addressed under current national frameworks. According to the Global Plant Council, drought events and intense rainfall are both associated with climate change, and they both exacerbate bloom conditions because intense rainfall is associated with increases in nutrient run-off, and drought events can cause concentration of nutrients in waterways.

In SA, the bloom has now spread to an area spanning more than 4,500 square kilometres since it was pinpointed off the Fleurieu Peninsula back in March, and according to the peak national body, Seafood Industry Australia, led to the death of roughly 13,800 marine animals and counting across 400 species, including fish, shark, rays, sea dragons, cuttlefish, octopus, shellfish and even birds and mammals. Scientists are still unable to predict how long it will last.

Last month, I successfully proposed an amendment in this place to the Emergency Management Act to explicitly list strategies relating to emergencies that cause or threaten to cause damage to marine environments, including marine flora and fauna. That amendment was passed in this place and in the other, meaning that marine events such as the current algal bloom crisis will have to be responded to by the state as a natural disaster in line with other events that are declared under the EMA such as bushfires and floods.

The Emergency Management Act establishes a framework for managing emergencies, including preparation, response and recovery from various hazards. The Premier, to his credit, acknowledged that the algal bloom is a natural disaster when he said on the ABC in July:

I want to be really clear about this. This is a natural disaster. I think politicians can do themselves a disservice when they get caught up in technicalities. This is a natural disaster. It should be acknowledged as such.

Our Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, refuses to do the same. During a visit to Adelaide, I think it was last month, he merely said the commonwealth had 'acknowledged it as a significant ecological event'. Federal environment minister, Murray Watt, seemed himself to be caught up in technicalities when he said in July that the algal crisis did not meet the definition of a natural disaster under the country's laws. Minister Watt was quoted by the ABC as saying:

The fact is that as the Commonwealth's Natural Disaster Framework currently exists, it doesn't consider an event like this to be a natural disaster.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet defines natural disaster as events that pose significant risks to life, property and the environment. That same department, back in November 2020, under the then Morrison government, acknowledged that the 2020 Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements concluded that the commonwealth government has the power to and should play a greater role in relation to natural disasters on a national scale. To quote the department:

For such disasters, the Royal Commission found that the Commonwealth should be able to declare a state of national emergency, supported by clear legislation. This includes the ability to take unilateral action, whether or not a state has requested assistance, subject to a high threshold. The Royal Commission found such a declaration would be the catalyst for a more coherent, pre-emptive and expeditious mobilisation of Commonwealth resources.

The Morrison government at the time welcomed the recommendation, which, to quote the government's words:

...recognises that such a declaration is necessary in an 'all hazards' approach to national natural disaster events, including those beyond floods and fires.

So why not droughts? And why not an unprecedented algal bloom crisis, which *Australian Geographic* called 'a catastrophe unlike anything seen before in the Southern Hemisphere'?

This year, the South Australian agriculture sector was again hit by severe drought. Only last month, Premier Malinauskas announced more than \$1 million in funding for extra deliveries of fodder and a free technical advice service for impacted farmers. The state government said its \$73 million drought package had assisted more than 3,000 farmers with on-farm infrastructure grants, while almost 2,000 farmers have benefited from the delivery of 16,000 tonnes of hay through the Donated Fodder Transport Drought Assistance Scheme.

What is also needed is for the federal government to step up to the plate, including reinstating drought as a natural disaster. Drought is not an occasional inconvenience. It is a recurring natural disaster in this country, one as destructive as floods, cyclones and bushfires. When a flood strikes, emergency funds are rightly mobilised. When fire rages, relief is delivered. But when drought strikes, our farmers do not fare nearly as well. Farmers in regional SA have reported failing crops, soaring feed costs and dwindling stock water. Without sustained drought support, we risk not only the collapse of family farms but the long-term viability of entire regions.

Families who have farmed for generations will be forced from the land unless they are given access to no or low-interest loans, one of the state's peak agriculture bodies told *The Advertiser* again last month. Grain Producers SA Chief Executive Officer, Brad Perry, joined farmers in calling for either the state or the federal government to increase their drought relief packages to offer no or low-interest loans. I know this is an issue that has been ventilated in this place, particularly by the member opposite, the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, exhaustively. Mr Perry has told *The Advertiser*.

Our number one priority now is for no or low-interest loans. Ideally, we'd love it to be a joint response...but we just can't bring the federal government to the party, and we feel that our last hope is with the state to provide that support.

While we contend with drought on the land, we know another crisis is devastating our shores and the communities who rely on them. The algal bloom outbreak, dubbed the 'algae Armageddon' by *Australian Geographic*, is choking our waters. As mentioned yesterday, it has killed thousands of marine creatures, it has upended our ecosystems and it threatens to drive visitors away from once-pristine beaches, impacting our seafood and tourism economies. It threatens our international seafood trade, which is worth hundreds of millions of dollars to the South Australian economy.

For South Australia, a state defined by its coastline, seafood and clean natural environment, this is shaping up to be a disaster of biblical proportions. There have been reports of calamari or squid not being sighted in Gulf St Vincent for months. A Senate inquiry into the bloom crisis, as we know, held hearings across Adelaide, Port Lincoln, Ardrossan and Victor Harbor last week. We have heard from Port Lincoln Mayor Diana Mislov, who told the inquiry that fishermen were struggling to catch fish in the Spencer Gulf. She said as quoted in the press:

We're feeling it in our bays—the fish just aren't biting, they are not there.

She said fishermen were having to drive to the West Coast, taking their boats over 600 kilometres away, and fish there.

The Senate also heard warnings from the seafood industry of dramatic layoffs over the next 12 to 24 months. A visit to Yorke Peninsula, which is a destination point for fishing and tourism, seems more today like a visit to a ghost town. If you are in touch with locals there you will know that there is simply no activity in those surrounding towns. An SA government business submission says some businesses have reported revenue losses already of as much as 90 per cent year on year, and this is an industry that contributes towards \$12 billion of economic activity and supports over 70,000 jobs across this nation.

Let's talk about the elephant in the room that we do not appear to want to be addressing when it comes to the algal bloom and declaring it a natural disaster in SA. I remind honourable members that the Premier himself has said, 'Make no mistake, this is a natural disaster.' Why is it inextricably linked to drought? As mentioned previously, the government has over the last few



decades moved from that reactive to a proactive national disaster framework, with drought removed from the list of contributing factors that trigger emergency relief and recovery. The new shift in policy focuses on resilience and risk management and preparedness and diversifying businesses to deal with climate changes that could result in drought.

Why the shift? If you ask a lot of experts and commentators, they will tell you in a nutshell that drought was simply costing too much. It has been suggested that algal bloom cannot be captured by the current emergency relief framework. That is questionable, and we would know in this place that is highly questionable. But, even if, as federal Minister Watt has suggested, that were to be true, the next question has to be: why have not the necessary tweaks been made to make it happen? We know governments have the ability to react quickly and swiftly to legal shortcomings or to emergencies when they need to. COVID is a perfect case in point. They know that federally, and we know that here at a state level. You can move mountains overnight in government if you need to.

Why have not those tweaks been made to capture algal blooms and why has not the federal government declared a natural disaster in SA? As I said, I tend to agree with those commentators who say that, if we declare algal bloom a natural disaster, what do you think will happen next? There will be a massive push to reinstate drought. It is not that hard to wrap your head around. If it is good for the waters, then it is good for the land, and that is something the federal government does not want to see happen.

The state government is working on a summer plan for algal bloom. I am exceptionally proud of the work that I have done with the peak bodies and the government in the background in getting the responses that we have had to date, and have given my commitment to those communities and to those peak bodies to keep working with the government in terms of that summer plan. But I tell you, we have had plans for a \$675,000 200-metre by 100-metre air bubble curtain trial to protect cuttlefish in the Upper Spencer Gulf, with the Premier reportedly saying in October that it is likely for the summer plan to help businesses.

I am delighted the state government is extending and expanding the availability of business grants on offer for those impacted by the algal bloom. I am absolutely supportive of the fact that we brought forward and lowered the threshold for businesses, those who can enter the scheme to be captured by the current thresholds, but there is much yet to be done and we will all be looking at that summer plan very closely. The algal bloom outbreak in this state might not be the only one, and we simply do not know what is to come.

In one of the 115 submissions to the inquiry into the algal bloom disaster, Flinders University Professor of Water Economics Sarah Wheeler wrote:

...given the difficulties to control—let alone reverse—this type of event, there is a possibility that we are witnessing a tipping point of climate change (with irreversible and long-term implications).

She says that the tipping point is where an effect has crossed a certain threshold, and from that point on it triggers a larger and more significant transformation, having an impact far wider and greater than anything that might have been first predicted. She wrote:

From an economic perspective, the destruction of the algal bloom is akin to the destruction of the capital stock of numerous unique ecosystems, with profound effects on fishing, tourism, recreation, physical and mental health and more generally the willingness of a population to live close to such a compromised ecosystem.

Professor Wheeler says that the commercial fishing industry in South Australia was worth around \$478 million in 2023-24, based on a PIRSA 2025 report, while the recreational fishing is estimated to be worth about a billion dollars and generating up to \$10 billion in tourism value, based on a SA Tourism Commission report of 2024. Some would say that value of \$478 million is probably closer to \$750-odd million, but the bottom line is that it is the lifeblood of our coastal regional communities. She also says research suggests that the recreational fishing industry may have been worth about \$1.73 billion in direct expenditure in 2024-25.

I am pleased to note that the government's submission to the Senate mirrors my call for a new national framework for managing significant marine mortality events and marine environmental disasters, whether through a new mechanism or explicit reform of the existing framework. The submission from the South Australian government states:

The...government has acted to strengthen its legislative framework by explicitly requiring marine environment emergencies to be incorporated into the State Emergency Management Plan. However, broad national reform is required. The recognition of algal blooms and other protracted natural disasters under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements would provide an essential mechanism for supporting communities, industries, and ecosystems in responding to these complex, climate-driven events.

The submission goes on to state:

The Commonwealth's DRFA does not recognise algal bloom or marine heatwaves as eligible natural disasters, despite their catastrophic impacts. The DRFA should be amended to explicitly include long-onset and complex emergencies, such as harmful algal blooms and biological events. These events, while different in nature from rapid-onset disasters, can cause equally devastating social, economic, and environmental impacts.

The government's submission states:

Updating the national architecture to recognise and support such events would ensure that states are not left to navigate them alone, and that the Commonwealth can play its critical role in providing resources, funding, and coordination.

The SA government submission goes on to state:

If the Commonwealth is not willing to recognise harmful algal blooms and similar events under the DRFA, then an alternative mechanism should be established.

That is precisely what this motion is asking us to acknowledge. I am not calling on anyone to do anything; I am simply asking us to acknowledge these factors, most of which are actually acknowledged and indeed relied upon by the government in its own Senate submission.

Seafood Industry Australia has echoed the state government's position. They have said that Australia's siloed governance arrangements were criticised in the Glasser report, which urged strengthening coherence across the emergency management spectrum. Integration of aquatic resource disasters into the existing natural disaster framework would be consistent with the thrust of the Glasser review.

The Senate inquiry's final hearing is on the 24<sup>th</sup> of this month and they are due to report on 28 October. Needless to say, the feds are on notice. They do not want a war on their hands. If they do not want that war on their hands then they best get prepared to deliver for South Australia's marine environment and the communities and sectors that are impacted. A \$14 million cash injection mirrored by the states in July is welcome but it is a tiny drop in a vast and contaminated ocean.

Nobody has to agree with anything I have said about climate change. I appreciate that there are lots and lots of discussions—and I can see that on my own social media pages—about what the causes of this crisis are and what role algal bloom plays. Some have suggested desal plants. There are lots and lots of discussions—

**The Hon. D.G.E. Hood:** Sitting tonight?

**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** That is not my suggestion. There are lots and lots of discussions in those communities that are impacted about what has caused this crisis in South Australia. You do not have to believe in climate change to expect the federal government to step up and do the right thing by South Australia, which is currently experiencing an unprecedented marine natural disaster the likes of which our state has never seen before.

It is easy to forget that we do have to turn our minds to so many questions that we simply cannot answer today. It is easy for us to all get up in here and ask questions, but the bold, harsh truth remains—and I have faith in the seafood and fishing industry perhaps more than I do in politicians in this place—that we simply do not know what the short and medium and long-term impacts of this crisis will be on our state, but we expect it to be ongoing and we know we need long-term measures for every community of every industry that is being impacted.

To do not nearly enough is to gamble precariously with the future of South Australia—with our jobs, with our industries, with our ecosystems, and with an enviable way of life we have taken for granted for so long.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. D.G.E. Hood.

## ANTIRACISM

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (16:50):** I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises that multiculturalism and diversity are our state's greatest strengths and that the valuable contributions of our multicultural communities shape the social, cultural and economic development of South Australia;
2. Rejects all forms of racism, discrimination and hatred and condemns those who would sow fear and division in order to weaken our social cohesion;
3. Stands in solidarity with our diverse communities and notes that Neo-Nazi rhetoric and rallies such as the March for Australia demonstrations cause distress, division, fear and harm for migrant communities;
4. Affirms that everyone has the right to feel safe and welcome in our society and stands together with our diverse communities who have been impacted by the anti-immigration movement;
5. Acknowledges the ongoing strength, resilience and leadership of South Australian multicultural communities in their antiracism efforts; and
6. Calls on the Australian government to review the national antiracism framework, implement strategies to combat racism, engage with disaffected individuals and groups and safeguard the safety and wellbeing of our community.

As a first-generation migrant, like many others, I am proud to be an Australian and at the same time cherish my cultural heritage. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities that Australia has given to me and my family. I believe we all aspire to live in a better community, a community that is characterised by trust, respect, open communication and shared values, fostering an inclusive and harmonious environment where people feel valued and connected.

Australia is a multicultural country. I truly believe that multiculturalism and diversity are our greatest strengths. I cannot count the number of times I have stood in this chamber and declared how fortunate we are that our diverse multicultural communities contribute to every level of our economy and society. I have spoken many times on the anniversaries of major multicultural communities that have contributed to South Australia.

Migrants and their descendants from over 200 countries call South Australia home, and their valuable contributions continue to shape every aspect of life in our amazing state. From the Afghan and Indian cameleers who helped explore and map the outback in the 1800s, to the Italian, Greek and European migrants who helped build our postwar economy, to the vibrant contributions of the Vietnamese, Indian, Chinese, Nepalese, African, Ukrainian, Afghani, Pakistani, and many other emerging communities today, our diverse communities have shaped our history and our social, cultural and economic development in profound ways.

Everyone in our community has the right to feel safe, to feel welcome, to live peacefully, and to engage fully in our society, no matter where they come from or what their cultural background may be. There is no place for hatred or racism in Australia. I recognise racism because I experienced it as a young teenager at school, when I was called 'ching chong' or 'wog'. I went to conferences around Australia during the time when Pauline Hanson was elected, and I was targeted. There were groups calling 'Heil Hanson' and all my friends had to stand around me and protect me. I understand what racism is about because I experienced it.

A March for Australia rally sounds benign, it even sounds patriotic, but people who planned to attend the March for Australia rallies around the country were marching alongside white supremacists and Neo-Nazis. The march is advertised as being about ending mass immigration. The media and anti-fascism activists have revealed that some of the organisers of the marches have posted white nationalist ideas like remigration, including pro Nazi or pro Hitler memes, and threatened violence.

More than one politician has voiced support for the March for Australia, including Independent MP Bob Katter, who threatened to punch a journalist for mentioning his Lebanese heritage when questioning him about his support for the anti-immigration rallies. These marches can be seen as part of the pattern of Neo-Nazis and fascists becoming more and more emboldened in

Australia and overseas, using anti-immigrant sentiment to bring extremist ideas like the mass deportation of non-white people into the mainstream.

The hateful white supremacist language, the calls for violence and the talk of mass deportation make it clear that the March for Australia has a much more sinister agenda at its heart. After the Melbourne march, the Neo-Nazi group NSN boasted a surge in membership, meaning it was on track to overtake the Liberal Party membership within 18 months, it was reported.

Of course, we cannot forget it is just six years since an Australian white supremacist massacred 51 people and injured 80 others during Friday prayers at a mosque in Christchurch. There have also been threats that violence will be used at the March for Australia. Sydney organiser Bec Freedom was confronted by the 2GB host Ben Fordham with an audio clip of her saying, 'We need to see violence at the march.' She later apologised, but she continued to be recorded advising people how to introduce far-right ideas to make them sound more palatable to the mainstream.

So: protect Australian heritage, culture and way of life. The next step: protect European culture, heritage and way of life. The next step is to protect white heritage. Protect white heritage—it could not be more blatant that the far right is carefully using anti-immigration sentiment in the community, trying to bring these white supremacist ideas into the mainstream. The ANU School of Sociology's Simon Copland has warned this should be seen as a red flag.

This fresh wave of anti-immigrant protests across Australia has certainly taken an unsettling turn with South Asian communities, particularly Indians, being targeted through racist rhetoric, misinformation and violent attacks. While it was framed as a protest against government immigration policy and rising living costs, the event was heavily influenced by far-right groups and featured overtly racist messaging, particularly targeting South Asian migrants.

Protesters have seized on migration figures or inflated border arrival numbers to claim Australia is suffering under record high immigration, despite net overseas migration actually falling by 37 per cent from a 2022-23 peak of 538,000 to 341,000 by December 2024, as per the federal government's figures cited in *The Guardian*.

Political leaders, including the Liberal Coalition, such as Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, Australia's main centre-right party alliance, and Pauline Hanson, a right-wing populist known for her anti-immigration stance, have echoed housing related anxieties tied to immigration. Blaming migrants, especially communities of colour, for housing woes contradicts Australia's own settlers colonial history. European colonisation from 1788 onward led to Indigenous dispossession, yet today migrants from South Asia are framed as threats to the Australian dream. South Australia's multicultural community has raised these concerns with me, and have described the fear, hurt and disappointment sparked by the anti-immigration rallies held across Australia. Some even compare it to memories of the White Australia policy.

We all have the right to protest, and there are some genuine people who are concerned about the cost-of-living crisis and housing issues, etc. They have their reasons to be there, of course, but demonstrators have given different reasons for attending. Many have said that there were too many overseas arrivals and their fear is that Australia has become too multicultural. Organisers of the events have been linked to white nationalist views, as I mentioned before, and they claim that the events were about standing up for Aussie culture. Is this a representation of the modern Australia that we want to be?

That is why I want to bring this motion to this parliament. I want to listen to what other honourable members have to say about this. I want to hear their views. I want to have a rightful debate. I want to hear from the government and the opposition and the crossbench members how they feel about this, and whether they are serving constituents who have brought these issues up to them directly as well. I do not want this to be swept under the carpet. My motion also reinforces the need for constant advocacy for multicultural Australia and the strength that the broader multicultural communities can give—and have given—to this country.

There were matters that have been brought to my attention such as chants of 'Send them back. Stop the invasion' being heard loud and clear. Some attendees openly told me that there are too many Muslims and Indians here. This is not a genuine policy debate; this is blatant racism. Let

us be clear: these demonstrations were not about housing or infrastructure, they were a smokescreen for hate.

History teaches us that during times of economic uncertainty far right movements deliberately spread misinformation to manipulate mainstream discourse and exploit legitimate anxieties to scapegoat migrants. In the 1930s, the Great Depression fuelled xenophobic policies across Europe. During the height of the COVID pandemic, we saw politicians and media blaming migrant communities for spreading the virus, misleading and offensive references to the 'Chinese virus' and headlines such as 'China Kids Stay Home' published on the front pages of Australian newspapers.

Fake news and misinformation spread rampantly online to instil fear, incite hatred and trigger a racist us versus them mentality. We are seeing this exact formula being deployed again. These rallies were not isolated incidents. They were part of a coordinated effort to sow fear and division, exploiting economic anxieties to scapegoat migrants and disrupt social harmony in our society.

The Neo-Nazi rhetoric and imagery of these rallies cause real harm. Members of migrant communities were sharing safety tips and advising individuals and families to avoid going out in public areas because they feared being the targets of verbal or physical abuse based on their appearance or accent.

We have seen reports from teachers highlighting the alarming surge in Nazi slurs and racist taunts in our schools since these anti-immigration marches took place. One teacher reported that a group of white teenage students chanted 'Deport, deport, deport' and 'Go back to your own country' at a Muslim classmate, ignoring staff efforts to intervene and make them stop.

In the past, Neo-Nazis have worn masks and hidden their identities when marching in public, but the fact that they felt emboldened to show their faces and openly label themselves as Neo-Nazis should be of utmost concern to us all. It shows that they feel they are making headwind and becoming part of mainstream discourse. As housing prices soar and public services strain, some seek easy answers, but blaming migrants is not only wrong, it is dangerous. It is misrepresenting and it is misleading.

Experts have shown that immigration is not the root cause of our housing crisis. There are many factors, including policy settings and systemic underinvestment in housing availability and social housing. In fact, the statistics show that the divorce rate of 50 per cent has a far greater impact on housing availability than migration. We must not let economic frustration be weaponised into racial hatred. We must stand in solidarity with our diverse communities, who bear the brunt of these hateful, harmful and false narratives and who have been deeply impacted by the anti-immigration movement.

Despite all this, our multicultural communities continue to lead the fight against racism and promote social harmony, mutual understanding and compassion. I wish to acknowledge and pay tribute to the ongoing strength, resilience and leadership of South Australian multicultural communities in their antiracism efforts. From organising forums on social cohesion to providing support and assistance to the most vulnerable members of our community, their advocacy and efforts to promote intercultural dialogue and respect are remarkable, in the face of adversity particularly.

But they should not have to shoulder this burden alone. This motion calls on the Australian government to review the National Anti-Racism Framework. The framework, launched in late 2024, outlines 63 recommendations across the legal, health, education, media and justice sectors. It proposes a whole-of-society approach to dismantling racism and promoting inclusion. It is the first time we have had a national approach to addressing racism, and it is underpinned by antiracism. This means it aspires to more than simply not being racist; rather, antiracism involves identifying, challenging and dismantling racism at the individual level, structural level and institutional level, including parliament.

We must implement the recommendations and strategies outlined in the framework. This will require sustained, coordinated and meaningful action. It is vital that we work together to combat racism, engage with disaffected individuals and groups and safeguard the safety and wellbeing of our community. I call on all honourable members to support my motion, to stand against all forms of racism, discrimination and hatred and to continue to advocate for a more inclusive and harmonious

society. Acts of fearmongering and incitement of racial hatred have no place in modern Australia. I commend the motion.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (17:08):** I rise to speak in favour of the motion, and in so doing I want to commend the Hon. Jing Lee for her leadership in putting this matter before us for discussion today. I also thank her for sharing a bit about her personal story and for the leadership that she provides to multicultural communities in our state. I know that the honourable member engages regularly with those communities and does a lot of work in terms of amplifying the voices of those communities in this chamber, so I acknowledge that and I thank her for that leadership.

I want to indicate my unequivocal support for the motion that the honourable member has put forward today. Racism should have no place in our state. Our state, and indeed our nation, has been enhanced by the enormous contribution that has been made by migrant communities. Indeed, our state and our nation are great examples across the world of a truly multicultural society and we are strengthened and enriched by the enormous contribution that is made to our migrant communities.

I, like so many South Australians, was deeply distressed, saddened and outraged to see the anti-immigration rallies that happened right across the country and to see that happen right here in our home state, and I condemn those rallies. I am particularly concerned about the way in which white supremacist language is becoming normalised in our politics. It is rhetoric that I think is coming from the United States and is being normalised through the presidency of Donald Trump and it is now finding its way into the political discourse in Australia. It should have no place, and those who seek to sow the seeds of division in our society should be condemned absolutely because everybody should feel comfortable, safe and welcome in South Australia.

Like the honourable member, I have heard some of the experiences of people from migrant communities in South Australia in recent weeks who have reported feeling unsafe and uncomfortable, particularly on the day of those rallies, and I think that is really regrettable and really reinforces why it is so important that we have this discussion in the parliament today so that all members have an opportunity to make it clear that they reject racism and they reject what we are seeing, which is racist dog whistling seeking to scapegoat migrant communities for the problems that we are dealing with in our economy.

The reality is that migration is fundamental to our economic growth, and I refer to a report that has been prepared by Migration Council Australia that looks at some independent economic modelling, which was completed in 2014 and 2015 by the Independent Economics group. What that found was that Australia's projected population will significantly increase by 2050 and that migration will contribute \$1.6 trillion to Australia's GDP.

Moreover, the report finds that this increase in migration would have added 15.7 per cent to our workforce participation rate, 21.9 per cent to after-tax real wages for low-skilled workers and it would have added 5.9 per cent in GDP per capita growth, so migration is fundamental to our economic growth. It is also fundamental to our social value and diversity as a community and we in our state and our nation have drawn so much from the diverse experiences of the many people from across the globe who have come to call Australia home.

I also want to indicate that this matter continues to be an issue of key concern for the Greens. Indeed, my colleagues in Canberra have been strong advocates for a retention of the Racial Discrimination Act, opposing attempts to try to repeal section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act. We do not want to see a licence being provided for bigotry. Any attempt to water down racial discrimination protections runs the risk of providing a forum for bigotry and for this scapegoating to occur.

I also want to address one of the key claims that seems to be made in these rallies that somehow migration is to blame for the housing crisis and the cost-of-living crisis that we are dealing with in our state. That is just complete nonsense. That is a complete confection by the far right, who are deliberately using this rhetoric to try to stigmatise a group in our society.

The reality is we know that the housing crisis has been caused by a failure of governments over many generations to appropriately invest in housing, affordable housing and social housing. We

know that it is also being caused by tax arrangements that are in place at a federal level that make it very attractive for people to invest in housing and to use housing as an asset class. Negative gearing and the like, all of these things combined, have priced people out of the housing market.

In terms of the cost-of-living crisis, we know that the main driver of that is an economic system that has been focused on corporate greed and wealth accumulation of the few at the expense of the many. These are the things that are driving inequality in our society and that are pricing people out of our housing market. It is not the fault of migrant communities or those who have moved to our state and now call Australia home.

So I strongly support the motion. I join with the honourable member in repudiating in the strongest possible terms those racist views that were expressed at that rally and, indeed, the displays of racism that we saw. It should have no place in South Australian society, and our strength lies in our diversity as a community.

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (17:16):** I rise to support this motion and thank the Hon. Jing Lee for bringing it before this place to give us an opportunity as leaders in our community to make some statements for our communities and for cohesiveness within our diversity. I strongly support the motion that the Hon. Jing Lee has brought here. I recognise that multiculturalism and diversity are some of our state's greatest strengths and that the valuable contributions of our multicultural communities shape the social, cultural and economic development of our state.

Indeed, I also stand in solidarity with our diverse communities and note that the Neo-Nazi rhetoric and rallies that were a hallmark of the March for Australia demonstrations have caused distress, division, fear and harm, especially for migrant communities, and I would also say for First Nations communities, some of whom have questioned how March for Australia is not inclusive of them. Indeed, in some ways it has reappropriated the Aboriginal flag. That has been called out by First Nations Australians for what it is: a sham.

Those March for Australia rallies around the nation, of course, were at first marked by a lack of awareness about what they were all about and who was really organising them. But then—surprise, surprise—at each and every March for Australia rally right across the nation, Neo-Nazis were involved, not just attending but speaking at those rallies. So for those who simply wanted a day out to celebrate being Australian, you stand with Neo-Nazis. I do not stand with you, and I do not support that action. There are much better ways you can stand for the things that Australia should rightly hold proud than to stand next to or shoulder to shoulder with Neo-Nazis.

Around those March for Australia rallies, I did observe a fear in our community and in community members, particularly from the Indian community, actually. I have a friend who is a rideshare driver. He is not Indian, but he posted online that his Indian colleagues were scared to work that day, were confused about what those rallies were about and were worried for their safety. Ironically, of course, many of them also reported taking people to those rallies to attend those rallies. As we know, there is the infamous picture of some rally attendees then going to a Chinese restaurant afterwards with their Australian flags draped over their shoulders as they tucked into, no doubt, a delicious, succulent Chinese meal.

The irony, I think, however, is lost on them, and perhaps they did not really know they were marching with Neo-Nazis. I do hold hope that not all who marched are actually racist, but I also urge them to reassess who they march with and what really is the intent here. I think the intent of these March for Australia rallies is to divide us: to divide us along the lines of ethnicity and race from other members of our community, to claim some are more Australian than others and to create the sort of horrific scenes we saw in Cronulla not that long ago. I never want to see those sorts of scenes repeated.

I therefore will stand today and affirm my commitment to our diverse communities in this country, to First Nations Australians—to the first and the last Australians, as they often say, who often get treated the worst in our society. When they get treated the worst, that is usually because of racism.

I do believe that the member has a really valid point here in terms of calling on the Australian government, but I also want to review and take this opportunity to reflect on the Everyday Racism

report that the former Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly, produced in May 2024. She was actually surprised at the time she produced that report, in which she consulted with South Australian children and young people and found the cruelty of the racism reported to her by South Australian young people from migrant communities was prevalent, to her surprise and shock.

We know, of course, that racism-based bullying is a learned behaviour and that it tends to increase as young people make their way through the school system and peaks in the senior years of school. But it is not just young people, of course, who are exposed to racism. It is at school, in our work settings and in social settings, too. Whether it is overt or covert, indirect or direct, we need to address the unpalatable fact that racism is a behaviour that is being practised right around us.

We have to change this. Our children and young people already have enough challenges to deal with without racism on top of it. The 2017 Multicultural Youth Australia Census found that 49 per cent of 15 to 25 year olds from migrant backgrounds had experienced discrimination or unfair treatment in one form or another in the previous 12 months—pretty much half of them. Sixty-seven per cent of this same group of young people had experienced racial discrimination at some point in their lives.

Not only does racism undermine a person's sense of belonging and their developing identity—their sense of self—it undermines their relationships, too. As if there are not already enough harms, racism can be a barrier to education, employment and full participation in our society and our community. Barriers that prevent access to these fundamental parts of being a human being lead to exclusion and marginalisation, and they come from that othering that I mentioned before.

It can see students leaving school early, ruling out going to university or further tertiary study and not taking up certain courses and can ultimately see young people from migrant backgrounds miss out on those critical everyday role models to whom they can relate and who can understand their experiences.

Even those of us who do not necessarily suffer racism directly can of course suffer from its consequences. Vicarious racism can lead to increased childhood illness and social and emotional difficulties, and the impacts of racism can be insidious in how they manifest. Racism can, of course, lead to really long-term intergenerational consequences.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the federal Racial Discrimination Act and, at a state level, the Equal Opportunity Act and Racial Vilification Act all seek to ensure that racism does not have a place in our communities—and rightly so—and that everyone is protected from it. These pieces of legislation demonstrate the desire of previous parliaments and our South Australian community to bring an end to this abhorrent behaviour.

Events such as the March for Australia undo that work, but we will stand against them. It is time we recognised that legislation alone is insufficient. We must ensure that our institutions and our communities embody the intent of our legislation. The recent increased racism that is currently occurring across communities, in schools and in workplaces is impacting our young people. The commissioner recommended, through the Everyday Racism report, that the recommendations of her report be implemented as soon as possible. These would aim to:

- ensure a zero tolerance approach to racism as standard practice;
- empower students and teachers to call out racism without fear of retribution;
- empower sporting clubs to implement principles of non-discrimination, ensuring that children and young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds can fully participate in sport without compromising their psychological safety; and
- provide mentoring and work experience programs so that young people can build professional skills and healthy employer relationships, a commitment to wipe out racism and simply to treat everybody with the same level of dignity and respect with which we would like ourselves to be treated.

The recommendations in the commissioner's report are yet to be implemented, I believe, and I also look to the good work of Reconciliation SA, which has discovered that First Nations Australians are



extraordinarily likely to feel that racism exists and to experience racism in their lives. More than one in two of those people in that study reported experiencing direct racism. We are not doing enough. We can do more.

With that, I congratulate the Hon. Jing Lee for her leadership, not just in this motion but in this place and in her communities. I know that she is very well respected within multicultural communities and has worked incredibly diligently for some over 15 years now as a leader. I hope that we will all consider this motion with the respect that it deserves, and I do hope that it will lead to real change. With that, I commend the motion.

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

### GREYHOUND RACING

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (17:27):** I move:

That this council notes that—

1. Greyhound racing is currently legal in only eight countries across the world, specifically being Australia, the USA, the UK, Ireland, New Zealand, China, Mexico and Vietnam;
2. While there are over 50 active tracks in Australia, there are only two operational tracks in the USA, six in New Zealand, 21 in the UK, 17 in Ireland, one in Mexico, and none in Vietnam;
3. New Zealand announced a bipartisan phased ban on greyhound racing in 2024 to take full effect in 2026;
4. Scotland and Wales have recently announced they will soon ban greyhound racing;
5. Tasmania is set to end its funding to greyhound racing by 2029;
6. The ACT banned greyhound racing in 2018; and
7. South Australia is now in the second half of the two-year timeframe first given in late 2023 when the Malinauskas government gave the greyhound racing industry notice to clean up or be shut down; and that to date slow progress is being made to that goal.

This motion notes that greyhound racing is currently legal in only eight countries across the world, specifically being Australia, the USA, the UK, Ireland, New Zealand, China, Mexico and Vietnam. While there are over 50 active tracks here in Australia and dwindling—I note the end of the Dapto Dogs in the last month—there are only two operational tracks in the USA. In fact, there is an effective ban right across that nation, except for two tracks in that country. There are only six in New Zealand, 21 in the UK, 17 in Ireland, one in Mexico and none in Vietnam.

I also draw the attention of the council to the fact that New Zealand announced a bipartisan phased ban on greyhound racing last year, in 2024, to take full effect in 2026. That ban, which was originally announced by Winston Peters when he was minister—a conservative member of that New Zealand parliament, but he acknowledged the bipartisan approach to which New Zealand was undertaking that work—has led to a phase-out plan through a committee where they are ensuring that the greyhounds who were being raced are being rehomed. But it draws concern from many here in Australia that some, if not many, of those dogs will be exported from New Zealand to Australia. There appear to be no contingency plans in Australia to address that particular concern.

Scotland and Wales have in the last two weeks announced that they will be banning greyhound racing, so the UK may not be as united in that kingdom when it comes to the support of those particular races there.

Tasmania, as we know from the state election, is now set to end funding to greyhound racing in that state by 2029 when the current round of funding expires. That Tasmanian case will be a really interesting model for South Australia to observe. We have seen greyhound racing defended by Labor governments when conservatives have attempted to ban it, as Mike Baird did back in the late 2010s with a concerted campaign against that by a Labor opposition who then became government and that ban was overturned through the Labor Party's campaigning.

In Tasmania, that campaigning did not quite have the same effect. In fact, while Labor was staunch in their support of greyhound racing to continue in that state, they were bereft of numbers in the parliament to do so. I think the Tasmanian government will be a really interesting case in point of

where the supposed lessons of a conservative government taking leadership on this sort of issue will receive a backlash, and that Labor will somehow lock in and defeat it may not necessarily be a playbook for the future.

The ACT of course banned greyhound racing in 2018, which was when New South Wales first did, and it has remained in place without controversy and without any attempts to repeal. Today—this morning, in fact—Western Australia, upon the receipt of over 26,000 petition signatures, has announced an inquiry into greyhound racing in that state. New South Wales, through controversy and the loss of the Greyhound Racing NSW chief executive officer, has also announced an inquiry in that state and a call for certain documents to be handed over for full transparency.

I will have quite a bit to say about this issue. I recognise, however, that the hour is drawing a little later than I would have thought for when I was going to get to this speech. I will seek leave to conclude my comments and finish my speech then.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Ms Game, before I call you this bill is a very important bill. It will attract attention and emotion from all sides of the bill. I will expect all members to listen in silence to other members' contributions and I certainly will not tolerate any distraction from the gallery. With that, I call the Hon. Ms Game.

#### *Bills*

### **TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (RESTRICTION ON TERMINATIONS AFTER 22 WEEKS AND 6 DAYS) AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:33):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2021. Read a first time.

#### *Second Reading*

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:33):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

When the Termination of Pregnancy Act passed the South Australian parliament in 2021, the then Attorney-General, Vickie Chapman, gave a very clear assurance to the parliament. She promised that these laws would not result in healthy babies being aborted after viability for a maternal mental health reason.

In fact, when asked directly in parliament on 17 February 2021 if a pregnancy could be aborted at 35 weeks if two doctors deemed a mental health threshold had been reached for an otherwise healthy unborn baby, Ms Chapman's answer was an emphatic 'No'. She said that if the only factor was the mother's mental health and if the baby was healthy then the safest outcome would be for that baby to be delivered alive.

But here is the reality: in the first 30 months of these laws coming into force, 79 healthy, viable babies in non-emergency situations were deliberately killed in the womb after 22 weeks and six days. That is three reception classes that are no longer with us. That is not what the parliament was promised. That is not what South Australians were promised. It is a tragedy that demands action, and if we in this chamber fail to act now more South Australian babies will die.

When people hear the phrase 'late-term abortion' many do not know what that actually means, so let me explain to you what happens to a baby after 23 weeks' gestation. As I explain this, remember that this has happened to 79 healthy babies in South Australia since July 2022 and up to December 2024. Under ultrasound guidance, an injection is given directly into the baby's heart or umbilical cord. The injection is a needle filled with potassium chloride or digoxin. It causes the baby to go through a painful cardiac arrest.

When this injection is used to euthanase animals or to kill convicted criminals on death row, sedation is given first, with the intended protocol being to sedate death row prisoners before the potassium chloride is administered. In fact, the evidence shows that if the sedation given to prisoners

is inadequate, potassium chloride causes excruciating pain as it travels through the veins and stops the heart. That is why there has been so much controversy about botched executions.

We do not do this to prisoners or animals and yet we do do it to babies in South Australia. This underscores the inhumanity and sheer barbarism of what we are doing to babies through late-term abortion. Once the baby has been killed, the mother's cervix is prepared with drugs and labour is induced. Over the course of many hours, sometimes even overnight, she goes through contractions until she delivers her baby, but because of the injection that baby is delivered stillborn. The placenta is then removed and the mother is monitored for bleeding and complications.

This is not speculation. This is the clinical process. This is what a late-term abortion is. It is the deliberate ending of the life of a viable, healthy baby, followed by induced labour and delivery. In South Australia, in just 30 months 79 healthy babies, babies who could have survived outside of the womb, have been killed in this way. This is not what the parliament was promised. This is not what South Australians were promised, and it must not continue.

Some of you may be wondering how we know these 79 babies killed after 23 weeks were perfectly healthy. How do we know they were not aborted to save the mother's life? How do we know that? Because in South Australia's annual reports on abortion there are separate data records for late-term abortions required to save the mother's life or another baby's life, or required because of a disability.

These 79 cases were not performed for either of those reasons. They were not emergencies. These babies had no life-threatening conditions. Their mother's lives were not at risk. That means that these 79 babies were healthy, viable babies and could have been born alive, yet their lives were deliberately ended in the womb. South Australians were told this would not happen. Parliament was promised it would not happen, and yet it has happened 79 times in just 2½ years. Indeed, 75 per cent of all late-term abortions in South Australia kill healthy, viable babies. We cannot look away from this. These were healthy children and their loss is a tragedy that demands justice.

Opponents of this very sensible and compassionate bill will try to argue that this will put women at risk. For example, pro-abortion activist group Fair Agenda has stated its opposition to the bill and argued, 'A woman can need access to abortion after 23 weeks because of a catastrophic diagnosis for her own health,' or because she is trying to escape an abusive relationship. Let me be clear: no woman will die under this bill. This bill makes it crystal clear that if a woman has a catastrophic diagnosis for her own health, she can still access emergency care. This bill only removes the capacity to have a late-term abortion and kill a healthy, viable baby in circumstances where the mother's life is not at risk.

Let's be clear about what good medical practice looks like. In a genuine emergency, where a mother's life is at risk—for example, with extreme pre-eclampsia, or even in non-emergency situations where her physical health is threatened—the safest and most effective treatment is to end the pregnancy by delivering the child alive. That can be done by emergency caesarean or by inducing labour without the need for foeticide. In fact, standard obstetric practice after the point of viability is exactly that: to deliver the baby.

If the mother's health is at risk, doctors act quickly to deliver her child alive. What is not normal obstetric practice is to first stop the baby's heart and then proceed to delivery. This process of a late-term abortion takes much longer—at least 12 to 72 hours to complete—and is therefore not appropriate as emergency medical care for a woman in a truly risky situation.

This shows us something very important: the deliberate killing of a baby after viability is not about protecting a mother's life. The safest, fastest and most compassionate medical treatment is to end the pregnancy and deliver the baby alive. But do not just take my word for it. Professor R.J. Norman, Professor for Reproductive and Periconceptual Medicine at the University of Adelaide and Founding Director of the Robinson Research Institute, has said this about South Australia's abortion laws:

In this law, we are operating a dual standard.

We deny human rights to a viable fetus, yet in premature birth we strive our utmost to preserve human life.

Logically, there is no difference between the potentially disposable material in the womb at 23-plus weeks and the sacred, inviolable rights that are conferred upon the baby at birth.

My recommendation is that in the case of a normal fetus the primary aim should be to deliver it alive and provide life-giving support for the child, and perinatal psychological support for the woman involved.

Activist organisations like Fair Agenda argue that a late-term abortion is necessary in order to rescue a woman from an abusive situation. But let's stop and think about that. A late-term abortion does not rescue a woman from abuse, it does not remove her violent partner, it does not end her trauma.

What it does do is end the life of a woman's child and then send the woman straight back into the very abuse that caused her pain in the first place. That is not compassion; that is abandonment. What vulnerable women in these circumstances need is genuine support and care, housing, safety, counselling and community, not a late-term abortion that compounds their trauma and robs them of their child.

Some of you may be asking why now? Why introduce this bill so close to the end of the year? My motivation is simple: I want to save these babies, and I believe every South Australian wants the same. This should be an easy bill to pass. Both the Premier and the opposition leader voted for the substance of this bill when it was presented as an amendment in 2021. Tragically, that amendment lost by just a handful of votes, and now we are living with the devastating consequences: 79 healthy, viable babies have been killed. I wager most South Australians have no idea this is happening, nor have knowledge of the brutality of abortion up to birth. Through this debate and vote I will call, I will make it my mission to ensure every South Australian knows.

I wish to acknowledge the broad support I have received for this bill, including from Love Australia, the Australian Christian Lobby, plus other pro-life groups and individuals. I also acknowledge Dr Joanna Howe, Professor of Law at the University of Adelaide, who has used her expertise to chair a committee of medical specialists in drafting this bill.

These experts come from fields including obstetrics, gynaecology, neonatology, nursing, midwifery and psychiatry. You may wonder why these experts remain anonymous. The reason is simple: they have no choice. Our peak medical bodies, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists, the Australian Medical Association and others, are dominated by pro-abortion activists who do not reflect the membership's views on late-term abortion.

For healthcare professionals to speak critically of this agenda is extraordinarily difficult, almost impossible. The people of South Australia want more from us. They do not want voices silenced. They want this debate to be heard properly and urgently because there are babies' lives on the line.

I make this commitment today: whether this parliament passes this law this term or not, I am here for at least another four years and I will make it my mission to try to save these babies. South Australians were told this would not happen. Parliament was promised it would not happen—and yet it has happened, 79 times in just 2½ years. If we fail to pass this bill, more healthy, viable babies will die. We cannot look away. These were healthy children and their loss is a tragedy that demands justice.

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

#### *Motions*

#### **BASHEER AM, MR M.R.**

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (17:46):** I move:

That this council:

1. Mourns the passing of distinguished South Australian National Football League (SANFL) administrator and stalwart, Max Basheer AM;
2. Acknowledges his immense contribution and enduring leadership across nearly 50 years of service to the SANFL, including 25 years as League President and as Chair of the South Australian Football Commission;
3. Recognises his pivotal role in the establishment of Football Park and in securing the entry of the Adelaide Football Club and Port Adelaide Football Club into the Australian Football League (AFL);

4. Acknowledges his long and outstanding career in the legal profession, including his service as honorary solicitor to the South Australian Amateur Football League; and
5. Extends its sincere condolences to Mr Basheer's daughters, Jayne and Ann, and to the Basheer family on their loss.

This motion celebrates the life of Max Rafeek Basheer AM, a pillar in our community through his longstanding and distinguished service to the legal profession in South Australia and also to the game of football, as its most outstanding administrator.

The final siren sounded on Max's extraordinary life last Sunday. He was 98. Football, particularly the AFL, and the two teams this state has in the competition, and the SANFL could have been much different had it not been for his outstanding leadership in times of crisis and upheaval. Max left an enormous legacy which I do not think will ever be forgotten: 50 years of service and 25 years as SANFL President.

There was a comment I heard on radio on Monday morning, when his passing was announced, that younger generations of football players and followers would not know much about Max's life and career. If they do not, they should. When they see his name on one of the stands at Adelaide Oval, perhaps they can take time to reflect on who he was and what he stood for.

They get to enjoy the experience and the results of his decades-long dedication, hard work, hard knocks and foremost his integrity in making football the vibrant activity we have in our community, whether it is at the highest level in the AFL and SANFL or the amateur ranks and grassroots with kids, and which also has now become inclusive with women participating.

Max's parents were Druze immigrants who had settled in Kalangadoo. He went to school at Prince Alfred College and then on to Adelaide University where he studied law. He was admitted to the bar in 1951 and enjoyed a successful career. He was a partner and then a senior partner in several law firms. Even though he had long retired from the legal profession, Max would still be seen visiting the office.

The Basheer family is well known for their strong presence in the hospitality business, running several successful hotels including the Strathmore, where I first met Max and his brother Fred, when working for *The News* afternoon newspaper. Max's nephew, David Basheer, now runs the Strathmore and other hospitality venues in the city.

Max was a handy player as a rover. He played amateur league, but could have played SANFL for Sturt had it not been for North Adelaide blocking his request to move to Unley. He also served time on the SANFL's disciplinary tribunal, where—by accounts of some former players I know—he handed out some tough suspensions.

Max came into his own steering the SANFL away from the Adelaide Oval after a protracted dispute with the South Australian Cricket Association and Sir Donald Bradman, to build a new, modern oval at West Lakes, which later became known as Football Park. It was a brave decision. West Lakes was a swamp being developed into housing and, even though it was only 13 kilometres from the city, it still seemed a long way to go. It was also bloody cold in winter and in night matches, earning the nickname 'Pleurisy Park'. It was finished in 1974. It hosted crowds of up to 80,000—grand finals, State of Origin, World Series Cricket, soccer internationals, rock concerts by some of the biggest names of the time and, of course, the beginnings of the Crows, the Adelaide Football Club in 1991, and then Port Adelaide in 1997, creating the famous Showdown rivalry between those two clubs.

The last game was played there in 2013 and the move to the new Adelaide Oval when peace was brokered with the South Australian Cricket Association. Max had a showdown of his own with Footy Park in 1978. The local council refused to allow floodlights. There was a royal commission and a court case in the Supreme Court in a battle that lasted 6½ years. Leigh Whicker, general manager of the SANFL and a close confidant of Max for more than 30 years, told me this week he was a very detailed, astute person and never left anything to chance. His heart was in the SANFL, Leigh said.

The biggest battle came in 1990 when Port Adelaide wanted to leave the SANFL and join the VFL after the Victorians had tried to woo Norwood. Four years earlier, Max and an SANFL delegation were meeting their counterparts in Western Australia who told them they were breaking

their pact with South Australia to create the West Coast Eagles and join the Victorian competition. Max and the board then created a retention scheme to keep our best players from being lured over the border and it was funded with houses that were provided by well-known Adelaide developer and philanthropist Gordon Pickard.

At the time, I was the editor of *The News*. Port Adelaide's attempt was controversial, divisive and labelled as an act of treachery. It created daily headlines, enemies who were once friends, tension and emotional scenes as the fight dragged through the courts. Max and his SANFL board kept calm, putting the interests of the game in South Australia first. As Max once said in an ABC story in 1978, South Australia—football, that is—was not even talking to the Victorians, and there was no dialogue between the two bodies, such was the bitter acrimony. Kick a Vic had its genesis at this time. Here is how Max described it to journalist Anne Johnson, the wife of legendary football broadcaster Bruce McAvaney:

No-one has any idea now of just how difficult the time was. In my office I couldn't come out the front, because there was a barrage of TV cameras and radio people and newspaper people waiting. I've been pretty low at times but, on the other side of the ledger, there have been times of real exhilaration, I mean, when we've won an interstate match, when we've beaten Victoria. It's hard to go through life in football, at the top, without having upset a few people. I reckon you could count them on one hand, if I have.

Radio broadcaster Ken Cunningham, who was a strong critic of Port Adelaide's actions, had to run the gauntlet of angry Port supporters at the Alberton Oval who were baying for his blood. He told me this week:

I really thought they were going to kill me. I had a lot of threats. They kept saying, 'You've backed the wrong horse here. It will be your downfall.'

KG is full of praise for the way Max Basheer handled the crisis and stood up to the Victorians. Quoting Ken again:

He fought them. He stood up to them. He eyeballed Alan Schwab...

He put his head on the chopping block.

He was the best administrator I've seen. He was remarkable.

There is this from football writer, author and broadcaster Michelangelo Rucci:

My lasting note on Max is a philosophical theme I wish the world could adopt.

He did not seek revenge. He did not seek ultimate victory. He sought solutions. His masterful moment in 1990 was in that meeting with the AFL where he knew who was on the other side of the table and what he wanted.

He gave Ross Oakley \$1 million to take the Crows and not Port Adelaide, well not until the second licence in 1994.

He knew the VFL wanted money. He found the solution to avoid a long and bloodied war.

He was pragmatic. He was the man for solutions.

His battle with (Sir Donald) Bradman over Adelaide Oval was a long game that he won while Bradman rolled in his grave.

But the key note—Max would win while never making the opponent feel a loss.

Imagine if he ran the world.

Our sincere condolences go to Max Basheer's family.

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

### **PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (17:56):** I move:

That this council—

1. Notes that September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month;
2. Notes that prostate cancer is one of the most diagnosed cancers in Australian men, with a profound impact on men, their partners, families and communities;

3. Notes that on average 26,000 new cases of prostate cancer are diagnosed every year across Australia, accounting for about 28 per cent of all new male cancers;
4. Notes that this equates to approximately 7,500 to 8,400 new cases of prostate cancer being diagnosed in South Australia every year;
5. Notes that there has been a substantial increase in diagnosis of prostate cancer in the past fifty years;
6. Notes that the prognosis for prostate cancer varies widely, depending on the type, stage and spread of the cancer and effectiveness of a wide range of treatments;
7. Recognises the vital role of general practitioners, nurses, specialists and allied health workers in early detection, diagnosis, treatment, recovery and survivorship of prostate cancer;
8. Acknowledges the important work of community organisations, including the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, the Cancer Council, Novartis and support groups;
9. Acknowledges that men in regional and rural communities, First Nations men, and men with a family history of prostate cancer face higher risks and often greater barriers to timely screening, diagnosis and care;
10. Encourages men, particularly those aged over 50 and younger men with additional risk factors or symptoms, to talk with their general practitioner about prostate-specific antigen testing and individual assessment, and to act early on symptoms or concerns; and
11. Commends the work underway to improve access to high-quality diagnosis and treatments, with initiatives delivered by specialist doctors, nurses, allied health professions, family and mental health supports, and better follow-up care improving all the time.

I am speaking to acknowledge that September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. I will gladly declare my interest here, as I am a recovering stage 4 prostate cancer survivor and I believe it is important that we continue to spread the message and raise awareness of this very common type of cancer among men.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in South Australia, with an estimated 1,894 new diagnoses and 264 deaths each year. In fact, there are an estimated 20,000 South Australian men alive today following a diagnosis of prostate cancer in the last 40 years, accounting for around 20 per cent of the cancer survivorship cohort in South Australia.

Notably, South Australia has one of the highest rates of prostate cancer in the world, with significant disparities in survival based on geographic distance to treatment and demographic factors such as socio-economic disadvantage. Of concern is that regional men face a 24 per cent increased risk of death compared to their urban counterparts, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men in South Australia face a 50 per cent increased risk of mortality from prostate cancer compared to non-Indigenous people.

In relation to the growing burden of prostate cancer on the South Australian community, more than 300 South Australian men are newly diagnosed with advanced and incurable stage 3 or stage 4 prostate cancers each year, with one in five South Australian men likely to be diagnosed in their lifetime.

I cannot begin to explain the personal shock I felt in January last year when my oncologist, Dr Braden Higgs, and my urologist, Dr Diwei Lin, gave me the diagnosis that I had stage 4 cancer and a high 8 out of 10 on the Gleason score, which is a scale that indicates how aggressive the cancer is and the likelihood of it spreading. All sorts of thoughts raced through my mind: my mortality, my family, my future on this earth, the gruelling radiation treatment and my work.

I chose to continue working through my treatment. I found it therapeutic even though there were side effects like lethargy. I continue the recovery process, and I am grateful to my doctors, including my GP, Dr David Anderson, who gives me sage advice about pacing myself, which is why I took a decent break recently during the winter recess. Therefore, it was disappointing for me, a recovering cancer survivor, to be ridiculed and mocked by the Premier, the Hon. Mr Koutsantonis and their Labor Party trolls.

Another startling thing I discovered on my journey was how many male friends I knew who had also gone through various stages of prostate cancer or who were experiencing prostate

problems. It is so common that it is scary. The good thing is that treatments have improved over the years, and survival rates have improved dramatically. My urologist, Dr Lin, gave me a sense of optimism that prostate cancer can be cured if caught early. There are many treatments achieving success.

One that is getting much international attention is radioligand therapies or RLTs. Novartis has been developing cancer drugs for decades and is now at the forefront of this precision oncology treatment after acquiring the technology. A trial of this targeted radiotherapy has returned impressive results overseas. Some patients in a clinical trial had in just six months completely cleared cancer that had spread around their bodies.

Michael Morris, an oncologist at New York's Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, said it was 'incredible' and 'never seen before'. In the first trial he worked on the scans were clear of cancer for about 9 per cent of the participants. In the second trial, it was 21 per cent.

So how does this new treatment work? Radiotherapy, which is used to treat about half of all cancer patients, is usually delivered from outside the body to kill cancerous cells, but healthy tissues are damaged in the process. Radioligand therapy is given intravenously as an infusion containing radioactive isotopes attached to a ligand. These are molecules that bind to receptors on cancer cells and allow a much more targeted dose of radiation to be delivered.

As the *Financial Times* of London reports, the promising therapy comes with major logistical challenges. The radioisotopes must be made in a nuclear reactor, then the radioactive drug has to be safely manufactured, transported and delivered to the patients. Novartis has spent years working to overcome these hurdles, yet other companies see the opportunities in the therapy and are racing to catch up. Novartis has seven potential radioligand therapies in 15 clinical trials, with more in preclinical testing. It is exploring different isotopes and therapies in combination and expanding into other cancers, including lung, breast, pancreatic and colon.

Once new radioligand therapies are approved the challenge is making them at scale. Novartis has purchased much of the supply of the radioactive isotope lutetium, so other companies are now looking at alternatives such as actinium. Much of this isotope is sourced from Russia, so they are also having to look for supplies elsewhere.

Once the radioactive material has been made the company has only three to five days to create the drug and deliver it to the patient before the decay process starts to make it less effective. Each vial is made for an individual patient, tailored to their planned treatment day.

Novartis has a proposal to establish South Australia as a centre of excellence in transformative cancer care. Novartis is seeking to establish an Australian-first RLT innovation partnership with the South Australian government that will, firstly, build and enhance local capabilities, spanning research and discovery, supply chain and a skilled workforce to enable clinical transition and trials of new treatments to ensure that South Australia can realise the full economic and productivity potential of RLT; and, secondly, provide South Australian patients with affordable and equitable access to Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods and good manufacturing practice certified radioligand therapies.

There are ongoing problems trying to secure a proton therapy unit here. Radioligand therapy presents an opportunity for the government to look at partnering with this advanced new treatment that is returning positive results. Like any nuclear-type treatment, there are challenges when radioligand therapy is given to patients. Unlike external radiotherapy, the radioactive material remains in the body, continuing to work after the dose is delivered. In some countries, including Germany and Japan, patients must remain isolated overnight in a radiation-proof hospital room. However, there are a few companies that can build this type of specialist facility.

Clinicians also need to be trained in how to care for these patients. In some countries, patients' urine must be collected and stored for 70 days until the radioactive material in it has decayed. These are clinicians and scientists who believe targeted therapies like RLT are the future for cancer treatments and increasing the survival rates among cancer patients. On 12 November, at Parliament House, I will be hosting an information session on RLT, and I will be sending out invitations shortly.



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

**KIRK, MR C.**

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD (18:06):** I move:

That this council—

1. Notes with deep sorrow the assassination of American political commentator Charlie Kirk on 10 September 2025;
2. Extends its sincere condolences to his family, friends, colleagues and supporters;
3. Affirms that political violence has no place in a free society;
4. Condemns all forms of political violence and intimidation; and
5. Calls on all South Australians, particularly political leaders, to commit to respectful and peaceful public discourse.

Today, I rise to move a motion that condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the assassination of Charlie Kirk and political violence in any form and to remember Charlie as a fierce believer in free speech and open debate and as a man of faith.

Charlie Kirk was not simply a commentator or a political organiser; he was a man who built a movement from the ground up around college campuses in the United States. Through Turning Point USA, he gave voice to millions of young conservatives across the United States and beyond. He stood boldly for what he believed, often in hostile environments, and he did so with clarity, conviction and an unshakable belief that free speech matters. Charlie spoke openly about his faith, he lived it and wove it through his message to the next generation. In a remarkable way, his death has amplified that testimony.

In the days since his assassination, I have had people contact me who, confronted by this murder, have reconsidered questions of their own faith. Some have been moved to explore Christianity for the first time, others to recommit themselves to a faith they once set aside, and that is a profound legacy. But we should not need to speak about legacies, we should not need to be reflecting on faith in the face of a murder, because Charlie Kirk should be alive today. He should still be debating, organising and speaking. He was assassinated for his words, and that is something every person in this chamber should find chilling.

It was not an isolated incident; it is part of a growing pattern of political violence that we can no longer ignore. We must remember Charlie Kirk as we must also remember the political assassination of Minnesota Speaker of the House, Melissa Hortman, and her husband, Mark, only a few months ago. We must remember Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro and his family, who were evacuated from their home in the middle of the night after an arson attack set fire to their house in another act of political violence. We must remember Congressman Steve Scalise, shot at a baseball field, nearly killed for doing nothing more provocative than participating in a bipartisan sporting event.

We must remember CEO of UnitedHealthcare, Brian Thompson, whom 26-year-old Luigi Mangione is accused of murdering in cold blood because of his grudge against the US health system. Luigi is somehow still celebrated for the accusations against him. We must remember the attempted assassination of President Trump. By sheer chance, by a fraction of an inch, he survived. Had that bullet landed differently, the United States would have been thrown even further into crisis.

There are many more, from both sides of politics and beyond, and all of these events, like Charlie's murder, have one thing in common: they grow out of a culture where hatred is normalised, where opponents are not just people with different views but enemies to be destroyed, where words of contempt become seeds of violence.

What has disturbed me most since Charlie Kirk's death is not just the brutal act itself but the response that I have seen on social media—not from far-left activists but from people I know personally, words like, 'People should not be killed for speaking their mind, but...' The moment the word 'but' appears, the sentence collapses. 'But' turns a principle into an excuse. 'But' shifts the focus of the crime to the victim, as if somehow Charlie Kirk or any other person killed for their opinions or political affiliation had it coming. 'But' drains away empathy and leaves only the coldness of

justification. If you truly believe people should not be murdered for their words, then there can be no 'but', no caveat, no condition, no excuse. You either stand against political violence or you allow it.

For those who have celebrated Charlie's murder, who have laughed, who have mocked, who have cheered, who have danced, those who have used their own stage, like musician Bob Dylan, to quite literally jump for joy at the death of another human being, you should be condemned for your disgraceful conduct.

Yet, I want to acknowledge this: not everyone has responded with cruelty. There have been voices from all sides of politics who have spoken with decency, compassion and shock about what has happened and I want to commend those voices. They show that even across deep divides there can still be agreement on the most basic human truth: that life is sacred and violence is never the answer. That is why we must call it out at every opportunity, call out the 'but' wherever it appears, because we should not think that Australia is immune to this violence.

We must call it out because anything else signals the kind of politics that we are willing to accept, and we must accept a higher standard. We must be willing to debate fiercely without resorting to violence. We must argue with conviction, without slipping into hatred. We must model to the community that we can disagree without destroying one another, because if we cannot then we are laying the groundwork for the same poisonous violence to take root in this country.

Charlie Kirk's life was cut short, but his message is not silenced. His courage to speak openly, his faith that guided him, his commitment to defending free speech without violence—those are the things that will endure. The challenge to us is whether we will have the same courage to stand for these principles even when it is costly: that political violence and timid acceptance of it, should you disagree with the one who is on the receiving end of the bullet, has no place in a democracy; that assassination can never be justified; that if we stop debating with words, we will end up fighting with fists and guns.

This is something Charlie Kirk himself warned about: find our disagreements respectfully, because when people stop talking that is when violence happens. Let us keep talking, no matter how much we may disagree, because what can come next is infinitely more painful and more destructive. Rest in peace, Charlie Kirk. We are all Charlie today.

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

At 18:15 the council adjourned until Thursday 18 September 2025 at 14:15.