

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

### Wednesday, 26 November 2025

**The PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens)** took the chair at 11:02 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*

#### SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (11:03):** I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable petitions, the tabling of papers, ministerial statements, questions without notice, giving of notices of motion, matters of interest and notices and orders of the day private business to be taken into consideration at 2.15pm.

Motion carried.

**The PRESIDENT:** I note the absolute majority.

#### *Bills*

#### RETURN TO WORK (PRESUMPTIVE FIREFIGHTER INJURIES) AMENDMENT BILL

##### *Final Stages*

Consideration in committee of message No. 303 from the House of Assembly.

(Continued from 25 November 2025.)

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

That the House of Assembly's amendments be agreed to.

I am pleased to advise that since this matter was last considered by the Legislative Council, the government has had extensive good faith dialogue with the leadership of the United Fire Fighters Union about the progress of this legislation. Given the parliamentary year is shortly coming to an end, neither party wants to see this delayed any further. As a result of those discussions, we have reached an agreement on a pathway which will see the list of presumptive firefighter cancers under the Return to Work Act expanded to match the list of cancers covered under the equivalent legislation in Queensland.

The House of Assembly has passed amendments to the bill to deliver on the first tranche of that. With these amendments, the bill will extend presumptive liability to include primary site cervical cancer; primary site ovarian cancer; primary site uterine cancer; primary site penile cancer; primary site thyroid cancer; primary site liver cancer; malignant mesothelioma; and reduce of qualification for primary site oesophageal cancer from 25 to 15 years.

These provisions will apply to both employed South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service firefighters as well as volunteers deemed to be employees of the Crown for the purpose of the act, such as the Country Fire Service. These provisions will also apply retrospectively to cover claims relating to injuries dating back to 1 July 2013, consistent with other presumptive cancers covered by the legislation.

These changes will come into effect immediately upon assent, rather than awaiting a separate proclamation. As part of the government's discussions with the United Fire Fighters Union, the government has also committed and places on the record its commitment that should it be re-elected at the next state election in March it will progress a bill within the first 100 days of the next

parliamentary sitting term to legislate presumptive liability for four remaining additional cancers: primary site pancreatic cancer; primary site skin cancer; primary site lung cancer; and asbestos related disease.

These four remaining items, I am advised, are the most financially complex to accurately model, and deferring them until the next term of parliament provides time to finalise costing works and ensure that the impacts of those amendments is properly accounted for before they come into effect. This approach will enable the government to immediately address our original goal of addressing cancer specifically affecting women, make significant immediate progress on other cancers affecting firefighters, and allow us to finalise existing costing work on the remaining items before the term of next parliament.

These amendments follow significant commitments to additional medical support, screening and health monitoring services for all MFS employees as part of a new enterprise agreement, which was reached in principle agreement with the government and the leadership of the United Fire Fighters Union last week. Together, these reforms will help detect and treat firefighting-related cancers as soon as possible and make it faster and easier for firefighters to have any workers compensation claims for firefighting-related cancers made and accepted.

This reform recognises the growing number of female firefighters in South Australia and the invaluable service they provide to the community. This will remove barriers to fair access to support and compensation for workplace injuries and is consistent with similar amendments introduced in other jurisdictions. We understand the United Fire Fighters Union has written to members urging them to support this bill.

I wish to place on the record the government's gratitude to the leadership of the United Fire Fighters Union, particularly secretary Max Adlam and acting secretary Peter Russell, for their constructive approach.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** Just to clarify, I stood up to speak because I had been listed to speak. I want to indicate my support for the bill. I welcome the fact that the government has taken action on this. As the minister has acknowledged, this is an issue that has been the subject of a long-term campaign from many people, including in this place but also the relevant union, and it is great to see this becoming a priority for the parliament.

Motion carried.

## SCRAP METAL DEALERS BILL

### *Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 25 November 2025.)

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (11:10):** I rise to speak on behalf of the Liberal opposition to indicate our support for this bill, which aims to bring South Australia into line with other jurisdictions in the nation with regard to the scrap metal industry. The bill seeks to require the registration of legitimate and conscientious scrap metal dealers who are not involved with criminality; ensure that transaction records are provided to police to assist with their investigations where necessary of suspicious activity; prohibit cash, cheque and in-kind payment for transactions to ensure payments are traceable; and to provide powers to police to enter, search and inspect any premises, vehicle or vessel, issuing disqualification notices where necessary.

There is indeed a pressing need for these provisions within our state, as for many years we have unfortunately grappled with the persistent problem of metal theft, which has been affecting households, small businesses, farms, local communities, transport infrastructure and even essential services. Copper cabling stripped from rail lines, stolen irrigation equipment from regional farms, catalytic converter thefts, and the targeting of construction sites in particular have become far too common in our state.

In fact, as the Minister for Police stated in the other place during his contribution, these crimes are costing South Australians millions of dollars each year, with the Master Builders Association estimating a cost in excess of some \$70 million per annum to its industry alone—imagine what that would be across all industries. I am sure members would agree that this is just utterly unacceptable

and, as the shadow minister for police again suggested, could well be pushing the price of housing up as well at a time when home ownership has regrettably become out of reach for many younger South Australians, as of course many of these materials are used in the construction of homes.

Further, as the shadow minister for police also stated in his second reading contribution in the other place, the opposition has consulted with as many stakeholders as possible within the short timeframe we have been afforded to consider this bill. The housing industry does appear to strongly support the proposed legislation, with industry bodies such as the Housing Industry Association, the Master Builders Association and the Urban Development Institute of Australia SA endorsing the provisions in this bill. The shadow minister also had the opportunity to be briefed by SAPOL, which is unsurprisingly in favour of these amendments as well.

There were some concerns raised by scrap metal dealers to the Liberal Party whilst this bill was being considered. As we understand it, they largely oppose the bill, with some of their grievances being that their contentions were not adequately heard by the government nor responded to in what they regarded as a fairly flimsy consultation process.

Through that process, however, it is evident the state government has decided that it needs to act in this regard and the opposition will support that action on this occasion; for example, the opposition notes the removal of the licensing scheme that was proposed initially, as well as the limitation of most of the operation of this act to what is a defined term 'prescribed scrap metal'. So the opposition has suggested those changes and the government has agreed to them and we see a way forward based on that.

Further, the opposition is pleased that the amendment to reduce the timeframe of review of this legislation from three years to one was supported in the other place—another initiation of the opposition in order to approve this bill because, as I said, some of the industry itself is not fully in favour of this bill and therefore a shorter timeframe, in our view, was appropriate in order to ensure that anything that needs to be rectified could be rectified in a shorter timeframe.

After indicating over nine months ago that our parliament should be expecting the introduction of this legislation, the opposition is pleased that we are finally debating it. It has taken too long, in our view. The scrap metal industry plays a significant role in our circular economy by reducing waste, promoting resource recovery and supporting jobs across metropolitan and regional South Australia, and we as the opposition believe that this legislation will not only prevent scrap metal theft in our state, which as I said is a significant problem, but will benefit the industry itself by ensuring that it is transparent, accountable and resilient.

These are somewhat difficult changes, in a sense, for the industry, but as I said it is supported broadly across other industry sectors. We believe it is about right, but we have insisted on that one-year review, rather than a three-year review as originally proposed by the government—we think that is right—and because of those changes and those concessions, if you like, we are happy to support the bill.

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (11:14):** I rise to speak on the Scrap Metal Dealers Bill 2025. This bill seeks to impose a regulatory framework in the dealing of prescribed scrap metal, and is an attempt by the government to address the rising theft of copper and scrap metal. The measures in this bill will make it more difficult to buy and sell stolen scrap metal, as well as prohibiting the use of cash and cryptocurrency and requiring the maintenance of accurate records along with proof of ID. There is also an increase in police powers to seize evidence from premises suspected of engaging in the trade of stolen scrap metal.

While I do not support the prohibition on the use of cash, and I appreciate concerns raised by the Waste and Recycling Industry Association regarding the administrative burden these proposed measures will impose on the scrap metal industry, there is widespread support from the building and construction industry for the government to address the serious issue of copper theft from building sites.

According to a report commissioned by Master Builders SA, the damage and delay caused by the removal of copper pipes and data cabling from building sites is costing the industry \$70 million

a year. Given these figures, it is clear that legislation is needed to try to stop the high volume of theft impacting the building and construction industry.

Unfortunately, the waste and recycling industry has expressed concern about being excluded from the consultation process that took place to construct the bill that is before us today, and the scrap metal industry remains concerned about the administrative burden these proposals will place on the industry. In response to these concerns there is an admission from government that the bill has been rushed through in response to active lobbying from the building industry urging the government to act as quickly as possible.

In addition to this, during a briefing with my office SAPOL expressed a commitment to work closely with the scrap metal industry to alleviate any administrative burden that might be caused by these new measures. Further to this, a review clause has also been added to the bill to provide a review of the act after three years. With this, I confirm my support for the bill and thank the stakeholders for their valuable contributions.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (11:16):** I rise today to speak on the Scrap Metal Dealers Bill 2025. This legislation aims to address a growing problem that has been plaguing our building and construction industries and hindering the delivery and maintenance of public infrastructure across South Australia.

The rampant theft of copper and other valuable metals from construction sites and vital infrastructure such as railway signal boxes causes enormous damage throughout our state. The facts are stark: copper theft alone costs our building industry an estimated \$70 million every year. These losses include not just the value of stolen materials that need to be replaced but also the cost of repairing damage, security requirements, project delays, increased insurance premiums and the disruption to businesses and home owners.

Copper prices have tripled in the last 20 years, making theft a very lucrative enterprise, with construction sites, community sports facilities and vacant buildings targeted for air conditioning units, exposed copper piping and cables. The ripple effect is significant, with thefts causing delays in housing delivery, increased costs for builders and homebuyers, and added pressure on a market that is already in crisis. Copper theft also impacts critical public infrastructure such as railways, with the theft of copper cabling in 2023 plunging the metropolitan train network into safety mode, causing significant peak hour delays.

This bill is a measured and reasonable response aimed at curbing thefts of these valuable scrap metals, introducing a narrow and targeted regulatory framework that focuses solely on prescribed scrap metals. These prescribed items include those that are commonly stolen, such as copper wiring, catalytic converters, railway fixtures and water meters. The legislation does not aim to regulate all aspects of a scrap metal business and will not impact on can and bottle recycling or other resource recovery activities that are vital to our efforts to reuse resources and reduce unnecessary landfill.

This bill introduces several key changes to curb the trade of stolen scrap metal for illegal gain, establishes a registration scheme for scrap metal dealers who deal in prescribed scrap metals and requires dealers to verify ID and keep detailed records of all such transactions. The bill also prohibits cash and cheque payments for prescribed metals to ensure that transactions can be traced, reducing incentives for criminal activity. Police will also have the power to search and inspect premises and records, issue disqualification notices and enforce compliance. Dealers will have a duty to report suspected stolen materials to the police, and there is flexibility to expand or exclude the prescribed metals and classes of persons via regulations.

It is important to acknowledge that the vast majority of scrap metal businesses in South Australia are already doing the right thing. Many already request ID when dealing with scrap metals of this kind and often report to police and assist with inquiries about suspected theft. Unlike the New South Wales legislation, which involves a yearly licensing scheme and has been widely criticised for overreach, this bill is narrowly targeted at disrupting criminal activity without unduly burdening legitimate businesses.

I note that the waste management industry has indicated reservations about the administrative impact on small businesses around electronic payment processes and record-keeping requirements. However, I have been advised that SAPOL have committed to work closely with industry to develop an online portal to reduce this burden as much as possible. Overall, I believe that

this legislation will help disrupt criminal activity by making it harder to profit from scrap metal theft that causes enormous damage to our community, industry and economy.

The construction industry has been crying out for action to address this statewide issue, and I am glad to see these sensible changes being carried out by the government. I firmly believe in policies that make our workplace and society safer, reduce crime and support businesses and economic growth. With those remarks, I support the bill.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (11:21):** I rise to indicate my support for the bill. I will not traverse the elements of the bill—that has been covered by other speakers—suffice to say I think this is an important reform that the government is undertaking. It is interesting that this issue was actually brought to my attention a few years ago by a friend at a party, who told me about some of the things he was experiencing while trying to have his house built. He was literally saying that he was having to camp out on the building site to stop people from stealing copper during the construction phase of the property.

This was really baffling to me. I had not really been aware that was an issue, and it demonstrates that obviously people are seeing great value in this. It is creating significant stress and anxiety for people, particularly during the construction phase of a home. As I say, I have heard reports of people having to camp out on their property to keep an eye on the copper to make sure that it is not being ripped out of the build.

So what the government is proposing here seems like a fairly straightforward and sensible measure, and I think they have struck the right balance in terms of ensuring that people can access this vital commodity as part of our construction work and also that there is a relevant paper trail to make sure that if people are behaving in a dodgy way it is cracked down on. I support the bill.

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (11:23):** I rise to speak in support of the Scrap Metal Dealers Bill 2025 and to echo the sentiments that have just been expressed by the honourable members. We know that scrap metal recycling is an important part of our economy and our environment, and I think it is fair to say that the bill seeks to support that industry while closing those loopholes that enable crime. It is quite remarkable, the lengths and the sorts of complaints that we have all heard now over a protracted period: nothing is off the table when it comes to how far these very elaborate and organised criminal activity groups will go to to steal the sort of material that is covered in this bill. Whether it is a new build of a home or a cemetery or a railway line, nothing seems to be off the table.

A couple of months ago I had some photos shown to me, because it is not just the theft that is an issue but the safety risk. Members will be familiar with the new builds at Riverlea. There were some photos taken which were reported. There is a grate in the ground directly outside the entrance to this place. These thieves had lifted the grate, ripped out the copper wires and effectively left a hole, which looked from the photo to be about 50 by 50 centimetres, 60 maybe, 40 —somewhere in there, but big enough to fit a person.

You can just imagine walking out of this estate, the grate is off, it is dark, someone falls in and there are live wires. So it is not just the theft that is an issue but certainly also the threat that it is exposing people to as a result of the lengths that people will go to strip wires of the copper and the other materials that have been covered.

Far from being rushed through, I would say this bill has been the subject of very extensive consultation. There have been nine months of consultation—three rounds of consultation. The government settled on a balanced model, I think. It is narrower than the earlier drafts that were proposed and is closely aligned with the successful UK approach. I know consideration was given, as has been mentioned, to the New South Wales approach. That was considered heavy-handed. I think this does strike a reasonable balance.

There are not concessions but clauses in there that, for instance, establish a once-off permit and not an annual licence, meaning a simple one-time fee. The bill draws on very proven legislation which was, I think it is fair to say, the subject of the same level of concern and contention in this place when those pieces of legislation were debated: the Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act, the Second-hand Vehicle Dealers Act and the Tattooing Industry Control Act. This legislation draws on elements of those three bits of legislation for effective disqualification provisions. Also, when we

debated those pieces of legislation they were considered equally problematic, and I think we have managed to iron out quite effectively the sorts of concerns that were raised by stakeholders when we debated those.

I think it is really important to note that the scheme targets only the metals that are most commonly found in criminal activity, with the flexibility to add new metals as the criminal markets evolve. I note, of course, that these criminal markets are not just South Australian based. We have organised criminal activity taking place here that is well orchestrated across the nation. It is not locals, necessarily, taking this out but people coming from other jurisdictions and moving this stuff back out of our jurisdiction and wreaking havoc on our infrastructure, whether that is public or private.

The bill defines scrap metal clearly. It is used, discarded or worn out items and captures only genuine scrap, such as strip copper, not new products like the hot water systems that we often hear are ripped out of new builds as well. They are ripped out so that they can be sold as a new hot water system.

So I do think the bill is carefully calibrated. Businesses will have to buy or sell prescribed scrap at least 12 times a year to be captured, ensuring that we do not pull in ordinary tradies or some operators unnecessarily. Disqualification powers are similar to those that exist in the tattoo industry. They apply only to specific metals and will not shut down an entire business in the event of a misstep, which is particularly important in our regional areas.

I think it is very important to note for the record, given that there are still those concerns from industry groups around this bill, that the record-keeping requirements—and this has been made very clear to us—will not commence until SAPOL's digital police station portal is ready. That is likely to be in 2027 or 2028, and dealers will not actually be expected to produce data prior to that. So those two things will work in tandem and become operational at the same time.

ID verification and reporting duties, of course, are going to assist our police to track theft trends in real time, again, in a very carefully calibrated way so as not to place unfair burdens on dealers. Enforcement will be undertaken appropriately by authorised officers, including in regional areas, where there are going to be clear safeguards around powers of entry.

The bill does not prescribe imprisonment penalties. This is a regulatory scheme with financial penalties only, and that is reflective of the fact that we have taken what has been seen as this successful approach from the UK. I think the vast majority of operators do the right thing. They want a clean, safe and reputable sector. They have been tainted by the brush of organised criminal activity in this space, and I actually think that this bill will do a lot to lift the profile of those sectors and clean out that industry as far as possible. The bill gives them the framework to achieve that while, of course, allowing systems to adapt as new markets emerge. It is on that basis that I support the bill and look forward to its implementation as soon as possible.

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (11:30):** I rise to briefly make some remarks in support of the Scrap Metal Dealers Bill. I reflect that the contribution of the other members, and particularly the Liberal opposition, has raised some concerns. I know that all members of this council received some correspondence on 11 November from Adam Gray, in his capacity with the Waste and Recycling Industry Association SA (WRISA), raising a few minor concerns but overall being supportive of the bill.

I understand the need for this bill. This bill is much needed. It will address what is a difficult challenge, and that is something that should be managed urgently. I thank Minister Boyer and his office and, in particular, Josh Weidenbach for his briefing, as well as SAPOL, for assisting my office, who have then progressed some of the concerns made in more detail by WRISA. I put those on the record now so that they can be answered either in the second reading summary or in clause 1 by the government. I note that I have alerted Minister Boyer's office of these questions coming.

Mr Gray raised that WRISA's reading of the current bill suggests some significant gaps and that these reflected some of the administrative gaps, if you like, that had emerged in other jurisdictions where similar legislation had been enacted, and that is around enforcement. In particular, Mr Gray noted that the biggest issue in the eastern seaboard has been around enforcement and, despite the law actually being in place, enforcement not being conducted. He has particularly alerted us to the exemption from record-keeping factors to do with this legislation. I note that he stated:

Prescribed Dealer to Prescribed Dealer transactions do not need record keeping. This is a major concern as paying a once off fee of \$200 would then exempt any dealer from keeping records for purchasing scrap from a 'peddler' because they are a registered dealer. We strongly suggest that all transactions, no matter the origin be recorded.

He also noted:

Lower tier dealers are a concern, as these dealers are often the purchasers of stolen scrap. If illegally the dealer purchases from the thief without keeping records, then on-sells to another dealer, no record is required to be kept and the stolen scrap is then lost in the system.

Finally, with auditing:

Random auditing must be applied to all levels of prescribed dealers. Sims Metal should not be penalised because our systems allow for quick and accessible records, whereas a 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier level Dealer is avoided due to the inaccurate, time consuming and language barrier breach SAPOL may have in gaining these records.

Mr Gray has given my office a real-life example that I have passed on to the minister's office, which is:

A person brings in a trailer of 'Baling Steel' that happens to have a prescribed 'Hot Water System' on board. Dealer will have to make an individual record of that Hot Water System along with their own standard record keeping. They can't pay cash for the 'hot water system' but can for the balance of the load. This will likely lead to many instances of poor record keeping (illegal) and cash for prescribed items. The dealer then conducts a B2B transaction (exempt from record keeping) and the details of the scrap is lost in the system.

As the dealer-to-dealer exemption of record keeping under section 16 seems to be potentially a significant gap, I ask the government to place on record how this concern that has been raised in these last few weeks will be addressed in the implementation of this legislation. With that, I commend the bill.

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (11:34):** I rise today to speak on the important reforms contained in this bill that will regulate the scrap metal industry. I am especially pleased to see this bill, as it addresses an issue I have had personal experience with and is one I have raised with various ministers over the years.

The origins of this bill stretch back to 2009, when the Hon. Michael Wright, then Minister for Police, introduced legislation in the House Assembly that included, among other matters, a definition of scrap metals. The bill stalled and was not debated and brought to a vote before the parliamentary term ended. In 2012, a new bill was introduced in the House of Assembly to repeal and replace the Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 1996. Debate commenced but was adjourned. When debate resumed in February 2013, that version of the bill did not reinstate the original 2009 definition of scrap metal, and consequently scrap metal was not captured within the regulatory framework.

As a result, South Australia's existing legislative framework does not address the increasing rise of scrap metal theft and the selling of stolen scrap metal such as copper, brass and aluminium. These are all metals commonly used in residential water and gas piping. In fact, my next-door neighbour had all the copper piping stolen from a house she purchased in our street, not once but twice. She purchased the property from my neighbour after he passed away. During the period between the signing of the contract and the settlement, all existing copper piping around the house was dug up and stolen. This was replaced by the new owner and, unbelievably, the very next day the copper piping was stolen for a second time. In fact, it was almost stolen for a third time. When I heard noises late at night, I went outside and shone a torch across the fence and deterred the theft from happening again.

This is not the only instance of this type of theft that people have raised with me. A friend of mine who runs a little restaurant had the same thing happen. He had copper piping stolen twice in two days, just as my neighbour had experienced. After the theft of pipes from the house he had just sold, he decided to sleep outside the property in his van for two days during the cooling-off period.

Thieves target other areas as well—light towers at local shopping clubs, exhaust systems and catalytic converters from people's cars, as well as cabling from Telstra pits. These thefts are not victimless crimes. They impose heavy financial burdens on construction companies, home owners and small businesses, jeopardising project timelines and costing people and families thousands of dollars. As the Hon. Blair Boyer MP, Minister for Police, stated in the other place, the Master Builders

Association of South Australia estimates the cost of metal theft to the industry to be about \$70 million per year.

The government has listened to industry and stakeholders to get this bill right, and further consultation to draft the required regulation will take place should this bill pass both houses. I therefore commend the bill to the council.

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Autism) (11:39):** I would like to thank the many people who spoke on today's important piece of legislation. As we have heard today, this has been a long time coming and one that will save not only future home owners but also industry a significant amount of money. As we have heard, this has come from learnings from not just interstate but also around the world. We have taken a lot of learnings from the UK in regard to the development of this bill before us today.

In regard to references about concessions in regard to the consultation process, I think any good government is willing to go out and do consultation. That is what this government has done, through a number of layers: through YourSAy, putting the bill out to the community to get responses and getting further responses back from industry. We were willing to make changes to the initial bill that was to be presented to the parliament. I think there has been a significant amount of consultation put into this, which the industry has taken seriously, and appropriate changes have been made to get to where we are today to have the support of the chamber.

Bill read a second time.

*Committee Stage*

In committee.

Clause 1.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** If it assists the chamber, I have about half a dozen questions at clause 1, one group of questions at clause 4 and maybe three or four questions at clause 20. My first question to the minister is: there was some sort of expression from the industry, quoting this \$70 million figure. We have taken that at face value; we have no reason not to. I just wonder if the government has any insight as to whether that is a figure based purely on the cost of the materials, or does that include add-ons, things like labour charges, clean-ups, all that sort of thing?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** My understanding, and as I have just been further advised, is that those costs often relate to the damage that is then created to those individual properties. Again, that cost is being carried over. As you said in your opening remarks, it is often the home owners having to pay for that in future builds but also industries having to pay a significant amount of money.

There is also high risk that is being taken, so it is not just the economic cost. We have people going onto train lines to take out wiring, putting their own lives at risk, and also train drivers have to be confronted with people taking that risk. It is also something now that, in my new role, we do not want people to be thinking that the only way they can go about getting a little bit of extra cash is to go and take copper wiring from our train lines.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** I thank the minister for answering and completely agree. We would not want to see that, of course. Moving on to the next topic, it is with respect to enforcement, and you happen to have a person who may be very helpful with that, I would imagine, right near you. Has SAPOL taken into account how they might enforce this particularly? What is the plan, essentially?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** There will be a combination of support. The Licensing Enforcement Branch will be there to oversee the second-hand dealership industry. They are there to put those oversights in place, and they will be there as a reinforcement of how this will roll out. But then we also have our general operations that we will be undertaking—the more localised concerns that are being raised. There is already an operation in place, Operation Alchemy, that looks into this particular matter where they have a focus and workforce already seeking to make some changes.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** That makes sense, I am pleased to hear that and thank the minister for that response. This is a related topic, and that is with respect to people doing the right thing. There are people who will be seeking to gather these scrap metals legally in order to get the cash that is owed to them when they do that. Is there a particular carve out in this legislation, or a way of acknowledging that this is also a legal activity?



**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** They have deliberately tried to make the prescribed terminology in this quite narrow, because what they want is, if you have a fridge that you want to take in that might have copper in it or legitimate items you are trying to take in, that is going to be seen as absolutely fine. But any sort of loophole—we already have people taking high risks. We are already seeing people undertake criminal activity to try to find loopholes to gain money from copper. We have tried to narrow down that component as much as possible to focus on the criminality, but if there are legitimate reasons, we have also tried to identify those pathways as well.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** I am pleased to hear that. That makes sense to the opposition. My next question is with respect to the consultation period. My understanding is that the industry itself was very keen to maintain the cash payment allowance within the scheme or within their operations, but the government was not prepared to compromise on that, and there may well be good reasons for that. My question is: were any other specific concerns raised by the industry with respect to payment? Cash is ruled out, but was anything else raised by the industry?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** As I said in my remarks earlier, we had the opportunity to take learnings from not only interstate but around the world. In the UK and interstate, they do not take cash. We have done this because we need to be able to track the transactions and we cannot do that with cash. We also know that, if we leave it as an option, it will just continue to be a loophole. That is why it has been really tightened down to say that no cash is available through this process.

**The Hon. D.G.E. Hood:** Any others?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** I am advised that nothing of concern was raised.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** I have a couple of other questions at clause 1 about the consultation process. Minister, I think you would agree that some of the industry have not been entirely satisfied with it. Will the minister outline the process for the chamber, outline what hiccups were experienced and how they were remedied?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** My understanding, as I mentioned earlier, is that a YourSay was undertaken for the original bill. The bill then went out to consultation, after which there was significant change as a result of that consultation period, because it was important to hear from the industry. A new bill was then drafted and further considerations were taken from the UK modelling and that was again consulted on. That was a shorter timeframe because already so much work had been done to get to that final bill that we are now seeing before the council. So yes, the last part might have been shorter, but we had arrived at that end result because so much consultation had happened prior.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** This is the last one on clause 1 from me. I think the minister sort of partly answered it in that answer anyway, but I will put the question for the sake of the record. This consultation has taken quite some time, or the process I should say. I think the government announced back in February, if I am not mistaken, that this bill would come, so I guess my question is: why so long?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** We have taken the consultation period seriously. We went out, as you have correctly highlighted, in February. There was that consultation period through YourSay. The bill went out. There was an industry consultation process as part of that, and the government was willing to go back to them and say, 'We will make changes.' Significant change was made to arrive at the bill that we are at today. I want to congratulate the former and the current minister for the work that they have done in this space. As we have heard today, ultimately this is about saving industry tens of millions of dollars, saving future home owners a significant amount of money and heartache, but also trying to prevent people from taking reckless actions and putting their own lives and others at risk as well.

**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** Just for the sake of the record and for clarity, I am hoping that we will be able to confirm that, in terms of those administrative burdens—for want of a better word—that people have raised, the issue of record-keeping requirements is not expected, as I am advised, to commence until that digital police station by SAPOL portal is ready, and the likely timeframe around that, in terms of allowing people time to adjust, is around 2027-28, and there will not be a requirement on dealers to actually provide data before that digital police station is actually up and running.

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** You would be correct in your assessment.

Clause passed.

Clause 2 to 3 passed.

Clause 4.

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** If I could just ask the honourable member Tammy Franks to again put on the record her questions while I have an adviser next to me.

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS:** I reiterate my second reading question that has been raised by the Waste and Recycling Industry Association and Mr Gray there in regard to the potential errors or omissions of record keeping, and how we are going to address the failings of the eastern seaboard implementation of this particular scheme, where record keeping has not necessarily flowed all the way through in certain situations. How is that being addressed?

I did provide these questions in the second reading and to the minister's office, and gave that example of the hot water system, where the dealer has to make an individual record of that in their own standard record keeping, not being able to pay cash for the hot water system but being able to pay cash for the balance of the load, which then might lead to poor record keeping and cash for prescribed items. That was certainly something that has happened interstate that we are keen to not see happen here.

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** I am advised that the act will regulate the industry, as you would expect, but the important component here—I think you were out of the room when this came up before from the Hon. Dennis Hood—is in regard to the Licensing Enforcement Branch that is already in place. They will have oversight in auditing how this act will be rolled out and, I guess, provide an extra layer of scrutiny over that process.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** I am going to ask this at clause 4. It is hard to know where it fits, really, but I think it is probably here. This is with respect to the industry concerns expressed during the consultation phase and to the opposition about illegal dumping as a result of this bill. My questions are twofold, essentially: what is the government's response to that claim, and, secondly, have there been other jurisdictions that have seen that as a result of similar legislation?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** I have been advised that that could have been a risk if we had made this too onerous, but what we have tried to do is work in consultation so that we avoid that being the outcome.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** And other jurisdictions? Do we have any knowledge of them?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** It could very well occur, as I have been advised, but we do not have any examples of that.

Clause passed.

Clauses 5 to 19 passed.

Clause 20.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** A twofold question again, minister. I think I know the answer to this one, but just for the sake of clarity: my understanding is that this bill before us was modelled extensively on bills in other jurisdictions. Can you confirm that or otherwise? The second part of that is: what role did SAPOL play in formulating the bill?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** I have been advised that the first bill was based off the New South Wales model. That was seen as too onerous, which, again, I guess plays back into your previous question about whether the consequences of that could lead to dumping, which is something we have also wanted to avoid. So we have gone off something that we do know works, which is the second-hand dealers act and basing it off that. That is the process that we have worked through.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** This is my last question, I think, and it is with respect to SAPOL's role, as I mentioned in my previous question, and also SAPOL being adequately resourced. That is no slight on SAPOL at all, but just a genuine question about the fact that this is extra work for them, so will they be sufficiently resourced to undertake the task?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** I was going to be cheeky, but I will not. They are sitting next to me. They have been heavily involved in this consultation period. SAPOL have obviously been very

much involved in the drafting of this bill. As I have already mentioned before, we already have the Licensing Enforcement Branch that is established and underway, but the government has also funded the digital police station. So there have been investments made, but also—

*The Hon. T.A. Franks interjecting:*

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** You never miss a moment; I love it. So, yes, they have been very much involved.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (21 to 34) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Autism) (11:59):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

### **RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 25 November 2025.)

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (12:00):** I rise to speak briefly on the Residential Tenancies (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2025, and indicate that the opposition is supporting the bill. As the shadow Attorney-General, who has portfolio responsibility for this area, noted in the other place during that debate, this bill primarily resolves issues which emerged following the extensive 2023 residential tenancies reforms.

Those reforms introduced significant changes, and it is unsurprising that some technical and practical amendments are now required to ensure consistency and clarity across the scheme. The provisions before us are fairly uncontroversial. They modernise the act through clarification of definitions, correcting inconsistencies between fixed term and periodic tenancies, and close off the unintended loophole that allowed for more frequent rent increases where automatic increases were written into a lease agreement.

These sensible adjustments bring the act into line with the intent of the 2023 reforms, and with the national position of limiting rent increases to once every 12 months. This bill also makes improvements to rooming house provisions, updates the operation of the Residential Tenancies Fund to align with the Unclaimed Money Act, and streamline SACAT's internal review process, which reflects feedback from the tribunal and industry stakeholders.

While these amendments include some matters of substance they are, as the Hon. Josh Teague described, part of ensuring a complete and coherent treatment of the residential tenancy framework. I acknowledge the advice provided through briefing processes and the work of departmental officers in responding to stakeholder concerns. On that basis we support the bill.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (12:02):** I rise today to speak on the Residential Tendencies (Miscellaneous Bill) 2025. This bill seeks to make technical adjustments to the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 following the significant reforms introduced in 2023 and fully implemented in July 2024. While these amendments address certain operational issues, it is important to acknowledge that many concerns raised by landlords, property managers and real estate professionals remain unresolved.

The bill before us introduces several technical amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 1995. These include clarifying that receipts may be issued electronically and in hard copy, closing a loophole that allowed automatic rent increases at stated intervals within agreements, and aligning re-letting timeframes for fixed term and periodic tenancies to six months from termination in both

cases. It also provides a mechanism for unclaimed bond monies to be paid to the Treasurer after 12 months, extends termination grounds for fixed term rooming house agreements, and refines SACAT review provisions to improve efficiency.

These changes are practical, and respond to feedback received from stakeholders and the tribunal; however, broader concerns from the property sector remain. The 2023 reforms represented the most substantial changes to tenancy laws in decades. They were designed to strengthen tenant protections and improve housing security, but I constantly receive feedback from community members and from those in the property sector that highlights how some of these changes have created challenges that may discourage investment in rental housing—a trend we cannot afford, given the current pressures on housing supply.

The 2023 reforms introduced strict termination requirements, meaning landlords must now have a prescribed reason to terminate or not renew a tenancy, such as selling the property, moving in themselves, undertaking major renovations, or responding to serious tenant misconduct. While these grounds are understandable, they significantly limit flexibility for landlords who may face unforeseen circumstances. Property managers report that these rigid requirements make it harder to manage problematic tenancies, increasing risk and stress for owners.

Concerns also persist around pet policies. While allowing tenants to keep pets under reasonable conditions promotes inclusivity, landlords argue that the inability to refuse consent without strong justification exposes them to potential property damage and disputes. Balancing tenant rights with property protection remains a challenge.

Further, rent increase restrictions—limiting increases to once every 12 months and removing the option for mutual agreement outside that period—have been highlighted as problematic. Landlords who invest in property investments, such as installing a new kitchen, cannot adjust rent for those upgrades unless 12 months have passed. This disincentivises investment and discourages upgrading and modernisation of rental stock. The cumulative effect of these changes, according to industry feedback, is that some landlords are choosing to sell or leave properties vacant, rather than risk being locked into difficult tenancies.

I spend a lot of time speaking to community members, many of whom are renters and many of whom are landlords. I have personally heard from many mum-and-dad investors, who generally want to do the right thing by their tenants and provide them a secure and safe place to call home. Equally, there is stress and worry about the detrimental impact that problematic tenants may have on their livelihood and investment. They have told me that it makes them second-guess their investment decisions and avoid taking risks on the very people who need who most need a secure roof over their heads.

Many community members tell me that their rental properties are their retirement fund and that they scraped and saved and took on debt to buy and maintain these properties. They simply cannot afford to get stuck with problematic tenants and go through potentially lengthy, stressful and expensive legal proceedings to terminate a lease, if required. Renters need appropriate protections and certainty, but we also need more supply, more investment and more private capital in the housing market. If we fail to address the legitimate concerns of mum-and-dad investors, we risk forcing them out of the private rental market—an outcome that runs counter to our shared goal of increasing rental availability.

While the bill makes useful clarifications, it does not address those broader concerns I mentioned. I urge the government to continue engaging with all stakeholders to ensure tenancy laws strike the right balance, protecting tenants while encouraging landlords to remain active participants in the rental market.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (12:08):** I rise to speak on the residential tenancies bill. I note that the bill addresses issues in relation to rooming houses. I am supportive of that, but I do feel that this would be a missed opportunity: given we are opening up the Residential Tenancies Act, this is potentially a missed opportunity for the parliament to deal with some of the outstanding issues that we failed to resolve the last time we opened up the Residential Tenancies Act.

In particular, I will be moving a series of amendments to address some of those issues. The first of those is to end the practice of rent bidding. The government will claim—and indeed they did so with great fanfare—that they have outlawed rent bidding in South Australia. That is not entirely

true. What they have done is prevented a landlord from being able to advertise a range for a rental property, but there is nothing to stop a prospective tenant from turning up to an open inspection and offering more than the asking price, and there is nothing to stop a landlord from accepting a higher price. My amendments would outlaw that practice and introduce penalties for people who engage in that practice. We know that the practice of rent bidding is driving up prices in South Australia, so I urge the Labor and Liberal parties to support that sensible proposal.

The other amendment I am moving will seek to cap rent increases in line with CPI. This is not a radical proposal. The ACT has operated with a similar model in place for many years. The sky has not fallen in there and it will not here in South Australia. It is very clear that we have to do something about rent prices. Just this week, we saw a new survey come out that showed that rental accommodation in Adelaide is now as unaffordable as in Sydney. That is an absolute travesty, and it is an indictment on the Labor and Liberal parties, which fail to support rent capping. Christmas is a time for redemption. There is an opportunity for them to look at this proposal with fresh eyes and do something to help renters as we head into the Christmas period, because we know a lot of people are going to be struggling.

The amendment I am moving would also provide for the concept of a bond transfer. Victoria has recently announced this. This allows people to have their bond transferred directly from property to property rather than having to collect it and reallocate the bond. It is a pretty straightforward proposition. It is something that would make life a lot easier for renters. I hope the major parties support it.

Finally, I am proposing that the money that sits in unclaimed bonds be reinvested towards homelessness services or tenancy support services or indeed to build more social housing. I understand the government has indicated they are going to do everything they can to try to reconnect people with money that has not yet been claimed, but if the money is sitting there for 12 months or more and has not been claimed their proposal is that it will go back towards general revenue.

I am suggesting that, instead, money should be allocated towards services that support renters, it should be allocated towards services that support homeless people and advocate for their interests, or it should go towards actually building more housing. I recognise that we are at a time where homelessness organisations are desperately seeking funds. They do not have access to them at the moment, and they are significantly under-resourced. They are getting government funding, but that is well below what they need. So these amendments would provide them with a potential lifeline as we head into the Christmas period.

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (12:12):** I rise to speak on the Residential Tenancies (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2025. The state government conducted the largest review of the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 in nearly 30 years over the course of 2023 to 2024. The aim was to modernise the RTA and strike the right balance between protecting the interests of both tenants and landlords. Reforms were fully implemented from 1 July 2024. Since that date, the government has received feedback on several of the amendments to the RTA. The amendments to the RTA contained within this bill are largely of a technical nature and are unlikely to be controversial.

The bill includes the following amendments. It closes an existing loophole to the previous RTA reforms, which intended to limit rent increases to once in a 12-month period. The current subsections that allow the rent of tenants to be increased more frequently than once in a 12-month period and more than once in a six-month period for rooming house residents will be removed. When you consider that previously a landlord could have raised the rent twice in just six months in some cases the changes would seem completely reasonable.

The bill will also add a definition of 'receipt' to the RTA to enable both electronic and hard copy receipts. This is important particularly for residents who still work on the paper system. The bill will provide consistent timeframes in the RTA, applying to both periodic and fixed-term leases, that restrict landlords from re-letting their rental properties after terminating a lease on certain grounds.

The 2023 bill already struck a fair balance for landlords and tenants. It prohibited the termination and non-renewal of tenancy agreements without providing a prescribed reason. The grounds on which a lease would not be renewed or terminated, however, were expanded to include termination when serious damage was caused or when the resident used intimidating behaviour or

put neighbours, the landlord or contractors in danger. It also prescribed 60 days for termination of rent instead of 28 days, so it was about balancing rights. Other amendments include:

- Clarifying that section 6 of the Unclaimed Money Act 2021 applies to the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs to enable payments of unclaimed bond monies in the Residential Tenancies Fund to be paid to the Treasurer.
- Clarifying the prescribed grounds for the termination of rooming house agreements, as outlined in the Residential Tenancies Regulations 2025, will apply to fixed terms as well as periodic rooming house agreements.
- Amending the definition of 'relevant decision' in relation to applications made for internal review of SACAT decisions where leave cannot be granted for internal review unless exceptional circumstances exist.

SACAT submitted that vacant possession orders containing rental payment plans be explicitly excluded from this definition. This will address the unintended consequence of increased hearing times for SACAT when determining internal reviews of matters relating to time-sensitive vacant possession orders.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (12:16):** I would like to thank honourable members who have contributed: the Hons Ms Lensink, Ms Lee, Mr Simms and Mr Wortley. As stated, the purpose of the bill is to close up some loopholes that are not conducive to what we consider to be in the best interests of tenants. There is a number of amendments that have been proposed, which we will discuss in due course in the committee stage.

Bill read a second time.

*Committee Stage*

In committee.

Clause 1.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** I would like to ask some questions about the unclaimed bond money. Can the minister advise how much money is currently sitting in the fund, notionally as unclaimed bond?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I am advised, in the residential tenancy and rooming house composition of the fund, as at 31 of October, that it was approximately \$23 million. It is also worth pointing out, however, that unclaimed bonds can, of course, be claimed by former tenants, and that continues to be the case.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** What steps will the government take to ensure that people are able to access their unclaimed bonds? Is it a process similar to superannuation where sometimes you might have some money sitting in a fund? How precisely will the government ensure that people are aware that that money is sitting there?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I am advised that a portal has been introduced since June 2024, which is an online system where people can claim or seek information about unclaimed bonds. There have also been alerts that have now been put in place, where if the bond has been unclaimed for seven days or more, CBS can alert those individuals with their contact details about the unclaimed bonds via SMS.

There is also work in regard to notifying the owners of historical bonds by SMS or email in relation to how to make a claim for an unclaimed bond. There has been a dedicated marketing campaign on unclaimed moneys in October 2023, encouraging tenants to search the register for old bonds. I am also advised that a relatively recent initiative has been to alert existing tenants around 30 days prior to the end of their existing tenancy agreement to let them know of their options.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** If after a set period of time the bond is not collected, it is my understanding that the government is proposing that the money then will just go into general revenue. Will there be an opportunity for someone, if they come forward later, to be able to access the money, or is there a time limit?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I am advised that, if the amendment proposed here by the government goes forward, after 12 months the money will be transferred to the Treasurer, but an application can be made at any time for reimbursement of that unclaimed money, and that is covered under the Unclaimed Money Act.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK:** Can I ask whether there is any cross-linking with the CBS database against other databases, such as the one for drivers of motor vehicles and Births, Deaths and Marriages, so that CBS at least is aware if someone has passed away or there is a change of address notification and those sorts of things? It is obviously something nationally through Services Australia that a lot of those databases are linked, which means that changes of circumstances can flow through and across their systems.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I am advised that when a tenancy agreement is signed, tenants are encouraged to provide emergency contact details. That information is able to be used for the purposes that have been outlined. In terms of the other information about cross-linking, we would need to take that on notice, noting however that under different scenarios people provide information for a particular purpose, so there may be limitations on the extent to which that can be shared without permission. We do not have final details on that but can take it on notice.

Clause passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 passed.

New clause 3A.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** I move:

Amendment No 1 [Simms–1]—

Page 2, after line 12—Insert:

3A—Amendment of section 52A

Section 52A(3)—delete 'solicit or otherwise invite an offer of an amount of rent under a residential tenancy agreement that' and substitute:

enter into a residential tenancy agreement if the amount of rent payable under the proposed agreement

This is the provision that I referenced earlier around banning rent bidding.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** The government does not support this amendment. Measures to prevent rent bidding through banning landlords, agents and third parties from soliciting offers of higher rent and prohibiting rental properties being advertised within a price range were addressed in the Residential Tenancies (Protection of Prospective Tenants) Amendment Act 2023. These reforms commenced on 1 September of that year. Since that time, Consumer and Business Services has only received a small number of complaints relating to landlords inviting offers of higher rent than the advertised rent amount.

However, the government has gone further with that, most recently introducing a standard rental application form. The form includes a section for the rent payable to be inserted by landlords and agents, providing transparent rental prices for prospective tenants. The form clearly identifies that landlords and agents cannot offer a premises for rent unless the rent payable is a fixed amount and cannot invite offers of higher rent amounts above the advertised price. The prescribed form must be in use by 1 January 2026. The government is seeking in this to be able to address some of the concerns that were outlined by the honourable member in his second reading contribution.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK:** The Liberal Party agrees with the government on this occasion.

The committee divided on the new clause:

Ayes .....	2
Noes.....	18
Majority .....	16

## AYES

Franks, T.A.

Simms, R.A. (teller)

## NOES

Bonaros, C.

Bourke, E.S.

Centofanti, N.J.

Game, S.L.

Girolamo, H.M.

Hanson, J.E.

Henderson, L.A.

Hood, B.R.

Hood, D.G.E.

Hunter, I.K.

Lee, J.S.

Lensink, J.M.A.

Maher, K.J.

Martin, R.B.

Ngo, T.T.

Pangallo, F.

Scriven, C.M. (teller)

Wortley, R.P.

New clause thus negated.

Clause 4.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** I move:

Amendment No 2 [Simms-1]—

Page 2, after line 13—Insert:

(1) Section 55—after subsection (2b) insert:

(2c) Despite a preceding provision, for each period of 12 months after a residential tenancy agreement is entered into, the rent payable under the agreement cannot increase by more than the percentage applying under subsection (2d) relating to the financial year in which the increase is to occur.

(2d) The percentage applying under this subsection in respect of a financial year is the percentage change in the CPI (expressed to 1 decimal place) when comparing the CPI for the September quarter of the immediately preceding financial year with the CPI for the September quarter of the financial year immediately before that preceding financial year, being this percentage change published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

(2e) In subsection (2d)—

*CPI* means the Consumer Price Index (All groups index for Adelaide).

I would encourage members not to leave the chamber, as there might be a division. This is, in effect, a rent-capping provision. It ties rent increases to CPI. It is a very reasonable proposal and one that I urge members of this chamber to support. We know from data we have seen just this week that Adelaide is now becoming as unaffordable as Sydney when it comes to rents. Rents are going up and up and up. This amendment would allow landlords to make a modest profit in line with CPI, but nothing more.

Whilst I accept that many landlords are doing the right thing by their tenants, many are making really unrealistic profits and driving up the cost of rental property here in our state. As we head into the Christmas period, I think it is really important that some relief is provided to renters. I have moved provisions like this on multiple occasions during this term of parliament, and this is giving members one final opportunity, as the clock ticks down to the end of this parliament, to do the right thing by SA renters.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** The issue of rent capping is one that sounds very positive on face value, but as became apparent through the 2023 public consultation conducted throughout the major review into the Residential Tenancies Act 1995, the issue of rent capping is more complex than that. While it may provide some relief for tenants, there have been concerns raised that rent control measures may cause an upsurge in rental prices prior to the commencement of any such measures. Further, imposing rent restrictions may result in some landlords electing to exit the market, which may in turn worsen rental availability issues. Rather, the government has sought to strike the right balance with prohibiting rent increases for tenants in the way proposed in existing clause 4 of the bill.

Clause 4 of the bill proposes to repeal subsection 55(6) of the act. This will prevent a tenant's rent amount from being increased more than once in a 12-month period. This extends upon the



government's previous measure to ease the rising cost of rent when the Malinauskas government acted to prohibit rent increases more than once in a 12-month period in the Residential Tenancies (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2023.

This new amendment, at clause 4 of the bill, will ensure that a pre-existing loophole allowing rental agreements to include terms for automatic rent increases at specified dates will no longer be available to landlords and agents. The government's proposed amendment is entirely consistent with national cabinet's 2023 A Better Deal for Renters recommendation, which called for jurisdictions to move towards a national standard of no more than one rent increase per year for tenants. For all of these reasons, the government will not be supporting this amendment.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK:** These matters have been well traversed many times and because it is actually bad policy the Liberal Party is not going to support it. The matter of rent capping has been applied in some jurisdictions around the globe. Most notably, there are rent controls in the city of New York, which has effectively led to slumlords because there is no capacity to invest in the property, and so you have some pretty horrendous things there.

We have the Housing Improvement Act in South Australia, so we prevent houses from falling into disrepair, but it would certainly prevent landlords from doing any voluntary upgrades to properties and, as the minister has stated, could lead to landlords exiting the market and fewer properties being available on the market. These ideas are often very superficially attractive but the reality is very different.

The committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes .....2  
Noes.....18  
Majority .....16

#### AYES

Franks, T.A.

Simms, R.A. (teller)

#### NOES

Bonaros, C.  
Game, S.L.  
Henderson, L.A.  
Hunter, I.K.  
Maher, K.J.  
Pangallo, F.

Bourke, E.S.  
Girolamo, H.M.  
Hood, B.R.  
Lee, J.S.  
Martin, R.B.  
Scriven, C.M. (teller)

Centofanti, N.J.  
Hanson, J.E.  
Hood, D.G.E.  
Lensink, J.M.A.  
Ngo, T.T.  
Wortley, R.P.

Amendment thus negatived; clause passed.

New clause 4A.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** I move:

Amendment No 3 [Simms-1]—

Page 2, after line 14—Insert:

4A—Insertion of section 63A

After section 63 insert:

63A—Transfer of bond

- (1) The Commissioner must prepare and publish a scheme to facilitate the transfer of bonds on behalf of tenants (the *transfer of bonds scheme*).
- (2) The transfer of bonds scheme must allow for tenants to apply to the Commissioner for the transfer an amount held by way of bond provided or paid to the Commissioner on behalf of the tenant in respect of a residential tenancy

agreement so that the amount is held by the Commissioner by way of bond in respect of another residential tenancy agreement.

- (3) The transfer of bonds scheme may—
  - (a) require tenants to provide information that the Commissioner requires in relation to the transfer of a bond; and
  - (b) provide for requirements that must be met before a bond is transferred in accordance with the scheme; and
  - (c) provide for other matters relevant to the transfer of bonds.
- (4) The transfer of bonds scheme may modify or disapply a provision of this Act for the purposes of the transfer of bonds in accordance with the scheme.
- (5) If the transfer of bonds scheme modifies or disapplies a provision of this Act, the Commissioner must publish a copy of the scheme in the Gazette as soon as reasonably practicable after the scheme is published.

I spoke about this earlier. This amendment would bring South Australia into line with Victoria, introducing a bond transfer scheme. It is a pretty straightforward proposition that would make life easier for a lot of renters. Basically, Victoria has just passed legislation to do this. The transfer of bonds scheme would enable tenants to move from properties without having to find an extra \$2,000 towards the cost of bonds, so it is a seamless transfer. It does not have any adverse impact on landlords in any way; it just streamlines the rental process for tenants.

It has been advocated for by organisations such as the McKinnon Institute and a range of others have suggested this is something that is worthwhile for renters in South Australia. I do encourage the parties in this chamber, whatever their views might be on the other issues around rent prices and rent bidding, to give positive consideration to this proposal. It is a pretty commonsense suggestion, but one that would make life easier for a lot of renters in our state.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** The government does not oppose the introduction of a portable rental bond scheme in South Australia outright; however, the complexities of such a scheme and how it might sit within our current legislative framework do require full consideration. The government is currently considering the best way to achieve a scheme that alleviates financial pressures on residential tenants and improves mobility in the rental market.

It has been identified that the legislation and the bonds online system will require a large set of fully considered amendments and enhancements, including significant system upgrades in order to sufficiently integrate the scheme into South Australia. The government has been monitoring the implementation of similar schemes in other jurisdictions, particularly New South Wales, where it will have taken three years and a commitment of \$6.6 million once it is introduced in 2026.

Victoria is another jurisdiction that has only recently announced a commitment to introduce a portable rental bond scheme, but the full detail and the specifics of that scheme are yet to be prescribed. The South Australian government will continue to monitor the implementation of the portable rental bonds scheme models in New South Wales and Victoria, while considering the establishment of a scheme here that provides long-term operational certainty and improves tenant mobility and access to housing. However, we are unable to support this amendment at this time.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK:** This is a very interesting amendment and the member is to be commended. I am pleased to hear the government say that they are looking at this because I think it is a sensible suggestion. But I appreciate that is probably a bit premature to support it at this stage.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** I thank the minister and shadow minister for their contributions. I am greatly encouraged by the openness of the government and the opposition to look at this. It is a reform that makes a lot of sense and, as I say, is something that would be beneficial for a lot of people. I therefore flag that it is a matter I will take up in the new parliament, and I look forward to having positive discussions with whichever party forms government.

New clause negated.

Clause 5 passed.

Clause 6.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** I move:

Amendment No 1 [Simms–2]—

Page 3, lines 10 to 12 [clause 6, inserted subsection (5a)]—

Delete 'may pay the money to the Treasurer in accordance with section 6 of the *Unclaimed Money Act 2021*' and substitute:

must pay the money as follows (as determined by the Commissioner in the particular circumstances):

- (a) to an entity that the Commissioner is satisfied has a primary purpose of advocating for and representing the interests of tenants, rooming house residents and residents of residential parks;
- (b) to an entity (including an agency or instrumentality of the Crown) that provides social housing or services for homeless persons (or both).

This amendment applies in circumstances where money has not been claimed over a long period of time. I understand there is money in the fund that the minister referred to earlier that has been there for up to 20 years that has not been claimed.

Rather than this money going into general government coffers, I am proposing that the money go towards supporting homeless organisations or rental advocacy services, or indeed towards the construction of social housing. It does seem inappropriate that if there is a circumstance where money has not been claimed over a long period of time that it just vanishes into general revenue. This seems like an opportunity to at least be able to use that unclaimed bond money for something that is going to support people who are struggling.

**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** I indicate that I will be supporting this amendment. Like the previous ones, if the government is not in a position to support this now I certainly hope it will add it to the list of issues that it will consider going into the new year. I do not think it makes any logical sense that that money would be going back into general revenue, given that it could be going to much-needed services and assistance to people, particularly regarding homelessness. I thank the honourable member for bringing it to this parliament.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I am advised that as part of the immediate priority reforms to the act, which commenced on 1 September 2023, the use of the income derived from investment of the Residential Tenancies Fund was expanded. As a result, it may now be applied for the benefit of an industrial association or organisation with the primary purpose of advocating for and representing the interests of tenants, rooming house residents and residents of residential parks.

In 2024, the government awarded a \$1.4 million grant across four years to SYC Ltd (RentRight SA) for the purpose of providing a tenant advice and advocacy service to tenants and residential park residents. This also includes advocacy supports to tenants and residents at SACAT. Existing section 101(1)(e) of the act already allows the income from the investment of the fund to be applied for the benefit of tenants, rooming house residents and residential park residents in other ways approved by the commissioner.

The proposed amendment at clause 6 of the bill clarifies that the commissioner may pay unclaimed bond money to the Treasurer where the bond money has been held for at least 12 months and the owner cannot be found. This is in accordance with section 6 of the *Unclaimed Money Act 2021*. However, that would still enable tenants and rooming house residents to make a claim for their bond money after the initial 12-month period has passed. This was referenced in discussion at clause 1.

There are concerns that the proposed amendment by the Hon. Mr Simms would not enable tenants and residents to make a claim for their bond money if such money had been transferred over to an advocacy entity or social housing entity after 12 months had passed. The experience of Consumer and Business Services is that tenants and rooming house residents may not make a claim for their bond money straightaway, particularly in the case of, for example, international students. Transferring the unclaimed bond moneys to the Treasurer's fund after 12 months will, however, provide certainty on the ability of future claims to be made by tenants and residents. The government therefore will not be supporting this amendment.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK:** We could potentially go either way on this amendment. I again commend the honourable member for bringing it to the chamber. I think one of the issues that the government has had for some time is this lack of cross-checking across government. I note, too, in response to the minister's comments in response to my question earlier, information privacy principles exist which often cover a lot of the situations where agencies might want to engage in data sharing, but that is a sort of big project for another day. I am pleased to hear that the government is partly mindful of this, but I think it is an issue that is worth revisiting in the future.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** I thank the minister, the shadow minister and the Hon. Connie Bonaros for their comments. Again, I am encouraged by the willingness of people to look at this issue. I accept the minister's point that we would not want to create a situation where people, should they come forward at a later date, are then not able to access the funds. I understand, though, that there are funds that have been sitting there for many years that are not claimed and that potentially there is an opportunity to allocate those funds in a way that is going to assist people.

So I am certainly keen to keep this conversation going, and it could be a matter that we revisit in the new parliament. It is certainly something that I will put on my agenda, to talk about it to whoever forms government next year.

**The CHAIR:** The question is that it be a suggestion to the House Assembly to amend clause 6 as proposed by the Hon. R.A. Simms.

Suggested amendment negatived; clause passed.

Remaining clauses (7 to 10) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

*Third Reading*

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (12:52):** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

*Sitting suspended from 12:53 to 14:17.*

*Parliamentary Procedure*

**PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the President—

Report of the Auditor-General—Report 10 of 2025—Update to the annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025—Department for Environment and Water

By the Deputy Premier (Hon. K.J. Maher)—

Reports, 2024-25—

Barossa and Districts Health Advisory Council Inc  
Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network  
Berri Barmera District Health Advisory Council Inc  
Central Adelaide Local Health Network  
Chief Psychiatrist of South Australia  
Commission on Excellency and Innovation in Health  
Coorong Health Service Health Advisory Council Inc  
Gawler and District Health Advisory Council Inc  
Health Performance Council  
Keith and District Health Advisory Council Inc  
Kingston/Robe Health Advisory Council Inc  
Lower North Health Advisory Council Inc  
Loxton and Districts Health Advisory Council Inc  
Port Augusta, Roxby Downs & Woomera Health Advisory Council Incorporated

Southern Adelaide Local Health Network  
 Southern Fleurieu Health Advisory Council Inc  
 Women's and Children's Health Network  
 Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Inc  
 Yorke Peninsula Health Advisory Council Inc  
 SA Health's response to the Deputy State Coroner's finding into the death of Kathleen Ethel Salter prepared by SA Health dated November 2025  
 SA Health's response to the Economic and Finance Committee report into delivery of health services on the Yorke Peninsula prepared by SA Health dated November 2025

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

Reports, 2024-25—  
 Behavioural Standards Panel  
 Department of State Development  
 Outback Communities Authority  
 South Australian Local Government Grants Commission  
 Study Adelaide  
 Veterans SA

By the Minister for Forest Industries (Hon. C.M. Scriven)—

Select Committee on Matters Relating to the Timber Industry in the Limestone Coast and Other Regions of South Australia—Response from the South Australian Government dated November 2025

By the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport (Hon. E.S. Bourke)—

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority: Report, 2024-25

#### *Parliamentary Committees*

#### **LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (14:18):** I bring up the 75<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, 2022-25.

Report received.

**The Hon. R.B. MARTIN:** I bring up the 76<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, 2022-25.

Report received and read.

#### *Ministerial Statement*

#### **H5N1 HIGH PATHOGENICITY AVIAN INFLUENZA, WILDLIFE PREPAREDNESS**

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:22):** I table a copy of a ministerial statement made earlier today in another place by the Hon. Lucy Hood entitled H5 Avian Influenza, Wildlife Preparedness Update.

#### *Question Time*

#### **ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:23):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Deputy Premier regarding the harmful algal bloom.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** As we all know, on 16 October this year, this council passed a motion requesting the tabling of documents held by government agencies relating to the harmful

algal bloom. The government subsequently advised that a range of departments, including the Department for Environment and Water, SA Health and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet may hold relevant documents and that work was underway to locate, review and access them. My questions to the Deputy Premier are: has the Deputy Premier or his office already received any of those documents from the departments identified, and, if so, will the Deputy Premier table those documents today?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:24):** I will refer the honourable member to my statement yesterday in relation to having received documents: not that I am aware of.

#### **ADELAIDE BEACH MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:25):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to addressing a question to the Deputy Premier on the Adelaide Beach Management Review.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** It's the opposition's understanding that at a recent community forum the Premier told attendees that the report on the Adelaide Beach Management Review would be made public some time this month. We are now 26 November and that report has still not been released. My questions to the Deputy Premier are: does the Deputy Premier stand by the Premier's commitment to make the report on the Adelaide Beach Management Review public this month, and, if so, will the Deputy Premier commit to releasing the report publicly prior to the end of the sitting calendar?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:26):** I wasn't at any such forum, but I am happy to make inquiries.

#### **ADELAIDE BEACH MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:26):** Supplementary, Mr President.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! You are asking for a supplementary question. I will listen to it.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** Will the Deputy Premier, in making those inquiries, commit to releasing the report publicly prior to the end of the sitting calendar?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:26):** I have nothing further to add. I said I would make inquiries.

#### **DROUGHT ASSISTANCE**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:27):** I seek leave to offer a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries regarding fodder deliveries.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** In a question taken on notice back in June of this year, some five months ago, where I asked how much of the freight subsidy announced in the April package is remaining and will the government commit to further funding for freight rebates as required, the minister yesterday tabled that answer, which stated how much was yet to be allocated as of 17 June, and that, and I quote:

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions is also closely monitoring seasonal conditions and will consider the need for further funding if necessary.

The opposition is aware of farmers and others in the supply chain who assisted with accessing fodder from Western Australia for drought-affected farmers on the understanding that the freight costs would be covered under agreed funding through PIRSA. We estimate that approximately \$230,000 is owed

for just one small cohort of farmers and that they have been waiting for months and still there is no sign of repayments. My questions to the minister are:

1. What is causing the delay in finalising reimbursements for these farmers and freight providers, particularly at a time when they are under significant financial pressure and cannot reasonably absorb these costs?
2. What is the total value of outstanding reimbursements for fodder assistance that remains unpaid?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:28):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I would be happy to make some inquiries, if the honourable member could provide more detail about what she is referring to. Members may recall that funds are made available to charities to cover the transport costs of donated fodder. She is welcome to provide the details of the charities. If it is a matter of an arrangement between the charities and farmers, then that obviously would be different than if she is suggesting that the charities have not been reimbursed. Certainly the latter has not been brought to my attention as being something that is outstanding.

#### DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:29):** Supplementary: given the minister suggests that it hasn't been brought to her attention, will she actively seek advice from her department as to whether or not there are farmer payments outstanding from her department?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:29):** As I said, if the member would like to give details of specifically what she is referring to, then that would enable those inquiries to be made. If we are talking about a situation between a charity and an individual, then obviously that's not something that PIRSA has direct involvement with. If she wants to provide some specifics, then I would be more than willing to make inquiries and to see whether indeed what she is saying has any accuracy and, if so, take any action that is required.

#### DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:30):** Supplementary: is the minister suggesting that it would be appropriate that I provide private information, in terms of farmers who are still requiring payments, in this chamber?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:30):** Although I am not sure that went from the original answer, what I am suggesting is that, if she is serious about actually getting an alleged problem addressed, she needs to provide the information. She is more than welcome to provide that to my office. A general 'farmer's fodder' is not answering the questions that I have just asked.

I can only assume from the member's statements of outrage that she doesn't actually know the answer to the question. Is she talking about farmers or individuals who have a relationship with a charity, who have not been reimbursed for something? In that case, it is between the charity and the farmers. Or is she talking about some other matter? If she wants to be specific, I am more than happy to provide whatever information is available.

#### DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:31):** Final supplementary, Mr President.

**The PRESIDENT:** Well, I will let you know if it's going to be a supplementary question. Away you go.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** Is the minister aware of outstanding payments required from her department to the South Australian Dairyfarmers' Association?

**The PRESIDENT:** I am not sure we mentioned the dairy farmers. Do you want to answer it?

**The Hon. N.J. Centofanti:** She wanted specifics. I have just given her specifics.

**The PRESIDENT:** Was that arising from the original answer? No, but thanks for your feedback.

### GIANT AUSTRALIAN CUTTLEFISH

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (14:31):** My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister inform the chamber about the government's commitment to protecting giant Australian cuttlefish?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:32):** I thank the honourable member for his well-constructed question, which is specific and which we can provide information about.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Listen, this is about Whyalla. Everyone pay attention—no interjections.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** Thank you, Mr President. I absolutely agree that Whyalla is incredibly important, and I am very glad that you have called people's attention to that in this place. We went to the last state election committing to the re-implementation of protection for the giant Australian cuttlefish in the Upper Spencer Gulf, which of course was allowed to lapse under the former Liberal government in 2020. I am pleased to say that we delivered on the commitment quickly and have continued to strengthen protection further, in regulation and now in a proposed act, ever since.

It was interesting to hear the Leader of the Opposition recently defend the decision of the former government to allow protection to lapse, saying, 'Sound science must always underpin fishery management decisions,' and that this decision was consistent with the best available science at that time. The opposition supported the government's bill in this chamber, and we certainly appreciate that they have recognised their error while in government and joined us as we seek to provide the highest legislative protection available to the species, protection that they took away only five years ago.

I absolutely agree with the Leader of the Opposition—a rare thing—when she says fisheries management should always be based on the best available science, which I am certain she will be pleased to know is exactly how this government makes fisheries management decisions, including decisions we have made in recent times.

The Leader of the Opposition has been a frequent critic of SARDI and our scientific community and their work in recent years. It would seem she was more open to their work when her party members were on this side of the chamber, as opposed to when she can try to score a political point when she is sitting on that side.

Shortly after the 2022 election, I acted quickly in delivering our election commitment, instructing PIRSA to implement protection across the Upper Spencer Gulf for giant Australian cuttlefish. This protection, enacted through section 79 of the Fisheries Management Act, was in place for the 2022 spawning season.

By 2023, regulations were put in place to ensure long-term protection of the species, which in turn has provided confidence to the people of Whyalla, who do such a fantastic job in accommodating the increased nature-based tourism and the large numbers of people wanting to witness the cuttlefish aggregation and take part in the town's Cuttlefest, which includes many ways to experience the aggregation and other Whyalla and surrounding region attractions.

The giant Australian cuttlefish is an iconic species that captures people's imaginations, and we are incredibly fortunate to host their aggregation in our state's waters, the only known event like this for the species anywhere in the world—right on our doorstep. I acknowledge the hard work of the Hon. Eddie Hughes, who has been a passionate advocate for his region in pushing for the highest possible protection for giant Australian cuttlefish because he knows how important they are to his community, both in the environmental sense and also to the growing opportunities around the spawning event, a fantastic reason to visit one of our state's great places.



**ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:35):** My question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development is: how many mammals have had necropsies associated with the algal bloom event as a result of their death, and will they be published—

**The Hon. C.M. Scriven:** As a result of?

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS:** As a result of their death, which is when you have a necropsy on a creature. How many necropsies have occurred as a result of the algal bloom event, and will they all be published and made public to the South Australian people?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:36):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I am happy to take that on notice and bring back a response.

**ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:36):** Supplementary: what part of 'Will they all be published?' do you have to take on notice?

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Minister, can you provide any more information? No.

**RARE EARTH MINING**

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:37):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question without notice to the Minister for Primary Industries on the topic of rare earth mining extraction on primary production land.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** I was recently alerted to an issue impacting agricultural landholders in the Limestone Coast region. Agricultural landholders, I understand, are having their land strip mined for rare earth minerals. This practice involves having the topsoil removed, tested for rare earth minerals and then returned to the land. This activity is having seriously negative effects on topsoil. The removal, testing and replacement of the topsoil on fertile land does not acknowledge the timeframe required for the development of a mature soil structure, nor its water-holding capacity after it is replaced.

This has serious lasting impacts on the ability to grow productive crops, and in turn it impacts adversely on the livelihood of people who work on our land. This is leading to long-term damage to the topsoil, effectively damaging the soil for decades after the exploration has ended. In Victoria, farmers have also raised serious concerns around the environmental and economic impacts of rare earth mining on and around these properties.

My question to the Minister for Primary Industries therefore is: what action is the minister taking to ensure that mining exploration does not degrade our state's fertile agricultural land, especially when farmers are already experiencing the impacts of climate change from drought on their livelihood, and is the minister concerned about the potential impacts of this practice on the Limestone Coast, given her own connections to the region?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:39):** I thank the honourable member for his question. I do query some details of the question. Certainly it is the case that exploration company Australian Rare Earths, also known as AR3, have signalled an intention to apply for a mining lease in the area. I understand they have done some exploration, but I am not sure that all of the matters that the honourable member was saying have occurred have actually occurred. My understanding is that they may well occur if a mining lease was granted and that mining actually did take place.

However, notwithstanding that, I am certainly aware of the concerns. For a good amount of time now I have been having discussions with affected industries and individual landholders. The Mining Act 1971 provides a process to guide interactions between exploration and mining companies and landholders in regard to both exploration and mining. Members might recall that there is a

landholder information service available through Rural Business Support to assist with understanding the lease approval process for mining exploration and mining. It is an impartial and free service and I would recommend that people do avail themselves of it.

In January 2025, I understand, the Department for Energy and Mining released its report, 'Energy and mining on the Limestone Coast: social research findings and recommendations'. A key concern raised by the community through that DEM engagement was impacts on farming and other pre-existing industries. I am informed that this report includes a series of recommendations for mining proponents, including undertaking scoping work, a social impact assessment, engaging a multistakeholder consultative committee, establishment and maintenance of an issues register and actions to increase transparency.

I am aware that, following advice from the Department for Energy and Mining, AR3 formed an independently-chaired Koppamurra community consultative committee. I am advised that Mr Iain Evans was appointed as chair and that member appointments to the community consultative committee include: Steve Bourne from the Limestone Coast Landscape Board; Todd Woodard from Limestone Coast Sustainable Futures Association; Patrick Ross, Mayor of Naracoorte Lucindale Council; Tony Wright from the Green Triangle Forest Industry Hub; Will Malone from Limestone Coast Grape and Wine Council; Erika Vickery, RDA Limestone Coast; Ken Turner, a landholder; and, Darren Turner, a business owner.

A robust process must be gone through before any approvals are provided. I think it is fair to say that having that robust framework in place is absolutely essential to ensuring that nothing occurs that would have long-term detrimental effects that could not be appropriately mitigated. I am aware of the research, which I think it is fair to say is immature research in my view in regard to the long-term impacts that could be had. However, it is not appropriate to prematurely judge a particular process, given that we do have a robust framework in place. All of those processes must be gone through and that would result in an outcome of whether or not such a thing could be approved.

#### **RARE EARTH MINING**

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:42):** Supplementary: is the minister concerned about the adverse environmental impact of the exploration work that has already been undertaken?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:43):** Whilst I have had a number of meetings and discussions in regard to the impact of mining, I don't recall specific concerns being raised with me about the current exploration process.

#### **RAIL CROSSING UPGRADES**

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:43):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport about rail crossing upgrades.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** I have been contacted by many angry residents about the need to spend \$3 million on a safety upgrade of the level crossing on Grange Road at Lower Mitcham in the electorate of Waite—the government calls it notorious. In what has been described as a pork-barrelling exercise for the seats of Waite and Unley, residents argue that the department's reasoning isn't justified, with just 51 incidents reported over the past four years of minor boom gate strikes on vehicles that encroached into the 'keep clear' zone. With 7,000 vehicle crossings each day, or 10.2 million in that time, it represents just 0.0005 per cent of total use.

They are concerned that the redesign, which includes regrading Grange Road, installing traffic signals, removing a stop sign and imposing turning restrictions, will create far more safety incidents and traffic congestions than it was intended to fix and pose a flooding risk to low-lying Verco Avenue nearby.

Furthermore, residents are extremely critical of the department's consultation and engagement process, which they described as a formality to achieve a predetermined outcome. They say more practical and much cheaper options arising from their lived experience and knowledge in the area have been ignored or dismissed by DIT.

Many met with the minister last weekend but left disappointed in that they couldn't get a straight answer from her because she said she depended on the advice of her bureaucrats. They are demanding the works, scheduled to start next week, be halted pending further discussions. My questions to the minister are:

1. Did your department formally assess the options put to them by residents during the so-called investigation process started in May, and can you provide that response?
2. What formal assessments of potential safety and accident risks because of the upgrade have been done, and can you provide them?
3. As part of the road is controlled by Mitcham council, why did your department only seek to fully brief the council as recently as just over a week ago?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Autism) (14:46):** This is going to be fun. We have our first question from the candidate for Waite. Congratulations, it's taken a while. I would suggest that the member of this chamber who has decided to raise his head about Waite, it would have been great to see him at the consultation that was open on the weekend. I don't know if you had time to pop in to your electorate and come along to this consultation period that was open to the community. I was there. I don't know if you were there. I didn't see you while I was there, that is for sure.

If you want to stand over there and lecture me and this government about one of the most notorious intersections and rattle off some most ludicrous statistics, you should be ashamed of yourself. You should actually be ashamed, because what you have just done is irresponsible. This is an intersection that is seen as one of the worst intersections we have in our state. I rely on the facts and that is what I have been advised.

I have been to the street-corner meeting, and I heard the same data. What we need to look at is the number of people who travel through that intersection in comparison to others when we have an integration between rail and road, and the risk they are being put at. I have seen the images. I have seen the buses caught under that boom gate because they got too close, left too late, because this intersection has not been upgraded.

You have stepped into the wrong argument. You are on the wrong side here because I did rock up. I did talk to the community. I have taken on the feedback of the community, and I want them to be safe. I absolutely want them to be safe. I was there with the member for Waite, Catherine Hutchesson, who advocates tirelessly for her community. I spent the day with her, and it could not be made clearer about the advocacy that she has done for that community. I will work with that community to take on their feedback to ensure what is deemed one of the most dangerous intersections for our rail and road crossings coming together, where they integrate, can be made as safe as possible.

We do not want local residents exiting in the morning when it's busy, or coming home in the evening when it's busy, and coming home to an unsafe intersection. We must take on the advice of the experts, but we also are listening to the locals. I will integrate as much of that feedback as I can, but I will not allow that to interfere with the safety of the community.

#### ADELAIDE AQUATIC CENTRE

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (14:49):** My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister provide an update on the construction of the new Adelaide Aquatic Centre?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Autism) (14:49):** I thank the member for his question—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** The Hon. Tung Ngo; very, very honourable, actually—and for his interest in this topic, which will provide a brand-new state-of-the-art facility in the heart of Adelaide.

As members may remember, the Premier and the member for Adelaide, now Minister Lucy Hood, announced that if elected a Labor government would build a brand-new aquatic centre to replace an old facility that was literally falling apart. We said we would deliver that before the next

election, and today I am pleased to update the house and advise that the brand-new Adelaide Aquatic Centre will open to the public on 27 January next year.

Construction started a little over two years ago, and we recently achieved a major milestone with the first pool, the learn-to-swim pool, filling with water. It took over two days, but it was an important pool to be starting with, considering the significance of the message it is sending: we want safer swimming facilities but also stronger swimmers in our community. The progress being made at the centre is a true testament to the Sarah construction team, and soon we will see the 10-lane 50-metre pool filled with water. This will take up to three days using a fire hydrant.

There have been over 400,000 construction hours worked and over 1,500 full-time jobs supported during the construction phase. This includes one kilometre of underground plumbing, the lifting of 52 beams and columns—one that I believe is the longest in Australia at 37 metres. Finishing touches are being applied to the interior space and work is progressing on the outdoor aquatic space and landscape areas. The site of the former Adelaide Aquatic Centre will be returned to parklands, while construction of the new car park is also scheduled to be completed in time for the opening.

Experienced operator YMCA Aquatic was announced as the operator for the centre, and I am advised that up to 300 jobs will be created, with staff who worked at the former Adelaide Aquatic Centre given the first opportunity to express interest in filling the roles. Recruitment for these positions continues.

In a unique and popular move, membership of the new Adelaide Aquatic Centre also gives access to the SA Aquatic and Leisure Centre, which gives two great facilities with one pass. South Australians can now jump online to sign up for the general pool and gym membership and enrol in the learn to swim classes. We cannot wait to see the doors open and welcome the public back to this incredible centre.

#### CHILD ABUSE REPORT LINE

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (14:52):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industry and Regional Development, representing the Minister for Child Protection, regarding child protection reports.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE:** Recently, concerns have been raised about the administrative processes within the Child Abuse Report Line, specifically regarding the downgrading or dismissal of mandatory reports, refusal to record reports in the system and misleading advice being provided to callers about statutory responsibilities. These concerns come alongside recent media reports about long wait times and poor responses from CARL, suggesting wider departmental problems.

It has also been reported that CARL staff failed to follow departmental policy and guidelines, and that reports involving departmental staff were not handled confidentially or appropriately. These actions reduce transparency and confidentiality and may amount to maladministration under the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. Concerns have also been raised about such failures removing critical safeguards for vulnerable children and compromising independent oversight. My questions to the minister are:

1. Can the minister advise whether the department has investigated claims that Child Abuse Report Line staff have refused to record mandatory reports and have downgraded them to file notes, against policy and legislative requirements?
2. What steps are in place to make certain that the mandatory reports are handled properly and independently, especially when concerns involve departmental staff?
3. After years of serious failures in child protection, will the government commit to urgent reform of the Child Abuse Report Line to protect vulnerable children and restore public trust?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:55):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I am happy to refer that to the appropriate minister in the other place and bring back a response.

**ADELAIDE HILLS INTERSECTIONS**

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:55):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking questions of the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport regarding dangerous intersections in the Hills—with some trepidation.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK:** As part of the Adelaide Hills Productivity and Road Safety Package, the staggered T-intersection of Onkaparinga Valley Road, Tiers Road and Nairne Road at Woodside has been identified as a key location in the Adelaide Hills needing upgrades. Despite this, there have been no project updates since 26 June this year, and the results of public consultation on the draft plan have not been released. My questions therefore are:

1. What is the reason for no updates being provided on this vital project for the Adelaide Hills?
2. Has the minister visited the intersection and experienced firsthand the danger it poses to motorists and pedestrians?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Autism) (14:56):** I thank the honourable member for her question. We are spending a significant amount of money in the Adelaide Hills, not only to upgrade intersections but also to invest in public transport.

What we have recently heard a lot about, when we talk about Adelaide Hills investments, is not taking investments seriously in the Adelaide Hills. As a government we have invested a significant amount of money at particular roundabouts, intersections and upgrades, ones for which I was able to again participate in the consultation over the weekend. At the Mount Barker intersection, at Adelaide Road, we are doing the roundabout that has been called for there for some time.

It is a significant amount of money. If you were to blend in the infrastructure investments we have done, it's over \$550 million, I am advised, that has been undertaken in this space, just in transport infrastructure. That is an incredible investment, and \$19 million of that has gone towards upgrades in public transport to have more services and to be able to have a park-and-ride at Crafers. These have been significant investments, investments we didn't necessarily see under the others when they were in government.

What we do see when we talk about the difference between us delivering on projects—spending hundreds of millions of dollars on projects in the region, in this region of the Adelaide Hills, hundreds of millions of dollars—what we do see from those opposite is them coming out and somehow thinking they can widen the Southern Expressway for \$15 million: we are going to build an extra lane for \$15 million.

I don't know where these costings have come from. Maybe it's a napkin, maybe it's a Post-it note, but maybe they went to Frank and said, 'Frank, check with AI. It might have an answer as to how much it costs to widen a freeway by an extra lane.' 'Oh, \$15 million, I reckon.' Good luck. Good luck, because I do not know where that cost could ever have come from.

'We're going to chuck in a park-and-ride. We're going to do an extra lane.' Your announcement has been as vague as your costings. 'We're going to do an extra lane.' Is it an extra lane on both sides? Is there an extra lane on one side? Nobody knows. I don't even know if you know.

In regard to investments, yes we are spending big in the region. We are doing a lot. We are delivering, and we are not taking the community for granted. We are not giving them ridiculous costings. We are getting on with changing things in that region.

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Ms Lensink, just before you ask your supplementary question arising from the answer, minister, you will refer to the Hon. Mr Pangallo as 'the Hon. Mr Pangallo'. He doesn't—

**The Hon. E.S. Bourke:** Apologies. I did not mean—

**The PRESIDENT:** That's okay.

**ADELAIDE HILLS INTERSECTIONS**

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:00):** Supplementary question arising from the answer: for the community of Woodside, what part of the minister's response would she advise providing to them based on relevance?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Autism) (15:00):** As I said, we are investing a significant amount of money in this region that is benefiting many people. We are investing in the roundabouts and the intersections, costing \$150 million, so that they can be more connected and safer. We are investing significant amounts of money in this space, which I have already run through.

We are there on the weekends. We are consulting with them. I will be back there again on the weekend to have a chat about all these investments that we are doing in this region because it is significant change.

**ADELAIDE HILLS INTERSECTIONS**

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:01):** Supplementary question arising from the original answer: will the minister ensure that all candidates are invited to all of these consultations?

**The PRESIDENT:** You can answer it, but it's not really a supplementary question.

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Autism) (15:01):** It's called a community event, because it's a community event. And he did pop in for a little bit.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE:** No, no—not that one.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**ASBESTOS VICTIMS MEMORIAL DAY**

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON (15:01):** It's hard to believe this is the second-to-last one. My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector. Will the minister inform the council about the Asbestos Victims Memorial Day service held this week?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:02):** I thank the honourable member for his question. It was a privilege, again, this week to be able to attend the Asbestos Victims Memorial Day service. The memorial day marked a special 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and was held, again, at Jack Watkins Reserve in Kilburn, named in honour of the man who dedicated his life to improving the health and safety of his community.

The memorial day provides an important opportunity for people to come together and commemorate the many thousands of people in South Australia and across the country who have died from asbestos-related diseases and to reaffirm the need for constant vigilance in standing up for the health and safety of the community. For two decades, families, advocates, survivors, friends and supporters have come together to join their voices in solidarity. Each gathering represents compassion, courage and a shared commitment to ensuring that no story is forgotten and no struggle is overlooked.

The service was once again hosted by the Asbestos Diseases Society of South Australia (ADSSA), and I would like to acknowledge particularly the Hon. Connie Bonaros, who once again was in attendance and is a patron and longtime supporter of ADSSA. Also attending the memorial day for many, many years has been a former colleague, the Hon. Irene Pnevmatikos, and this year Michael Brown, who has attended a number of times before, as well as others in parliament, standing alongside families, advocates and survivors.

ADSSA's services include education to raise awareness, preventative measures, assistance with obtaining legal advice and a range of psychosocial and psychoeducational interactions, led by a social worker, to support those impacted by asbestos-related disease.

Asbestos was banned in Australia just over 20 years ago. This was a critical moment when Australian society and legislators collectively said, 'We're not willing to tolerate the devastating impact of this dangerous material on workers and the community.' Yet even today, decades later, asbestos-related disease continues to kill people. In fact, each year asbestos-related disease claims more lives than the national road toll.

The decades of widespread use mean asbestos remains present in many buildings, products and public spaces. As a result, the need for education about its dangers and the removal of products remains as strong as ever. It is something the government has taken to heart and we have been committed to significant national action in relation to dust disease, both asbestos as well as newer dangers, such as silicosis from engineered stone benches.

We were one of the first governments in Australia to publicly support the ban of engineered stone benches. In fact, we were willing to do it alone with a South Australian state-level ban if there wasn't a coordinated ban. Fortunately, we have seen every state and territory introduce a ban on engineered stone from 1 July last year. However, we know that passing a law or instituting a ban is only part of the solution.

These products continue as a legacy in our communities and it is essential that work be done to educate and warn about the safety and handling of these materials. There is still much to do, but I thank all the individuals and organisations for the work that they do in supporting victims of dust disease and protecting the community.

#### ASBESTOS

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:05):** Supplementary: has the government contemplated a scheme whereby there may be some sort of subsidy or assistance with respect to removing asbestos, particularly in domestic settings, or is he aware of a similar scheme that might exist in another jurisdiction?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:05):** I am happy to take that on notice and look to see if there are any other schemes around the country in relation to the removal of asbestos from domestic settings. Up until 20 years ago, asbestos was very, very widely used. There is asbestos, I know, that remains in buildings. Some of it is encased or doesn't cause harm to people, but of course there is asbestos that can potentially cause harm. But I am happy to go and have a look and see what other jurisdictions do.

#### BEACH MANAGEMENT

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (15:06):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, regarding beach management and sand dredging.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. S.L. GAME:** The state government's Department for Environment and Water conducted an operational dredging trial between October and November 2024 and is now due to evaluate the trial data and report its findings. Meanwhile, quarried, washed, sterile sand is currently being trucked to West Beach, aimed at combating erosion along Adelaide's coastline. More than 100,000 cubic metres of this quarry sand was delivered to West Beach between July and December 2024 and a further 100,000 cubic metres has also been delivered earlier this year.

Having commenced on Monday 13 October 2025, a purported additional 45,000 cubic metres of quarry sand is to be delivered. According to media reports, the Save West Beach Sand Group and others say the quarry sand is the wrong size and is being dumped without reference to any architectural landscape design or science-based coastal model, causing it to wash away quickly. My questions to the minister are:

1. Can the government explain why the department's report is yet to be released? When will it be released and will it be released publicly?

2. In reference to recommendation 2.2 of the department's Adelaide Beach Management Review report, will the government explain why it won't use compatible sand from Adelaide's northern beaches like Semaphore and Largs Bay?

3. Can the government provide the price per cubic metre it is paying for the quarried sand to be delivered to West Beach and what it would cost per cubic metre to deliver sand from Adelaide's northern beaches?

4. Will the \$14 million committed to in the state budget be used to continue trucking quarry sand to West Beach or will any of it be allocated towards more sustainable long-term coastal protection solutions, such as sand recycling infrastructure?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:08):** I thank the honourable member for her question. In relation to the report, as I have answered previously in this place, I will seek advice on that report. In relation to questions about compatible sand, I am happy to go and check, but it's my understanding that quarry sand—as I think the honourable member indicated, I think in the 2024-25 financial year there was something like 200,000 cubic metres of sand that was put onto the West Beach area to build up the beach to combat erosion.

As I understand it—but I am happy to go and check to see if there is anything further that can be added—there are requirements in relation to the type of sand, the grain size and so forth to make sure it is as compatible as possible. In relation to the ongoing use of quarry sand, I think it is fair to say there is an ambition—and that is the whole purpose of the work that has been going on—to find another solution, other than quarry sand, that in some way recycles the sand in that northern beach cell.

#### **TORRENS TO DARLINGTON PROJECT**

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD (15:09):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure regarding the Torrens to Darlington project.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD:** The Torrens to Darlington project, as the opposition understands, relies on several layers of flood mitigation, including coordination with the Brown Hill Keswick Creek Stormwater Project, major underground drainage works and a proposed physical barrier to stop floodwater entering the lowered motorway. More than half of the project will be underground, making the reliability of these protections critical. Stakeholders have raised concerns about whether these measures are fully costed, fully designed, and whether design delivery timelines between T2D and the Brown Hill Keswick Creek project are genuinely aligned.

My questions to the minister are: can the minister confirm whether all flood mitigation measures for the Torrens to Darlington project are fully funded within the \$15.4 billion budget, fully designed and aligned with the Brown Hill Keswick Creek Stormwater Project, and further advise whether the department has identified any unintended issues or impacts along the Brownhill Creek corridor relating to flood mitigation actions on the Torrens to Darlington end?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Autism) (15:10):** I thank the member for his question. I don't recall this being a matter that has been raised with me, but I am happy to look into that further.

#### **LIMESTONE COAST MOBILE PHONE TOWER PROJECT**

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON (15:10):** My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister provide the chamber with an update on the progress of the Telstra Limestone Coast mobile phone tower project?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:11):** I thank the honourable member for his question. Mobile connectivity in our regional areas plays a crucial role in driving economic development, improving access to essential services and enhancing quality of life for regional residents. Investment in statewide digital connectivity underpins the aspirations of our government's economic statement, and



reliable mobile networks are essential to a state that is smart, sustainable and inclusive, with an economy that is fit for the future, improving the wellbeing of its residents.

Connectivity is essential to ensure all South Australians can access the services they need and benefit from economic growth. Businesses across the state also need access to voice and internet connectivity to run their businesses, whether that be taking payments and bookings or managing their operations using emerging technologies, such as sensing and automation in remote agricultural locations.

This state government, along with the federal Albanese government, has made an investment of \$25 million to install 27 new mobile base stations across the Limestone Coast. I am advised that this will be the largest co-investment project Telstra has ever put together in South Australia and one of the largest nationwide. The project has funding from all three tiers of government and from local industry, who see the benefit to improving connectivity in the Limestone Coast.

The funding deed for this historic investment was executed earlier this year and work is well underway to have the 27 new mobile base stations running as soon as possible. This is occurring in four stages. The first stage is the design stage, where Telstra designs the specifications of the sites. Once this is complete, Telstra applies for all the necessary approvals, including by lodging development applications and negotiating agreements with the landowners.

Then the construction phase commences. Once construction is complete, optimisation occurs, where Telstra ensures that the sites are operating to their specifications. Telstra have advised that their intention is to have all 27 sites built by Christmas 2026, with the first site on track to be completed by the end of this year.

This investment is set to add some 2,400 square kilometres of additional 4G coverage, which is a 44 per cent increase in the landmass covered by 4G. It will increase wireless broadband and data sharing capabilities and will provide additional 000 connectivity, including for users of other networks. Access to 000, of course, particularly in remote areas, is vital to the safety of residents and travellers.

The project will enable more efficient and effective communication and monitoring in the many industries that make up the Limestone Coast, including forestry, dairy, agriculture, wine and wool. It will provide better services to tourists, improve access to health services and improve safety, as I mentioned, with the increased access to 000.

The project was developed in close consultation with local councils, the South Australian Forest Products Association, Primary Producers SA, Grain Producers SA, the South Eastern Professional Fishermen's Association, RDA Limestone Coast, and the South Australian Country Fire Service. I look forward to seeing the continued investment and progress on this vital initiative, which is critical to the future development of the Limestone Coast region, and I thank all of those who have been involved with this project so far.

#### SUPPRESSION ORDERS

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:14):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Deputy Premier and Attorney-General a question about suppression orders.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** Media outlets have reported over the past few days that notorious convicted child murderer and suspected serial killer Bevan Spencer von Einem is close to death. His conviction in 1984 for the abduction, imprisonment, torture and murder of 15-year-old Adelaide teenager Richard Kelvin rightfully earned him life behind bars. That tragedy represented just one of the colloquially termed 'family murders', a series of unsolved sadistic murders of young men and teenagers in Adelaide in the seventies and eighties.

Von Einem was ordered to stand trial over the two murders—those of 18-year-old Mark Langley and 16-year-old Alan Barnes—charges that were later dropped. According to criminologist Associate Professor Xanthé Mallett, at least five boys and young men are thought to have been potentially tortured and murdered by von Einem and his group. Police and detectives have long believed he was not acting alone, yet to this day he remains the only person ever convicted in

association with those murders. This is despite authorities recommencing DNA testing in 2008. Meanwhile, the names and identities of other suspects have been subject to suppression orders since. In the case of those suppression orders, they remain in place only in South Australia.

My question to the Attorney and Deputy Premier is: four decades on from von Einem's conviction, noting the unlikelihood of a deathbed confession, will the Deputy Premier commit to reviewing our laws, including our Evidence Act, to ensure that those orders remaining in place over individuals suspected of involvement in those murders are finally lifted?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:16):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I have been asked this question during the course of this week at press conferences about that particular prisoner. I don't think there is a single person in this chamber, and I doubt there's a single South Australian, who will be at all remorseful at the death of that person. Those events are etched in the psyche, I think, of South Australians and, fundamentally, for a generation changed the way that they interacted publicly, particularly for young people.

In relation to suppression orders, I am not aware of the very particular reason the suppression orders that the honourable member refers to were made. I am happy to ask for some advice in relation to that. Suppression orders are not something the government makes. They are something that are made by the judiciary.

In relation to the issue of suppression orders generally, the South Australian Law Reform Institute recently handed down a report on suppression orders and their use in South Australia. If I remember correctly, part of the report talked about the fact that often suppression orders are used more sparingly in South Australia than many other jurisdictions, but I am happy to seek some advice on those historical suppression orders in particular.

#### VICTIMS OF CRIME FUND

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:17):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking questions of the Attorney-General regarding the Victims of Crime Fund.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** The Law Society of South Australia has publicly criticised the South Australian government's current payout rules for the Victims of Crime Fund, referring to it as 'arbitrary and unjustified'. When referencing the fact that victims receive only 75 per cent of their compensation for economic loss and medical expenses after the first \$2,000 is paid in full—that is the reason for their comments—the President of the Law Society has publicly stated, and I quote:

The Law Society maintains that there is no compelling reason to impose a reduction that requires victims to bear a portion of the cost of medical treatment and loss of income.

There is presently approximately \$227 million in the Victims of Crime Fund, I am informed, following an increase of some \$17 million over the last financial year, approximately. My questions to the Attorney are:

1. Is the Attorney comfortable leaving victims of crime with out-of-pocket medical expenses and not being fully compensated for economic loss when there is a quite a large \$227 million balance in the Victims of Crime Fund?
2. Will the Attorney review the current system of calculating Victims of Crime Fund payouts in order that victims are not out of pocket following an event or events from which they are victims and therefore it is not their fault?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:19):** I thank the honourable member for his question. I know the Hon. Connie Bonaros has asked similar questions and I think has various mechanisms in this chamber to further progress and look at these issues. I know the Hon. Ben Hood, during the Auditor-General's Report questioning recently, touched on the Victims of Crime Fund, the balance and what could be done with the Victims of Crime Fund.

From the outset, it is important to say that the Victims of Crime Fund is not intended to be a compensation mechanism of first resort. It is, and always has been, intended as a fund of last resort.

It is not, and has never been, intended to fully put someone in a position as if they were not a victim of crime, but it recognises—and it was a very early form of this sort of legislation, this sort of scheme around the world—the impact that crime does have on victims.

In relation to the balance, the honourable member is right. I do not have the current balance in front of me, but I gave an update as of a month ago, I think, to the Hon. Ben Hood during the estimates process, which will be on *Hansard*, for the current balance. I think the \$251 million was of 30 June this year. I had a more recent update during the estimates process as to the balance.

We do not have an intention in the immediate future of changing the way distributions are made from the Victims of Crime Fund. One of the very big reasons for that is our obligation in relation to the National Redress Scheme for victims of institutional childhood abuse. There has been a very significant amount from the Victims of Crime Fund that has been put into that National Redress Scheme. The former Liberal government, during its term, committed \$146 million from the Victims of Crime Fund towards the National Redress Scheme.

During the term of this government, we put in, I think, about \$25 million more in 2022-23 and then, in the 2024-25 Mid-Year Budget Review, a further \$135 million was committed from the Victims of Crime Fund to the National Redress Scheme. I am advised that the National Redress Scheme is accepting applications up until 30 June 2027. I think it would be reasonable to assume that there will be some activity, and there might even be an increase and a flurry of activity, in making applications as that scheme closes.

I am quite certain there will be more and more significant calls from the Victims of Crime Fund for the National Redress Scheme, and we do not want to be in a position in South Australia where we do not have the funds from the Victims of Crime Fund to put into the National Redress Scheme. It is very difficult to tell, as it winds up, exactly how many more applications will be made and exactly what the further call will be on those applications. Having already committed hundreds of millions of dollars to the National Redress Scheme, we want to make sure that the Victims of Crime Fund is in a position to be able to fund South Australia's calls under that scheme.

#### WILTJA BOARDING

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:22):** My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Can the minister tell the council about the recent 2025 Wiltja Boarding end-of-year celebration?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Deputy Premier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:23):** I thank the honourable member for his question. It is indeed a very good question. In parliament yesterday, I was very pleased to be able to talk very briefly about the Wiltja Boarding school end-of-year function that I attended this week. Yesterday, we were privileged to be able to give a tour to a couple of members of the Wiltja Boarding school who were in parliament during the course of yesterday. They had a lot of questions after seeing question time here yesterday and what goes on in the chamber.

For those who might not be familiar with Wiltja, it is a Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara word that translates roughly to 'shelter' or 'shade'. It has provided a home away from home for many Anangu students from the APY lands and Maralinga Tjarutja lands. Over many years, students undertake their secondary education at the boarding school on the basis that their families actively wish for them to participate in the program. Wiltja allows young people to walk in two worlds. It provides access to mainstream secondary education here in Adelaide while respecting and maintaining their connection to language, culture and country.

A highlight of the evening was to be able to hear from Tahwanee Coombes and Aaron McCormack, both of whom completed year 12 this year. Aaron and another Wiltja student, Kyrissa, as I said, were actually in Parliament House yesterday. Later in the evening, the closing speech was delivered by Leon Kenny, a former Wiltja student himself who has gone on to a successful career with the education department. Watching him speak earlier in the week to current students, we were seeing the cycle of success in action—living proof that those who graduate succeed in the education system and can turn around to support and lead other people.

I congratulate all students from this year's Wiltja graduating class for their achievements and success, who are seeing recognition, including awards, in everything from surf lifesaving to the Duke of Edinburgh Awards; it is incredible. These students leave their families and travel hundreds or sometimes in excess of 1,000 kilometres to be here in Adelaide, and their commitment to their education and their achievements are a testament to their courage. I left the event feeling incredibly optimistic about the future of these young people through the Wiltja program, which is doing essential work. It is an honour to be able to celebrate another successful year.

*Matters of Interest*

**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:25):** I rise to speak in support of the recent state government pre-sale guarantee fund for apartments/developments in the Adelaide CBD. As the lack of housing is contributing to the housing crisis, I believe this policy announcement is crucial to accelerate the delivery of more homes quickly.

Recently, I had a student from the South Australian Parliamentary Internship prepare me a report on housing affordability and innovative solutions. Her findings suggest that housing affordability has had tremendous effects on South Australians, marked by a mismatch in housing demand and supply. As housing affordability worsens and housing stress becomes more common, South Australians are more than ever open to the diversification of living arrangements and types of housing. Medium to high density housing, like apartments, can facilitate a strong housing supply to meet the increasing and changing housing demand.

The outward expansion of cities was once a solution to boost housing supply, which was enabled in the past by relatively affordable land, energy and finance. Adelaide has already stretched too far north and south as its expansion to the west and east is limited by geographic boundaries. The rate of urban sprawl in Adelaide faces challenges from limitations in infrastructure and the public transport system. This highlights the need for more medium to high density housing projects, not only to provide more affordable housing to South Australians but also to encourage more mobility and investment in the Adelaide CBD.

Despite this, higher density housing construction has been restrained, as conventional detached homes remain the most common kind of new dwellings. Economically, medium to high density housing is generally more cost effective for governments and home owners, but not as profitable as conventional detached houses for developers, due to the lengthy approval process and increasing material costs.

The requirement of the 50 per cent to 80 per cent pre-sale rate for projects to secure financing also leaves many projects being discontinued. In response to these challenges, the South Australian Labor government recently announced a \$500 million fund that will guarantee up to 50 per cent of dwellings—or up to \$30 million per project—in eligible off-the-plan developments. This means that if the dwellings remain unsold the developers can call upon the guarantee and the government will purchase them at a discount of 10 per cent of the market value. This will help developers to start construction with ease and avoid leaving spaces underdeveloped.

This fund opens pathways to high-rise buildings by supporting housing developers and the construction sector with the goal of delivering more housing in the short term. The guarantee fund, and the recent changes in building height regulations, will enable South Australia to make progress with the Housing Roadmap and the National Housing Accord. It will encourage developers to deliver well-designed and well-located options. Apartment developments will make the city area an integrated and vibrant residential, cultural and commercial hub.

This government is committed to supporting developers and delivering affordable housing to help young people in entering the housing market. I believe that the Malinauskas Labor government's \$500 million Pre-Sale Guarantee Fund will help to achieve this by improving housing supply and affordability.

**The ACTING PRESIDENT (The Hon. T.A. Franks):** Welcome back, the Hon. Laura Henderson.

## STATE LABOR GOVERNMENT

**The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (15:30):** Thank you, Acting President. At the 2022 election, the Labor government campaigned under the slogan of 'For the Future'. But almost four years on, the future under this government is not looking bright. Instead, it looks like a child protection system that is in crisis; a childcare system leaving children and families exposed due to delayed reviews; a cost-of-living crisis pushing household budgets to breaking point; a property market increasingly out of reach for young South Australians; a collapsing coastal economy; farmers struggling through drought; and ramping at levels never seen before. These are not isolated issues. They form a pattern, a pattern of a government which is distracted by bread and circuses while failing to deliver on the issues that impact people's daily lives and shape their opportunities for their futures.

Since 2022, the price of everyday essentials has surged. Bread and cereal products are up by around 21 per cent, dairy by 20 per cent, fruit and vegetables by around 15 per cent, and power prices continue to climb at a relentless rate. According to the Office of the Valuer-General, the median sale price for homes in metropolitan Adelaide has jumped from \$650,000 in March 2022 to \$847,000 in September 2025. Housing affordability is now one of the most common concerns that is raised with me when I am out and about in the community listening to constituents.

While the Premier is busy promoting LIV Golf and the next fixtures for Gather Round, ordinary South Australians are worrying about how they will make their next mortgage payment, how to afford rent, and whether buying a home will ever be possible for their children and grandchildren. For many, the dream of home ownership is slipping further and further out of reach, as prices continue to skyrocket.

As the cost of living rises, more families need both parents back at work, simply just to keep the lights on. For many, that means turning to child care, but the system that families rely upon is showing serious cracks. In recent months, we have seen an increased focus on the state of child care across Australia, and what we have learned is alarming. Some centres in South Australia have not been assessed for up to 10 years—10 years. This is unacceptable, particularly when around half of the state's childcare centres were found not to be meeting the national quality standards.

Parents deserve transparency, and they deserve accurate, up-to-date information to help them decide whether a centre is safe for their child, but Labor's failure to keep up with assessments has left families without that basic confidence and that basic information. We have all seen the devastating stories from interstate, stories that remind us just how vulnerable children are, and how essential it is that governments uphold their responsibility to protect them. South Australian families should never be left exposed because the government of the day has fallen behind on their critical reviews.

If we are talking about the future, then children must be at the heart of that conversation. We have seen the child protection minister face the threat of multiple censure motions now, and calls for her resignation, not just from the Liberal Party but from other members across the political divide within this chamber: the Hon. Tammy Franks, the Hon. Connie Bonaros, the Hon. Sarah Game, and the Hon. Jing Lee. It is not often that we are all together, joined in one cause, but on this we are because the state we see this child protection system in is utterly unacceptable. Quite frankly, I am sick and tired of us constantly coming here and having the same conversations, but never seeing any action from this government.

If anyone has taken the opportunity to look at the newspaper across the last few months, the last few weeks, they will see just how dire this situation is—yet we see no change from this government. We see no appetite from this Premier to actually do something about it, but you know what? We have LIV Golf, so everything is great.

We see thousands of South Australians who have joined in our cause for a standalone child protection minister. We continue to see calls for this government to do better for the most vulnerable within our community. South Australia's most vulnerable definitely and desperately need change, so it is time this government took it more seriously.

Lastly, there is ramping. Let us not forget the corflutes that Labor will fix the ramping crisis and that we should, 'Vote Labor like your life depends on it, because it just might'. Their promises

were clear, they were a contract to the South Australian people, and that contract has been breached. The results speak louder than the slogans. South Australians were promised the crisis would be fixed, instead it has worsened.

Time expired.

### GENDER EQUALITY BILL

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:35):** On 3 April this year, I asked the Minister for Women for an update on the Gender Equality Bill. There was an about 125-word response provided just yesterday in this place, and not one of those 125 words referred to a gender equality bill.

In September of this year, this council passed a motion calling on the Malinauskas government to introduce a gender equality bill. The government's silence spoke volumes. Not one member in this chamber spoke on the motion, despite previous commitments and undertakings to introduce a bill on gender equality. We have heard crickets from the government and the Minister for Women on this issue, so it is little wonder that SA Unions has today launched a public petition campaign calling on Minister Hildyard to champion a gender equality bill immediately.

The SA Unions campaign quotes damning statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other sources: every week SA women are paid \$167 less than men; men are still paid more than women in 98 per cent of occupations; only one in five Australians are employed in gender-balanced occupations; and women are still retiring with 25 per cent less super than men.

As SA Unions notes, the government has repeatedly promised to introduce a bill, highlighting it as a priority in key documents like the state budget and the Women's Equality Blueprint—yet we have had not one mention of gender equality when asked about the progress of the promised legislation.

The South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce established by the state government in 2022 also urged for this bill. It has been introduced by me twice in this place. When this government was in opposition, they supported that call: when they came into government, they opposed that, promising to bring in a bill of their own. We still have nothing, deafening silence.

The Gender Pay Gap Taskforce found that the gender pay gap not only affects women on an individual level, it reinforces gender equality through ongoing discrimination faced by women and the unequal distribution of power, resources and opportunities between men and women. The task force says research shows that reducing the gender pay gap would result in an increase in workforce participation and productivity and add a massive \$128 billion to Australia's economy.

Only this month, *The Advertiser* reported that a major pay gap exists even in the female-dominated profession of teaching, with males earning on average \$10,000 more than females, and male primary school teachers earning on average \$13,000 more than women. The stats just get worse and worse, with another new report finding women in Australia are earning about \$1.5 million less than men over their lifetime. That report, 'Ages and Wages', released by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, based its findings on information from more than 7,400 employers in 2024 representing more than 5.1 million employees across 19 industries. The pay gap between genders continues expanding over the years until it hits a peak at the age of 55 to 59, when men are earning almost \$53,000 more than women.

We make up over half the population. A Jobs and Skills Australia study published last August found that over 100 occupations have gender pay gaps greater than 25 per cent, and that in nearly 30 occupations men earn 35 per cent extra. It says that the impact of inequality is even more evident for First Nations women, who face a 10-year gender pay gap of 38.1 per cent, reflecting compounding barriers and discrimination in the world of work, education and training.

Closing the gender pay gap is an important step for South Australia; we all know that. It is time, as SA Unions has said today. It is absolutely time that this government steps up and fulfils its commitments to the South Australian public and its commitments to this chamber, not once but twice: throughout debates and throughout their policy commitments.

### HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATION

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (15:40):** I rise to speak on the recently tabled report by the South Australian parliament's Social Development Committee, recommending the enactment of human

rights legislation in South Australia, and acknowledge the Hon. Robert Simms' follow-up question to the Deputy Premier regarding the government's response to this report.

According to the report, South Australia is now considered an outlier where human rights are concerned, where the various laws of our state only offer citizens partial protection and limited enforceability. Given that Australia is the only Western democracy without a national human rights charter, and given that Queensland, Victoria and the ACT have enacted their own human rights legislation, it is incumbent on our government and this parliament to commit to genuine consultation with the people of South Australia to improve this state's human rights framework.

With public trust in government reaching an all-time low and people suffering under significant health and financial pressures, there is an increasing need for governments and parliaments to take clear and explicit actions to restore faith in our Westminster system of responsible and representative democracy. It is my contention, along with 131 of the submissions received by the committee, that a human rights act for South Australia will be a fundamental step towards the restoration of trust between the people of this state and their public institutions.

It is often stated that a successful society is measured by how it treats its most vulnerable citizens: the children, the sick and the elderly. While there is much for us to be grateful for in this state and we should celebrate the achievements of our health and education systems, we must also work to maintain the quality of our services to our most vulnerable, and this requires active participation of citizens in the decisions and laws made by our government and parliament. It also requires citizens who understand their rights and what to expect from public authorities, plus appropriate remedies and courses of action when a person's human rights are breached.

In the absence of one single, clear, unified and consistent human rights framework, our most vulnerable citizens are at risk of having their rights and freedoms infringed upon by public institutions and departments, which often make decisions based on management and procedural protections rather than the dignity of individual citizens.

There are numerous reports of people living with disability or of the elderly in our community who are often denied simple freedoms and deprived of appropriate consultation or consideration. Plus, there are others suffering from poor levels of care, mistreatment and neglect. Such vulnerable individuals are rarely in a position to enforce their rights, and, in the unlikely event that they do seek some recourse against their perpetrator, the complaints process is often unlimited or ineffective.

It was only this week in this chamber that amendments to the guardianship act and Advance Care Directive Act were passed, despite considerable opposition from aged-care advocacy groups regarding legitimate concerns about the lack of government consultation, especially around the rights of elderly hospital patients being discharged into nursing home facilities. At the very least, the elderly in our community deserve the right to be heard.

In addition to this, many of our most vulnerable children, quite often victims of child abuse or neglect, are then placed in state care or detention. While there, they are further victimised by a system which has been described by the Guardian for Children and Young People, Shona Reid, as 'consistently and alarmingly unresponsive towards protecting, respecting and fulfilling the human rights of the child or young person'.

It is important to note that any proposed charter of human rights would not override parliamentary sovereignty but would still require any proposed laws to consider compatibility and alignment with the charter. Such a charter would provide the South Australian people with an important reference point against proposed laws that expand executive power at the expense of fundamental rights and freedoms, laws like the South Australian government's recent Emergency Management Act, which extended the government's emergency powers to include a predicted or potential emergency, where authorised officers are given the special power to infringe on a person's property rights, freedom of movement and bodily autonomy.

If South Australia had a charter such legislation would have been subjected to the scrutiny it deserved and not so easily disregarded and rejected, as was my own attempt to insert some safeguards to curtail some of the government excesses within the emergency powers. In addition to

this, government departments could also be required to give proper consideration to the charter before making executive decisions.

The significance of this was most apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic in Queensland, where government directives required members of police and ambulance services to receive the COVID vaccine. Ultimately, the Queensland Supreme Court declared this directive and policy unlawful because of the government's failure to consider the Queensland Human Rights Act before making its decision. The rights and freedoms of the people of South Australia deserve the same consideration.

### PRIMARY PRODUCERS, NUISANCE LAWS

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:45):** I rise today because we are at a crossroads, a moment in time where our primary producers, the very people who feed and clothe us in this state, are telling me they cannot take much more. For years now they have been stepped on, they have been burdened with rule after rule, they have been smothered in red tape, facing higher and higher input costs, whilst receiving prices dictated by a supermarket duopoly. They have weathered droughts, floods, bushfires and biosecurity scares; however, more than anything, they have weathered governments that make their lives harder instead of easier.

Now, somehow, farming itself risks being treated as a nuisance. Farming is not a nuisance. Farming is survival, farming is food security and farming is dignity, and in South Australia our farmers do what few others on earth can do: they produce world-class food in the driest state in the driest continent. They farm ancient, low fertility soils; they farm with some of the highest water costs in the country; and they farm in a climate that tests them every single day.

Yet it is not the climate or the weather keeping them awake at night. It is us. It is government. It is the unpredictability of policy and the constant fear that a new rule, a new cost, a new regulatory burden will be the straw that breaks their business. A recent survey shows that nearly half of fresh produce growers are thinking about walking away—half—not because they cannot grow food but because they cannot survive the compliance, the regulation, the constant pressure from markets and government alike.

Considering that only 4 per cent of Australia's land is arable, and when the world needs more food than ever, we should be strengthening agriculture, not weakening it. Yet with urban sprawl creeping further into primary production zones farmers are now being told that normal sounds, smells and realities of farming might be considered a nuisance. People move to the edge of a paddock and complain about tractors. They move next to a vineyard and complain about spray drift. They move beside a livestock property and complain about odour. And instead of government standing firm and saying, 'This is farming. This is how food is grown,' we are allowing farmers to be exposed to trivial, vexatious or ill-informed complaints, complaints that could jeopardise livelihoods.

As Anthony Kelly wrote in the *Stock Journal* of 20 November, there is an extremely low threshold in the act for something to be classified as a nuisance. A farmer legally using machinery, something as simple as noise at dawn, could suddenly find themselves the target of a complaint from someone sitting on a verandah who does not like hearing the sound of feeding a nation. This is not fairness, this is not balance and this is not how a state that depends on agriculture should behave.

Mining is exempt because of its importance to the state, yet farming, the industry that feeds us, is left exposed. Why, on what logic and on what moral basis are the questions I ask. Farmers do not want carte blanche, they do not want to harm or inconvenience neighbours and they do not want to ignore genuine issues. They simply want certainty. They want protection from frivolous complaints, and they want to be allowed to do the job that every single person in this chamber relies upon.

I do not think this is unreasonable. I think this is basic respect. While my attempt to exclude primary production from the Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act was not successful, I take some comfort from the Attorney-General's acknowledgement that the minister will consider these issues when drafting regulations. But let me be clear: farmers cannot wait forever. Every season matters and every regulation matters. Every uncertainty costs them sleep, costs them money and sometimes the next generation's willingness to stay on the land.

I have been overwhelmed by messages from primary producers thanking me for fighting this fight, farmers who have felt unheard, undervalued and misunderstood. They do not want special treatment, they want a fair go, they want clarity and they want a government that remembers where



their food comes from. We are at a crossroads: we can choose to support the people who keep this state alive or we can keep piling pressure onto them until the industry breaks. We will always stand with our farmers. I will always stand with our farmers and I will always fight for their certainty, their dignity and their right to farm without being labelled a nuisance for feeding this nation.

### HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (15:50):** That was very passionate. I like the way you did this. Did you practise in front of the mirror last night? It is appropriate that 10 December is known as simply Human Rights Day and does not carry the usual 'international' or 'world' prefix. Why is that appropriate? Because human rights are about the rights of the individual rather than the nation or the world. They are about the respect each one of us should receive as a matter of course. It is the one day on which we should consider the basic rights of every person we meet.

December 10 marks the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The document advances and protects the inalienable rights to which every human being is entitled, regardless of their race, colour, religion, sex or nationality. In Australia, human rights are considered and recognised more than in most other countries around the world, but we are not so naive as to believe there is not a long way to go.

We only need to look at the fight that First Nations Australian people have endured just to be treated as equal citizens and, in some cases, many are still not. The same could be said about some minorities in Australia, although the situation is improving by the day. The Australian Human Rights Commission describes human rights as:

...the right to life, the right to a fair trial, freedom from torture and other cruel and inhuman treatment, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the rights to health, education and an adequate standard of living.

We can proudly say that almost all Australians have these rights, but not all, of course, and we cannot stop fighting for their rights while the problem exists. While we still have a homelessness issue, we must keep fighting the fight. It is much less of an issue than in other countries and democracies like the US and, surprisingly, Canada, where thousands sleep rough on the streets of Vancouver every night. But we still have people sleeping rough here. The fact that Australia has a Human Rights Commission is a fair clue that we as a nation cherish the need for human rights for everyone.

A US State Department report released last year found serious human rights violations have occurred recently in Russia, China, Iran and also the allied nations of Israel and Ukraine. It found the list of victims ranged from journalists and public officials to humanitarian volunteers and teachers. These were people just doing their job or, even more disturbing, volunteering their time and efforts to help others. The deprivation of their rights ranged from inhumane treatment and the withholding of medical treatment to torture and, in some cases, execution.

In Iran, 798 civilians were executed in 2023 alone. Their crimes were largely being protesters. In the case of Russia, the report uncovered 77 executions of civilians during arbitrary detention. This is a United States report, and I think we have all seen a violation of human rights in that nation in recent times. That country, like ours, was built to some degree on denying the human rights of others, but at least we, and to a certain degree other democracies, acknowledge the wrongs we have done and tried to fix them.

In the case of the US, recent evidence shows those human rights are shamelessly being eroded once again while authorities watch on. At least in Australia we acknowledge human rights. We have protests held here regularly just outside the doors of this parliament. There was one there only today, attended by thousands of public servants. People get angry, as you would expect in a protest, and sometimes emotions spill over, but they are allowed to happen and nobody is killed for holding them. In some other countries, the protesters would be dragged away and never seen again.

We can be proud of our human rights record that allows people the right to protest, and we have seen many instances where those protests have brought about positive change. We do not need to wait for Human Rights Day to respect and protect the rights of others. Let's just take the time to consider how far we have come, but also how far we need to go to ensure every Australian has basic human rights.

### VALEDICTORY

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:54):** I rise today in what is likely the penultimate day of the current sitting not just year but session to celebrate my valedictory era, my Independent era, and take up a challenge that was made to me by Monti on my staff this week. This MOI will be dedicated to my staff and thanking them. Part of the challenge was that I was asked to get as many Taylor Swift references in as I could. I am not going for quantity, I am going for quality. My staff have saved me from the fate of Ophelia and we swear allegiance to our hands, our teams and our vibes and I swear allegiance to them today and thank them: Monti, Tina, Keiran, Jamnes, Joanna and Michael.

Tina Woghiren is my office manager. She is office manager extraordinaire and has worked for, among others, Steve Georganas, the Hon. Frank Pangallo and I believe the Hon. John Darley, formerly. She is not a party person. She is a professional office manager and she is also the Hon. Connie Bonaros' sister. I want to thank Tina for her organisation, for her calmness and for her competence.

For each of my staff, I am going to dedicate a Taylor Swift lyric or song or era. So I asked advice of the Hon. Connie Bonaros because we are all a little afraid of Tina at the same time as being in awe of her and so her song is *Who's Afraid of Little Old Me?* We all are, Tina, we all are—but we also see you as our father figure, and you will protect our family.

The other part of that married couple, of course, is Jamnes Danenberg, the man with the dreads and the snood. He has been with me originally since 2010. He has come back to work in my office in recent times and I thank him for that. He has been, over his time in politics, an independent Animal Liberation candidate. I first met him when he was active working on the HEMP campaign back in 1995 and we were both activists on that in that year.

Jamnes has worked for various Greens MPs—not just myself but also Lynn MacLaren MLC and Alison Xamon MLC in WA. His song, given his ability to talk underwater that led me with this voice to last week ask him, 'How do you keep talking and never lose your voice?'—and if there is a story to tell, James can take a long time to tell it—is *All Too Well (10 minute version)*. That is because he will keep the old scarf or the snood and he does remind me of a time more innocent.

Monti, my parliamentary adviser, is the one who issued this challenge and he is a trained musical theatre performer who has somehow fallen into politics—and, my goodness, they are very good at politics, but also recently were a Tammyoke star when I found myself in a role of hosting the closing night of the Semaphore Music Festival with a Tammyoke event, which I have been asked to repeat in future years. I will be calling upon Monti, not just for Tammyoke, but thank Monti for their expertise, their insight, their political professionalism—and, Monti, you are the 'A-Team' from *End Game*.

Another part of the *End Game* A-Team is Joanna Wells, who did not want a Taylor Swift song assigned to her. She does not like the drama, but it likes her. We love you, Joanna, and we thank you for your expertise on climate, environment and water, your ability to take technical subjects and find practical paths through—and 'All's well that ends well to end up with you', Joanna Wells. I am so grateful that we have you in our office.

There are a few more. There is Keiran Snape, who, like a rainbow with all of the colours but especially purple, is one of a kind. Indeed, I promise you will never find another like Keiran Snape.

Michael Donato, my fellow Swiftie, is the last person I wish to pay tribute to—anything from *New Romantics*, 1989, *Welcome to New York*—'Everybody here was someone else before. And you can want who you want. Boys and boys and girls and girls.' Michael, you are the person who actually converted me into a Swiftie. I thank all of my team in particular. I have had the time of my life this year fighting dragons with you all. *Long Live*.

### Motions

### PREMIER'S COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (16:00):** I move:

That the report of the Premier's Commemorative Committee be tabled in the Legislative Council and ordered to be printed and posted to the Parliament of South Australia's internet site.

On 16 September 2024, Premier Peter Malinauskas proposed that I establish the Premier's Commemorative Committee. Its sole function was to oversee a series of events commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the decriminalisation of male homosexuality in South Australia. The committee consisted of myself as chair, the Hon. Robert Simms, the Hon. Michelle Lensink, the Hon. Lucy Hood and the Hon. David Pisoni.

I have spoken in this chamber numerous times about the pathway to decriminalisation and its impact on our South Australian queer community, so I will not speak further on that today. But what I will do is briefly comment on the work of the committee in creating what turned out to be quite an impressive celebration of this historic milestone.

The committee published a historical program of significant events from 1972 to the present day, including a variety of events commemorating the passage of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Amendment Act 1975, and a digital version of the program is available on the Department of Human Services website for posterity.

A special pin was commissioned, which I am wearing today, Mr President—I am sad to see you are not wearing yours; I will have to get you another one—to join the many others I have in my collection in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Notably, the pink colour of the pin is as close as we could possibly get to match the tone of the shorts of former Premier Don Dunstan. That historic event itself was reprised by the minister in the other place, the Hon. Blair Boyer, with great flair and style out on the steps of Parliament House.

We also coordinated a reenactment of the parliamentary debates held in this place on 2 October 2025. This date coincided with the proclamation of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1975. The event was followed by a reception at Government House, kindly hosted by the Governor, and we thank her for her invitation to join her at that event.

I would also like to thank the many queer groups from Adelaide and South Australia for their engagement in support of this initiative. It has been great to see the community come together to celebrate this occasion. I was, I must admit, in the early days quite surprised and overwhelmed by the desire by the community to participate in what was going to be a very small commemorative event in parliament, and it blew out to a much bigger statewide event, really.

I would like to extend particular thanks to Tim Reeves, Will Sergeant and Simon Royal for their individual contributions to the commemoration. I am also very grateful to you, Mr President, and the Speaker from the other place for the important role that you played in support of our commemoration, allowing the Legislative Council chamber to be used for the re-enactment and for flying the rainbow and progress flags from the top of Parliament House.

I would also like to thank the other members of the committee and their staff for their support in organising a wonderful year of events. As is true most of the time, whilst honourable members here will take a lot of the credit for what we did, it was our staff who actually delivered on these events and did the hard grunt work, and I thank them on behalf of all the honourable members.

Finally, on behalf of the committee, I would like to extend our thanks to the Premier for proposing its creation and to appropriately recognise the landmark social reform of decriminalising male homosexuality in South Australia. It became a much bigger event than it was really originally designed to be, and it was very welcomed by the community in South Australia.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (16:03):** I will not speak very long on this motion. As a fellow member of the committee, I would like to endorse all of the comments that have just been made by the Hon. Ian Hunter as the chair. I particularly commend him and his leadership of that group. I know these things can sometimes be like herding cats. There are a lot of cats to be herded. I think we did our best to pull it all together—or, as he has intimated, the staff did. Certainly, we have all been very pleasantly surprised at the response to letting everyone in the community know that there was going to be a celebration for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the huge number of events that came out as a result for people to participate in.

I must admit it has been a little bit exhausting at times trying to get to some things. I did not end up making it to Feast in the park, which is a separate event anyway, but we will probably tack that on as part of the 50<sup>th</sup>. I think it has certainly been an extremely positive opportunity for the queer

community to be able to highlight, celebrate and commemorate this event. I commend everybody for their work on it.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:05):** I rise to endorse the comments made by the Hon. Mr Hunter and the Hon. Michelle Lensink. As a member of the committee, while I say it was a great privilege to serve on this committee, I do want in particular to acknowledge the leadership of the Hon. Ian Hunter. I think it is a testament to the high regard in which the honourable member is held by the LGBTI community that so many groups across our state were keen to participate in this year's program. It was a really broad cross-section of the LGBTI community. I think that is a credit in particular to the honourable member.

One of the elements I thought was really powerful about the committee was the multiparty way in which it operated. As has been reflected on multiple times during the year, I think the story of LGBTI law reform in South Australia is one that involves all political parties. Well may that continue to be the case because, through working together, that is how we are able to advance the rights of LGBTI people and cement those rights, particularly at a time when we are seeing those coming under assault in other places around the world.

I also want to thank the Premier for setting up the committee and, as other members have done, acknowledge the work of the staff across all of the offices. In particular, I want to thank and acknowledge the Hon. Ian Hunter's office team for all of the work that they did and also acknowledge the work of my office, too, who assisted in getting a lot of this stuff on the ground. I also acknowledge, of course, the work of Kirby, who was assigned to us by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, who was excellent. Thank you to everybody involved. It was a really positive event, and I really look forward to being part of the 100-year celebrations here in the parliament in the future.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (16:07):** Pursuant to the resolution of the council, I lay upon the table the report of the Premier's Commemorative Committee.

Report received.

#### *Parliamentary Committees*

### **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: INQUIRY INTO THE PREVALENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS IN PRESCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS TO ENSURE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT GO HUNGRY DURING THE DAY**

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (16:07):** I move:

That the report of the committee on its inquiry into the prevalence and effectiveness of programs in preschools and schools to ensure children and young people do not go hungry during the day be noted.

The terms of reference for this inquiry were referred to the committee by the House of Assembly on a motion of Ms Erin Thompson MP on Thursday 20 February 2025. The committee thanks all of those who submitted evidence to the inquiry. A full list of submitters and witnesses is contained in the report. The committee particularly thanks the Department for Education and existing partners working in the school breakfast program, Foodbank SA & NT and KickStart for Kids.

The committee also thanks Professor Rebecca Golley of the Caring Futures Institute, Flinders University, and Dr Stefania Velardo at Flinders University for their multiple contributions throughout the inquiry. The committee would also like to thank Helen Connolly, the Children in the North Alliance, and the children and staff of Swallowcliffe School P-6, Elizabeth Downs Primary School and Fraser Park Primary School for hosting committee members on their site visits to the schools. Of course, we thank our staff, Ms Robyn Schutte and Ms Mary Bloomfield, for their work on the inquiry.

The committee called for submissions to the inquiry at the beginning of May 2025 and received 29 written submissions from individuals, government and non-government organisations, associations, advocacy groups and academics from a number of universities. The committee held six hearings of oral evidence at Parliament House, with evidence presented by 19 individuals from a number of organisations, government departments and universities. The evidence was clear that the primary reason children and students go to school without having had breakfast or without taking their lunch was food insecurity. The evidence showed that:

- 53.2 per cent of South Australians reported financial hardship as a major concern as a consequence of the rising cost of living in 2025;
- 16 per cent of South Australians experienced food insecurity in 2023;
- 26 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in South Australia reported food insecurity;
- 6.9 per cent of South Australian children and young people reported experiencing food insecurity, an increase of 1.5 per cent from 2023;
- the child poverty rate in South Australia is 17.3 per cent—that is one in six children living in poverty; and
- 32 per cent of children and young people attending South Australian government schools receive the School Card.

In South Australia there are currently numerous school food programs run by many different providers, the largest being the School Breakfast Program, co-funded by the South Australian government and provided by Foodbank SA and NT and KickStart for Kids.

The committee received evidence that this SBP has been very successful and the work being done is commendable, because so much is being done by volunteers. The committee heard that the expansion and uptake resulting from the increased state government funding in 2023 has been an important step forward in addressing the needs of children and young people and the increased funding has allowed the providers to meet increased demand and reach more students and schools.

There is now much research to show that children who go hungry during the school day are disadvantaged compared to their peers who consume nutritious food at school. Likewise, children who consume foods that are poor in nutrition, low in protein and high in sugar and simple carbohydrates are also worse off. The committee was provided with a wealth of evidence from across the world, with some research conducted in South Australia at the Flinders University. This evidence shows the impacts of hunger and that the experience of food insecurity can have lifelong consequences for children and students, including poorer academic outcomes, poorer health and mental health, and poorer life outcomes overall when compared to their peers.

These children and students struggle to engage academically and socially and many avoid school because of these circumstances. The evidence provided insight into what alternative outcomes might look like for these children and students, demonstrating the benefits of a nutritionally balanced school meals program.

The inquiry explored what types of model of school meals program would work in South Australia, and evidence shows the most flexible model would be one of proportionate universalism. This is because it has the broadest reach with the least amount of stigma and discrimination, it can be rolled out to those schools with the most urgent need first, while staggering a rollout to those schools with less urgent requirements. At the same time the model can be adapted to suit individual school situations and it provides flexibility to accommodate whether a school wishes to provide a centralised service or a service where food is prepared on or off site.

A school meals program for South Australian public school students and children has the ability to also provide many benefits to the broader community and numerous examples of interstate and overseas models show this. For example, there is the capacity for economic stimulus in local communities through procurement of product services and employment in that local community.

There are many aspects to a school meals program that will need to be determined and, as the evidence also shows, what works best has to be undertaken with an across-government public health approach. State government departments for health, human services and primary industries will have opportunities to collaborate with the Department for Education, the individual school communities and the experts in this area to develop an holistic SMP that benefits our children and our communities.

The committee has made three recommendations to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills, including options for the adoption of a universal free school meals program in South Australian public schools. I commend the committee's 51<sup>st</sup> report to the house.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:13):** I rise to speak very briefly to the report. I thank all members of the committee, in particular, of course, the Hon. Ian Hunter, who was chair of the committee. I am doing a lot of acknowledging Ian's chairing skills today. He did do an excellent job in getting this committee moving this term, but in particular in looking at this issue, which I think was one that multiple members were passionate about and interested in.

Certainly from my perspective, I have been a long-term advocate for free school lunches, and it is really encouraging to see that this has been recommended by the committee. In particular, I draw the chamber's attention to recommendation 1:

Noting the multiple models of school breakfast and lunch programs operating across South Australian schools, the Committee recommends the Minister for Education, Training and Skills:

- a. Develop, fund and implement provision of a nutritious school-provided meals program based on the model being piloted at Swallowcliffe... (similar to that of the Tasmanian model) in all public primary schools.

Paragraph b. recommends that, alternatively, the government considers specifically targeting schools and students most in need. If members have not had an opportunity to go to Swallowcliffe, I would encourage them to do so. I know the Hon. Russell Wortley and myself found it to be a really valuable experience, as did other members of the committee, so I certainly encourage members to go and have a look at that.

One of the key lessons for me, having spent some time there and looking at how the model is working, is it does not have to cost a fortune to roll this out. They have a very good system that could be rolled out at scale. No child should be going to school hungry in our state, and I think what is really exciting about this report is it has set some clear recommendations that can be picked up by the next government, whomever that might be, and implemented. I encourage both the Labor and Liberal parties to look at this report because there is some really good stuff in there.

I meant to do it in my previous contribution, but I might do so now, just to acknowledge the Hon. David Pisoni who was on the committee, and who I know is very interested in this, but also was on the committee looking at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I do want to acknowledge that he is finishing up in parliament and has been a long-term advocate on a number of social justice issues, particularly in the LGBTI space, and I know that his leadership on those issues has been greatly appreciated by many in the community.

Motion carried.

#### **STATUTORY AUTHORITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORTS**

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON (16:16):** I move:

That the annual reports of the committee 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 be noted.

As members are aware, the Statutory Authority Review Committee is a parliamentary standing committee whose five members are drawn solely from the Legislative Council. It was established in 1994 to make the operations of statutory authorities more open to detailed scrutiny. Its legislative functions are essentially to inquire into, consider and report on any statutory authority, including the authority's functions and need for it to continue to perform those functions, and whether the authority and its operations provide the most effective means for achieving the purposes for which the authority was established.

On behalf of the committee, I am pleased to present its 78<sup>th</sup>, 79<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> reports, being the annual reports for the committee for the years I have already stated. The reports provide a summary of the committee's activities across those years. Instead of undertaking a formal inquiry into any particular statutory authority in 2022-23 and 2023-24, the committee resolved to hear from a series of statutory authorities in separate hearings in order to delve into various areas of each statutory authority's operations.

During 2022-23, the committee met on 13 occasions and heard hearings into six statutory authorities. The committee heard from three witnesses regarding the Legal Services Commission

across two hearings and received evidence, including and in relation to, firstly, the criteria for a grant of aid for legal representation; secondly, the means, merit and guidelines tests for eligibility for legal aid; and, thirdly, the commission's membership and budget.

A focus of the committee's inquiry related to the commission's provision of services to remote and regional South Australian communities. The committee heard from three witnesses from the South Australian State Emergency Service and received evidence, including in relation to the current numbers of volunteers and how they are deployed; whether the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on volunteer numbers; the demographics of the service volunteer workforce; mental health counselling services for volunteers; and the service's role in the response to the River Murray flood event. The committee used the opportunity to understand more about the service and how it responds to natural disasters.

The committee heard from two witnesses from the Pharmacy Regulation Authority of South Australia and received evidence, including in relation to the telepharmacy services model that had been recently introduced into the state; regional pharmacies and their provision of COVID-19 vaccinations; and, lastly, the growing area of compounding pharmacies, which provide, of course, compounding medicines. The committee had an interest in ensuring the high standards of professional expertise and probity in relation to the delivery of pharmacy services.

The committee heard from four witnesses from the South Australian Ambulance Service and received evidence including and in relation to the roll out of the GoodSAM app, SAAS's Mental Health Co-Response Service, ambulance ramping, the allocation of funding towards and progress in building new ambulance stations and upgrading existing stations and, lastly, the recruitment and retention strategies in relation to the volunteer workforce for SAAS. The committee had an interest in understanding more about how SAAS was performing against its objectives.

The committee heard from four witnesses from the South Australian Tourism Commission and received evidence, including in relation to the tourism voucher scheme to support the flood-impacted regions in the Riverland and Murraylands, the tourism levels since COVID-19, Tasting Australia, LIV Golf, Gather Round, the FIFA Women's World Cup, and the Sam Smith concert at McLaren Vale. The committee's interest included further developing and improving the state's tourism industry, particularly in light of the impacts of COVID-19.

The committee heard from two witnesses from the South Australian Motor Sport Board and received evidence including and in relation to the Adelaide 500 event and the Adelaide Motorsport Festival. The committee's interest was ensuring oversight of the board's targets.

During 2023-24 the committee met on 12 occasions and held hearings into seven statutory authorities. The committee heard from two witnesses from the Urban Renewal Authority, and received evidence including and in relation creating affordable housing, converting empty apartments into public housing, the extent of the authority's involvement in the delivery of the AUKUS submarine facility at Osborne, industrial and commercial developments that the authority is currently undertaking, and the Our Port development at Port Adelaide. The committee recognises the importance of the authority in contributing to the state's infrastructure and delivering economic and community outcomes for South Australia.

The committee heard from two witnesses from the Construction Industry Training Board and received evidence including and in relation to the extent of the success of the board's doorways2construction program, incentives for employees to keep on apprentices, and workforce diversification, including pathways for migrants into the construction sector and the take-up of adult apprenticeships. The committee recognised the importance of the board's work to attract, train and retain South Australian building and construction workers.

The committee heard from two witnesses from the State Courts Administration Council and received evidence on the State Courts Administration Council's progress in implementing the recommendations from the committee's inquiry into the State Courts Administration Council—Sheriff's Office report and the outcomes of the cultural change program being implemented in the Sheriff's Office. The committee's focus was to retain oversight of the council's response to the recommendations arising from the committee's inquiry into the culture of the Sheriff's Office.

The committee heard from five witnesses from the South Australian Government Financing Authority and received evidence including in relation to how SAFA's investments are currently performing, SAFA's role with sustainability bonds, the proportion of electrical or hybrid vehicles in the state fleet, the current state debt levels, and the state's credit rating. The committee's hearing into SAFA's operations ensured oversight of those critical functions relating to the state's finances.

The committee heard from four witnesses from the Coast Protection Board and received evidence including and in relation to the board's grant programs, activities the board has undertaken in line with a recommendation into the state parliaments Environment, Resources and Development Committee's inquiry report, stakeholder engagement, the board's composition, and the board's key achievements in the last 12 months and the strategic priorities going forward. The committee's hearing aided its understanding of the conservation and protection of South Australia's beaches and coastal areas.

The committee heard from two witnesses from the Dog and Cat Management Board—one dog, one cat presumably—and received evidence including and in relation to whether the breeder registration program remains fit for purpose to meet the government's commitment to banning puppy factories, feedback from users of the Dog and Cats Online system regarding the extent to which the system is user-friendly, and the cost of registering a cat or a dog. The committee sought to ensure oversight of the state's dog and cat management laws.

The committee heard from two witnesses from the Aboriginal Lands Trust and received evidence from them, including and in relation to:

- whether the trust had plans and funds in place to conduct independent valuations of trust lands and buildings;
- whether the trust had developed a strategy to improve the financial processes relating to the whale watching centre;
- the Davenport community facilities; and
- the Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute.

The committee's hearing provided oversight of the trust's work for the ongoing benefit of Aboriginal South Australians.

In May 2024, the committee commenced a formal inquiry into the South Australian Museum and the Art Gallery of South Australia, particularly in response to the SA Museum Board's proposed new strategic direction, colloquially known, of course, as 'reimagining'. In 2024-25, the committee continued its inquiry into the South Australian Museum and the Art Gallery of South Australia. The committee received 84 written submissions from individuals and organisations as part of the inquiry, including from the South Australian Museum, the Art Gallery of South Australia, the Public Service Association of South Australia and the Royal Society of South Australia. The committee also held 13 hearings in relation to the inquiry to hear evidence from 23 witnesses.

The committee visited the South Australian Museum and its offsite storage facility. It also visited the Australian Museum and the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney and the Queensland Museum to hear about recent organisational restructures that these institutions had implemented, including how they undertook stakeholder engagement. The inquiry was not completed prior to the end of the 2024-25 financial year. The committee's report was tabled on 19 August 2025 and included 16 findings and 14 recommendations. The recommendations included that:

- the boards of the Museum and the Art Gallery both retain their status as statutory authorities;
- both acts and associated regulations be reviewed by the state government;
- the Museum continue to implement the recommendations from the Premier's Review Panel;
- best practice in governance be adopted by the boards of the Museum and the Art Gallery, especially with respect to financial reporting; and



- a review be conducted by the state government, in consultation with stakeholders, into the financial sustainability of both the Museum and the Art Gallery.

Members of the committee and the committee staff had the opportunity to attend a number of conferences during the reporting periods. In July 2022, the committee attended the 16<sup>th</sup> Biennial Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committee conference, which was held in Wellington, New Zealand. The Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committee (ACPAC) aims facilitate the exchange of information and opinion relating to the public accounts committees and to discuss matters of mutual concern. In April 2024, we also attended the 17<sup>th</sup> Biennial ACPAC conference in Perth. At this conference I delivered a presentation regarding the South Australian Government Financing Authority's issuing of sustainability bonds.

I thank all honourable members, past and present, who served on the committee during the years of 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 for their contribution to the committee. I also thank the committee staff members, including research officer Dr Merry Brown, for their service during these three annual reporting periods. I commend the committee's three reports to the council.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (16:27):** I rise today to support the Hon. Justin Hanson's motion and to highlight the important work undertaken by the Statutory Authorities Review Committee. It has been a privilege to serve as a member of the Statutory Authorities Review Committee since 2022. The committee's remit is to investigate matters relating to the role, performance and continuing relevance of state instrumentalities and independent public bodies. I want to acknowledge the diligent work of the Presiding Member, the Hon. Justin Hanson, along with members of multiple parties who are on the committee.

The committee receives important insights into instruments and bodies responsible for many essential services and functions across our state, always with a focus on whether these bodies are achieving the most effective, efficient and economical means of operating and fulfilling their purposes.

During my time on the committee we heard evidence from a wide range of statutory authorities. This includes the Legal Services Commission, South Australian State Emergency Service, Pharmacy Regulation Authority SA, South Australian Ambulance Service, South Australian Tourism Commission, South Australian Motor Sport Board, Urban Renewal Authority, Construction Industry Training Board, State Courts Administration Council, South Australian Government Financing Authority, Coast Protection Board, Dog and Cat Management Board, Aboriginal Lands Trust and, of course, the South Australian Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia, as well as the Public Service Association of SA and the Royal Society of South Australia.

I particularly wish to highlight the committee's work inquiring into the South Australian Museum and the Art Gallery of South Australia. As honourable members would recall, the Statutory Authorities Review Committee inquired into the Museum following significant community concern about the proposed restructure announced by the board of SA Museum in 2023. The committee was best placed to conduct a more thorough inquiry into the SA Museum with the high level of scrutiny, independence and accountability that the South Australian community demanded and deserved.

I wish to thank everyone involved who presented themselves to the committee and offered expertise and invaluable insights throughout the SA Museum inquiry, especially those staff who provided evidence in spite of potential ramifications for their careers and reputations. I am very pleased that the inquiry delivered some very meaningful outcomes. You would have seen the tabled reports already.

Finally, in addition to thanking the Presiding Member and honourable members who served on the committee I also want to show my appreciation to the secretary, Mr Peter Dimopoulos, and principal research officer, Dr Merry Brown, for their diligence and assistance to the committee. It is truly appreciated.

Parliamentary committees are important because they allow for detailed and specialised inquiry that enhances government accountability through public scrutiny. More importantly, the process of parliamentary inquiries increases public participation in the policy-making space. With those remarks, I commend the motion.

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

*Motions*

**ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT**

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

That this council—

1. Notes that the United Nations independent commission of inquiry, Amnesty International and multiple Israeli human rights organisations have found that the Israeli government is committing the crime of genocide against the Palestinian people;
2. Notes that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has deemed Israel's ethnic cleansing and occupation of Palestinian land illegal under international law and has ordered that states employ all means reasonably available to prevent genocide in Gaza;
3. Notes that under international law, South Australia can be held liable for complicity by aiding or assisting genocide or human rights abuses;
4. Notes that the Commonwealth of Australia formally recognised the independent and sovereign State of Palestine on 21 September 2025;
5. Calls on the South Australian government to review any exports of weapons and weapons components from South Australia which may be used by the Israeli government to commit genocide and/or human rights abuses against the Palestinian people;
6. Calls on the South Australian government to divest all public entities (including Funds SA) from any corporation which may be complicit in genocide and/or human rights abuses against the Palestinian people, as was done for Russian entities following the illegal invasion of Ukraine; and
7. Urges the South Australian government to end all current and future public investment and subsidies for weapons or weapons components which may be used by the Israeli government to commit genocide and/or human rights abuses against the Palestinian people.

I think it is almost self-evident why this motion would be brought before this place today, but I have a few more words to add. I start with words that are not my own: 'Israel has committed genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.' They are not my words. They are the words of the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. Other words:

...Israel has committed and is continuing to commit genocide against Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip...

They are the words of Amnesty International. Then:

Israeli authorities have deliberately inflicted conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of part of the population in Gaza by intentionally depriving Palestinian civilians there of adequate access to water, most likely resulting in thousands of deaths.

Those are the words of Human Rights Watch.

...An examination of Israel's policy in the Gaza Strip and its horrific outcomes, together with statements by senior Israeli politicians and military commanders about the goals of the attack, leads us to the unequivocal conclusion that Israel is taking coordinated action to intentionally destroy Palestinian society in the Gaza Strip.

Those words are from B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights group. I think this is not up for debate: Israel has been committing a genocide against the Palestinian people. The United Nations, Amnesty International, B'Tselem and numerous other groups have found that a genocide is occurring. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has found against Israel in multiple cases since South Africa first pursued their case with them in December of 2023, ordering Israel to take all steps possible to prevent the further killing of Palestinian civilians and to allow aid to enter Gaza as the occupying power.

If we know that Israel is committing a genocide, then we must ask ourselves, 'What have we here as Australians, and in fact here are South Australians, done and how have we allowed or supported this genocide, not only on a moral level but also because of the potential international human rights law implications?' Looking to Article III of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, that reads:

The following acts shall be punishable:

- (a) Genocide;
- (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide;
- (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;
- (d) Attempt to commit genocide;
- (e) Complicity in genocide.

Subsection (e) should be of particular concern to us in South Australia and to this parliament. In October this year, the UN Special Rapporteur, Francesca Albanese, accused Australia of:

...indirect transfers by supplying components for arms used by Israel. The F-35 stealth striker fighter programme, key to the Israeli military assault in Gaza, involves 19 States...

Francesca Albanese notes that Australia is one of those 19. She goes on to say:

Despite litigation in the Netherlands, Canada, Australia, Denmark and the United Kingdom—all of which defended their roles, and some cancellation of direct exports—States continue to transfer F-35 parts, heavily used in the genocidal destruction of Gaza.

And:

States have continued to grant export licences for weapons to Israel, to review and partially retain licences despite acknowledging concerns (e.g., the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia)...

The Prime Minister here has told us time and time again that apparently Australia does not export weapons to Israel. He dances around that subject. He plays word games and semantics, all to avoid the ugly truth. No matter how the Prime Minister tries to slice it and no matter what middleman exports are going through, Australian parts are getting to Israel and they are helping to facilitate a genocide.

There are few people in the world who would know more about this genocide and how states are facilitating or supporting it than Francesca Albanese. If she can see that Australia is providing indirect support for this genocide, surely our government should too. I think the South Australian people certainly do. It is well past time that South Australians showed some leadership here and began to actively pursue divestment of funds away from any corporation that may be complicit in genocide or human rights abuses against Palestinians.

How can we sit here, after more than two years of this latest escalation of the occupation, and not divest? We have done it before when the world was rightly horrified by the illegal actions of Russia in their invasion of Ukraine. The South Australian people demanded action from our government, and, to their credit, the government acted and the parliament backed it in. The Malinauskas government made moves to divest around \$60 million away from Russian assets, with the Premier being quoted in a press release saying, and I quote him now:

We cannot continue to invest South Australians' money in Russia given their disgraceful conduct in Ukraine, which we have all watched in horror.

Well, Premier, South Australians continue to watch in horror as we learn the full extent of Israel's genocide against Palestinians. We continue to watch in horror as innocent civilians, so many of them children, try to rebuild their lives, and after two years of relentless bombings, we continue to watch in horror as Israel's illegal occupation continues, not only in Gaza but in the West Bank and across Palestinian territories. Yet, as we watch this horror, we are yet to see the same response from our Premier.

This Saturday is 29 November. It is also International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. I can think of no better way to mark that occasion and to show our solidarity than for this state and our Premier to show leadership and finally divest and take a stand against genocide. I commend the motion.

*There being a disturbance in the gallery:*

**The PRESIDENT:** No. Please sit in silence. You have made your point, but do not do that again or I will clear the gallery.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:41):** I rise to support the motion. As this motion correctly indicates, the UN has found Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people. Navi Pillay,

the chair of the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, has said that, and I quote:

The Commission finds that Israel is responsible for the Commission of genocide in Gaza.

It is clear that there is an intent to destroy the Palestinians in Gaza through acts that meet the criteria set forth in the Genocide Convention.

The responsibility for these atrocity crimes lies with Israeli authorities at the highest echelons who have orchestrated a genocidal campaign for almost two years now with the specific intent to destroy the Palestinian group in Gaza.

The Commission also finds that Israel has failed to prevent and punish the commission of genocide, through failure to investigate genocidal acts and to prosecute alleged perpetrators.

In establishing the genocidal acts, the commission examined the Israeli military operations in Gaza, including:

- killing and seriously harming unprecedented numbers of Palestinians;
- imposing a total siege, including blocking humanitarian aid leading to starvation, systematically destroying the healthcare and education systems in Gaza;
- committing systemic acts of sexual and gender-based violence;
- directly targeting children;
- carrying out systemic and widespread attacks on religious and cultural sites; and
- disregarding the orders of the International Court of Justice.

South Australia is home to BAE Systems, which is a key partner in the F-35 fighter jet program. The Israeli Air Force operates F-35s, which have been deployed in air strikes over Gaza. BAE Systems have also supplied Israel with other military technologies, including electronic missile launching kits and gun sight technology, and components for artillery shells, which have been used by the Israeli military in Gaza operations.

In 2022, the government passed laws which gave the government the power to divest \$60 million worth of South Australian workers' super held in Russian assets by Funds SA. This ended state government funds and the superannuation of the state's public sector workers being invested in Russian assets. That was the right thing to do. As the Hon. Tammy Franks alluded to, why is it that the Premier was willing to show leadership on that issue but not on human rights abuse and genocide in Gaza? What will it take for the Malinauskas government to step up and show some leadership, and, indeed, for us to see leadership over in Canberra?

South Australia must be consistent in its approach to protecting human rights. The government has a responsibility to ensure that its investments are not profiteering from or supporting breaches of international law. The state government must urgently undertake a review to determine any exports of weapons and weapons which may be used by the Israeli government to commit genocide and other human rights abuses against the Palestinian people and end all current and future public investment and support if this is found to be the case. This would send a very clear message that SA should not be connected to or financially benefit from companies identified by the United Nations as complicit in human rights violations. South Australia must not be a place that funds or supports the economy of genocide, and there is no excuse for us failing to meet our legal obligations. As leaders in our own communities in this parliament, it is vital that we do what we can to ensure that we encourage peace in the Middle East.

I recognise this is towards the end now of the parliamentary session. I certainly make a commitment that I will revisit this issue in the new parliament and ensure that this is on the agenda for the next government, whomever that might be. Certainly, from the Greens perspective, we will continue to push to highlight this issue during the upcoming state election. I recognise, of course, the work of my colleagues in Canberra as well. This is an important issue, and it is vital for the state government to show some leadership. I think South Australians have been watching what has been occurring in the Middle East with horror, sadness and grief, and we need to see all levels of government taking action.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (16:45):** I rise today, first, to thank the Hon. Tammy Franks for moving this important motion. It is with a very heavy heart as well that I join her in addressing one of the gravest issues facing our global community and its impact on our community in South Australia—the crime of genocide against the Palestinian people.

Recently, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel concluded that Israel has committed genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. In its report published on 16 September 2025, the commission concluded that the Israeli authorities and security forces had committed four of the five genocidal acts defined in the 1948 Genocide Convention against the Palestinian people. These findings have been corroborated by Amnesty International, the UN Special Rapporteur and numerous other human rights organisations and experts.

These findings are not mere allegations. They are based on extensive evidence of systematic killings, deliberate infliction of conditions of life calculated to destroy, and other acts prohibited under the Genocide Convention. The International Court of Justice has reinforced this by ruling that Israel's occupation and ethnic cleansing of Palestinian land are illegal under international law and has called for all states to take all measures reasonably available to prevent genocide in Gaza.

This is not just a distant tragedy. It is an ongoing conflict, a constant violation of human rights, and intentional and systematic destruction of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. These are felt deeply by members of our own community in South Australia. I recently met with executive members of the Australian Friends of Palestine Association (AFOPA) and Amnesty International Australia SA/NT, and I wish to thank them for their relentless work to promote peace, respect for human rights and justice for Palestinians, based on international law and United Nations resolutions.

AFOPA and Amnesty provided a heartbreaking and detailed account of the horrific conditions currently faced by Palestinian people in Gaza, many of whom are elderly, women and children, and particularly vulnerable due to displacement and constant bombardment. They highlighted the grief, the anger, the trauma that continues to deeply affect the Palestinian community in South Australia.

I want also to refer to a very important article which features insights from Associate Professor Melanie O'Brien from the University of Western Australia Law School, because I feel that referring to her article in parliament will actually inform our debate even further. There were three important questions that were asked to determine if genocide is happening. The professor walked through the different parts of the definition for this article. The first question:

Do Palestinians fall within one of the listed groups?

Yes, Palestinians could fall within any or all of these groups; for example, they are nationally Palestinian.

The second question that was asked was:

Is there an 'intent to destroy' the Palestinians?

This is known as the 'special intent'...It's the most difficult part of genocide to prove.

This special intent may be shown through statements made by military or civilian leaders. Since October 2023, Israeli leaders, as well as prominent community members, journalists and soldiers, have made statements about the intention to deny Palestinians necessities of life, forcibly displace Palestinians from Gaza, and 'destroy' and 'erase' the Gaza Strip.

Dehumanising statements have also been made, such as referring to Palestinians as 'human animals' or 'monsters'.

Intent may also be inferred from a pattern of conduct. For this, we must look at the actions on the ground against the target group.

In Gaza, this includes direct killings through indiscriminate bombings of civilian areas, the denial of health care, and imposing conditions that have clearly led to starvation, famine, dehydration and death due to malnutrition and disease.

All these actions indicate an intent to destroy the Palestinians of Gaza.

The third question was:

Are the specific genocide crimes being committed?

The first genocide crime is killing members of the group.

The death toll in Gaza has now surpassed 60,000 people, more than half of whom are women and children.

Palestinians have been killed in attacks on medical facilities, open firings on those trying to access food, and the bombings of civilian areas, including refugee camps and schools.

The second genocide crime is causing serious bodily or mental harm.

More than 146,000 people have been wounded in Gaza. There are also credible reports from UN experts, human rights groups and media outlets of the detention and torture of Palestinians, including sexual violence.

Causing mental harm is the constant fear of injury or death, the loss of loved ones, a general denial of human rights, and living in conditions of deprivation and dehumanisation, with no ability to escape.

The third genocide crime is deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the group's physical destruction.

International courts and tribunals have previously said this includes:

- the systematic expulsions of people from their homes
- the denial of medical services
- deprivation of food
- forced displacement
- creating circumstances that would lead to a slow death (such as a lack of proper housing, clothing or hygiene).

All of these acts are occurring in Gaza.

The fourth genocide crime is imposing measures intended to prevent births.

There has been significant harm to the reproductive capacity of girls and women due to starvation and a lack of access to water and sanitation.

Human rights groups say girls and women have suffered miscarriages and other childbirth complications, due to a lack of healthcare professionals and facilities.

Direct attacks have also taken place on sexual and reproductive healthcare facilities, including maternity wards and a fertility clinic holding 4,000 embryos, which UN experts alleged was intended to prevent births.

Genocide is a process, not a single event. Taken together, all of these actions serve as evidence that the crime of genocide is being committed by Israel against Palestinians in Gaza.

As honourable members would be well aware, the South Australian Parliament has taken a strong stand on a number of international conflicts and crises, including Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. As a chamber and as a parliament we have previously recognised the genocide in Armenia by the Ottoman Empire in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the more recent genocide and ethnic cleansing committed against Armenians in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

I have spoken several times in this place about the devastating conflict and humanitarian disaster occurring in Gaza, but today I wish to place on the record that I believe we must take a stand and officially recognise the genocide being committed against the Palestinian people. We can no longer talk around the issue: the findings are unambiguous. We must make our opposition and condemnation of such actions abundantly clear.

Australia formally recognised the independent and sovereign State of Palestine on 21 September 2025, joining with the international community in a coordinated effort to build momentum for a two-state solution, which is the only viable path to peace. The South Australian Parliament has previously and rightfully condemned the atrocities committed by Hamas on 7 October 2023, and reiterated that it is our fundamental belief that all people have the right to live in peace with secure borders.

I believe we must now recognise and condemn the acts of genocide committed by Israel against innocent Palestinians. I urge the government to review its policies and partnerships to ensure South Australia does not risk complicity in these atrocities. I take this opportunity to express my wholehearted support for the South Australian Palestinian community and acknowledge the pain, the anger and the grief that they feel as a result of the horror that has been inflicted on the region.

The Palestinian community has been an important part of our rich cultural and religious tapestry for more than 70 years, and they have contributed enormously to our state in all aspects of

our society and economy. I wish to acknowledge and thank all community members and organisations who persistently advocate for peace, respect and dignity for the Palestinian people. On the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People that is coming up, I hope that this chamber, this parliament, joins the Hon. Tammy Franks, the Hon. Robert Simms, the Hon. Connie Bonaros and all other members in recognising this motion. I commend the motion.

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (16:57):** I rise to speak in wholehearted support of this motion. Almost two years ago today, I said in this place that I had one wish for Christmas and that is an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, equal rights for Palestinian people and a free Palestine. Two years later, despite the so-called ceasefire brokered by Trump, we still have none of these things.

In the more than six weeks since the Israel-Palestine ceasefire was announced, Palestinian authorities said Israeli strikes have killed more than 300 Palestinians and wounded hundreds more, many of them of course women and children. It said that three IDF soldiers had been killed since the ceasefire came into force. Al Jazeera reported that Israel had violated the Gaza ceasefire at least 497 times in the 44 days since the 10 October ceasefire supposedly came into effect, citing the Gaza government media office.

Last year, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants, citing alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, former defence minister Yoav Gallant and Hamas commander Mohammed Deif, whose death was confirmed by Hamas in January. The shocking, unimaginable scenes we have witnessed daily across media platforms: tens of thousands of Palestinians arbitrarily massacred, most of them reportedly women and children—it is always the women and children—have completely, I think, rattled our faith in humanity and in what we thought we knew about world order. By that I mean governments so slow to react and condemn, albeit with tempered words, one of the worst atrocities seen since World War II.

Last Friday, UNICEF warned that two Gazan children had been killed every day since the so-called Trump truce began last month. 'Since 11 October, while the ceasefire has been in effect, at least 67 children have been killed in conflict-related incidents in the Gaza Strip, dozens more have been injured.' That is from UNICEF spokesperson Ricardo Pires, who said that at a press briefing in Geneva. He said many children are sleeping in the open and trembling in fear while living in flooded makeshift shelters. 'The reality imposed on Gaza's children remains brutally simple: there is no safe place for them and the world cannot continue to normalise their suffering,' he said, urging more assistance to be allowed in the territory.

Al Jazeera reports that Palestinian children have borne the brunt of Israel's bombardment of Gaza—I do not know how we can keep reading these figures, and not be moved or touched by the number of deaths that we hear reported of innocent kids—estimating last month that 64,000 children have been killed and injured in Israeli attacks since the war began in 2023. Save the Children reported this week that, in 2024, an average of 475 Palestinian children suffered lifelong disabilities each month as a result of the war, including traumatic brain injuries and burns. Gaza has also become home to the largest cohort of children amputees in modern history.

Meanwhile, Israel has been accused of using starvation as a weapon of war, plunging the territory into a humanitarian crisis that led to several hunger-related deaths among, again, children. Explosive weapons are killing children on a scale never seen before, according to a new Save the Children report. As wars increasingly move into cities, bombs and drones are striking schools. They are striking homes and hospitals, places that should be safe under international humanitarian law.

For decades, children in war zones were more likely to die from malnutrition, disease or collapsing health systems than from bombs or bullets, it says. The new report 'Children and Blast Injuries: The Devastating Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children' reveals that more than 60 per cent of child casualties in war zones now result from explosive weapons. Between 2020 and 2024, nearly 50,000 children became casualties of war—the equivalent of two full passenger planes—two children every single day since that ceasefire.

The senior conflict and humanitarian advocacy adviser at Save the Children UK, and leading author of the report, said:

The world is witnessing the deliberate destruction of childhood—and the evidence is undeniable.

Children are paying the highest price in today's wars—not only at the hands of armed groups, but through the actions of governments that should be protecting them.

Missiles are falling where children sleep, play and learn—turning the very places that should be the safest, like their homes and schools, into death traps. Actions once condemned by the international community and met with global outrage are now brushed aside as the 'cost of war'. That moral surrender is one of the most dangerous shifts of our time.

We are watching the rules of war unravel. If we accept this as normal, we are accepting a world where childhood itself is under attack.

We urgently need the knowledge, tools, and the will to protect children—and to provide care for those who survive.

The mass slaughter of children is unconscionable beyond belief, and again I thank, wholeheartedly, the Hon. Tammy Franks for moving this motion, noting that in 2022 we talked in this chamber about it being unconscionable for us to still have state government funds and public sector workers' superannuation invested in Russian assets following that country's invasion of Ukraine. Make no mistake: we were swift, absolutely swift, to jump on that issue. This government acted immediately on the issue of Russia and Ukraine.

Australia formally recognised Palestine as a sovereign state in September, becoming one of more than 150 nations to do so including Canada, the UK, Belgium, France and Portugal. That is a good development, whichever way you spin it, from where we were when this started. This is the world saying that the cycle of violence has to stop. Prime Minister Albanese said at the time, 'Now is the time. You can't just watch what is unfolding there and not have a response.' They are the prime minister's words.

I do believe it is incumbent on all of us to do what we can, what is within our power, to ensure that any exports—not just from this state but from this country—are not used by Israel to commit genocide and human rights abuses. Like we did with Russia and Ukraine, regardless of whether you supported or did not support the principle of that. We were quick to act to divest all public entities from corporations complicit in such war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Even if it is just a message to the people of Palestine and to the Palestinian community in South Australia, we owe it to them to act just as swiftly as this government did when it came to Russia and Ukraine—even if it is just a symbolic message to the people of Palestinian background in this country. It is incomprehensible to me how any person with a conscience can look at what is happening to Palestinian people and Palestinian children and not be heartbroken, be outraged, all at the same time. I do not understand this state government's stance on Palestine.

I do not understand the silence and the constant deferral to the federal government, especially in light of the swift action that has been taken here on other occasions. I do not understand the resistance to lighting up a building in the colour of the Palestinian flag, like we have done on so many other occasions, including the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. It makes absolutely no sense to me that we can be so defiant when it comes to some issues and tread so carefully and delicately when it comes to this one.

I want to end by saying that there are times when we speak to these issues, and I think it is a perfect opportunity right now, before the end of this term of government, to have this conversation in this place again. But know that there are many of us who stand with you and who will always stand with you, regardless of whether we are here or not. I will continue to stand with you regardless of whether I am here or not.

I sincerely thank the very good people at AFOPA and Amnesty International, amongst others, for your relentless and tireless advocacy for peace and solidarity. Of course, once again I thank the mover for bringing this motion to the attention of this chamber.

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

#### **CITY OF PLAYFORD**

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:08):** I move:

That this council—



1. Acknowledges that on average 10 people per day are moving into the City of Playford and that this influx is leading to unprecedented housing growth within the City of Playford, increasing pressure on roads and other public infrastructure.
2. Recognises that roads in the City of Playford have failed to keep pace with such exponential growth and resultant increased traffic flow, meaning many important and busy roadways are currently in below-par, unsafe states.
3. Understands that this situation is unacceptable for local ratepaying and taxpaying residents and their families.
4. Commends the state government and federal government for committing a combined \$280 million to construct an overpass on Curtis Road over the Munno Para railway line, and construction of a dual-lane roundabout for Curtis and Heaslip Roads.
5. Acknowledges that all three tiers of government must commit to working together to prioritise critical road upgrades to ensure community safety.
6. Congratulates the Playford Growth Infrastructure Campaign group for compiling over 10,000 signatures calling for, but not limited to:
  - (a) installation of a dual lane roundabout for the intersection of Curtis and Heaslip Roads;
  - (b) installation of dual lanes on Curtis Road from Main North Road to Heaslip Road and consideration of a railway line at Munno Para to be raised;
  - (c) upgrading of the southern end of Heaslip Road to include stormwater management and walking paths;
  - (d) a dual lane upgrade for Womma Road (from the Northern Expressway to Stebonheath Road) with stormwater management and effective lighting, similar to Edinburgh Road;
  - (e) installation of second egress lanes for traffic exiting Northern Expressway at both Edinburgh and Curtis Roads, and correlating roundabouts to be dual lanes.
7. Acknowledges that gathering 10,000 signatures all calling for action equates to significant community sentiment.
8. Encourages whichever party wins the 2026 State Election to commit to these improvements.

Data shows that new residents are pouring into the City of Playford council district. In fact, it is currently running at an average of about 10 newcomers each and every day. It is a statement of fact that local infrastructure and roads have failed to keep pace with this exponential growth; indeed, this was acknowledged by the federal and state governments when they recently committed \$280 million to construct an overpass on the notorious stretch of Curtis Road over the Munno Para railway line and build a dual lane roundabout for Curtis and Heaslip roads—

*There being a disturbance in the gallery:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Come on, out you go. No respect; get out.

**The Hon. S.L. GAME:** Thank you, Mr President. Currently, over 50 new housing estates are springing up in the City of Playford area. That is good news for the housing shortage but bad news for the existing road network, and that is because this traffic increase is adding further pressure to the existing road network, which is already failing.

In recent times, a local community group, the Playford Growth Infrastructure Campaign, has been calling on all levels of government to prioritise critical upgrades across their district. Members of this group know of people moving away from the area or putting their homes on the market due to the often treacherous traffic conditions. Long-term residents are feeling downtrodden, fearing that nothing will change. These subpar conditions are dangerous for families and those going about their daily tasks, including parents taking children to and from school. They are also a handbrake on local business, impacting efficiencies.

Via the media, most members would be aware of the long, dangerous daily line-ups on the Northern Expressway, when cars travelling 110 km/h are suddenly confronted by a slow-moving or stationary line of vehicles waiting to exit the main roadway into City of Playford suburbia. But that is only part of the problem: away from the expressway and across the district, roads and infrastructure are simply not keeping pace with growth. I recently drove through a number of these hotspots myself,

and, while I have seen plenty of bad roads across South Australia, including the South-East, I was certainly taken aback by what I experienced.

For over two years now, the Playford Growth Infrastructure Campaign has been advocating for change. A couple of volunteers have been gathering signatures, calling for a recognition of the problem and calling for change, including safer roads, better planning and shared commitment and coordination between all levels of government for supporting and facilitating growth in their area. Remarkably, the group has gathered 10,000 signatures from within the City of Playford area to support its call and has even handed over those signatures to my office.

The \$250 million joint government commitment is welcomed, but it is years away from fixing any problems and it fails to tackle other urgent safety matters across the area. Along with the duplication of both Curtis and Womma roads, the group has highlighted Craigmores Road, managed by the City of Playford. Once a safe and well-maintained local route, the road has been heavily impacted by SA Water's essential pipeline works, which have brought increased heavy vehicle traffic to the area. I fully support SA Water's investment in new infrastructure to service Playford's growth, but the condition of Craigmores Road and other roads impacted by the SA Water pipeline works has deteriorated sharply in recent months.

Together with the Playford Growth Infrastructure Campaign, I am urging a collaborative approach to ensure high-quality reinstatement of the road surfaces and to make certain that ratepayers are not left footing the bill for necessary repairs. These are growing pains, but with the right planning and cooperation they can become success stories for rapid development.

Backed by this community support, evidenced by the 10,000 signatures, the campaign group is now calling for state and federal governments to prioritise investment in road upgrades that support housing expansion and ensure long-term safety for residents. It is time for this chamber to support growth and support locals, and I call on both major parties to publicly commit to making action in Playford an election promise in the coming weeks and months.

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (17:13):** The northern regions of Adelaide are projected to have the highest population increase in South Australia from 2021 to 2041, with up to 90,000 additional people expected in the outer north and 50,000 additional people in the inner north regions of Greater Adelaide. This accounts for 40 per cent of Greater Adelaide's projected population growth, necessitating additional investment in infrastructure to support this expansion.

From the outset, I would like to confirm that Curtis Road is under the care, control and management of the local council. Despite this, the federal Labor government and the state government have invested heavily in this road to support the areas of new housing growth. The \$30 million commitment by the Australian and South Australian governments will create a dual-lane roundabout at the intersection of Curtis Road and Heaslip Road at Angle Vale. We know site investigation work commenced in June of this year and major works are planned to commence in early 2026.

Furthermore, as part of the 2025-26 state budget, the South Australian and Australian governments announced \$250 million for the Curtis Road level crossing removal. Major works are scheduled to begin in 2027 and to be completed by 2030. Removal of the level crossing will improve safety by reducing road and Gawler rail network conflicts and improve road and rail network reliability and travel time.

During the pm peak, the boom gates can be down for up to 15 minutes, with the boom gates down for 10 minutes on average each hour between 3pm and 6pm. During the am peak between 7am and 9am, the boom gates are down for nine minutes on average each hour. It is important to note that there have been huge amounts of federal and state government investment in Curtis Road, despite the road being the responsibility of the City of Playford. We look forward to very soon releasing the Northern Adelaide Transport Study, which was informed by the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. N.J. Centofanti.

### **HUTT STREET PROPOSED WORKS**

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (17:16):** I move:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges that Hutt Street is a well-loved Adelaide precinct, valued for its village character, established trees, dining, and local services;
2. Notes that the City of Adelaide's proposed revitalisation—including wider footpaths, cycling infrastructure and greening—will result in a significant loss of car parks vital to trader viability;
3. Notes that Adelaide City Council has received \$7.32 million in federal funding for these works, and further notes that this funding is not contingent on the inclusion of separated bike lanes;
4. Notes that, despite consultation on five design options, residents and businesses remain concerned about parking loss, business disruption and the erosion of the street's character;
5. Acknowledges a petition from residents and traders outlining these concerns;
6. Notes that Adelaide Economic Development Agency data shows 87 per cent of the precinct's \$102.3 million in annual economic expenditure comes from suburban visitors who rely on accessible parking;
7. Notes that a final Adelaide City Council decision is expected in December 2025;
8. Calls on the City of Adelaide to genuinely consider local and trader concerns before making any final decision;
9. Calls on the City of Adelaide to retain 60-degree parking to maintain commercial viability and minimise parking loss; and
10. Calls on the City of Adelaide to ensure any future works are clearly communicated and staged to minimise disruption, avoiding impacts similar to those seen on Jetty Road in the City of Holdfast Bay.

The City of Adelaide council has put forward five options to revitalise Hutt Street. Many of those options involve removing a significant number of car parking spots. There are a number of very deeply concerned residents and traders in the district concerned about the proposals that risk making Hutt Street commercially unviable.

They have been clear to me: in their words Hutt Street does not need a total revamp. For decades it has been a very cherished part of Adelaide life, a place where you can enjoy a meal under the shade of established plane trees, grab a coffee, pick up your dry-cleaning or visit the pharmacy in a beautiful leafy setting. The street is tree lined with attractive built form and well curated tenancies that meet the needs of locals and visitors alike, and many feel that with some minor improvements, cars, pedestrians and cyclists can coexist harmoniously.

But Hutt Street is more than a road from A to B. It is about the traders—the lifeblood of the street. They bring vitality and make Hutt Street a destination, and without them it becomes, some would say, nothing more than a transport corridor.

The data is clear. The Adelaide Economic Development Agency reports that 87 per cent of the \$102.3 million spent on Hutt Street comes from visitors outside of the City of Adelaide. These people drive in. Without convenient parking, they will go elsewhere for their coffee, for their dry-cleaning and for their pharmacy needs, and when they go elsewhere these businesses—many of them local institutions—do not survive. So removing significant car parking has been signalled as an issue that will sound the death knell for these traders.

There are serious concerns that have been raised in relation to what is going on on Hutt Street and concerns that have been raised in relation to the consultation process. Let me be clear at this point, before I continue. This is not a council bashing exercise and will not be a council bashing exercise, as I think has been demonstrated by the very measured approach of this motion. Many residents, though, have complained that they were unaware of the consultation or the proposals. Given that 87 per cent of trade comes from outside the city, the low number of respondents indicates that the engagement process did not meaningfully engage with the thousands of suburban customers from the suburbs identified in the AEDA visitor analysis.

Under the City of Adelaide Act council is charged with recognising, promoting and enhancing the special social, commercial, cultural and civic role that the City of Adelaide plays as the capital city and heart of South Australia and with ensuring access to the City of Adelaide for all South Australians.

Locals and traders have raised concerns that these obligations have not been met in the desirable way. Indeed, some have gone as far as saying it has not been met in a meaningful way. Of the five options, the council's community engagement preferred recommendation was option D, that is, reducing the car parking to parallel parking and reducing Hutt Street to one lane each way from two each way currently. In effect, that is a reduction in on-street parking from 132 to 72 spaces.

Regarding their surveys, of the 1,039 survey respondents, 56 per cent preferred option D. That is 581 who preferred option D and 458 people who were against option D. Many would argue that it is not good city governance to decide to commit an estimated \$29.2 million on such a potentially biased and small sample and without a complete comprehension of the impact on existing businesses, given the closure of many businesses that is currently occurring along Jetty Road at Glenelg.

Hutt Street business owners are quite rightly fearful of not only the loss of car park spaces but the devastation to their livelihoods during the construction of any proposed works. The Jetty Road example is front and centre of their minds at the moment, because they see that as a clear example of how traders could lose their businesses during a prolonged closure of the street. They question, quite rightly, how this is supporting our fragile city small business traders. The community engagement that I referred to did not explain that, by reducing the current cars from 132 to 72, and most likely less as that is an estimate, this would have a very serious and fatal impact on businesses. That is one of the reasons why there has been criticism of that process.

The Hudson Howells desktop economic analysis suggesting an economic boost from option D has not been tested with the business owners in Hutt Street to ask fundamental questions as to their customers' attitude to car parking and access to their businesses and therefore cannot be relied upon. Star Discount Chemist Hutt Street says petitions on the counter of many Hutt Street businesses from different industries show—and indeed I have confirmed this—that there are between 1,800 and 2,000 signatures opposing the plan, as opposed to the council's 1,039 survey respondents.

Apparently many of the petitioners did not know that there was a consultation process that they could take part in. Worse, Star Discount says it was warned that any deviation from option D would forfeit the entire federal grant that has been allocated to this project. Adelaide City Council undertook a concept design master plan in March and April of 2022, and I am sure most of us remember that. A Hutt Street main streets revitalisation concept development revitalization was engaged in February and concluded in March of 2025.

Any master plan must include the local business owners. There is no point not including the people who are, as I said, the heartbeat of the areas that are impacted. It is only they who knew their customers and the impact that reducing cars would have on their businesses' survival. The traders are currently fearful, quite rightly, of councillors making a decision without actually understanding how those businesses function.

There is insufficient foot traffic for Hutt Street to survive relying on cyclists or local residents alone. Again, this is not to say that we do not want more cyclists and we do not want more foot traffic in the area, but the brutal economic reality is that, whatever is there now that contributes to that beautiful village-style feel and vibe that that area has, that relies on customers coming from outside and car parking for visitors. Without an independent economic assessment of how Hutt Street functions financially and the importance of the 87 per cent of customers who come from the suburbs, a master plan based on proposal D or E, combined 45° angle parking, does risk the commercial viability of the street.

State and federal members for Adelaide, Ms Hood (now Minister Hood) and Mr Steve Georganas, had penned a joint letter to Adelaide Lord Mayor Dr Jane Lomax-Smith—and I will seek to table that letter at the conclusion of this speech—saying that they have heard the feedback that many residents were unaware of the consultation. So it is not me saying it: here are the local and federal MPs for the area saying that they have heard these concerns raised by people in their areas and that they did not feel fully informed about the practical implications of option D.

They said several residents noted that options online only emphasise the number of retained parking spaces rather than the spaces being removed, and that this lack of clarity understandably caused confusion and subsequent frustration. This is something that this motion seeks to recognise. The two members for Adelaide wrote, and I quote, that they:

...strongly encourage the City of Adelaide to consider a compromise option—one that delivers improved safety and amenity for cyclists, while also maintaining essential access for customers and visitors. Specifically, we ask Council to consider adopting the principles of Option E, but with the retention of 60-degree parking. This approach would achieve the goal of a protected bikeway while preserving as much parking as possible for local businesses and residents. Feedback from traders and locals suggests they would like to see at least 100 car parks retained.

As mentioned by Star Discount Chemist, their letter addressed reports that residents and traders have heard from council and/or councillors that any departure from option D or the inclusion of a different bikeway configuration might jeopardise federal funding for the project. The local and federal members have sought clarity in relation to that directly from the office of the Hon. Catherine King MP, federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, who has indeed confirmed that the grant agreements can be and are regularly negotiated between the commonwealth department and local government grant recipients.

Council must learn from what is happening on Jetty Road, Glenelg—indeed, what happened along King William Road—where planning and communication resulted in closures and where planning and communication is already resulting in closures along Jetty Road, and more businesses may not make it past Christmas, which could have been avoided. Communication and stage planning are key.

Nothing is broken. This motion calls on the City of Adelaide to revisit this master plan, to protect the traders who make Hutt Street what it is and to ensure that they can sustain viable businesses for the customers and visitors, many of whom drive into the city, and to learn from and be guided by the mistakes that have been made in other areas, and we have two such huge mistakes: King William Road and Jetty Road.

This is not, like I said, a council bashing exercise or an anti-cycling motion. Residents and traders are actually pleading with council to take into account their concerns before making a final decision in December. They are pleading with council to ensure future works are clearly communicated and, critically, they are calling on the option to be staged to minimise disruption and to avoid similar impacts to those that we have seen or are seeing now play out on Jetty Road. They are calling on council to genuinely consider locals' and traders' concerns before making any such final decision and they are pleading with council to consider retaining the 60° parking to maintain the commercial viability and minimise loss and maintain the existing village vibe that has made Hutt Street what it is.

I frequent Hutt Street and I can tell you I do not do so by bike or indeed by foot; I usually do so by car. For me, it is a destination point purely because of where I live. The reduction in car parking does mean that if I do not have somewhere to park, I am not likely to go there. So I understand what traders are concerned about. The same impact, the same can be said for Jetty Road. Right now, as much as those businesses are wanting us all to go there, we are sitting back thinking how convenient this is to us in terms of going down there if you are not from the area, if you are not someone who cycles or catches transport because of your own circumstances.

We are all familiar by now with the frustrations that have led very sensible people like Bruce Djite of the Property Council to urge the government to review the powers and functions of the council and strip back what he calls the excessive influence over the state's 'economic heartbeat'. Whether you like it or not, there is a lot of sympathy for that view, that council is elected by a small fraction of the city's population but has a very broad remit and disproportionate power compared to those who contribute to rates revenue.

Of course, anyone who has ever met the Lord Mayor knows that Bruce has met his match when it comes to the regular contests that he has with the Lord Mayor in the media. She, too, is a reasonable person who wants to see the city prosper. But the bottom line is this: the Lord Mayor, in this instance, is not in control of that decision-making: the council is. So this argument that continues to fester between two very experienced and high-profile people in the public, I am sure, will continue to fester until these sorts of issues are resolved appropriately.

It is a contest of ideas between two very highly respected community leaders, who each are representing their views and the views of those individuals who reach out to them and say, on the one hand, 'This is what we want because we live here,' and on the other hand, 'This is what we want

because we have been here for a long time and are trying to maintain the commercial viability of the city and the wants and needs of the locals who live in that area.'

I think this is a perfect example of where there needs to be a middle ground between those two views. As I said, the final decision has not been made. It is due to be made in December. Those people who have contacted the local member for Adelaide here at a state level and the local member federally, and indeed who have contacted me, and the 2,000-odd signatories to the petition, are just calling on the local council to take into consideration those issues that have been identified in this motion and their concerns about the beautiful village vibe that exists in Hutt Street and the potential damage that is confronting them when a decision is made as to which option to adopt in this case.

I do not think it is an unreasonable ask for locals and traders. There are traders who have said, 'In the absence of a reasonable decision, we don't have any choice but to pack up and move out, because our business simply will not survive.' I think asking for a staged approach and consultation as a bare minimum is not an unreasonable ask. If there are people who are complaining that has not happened, then they are complaining for good reason. They are not whingeing and whining that they do not like the decision you have made, because there is no final decision. They are pleading with you to take into account their views as local traders and residents in the area before making a decision and ensure that that final decision has the benefit of understanding the intricacies that exist on Hutt Street.

With those words, I look forward to hearing from other honourable members on this motion. I seek to table that letter. I plead with the Adelaide City Council to take into account the matters that have been raised, the 2,000 signatures that have been signed, and the joint letter that has been provided by the local and federal MPs in relation to this issue.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (17:34):** I am going to speak very briefly on this motion to indicate that I have some concerns with members of parliament seeking to ride roughshod over the Adelaide City Council. I should disclose I am an Adelaide City Council resident and, indeed, I do live quite close to Hutt Street, so I have a bit of knowledge about some of the issues. I do understand the concerns of local traders. Absolutely, I understand those concerns.

I think it is important that, when we are doing any infrastructure planning, we strike a balance between the needs of businesses and also the needs of pedestrians and the like. I think the suggestion that there has not been consultation or inadequate consultation is perhaps misguided. I seek leave to table a document myself, the 'Our Places: Hutt Street Revitalisation' presentation that was provided to the Adelaide City Council, as listed on its website.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** In that document, slide 12 onwards references the process that the council undertook in relation to its consultation. It notes that back on 26 November 2024, council resolved that it approved for the purposes of public consultation:

- 1.1 Option A (Existing conditions—footpath option only); and
- 1.2 Option B (Renewal with 60-degree angle parking) and
- 1.3 Option C (Renewal with 45-degree angle parking) and
- 1.4 Option D (Current Concept (interpeak parallel) and
- 1.5 Option E (Combined 45-degree angle parking).

These were the options that were identified by the council for consultation. As a result, the council undertook to promote that via the *Our Adelaide* newsletter to its subscriber base, 11,000 recipients. It did a fact sheet that was dropped to 3,375 properties. It posted to 2,295 owners. It did social media. There were posters. There were business forums conducted.

I understand—and again, I am referencing the information in the document that I have tabled—there were 1,000 survey responses. There were three drop-in sessions that were attended by nearly 100 people. There were business forums: 129 people were invited, 36 attended. There were stakeholder workshops with eight attendees but with 40 invitations, and 46 online and hard copy submissions were received. The outcome of all of that consultation was that option B was

accepted: protected and separated bike lanes, wider footpaths, greater opportunity for outdoor dining and activation, and renewing the street and creating more opportunities for business.

I just make the point that the experience in every place around the world when they have introduced separated bikeways is that businesses do have concerns about loss of parking and the impact that might have but, once the bikeways are built, actually there is an economic uplift for those communities. I just urge members of this chamber to be careful about trying to ride roughshod over the Adelaide City Council. I am conscious that we have a very important speech that I am looking forward to hearing, so with that, I will conclude my remarks.

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

#### *Parliamentary Procedure*

### **VISITORS**

**The PRESIDENT:** I acknowledge the Pakistani Australian Association of South Australia, guests of the Hon. Mr Wortley. Welcome.

#### *Motions*

### **VALEDICTORIES**

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. K.J. Maher:

That this council acknowledges the contributions made by retiring members.

(Continued from 25 November 2025.)

**The PRESIDENT (17:38):** Honourable members, with your indulgence, I would like to thank the Deputy Premier for the opportunity to make what will actually be my valedictory speech. Members would know that I have made the decision not to run for a fourth term in the South Australian Legislative Council.

As a proud son of Whyalla, I have always tried to put the people of my hometown and regional South Australia generally at the front of my mind in all of my decision-making. Whyalla gave me a start and the opportunity to start my own local business. It took a lot of hard work and tough times, just like Whyalla itself, but ultimately gave financial security to my wife, Donna, and my family.

That spirit of entrepreneurship led me to the Liberal Party, and I see myself in the tradition of Robert Menzies: I stand, and always have, for family, freedom, fairness and free enterprise. That may sound old-fashioned, but I maintain that those Liberal values apply equally well today. Whether you are farming, working in business, creating a startup at the cutting edge of the IT industry, self-reliance, hard work, honesty and common decency are values that still offer a pathway to a better Australia. Teddy, you are going to have to be quiet there or I will have to get the Black Rod to come and speak to you, okay—good boy!

I have not been the most media-focused MP, but I have worked closely behind the scenes with many sectors of industry, bringing them closer to the Liberal Party and ensuring that Liberal Party policy is informed by private sector knowledge and expertise. In truth, my networks have been based upon friendships as much as anything, and I will never be able to fully explain how spending time with good friends in the retail, real estate, property, sport and hospitality sectors, to name a few, have helped inform and provide guidance for the deliberations in the corridors of parliament and in the government of South Australia.

In particular, I would like to thank some people who have given me guidance and certainly friendship along the way. People like Trina and David Basheer—David being the President of the AHA—his deputy Matt, along with Charmaine Binns, have been wonderful advocates for their industry and extremely professional in the way they have gone about things and certainly have been very good friends to my wife and me.

I also thank Bob Holton and Tony Newman, both former chairs of the South Australian Jockey Club. They are quite an odd pair in that they are great friends and I am a great friend of theirs, Bob having been probably a Liberal supporter most of his life and Tony Newman very proudly a Labor supporter for most of his life, but we have a great relationship. They have certainly provided me with

terrific guidance in regard to the racing industry. It has been no secret that I have probably championed that industry in the corridors of this place, occasionally with some success.

Also, I acknowledge some of my favourite community groups, like the Payneham RSL, ably led by their president Mark Lawson. Mark Lawson is an extremely colourful character, a very generous man. He has served his country, Great Britain, with distinction, but serves the veteran community very selflessly, and I admire him greatly and his family.

I also acknowledge the Croatian community. Again, it is no secret that I have had long ties with the Croatian community before my time in parliament, going back to Whyalla days. I became a member of parliament, and one of the first things in a party meeting was that somebody said, 'We need somebody to go out to the Croatian community.' I put my hand up and it was like being at home. I love that community; I love the people. There are families like the Tudorovic family, the Kilic family, the Smoljan family, the Tomich family, to name a few, but they really have looked after me like a son and I am very grateful.

I will make a few comments on the institution of parliament. Even though I was elected as a representative of one of the two major parties, I have taken my responsibilities and duties as President of the Legislative Council incredibly seriously. I am conscious that I am a custodian of traditions that go back hundreds of years. Our democracy has endured because those traditions have enabled, empowered and protected citizens. I worked hard to approach the task as President in a fair and impartial manner. I am sure that members will make their own assessment, but I really worked hard to do that. I encourage my successors to maintain and defend those traditions.

I have had the privilege of serving in this place with 53 other MLCs and 114 members of the other place over, today, 1,186 sitting days—1,187 will be my last. I am happy to have had a good run, to have made an honest, thoughtful and occasionally passionate contribution.

I am very pleased to leave on my own terms and, for the record, my decision not to renominate was mine alone. When I say mine alone, my wife was very helpful in that decision and, as per usual, she is right, and I am very grateful for her wise counsel. No-one tapped me on the shoulder and no deal has been made. Unlike many other MPs at the end of their time in parliament, my kneecaps are intact. I still have a lot to give and I will spend the coming months spending time with my wonderful family and seeking advice on my future from my friends, colleagues and my networks in business and government.

I would just like to put on the record some of the friends who have strongly supported Donna and I along the way: Morry and Mel Bailes; my good friend George Boubouras from Melbourne, who helps me with all things superannuation. As your Chair of the Parliamentary Superannuation Board, he has been extremely helpful. My old friend Harry Perks, Richard Hayman, Neil Briggs and Natasha Bertram from Perks Property have certainly assisted me with commercial decision-making and my thought processes in this place.

A very special mention to a very talented young barrister, a guy by the name of Sam Joyce, who is more like family than somebody who I have interacted with in regard to the law. His understanding and his shepherding of my wife and I through a difficult period will never, ever be able to be repaid, and I am eternally grateful.

Some old stagers in the Liberal Party who are just lovely people: John and Di Harvey; John and Lyn Nitschke; an old fellow by the name of Jim Buckoke; Cory and Sinead Bernardi have been with me through thick and thin—and when I say me, I mean my wife and I, through thick and thin—they are very strong supporters; Cosie and Maria Costa; and my young friends Reilly and Chloe O'Brien, who at different times have added a fair bit of fun and have been pretty solid friends.

I am extremely grateful to have worked with some terrific people. I have had a lot of staff over the journey and they have invariably gone on to bigger and better things. I have always been a person who acknowledges that if someone can elevate themselves to another level I should never stand in the way, and I have really been thrilled to see a number of people continue on in their career paths, one of whom is the Hon. Mrs Henderson, who worked with me for a short period of time. I still look over at her like she should be in high school and there she is with a baby, bringing the little fella into this chamber, which gives me immense pride.

Currently, an old stager, an old friend, Graham Taylor, works with me and looks after me. He is a highly qualified accountant and I think he looks at me with quite a bit of amusement as to how I



finished up in this particular role, but he has been a solid support. Other than being a Port supporter, we agree on most things. I overlooked the fact that he has been a lifelong Port man when he joined me, but sometimes you have to look past some people's frailties, don't you?

A young lad by the name of Isak Brusch is a grapegrower from McLaren Vale. He is a terrific young fellow, he is interested in politics and I am pleased that he has been able to join me for a short period of time.

I want to say work wife, but he is not my work wife, he is my work husband: Adam Golding. He and I spend more time together in a car than my wife and I do, and he is wonderful in that he is quite a shy man, but he gives me such full and frank advice, often unsolicited, and sometimes I just sit there and cop a pounding as to the way the world should work and the way it is not working, but I have really enjoyed our friendship and his unwavering support.

I want to touch a little bit on some of the things that have happened in my time—I am not trying to blow my own tyres up at all—some of the things that I have seen that have made me incredibly proud. I touched on it before, but the legislation for Whyalla was one of the proudest moments of my time in parliament, the way the 69 members of parliament all locked in and supported the people of Whyalla. If there was ever an opportunity for someone to play politics or grandstand or big-note themselves, it was at that time, and nobody did. Everybody dug in for my hometown. It was so important.

To see those people suffering because of false promises that had been made time and time again was disheartening, and it really made me proud when the government took action, supported by the opposition and everybody else in this place, to make sure that Whyalla had a future. Whyalla does have a future, because this country needs the ability to make the steel that Whyalla produces. We have to have that sovereign capacity, and I am pleased that all sides of politics have been really quite supportive. So again, I thank every member of parliament who participated at that time.

I spent a lot of time on committees. Committee work can be gruelling but it can also be really fulfilling. There is the opportunity to work with other members of parliament you perhaps would not normally work with in cooperation, and you bounce ideas off each other, often travel with each other to different parts of the state, and sometimes interstate, to broaden knowledge, but also you are trying to get outcomes for people.

There is one thing I want to touch on, and certainly want to remind people of who are continuing in this place—and hopefully those who want to continue can. I served for a long time on the Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee, which I thought was a very, very good committee. One of the standout things we did was when we became aware of an NGO out of Alice Springs that was providing kidney dialysis for remote communities in the NT and the eastern part of WA.

South Australia was experiencing the issue where people from the APY lands who needed kidney dialysis would be provided with kidney dialysis in Adelaide or Port Augusta—there was no shortage of trying to give them the correct treatment—but anybody who has any understanding of Aboriginal people would know they have a connection with their country and often people would discharge themselves because they wanted to go back to country. I respect that, but what would invariably happen is that they would become very unwell and then the Royal Flying Doctor would have to go and retrieve them. It was really quite an expensive exercise to bring them back to continue treatment.

Then here was this Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee that the Hon. Tammy Franks was on and the Hon. Tung Ngo and some of my colleagues from the other place. We went to the Purple House in Alice Springs and we could see the good work that was happening—but it was not happening in South Australia. We went, 'Well, how can we make this happen? How can we solve a problem?' What was really frustrating were the barriers that were put in front of the suggestion that we were going to do that. At the time it was by SA Country Health.

We had Tammy, who was tenacious in making sure we pursued this, and we had the inside running of the Hon. Tung Ngo, who had been an adviser and had worked for the Hon. Jack Snelling

in Health. So every time a bureaucrat would say, 'No, you can't,' we would all get stuck into Tung say, 'Come on, Tung. Help us make this happen.'

It would have been funny if it were not so serious. Every time we pushed and pushed for this dialysis there would be a reason why we could not do it: 'There's no funding for a facility,' actually, the federal government were prepared to fund it; 'The water supply might not be of a quality that we should have,' actually, with the water supply in every other community Purple House have managed to overcome it; 'The electricity might be unreliable, we can't do it,' actually, it has been done everywhere else around South Australia so it can be done; 'We won't be able to get the nurses we need with experience,' actually, Purple House will provide the nurses, so it is not something to worry about.

Time and time again we got push back, push back, push back, but it was happening across the border, and it was happening across the border into Western Australia. So we persisted, we persisted and we persisted and the facility came to fruition, and it was because our Aboriginal Lands Standing Committee pushed and pushed and pushed back against bureaucracy. You can get things done; you just cannot give up with some of that stuff.

One of the more emotional times for me in this place was when something was brought to my attention. A good friend of my wife's came to our house in Norwood on a Saturday. We had no idea, but they explained to us what had happened in their life: they had been molested as a child. You would not believe it—a high functioning, great member of the community. It brought to our attention that we had a flaw in our system, that people who had committed atrocities against children that were historical were actually getting very lenient sentences, even suspended sentences, because they were 'really nice people now'. The things those people had done to children, and the lives that they had destroyed, were horrendous and horrific, and yet we had allowed this almost acceptance to creep into the way the judicial system looked at perpetrators.

I raised the issue with our team in the party room. Things were not going too quickly on this issue. David Penberthy got involved and Sean Fewster got involved. All of a sudden there was a little bit more urgency. I know that everybody supported the changes that were required.

I do not know if you remember, but there were two guys who were called the 'two masked men' and they virtually hunted down and embarrassed a guy who had done horrendous things to them both. We made sure that an appropriate sentence was handed down—as they all are now, apparently. The guy had the temerity to appeal to say that the sentence was too hard. The appeal was dismissed in a heartbeat, and it was probably one of the better things I have seen happen in our judicial system. That was another time I was really proud of the way the parliament reacted to something that had just slipped through and was kind of accepted but which was really unacceptable.

I have to say that in this job you have to have a sense of humour. We do serious work in this place, and I love it when there is just a little bit of humour that creeps in. It actually takes the edge off everybody and it reminds us that we are all human. We might not agree on things, but we all come with the best intentions. We all have a work ethic. I really appreciate the bit of humour that comes in from time to time, especially in this role, because I can watch you all getting a little bit angry at times—and it is really nice to take the temperature down when we can.

Some of the funnier things—and I was reluctant to perhaps even talk about some of this stuff, because we do serious work and we work long hours, and the public, fed by the media, hate to think that at any point we are actually getting some enjoyment and some fulfilment out of this role. There have been a few funny things that have happened across my journey, and I will just give you a few little snippets.

The Hon. David Ridgway, who is the Agent General, and I were elected at the same time. We worked pretty hard together and travelled the state and did a lot of stuff. I was sitting next to him when he gave his maiden speech, and I was terrified as to how it was going to work out for me—this is nearly 24 years ago. David struggled with the phrase 'traditional lamb cuts', and I sat next to him terrified of what I was going to deliver in my maiden speech. This whole new thing was intimidating. Our good friends in Hansard very kindly heard 'traditional lamb cuts', so in history it was recorded as such, but it was a very awkward time for me, knowing that I was next and that if he could say that what was I going to say?

There was another time, when journos were asking members of the Legislative Council: what is the thing that you have been most proud of in your contribution? This must have been about 10 years ago. The Liberal Party had a policy to build an inner city covered stadium over what was then called Railway Oval; it is now Karen Rolton Oval. It is a beautiful facility. We were trying to come up with a bold idea: we wanted to bring football back into the city.

Everybody knows that in terms of our policy we were not successful. The government was returned. They worked with the South Australian Cricket Association. Adelaide Oval came into play, and it is fantastic. It is a fantastic facility. But I said I was really pleased to be part of the conversation where we actually finished up getting football back into the city, and that was interpreted by some, very early on, as me saying I was responsible for Adelaide Oval. I had made it quite clear: it was not my suggestion or position. We were against it. But that conversation had actually got the Rann government, with the Hon. Kevin Foley, heavily invested, and they got Adelaide Oval done, which is quite amazing.

So there were some members of the Labor Party who were really angry for about 15 minutes, thinking that I was trying to take credit for Adelaide Oval. Then it actually came to pass that, no, that is not what he said at all. But then the mickey was taken out of me for at least about a month. Everywhere I went it would be, 'Oh, the things that Terry did.' I remember Jayne Stinson when she was a journalist. There was media drinks or something that I went to, and the media were lining up to have selfies with me because they wanted to talk about things that Terry did. There was a two-page spread in *The Advertiser*—'Things that Terry did', like 'invented the Pyramids' or 'built the Pyramids'.

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

**The PRESIDENT:** It was a hashtag thing. At the end of the day you have to be able to laugh at yourself. I think I have always been able to laugh at myself. If people are happy, well, then I am happy. But it was one of the crazier times in my parliamentary career, and I was very lucky that people actually appreciated that.

I have really enjoyed the Hon. Tung Ngo giving speeches on the wrong bills in this place. It always sets the place alight. Sometimes I think he does it on purpose just to be controversial. My good friend the Hon. Russell Wortley I have known—I do not even think we were teenagers. I used to come to Pooraka all the time as a kid. Russell was in Pooraka. I am not sure how he claims he grew up in Port Adelaide, because Pooraka is a fair way from Port Adelaide, but I have always enjoyed the Hon. Russell Wortley's inability to control his mobile phone. In fact, he is the only person I have ever seen who projects his mobile phone to other places. When someone's phone goes off you know it is actually the Hon. Russell Wortley's fault.

The Hon. Robert Simms has teased me again today. We get on really well. We do not agree on much, but we get on really well. He has thrown up the possibility that he is going to talk about regional rail again tomorrow. I just cannot wait. The Hon. Nicola Centofanti: totally out of order with her supplementaries, breaks all the rules, knows that it is not right and then feigns indignation when they are ruled out of order. Like, really?

I have to say to you, Deputy Premier, I do feel embarrassed taking my salary while knowing that you are always available and trying to help me adjudicate. Even though it is not your job, you are trying to do mine for me as well. It does not go unnoticed. In Monty Python it is 'a very naughty boy'. Usually you are a very naughty boy, and you know it. The Hon. Connie Bonaros telling us one more time 'just for the record': I am going to miss that going forward.

**The Hon. C. Bonaros:** Just for the record, so will I.

**The PRESIDENT:** Just for the record. The Hon. Clare Scriven's attempt to sing was a highlight. What you do not know is that the Clerk nearly snapped his neck turning around to me that quickly to tell me, 'You can't do that,' which is why we had to rule that out of order. My good friend the Hon. Frank Pangallo's version of a brief explanation—are you kidding me? 'Mr President, I would just like to make a brief explanation.' There is absolutely nothing brief about any of the Hon. Frank Pangallo's explanations. Any of you I have missed I am going to get you tomorrow night when we close, so do not feel like you are being left out.

As I said, I found my value, and my personal joy in parliament has been to build new relationships, to bring people together and to help others find common ground. I do not know what my next chapter will bring, but I am sure I will find some new way to put some of those characteristics to good use, hopefully, and I will do it with my wife's advice because she is much wiser than I am.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Yes, I am not shying away from that. This is the hard part. I was actually going to be a wimp and try to do this first, because you get this stuff out of the way where you might not hold yourself in the strongest way. I would like to acknowledge in the gallery, firstly, my children, Courtney and Riley. I am extremely proud of the people you have become.

To my daughter, you have been pretty much an angel most of the way through. You are a bit shy and a bit quiet, but leave people under no illusion as to what you are thinking at times, and sometimes you tell your father that he is so far out of line it is not funny. Riley, nobody has ever said that you have not had a bit of character. I am glad that you have really found your way and are doing something that you love.

You have a lovely partner, Keela, who you brought down from Queensland, all the way from Wickham in far north-west Western Australia. That is a long journey to get to Adelaide. We love having you as part of our family. I do not know what you think about us most of the time, but we are a bit crazy. We have a sign in both of our houses that says, 'We speak fluent sarcasm.' It is the lowest form of wit, so thank you for bearing with us. Fraser Ellis, my now son-in-law, has finally done the right thing and married my daughter. He has a sense of humour that we sometimes struggle with. He is very sharp on it. He has presented us with two beautiful grandchildren whom we love dearly.

Now it comes to my wife. She has spent most of her life, and certainly my political life, reminding people that she is a very honourable person because she is a nurse and everybody loves nurses and that I am a lowly politician and nobody likes us. Any time that we have had an argument, she reminds me, 'Just remember who is respected in the community and maybe who is not.' To my wife, I love you. It has been a challenging ride. Relationships are hard. I think they are incredibly hard for political people and political life, with the sacrifices that we make and the sacrifices that our partners and our wives make by being the parent who does everything because we are doing something else for other people in the community.

I know people in all walks of life make sacrifices, but I think they are particularly hard in our life because of the scrutiny and sometimes the public humiliation that we cop. I think most of the time it is very much unjustified and it is not fair on our families. To my wife, how you have managed to stick by me is beyond me, but I am very grateful. As I said, we are not normally gushy people, but this is the time I have to say it. Thank you and I love you. You have not necessarily wanted me to pursue this career but you have stood by me the whole way, so I am very grateful.

With that, honourable members, thanks for indulging me. Thanks for giving me the great privilege of my life to be your President. I am very, very grateful. I wish each and everyone of you every bit of happiness and success in whatever you choose to do. With that, I thank you and I will wave to Teddy. Hey boy.

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** In moving that this matter be now adjourned, I do ask for you to make a ruling on presidents who break standing orders by referring to people in the gallery.

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Mr Hunter, I will go to my office when we get up and have a good hard look at myself, I promise.

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

*Parliamentary Committees*

#### **SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH SERVICES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (18:09):** I move:

That the final report of the select committee be noted.

One of the first things I did when I came into this place was to propose a select committee of this place to be established to report on health services in SA. I reflect on that very fondly because there was my motion and there was a motion by the Hon. Emily Bourke. Mine had been proposed first and

the Hon. Emily Bourke wanted a committee on Pathology SA. The Hon. Ian Hunter inserted himself into that discussion and debate at the time and we ended up having both committees as a compromise, or as the numbers fell at the time.

There was some to and fro between all three of us in terms of ensuring that the Hon. Ms Bourke got her committee and I got this committee. It was re-established in 2022 without the need for any of that, and I think that is a reflection of the work that committee has done. That committee has continued to meet on numerous occasions to hear evidence on ways to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of health services through an increased focus on preventive health and primary health care.

It does play an important role in bringing the needs and shortfalls of the South Australian health system to both the public and government's attention, ensuring transparency and accountability at all levels. Historically speaking, members could see that the last election—it was obvious to me just from being on that committee—was going to be a health election. I think the beauty of that was that in a very impartial way, without any reference to any particular opposition, we literally had lots of experts, doctors, nurses and members of the public queueing up to give evidence to that committee.

Importantly, the committee would break stories that never would have seen the light of day otherwise. It became a very important instrument in terms of having newspapers or radio coverage or TV coverage and bringing to the fore for the public the sort of evidence and testimony that was being provided to that committee. It was pleasing to note that SA Health endorsed all of the recommendations of the interim report tabled in 2023, with the intention of implementing those recommendations that align with both state and federal priorities.

Last week, that committee heard—and I will give a summary of what we have done and what is in this interim report—from medical student Sam Diprose, an advocate for improved mental health policy and systems. Sam has lived experience with depression and mental health issues. He gave us an oversight of what that was like in a very eloquent way when it comes to transcranial magnetic stimulation, a non-invasive neurostimulation therapy which has proven effective for 60 per cent of patients with a history of resistance to other treatments but is not available in the public sector in South Australia. Sam said that suicide is the ultimate complication of depression and is what makes depression a lethal disease. This is why he is so passionate about seeing TMS introduced in the public system.

In October, we heard from Dr Monika Skubisz, a clinician, researcher, specialist, obstetrician and gynaecologist, and the South Australian Councillor for the National Association of Specialist Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (NASOG) who warned us of a maternity crisis in Australia. We heard that in Adelaide, since 2018, we have had 40 per cent of our private maternity units close. It is part of a national trend where we have seen 18 units close around the country since 2018. It leaves us with swathes of Australians who have no access to a private specialist in pregnancy.

Dr Skubisz said that if private obstetrics was to collapse this would force an additional 30 per cent of women who currently deliver in the private system to deliver in public instead, a system that we know is already working at or over capacity. Displacing 30 per cent of our private mothers into the public system would of course in turn displace other elective procedures, whether in gynaecology or in other specialties, and our elective surgical wait list will continue to blow out if that happens.

She pointed to findings that showed that public care costs just shy of \$6,000 more per birth and yet delivers poorer outcomes, that the private maternity sector is allowed to collapse, and that if women currently in private obstetric care all moved to standard public care the net additional cost to government would be \$1.77 billion per year. I will not run through all of the evidence. It is available for members to go through, but it is this sort of evidence that we only get to hear about through this committee.

Some of the most confronting evidence we heard during this session was in relation to laryngectomies. A very visual display was put on for the committee so that we could actually see what it was like living with one of these procedures. Associate Professor John-Charles Hodge, who

is head of ENT at the RAH, told the committee that while often eight-hour cancer surgeries had a high survival rate many patients were not happy to survive, given the subsequent poor quality of life.

The reason I point to that one is because today's committee—and I will get to the committee members—use those sorts of cases to go directly to the minister and say, 'Minister for Health, this has been brought to the committee's attention. I think it's something that we could address quite reasonably without a huge cost blowout in South Australia. We are the only state who is not doing something. How about it?' That is currently one that we know is still sitting with the minister, and I have been assured that they are trying very hard to get that done.

I will point to another example, and I know the Hon. Tung Ngo is exceptionally pleased with this one. I visited Uniting Communities Streetlink Youth Health Service. They had only a couple of months left of funding. We talked about what we could do. I said, 'Why don't you come and tell the committee about what's going on down here and the vital and critical service that you play?' You did not really have to ask any questions because you could see how convinced all members were of the important work they had done.

The Hon. Tung Ngo and the Hon. Dennis Hood proposed and seconded a letter to Minister Picton in order to secure funding to keep that service going. Lo and behold, there was a positive outcome. That service was further funded. It is a service that plays such a critical role for transient and homeless people in the state, people who can walk in and have access to health services, who would otherwise end up at our hospital doors and further impact the health sector.

There are lots of these sorts of instances where the committee heard about the really critical services that exist out in the community. In the scheme of things, they needed very frugal funds or input from government to allow them to continue to play their part in terms of relieving the health system overall from further strains.

We heard from Dr Megan Brooks about the lack of resources in primary care and the calls for investment in nurse practitioner and advanced clinical practice roles and expanded scope of practice. Pharmacists appeared before the committee as well. We did the first inquiry into UTIs and then a number of subsequent inquiries into the need for full scope of practice. We know that those things are then used as levers to have those discussions with the health department.

I will not run through all of the sorts of examples as I am very mindful of the time. The Mental Health Coalition has provided evidence several times. It would be remiss of me not to mention SASMOA. Professor Svigos and Professor Warren Jones have done extraordinary work providing witnesses and experts who have appeared before that committee really successfully. There are campaigns that are, 'Let's just present before this committee and see if we can get an outcome,' and in so many cases it has resulted in really fruitful, useful and beneficial outcomes.

The Women's and Children's Hospital were very regular witnesses before this committee for the previous report. If you were to go down to the Women's and Children's Hospital you would find they attribute a lot of the success around getting 49 additional doctors to the work they were able to achieve through that committee. These are extraordinarily, I think, important things. The Michael Rice ward for paediatric cancer, the ICU paediatric unit at the Women's and Children's Hospital: all of these are the sorts of things that we have raised over the years at this committee.

I am extremely grateful to have had the privilege of chairing this committee. There are a host of others. I know that Minister Picton's team listen intently to see what is coming next at this committee. I would just like to say that at the end of this, the final report of this committee, there was only one recommendation made with unanimous support of all members who have served on the committee, and that is that the committee do indeed continue in the next term of parliament. I impress that upon members in this place.

I am extremely grateful to have served with amazing colleagues on this. I thank the Hon. Tung Ngo at the moment and the Hon. Dennis Hood in particular—it has been a privilege to serve with both of you—and the Hon. Russell Wortley and the Hon. Michelle Lensink. There have been previous members, including the Hons Ms Bourke, Ms Centofanti, Mr Dawkins, Ms Pnevmatikos, Mr Stephens, Mr Wade and Mrs Henderson, and of course the members I have just mentioned.

I love the way this current committee has gone about its work. We do not meet on a set day. It is not rigid, but we have made it issue based. When something comes up and people want

somewhere to go, then the committee is there, much in Budget and Finance style. We have been very fortunate to have Dr Robinson sit through those with us. I thank our secretariat, Mr Beasley and Dr Robinson, for their work on the committee. I think we hit the jackpot when we got Dr Robinson as our research officer in this case, working through the sort of evidence that has been presented to this committee.

I am going to end by again thanking everyone for their service and maybe thanking the Hon. Ian Hunter for the deal we did way back when we got this committee off the ground. I impress upon this parliament how critical a role this committee has played, regardless of which side of politics you sit on. It has played a critical role in terms of transparency, accountability and our responsibility towards what is in the public interest in ensuring that things that are in the public interest indeed do make their way into the public domain.

The only other case that I will mention on that point is that, had it not been for this committee, that cluster of baby deaths during COVID is not something that would have made its way into the public domain. That is probably the best demonstration of the impartial way that we have gone about serving on that committee and the work that it has done. I thank honourable members and remind everybody what a wonderful committee this has been. I seek their commitment to ensuring that it continues in the future.

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

### *Bills*

## **LABOUR HIRE LICENSING (SCOPE OF ACT) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Final Stages*

The House of Assembly agreed to the amendment made by the Legislative Council without any amendment.

## **UNCLAIMED GOODS (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Final Stages*

Returned from the House of Assembly agreed to the bill with the amendments indicated by the following schedule, to which amendments the House of Assembly desires the concurrence of the Legislative Council:

No. 1. Clause 5, page 5, line 9 [clause 5(4), inserted paragraph (c)(ii)]—Delete 'made reasonable attempts' and substitute 'taken reasonable steps'

No. 2. Page 12, after line 25, insert:

8—Insertion of sections 8A, 8B and 8C

After section 8 insert:

8A—Treasurer may pay money to lawful claimant

- (1) If the Treasurer is satisfied, on application made in a manner and form approved by the Treasurer, that a person—
  - (a) had, prior to the sale, an interest in goods sold under this Act; or
  - (b) has, after the sale, an interest in the proceeds of the sale of goods under this Act,

the Treasurer may pay to that person the whole or any part of the balance paid to the Treasurer in respect of the sale of those goods under section 8(1)(b).
- (2) An application under subsection (1) may not be made—
  - (a) for an amount that is less than the prescribed amount; or
  - (b) more than 25 years after the day on which the money was received by the Treasurer.
- (3) No interest is payable in respect of a payment made under subsection (1).
- (4) A payment under subsection (1) is to be made from the Consolidated Account, which is appropriated to the necessary extent.

- (5) If a payment is made to a person under this section, the Crown has no further liability in respect of the money that constituted the payment.
- (6) Subsection (5) does not prevent another person claiming to be the owner of the money from taking action for recovery of the money from the person to whom the payment was made.

8B—Record keeping

- (1) A recipient who, after the commencement of this section, disposes of unclaimed goods under section 6A or pursuant to an order under section 6D must make a record of the disposal that contains the following information:
  - (a) a description of the goods;
  - (b) the date on which the goods were disposed of;
  - (c) the manner in which the goods were disposed of;
  - (d) if the goods were sold—
    - (i) the name and address of the purchaser of the goods; and
    - (ii) the amount the purchaser paid for the goods; and
    - (iii) the amount retained by the recipient consequent on the operation of section 8.
- (2) A recipient who hands over goods to an owner of the goods in accordance with section 7(1) (in a case where the owner was not the provider of the goods) must make a record of the name and address of the owner.
- (3) A recipient must keep a record made under this section for a period of 6 years from the date on which the goods were disposed of.

8C—Protection from liability

No civil or criminal liability attaches to a recipient for any action taken in good faith in accordance with this Act.

**SUMMARY OFFENCES (HIGH RISK MISSING PERSONS) AMENDMENT BILL**

*Final Stages*

The House of Assembly agreed to the bill without any amendment.

At 18:29 the council adjourned until Thursday 27 November 2025 at 11:00.