Hansard

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

60th Parliament

Thursday 13 August 2026

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

Office-holders of the Legislative Assembly

60th Parliament

Speaker

Maree Edwards

Deputy Speaker

Matt Fregon

Acting Speakers

Juliana Addison, Martin Cameron, Jordan Crugnale, Daniela De Martino, Wayne Farnham, Lauren Kathage, Nathan Lambert, Paul Mercurio, Kim O'Keeffe, Meng Heang Tak and Iwan Walters

Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Premier

Ben Carroll (from 28 July 2026)

Jacinta Allan (from 27 September 2023 to 28 July 2026)

Daniel Andrews (to 27 September 2023)

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Premier

Gabrielle Williams (from 28 July 2026)

Ben Carroll (from 28 September 2023 to 28 July 2026)

Jacinta Allan (to 27 September 2023)

Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition

Jess Wilson (from 18 November 2025)

Brad Battin (from 27 December 2024 to 18 November 2025)

John Pesutto (to 27 December 2024)

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition

David Southwick (from 28 January 2026)

Sam Groth (from 27 December 2024 to 28 January 2026)

David Southwick (to 27 December 2024)

Leader of the Nationals

Danny O'Brien (from 26 November 2024)

Peter Walsh (to 26 November 2024)

Deputy Leader of the Nationals

Emma Kealy

Leader of the House

Anthony Carbines (from 15 April 2026)

Mary-Anne Thomas (to 15 April 2026)

Manager of Opposition Business

James Newbury (from 13 October 2025)

Bridget Vallence (from 7 January 2025 to 13 October 2025)

James Newbury (to 7 January 2025)

Members of the Legislative Assembly

60th Parliament

Member	District	Party	Member	District	Party
Addison, Juliana	Wendouree	ALP	Maas, Gary	Narre Warren South	ALP
Allan, Jacinta	Bendigo East	ALP	McCurdy, Tim	Ovens Valley	Nat
Andrews, Daniel[1]	Mulgrave	ALP	McGhie, Steve	Melton	ALP
Battin, Brad	Berwick	Lib	McLeish, Cindy	Eildon	Lib
Benham, Jade	Mildura	Nat	Marchant, Alison	Bellarine	ALP
Britnell, Roma	South-West Coast	Lib	Marsh, Anthony[9]	Nepean	Lib
Brooks, Colin	Bundoora	ALP	Matthews-Ward, Kathleen	Broadmeadows	ALP
Bull, Josh	Sunbury	ALP	Mercurio, Paul	Hastings	ALP
Bull, Tim	Gippsland East	Nat	Mullahy, John	Glen Waverley	ALP
Cameron, Martin	Morwell	Nat	Newbury, James	Brighton	Lib
Carbines, Anthony	Ivanhoe	ALP	O'Brien, Danny	Gippsland South	Nat
Carroll, Ben	Niddrie	ALP	O'Brien, Michael	Malvern	Lib
Cheeseman, Darren[2]	South Barwon	Ind	O'Keeffe, Kim	Shepparton	Nat
Cianflone, Anthony	Pascoe Vale	ALP	Pallas, Tim[10]	Werribee	ALP
Cleeland, Annabelle	Euroa	Nat	Pearson, Danny	Essendon	ALP
Connolly, Sarah	Laverton	ALP	Pesutto, John	Hawthorn	Lib
Couzens, Christine	Geelong	ALP	Read, Tim[11]	Brunswick	Greens
Crewther, Chris	Mornington	Lib	Richards, Pauline	Cranbourne	ALP
Crugnale, Jordan	Bass	ALP	Richardson, Tim	Mordialloc	ALP
D'Ambrosio, Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Riordan, Richard	Polwarth	Lib
De Martino, Daniela	Monbulk	ALP	Rowswell, Brad	Sandringham	Lib
de Vietri, Gabrielle	Richmond	Greens	Sandell, Ellen	Melbourne	Greens
Dimopoulos, Steve	Oakleigh	ALP	Settle, Michaela	Eureka	ALP
Edbrooke, Paul	Frankston	ALP	Smith, Ryan[12]	Warrandyte	Lib
Edwards, Maree	Bendigo West	ALP	Southwick, David	Caulfield	Lib
Farnham, Wayne	Narracan	Lib	Spence, Ros	Kalkallo	ALP
Foster, Eden[3]	Mulgrave	ALP	Staikos, Nick	Bentleigh	ALP
Fowles, Will[4]	Ringwood	Ind	Suleyman, Natalie	St Albans	ALP
Fregon, Matt	Ashwood	ALP	Tak, Meng Heang	Clarinda	ALP
George, Ella	Lara	ALP	Taylor, Jackson	Bayswater	ALP
Grigorovitch, Luba	Kororoit	ALP	Taylor, Nina	Albert Park	ALP
Groth, Sam[5]	Nepean	Lib	Theophanous, Kat	Northcote	ALP
Guy, Matthew	Bulleen	Lib	Thomas, Mary-Anne	Macedon	ALP
Halfpenny, Bronwyn	Thomastown	ALP	Tilley, Bill	Benambra	Lib
Hall, Katie	Footscray	ALP	Vallence, Bridget	Evelyn	Lib
Hamer, Paul	Box Hill	ALP	Vulin, Emma	Pakenham	ALP
Haylett, Martha	Ripon	ALP	Walsh, Peter	Murray Plains	Nat
Hibbins, Sam[6, 7]	Prahran	Ind	Walters, Iwan	Greenvale	ALP
Hilakari, Mathew	Point Cook	ALP	Ward, Vicki	Eltham	ALP
Hodgett, David	Croydon	Lib	Wells, Kim	Rowville	Lib
Horne, Melissa	Williamstown	ALP	Werner, Nicole[13]	Warrandyte	Lib
Hutchins, Natalie	Sydenham	ALP	Westaway, Rachel[14]	Prahran	Lib
Kathage, Lauren	Yan Yean	ALP	Wight, Dylan	Tarneit	ALP
Kealy, Emma	Lowan	Nat	Williams, Gabrielle	Dandenong	ALP
Kilkenny, Sonya	Carrum	ALP	Wilson, Belinda	Narre Warren North	ALP
Lambert, Nathan	Preston	ALP	Wilson, Jess	Kew	Lib
Lister, John[8]	Werribee	ALP			

[1] Resigned 27 September 2023
[2] ALP until 29 April 2024
[3] Sworn in 6 February 2024
[4] ALP until 5 August 2023
[5] Resigned 13 February 2026
[6] Greens until 1 November 2024
[7] Resigned 23 November 2024
[8] Sworn in 4 March 2025
[9] Sworn in 2 June 2026
[10] Resigned 6 January 2025
[11] Died 19 September 2026
[12] Resigned 7 July 2023
[13] Sworn in 3 October 2023
[14] Sworn in 4 March 2025

Party abbreviations

ALP – Australian Labor Party, Greens – Australian Greens,
Ind – Independent, Lib – Liberal Party of Australia, Nat – National Party of Australia

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Thursday 13 August 2026

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Matt Fregon) took the chair at 9:32 am, read the prayer and made an Acknowledgement of Country.

Business of the house

Notices of motion and orders of the day

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (09:33): General business, notices of motion 18, 19 and 76 and order of the day 4, will be removed from the notice paper unless members wishing their matter to remain advise the Clerk in writing before 2 pm today.

Committees

Integrity and Oversight Committee

The Independent Performance Audits of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission and Integrity Oversight Victoria

Tim READ (Brunswick) (09:34): I have the honour to present to the house the report from the Integrity and Oversight Committee on the independent performance audits of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission and Integrity Oversight Victoria, together with appendices.

Ordered to be published.

Performance of the Victorian Integrity Agencies 2023/24 and 2024/25

Tim READ (Brunswick) (09:34): I have the honour to present to the house a report from the Integrity and Oversight Committee on the performance of the Victorian integrity agencies 2023–24 and 2024–25, together with an appendix and transcripts of evidence.

Ordered that report and appendix be published.

Motions

Motions by leave

Ellen SANDELL (Melbourne) (09:35): I move, by leave:

> That this house notes Victoria's unresolved public health bargaining dispute with medical scientists, pharmacists, psychologists and mental health workers is still without a fair agreement after 11 months of negotiating and notes public hospital doctors are also about to take industrial action and calls on the Labor government to stop the war on workers and address gender-based undervaluation, close wage disparities and deliver a fair offer.

Leave refused.

Ellen SANDELL: I move, by leave:

> That in this house we stand in solidarity with Victorian students who are walking out of school today as part of a national day of action against Pauline Hanson and One Nation.

Leave refused.

Gabrielle DE VIETRI (Richmond) (09:36): I move, by leave:

> That this house notes that there have been reports of police raiding dozens of anti-war activists' homes, taking their belongings, which has no evidence and no charges.

Leave refused.

Members statements

University of the Third Age

James NEWBURY (Brighton) (09:37): The University of the Third Age is a volunteer seniors group that offers short courses for people in active retirement. The organisation supports more than 45,000 members across a network of over 100 clubs. The wonderful tutors from across the state recently visited Parliament for this year's Tutor Recognition Awards ceremony. Thank you to state president Annie Grigg and the broader movement.

Melbourne Law School

James NEWBURY (Brighton) (09:37): Melbourne University law school recently hosted a roundtable event examining potential reforms to the Open Courts Act 2013. Led by university associate professor Jason Bosland, the event brought together journalists, media lawyers, academics, court officers and me. Thank you to all those involved.

Brighton Croquet Club

James NEWBURY (Brighton) (09:38): Despite the rain, the members of Brighton Croquet Club welcomed Bayside councillor Robert Irlicht and me to recently open the club's season. Having broken my toe half an hour prior, Robert let me win as we hit the first hoop. The 115-year-old historic club has surged in membership to 60 members. Thank you to club president Bill Marks and the broader membership.

Justices of the peace

James NEWBURY (Brighton) (09:38): Our state's honorary justices of the peace will soon be on the front steps of Parliament to campaign to save their noble service from Labor. As the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices says:

> The Attorney General won't meet us. Promised funding for new JPs? Gone!

Recent figures suggest there are 3628 justices in Victoria, 2000 of whom are active, compared to the 64,000 in New South Wales. Association president Rodney Lavin is calling for a recruitment campaign for 5000 more justices by 2027.

Cranbourne and Pakenham rail lines

Gabrielle WILLIAMS (Dandenong – Minister for Education, Minister for Skills and Training, Minister for First Peoples, Minister for Women and Gender Equality) (09:39): When Labor first came to office, the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines were among the worst performing on our rail network. Commuters were paying the price for underinvestment, spending more time waiting on platforms and less time with their families and communities. That is why this Labor government got on with the job of removing every dangerous and congested level crossing down the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines and in doing so cut travel times, improved safety, reduced congestion and reconnected our communities.

We have also opened the Metro Tunnel, and the results speak for themselves: the Cranbourne and Pakenham line is now the best performing on the network, with turn-up-and-go services every 4½ minutes during the peak and 100 extra services operating a week. Projects and investments like these do not just ensure we have a rail network that is built for the future, they ensure and preserve the livability of this state. My constituents are now better connected to jobs, to study, to health care, and of course to each other.

Because every dollar saved on the daily commute is a dollar that can go towards groceries, bills or other aspects of the household budget, we have halved the price of fares and made travel free for kids as well, saving families up to $755 per child per year. These are real savings, but this November all of this is at risk because the Liberal–One Nation coalition is promising more than $40 billion in cuts, and

you can bet your bottom dollar that public transport and rail services will be on the chopping block, costing people opportunities and hurting productivity.

Gwen Malcolm

Jade BENHAM (Mildura) (09:40): I want to acknowledge the passing of Nationals life member Gwen 'Granny Bird' Malcolm. Gwen was a stalwart of the Hopetoun community; a member of the CWA for several decades; a dedicated member, along with her devoted husband Alan, affectionately known as Alan from Hopetoun on the ABC, of the Nationals; and a woman after my own heart: she loved a whisky. Gwen was known as Granny Bird by her grandkids and great grandkids. You know how you realise that you do not really know someone as well as you thought you did until you attend their funeral and hear some of these stories. It was a true celebration of a life so well lived in service, kindness and dedication to her family. Vale, Gwen Malcolm.

Domenico Carrazza

Jade BENHAM (Mildura) (09:41): We also lost an icon of the Mildura region recently with the passing of Domenico 'Don' Carrazza. Don made an enormous contribution to our community through his leadership in business and his stewardship of the Mildura Grand Hotel, and his contribution extended well beyond just business. He gave generously of his time and experience to support tourism, regional development and initiatives that helped to create a stronger future for Mildura. He cared deeply about the success of our community and was always willing to share his knowledge – whether you wanted it or not – connections and time to help others. Don's passing is a significant loss to our region. I extend my deepest condolences to his family and friends and those who had the privilege of knowing him. Vale, Don Carrazza.

Operation Richmond

Anthony CARBINES (Ivanhoe – Leader of the House, Minister for Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Economy, Minister for Major Events, Minister for Medical Research, Minister for Racing, Minister for Economic Development) (09:42): I rise to make some comments with regard to Operation Richmond. Integrity is not negotiable, and the behaviour in the report is wrong. It was outrageous and intolerable. It has not happened and it will not happen under a Carroll Labor government. The Premier has accepted all recommendations and will act immediately.

Jane Garrett

Anthony CARBINES (Ivanhoe – Leader of the House, Minister for Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Economy, Minister for Major Events, Minister for Medical Research, Minister for Racing, Minister for Economic Development) (09:42): I say further in relation to the statement made by Jane Garrett's family, the former member for Brunswick, that in an inaugural speech in Parliament she spoke about living her values and her respect for the dignity and the worth of others. As a fellow member of the class of 2010, I saw that firsthand. As a member of the Law Reform Committee, I saw that firsthand. I saw that with her family and her young children at that time. I hope they draw some strength from her grace and her behaviour and they draw some strength and greater understanding from her commitment to others and the way in which she sought to represent them in this place. The way in which she conducted herself is an inspiration and a lesson for us all.

Noah Hunter Dorsey

Rachel WESTAWAY (Prahran) (09:43): Prahran is home to people who turn ideas into enterprise. Noah Hunter Dorsey is a perfect example. Noah co-founded Future Fulfilment, a Melbourne logistics business built to solve the problems brands face in warehousing, dispatch and delivery. From modest beginnings, Future Fulfilment has expanded its network across Australia and internationally. Noah's ambition, energy and willingness to back an idea are exactly the qualities that make our local community so successful.

Harry Sanders

Rachel WESTAWAY (Prahran) (09:44): I also want to recognise Harry Sanders, founder of StudioHawk, who have their Melbourne headquarters in Prahran. Harry taught himself search engine optimisation as a teenager and founded StudioHawk at the age of 17. He has built it into a specialist SEO agency, with teams in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Harry's story is one of resilience as well as success, and his advocacy for young people experiencing homelessness reflects his genuine commitment to people.

Kate Quirke

Rachel WESTAWAY (Prahran) (09:44): Kate Quirke is an outstanding local business leader. As group managing director and chief executive officer of South Yarra–based Alcidion, Kate leads an Australian healthcare technology company delivering digital solutions for clinicians and hospitals across several international markets. Before joining Alcidion she led MKM Health and oversaw its successful sale to the company in 2018. Her career demonstrates the values of deep expertise, leadership and innovation, and she is inspiring.

Greensborough Football Club

Colin BROOKS (Bundoora – Treasurer, Minister for Industrial Relations) (09:45): I rise today to recognise the remarkable contribution of the Greensborough Football Club, one of the oldest and proudest sporting clubs in our community. Established back in 1893, the club is celebrating its 133rd season this year. A founding member of the old Diamond Valley Football League, now the Northern Football Netball League, Greensborough has a proud history both on and off the field. With around 500 members, 17 division 1 premierships and a club motto of 'actis non verbis', 'actions not words', the club has always let its actions speak for themselves. Under the leadership of first-year president Steve Ellis, whose involvement stretches from junior player to senior footballer, coach, football operations and now president, the club continues to thrive. It is a club built on values and a strong culture. That sense of a community is reflected in the junior club, established back in 1964, which has a record 430 registrations this season, ensuring a very bright future for the club.

I also want to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of the Brindley family. Rex Brindley served as president from 1988 to 1991 and is a life member. Neil Brindley is a hall of fame inductee, life member and former junior champion who has also given countless hours in leadership and coaching roles. Today that legacy continues through Tom Brindley, a current senior player, vice-captain and former Richmond VFL best-and-fairest winner. To everyone at the Greensborough Football Club, thank you for the incredible contribution you continue to make to our community and congratulations on 133 years.

Old Scotch Football Club

John PESUTTO (Hawthorn) (09:46): Recently I was delighted to join the Old Scotch Football Club for its breast cancer awareness lunch at Camberwell sportsground, held in support of Breast Cancer Network Australia. BCNA founder Lyn Swinburne AO introduced keynote speaker Lesley Gillespie OAM, who shared an inspiring story of resilience, community and giving back. Together with her husband Roger, Leslie has used their success in founding Bakers Delight and their other impressive endeavours to generously support breast cancer research and awareness. Congratulations to Gus McQueen and the entire Old Scotch family, along with everybody who volunteered, attended and contributed to this terrific cause.

Canterbury Cobras Junior Football Club

John PESUTTO (Hawthorn) (09:47): Cold weather and a bit of drizzle could not dampen the spirits at the Canterbury Cobras Junior Football Club when I visited them on Sunday for their girls and boys fixtures. The Cobras are a strong club with a big heart, growing bigger with every season, thanks to the volunteers who give their time and energy to make it possible. From coaches and team

managers to parents and supporters, they are building a community where boys and girls can come together, make friends and play great footy. Can I thank Sophie, Rebecca, Lawrence, Dan, Chris and the entire Cobras team for the very warm welcome they offered. I wish them well for the rest of the season and in next year's season as well.

Hindu Society of Victoria

Sonya KILKENNY (Carrum – Attorney-General, Minister for Planning, Minister for Prevention of Family Violence) (09:47): I rise to congratulate the Hindu Society of Victoria for hosting the Hindu Organisations, Temples, and Associations Raksha Bandhan celebration last Saturday at the beautiful Shri Shiva Vishnu Temple in Carrum Downs in my electorate. More than 40 Hindu organisations, temples and associations came together to celebrate the bonds of love, care, protection, unity and respect that connect families and communities. Thank you to HOTA for fostering such a strong and connected community and for its commitment to supporting women in leadership. That commitment is more important than ever, and I was proud to see it reflected at this event.

I wish to make a very special acknowledgement of Dr Usha Gullapalli, the outgoing president of the Hindu Society of Victoria and the first woman to hold that role. Usha, your leadership has made an enormous contribution to the society and to our broader community. Thank you for your generosity, your commitment, your courage and, most of all, your genuine warmth, care and compassion. You have been a wonderful friend, and I am a better person because of you. To everyone at the Hindu Society of Victoria, whenever I visit the temple with my family and staff we are welcomed as though we are part of your family. I will always be grateful for that. Happy Raksha Bandhan. It is such an important reminder, especially right now, that we are all stronger when we stand together.

Police conduct

Tim READ (Brunswick) (09:49): I wish to raise a concerning pattern of police raids on the homes of peaceful protesters earlier this year. In March and April the homes of 12 women were raided at dawn by groups of around a dozen black-clad police using battering rams and dogs. Children in the homes were terrified. Women were handcuffed for long periods, drawers were upended and clothing and possessions were scattered throughout their homes. Public order response and counterterror police were involved. Phones and laptops were confiscated. The women were mainly charged with graffiti and littering. Eight of those women had protested at the Zelda D'Aprano statue outside Trades Hall, putting an apron with a slogan on Zelda and chalking slogans on the footpath. Four had performed political theatre at the US consulate, which did involve spilling some fake blood on the tiles. They were protesting the US bombing of a girls school in Iran.

These police raids are so out of proportion to any threat posed by people performing political theatre, committing nuisance-level offences at worst, that they constitute extrajudicial punishment of citizens the police do not like. Who is making these decisions? The Minister for Police and the Attorney-General should explain to Parliament why these actions are being mischaracterised as terrorism, what happened exactly and what steps they are taking to ensure that we are not living in a police state.

Lord Reserve, Carnegie

Steve DIMOPOULOS (Oakleigh – Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC, Minister for Sport, Minister for Equality) (09:50): It was a pleasure recently to officially switch on the lights at Lord Reserve in Carnegie. $250,000 was provided by our Labor government for 100-lux lights to be installed in partnership with Glen Eira council. Two sporting clubs call this place home: the Glen Eira football club and Carnegie South Cricket Club. Combined, there are over 1300 registered players, with more than 1100 of them juniors. I would like to sincerely thank both clubs, all the officials, players, supporters and mums and dads for their work and advocacy on behalf of our community. Their passion for local sport is just amazing. That entire precinct from Glen Huntly Primary School right up to Koornang Park has benefited from Labor government investment, from the swimming pool to the pavilions, to the lights, to the primary school – we are really, really proud – and to the scoreboards.

Colombia earthquake

Steve DIMOPOULOS (Oakleigh – Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC, Minister for Sport, Minister for Equality) (09:51): On another matter, I would like to pass on my sincere condolences to the people of Colombia for the tragedy over the last few days of the earthquake in that beautiful country. Melbourne and Victoria have I think the equal largest Colombian community in the country. I know the Colombians in Australia are feeling this very deeply, both those who have been directly impacted but also because, as a proud, proud country and nation, they would be feeling it even if they were not directly impacted. My heart goes out to the Colombian community, including my beautiful husband but broadly to the Colombian community, who are suffering at this moment, and to the good, normal people who are putting themselves in harm's way to rescue others.

Regional Victoria

Emma KEALY (Lowan) (09:52): Agriculture is not just another land use. Our farmers grow our food, support our regional economies and underpin communities right across Victoria. But under Labor, farmland is seen as vacant land ripe for development. Under Labor, productive farmland and property rights are under increasing pressure from poorly planned development, transmission infrastructure, renewable energy projects, mining and urban expansion. That is why I introduced the Planning and Environment Amendment (Agricultural Land and Food Security) Bill 2026. My bill provides legislative protections for strategic agricultural land, requires proper assessment of the agricultural impacts of major developments, puts agricultural expertise at the decision-making table and improves transparency around the cumulative loss of farmland, because once high-quality agricultural land is sterilised or fragmented we simply cannot get it back.

The Nationals are going further. We will scrap Labor's emergency services tax, stop VNI West, review Victoria's transmission plan and renewable energy zones and scrap any project that does not stack up. We will restore the farmer's right to say no to entry on their land, cancel fines issued by VicGrid and tackle farm crime. Labor across the chamber might not like this, but the Nationals will always stand up for rural and regional Victoria. Farmers deserve a government that respects their land, their livelihoods and their property rights. The Nationals will always stand up for farmers. We will always stand up for rural and regional Victorians, we will always stand up for the right to farm and we will always stand up for Victoria's fair share.

Williamstown electorate sports clubs

Melissa HORNE (Williamstown – Minister for Ports and Freight, Minister for Jobs, Minister for Industry and Advanced Manufacturing, Minister for Defence Industry) (09:53): Sporting clubs in the Williamstown electorate bring our community together and provide vital opportunities for younger people to be active and build friendships and those important leadership qualities. The Altona Vikings are a key part of enabling young girls in our communities to grow and be a part of a club that really feels like a family. I want to congratulate the under-14 girls, who are already through to the grand final, and I wish them all the best this weekend. Altona North Soccer Club is another example of a family-orientated community club that our electorate is so fortunate to have. Last year I secured $100,000 for the club, funding that allowed the planning for the redevelopment of the facilities at Duane reserve. I would also like to acknowledge Riccardo Conte, the president of Altona North Soccer Club, who has invested so much time in the club and has made the decision to step away after 14 years of service. I want to thank Riccardo for his hard work, and I wish him all the best. I am also excited to celebrate Yarraville Glory's 60th anniversary later this month. I recently secured $1.18 million for the club to build new female soccer facilities, an electronic scoreboard and a new goal storage area. These upgrades have made a real difference. Finally, at last we are about to see the next stage of works on the Williamstown Swimming and Life Saving Club go out to public consultation, with works now proceeding to the next phase of delivery.

Treaty

Will FOWLES (Ringwood) (09:55): I rise today in strong support of treaty in Victoria. Good government listens. Good government consults. Good government gives people the opportunity to be heard. Through Gellung Warl, treaty provides a permanent structure for that consultation and that listening to happen – consultation that is so important with Victoria's First Nations people. Importantly, treaty takes nothing away from anyone else. It does not diminish the rights or the opportunities or the voice of any other Victorian. It simply ensures that First Nations communities have a structured and ongoing way to engage with government and engage with Parliament on the decisions that affect them. This principle is not weird. In fact it is a very simple principle. We consult with businesses about decisions affecting them. We consult with workers about decisions affecting workers. We consult with local communities about decisions affecting local communities. We consult with patients about their health care. Why not provide a permanent structured consultation mechanism for First Nations people in Victoria? It is a very simple principle, and it ought to be respected by every single member of this place. Government makes better decisions when it listens to people with direct experience and people who understand the practical implications of their decisions. That is what treaty provides, and that is why treaty will be defended to the hilt at this election in November.

Wayi School

Ros SPENCE (Kalkallo – Minister for Corrections, Minister for Victim Support, Minister for Youth Justice, Minister for Community Sport) (09:56): I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support Award winners from Wayi School for weeks 1 to 4 of term 3. Wayi School is an outstanding specialist school in my electorate, and their schoolwide positive behaviour support framework helps create a positive, safe and supportive learning environment by encouraging students to demonstrate the values of voice, choice and independence. This term's deserving award recipients are Mila from room 2, Haniya from room 3, Wareesha from room 6, Veronica from room 10, Elmo from room 13, Noelle from room 15, Suleiman from room 17, Aurora from room 18, Fallann from room 19, George from room 19, Yahya from room 22 and Gurnaz from room 23. Through the schoolwide positive behaviour support program, students are recognised for positive behaviours that contribute to a respectful, welcoming and successful school community. The program reinforces positive choices, strengthens relationships and supports students to develop the social and emotional skills they need to thrive both in and beyond the classroom. The achievements of these students reflect not only their individual efforts but also the support provided by the dedicated principal Leanne Sinnadurai as well as the terrific teachers, education support staff and families who encourage them each day to be the very best versions of themselves. I warmly congratulate these students. They should be extremely proud of their efforts and of the positive example they set to their fellow students. Keep up the fantastic work, and I look forward to visiting soon.

Bruce Turner

Anthony MARSH (Nepean) (09:58): On 31 July I was privileged to attend Rosebud RSL for the unveiling of the Turner Room, honouring Bruce Turner. Bruce served 26 years in the Australian Army then devoted 25 years to supporting serving and former military personnel as a military compensation advocate. As RSL president for 13 years and a member for 40 years, his service left a lasting mark. I thank president Geoff Scholes and the Rosebud RSL for ensuring Bruce's contribution to veterans in our community is remembered.

Southern Peninsula Rescue Squad

Anthony MARSH (Nepean) (09:58): On 16 July the opposition leader and I visited the Southern Peninsula Rescue Squad in Blairgowrie. Since 1967 this volunteer organisation has provided marine search and rescue across Port Phillip Bay and the Bass Strait coast. Operating around the clock, its volunteers assist police, ambulance and lifesaving organisations by rescuing people, searching for missing boats and towing vessels to safety. I thank Kent and the team for showing us their operation and for their extraordinary commitment to keeping our waters and community safe.

Country Fire Authority Red Hill brigade

Anthony MARSH (Nepean) (09:59): On 13 July I met with Red Hill CFA captain Sam Norris to discuss fuel loads and the upcoming fire season. Since 1940 Red Hill CFA has protected lives and property, responding to more than 100 incidents each year, ranging from bushfires and structure fires to road accidents, floods and search and rescue. I thank Sam and the brigade's dedicated volunteers for their service, professionalism and commitment to the Red Hill and wider Mornington Peninsula community.

Van Viet Truong

Natalie SULEYMAN (St Albans – Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Minister for Small and Family Business, Minister for Veterans) (09:59): I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to Van Viet Truong, the hardworking owner of Hong Hung Asian Grocery in Sunshine. Viet was a deeply respected grandfather and a dedicated local trader whom I had the pleasure of meeting. Tragically, Viet's life was cut short following a devastating incident where he stepped forward as a good Samaritan to aid a neighbour in need. On behalf of our entire community I extend my heartfelt condolences to Viet's family and especially my good friends Selina Chenh from the vegetarian cafe, Thanh Nguyen from the Fresh Chilli Deli and Huong from Diamond Valley Fashions and the wider Vietnamese community. May Van Viet Truong rest in peace.

St Albans electorate community safety

Natalie SULEYMAN (St Albans – Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Minister for Small and Family Business, Minister for Veterans) (10:00): On another matter, I was happy to start the morning talking to my local traders in St Albans today, informing them of our announcement that more PSOs are being recruited to patrol our shopping strips such as St Albans. This is welcome news to St Albans traders and is part of the Carroll Labor government putting safety first to help fight crime and keep our community safe. As a lifelong local of St Albans, I know this is so important for our community, and I have called on Brimbank City Council to work in partnership to address the issues of St Albans traders and ensure that our community is safe and vibrant for all.

Imagine Re-Evolution

Vicki WARD (Eltham – Minister for Public Transport, Minister for Creative Industries) (10:01): Imagine Re-Evolution is an incredible local organisation run by volunteers doing their best in supporting young people find a sense of belonging and purpose. Imagine Re-Evolution brings together young people and older mentors to create, learn and share skills while giving new life to donated materials often destined to end up in landfill. It is an impressive model, building connections across generations, giving young people opportunities to develop new skills, confidence and creativity. Their recent gala was an enjoyable celebration of their work in the community growing around them and included the opportunity to listen to *Detention* author Ralph Jackman. Thank you to everyone involved, particularly Jayne Clarke, founder and CEO of Imagine Re-Evolution. What began with Jayne asking how she could help break the cycle of poverty and disengagement for local children has grown into an organisation with over 300 young participants and 93 volunteers, aged between eight and 90. I am grateful for Jayne's passion and determination, which has built a wonderful community offering young people opportunities to thrive.

Diamond Creek Football Netball Club

Vicki WARD (Eltham – Minister for Public Transport, Minister for Creative Industries) (10:02): Diamond Creek Football Netball Club is a great club with community at its heart, and holding a First Nations round game as well as their recent community day shows how important inclusion is to this club. I thank president Daniel Baird and the committee for their leadership. For the First Nations round DCFNC produced beautiful jumpers commemorating First Nations, as well as holding a smoking ceremony and learning more about First Nations and their important contribution to marngrook and the AFL. Congratulations also to the senior football team on its strong victory over Hurstbridge on the

day. Their community day against Greensborough was a wonderful opportunity for locals to come together at Coventry, with activities for children, as well as sausages and support from Bendigo Bank.

St Peters Football Club

Nick STAIKOS (Bentleigh – Minister for Housing, Building and Precincts, Minister for Homelessness, Minister for Seniors) (10:02): I take the opportunity in the house today to congratulate St Peters Football Club on its 70th anniversary. In 1956 St Peters parish priest Father Fred McKenna identified the need for a footy team to be started at St Peter's Primary School, and so it began. The club went from strength to strength, and it won its first premiership in 1964. There have been a number of famous names to have come out of St Peters, none more so than the Beveridge family. Luke Beveridge, of course, is the coach of the Western Bulldogs. His late dad John was a recruiter for St Kilda, selecting legends like Nick Riewoldt, and the matriarch of the family, Rosa Beveridge, in addition to serving the club was also a councillor at the City of Moorabbin, serving a term as deputy mayor as well. Another councillor of Moorabbin and a friend of Rosa's was Julie Cooper. Julie was the first woman councillor and mayor of Moorabbin, and someone who contributed greatly to Centenary Park, where the club is based. Her name for many years has adorned the pavilion. But when Glen Eira council demolished the old pavilion, they had indicated that they would not be reinstating Julie's name on the new pavilion. So I joined with Rosa and the club to convince council that Julie's name must remain. Today the Julie Cooper pavilion continues to stand proudly at Centenary Park, a building that, while the current building is only 11 years old, holds 70 years of history of a club that in 2026 is stronger than ever. Congratulations to everyone who has contributed to the red and the green. Go Petes!

Mordialloc electorate achievements

Tim RICHARDSON (Mordialloc – Minister for Local Government, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Renters) (10:04): It is action packed in Mordialloc at the moment, with level crossing removal works and a brand new Mordialloc train station. It is part of a series of upgrades and ways that we are building a better community in Kingston and Greater Dandenong. When we look at the transformation in our schools – Mordialloc College, Parkdale Secondary College in recent times; we have had upgrades at Chelsea, at Edithvale, at Chelsea Heights; we have had upgrades at Parktone Primary School; and of course we have had upgrades to all of our Catholic schools in our local community. We are building better in education in our early childhood sector, with upgrades to our local kindergartens at Elonera, at Chelsea Heights kindergarten, at Chelsea kindergarten, and recently we have announced upgrades at Aspendale Gardens kindergarten. We are building better roads locally, with the Mordialloc Freeway delivering such substantial improvements in outcomes, getting people home to their relatives and the people that they love safer and sooner. We are making the Frankston train line level crossing free, with level crossing removals from Chelsea through to Cheltenham in the electorates I have had the privilege of serving over that time. We are building brand new train stations, and of course we are returning the Frankston train line to the city loop with the Melbourne Metro rail tunnel. In Keysborough South, a beautiful community I am proud to represent, we have delivered the Keysborough Community Hub. We have delivered the upgrades to Keysborough Gardens Primary School, and we have more buildings in the works. We just keep delivering, and we will keep fighting hard for Mordialloc residents.

Box Hill brickworks site

Paul HAMER (Box Hill – Minister for Roads and Road Safety) (10:05): Over $200 million is the figure which was revealed in the Legislative Council to acquire and remediate the privately owned Box Hill brickworks site – a site which the owner does not want to sell and has not allowed any independent environmental assessments of. I have been raising the future of the Box Hill brickworks site with ministers for several years and have previously called for more open space at this site, but not at any cost or any risk. With an owner who is neither willing to sell nor willing to allow independent inspections to take place, compulsory acquisition of the land would leave a new owner liable for every

unknown risk associated with the site. Whitehorse council has recently offered to purchase the site, and I welcome this significant investment in the Box Hill community. Over the years Whitehorse council has accumulated over $70 million from residential development through its open space development levy. My door is always open to the council to discuss how this funding can be leveraged to negotiate the best possible open space outcome for the community as part of the master plan for the site. Unlike the Liberals, who peddle false hope with their unfunded dreams, we are delivering more open space for the Box Hill community, including new parks in Ellingworth Parade, between Court and Watts streets and in Victoria Crescent, as well as a new linear park in Whitehorse Road.

Claire Cotter

John MULLAHY (Glen Waverley) (10:07): I would like to recognise Claire Cotter OAM, who is preparing to retire after an extraordinary record of service for CPEC, the Cerebral Palsy Education Centre. Claire has dedicated so much of her life to children with cerebral palsy and their families, advocating with compassion, determination –

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The time for making statements has ended.

Bills

Outdoor Recreation Victoria Bill 2026

Council's amendments

Message from Council relating to following amendments considered:

1. Clause 1, line 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
2. Clause 1, line 5, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".
3. Clause 3, line 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
4. Clause 3, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
5. Clause 3, after line 32 insert –

   "***Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria*** means the body established by section 5.".
6. Clause 3, page 3, lines 8 and 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
7. Clause 3, page 3, line 11, after "***Land***" insert "***and Aquatic***".
8. Clause 3, page 3, after line 23 insert –

   "(i) motorised and non-motorised recreation;

   (j) recreational motorcycling and trail-bike riding;

   (k) prospecting and fossicking;

   (l) horse riding and equestrian activities;

   (m) any other prescribed activity;".
9. Clause 3, page 3, lines 24 and 25, omit all words and expressions on these lines.
10. Clause 3, page 4, line 27, omit "Regions." and insert "Regions;".
11. Part heading preceding clause 5, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
12. Division heading preceding clause 5, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
13. Clause 5, line 4, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
14. Clause 5, line 5, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

15. Clause 5, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
16. Clause 6, line 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
17. Clause 6, line 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
18. Clause 6, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
19. Clause 6, line 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
20. Division heading preceding clause 7, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
21. Clause 7, line 3, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
22. Clause 7, line 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
23. Clause 7, after line 18 insert –

    "(da) to optimise the social, cultural and economic benefits of commercial fishing and aquaculture in Victoria in a sustainable manner;".
24. Clause 7, line 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
25. Clause 8, line 1, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
26. Clause 8, line 2, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
27. Clause 8, page 9, line 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
28. Clause 8, page 9, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
29. Clause 8, page 9, line 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
30. Clause 8, page 10, lines 3 and 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
31. Clause 8, page 11, line 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
32. Clause 8, page 11, line 2, after "fishing" insert ", hunting".
33. Clause 8, page 11, line 3, after "fishing" insert ", hunting".
34. Clause 9, line 19, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
35. Clause 9, line 21, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
36. Clause 10, line 29, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
37. Clause 10, line 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
38. Clause 10, page 12, line 8, omit "**1995**." and insert "**1995**; and".
39. Clause 10, page 12, after line 8 insert –

    "(iii) the sustainability and viability of commercial fishing and aquaculture; and

    (iv) the facilitation of fair and reasonable access to aquatic resources.".
40. Clause 11, line 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

41. Clause 11, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
42. Clause 11, lines 15 and 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
43. Clause 12, line 18, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
44. Clause 12, line 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
45. Clause 12, lines 23 and 24, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
46. Clause 12, line 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
47. Clause 16, line 26, before "The" insert "(1)".
48. Clause 16, after line 28 insert –

    "(2) Without limiting subsection (1), the best available information may include the following –

    (a) scientific research;

    (b) regional data, including localised information relating to use, access, closures, participation, economic impact, safety, compliance and environmental conditions;

    (c) stakeholder knowledge;

    (d) on-ground evidence, including observations, incident reports, field assessments, stakeholder reports and operational experience from areas to which the decisions relate.".
49. Clause 18, line 16, before "The" insert "(1)".
50. Clause 18, after line 27 insert –

    "(2) The principle of transparency requires publication of the following, to the extent practicable information regarding consultation processes.".
51. Part heading preceding clause 19, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
52. Division heading preceding clause 19, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
53. Clause 19, line 3, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
54. Clause 19, line 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
55. Clause 19, lines 5 and 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
56. Clause 19, line 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
57. Clause 19, line 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
58. Clause 21, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
59. Clause 21, page 17, line 2, omit "or aquaculture" and insert ", aquaculture, hunting, or recreational fishing".
60. Clause 21, page 17, lines 24 to 26, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert –

    "(b) where possible, does not ordinarily reside in Victoria.".
61. Clause 25, page 21, line 5, after "body" insert ", other than on a voluntary basis, where possible".
62. Clause 30, page 26, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

63. Clause 31, lines 15 and 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
64. Clause 32, lines 24 and 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
65. Clause 32, page 27, lines 23 and 24, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
66. Clause 32, page 27, line 29, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
67. Clause 32, page 28, lines 1 and 2, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
68. Clause 33, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
69. Clause 33, line 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
70. Clause 33, page 29, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
71. Clause 34, lines 20 and 21, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
72. Clause 34, page 30, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
73. Clause 35, line 8, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
74. Clause 35, lines 11 and 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
75. Clause 35, line 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
76. Clause 37, page 31, line 8, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
77. Clause 38, line 13, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
78. Clause 38, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
79. Clause 38, lines 15 and 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
80. Clause 38, line 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
81. Clause 38, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
82. Clause 39, line 27, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
83. Clause 39, page 32, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
84. Clause 39, page 32, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
85. Clause 40, lines 13 and 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
86. Clause 40, after line 16 insert –

    "(1A) A report under this section must set out –

    (a) information regarding the authorised officers appointed by Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria under section 42, including the number of authorised officers appointed by Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria; and

(b) information regarding access to land, including any matter that has reduced access to any public land for the purposes of outdoor recreation.".

87. Clause 40, lines 26 and 27, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

88. Clause 41, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

89. Clause 41, page 33, lines 10 and 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

90. Clause 41, page 33, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

91. Clause 41, page 33, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

92. Clause 41, page 33, line 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

93. Clause 41, page 33, line 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".

94. Clause 42, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

95. Clause 42, lines 6 and 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

96. Clause 42, line 29, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

97. Clause 42, after line 32 insert –

"(5) Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria, in appointing authorised officers under this provision, must have regard to the number of functions, duties and powers in relation to which authorised officers may be appointed under subsection (2)(b).".

98. Clause 44, line 10, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

99. Clause 44, lines 16 and 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

100. Part heading preceding clause 47, after "**Land**" insert "**and Aquatic**".

101. Clause 47, line 2, after "**Land**" insert "**and Aquatic**".

102. Clause 47, line 3, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".

103. Clause 47, line 7, after "public land" insert "(including public waters and marine environments)".

104. Clause 47, line 10, omit "to public land" and insert "and shared access".

105. Clause 47, line 12, omit "to public land".

106. Clause 47, line 14, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".

107. Clause 47, line 20, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".

108. Clause 47, page 38, after line 10 insert –

"(6) The Land and Aquatic Access Panel, by written notice, may request information from any person or body who is appointed as the manager of an area of public land or water.

(7) A person or body to whom a request for information under subsection (6) is given must provide a written response to the Land and Aquatic Access Panel.".

109. Clause 48, line 12, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".

110. Clause 48, line 15, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".

111. Clause 48, after line 15 insert –

"(2A) The Minister must ensure that the majority of members of the Land and Aquatic Access Panel are appointed from representative bodies.".

112. Clause 48, line 17, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".

113. Clause 48, line 20, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".

114. Clause 53, line 15, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
115. Clause 53, line 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
116. Clause 53, lines 28 and 29, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
117. Clause 53, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
118. Clause 53, page 42, line 1, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
119. Clause 54, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
120. Clause 55, lines 23 and 24, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
121. Clause 55, line 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
122. Clause 58, lines 30 and 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
123. Clause 58, page 44, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
124. Clause 59, lines 20 and 21, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
125. Clause 60, lines 9 and 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
126. Clause 62, line 20, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
127. Clause 62, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
128. Clause 62, page 46, lines 3 and 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
129. Clause 62, page 46, line 5, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
130. Clause 62, page 46, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
131. Clause 63, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
132. Clause 64, lines 31 and 32, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
133. Clause 64, line 36, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
134. Clause 67, page 48, lines 2 and 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
135. Clause 67, page 48, line 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
136. Clause 68, lines 27 and 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
137. Clause 69, lines 11 and 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
138. Clause 71, lines 7 and 8, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
139. Clause 71, line 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

140. Clause 71, line 13, omit "***Outdoor Recreation Victoria***" and insert "***Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria***".

141. Clause 71, lines 14 and 15, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

142. Clause 71, line 16, omit "***Outdoor Recreation Victoria***" and insert "***Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria***".

143. Clause 71, line 18, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

144. Clause 72, line 30, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

145. Clause 73, line 5, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

146. Clause 73, line 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".

147. Clause 73, line 10, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

148. Clause 74, lines 16 and 17, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

149. Clause 74, line 21, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

150. Clause 74, line 26, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

151. Clause 75, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

152. Clause 76, lines 4 and 5, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

153. Clause 76, line 8, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

154. Clause 77, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

155. Clause 77, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

156. Clause 78, line 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

157. Clause 80, lines 7 to 10, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert –

    "'***Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria*** means the body established by section 5 of the **Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria Act 2026**;";'.

158. Clause 80, lines 13 to 15, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert –

    "'(d) in relation to Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria – the chief executive officer of Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria;";'.

159. Clause 80, line 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

160. Clause 80, lines 21 and 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

161. Clause 80, lines 24 to 26, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria under Part 4 of the **Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria Act 2026**; or".

162. Clause 80, line 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

163. Clause 80, page 55, lines 3 to 5, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert –

    "'(d) in relation to Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria – the chief executive officer of Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria;";'.

164. Clause 81, line 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

165. Clause 81, lines 26 and 27, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

166. Clause 82, lines 5 to 8, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert –

"'***Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria*** means the body established by section 5 of the **Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria Act 2026**;".'.

167. Clause 82, lines 13 and 14, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

168. Clause 84, line 31, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

169. Clause 85, lines 7 to 9, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert –

"'(b) appointed by Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria under Part 4 of the **Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria Act 2026**;";'.

170. Clause 85, lines 13 to 16, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert –

"'***Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria*** means the body established by section 5 of the **Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria Act 2026**;".'.

171. Clause 85, line 24, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

172. Clause 85, line 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

173. Clause 85, line 31, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

174. Clause 86, lines 6 and 7, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

175. Clause 87, lines 15 and 16, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

176. Clause 87, line 19, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

177. Clause 88, lines 24 and 25, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

178. Clause 88, line 29, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

179. Clause 89, line 6, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

180. Clause 90, line 12, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

181. Clause 91, lines 18 and 19, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

182. Clause 92, lines 29 and 30, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

183. Clause 93, line 5, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

184. Clause 94, lines 11 and 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

185. Clause 95, lines 20 to 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria within the meaning of section 3 of the **Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria within the meaning of section 3 of the **Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

186. Clause 96, lines 29 and 30, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

187. Clause 96, page 61, line 2, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

188. Clause 96, page 61, lines 8 and 9, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
189. Clause 96, page 61, line 15, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
190. Schedule 1, page 62, lines 7 and 8, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
191. Schedule 1, page 62, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
192. Schedule 1, page 62, lines 15 and 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
193. Schedule 1, page 62, line 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
194. Schedule 1, page 62, line 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
195. Schedule 1, page 62, line 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
196. Schedule 1, page 62, line 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
197. Schedule 1, page 62, lines 30 and 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
198. Schedule 1, page 63, line 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
199. Schedule 1, page 63, lines 6 and 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
200. Schedule 1, page 63, line 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
201. Schedule 1, page 63, line 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
202. Schedule 1, page 63, lines 15 and 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
203. Schedule 1, page 63, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
204. Schedule 1, page 63, lines 22 and 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
205. Schedule 1, page 63, line 27, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
206. Schedule 1, page 63, lines 29 and 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
207. Schedule 1, page 64, lines 4 and 5, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
208. Schedule 1, page 64, lines 7 and 8, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
209. Schedule 1, page 64, lines 10 and 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
210. Schedule 1, page 64, line 15, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
211. Schedule 1, page 64, lines 18 and 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
212. Schedule 1, page 64, line 21, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
213. Schedule 1, page 64, line 24, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

214. Schedule 1, page 64, lines 27 and 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
215. Schedule 1, page 64, lines 30 and 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
216. Schedule 1, page 65, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
217. Schedule 1, page 65, lines 6 and 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
218. Schedule 1, page 65, lines 9 and 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
219. Schedule 1, page 65, lines 12 and 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
220. Schedule 1, page 65, line 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
221. Schedule 1, page 65, line 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
222. Schedule 1, page 65, lines 21 and 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
223. Schedule 1, page 65, lines 26 and 27, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
224. Schedule 1, page 65, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
225. Schedule 1, page 66, lines 3 and 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
226. Schedule 1, page 66, lines 6 and 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
227. Schedule 1, page 66, line 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
228. Schedule 1, page 66, line 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
229. Schedule 1, page 66, lines 15 and 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
230. Schedule 1, page 66, line 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
231. Schedule 1, page 66, line 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
232. Schedule 1, page 66, line 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
233. Schedule 1, page 66, lines 29 and 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".
234. Schedule 1, page 66, line 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
235. Schedule 1, page 67, lines 2 and 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
236. Schedule 1, page 67, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
237. Schedule 1, page 67, lines 9 and 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
238. Schedule 1, page 67, lines 13 and 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
239. Schedule 1, page 67, lines 17 and 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

240. Schedule 1, page 67, line 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
241. Schedule 1, page 67, line 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
242. Schedule 1, page 67, lines 27 and 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
243. Schedule 1, page 67, lines 31 and 32, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
244. Schedule 1, page 68, lines 2 and 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
245. Schedule 1, page 68, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
246. Schedule 1, page 68, lines 9 and 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
247. Schedule 1, page 68, line 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
248. Schedule 1, page 68, line 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
249. Schedule 1, page 68, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
250. Schedule 1, page 68, lines 22 and 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
251. Schedule 1, page 68, lines 26 and 27, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
252. Schedule 1, page 68, lines 29 and 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
253. Schedule 1, page 68, lines 32 and 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
254. Schedule 1, page 69, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
255. Schedule 1, page 69, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
256. Schedule 1, page 69, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
257. Schedule 1, page 69, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
258. Schedule 1, page 69, line 15, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
259. Schedule 1, page 69, lines 17 and 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
260. Schedule 1, page 69, line 21, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
261. Schedule 1, page 69, lines 25 and 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
262. Schedule 1, page 69, line 29, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
263. Schedule 1, page 69, lines 32 and 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
264. Schedule 1, page 70, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
265. Schedule 1, page 70, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

266. Schedule 1, page 70, lines 8 and 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
267. Schedule 1, page 70, line 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
268. Schedule 1, page 70, line 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
269. Schedule 1, page 70, line 19, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
270. Schedule 1, page 70, lines 22 and 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
271. Schedule 1, page 70, line 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
272. Schedule 1, page 70, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
273. Schedule 1, page 70, line 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
274. Schedule 1, page 71, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
275. Schedule 1, page 71, line 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
276. Schedule 1, page 71, line 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
277. Schedule 1, page 71, lines 13 and 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
278. Schedule 1, page 71, lines 18 and 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
279. Schedule 1, page 71, line 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
280. Schedule 1, page 71, line 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
281. Schedule 1, page 71, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
282. Schedule 1, page 71, line 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
283. Schedule 1, page 72, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
284. Schedule 1, page 72, line 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
285. Schedule 1, page 72, lines 9 and 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".
286. Schedule 1, page 72, lines 12 and 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".
287. Schedule 1, page 72, line 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
288. Schedule 1, page 72, lines 19 and 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".
289. Schedule 1, page 72, line 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
290. Schedule 1, page 72, lines 25 and 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
291. Schedule 1, page 72, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

292. Schedule 1, page 72, lines 32 and 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
293. Schedule 1, page 73, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
294. Schedule 1, page 73, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
295. Schedule 1, page 73, line 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
296. Schedule 1, page 73, line 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
297. Schedule 1, page 73, lines 16 and 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
298. Schedule 1, page 73, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
299. Schedule 1, page 73, lines 22 and 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
300. Schedule 1, page 73, lines 25 and 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
301. Schedule 1, page 73, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
302. Schedule 1, page 73, line 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
303. Schedule 1, page 74, lines 2 and 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
304. Schedule 1, page 74, line 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
305. Schedule 1, page 74, lines 10 and 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
306. Schedule 1, page 74, lines 13 and 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
307. Schedule 1, page 74, lines 16 and 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
308. Schedule 1, page 74, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
309. Schedule 1, page 74, lines 22 and 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
310. Schedule 1, page 74, lines 25 and 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
311. Schedule 1, page 74, lines 28 and 29, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
312. Schedule 1, page 74, lines 31 and 32, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
313. Schedule 1, page 75, line 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
314. Schedule 1, page 75, line 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
315. Schedule 1, page 75, line 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
316. Schedule 1, page 75, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
317. Schedule 1, page 75, line 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

318. Schedule 1, page 75, line 21, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
319. Schedule 1, page 75, line 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
320. Schedule 1, page 75, lines 25 and 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
321. Schedule 1, page 75, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
322. Schedule 1, page 75, line 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
323. Schedule 1, page 76, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
324. Schedule 1, page 76, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
325. Schedule 1, page 76, lines 8 and 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
326. Schedule 1, page 76, lines 11 and 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
327. Schedule 1, page 76, line 15, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
328. Schedule 1, page 76, line 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
329. Schedule 1, page 76, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
330. Schedule 1, page 76, line 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
331. Schedule 1, page 76, lines 25 and 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
332. Schedule 1, page 76, line 29, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
333. Schedule 1, page 76, line 32, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
334. Schedule 1, page 77, line 3, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
335. Schedule 1, page 77, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
336. Schedule 1, page 77, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
337. Schedule 1, page 77, line 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
338. Schedule 1, page 77, line 14, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
339. Schedule 1, page 77, line 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
340. Schedule 1, page 77, line 21, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
341. Schedule 1, page 77, lines 23 and 24, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
342. Schedule 1, page 77, line 29, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
343. Schedule 1, page 77, line 32, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

344. Schedule 1, page 78, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".
345. Schedule 1, page 78, lines 5 and 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
346. Schedule 1, page 78, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
347. Schedule 1, page 78, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
348. Schedule 1, page 78, lines 14 and 15, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
349. Schedule 1, page 78, line 18, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
350. Schedule 1, page 78, line 21, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
351. Schedule 2, page 79, line 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
352. Schedule 2, page 79, line 10, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
353. Schedule 2, page 79, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
354. Schedule 2, page 79, line 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
355. Schedule 2, page 79, lines 20 and 21, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
356. Schedule 2, page 79, line 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
357. Schedule 2, page 79, line 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
358. Schedule 2, page 79, lines 29 and 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
359. Schedule 2, page 80, line 2, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
360. Schedule 2, page 80, line 5, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
361. Schedule 2, page 80, lines 8 and 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
362. Schedule 2, page 80, line 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
363. Schedule 2, page 80, line 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
364. Schedule 2, page 80, lines 17 and 18, omit ", Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert ", Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
365. Schedule 2, page 80, lines 23 and 24, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
366. Schedule 2, page 80, line 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
367. Schedule 2, page 80, line 32, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
368. Schedule 2, page 81, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
369. Schedule 2, page 81, line 6, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

370. Schedule 2, page 81, lines 10 and 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
371. Schedule 2, page 81, line 15, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
372. Schedule 2, page 81, line 18, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
373. Schedule 2, page 81, lines 22 and 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
374. Schedule 2, page 81, line 27, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
375. Schedule 2, page 81, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
376. Schedule 2, page 82, line 3, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
377. Schedule 2, page 82, lines 7 and 8, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
378. Schedule 2, page 82, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
379. Schedule 2, page 82, lines 15 and 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
380. Schedule 2, page 82, lines 18 and 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
381. Schedule 2, page 82, line 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
382. Schedule 2, page 82, lines 25 and 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
383. Schedule 2, page 82, line 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".
384. Schedule 2, page 83, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
385. Schedule 2, page 83, line 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
386. Schedule 2, page 83, lines 10 and 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
387. Schedule 2, page 83, line 13, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
388. Schedule 2, page 83, line 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
389. Schedule 2, page 83, lines 19 and 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
390. Schedule 2, page 83, lines 24 and 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
391. Schedule 2, page 83, lines 27 and 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
392. Schedule 2, page 84, lines 3 and 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
393. Schedule 2, page 84, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
394. Schedule 2, page 84, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
395. Schedule 2, page 84, lines 13 and 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

396. Schedule 2, page 84, line 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
397. Schedule 2, page 84, line 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
398. Schedule 2, page 84, line 22, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
399. Schedule 2, page 84, line 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
400. Schedule 2, page 84, line 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
401. Schedule 2, page 84, lines 30 and 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
402. Schedule 2, page 85, lines 2 and 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
403. Schedule 2, page 85, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
404. Schedule 2, page 85, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
405. Schedule 2, page 85, lines 13 and 14, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
406. Schedule 2, page 85, line 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
407. Schedule 2, page 85, lines 19 and 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
408. Schedule 2, page 85, line 23, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
409. Schedule 2, page 85, lines 25 and 26, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
410. Schedule 2, page 85, line 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
411. Schedule 2, page 86, lines 3 and 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
412. Schedule 2, page 86, line 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".
413. Schedule 2, page 86, lines 8 and 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
414. Schedule 2, page 86, lines 11 and 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
415. Schedule 2, page 86, lines 16 and 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
416. Schedule 2, page 86, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
417. Schedule 2, page 86, lines 24 and 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
418. Schedule 2, page 86, line 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
419. Schedule 2, page 87, line 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
420. Schedule 2, page 87, lines 5 and 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
421. Schedule 2, page 87, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

422. Schedule 2, page 87, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
423. Schedule 2, page 87, lines 16 and 17, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
424. Schedule 2, page 87, line 20, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
425. Schedule 2, page 87, lines 23 and 24, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
426. Schedule 2, page 87, line 27, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
427. Schedule 2, page 87, lines 29 and 30, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
428. Schedule 2, page 87, line 33, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria's**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's**".
429. Schedule 2, page 88, line 4, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
430. Schedule 2, page 88, line 8, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
431. Schedule 2, page 88, line 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
432. Schedule 2, page 88, lines 15 and 16, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
433. Schedule 2, page 88, line 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
434. Schedule 2, page 88, lines 22 and 23, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
435. Schedule 2, page 88, line 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria's" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria's".
436. Schedule 2, page 88, line 28, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
437. Schedule 2, page 88, line 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
438. Schedule 2, page 88, line 33, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
439. Schedule 2, page 89, line 3, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
440. Schedule 2, page 89, line 7, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
441. Schedule 2, page 89, line 11, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
442. Schedule 2, page 89, line 14, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".
443. Schedule 2, page 89, lines 18 and 19, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
444. Schedule 2, page 89, line 25, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
445. Schedule 2, page 89, lines 29 to 31, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria must ensure that its members of staff" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria must ensure that its members of staff".
446. Schedule 2, page 89, lines 33 and 34, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
447. Schedule 2, page 90, lines 2 and 3, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".

448. Schedule 2, page 90, lines 5 and 6, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
449. Schedule 2, page 90, line 9, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
450. Schedule 2, page 90, line 12, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
451. Long title, omit "Outdoor Recreation Victoria" and insert "Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria".
452. Long title, after "Land" insert "and Aquatic".
453. Short title, omit "**Outdoor Recreation Victoria**" and insert "**Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria**".

Steve DIMOPOULOS (Oakleigh – Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC, Minister for Sport, Minister for Equality) (10:07): I move:

That the amendments be agreed to.

In doing so I will make a couple of very brief remarks. It gives me great pleasure to speak on the Outdoor Recreation Victoria Bill 2026. The bill brings together the Victorian Fisheries Authority and the Game Management Authority, two authorities that have done an incredible job over the last decade that they have existed. I want to also take the opportunity, because I no longer have the portfolio and I have not had a proper chance to say this in *Hansard*, to thank in a tremendous way the chair of the VFA Gus Dear and the CEO Travis Dowling, an indomitable team who have extended the brand of the fishing authority right through every part of this state and have really garnered tens of thousands more people fishing and having time with their family out in nature. I want to equally thank Chris Rose, the chair, and Graeme Ford, the CEO of the Game Management Authority for their patience, their diligence and their acceptance of what can sometimes be a difficult social licence. They are very, very good leaders.

There have been some amendments to this bill which the government has supported, including broadening the scope of what are listed as outdoor recreation activities. I had the privilege of introducing this legislation in its original form as Minister for Outdoor Recreation. This new authority, as amended, will provide a one-stop shop to make it easier for Victorians to get out and do what they love and have been doing for generations. The Carroll Labor government is about making life easier for Victorians. We have got a long-proven track record in supporting outdoor recreation in this state, right across metropolitan Melbourne and regional and rural Victoria, whether it is through the new and upgraded boat ramps across the state or the reinvesting of fishing licence revenue back into projects for fishers and grants programs. Just last year we unlocked an additional 135,000 hectares of additional public land for recreational hunting. We are the envy particularly of the fishing community around Australia because of the work we have done in reinvesting fishing licence fees back into infrastructure for fishers. Fishers are not just men in their 60s and 70s. They are families, intergenerationally, right through the Victorian landscape. The member for Ripon is one of many who understand this.

In finishing, there are a couple of key people who I would like to thank for their tireless work with the government on this bill and really everything we have tried to achieve over the last few years. They are Sean Kilkenny from the Australian Deer Association – Sean has been an absolutely steadfast, excellent leader in this field; Barry Howlett, equally, from the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia; and Anthony McGrath from VRFish. They are people that I have enjoyed the privilege of working with and that the government has enjoyed the privilege of working with. I also want to thank Jeff Bourman in the other place. He has been excellent, as has his staff member Norm Dunn, and my staff member Rumaan Baryalai, who has just been fantastic – getting some nods of approval in the chamber – and Dee Cakir, formerly of the Premier's office. It takes a village to put this show on the road, but it gives me enormous pleasure to commend the amended bill to the house.

Danny O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) (10:11): I am pleased to –

A member interjected.

Danny O'BRIEN: Well, you gave a shout-out to Jeff Bourman. They are Melina Bath's amendments that we are talking about.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the Chair.

Danny O'BRIEN: Exactly, Deputy Speaker, I will refer through the Chair. I will begin on that point that these amendments are largely due to the great work of Melina Bath in the other place as the Nationals Shadow Minister for Public Land Management and Shadow Minister for Outdoor Recreation. She has come up with a lot of amendments that I think strike a much better balance for the outdoor recreation sector and recognise particularly fishing and hunting as part of that, and go further.

I must say that on the background to this I am a little bit perplexed. These amendments were passed in the other place back before the winter break. Today is the sixth sitting day since then, and for some reason they have only just come through now. I am pleased that all of these amendments are being adopted by the government, as occurred in the other place, but there was a question mark as to whether that was, in fact, going to happen at some stage. There was some speculation that the government, with a change of Premier, had in fact changed its mind about outdoor recreation. Indeed there was some speculation it had changed its mind about duck season for a start. I am just looking across the table and seeing if there are any particular responses when I say that, because –

James Newbury interjected.

Danny O'BRIEN: There are a lot of heads down, member for Brighton. I am interested to know whether there is any policy change on duck season. We certainly asked the minister in the other place this week and got a very noncommittal answer, so I am interested to know. Perhaps, if there are any members on the other side that would like to speak on these amendments, they might enlighten us.

A member interjected.

Danny O'BRIEN: We know where those people stand. That is right. The member for Brighton's head is up, and he knows that the coalition position is very strong in favour of supporting duck season and continuing it. One of the very few things that I agreed with the former Premier about was her decision to maintain duck season. I hope that it is continuing under the new Premier. It would be rather extraordinary if a new Premier from the right was the one that actually came in, had done a deal, and duck season went, but we will let them explain that. This is certainly something that the Nationals and Liberals here are strongly in favour of, and we will continue our support of legitimate, sustainable hunting and particularly the rights of law-abiding firearms owners as well. Anyway, we will see whether we get any explanation from the government on that.

On these amendments that have come forward, though, as I said, Melina Bath in the other place put a lot of work into this and did a lot of work with the stakeholders – many of those that the minister has just mentioned – and worked to ensure that the rights and the activities of outdoor recreation groups and also the commercial fishing industry were properly recognised in these amendments and in this bill. The first thing that the amendments do is rename Outdoor Recreation Victoria, as it was proposed by the government, to Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria, which brings those activities into sharper focus. The bill does not only just deal with general outdoor recreation, it brings in hunting, recreational fishing, commercial fishing, aquaculture, boating, access and enforcement. This new authority is taking over the functions of the GMA, the Game Management Authority, and the Victorian Fisheries Authority, so we believe its name should reflect the broader activities that it will now be doing. That is why we are pleased that the name is now being changed to Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria.

Clause 3 actually expands the definition of 'outdoor recreation' to include motorised and non-motorised recreation, recreational motorcycling and trail bike riding, prospecting and fossicking, horseriding and equestrian activities, and any other prescribed activities. It is an inclusive list but not an exhaustive one. That is to highlight that there are multiple outdoor recreation activities that occur,

particularly on our state land and even in our national parks. We want to highlight that we support them – we support open access to our forests, and we support government not locking up our state forests and making sure that, whether you are a motorbike rider, whether you are a horserider or whether you are a prospector or a miner, you will still continue to have access to our public land.

Clause 7 includes some changes to ensure that commercial fishing and aquaculture are appropriately recognised and done in a sustainable manner. I know Melina has worked with Seafood Industry Victoria. They were very concerned that the commercial fishing sector had effectively been sidelined by the changes that were proposed. Melina has worked very hard with them and our commercial fishers, whether they are in my electorate at Corner Inlet, whether they are those in the electorate of Bass that Melina Bath has worked with at San Remo or whether they are in Port Phillip Bay along the west coast, where we still have commercial fishing. Aquaculture is a growing area of opportunity for us and one that we certainly support.

Clause 10 just introduces some principles about sustainability and viability of commercial fishing and aquaculture and makes sure that they are embedded in the sector. This has come across from the Victorian Fisheries Authority. It makes sure that that consideration must be given by the minister within this bill as well.

Clause 16 is important. It expands the definition of the evidence-based approach from simply being best available information to include scientific research, regional data, stakeholder knowledge and on-ground evidence. That is important. Too often in Victoria, in the past 30 years or probably 50 years in fact, we have had scientific or academic decisions made without the appropriate input of the people on the ground – the people who live and breathe these things every day. It is really important, particularly when it comes to outdoor recreation and the use of our forests and public land, because it is a contested area and there are those who think it should be 'Conservation at all costs' and 'Lock it all up'. You actually need to listen to the people who are out there all the time, whether that is foresters, whether that is native timber industry workers, whether it is outdoor recreation people in four-wheel drive groups or trail riders, horseback riders or prospectors and miners. They have an interest, and they have a right to be involved in that as well. That stakeholder knowledge and on-ground evidence are really important and we strongly back it, and it is a great amendment that is being adopted here today.

There are some other amendments about transparency, about reporting and particularly about the appointment of authorised officers, where we are now saying that there must be due regard to an appropriate number of authorised officers – sufficient authorised officers. We know this government likes to talk about cuts. It often likes to talk about cuts and Liberal cuts and National cuts, but we actually know that the government has been doing the cuts itself. It has been going for a long time, but the authorised officers in the fisheries sector – I think the number was 35 authorised officers cut, and it has had a significant impact on the number of inspections, patrols and things that are happening. I find it a little bit ironic, I must say, but perhaps not surprising. But the recreational fishing sector were really, really angry about it, and quite rightly so, because they want to make sure they have got protected fish stocks into the future. They want to make sure that people who are doing the wrong thing do have the book thrown at them. So there was quite a blowback to those cuts, and this amendment actually at least puts in some rigour with respect to the sufficiency of authorised officers in this legislation.

Finally, it is about who is on some of these groups. There was a proposal for a land access panel. That has been renamed by this amendment to a 'land and aquatic access panel', because it includes public waters and marine environments. When it comes to panel members, this clause 48 amendment ensures that members of that panel are appointed from representative bodies and that the panel should be practical, manageable and representative. Again, that is highlighting my earlier point that it is important that actual user groups – the people who are out there every day, either professionally or recreationally – do have some say on this. It is important to have, absolutely, the academics and the scientists involved. But decisions made about outdoor recreation, about fishing and about hunting should not be made by bureaucrats sitting in Spring Street; they should be made by people who

understand our bush, who understand our waterways, who live and breathe it every day, whose livelihoods and passions rely on it, and they generally are passionate about it. I think it is important that we have that. It reminds me of my time with the National Irrigators Council when we were debating Murray–Darling Basin plan reforms and water buybacks and all that sort of thing. Some of the commentators would say, 'Irrigators should not have a say, because they are conflicted.' They absolutely should have a say because it is their livelihood. That is exactly why they should have a say, and they are the ones that understand it best. The same applies in this sector.

I commend the Liberals and Nationals team for the work that was done. Melina Bath did a power of work on this, with the assistance of all those organisations, some of which the minister mentioned, whether it is the Australian Deer Association, Field & Game, Seafood Industry Victoria, the Sporting Shooters' Association, and the prospectors and miners. There were many others that Melina consulted with to get a much better outcome on this bill, and I do commend the government for ultimately adopting them. It was, again, a little bit perplexing. We actually had at one stage the government telling us dramatically, 'This has to be passed tomorrow. You can't put any amendments into it because we've got to get this passed.' Then that suddenly disappeared, we went on to the winter break, we had another sitting week of Parliament and still no amendments, and now, finally, we are here. Anyway, that is a good thing. We are strongly in support of these amendments, and we look forward to this bill now passing.

Martha HAYLETT (Ripon) (10:23): I rise to speak on the Outdoor Recreation Victoria Bill 2026. As a country Victorian I am proud to speak on this bill, because it is a bill that recognises something so many people in rural and regional Victoria have known for generations: our great outdoors is part of who we are. For many Victorians, particularly those of us who live outside Melbourne, outdoor recreation is not an occasional activity but a way of life. It is the family fishing trip before dawn. It is the annual duck season opening so your family can eat meat in the wintertime. It is camping with friends on public land. It is four-wheel driving through our forests, riding trails, exploring waterways and sharing traditions that have been passed down through generations. This bill sends a powerful message that these activities matter, the people who participate in them matter and the communities that depend on them matter.

Roma Britnell: On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, we are supposed to be speaking on the amendments, not the bill itself. I think we have got the wrong speech happening here. It is supposed to be on the amendments.

Colin Brooks: On the point of order, Deputy Speaker, there have been some wideranging comments from speakers on the other side of the house. I think the member is entitled to talk to the matter.

James Newbury: On the point of order, Deputy Speaker, the speaker herself referred to her speech as 'being on the bill', not on the amendments. If you refer to *Hansard*, it was referred to as a speech on the bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the point of order, member for Ripon?

Martha HAYLETT: I can speak on the amendments.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not ruled on the point of order yet. I note that the amendments affect clause 1. It is usually the process of the house in committee that clause 1 is fairly open slather with regard to the whole of the bill because clause 1 is the definition of the bill. It is therefore, I would say, relevant that anything regarding the amendments within clause 1 can be debated with regard to the amendments. Without upholding the point of order, I draw to the attention of the member for Ripon that we are talking about the amendments to the original bill, not the original bill.

Martha HAYLETT: The establishment of Outdoor Recreation Victoria, or as amended by the Legislative Council, Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria, represents a significant step forward in how we support outdoor recreation across our state. Rather than treating recreation, hunting, fishing,

boating and access to public land as separate issues, this legislation and the amendments bring them together under one organisation with a clear message: to promote participation, strengthen access, support regional communities and make these activities continue sustainably into the future. Importantly, these amendments do not diminish the strong regulatory functions currently undertaken by the Victorian Fisheries Authority and the Game Management Authority; in fact they preserve them. The expertise, compliance capabilities and staff that currently support Victoria's world-class fisheries and game-hunting management systems will continue under the new authority, but these amendments go further and the bill goes further. It recognises that government should not simply regulate outdoor recreation, it should champion it.

I want to speak specifically about hunting and fishing because they are often misunderstood by those who have not experienced them and underestimated by those who do not see their contribution to rural and regional Victoria. For thousands of Victorians, hunting and fishing are family traditions that connect people to nature, to each other and to the landscapes that we love. I know so many families in my electorate of Ripon where grandparents taught parents, who then taught their children, how to fish responsibly, how to care for the environment and how to safely enjoy the outdoors. These activities teach patience, they teach respect, they teach self-reliance and, perhaps most importantly, they are an affordable way for working families to take time out from the stresses of their daily lives and just switch off. The physical and mental health benefits of outdoor recreation are enormous. I know that for me and for so many others spending time outdoors reduces stress, improves wellbeing and strengthens social connections. Hunting and fishing bring families and friends together to share experiences and build lifelong memories.

They also contribute so much to our local economies. Our government has highlighted that recreational fishing and boating contribute around $5.82 billion to the Victorian economy and support approximately 56,000 jobs. Game hunting contributes a further $356 million and supports more than 3100 jobs. These figures were recorded back in 2019, and it is widely understood that the contribution today is even more than that. These jobs are not just concentrated on Spring Street, Lonsdale Street or Collins Street in Melbourne; they are found in our regional communities. Hunting and fishing support our tackle shops, bait suppliers, accommodation providers, pubs, cafes, caravan parks, servos, mechanics, boat dealers and countless small businesses. When people travel to Lake Eildon, the Murray River, the Gippsland Lakes, the Wimmera, the Mallee or our Western District waterways to fish, they spend money locally. When hunters travel for duck season, deer hunting or other game-hunting opportunities, they support local businesses. When campers and outdoor enthusiasts visit regional Victoria, they support local jobs. In communities across my electorate of Ripon and throughout rural and regional Victoria these visitors are not simply tourists; they are customers, employees, volunteers and contributors to our local prosperity. That is why these amendments matter so much, because their purpose is not merely administrative reform; their purpose is making sure that more Victorians can access and enjoy the outdoors, while strengthening the regional economies that depend on that participation. A scary number of Melburnians have never travelled more than 90 minutes outside our capital city. These amendments are trying to change that so that more Victorians can explore the beauty of Mount Buangor State Park, the Grampians, Mount Cole, Kara Kara National Park, Kooyoora State Park and beyond.

One of the most exciting aspects of this legislation and the amendments is their commitment to improving access to public land and waterways. Time and time again regional Victorians have told us that access matters. They want clear information and commonsense ways to enjoy public land. They want confidence about where they can camp, fish, hunt, prospect, ride or explore. The Legislative Council amendments strengthen this focus even further through the establishment of a land and aquatic access panel and an explicit recognition of access to waterways and aquatic environments. The amendments also broaden the definition of outdoor recreation to include activities such as trail bike riding, prospecting, horseriding and other recreational pursuits. This is really important because access is everything. You cannot enjoy the outdoors if you cannot get there, you cannot support regional tourism if barriers prevent people from accessing the landscapes they want to experience and you

cannot grow participation if people struggle to find information or navigate multiple agencies and processes. This new authority will help address those challenges.

This legislation and the amendments also come at a critical time for many regional communities. Across Victoria many communities are seeking new opportunities for jobs and growth. Nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation represent a tremendous opportunity. Our Labor government knows that nature-based tourism contributes billions of dollars annually to our economy. Outdoor recreation is increasingly becoming one of the strongest assets that regional Victoria possesses, and unlike many industries, our natural assets cannot be outsourced. The rivers, forests and lakes are all right here. The sites that attract so many visitors to regional Victoria exist nowhere else. When managed responsibly and sustainably, outdoor recreation creates lasting economic opportunities. This bill recognises that potential, as do the amendments from the upper house.

It also demonstrates that our government has listened. Hunters have asked for their contribution to be recognised. Fishers have asked for continued investment and support, and regional communities like mine have asked for better access. Outdoor recreation groups have asked for a stronger voice, and I am so proud to have helped be that voice in government as a proud supporter of recreational hunting, shooting and fishing. I have always supported recreational hunting, and I always will. I know how many people rely on it for food, and I know how much it brings families together – often those who work the hardest and get the least. This bill and the amendments back them. It backs the kid from Amphitheatre who wants to catch their first fish. It backs the truck driver from Beaufort who camps at Teddington Reservoir each summer. It backs the hunter from Snake Valley who has continued a tradition that has been part of her family for generations, and it backs the local businesses in Ararat, St Arnaud, Maryborough, Inglewood, Avoca, Raglan and Creswick who benefit from more visitors exploring our great outdoors. I proudly support these amendments, and I commend them to the house.

Gabrielle DE VIETRI (Richmond) (10:32): I rise to speak to the amendments to the Outdoor Recreation Victoria Bill 2026. The Greens support the renaming of Outdoor Recreation Victoria to Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Victoria, because fishing and hunting are what this authority is all about and it names it clearly. We also support the amendment on ensuring that there are enough authorised officers. But we oppose all other amendments, which are largely about furthering hunting and fishing interests at the expense of other uses of public land. I ask that the amendments be split to allow us to vote accordingly. I have given a list of amendments that the Greens intend to oppose to the clerks.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Richmond has requested that the question be split. I will therefore put two questions to the house: the first on the amendments the Greens have indicated they agree with, followed by those they have indicated they do not agree with.

Amendments 1, 3 to 6, 9 to 22, 24 to 31, 34 to 37, 40 to 46, 51 to 58, 62 to 85, 87 to 99, 114 to 451 and 453 agreed to.

Assembly divided on amendments 2, 7, 8, 23, 32, 33, 38, 39, 47 to 50, 59 to 61, 86, 100 to 113 and 452:

Ayes (74): Juliana Addison, Brad Battin, Jade Benham, Roma Britnell, Colin Brooks, Josh Bull, Tim Bull, Martin Cameron, Anthony Carbines, Ben Carroll, Anthony Cianflone, Sarah Connolly, Chris Couzens, Chris Crewther, Jordan Crugnale, Lily D'Ambrosio, Daniela De Martino, Steve Dimopoulos, Paul Edbrooke, Wayne Farnham, Eden Foster, Ella George, Luba Grigorovitch, Matthew Guy, Bronwyn Halfpenny, Katie Hall, Paul Hamer, Martha Haylett, Mathew Hilakari, David Hodgett, Melissa Horne, Natalie Hutchins, Lauren Kathage, Emma Kealy, Sonya Kilkenny, Nathan Lambert, John Lister, Gary Maas, Alison Marchant, Anthony Marsh, Kathleen Matthews-Ward, Tim McCurdy, Steve McGhie, Cindy McLeish, Paul Mercurio, John Mullahy, James Newbury, Danny O'Brien, Michael O'Brien, Kim O'Keeffe, Danny Pearson, John Pesutto, Pauline Richards, Tim Richardson, Richard Riordan, Michaela Settle, David Southwick, Ros Spence, Nick Staikos, Natalie Suleyman, Meng Heang Tak, Jackson Taylor, Nina Taylor, Kat Theophanous, Mary-Anne Thomas,

Bridget Vallence, Iwan Walters, Kim Wells, Nicole Werner, Rachel Westaway, Dylan Wight, Gabrielle Williams, Belinda Wilson, Jess Wilson

Noes (4): Gabrielle de Vietri, Will Fowles, Tim Read, Ellen Sandell

Amendments agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will inform the Legislative Council of the house's decision.

Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026

Second reading

Debate resumed on motion of Melissa Horne:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Roma BRITNELL (South-West Coast) (10:41): No-one disputes the importance of safe staffing levels. As someone who spent 30 years nursing in the acute health system, I know exactly what safe staffing means for patients, for nurses, for midwives and for the quality of care that is provided in the healthcare system by the nurses, by the midwives and by all the healthcare staff. But there is something deeply concerning about a government congratulating itself for putting more ratios into legislation when across regional Victoria hospitals are struggling to find nurses and they are struggling to find midwives and other health professionals needed to provide the care. A ratio written into an act is not another nurse beside a hospital bed, it is not another midwife in a birthing suite and it means very little if our hospitals cannot find the workforce to deliver it.

I want to put on the record, to begin with, my thanks to all the midwives, the doctors and the entire health workforce. Allied health workers and support staff are equally integral: radiographers, pharmacists, physiotherapists, social workers, cleaners and kitchen staff, occupational therapists, speech therapists – the list goes on. We need a health system that works cohesively, and we have had that. I want to take a minute to explain that anything I say here is not a criticism of any of the staff in the system. The system is not supporting them. Putting ratios into place is vitally important, but it will not fix a broken system alone. There are extraordinarily hardworking people in our health system, and it is not their hard work that is not making this work but the increasingly difficult circumstances. So any criticism is not of the workforce; it is of the system they are being asked to work within.

Labor have spent more time boasting than they have delivering, and staff are carrying the consequences of governance decisions, shortages, pressure, burnout and increasing demand. The government announcing another expansion of ratios presents as improving patient care, but regional hospitals are already struggling with meeting the ratios that are in place now. The truth is that hospitals are having to apply for exemptions and variations because they simply cannot find the nurses to staff the hospitals. It is quite insincere to be here today with the third tranche of this legislation putting ratios in place in other hospitals when the government has not been able to deliver the nurses to actually put them in place where they have already been announced. Legislation itself cannot manufacture nurses and midwives. You can legislate a ratio, but you cannot legislate a nurse into existence.

So before congratulating itself on another tranche, the Victorian Labor government should explain why the existing requirements cannot be consistently staffed. In the regions there is no doubt we are struggling with getting enough staff. We have seen the government boast about increasing training for nurses, putting more nurses through training, but then we also hear that these nurses are often not getting graduate positions in the hospitals. There is nothing more soul-destroying to a nurse than not being able to implement the learnings of the previous three years to actually care for people, and you do need to put in practice what you have been learning to be able to consolidate and train your skills to be the carer that you want to be. I know the nurses that I have always worked with and know well care about their patients and care about the outcomes, and they feel very, very vulnerable when it is not working properly. They feel responsible, and it is not their responsibility. They have got a

government that is not supporting our health system because it is allowing it to be deprived of funds and break.

I look at what I went through in 2017. I was part of the perinatal inquiry, a committee that looked at perinatal services. It was quite confronting to hear the people in the regions saying, 'If we don't address workforce strategy planning now' – and this was 2017, nine years ago – 'we will be faced with shortages in the region.' And it was not just in maternity services. This flowed over, they said, to other areas. They recognised then we needed more gynaecologists, more anaesthetists, more paediatricians, more midwives, more supporting services such as maternal and child health services. But that was not listened to. The recommendations recognised from that inquiry to incentivise and attract health professionals into rural and regional Victoria were ignored, and nearly a decade later regional communities are living precisely with that problem. We have seen maternity services particularly downgraded right throughout South-West Coast, but it is not just maternity services but many services. We are seeing people trying to get hospital appointments for ENT specialists, for urologists, for ophthalmologists, and we are not able to provide those services anymore.

Ten years ago when I entered this place, after nursing for 30-odd years in the acute system, one of my first bill speeches was on how proud I was of the Victorian health system. But today I genuinely cannot say I feel as proud. I am certainly as proud, if not more proud, of the staff and the nurses and the doctors and the allied health staff who all support the health system, but they are working under extraordinary circumstances. That is purely because of this government putting through bills like this one, which change nothing because they have not got the structure and the foundation underneath that has been invested in by the government to fulfil the promise of being able to deliver on ratios. So it is very disappointing that I have to stand here and say that we have got a government that has not really listened to our community.

Health is vitally important, but here we have got a situation, for example, where the Victorian communities out in regional Victoria have to go further – travel further, have more transfers to other services – to be able to get their health needs met. We have a system that used to exist 10 years ago and still exists in the same format today. Getting assistance from the government to go to Melbourne, for example, to receive treatment that you cannot receive in the regions – sometimes you received that 10 years ago. An example of that is having a pacemaker put in. I did that in 1999 at Hamilton hospital, actually – I did not personally do it; I assisted a doctor to do it. My mother at 93, last year, got transferred from Warrnambool to Geelong to have a pacemaker put in. Things have changed but the capability is not keeping up with that, and that is resulting in people travelling. Ten years ago you could go to Melbourne and have accommodation supported by the government and you would get $45 a night. It is now 2026. You cannot get any accommodation in Melbourne for $45 a night. You would be out of pocket, I would say, around $200, because $245 is what you have to find.

Here in South-West Coast we have got examples of how we have diminished the health service. We have got a helipad in Portland. If you have got less services, the helipad in Portland should be providing quick transfer to Melbourne if it is needed. It is closed. The helipad was closed by this government three years ago, with no explanation and respect for the community as to why or what we have to do to be able to get it back up and running. They take away services and they stop people being able to get quickly to the hospital – that is actually nonsensical. The hospital was promised in 2020 after 10 years of us waiting patiently for an announcement to say we can have a hospital that will meet our future needs. That hospital will now not meet our future needs because apparently the scope is being cut. Despite me asking in the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee what exactly has been cut and despite me making representations several times to the health ministers – as they change – about what is what is going to be delivered now, secrecy prevails.

This is a government that has asked a lot of the health service community but not actually supported them with the right amount of funding or the right infrastructure. We are not getting the better outcomes that we should be in the regions. We are getting worse outcomes, and that is proven with our higher rates of cancer, our higher rates of cardiac disease and our higher rates of even otitis media.

I mean, it is right down to things that should be able to be treated but cannot be. If you have not got an ENT specialist for little kids going off with what is known as glue ear, or otitis media, you are getting deafness. You are getting outcomes that you do not want to see and should not be seeing in 2026. This is a very disappointing situation to find ourselves in, because we have a health system that we were proud of. I was very proud of it. We have great staff, but this ratio change will not actually put more nurses in front of patients where they need to be.

Chris COUZENS (Geelong) (10:51): I am pleased to rise to contribute to the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026. I do want to begin by thanking and acknowledging all the health-related staff across our state for the work that they do, but in particular, in relation to this bill, I acknowledge nurses and midwives, who continue to care for Victorians and keep them safe. The vital role that nurses and midwives play across our healthcare sector is highly valued, and I know that in my electorate of Geelong my community are very grateful to the nurses and midwives in my community. They have nothing but praise for them. I often hear stories from constituents about their experience, whether it be in the hospital or one of the health services, and how much they appreciate what our nurses and midwives do in our community.

It is so important that we continue to listen to the likes of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF), who represent those nurses and midwives, and understand the vital role that that union plays in getting that message across – what nurses and midwives are telling us needs to happen in our communities and our healthcare sector. They support and care in so many different areas, such as end-of-life care, accident and emergency, intensive care, mental health and so many other areas in our healthcare system. It is really important to ensure that they continue to deliver the best care to patients, and that is why this bill we are delivering, with safer nurse- and midwife-to-patient ratios, is so important to our communities.

As our population demands grow – and I know certainly we are experiencing that in my community right across the Geelong and Bellarine region – we are dealing with many more complex health needs in our community as well. We need things like more nurses, more midwives and more healthcare providers to be able to address those needs in our community. We do know how important that is, and we have listened to our community. We have listened to nurses and midwives through their incredible union, the ANMF, and we will continue to do that because they know what is needed. We rely on them to feed back to us what is needed in our healthcare system, and I am really proud that we are now increasing that work and making sure that safe patient care and the nurse and midwife ratios are addressed, as has been fed back to us as a government.

I talked about the increase in population and the demand for services in our community, and I am really proud that this government has funded the new Geelong women and children's hospital, which is absolutely imperative in our community. We will see more and more new nurses coming on board to work in that new hospital. We know there is a huge demand for women's and children's services. We also know that people in the Geelong and Bellarine region and beyond need to travel to Melbourne, to the Royal Children's, for some of those services. To be able to get that on their doorstep at University Hospital Geelong is a game changer for those families. I have heard from those families time and time again about the challenges that they have, and they are not complaining; they are saying that travelling to Melbourne with their child who needs care is very, very challenging and time consuming and impacts on their entire family. This for many people in my community and right across the region will be a game changer, and we will need those nurses in there to make a difference. The hospital is under construction. It is about halfway through, scheduled to be completed by 2028. That is something that we are all looking forward to, knowing that we will have a state-of-the-art facility with incredible nurses, midwives and other medical professionals in there delivering what our community needs. I know that my colleagues the member for Lara, the member for Bellarine and the member for Western District are really excited about the service that it will be providing once it is completed.

The bill will further strengthen nurse-to-patient ratios, which is really important. We will add an additional 253 full-time equivalent nursing positions in our world-class health system. As I just mentioned, with the women's and children's services coming on board in Geelong, we will need those staff. With free TAFE, we know that there are so many people at the Gordon TAFE, for example, training to be in that new hospital. We know we need those nurses. We know that in a couple of years time there will be jobs there for those nurses to go into. This is a really important part of making sure that we are delivering what we need in our community: not only the facilities but also the nursing and midwifery staff that will be required to fill those positions as they come on board.

The legislation will reclassify 26 hospitals, including 17 in rural and regional Victoria, to a higher level. That does not impact on Geelong, but I am sure our colleagues on this side of the house are very grateful for that. The amendments to the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Act 2015 are backed by a $109 million investment, which again is really important. The bill will change how hospitals are categorised in the safe patient care act, updating the law so that certain hospitals are recategorised at a higher level for the purposes of required nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios. This means they must roster more nurses for the same number of patients, improving staffing and patient care. This will improve nurse-to-patient ratios at 26 hospitals across Victoria in general medical or surgical wards, emergency departments and intensive care units. We know that having higher ratios of registered nursing staff to patients increases patient safety and improves patient outcomes through reduced lengths of stay and fewer adverse events.

The amendments will help to create safe and satisfying workplace environments for our nursing workforce and help manage the increasing demands their work entails. I know that nurses are feeling very strongly about this. It is important that we look after them so that they are able to look after patients on the wards and in emergency situations, end-of-life care and all those really critical areas, but right across our health system, because we know the importance of the work that they do. We have to look after them so that they do not burn out and do not leave the health sector, because we do rely on them. But we need to look after them, and that is what this bill will do. The stronger staffing ratios mean better, safer care for Victorians when and where they need it most. It also means less pressure on our hardworking nurses, preventing burnout so we can retain the workforce. The additional roles will also create more opportunities for graduate and early career nurses. Nursing and midwifery jobs in Victoria are only safe under a Labor government, and we know that. We delivered a massive 28.4 per cent pay rise and have consistently strengthened nurse-to-patient ratios.

As I said, this is a really important bill, and I am really proud that we have brought this to the Parliament on the advice of ANMF and on the advice of nurses and midwives, helping to address the demands that are on them every single day. As I said, in my community of Geelong people are so grateful for the work that they do in our community, that they are there caring and supporting those patients when they need it. This bill is really important, and I commend the bill to the house.

Wayne FARNHAM (Narracan) (11:01): I am pleased to rise today to talk about the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026. I am pleased to rise today on this, and of course we do not oppose this bill, and nor should we when we talk about patient care and getting the best health outcomes for our community. The purpose of the bill is to implement the outcomes of the government's hospital classification review, which sought to assess hospitals' workloads in determining staffing requirements, which is really, really quite important.

Let me start by saying that in my community the staff at the West Gippsland Hospital do an exceptionally good job. I know a lot of the nurses up there and have met the doctors, the orderlies and everyone that works there. They do an amazing job in a hospital that is actually in very poor condition. I know they will not mind me saying this because they talk to me all the time when they see me down the supermarket. They are really, really disappointed in the government because they did not keep their commitment to starting a new hospital in 2024. It was extremely important for our community that this hospital actually got off the ground and got started. But not only was it important for the community, it was actually more important – well, just as important – for the staff that work at West

Gippsland Hospital. I agree with what the member for Geelong stated earlier about how wonderful our healthcare workers are. And they are; they do an extraordinary job. I could not do their job, absolutely. The work they do – looking after our loved ones or our children or our partners and trying to provide them the best health care they possibly can – is really important. When we talk about safe patient care, of course we are going to support safe patient care.

Probably what I am going to touch on today, especially in regard to my community, is: what about safe work conditions or better working conditions for the staff at the West Gippsland Hospital? I am going to express their frustration. I will park my frustration to the side for a moment, but I will express their frustration. When I am out and about and they see me and they come and talk to me, they keep saying to me, 'Wayne, keep pushing for a new hospital. We desperately need a new hospital.' When we reference West Gippsland Hospital, it was built in 1939. It is not fit for purpose anymore. It is only an 80-bed hospital. When you consider that the population of Warragul and Drouin now is about 43,000 people, you can understand why those 80 beds are no longer fit for purpose. The nursing staff are so frustrated. They are there for a good reason – they love what they do; they care about people – but when their work is impeded by the condition of the hospital, they become frustrated. The member for Geelong rightly pointed out earlier that we do not want our staff to burn out, and we do not. We should be giving our staff, our healthcare workers in this state, and our allied health workers as well, the best possible conditions to work in to deliver the best possible health care we can give our community. I have nurses coming up to me and saying, 'Wayne, you wouldn't believe it, but the other day I had to wheel someone into the midwifery ward for recovery,' and they feel guilty about it because they have got a patient trying to recover and heaps of babies crying. It is not what I would say is a relaxing environment for anyone to recover. When I ask them why they could not go into the recovery room and they say, 'Well, we're using that as a storage room,' it gives you an idea of or a picture of the hospital. I have nurses come up and say to me, 'You wouldn't believe the amount of leaks in this hospital.'

I will acknowledge that the government has committed some money to West Gippsland Hospital and Wonthaggi Hospital. In reference to West Gippsland Hospital, I believe it is for a new roof and some works on the Cooinda Lodge. The new roof is fine – that will stop the leaks – but it will not fix the problem. The problem is that, as I said, we have an 80-bed hospital. If you go to West Gippsland Hospital at any point in time on any given day, you will see cars parked right down Landsborough Street. Imagine trying to get up there if you are pregnant or if you are elderly. You have got to walk up this road and then you have still got to walk up a hill to the hospital and get across the intersection. There is no pedestrian crossing and no parking. The hospital is totally inadequate now for the population of my community.

I will go back to what I stated earlier. This hospital was built in 1939. With this facility they have renovated everything they possibly can to fit people in. I had a text message from a gentleman the other day who was in the emergency department being treated in the corridor after sitting there for 13 hours. He was not having a go at the staff – the staff were doing the best they could with the situation they had – but he was asking when this hospital will be built.

Back in 2022 the government did commit to building a new West Gippsland Hospital. I can actually remember in 2023 the then Premier Daniel Andrews sitting in that chair over there, and for once the hospital landed in the budget. He turned around and winked at me. I thought – I cannot say it – 'Really good.' I was going to say that was a really hot thing to happen. I actually thought, 'This is really good for my community.'

Members interjecting.

Wayne FARNHAM: I did not say anything unparliamentary – not a thing. You anticipate; you should never anticipate. Wait till I say it. I remember the Premier winked at me, and I thought, 'This is a really good thing for my community,' because they had fought long and hard to get it. I thought, 'Great, it's in the budget; we're one step closer.' Then for 12 months I gave the government the benefit

of the doubt. Being a builder, I do understand that things need to be designed. They need to be planned. You have got to get oxygen and gas consultants in. You have got to get the nurses, the cooling. You have got to do all those things when you are building a hospital – water et cetera, hydraulics, heating, all of that. So I gave them the benefit of the doubt. In 2024 there was no uplift. In the 2024–25 budget I thought, 'Well, that's all right. I can see the drawdown. They're still planning.' 2025–26 should have been when there was an uplift in the budget to deliver the hospital. There was no uplift. Then we hit 2026–27, and there was no forward funding at all. So you can imagine the frustration of the nursing staff at that hospital at finding out that there was no uplift on the budget, and the likelihood of that hospital starting in this term of government absolutely dissipated. It did not happen.

I have been fighting for this hospital on behalf of my community for a very long time, as did the previous member for Narracan Gary Blackwood. He fought very hard as well, and I carried on that work. I was very pleased the other day when the Leader of the Opposition Jess Wilson came down to my area, along with Georgie Crozier, a member in the other place, and said that we are going to build the West Gippsland Hospital – an $850 million commitment – and we are going to take that hospital from 80 beds to 223 beds. We are also going to have a training facility in that hospital as well for nurses, aged care, more birthing suites and more emergency department beds, because it is what is needed. Not only that, we are adding accommodation. We know we are in a housing crisis, and if we are going to train people there we need them to sleep somewhere, so we are adding accommodation into this.

All I will say in closing, in the last 40-odd seconds I have got left, is the West Gippsland Hospital bats well above its average for the facility that it is. The nursing staff, the doctors and everyone involved do an enormous job. When you have about 11,600 presentations to the emergency department a year and what they deal with, it is phenomenal. But people do get frustrated because they are sitting there at times for 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 hours. All I can say is, yes, we support this bill, but what I would have liked for my community is for the government to actually stand by its word and start the West Gippsland Hospital.

Jordan CRUGNALE (Bass) (11:11): I rise today to make a contribution on the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026, a bill that further strengthens Victoria's world-leading nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios and delivers safer care for patients while providing greater support for our hardworking health workforce. Anyone who has had a personal or family experience in a hospital knows just how important our nurses and midwives are. They are there for some life's happiest and some of life's most difficult moments. In Bass nurses and midwives are a vital part of our community and workforce. They care for local families every day and deserve a health system that supports them to do their job safely and effectively.

There was a collective community cheer when Bass Coast Health and Gippsland Southern Health Service joined the new Bayside Health network alongside Kooweerup Regional Health Service, Peninsula Health and Alfred Health. This creates a more coordinated, connected health system for communities across the south-east and into Gippsland, strengthens existing partnerships and provides greater opportunities for healthcare workers to build their careers across the network. This bill delivers stronger staffing ratios, providing funding for an additional 253 full-time equivalent nursing and midwifery positions across Victoria, and reclassifies 26 hospitals, including 17 in regional Victoria. It is backed by a $109.7 million investment, because this Labor government understands that safe staffing means safe patient care.

For my community one of the most significant aspects of this legislation is the long overdue recognition of the growing role of Wonthaggi Hospital. For years local nurses, midwives and the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) have argued that Wonthaggi Hospital had outgrown its historical classification. They recognised what our community already knew. Our hospital is caring for more people, managing more complex presentations and delivering a broader range of services than ever before. Of course over the summer period our population more than doubles. Under this legislation, Wonthaggi Hospital will be reclassified from a level 4 hospital to a

level 2 hospital, while its emergency department, previously without a classification, will also become a level 2 service. This is a significant achievement for Bass Coast and South Gippsland and a direct recognition of the scale and complexity of care already being delivered locally. Importantly, this is not about changing a label. Hospital classifications determine staffing levels, workforce support and ultimately the quality and safety of patient care.

The Bass Coast is growing. We have an ageing population, many families are moving to our beautiful area and calling it home and of course we welcome millions of visitors each year. Presentations to hospital are increasing and becoming more complex, and this classification means the law will better reflect the realities faced by our health service, our workforce and our community. For our nurses and midwives this outcome represents years of advocacy. For our community it is the recognition that Wonthaggi Hospital has evolved into a major regional health service, providing, as I have said before, increasingly complex care and playing an increasingly important role within the Bayside Health network.

I particularly want to acknowledge local ANMF delegates Kate Lindsay, Minnie Hopkins and also Jenny Buxton, and former CEO Jan Child, as well as the ANMF branch secretary Maddy Harradence and the executive, former secretary Lisa Fitzpatrick and all the delegates and members across Victoria who have worked tirelessly over many years pushing for safer staffing levels, stronger ratios and appropriate recognition of the growing demands being placed on regional hospitals, especially in Wonthaggi. The ANMF described these reforms as one of the most significant improvements to ratios in more than 25 years and the result of years of advocacy from frontline workers. Midwives provide expert care and support to women and families through one of life's most important milestones. The strengthened ratios contained in the legislation will provide additional support to maternity settings, including improved staffing requirements in antenatal and postnatal wards, helping ensure women and babies receive safe and high-quality care.

On 14 April I was at Bayside Health regional care at Wonthaggi Hospital with Bayside Health regional care group CEO Louise Sparkes and chief operating officer Christine Henderson, and we were very excited to announce a major investment to deliver major upgrades to Wonthaggi as part of the stage 2A redevelopment – a new pharmacy, a pathology clinic, medical imaging and a mortuary suite – as part of the $65 million upgrade across Wonthaggi and West Gippsland hospitals. There has also been much talk over the years about using the shell space to expand maternity and neonatal care. There is a whole floor still available and we are super keen to get this work happening, but it does need to be done in a coordinated way to ensure safety, capability and a continuation of care. The aim is for a higher level so more babies can be delivered close to home, and I am so pleased that this work has started and we are on the way.

Labor has already invested and delivered a massive $115 million redevelopment of Wonthaggi Hospital, with new operating theatres, a procedure room, an emergency department and an inpatient ward, which opened in 2022. I would like to acknowledge those that have helped drive these reforms too, including a number of former ministers for health: Martin Foley, Harriet Shing in the other place, the member for Macedon Mary-Anne Thomas and the former Premier Jacinta Allan, whose government's commitment to stronger ratios, workforce investment and hospital reclassification laid the foundations for the legislation before us today.

Beyond this legislation Labor continues to invest in the infrastructure, services and workforce our communities need. We have built 12 new public hospitals, recruited more than 17,000 nurses and midwives and continued investing in Victoria's public health system because we believe health care should be high quality, publicly accessible and available when people need it. Labor has invested in services such as the virtual ED, the virtual women's health service, Smile Squad and Chemist Care Now and has expanded access to surgery and specialist care for children. As I have said, we have delivered the $115 million redevelopment at Wonthaggi Hospital, opened Phillip Island Community Hospital and Cranbourne Community Hospital, with Pakenham next year, and supported healthcare worker accommodation in Wonthaggi to help attract and retain staff. Our region has also benefited

from more than $13.5 million across 31 health grant funded projects. Across the broader network our investments include the new Frankston hospital, a PET scanner for Peninsula Health and the Casey Hospital emergency department expansion and children's zone as well.

In closing, this bill is about backing the people who care for us when we need it most. It recognises the increasing demands on our health services, supports our nurses and midwives, improves patient safety and helps ensure communities like Bass can continue to access high-quality health care close to home. It acknowledges the expertise and professionalism of our nurses and midwives, strengthens their profession and provides the staffing support needed to deliver the very best care to Victorian patients. To all our nurses and midwives, thank you for the care, compassion and dedication you bring to your work every day. I commend the bill to the house.

Jade BENHAM (Mildura) (11:20): I am more than happy to rise to contribute to the debate on the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026. This is a bill that the Nationals and the Liberals do not oppose. It is intended to improve safety and achieve better health outcomes for patients as well as more support for hardworking nurses and midwives in our public hospital system. I think we can all agree that this is an outcome that is positive, particularly in the regions, where health care is consistently one of the top five issues that face our community, whether it is access to specialist care, beds within the public hospital system, elective surgery waiting lists and complications at times with being able to deliver babies locally. We do not oppose this bill, but there are a couple of things that the topic of this bill allows me to talk on.

As always, I will start by thanking our hardworking frontline staff in the public health system – our nurses. My mother-in-law was a nurse for over 30 years in the public system and is now being treated by the public system at the Alfred on a regular basis. I heard the member for Narracan say earlier, amongst other things which may or may not have made sense, that he could not do the job. Nor could I. You have got to be one of those people wired very, very differently to how I am wired to make all those sacrifices that our healthcare workers make day in, day out to save other people's lives. Sometimes I think in this place we might think that we are saving the world, but those people really are angels doing God's work, so I sincerely thank them. That extends to our ambulance officers, our ambulance community officers – anyone that is responding to medical emergencies with medical care. That extends also to aged care, disability, mental health, palliative care and allied health. It is all one big ecosystem.

The concerns that we do have with this bill, though, as with the previous amendments in 2025, are the adequacy of funding and health services' ability to comply with the new requirements given the current workforce shortages and overstretched hospital budgets. I am in close regular contact with the acting CEO at Mildura Base Public Hospital, and the underfunding and the overstretched resources in hospital budgets are a primary concern of his – and the amount of money or resources that go towards fly-in, fly-out staff. There has been a change of management at that hospital, and there have been some conversations around the best way to utilise those really stretched budgets, which would obviously be to have a local workforce instead of a plethora of agency nurses, locums and fly-in, fly-out specialists and surgeons, which are extraordinarily expensive, particularly for hospitals that have a stretched budget. He is quite a creative thinker in fiscal terms.

One of the concerns that has been raised is: how do we attract a workforce to be able to meet these ratios, first and foremost, but also how do we give consistent continuity of care to patients that obviously need it? The Leader of the Opposition Jess Wilson, the member for Kew, was in Mildura at the end of July to make an announcement of a big investment of $180 million into Mildura Base Public Hospital to help with patient flows and to work with the board, work with management and work with clinicians to get to a point where we can make sure that we can actually deliver this. We could promise $750 million or $850 million towards a new hospital, but if we cannot deliver that, then it is an empty promise. We want to make sure that we can actually deliver that, working with the board and clinicians and management at the hospital. The main immediate issue we need to solve to stop ambulance ramping and to make sure that people are not waiting in an emergency room for 24 hours is additional

beds, so that $180 million will go towards a new acute ward. The administration, allied health and mental health – any outpatient services and administration – will move over to the Eleventh Street site next to St Joseph's College, and once that floor is cleared that will allow room to be redeveloped into a new acute ward with 30 new beds, with 18 new beds in the emergency ward, which will have an immediate impact on patient flows and ultimately patient care. That is something that we can do and that should have been done five years ago. The Nationals and the Liberals are the only ones that will deliver that, because, again, creative thinking in hospital administration and the hospital board has come up with this plan, which can actually be delivered and be delivered quite quickly as a stage 1. We know that there is always more work to do, particularly in the public healthcare system. There is always more work to do.

These solutions, particularly out in the regions, should be place based and community led. I have long spoken about how most solutions out in regional and rural Victoria should be place based and community led. So I do want to thank the management, the clinicians and the board that has contributed to this solution for how we can best impact in a positive way patient outcomes at Mildura Base Public Hospital, and that is one of those. That investment also includes, though, some modular accommodation, so we can attract a permanent workforce that can learn. We have the GP academy with Monash School of Rural Health, so now we can train GPs just like the poster boy for rural generalist health care in Mildura, Dr Travis Taggert, who is my GP. He is one that is a real champion for rural generalist care. He is in the midst at the moment of developing a super clinic. Again, this is his own money he is putting into redeveloping Ontario family clinic into a super clinic. With that GP academy, students can do all of their GP training end to end in Mildura. They do not have to go away from Mildura, because often we lose them then to the system – they get sucked into the thrill of being in these big hospitals or trauma centres and things like that, and they do not come back. But if we can grow our own – which is far more cost effective for families, instead of having to house uni students in the city or in other places like Ballarat and Warrnambool that have biomed on offer – and if we can do that in Mildura, that goes another step towards that.

We will have more announcements with regard to allied health training as well hopefully in the not-too-distant future with Monash. Again, I want to congratulate the Monash School of Rural Health for really taking proactive, creative steps to address the workforce issues that are faced within regional and rural Victoria. I have been there around the table for the conversations at every step of the way, and the flexibility and creativity in providing solutions has been absolutely remarkable. When you have got such bright minds around the table asking can we do this, my mantra is to always jump to yes first and then figure out how to do it, particularly when the outcomes are so vitally important, and they are when it comes to health care in the regions.

The staff-to-patient care and the midwife-to-patient ratios, again, are something that we do not oppose, but we recognise that there are workforce challenges, and we are working creatively with different agencies, universities and different GPs, like Dr Trav on the ground and his super clinic. The boards have gone up. It is going into an old Chinese restaurant that was an icon on Deakin Avenue in Mildura for a long time, and I asked Dr Trav on my last visit if he was going to keep the roof of the Chinese restaurant, and most disappointingly he said no, which is a shame. But the fact that we will have that super clinic there, along with Monash and along with the investment of $180 million into Mildura Base Public Hospital, means that Mildura will very soon be a mecca of medical training in the regions, and it will be somewhere that is so attractive for people to come and learn every aspect of service delivery within the medical fraternity. I am really excited about this, and of course we are not opposed.

John LISTER (Werribee) (11:30): It is an honour to speak about nurse-to-patient ratios in this place, as I have many times since I was elected as member for Werribee, as it is a particularly busy time in my household when it comes to medical care down there at Werribee hospital. In fact I heard the news that we were increasing nurse-to-patient ratios at Werribee hospital, operated by Mercy Health, waiting in radiology with my partner for our appointment to check in on our little boy who is on his way. It was quite the moment. I texted the CEO at the time and I said, 'I've got some good

news.' He's like, 'Has the baby come yet?' I'm like, 'No, not quite yet. But you're about to get some more nurses on shift at Werribee.' This bill is really important for communities like mine. We always talk about the Wyndham area being one of the fastest growing in the nation, and in fact we are probably one of the fastest growing – literally growing babies at a rate of knots. Nurse-to-patient ratios are not just about our general ward nurses and our nurses working in emergency, which I will come to in a moment, but also about midwives and having that support for our midwives at places like Werribee, where they are helping around 100 to 110 little people come into the world and join our community in Wyndham and make their way through our care system. It is particularly important for me to speak on nurse-to-patient ratios. Many people on this side have mentioned this: we come from families of nurses. In fact I am pretty sure most of my aunties, if they were not teachers, were nurses, so I understand the hard work that they do in our hospitals.

This bill reclassifies 26 hospitals, including 17 in rural and regional Victoria, to have that higher level of care. Only Labor governments can be truly trusted to deliver these sorts of reforms. In fact we pioneered nurse-to-patient ratios here in this place a few years ago now, and it is great to see them extended out to these other hospitals as well. These reforms mean that we have that one-to-one nurse-to-patient ratio in all shifts in ICU for all level 1 and 2 hospitals. While Mercy is not necessarily a level 1 or 2 hospital, I will have to correct myself: for many a time I have spoken about the Mercy having a critical care unit. That is what they have to classify themselves as if they do not necessarily meet some of the requirements around nurse-to-patient ratios and the types of doctors on shift at that critical care unit. However, in my meeting with the CEO a few weeks ago they confirmed that they have now been reclassified so that they are an intensive care unit down there at Werribee hospital, meaning that they can treat those higher acuity patients and also have more higher acuity patients come through surgery. It is pretty exciting. I have been calling it a critical care unit, but it is in fact an ICU.

It also means when we have better nurse-to-patient ratios, we have increased capacity in emergency departments, something particularly important out in Werribee – our emergency is under the pump. We have not only supported increased nurse-to-patient ratios and emergency at Werribee over these years but also provided funding for ambulance fast-track, which came through last year, which means that we are getting more ambulances back out on the road quicker when they arrive at Werribee hospital, and there has been quite a significant improvement in ambulance response times as a result of that. But we are also backing our emergency department down at Werribee by building them a brand new facility, which is huge. It feels very space age walking in there when compared to the almost bush-style hospital of the previous facilities that they had there. It is amazing to see and something I am very much looking forward to as a local member with my neighbours from neighbouring electorates: to open that emergency department this year with a $95 million investment in this year's budget, with that increased staffing and more resources there, which I will come to in a moment.

Having that one to four midwife-to-patient ratio in postnatal and antenatal wards, particularly on night shifts, is very important. When I met with Werribee Mercy Hospital management, I spoke about what the benefit of this change of classification will be and where we will actually see it on the roster. It will be in particular in those afternoon shifts, which are at the moment being done one to five; that will come down to one to four. I was also particularly keen to know from a workforce point of view where the nurses are coming from. While I have been a teacher and I have seen many of my students go into nursing and also at Werribee hospital go into their nursing career, where are we getting them from? The great thing is they will be able to bring a lot of those people from the current pool that they run of nurses who come in and fill different shifts where they need them to put that one to four on in the afternoon shift. That is across a lot of different wards, not just emergency; it is in post-surgery, and it is in some of the general wards as well. I am really, really delighted to see that that will happen. Afternoon shifts, despite sounding a little bit casual, are not casual at all. In fact it is quite often the time when people are getting ready to be discharged before the evening, and also medication rounds coming around can make it quite busy. So it is really important to have that capacity built in at Werribee hospital as well.

I have spoken about some of the other reforms in patient care. I spoke about the ambulance fast-track at Werribee, which is doing amazing things to get those buses back out on the road, but also something that was pioneered and trialled at Werribee was the postnatal nurses assisting the midwives with the mums, which I think is particularly important. The midwives are there to help Mum and baby, but frankly I am a bit biased; I think one of the most important people in that situation is the mum. So having that extra person in those units has been of great benefit. I know there has been amazing feedback on that, and it has now expanded across more hospitals in Victoria. That is something that came out of trials at Werribee, so it is really important.

Also at Werribee – I have spoken a little bit about the ICU and the classification of that now – this Labor government has invested in the psychiatric unit there. Nurse-to-patient ratios are a big, important thing in our mental health system, particularly there at Mercy. Our mother–baby unit is a big beneficiary of having increased nurse-to-patient ratios because it means that those nurses can spend more time with mums and bubs as they work out how to settle in to this new life that they have suddenly been brought into, as well as that work in the emergency department and having all hands on deck, particularly on those busy nights and weekends that we have out there at Werribee.

But there are threats, and we have spoken about them on this side. While we talk about the threats of cuts from potential Liberal–One Nation coalition governments, I think it is important to also reflect on the track record of conservative governments when it comes to health care in the western suburbs. Peter Dutton cut nearly $100 million from the Mercy Hospital during their time when the federal government was in charge. We saw things like bulk-billing, so critical to keeping people out of hospital, drop right off the planet. There was barely a bulk-billing clinic in the Wyndham area. Now we are up to 80 or 90 per cent – I do not know, my federal colleague is always giving me the figure of bulk-billing under a Labor government – partnering with us to have not only primary care, which is excellent, but also this hospital care that we are backing in with these reforms.

I would also like to thank the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, who I have spoken to quite a lot leading up to the transition to the new emergency department and worked with on how that looks. Some of those are things that we need to do to prepare to open the emergency department. It was this government that made sure that our nurses were backed with a 28.4 per cent pay rise, consistently strengthening nurse-to-patient ratios along the way, and that is thanks to a strong union. I know many of my relatives have been members of the ANMF over the years. They are great for a bumper sticker. You can always tell if there is a nurse on the road because they have got their ANMF bumper sticker on. They are a fantastic union, and they are doing so many good things down at Werribee to make sure that they are respected and treated well down there. I think the most exciting thing about the new emergency department – I have been into the tearoom at the current emergency department, which is quite small and a little bit dark – is that it is open and bright and has a balcony looking back out towards the bay. It is a beautiful space for people who we cannot do enough for.

I think it is so important to continue to legislate for this, to make sure that no matter what happens we put in place structures to keep this as part of policy in Victoria and have these nurse-to-patient ratios. Only Labor governments truly support health in the western suburbs. We have seen investment to increase our maternity services – $250 million in this current budget. We are going to see more leading up to November. I commend this bill to the house.

Richard RIORDAN (Polwarth) (11:40): I rise this morning to contribute to the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026. This bill actually first came to my attention recently in Colac. I was approached by a group of hardworking local nurses from Colac Area Health, who brought it to my attention and wanted to know a little more about this bill and when it was coming through. They were certainly of the belief that this will help ease some of the pressures in their own workplace in Colac, because Colac Area Health, which has been providing service in Colac now since the 1880s, will be reclassified as a level 3 hospital. While that is a great thing for the staff there and ultimately a wonderful thing for the people of Colac and district that will come in and

be cared for by Colac Area Health, it is also incumbent upon the government to make sure that they have got the necessary funding and support behind it.

What this essentially means is that there will be a requirement, when the bill comes into effect, that there be more nursing and midwifery staff on hand in Colac Area Health. We know, for example, that particularly the urgent care department at Colac Area Health has grown exponentially over the last 10 or 12 years. They are now seeing in the ballpark of around 15,000 presentations a year, which is an enormous growth in an urgent care department that was built originally for around 3500 to 4000 visitors. So it is providing a huge service. Congratulations to the administrators and managers of Colac Area Health in recent years, who have managed to create some really good relationships with the large university hospital, Barwon Health, an hour or so down the road. We have been able to work with them and with Deakin University in order to provide extra medical staff to allow those increased urgent care services to come into force.

One of the keys to being able to provide greater medical support within a large rural hospital like Colac Area Health was the decision by the hospital some years ago to fund and build employee accommodation. That employee accommodation has enabled us to provide somewhere for visiting doctors to stay and help support the embedded medical health workforce in Colac in recent years. I do not often give the government a pat on the back – in fact, it almost makes me feel ill to do that, almost ill – but I will say we have benefited from a recent grant, 'we' being the Colac community and Colac Area Health, for some worker accommodation.

Members interjecting.

Richard RIORDAN: I know, those opposite; it is not often. But despite erroneous media to the contrary, I am a great supporter of the Colac health service. It is no doubt that having some extra employee accommodation close to the site will be of benefit to the community. But my question still remains, having been involved for some 16 years and reappointed regularly by a former Labor government to the position of chairman of the Colac Area Health board, I am well aware of its often parlous financial state, not because it is badly run but because the demands of a busy rural community can be expensive. As so many rural and regional Victorians know, there is often a shortage of health professionals, and so a lot of the heavy lifting falls back onto the community health service. Colac Area Health has done well with the support of both government and the philanthropic sector to provide extra accommodation. One thing is clear about these changes to nurse-to-patient ratios: they will require more nursing staff within the organisation. My concern would be about the ability of a large rural hospital like Colac Area Health to continue to attract extra staff, because people with the necessary nursing qualifications in our area have a few options for their work. We have got Epworth an hour away, Barwon university health an hour away, Warrnambool and Ballarat.

There are many larger health services that often are able to recruit and attract nursing staff, so a smaller level 3 hospital, which Colac Area Health will be, could in fact find themselves having to pay agency staff to fill the new legislative requirements. This government, as we all know, is running rapidly short of cash and is not always in a position to fund the things that we need – we have certainly seen recently a run on the need to have very expensive pot plants in government departments. But this is a real government service. This is providing the basic care and needs of sometimes remote rural communities. I would hope that when the Colac Area Health management team come to government and say, 'We just don't have available staff and we're going to have to recruit agency staff to fill the gaps,' the necessary financial support will be there, because unfortunately in small rural health services there is a lot of cross-pollination of staff, often working across various important health provisions across the organisation: in urgent care, in maternity, on the general ward or just helping in Corangamarah Aged Care and other places.

It is at the point where most people with the necessary skills are already employed, so if the government does not fully fund these new promised ratios, then unfortunately it will be our local community that will pay the price in perhaps reduction in other services. I am really looking forward

to these extra support resources for the people of Colac and district and those that use Colac Area Health, but I do hope that that is funded properly and adequately so that management can fill the rosters as they will be obliged to but in a way that does not force them to cut other services within the organisation. One of the great advantages of Colac Area Health is it is quite well known throughout regional health services as being a truly fully integrated health service – everything from primary care; aged care; community care services; a very, very vibrant neighbourhood house service; and adult day activity centres. It is a very wideranging set of services that certainly my community relies heavily on. It is very interconnected, and it would be a shame if, to meet these new government regulations, the government does not come fully on board and support the health service to the full extent to make sure that this is a no-cost commitment from the government to my local community.

Just in conclusion, ongoing funding and support of health services is always vital, and for communities like mine with urgent care services, rather than fully funded accident and emergencies, there are always opportunities to continue to support those services to make sure that there is adequate room for them. I want to refer briefly to a letter I received this week from a young family constituent who went in the middle of the night with young children into the Colac Area Health urgent care, and I had the good fortune of passing this on to the hospital themselves. They pointed out that hospitals at the best of times could be pretty traumatic. Colac's urgent care is quite small, the waiting room is pretty cramped and in the middle of the night, with young children running harum-scarum all over the place, it would be useful to have some provision for some child entertainment, whether it is a TV they can watch or some toys they can play with in a corner and not cause too much distress for the other people who are also waiting. As those of us who have had the experience of waiting late at night in an accident urgent care know, it is never fun at the best of times, even if you have not been seen in 5 minutes or a couple of hours, and unfortunately, urgent cares can be like that no matter who is in government or who is running them. They are highly problematic at times, but it is never a particularly fun experience. So any pressure that can be relieved on supporting the consumers, the people that are using the hospital, would be money and time well spent in the administration of a truly caring health service. That concludes my contribution on this particular bill. The opposition are supporting it, and we just also trust that the government will properly fund and support our smaller rural services.

Daniela DE MARTINO (Monbulk) (11:50): I rise to speak with great pride in support of the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026. This is a bill that goes to the very heart of what it means to be a Labor government: making sure that when Victorians walk into a public hospital they are met by enough nurses and midwives to look after them properly and those very same nurses and midwives are not stretched thin. It delivers on our government's commitment to reviewing hospital categories under the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Act 2015, and it further strengthens and protects nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios right across this health system.

Much has changed in our hospitals since these categories were set over a quarter of a century ago – patient acuity, complexity of care and population growth in our outer suburbs and our regions – and this bill fixes that. Rather than leave those categories to guesswork, our government commissioned the hospital classification review, which used a transparent, published methodology – three separate algorithms drawing on publicly available datasets common across every Victorian public health service – to properly assess the workload and set staffing requirements. Two of these algorithms apply to speciality and non-specialty hospitals under schedule 1, and a third applies to schedule 3 for hospitals with emergency departments. It is evidence based, it is methodical decision-making, and our government has committed to reapplying that methodology every two years so staffing ratios never again fall a quarter-century out of date. What does it actually mean in practice? This bill will reclassify 26 hospitals to a higher level, 17 of them in rural and regional Victoria – including in your part of the world, Acting Speaker Addison – and nine in metropolitan Melbourne. I am quite excited, because one of those nine hospitals happens to be the Angliss Hospital in the beautiful district of Monbulk. It recognises the complexity of the work that these hospitals which have been added actually do.

I would like to now speak about that hospital, the Angliss Hospital, because it means a great deal to my constituents across Monbulk. I tell you what, if you want to find a hospital with the best views from ward rooms, you will find it right there, because you are right at the base of the Dandenongs and looking through most of those windows you see the beautiful mountain rising and the blue of the gum trees. It is an incredible, beloved hospital. It has been caring for our community since 1939, and actually in 2017 it marked the 100,000th baby born in it. Since then probably about another 20,000 have been born. Every time I speak with constituents across the district, whether it be on the phones, on a doorknock, in the community, wherever, the second I mention the Angliss the response is either 'I was born there' or 'My children were born there'. It is beyond loved, and I am thrilled, because it was only a matter of weeks ago that I had the absolute honour of cutting the ribbon and officially opening our $112 million redevelopment and expansion of the Angliss. It is fabulous. This is what Labor governments do. I tell you I felt pride in the joy I saw on the faces of every healthcare worker from the doctors to the nurses, the staff, allied health practitioners and the technicians who work so hard and have such skill in sterilising the equipment that is used. Never underestimate how important that is; sterility of a hospital is everything. There was joy on their faces.

My cousin – I am going to give her a shout-out here – Melissa, formerly a De Martino but now a Lee, is one of the senior theatre nurses there. She loves the Angliss. She actually told me a story about when she was training to become a nurse. She was in that moment of – and I remember this from when I was doing my teaching rounds – 'Is this the career for me?' She ended up on a nursing round at the Angliss and went, 'This is it. This is my life career and I love it.' So she has been there since she was a self-described baby nurse. It is a community, and there is such an incredible culture amongst the staff at the Angliss. It is beyond loved.

I could not be happier, because our area out there, the Knox part of Monbulk district, is growing. The population is not growing so much across the district of the actual mountain range, but it is ageing. With a growing population in one part and an ageing population in the other, it is absolutely befitting that the Angliss is reclassified and that those nurse-to-patient ratios and midwife-to-patient ratios are strengthened. It supports our staff and incredible nurses.

I am the daughter-in-law of a nurse, a British one but a nurse nonetheless, who has told me countless stories of what she encountered as a nurse. The nurses I know here do exceptional work, and even though we always praise them when we talk about them, we can never praise them enough, because they are the angels amongst us. As the daughter of a woman who 21 years ago was given three to six months to live and is still with us now but has such complex healthcare needs, I can tell you how much I value our nursing staff. They have kept my mother alive. Three days a week she goes to Wonthaggi Hospital for her dialysis. They hold her hand, they talk to her and they make sure that she is taken care of three days a week. She knows them by name, and they know her. They are part of her extended family now, so a shout-out to them for all the work they do for Mum, and for my son and my daughter, who both have spent far too much time in hospitals for different needs. The nurses are just extraordinary. Without them, we are in trouble, so this bill goes to the very heart of the support that we give them as a Labor government. We will back our nurses in every day of the week. Every budget we put out there speaks to our values of how much we care for our nurses, and I am thrilled to speak on this bill as a result.

I can wax lyrical for a long time about the wonderful jobs they do. I should probably get into a bit more of the detail of the actual bill now. But it is not a slogan when we talk about how much we back our nurses in; these amendments actually do it. Line by line and ward by ward, across the state the uplift will add 253 full-time equivalent nursing and midwifery positions to our public health system, and that is supported by a $109.7 million investment by our government. We know, and the evidence actually tells us, that higher ratios of registered nursing staff to patients improve patient safety, reduce lengths of stay and reduce adverse events. This is not just good for patients, it is good for the nurses and midwives too. It means safer, more satisfying workplaces. It means less burnout and a workforce that can actually sustain a long career in our public system, rather than being driven out of it. It opens

the door wide for our graduates and early career or 'baby' nurses, to quote Melissa, to step into the profession with the support around them that they deserve.

As I said before, I do not think we can say enough how much we owe them a debt of gratitude, because they work in some of the most demanding, high pressure environments in our community. They give everything they have to complete strangers having the worst days of their lives. They make their existence better. They are the ones that hold a frightened patient's hand in the middle of the night. They are the ones counting a newborn's first breaths. It was a nurse who made sure that my son is alive today, because his Apgar score when he was born was 2. If anyone knows anything about an Apgar score, that is 'push the button', and it is a frightening number for a baby to have. It was the nurses and midwives in that room who made sure that my boy is here today, and I am so grateful to them. Every ratio in this bill – now I am getting emotional, sorry – and every additional position it funds is our Labor government's way of saying that we see the work, we value it and we are going to give our nurses the best we can. So I thank you all. I thank everyone who did the work on this in the background. I thank our nurses and our midwives, the angels that they are, and I commend this bill wholeheartedly to the house.

Anthony CIANFLONE (Pascoe Vale) (11:59): It is lovely to follow the very heartfelt contribution by the member for Monbulk talking about the contribution that our nurses and health workers make every single day. Whether it is through family members of ours who work in this space or those who are nearest and dearest to us who have been treated and cared for with the compassion of those workers, we as a Parliament, I think it is fair to say, very much value and appreciate the work of our nurses and our health workers every single day.

It is on that note that I also rise to speak in support of the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026. I do so as of course the state member for Pascoe Vale, which is home to one of the highest proportions of doctors, nurses and health workers generally in Victoria. As of 2024–25 I am very proud to say that 19.2 per cent, almost 20 per cent, of local workers work in the health, community and social services sector. That is around 10,300 local residents working to keep people healthy and well. A lot of those workers in my community may work at a lot of the different local health precincts: John Fawkner hospital, Brunswick Private and the old Vaucluse hospital down on Moreland Road as well as our local GPs and pharmacies. But many of them actually work to service some of our state's biggest and most important health precincts down in Parkville at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, the Royal Women's Hospital, the Royal Children's, Peter MacCallum and the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre to name a few. They work across our medical tech sector, which is so important. We recently hosted them in Parliament, just last sitting week, to celebrate and recognise their work. Many of my local workers also work at the Austin Health precinct over in Heidelberg and of course at the Northern Hospital and in Whittlesea and Mill Park.

I am a proud son. My mum migrated to Australia from Italy, and her first job when she came to Australia was working at St Vincent's Hospital just on Nicholson Street here. She was not a nurse, but she was someone who worked in the health sector there at St Vincent's, basically cooking and preparing the food in the old surgeon's dining room at the time and serving food to the patients in the wards. I am also very proud of my wife Anna. She is a long-time worker in this space. She was a long-time social and community worker, doing important work over many, many years prior to starting her own business to keep people healthy and well as a social worker with VincentCare, with Vacro and with the court integrated services program over in Heidelberg and so many other wonderful community social welfare organisations too.

I just want to give a bit of a shout-out to my mother-in-law Pauline, who has recently suffered health issues. She has been cared for very well and very diligently at the Ballarat Base Hospital. My wife has been going up there quite regularly over the last week to also care for her, but I just want to acknowledge the health workers that are keeping her healthy and safe so that she can make a good recovery. We pray for her recovery but also thank the health workers for her care.

The health and wellbeing of everyone is absolutely paramount. Regardless of age, background, income or postcode, we know that everyone across the community deserves the right to quality health care. It has always been federal and state Labor governments that have done incredible work, investment and reform in this space. We have established, sustained and protected Medicare and the pharmaceutical benefits scheme; built and expanded new hospitals, health and wellbeing services; and backed our doctors, nurses and allied health and community health workers right across the sector.

I also want to acknowledge our thoughts during this time are with Azariah, a young girl from my community who has recently undergone a heart transplant. She is being cared for very diligently as we speak. We pray that the heart takes and is accepted by her body and that she can go on to live a healthy life. Our whole community is right behind her and her magnificent family during this very, very difficult time. I say that as the local member, as a local dad who knows the family very well, but also as someone who is the co-founder of the Parliamentary Friends of Transplant Australia and who has been advocating so strongly around organ donation and tissue donation awareness. Our thoughts and our prayers as a Parliament are with Azariah and her family during this very, very important time.

On the safe patient care bill, Labor is making sure Victorians have the very best care with stronger, safer nurse- and midwife-to-patient ratios. This bill will further strengthen nurse-to-patient ratios. We have added an additional 253 full-time equivalent nursing positions to our world-class health system. The amendments to the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Act 2015 are backed by $109 million in investment. This legislation before us at the moment will reclassify 26 hospitals, including 17 in rural and regional Victoria, to a higher level. This bill will change how hospitals are categorised in the safe patient care act, updating the law so that certain hospitals are recategorised at a higher level for the purposes of required nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios. This means they must roster more nurses for the same number of patients, improving staffing and patient care. This will improve nurse-to-patient ratios at 26 hospitals across Victoria in general medical and surgical wards, emergency departments and intensive care units. We know that high ratios of registered nursing staff to patients increase patient safety and improve patient outcomes through reduced lengths of stay and fewer adverse events. The amendments will help to create safe and satisfying workplace environments for our nursing workforce and help manage the increasing demands that their work entails.

This bill, as I said, will add an additional 253 full-time equivalent nursing positions across our world-class health system and reclassify 26 hospitals, including 17 in rural and regional Victoria, to a higher level. They include Maryborough, Maroondah hospital, Mercy women, the Royal Women's Hospital, Werribee Mercy, Angliss, Rosebud, the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, the Victorian Heart Hospital, Sandringham, Ballarat Base Hospital, Bendigo Health, Latrobe Regional Hospital, Shepparton, Bairnsdale, Echuca, Sale, Swan Hill, West Gippsland, Wimmera, Wodonga, Wonthaggi, Ararat, Colac, Wangaratta and Hamilton.

Stronger staffing ratios mean better, safer care for Victorians when they need it most. They also mean less pressure on our hardworking nurses, preventing burnout so we can retain the workforce. The additional roles will also create more opportunities for graduate and early career nurses. Nursing and midwifery jobs in Victoria are only safe and will only continue to grow under a Victorian Labor government. We have delivered, let us remember, a 28.4 per cent pay rise and have consistently strengthened, protected and sustained these very important nurse-to-patient ratios. We know the Liberal–One Nation coalition do not respect nurses, and if given the chance they will axe thousands of nurses. They will axe thousands of workers. They will axe $40 billion out of the Victorian budget, which will sack one in seven public servants and also affect frontline services.

Cindy McLeish: On a point of order, Acting Speaker, the member for Pascoe Vale needs to be factual. He should know that we have several members on our team who have been nurses, and we are not cutting $40 million. This absolute nonsense peddled by –

The ACTING SPEAKER (Wayne Farnham): I will rule on the point of order. It is not up to me to determine what is factual and what is not, but my expectation is for every member in this house to be factual in their contribution.

Anthony CIANFLONE: If we are talking about being factual, the member for Eildon I think said they are not going to cut $40 million because it is actually $40 billion, with a 'b'. I note that.

This also marks the delivery of a commitment for stronger staffing levels in hospital settings. This work has been driven by the advocacy of nurses and midwives, and I want to acknowledge the ANMF, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, for its work on this important reform. It means that patient ratios across Victoria will include, in ICUs, the gold-standard one-to-one nurse-to-patient ratio on all shifts for all level 1 and level 2 hospitals, as well as a team leader and liaison nurse in emergency departments; improved staffing ratios in resuscitation cubicles on morning shifts in line with afternoon and night shifts; in maternity wards a safer one-to-four midwife-to-patient ratio in postnatal and antenatal wards on night shift, down from one to six; and in high-dependency and coronary care units the introduction of an in-charge nurse overnight. These changes will support better patient outcomes and more specialised care for Victorians who need it most and will reduce pressure on staff and help improve working conditions.

Again, we continue to deliver not just through these reforms that we are backing to help recruit and encourage more nurses to take up such an important career but through $270 million to make it free to study nursing and midwifery. We have delivered safer ratios, building on this bill as well. We have strengthened pay and conditions. We invested $26 million in the budget for the graduate nursing and midwifery program. We have done a lot across regional areas as well, but locally, I want to highlight the work we have done with the Medicare urgent care clinic which has opened at 444 Sydney Road, doing incredible work from 8 am to 10 pm. We have expanded the Chemist Care Now program for a lot more local people to access free care without the need for a GP appointment or a script. This work is all about improving health care.

Nina TAYLOR (Albert Park) (12:09): We – that is, Labor – are making sure that Victorians have the very best care with stronger, safer nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios. This bill will further strengthen nurse-to-patient ratios, and I will speak further to that. More specifically, the bill will change how hospitals are categorised in the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Act 2015, updating the law so that certain hospitals are recategorised at a higher level for the purposes of requiring nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios. This means they must roster more nurses for the same number of patients, improving staffing and patient care. I think there is not a Victorian who at one period or other in their lives is not going to have to engage with a health service or a hospital, I would have to think. It is arguably when you are at that vulnerable point, probably one of the most vulnerable points in your life. For some unfortunately it will be a protracted process, subject to the particular ailment or incident that they have experienced. Therefore making sure that we provide the safest patient care is absolutely vital, and making sure that we have appropriate nurse-to-patient ratios and midwife-to-patient ratios is critical, but also so we look after those who look after us, because at the end of the day if we expect them to fulfil their jobs with the highest precision in terms of skill, compassion and care, then we need to back them in. That is exactly what Labor does.

Specifically, the bill will add an additional 253 full-time equivalent nursing positions to our world-class health system. The amendments to the Safe Patient Care Act are backed by a $109.7 million investment. You can see therefore the priority of our government when it comes to health, because for anyone, if you do not have your health, quality of life is severely depreciated. The legislation will reclassify 26 hospitals, including 17 in rural and regional Victoria, to a higher level. I will not go through those hospitals as I think they have been well articulated in the chamber, but nonetheless I am not in any way pulling away from the significance of each and every one of those hospitals and what they mean to the people in those communities and the staff who work at each of those hospitals.

What are we really talking about here? Stronger staffing ratios mean better, safer care for Victorians when and where they need it most. I know there were some concerns raised by one of the members opposite regarding staffing issues. All of this has been negotiated very closely with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF), those who act on behalf of the nurses, representing the nurses and their interests, so all of this has been considered very carefully and in close collaboration with those who are actually delivering the care. They are not random figures et cetera or requirements. They are very carefully considered and have been projected for the specific purposes that Victorians need and deserve. It also means less pressure on our hardworking nurses, preventing burnout, so we can retain the workforce as well, because we want them to know that they are supported to be physically able to do all the tasks they need to do.

The additional roles will also create more opportunities for graduate and early career nurses. This is also really important obviously for succession and into the future. We need to support those who have time and experience in the profession but also those coming through for future generations. Nursing and midwifery jobs in Victoria are only – I am going to say they are only safe under a Labor government. We delivered a massive 28.4 per cent pay rise and have consistently strengthened nurse-to-patient ratios. I have to say, the Liberals' record is a bit shaky. If given the chance, they will axe thousands of nurses and wind back ratios to deliver $40 billion in cuts.

Steve Dimopoulos interjected.

Nina TAYLOR: More than a bit shaky. Like quicksand, exactly. Mark my words, they have done it before; they will do it. We are just being factual

The ACTING SPEAKER (Wayne Farnham): Through the Chair.

Nina TAYLOR: Through the Chair, with the greatest respect to the Chair, and pardon me for that. In any case, I am just reflecting on something that is factual, and they have form in this space.

Steve Dimopoulos: Last time they employed a nurse was before the moon landing.

Nina TAYLOR: Another reflection there relevant to this conversation. I think in terms of our government record, from Wednesday 1 July strengthened ratios enshrined into law last year came into full effect. It marks the delivery of a commitment for stronger staffing levels in key hospital settings. They were driven by advocacy from nurses, midwives and the ANMF. I really want to emphasise that point just to allay the concerns of those opposite, because as I say, we have not come about with these reforms randomly or in isolation. It is through close consultation with those who truly know, those on the front line, who understand the circumstances under which they operate. It means, from now, patient ratios across Victoria will include for ICUs the gold standard of one-to-one nurse-to-patient ratios on all shifts for all level 1 and 2 hospitals as well as a team leader and liaison nurse – the closest hospital to my electorate would be the Alfred Hospital, which is a level 1 hospital, just to give an example there; for emergency departments improved staffing ratios in resuscitation cubicles on morning shifts in line with afternoon and night shifts; for maternity services safer one-to-four midwife-to-patient ratios in postnatal and antenatal wards on night shifts, down from one to six; and for high-dependency and coronary care units the introduction of an in-charge nurse overnight.

Again, we can see the precision with which these reforms have been developed, and I think it is pretty much common sense. I say that loosely as someone who has not worked as a nurse, but I am reflecting on the information that we have received from those who are actually on the front line and delivering those vital services for each and every one of us every day. What will this do? This will support better patient outcomes and more specialised care for Victorians who need it most. Importantly, the new ratios will reduce pressure and deliver safer working conditions for nurses and midwives. Those opposite, if you give them a chance – Liberal–One Nation, if they were to get through – will cut jobs and will wind back ratios, and that will only put patients at risk. So this is something that everyone needs to think about.

We have a strong record, again coming back to our Labor government's record, in terms of backing in our health workforce. We continue to deliver on the $270 million initiative making it free to study nursing and midwifery.

A member interjected.

Nina TAYLOR: Yes, fantastic. We have delivered safer nurse- and midwife-to-patient ratios. We have strengthened pay and conditions for a number of key sector workforces, including nurses and midwives. We have invested $26.78 million in the 2026–27 budget to strengthen the graduate nursing and midwifery program through the delivery of an additional 250 graduate nursing and midwifery positions in the health system, which is continuing to build the workforce that we need into the future. I think it goes without saying how vital it is to bring through that succession and that forward planning in terms of being able to continue to deliver the highest possible care in our state for the benefit of all those we love and our broader communities. It is just really important. That might sound like a simplistic comment to make, but as I say – and I think I can relate to a number of relatives when they have been at that most vulnerable point and knowing that you can trust that the person who is looking after them – know that we have their back and that they can deliver the service that they have to with the compassion and care and skill that all Victorians deserve. They really need to know that we have their back, and they do under a Labor government. We have our record, and we are continuing to deliver in terms of providing the appropriate ratios and overall funding support for our fantastic nurses and midwives.

I certainly want to express my gratitude, because I think it takes a particular skill set to be able to handle often having to discuss some pretty difficult prognoses. We know in hospitals they are dealing with people at their most vulnerable point and not necessarily going to have the best possible outcome, because sometimes the human body is, as we know, extremely vulnerable. However, doing all we can – I think it is upon us to make sure that we support our nurses and midwives – is absolutely paramount, and that is exactly what we are seeking to do with this bill.

Steve DIMOPOULOS (Oakleigh – Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC, Minister for Sport, Minister for Equality) (12:19): I move:

> That the debate be now adjourned.

Motion agreed to and debate adjourned.

Ordered that debate be adjourned until later this day.

Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026

Second reading

Debate resumed on motion of Sonya Kilkenny:

> That this bill be now read a second time.

James NEWBURY (Brighton) (12:20): I rise to speak on the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. Hasn't this bill been a long time coming, a bill that has been so much in need in this state. The house will recall the debate in this place whereby the coalition sought to introduce workplace protection orders through amendments to a similar bill 265 days ago. The member for Caulfield did a power of work in relation to those amendments and should be acknowledged for doing so. And then, more recently, we sought through a private members bill to move to ensure that we had a workplace protection regime in Victoria, and on both occasions, Acting Speaker Farnham, you may not be aware that every single Labor member voted against, firstly, those amendments 265 days ago and then, more recently, the private members bill that we moved in this place. At the time, when the amendments were first moved, the government members were not even certain, and they would not even commit to introducing a regime. They were not even sure whether they supported a regime. I recall at the time some of the biggest and most senior names in the retail sector and also law enforcement calling for

workplace protection orders and a scheme to be introduced in Victoria. I will speak about some of those comments earlier.

Why does the timing of when you try to fix a problem matter? Why does it matter? Because the government will stand up and say, 'Perhaps we've been slow, but we've been consulting and we've been thinking and we've been planning,' and all of the descriptors that they will use. Why does it matter that when there is a problem you fix it as soon as possible? Because what we do in this place stops problems in the community and helps people, especially where we are talking about law and order, from becoming victims. And we know that over the last year, on average, we have seen 5000 people in workplaces who have had criminal incidents against them as persons, which you would presume primarily includes things like assault. So in the almost a year since the government voted against a regime being introduced, we have had almost 5000 victims in Victoria. I feel certain that a workplace protection order regime, had it been in place almost a year ago when we proposed it, would have helped some of those victims. We would have been able to help some of those victims.

As I say, the government will get up and say they have been thinking and talking and working. Because this bill was not moved until we saw a new Premier in the government, the only thing that I can imagine and presume is that there was a factional dispute in the government over whether or not this legislation should proceed. We have a Premier from the right rather than a Premier from the left, and presumably that played some part in why we have any legislation in this place. Or perhaps it was the new Premier's inspirational reading. We have heard about his favourite book *Where the Light Gets In*. Perhaps that inspired him. I did think it was worth noting. Perhaps that is what has inspired him to bring about this legislation, a book described as:

> Simple, playful and profound perspective shifts to change your life.

Isn't the Premier a deep man? He is a deep, deep man. 'Simple, playful and profound perspective shifts to change your life.' That is what we are seeing today, aren't we, from the government: simple, playful and profound perspective shifts from this government when it comes to this issue. As I said at the start of that descriptor, simple – and I pick up on that word, because despite this legislation being put to this place, when you look at the detail, the government has not got it right. We will not be opposing the legislation, but the government has not got it right in terms of what it is proposing. I suspect the reason why the bill is in the form that it is in is because there were internal disputes for so long before this bill landed in the chamber that the proposal that is now with us was all that could be agreed to by this government. The bill, unfortunately, does not do all that it should, and it certainly does not do what the coalition proposed 265 days ago, because we believe there should be a strong workplace protection order regime in Victoria.

I want to talk about a particular constituent in my community and the story she shared with me a little over a year ago. This constituent of mine, who I will not name – and I have mentioned her in debates on these issues in the past – suffered from a person threatening to assault her. She was stalked by this person in the workplace. She is a retail worker and was stalked in the workplace, and it really impacted upon me in terms of the need for a workplace protection order regime in this state, because she was not protected. She went through immense difficulty in terms of seeking an intervention order – the need for her to be pushing for the intervention order, working through the processes of seeking an intervention order, and then every time the order was breached needing to have it enforced. She came to the local member of Parliament because the intervention order was not being enforced in a way that protected her. The person who was fixated was still going to her workplace and was still following her home. The system as it stands today did not protect her. So we have needed this workplace protection order regime in this state. Those are not just my words. Obviously I have talked about the example of the constituent in my community and what she suffered, but you could see people like Leah Weckert from Coles noting that 'retail crime is escalating' and therefore advocating at the time for a regime. You also saw other major executives speak in the same way. There was a need, and as I said, unfortunately this regime that is being proposed does not fully acquit or will not properly address the issues that need to be covered by way of retail workers and their need to be protected in this state.

Under standing orders I wish to advise the house of amendments to this bill and request that they be circulated. The coalition will move amendments in this place and also in the other place to deal with some of those issues. I will speak to those issues with the legislation now.

Firstly, and perhaps most glaringly, after the government has waited so very long and been left wanting for so very long on this regime, the first thing that strikes you with the bill is that it does not commence as a regime until July next year. After waiting 265 days since we first sought to introduce the regime, this bill introduces a commencement of the regime in 11 months – in nearly another year. As we heard earlier, we know that there are 5000 victims of, in shorthand, personal attack in the retail setting each year. In 11 months the best part of 5000 more victims – more people, more Victorians – will become victims in the workplace and not have a workplace protection order regime available to them, because the bill has a default commencement of July next year. At times the government will say, 'Well, that's only the default commencement.' The government have confirmed through the briefing on this bill that that is their intended commencement date – in another 11 months. How can it be that we have already seen this government vote against the regime twice and they are now seeking to introduce a regime in almost a year's time? It will be two years almost in terms of introducing a regime into Victoria. It is just not good enough. That is why our first amendment seeks to bring the regime forward.

The government of course will say, 'Things take time. We need to do things in a slow, methodical way' – only when it suits them. We see many examples of the government introducing things immediately when it suits them. When you are dealing with protecting someone in their workplace from violence and threats of violence, an 11-month delay, frankly, is wrong. It is, frankly, wrong, and so we will be amending the legislation, both in this place and the other place. I would hope that in the other place, where the chamber can actually deal with the substance of the amendments – these are textual amendments, which means that this house will not have an opportunity to vote on them – the non-government members, the crossbench members, can see the merit. I suspect there is interest from them in certain amendments to bring this regime into place sooner, because an 11-month delay is simply wrong. We will be doing that.

Secondly, we seek to amend the bill by ensuring that a victim has a consent right. The government members, I am sure, probably are not aware of this, but under this regime, the victim has no right of consent. Let us talk that through for a moment. If a victim raises an issue with a colleague or a person in the workplace – perhaps they are talking about a family circumstance or perhaps they are talking about an incident that happened to them at home, which would be shocking and we would all be horrified in that circumstance. What this bill allows is an order to be taken in relation to the workplace on that information without that victim's consent. The employer or union could seek an order in relation to the workplace without a victim's consent. How can it be that the government has been so shortsighted to not ensure that a victim is a party to a protection order? The protection order is to protect them. They should be party to the order. Of course they should be party to the order.

It is not that this bill provides victim consent other than by way of exception. For example, there may be a certain circumstance that you wrote into the bill that there needs to be an exception. This bill includes no acceptance of the need for victim consent in any circumstance. Victim consent is not included in the bill in any way, full stop, so you can easily see circumstances where perverse outcomes occur. If there were a workplace protection order taken based on information that an employee perhaps had provided, you would be potentially breaching that person's confidence and confidentiality in that their rights, the onus of the information they hold as a victim, are breached in a way that others would find out. I mentioned the example before of someone talking about a personal circumstance, perhaps against a family member, and by nature of an order being taken the other party of course would become aware of that information being breached and the order being taken.

We believe very strongly that victim consent should form the basis of an order being taken in this bill, and to be completely frank, I was aghast, in relation to the bill, that victim consent is not a consideration. I raised the issue, and did so in a bipartisan way, and sought to facilitate the government perhaps considering an amendment – not necessarily picking up all of my proposed amendments. But

I did speak to the government and say, 'I would prefer this not to become an issue. I would prefer the government to pick this amendment up before I move it and include it in the bill, and we will leave it there.' The government said no. They simply said no to victims having a consent right. I do not think this bill can proceed, frankly, hopefully, without the government's reconsideration of that position. I have said we will not be opposing the bill, but I am not sure how the government cannot want to ensure that victims have autonomy over their story, over their circumstance, and it is quite shocking that a right of consent is not included in the bill.

A further amendment that I am proposing to the bill is to expand the definition of workers who are captured by the legislation. This bill is very strict in its definition to include certain retail workers and certain transport workers. Let me give you an example – the example I gave to the government in the briefing on this bill. If we walk across to Collins Place, there are many retail workers working there right now. You can go and buy your lunch there, and the retail workers who are serving lunch will be covered by the new regime under this legislation. But there will also be retail workers working at the cinema, which sits directly next to the shopfront where food is being served. Because that cinema is providing a service rather than a good, those workers are not covered by the bill. So you have a cinema with retail workers working, providing a service, next door to a retail outlet serving food, a good, and only the shopfronts providing the good are covered by this bill. They are both working next to each other in the same shopping complex across the road. How can it be that the regime does not cover people, retail workers, who are providing a service rather than a good? How can that be? It makes no sense.

Initially when I read it I thought to myself this must be a drafting error. It is not possible that you can have two shops with retail workers working next door to each other and the government is mistakenly only covering retail workers in one type of shop. That does not make sense. How could you leave out all retail workers who are selling services rather than goods? It was by design. The answer given to me by the government was that it is by design. They are open to thinking about expanding the definition in three years time, after the bill has been in operation, when a review is conducted into the bill. You are going to see across every retail setting, frankly, shops next to each other where every second shop is covered by this regime. We think that is wrong. We think in fact it is nonsensical. You cannot pick and discriminate against retail workers because they are selling a service rather than a good. You cannot pick retail workers and simply say to every retail worker who is providing a service rather than a good, 'We don't want you included.' Why should they have less of a right to protection than the person working next door, 1, 2 or 3 metres away? How can that possibly be? Again, as I said earlier, I presume that there was an internal deal done in terms of the legislation that was put forward and this is all that the new government could get through internally to bring this bill forward. It is the only possible reason why you would bring a bill forward that is so obviously flawed.

As I said before, we have an 11-month delay before it commences. Why? There is no good reason. We have a mistake, in my view, of not including the concept of a victim having a consent right. So there is just no concept of consent. Then we have a system whereby, for retail workers who work side by side, you have every second shop covered because every first shop sells a service rather than a good. These are very, very significant flaws in the bill. I suspect there was an agreement issue. I am sure there was also a rush, by way of the bill, and you could see how proud the new Premier was to bring in the legislation when it was first announced, straight after he took his new role. I suspect there was also a rush. To give him some credit, perhaps he was not fully aware of how big these mistakes are. But to see two retail shop workers working next to each other and only every second shop being covered tells you there are big flaws in this bill.

The fourth amendment in relation to the legislation is allowing police to apply for an order, and what this bill does not do is enable police to do so. We are not in any way saying that police should be forced to do so – that police should be the lead on every circumstance of a workplace protection order – but we do believe that the bill should have the power for police to apply for one. It may be that they are not the lead agency and that the workplace takes the lead in terms of seeking orders. That may well be

the case. But we believe it is a flaw in the legislation to not include the power for the police to ever seek one. It may be, because police often will deal with these crimes that are occurring in the workplace, and we were talking before about 5000 incidents in the last year. Police are very often involved in these incidents – not always, but very often – because we are talking about crimes occurring. Police may feel that a circumstance is so great or a perpetrator, frankly, is so bad that it would be appropriate for them to be involved in seeking an order. We are not proposing that they be the lead agency, but we are saying that when it comes to the drafting of legislation, we believe that the power should exist should it be needed, because we are talking about a regime that creates protection for people at work against, in simple speak, crimes. Who is involved in crimes in terms of protecting those workers? Police a lot of the time, so our fourth amendment relates to empowering police, should they need that power, to have that power. We believe that was another error in the drafting of the bill.

As I said more than once, we will not be opposing the legislation, but I think those four amendments, by way of a broad topic, are amendments that I hope the other place considers in detail. It seems only reasonable that the timing of the legislation be quite a focus. There is no reason, after the government proposed a piece of legislation almost a year after we first moved it in this place, to wait another year for it to commence. We feel very strongly about that, and we hope in the other place the crossbench thinks that through. From what it seems, the crossbench at the moment do not seem to be particularly happy, so hopefully they will consider it more than they normally would.

Secondly, we hope they consider the amendment in relation to consent. If you think about law and order legislation more broadly, the concept of consent is embedded into our law and order legislation. The concept of a victim having autonomy over what has happened to them and a consent right is embedded into the principle of how we care for people and how we deal with the circumstances they have unfortunately faced, whatever they may be, so a consent right not existing in this legislation is concerning. I raised earlier an example whereby consent could be misused in terms of information passed on amongst colleagues in a workplace and an order being sought without that person's consent based on that information which would then expose that victim, because if an order was obtained on that information, the victim may be exposed for passing on that information, which of course is unreasonable. Thirdly, to reiterate, the definition of 'industry' has an obvious error in drafting whereby only goods, not services, workers are covered by the legislation. Finally, police should have the power, not as a lead but as a simple power, should they need to apply for an order to have the power within the legislation to do so.

Workplace protection orders as a regime we have waited too long for in Victoria. The delays from this government have been unacceptable, and they have a real-world consequence, as I spoke to, with an average of 5000 people in a retail setting having a crime against the person over the last year. We know that delay has hurt thousands of workers by not having had the option of a protection order. Government delays in terms of protecting the community do have consequences, and it has been a very long and disappointing delay with this legislation, especially when you consider, as I have gone through throughout the debate, some of the quite obvious mistakes in the legislation. We do hope that by the time the bill gets to the Council perhaps the government has reconsidered some of those matters and may consider, by way of government amendment, fixing the legislation before it gets to the Council. If not, we do hope the crossbench considers those amendments closely, because I think those amendments are only fair and reasonable and are required to make sure that we see a regime that Victorians deserve and, frankly, one that the coalition has a very, very long track record of calling for.

Daniela DE MARTINO (Monbulk) (12:50): It gives me great pleasure to rise and speak on the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. Before I commence with my speech I would like to address some of the assertions raised by the member for Brighton. I note the amendments that they will seek to move here, and I would like to address some of them, actually. In terms of Victoria Police not being party to moving or to applying for a WPO, as I will refer to them from this point on, that is because of consultation with Victoria Police, who do not wish to be doing this. I do wonder if the member for Brighton has conducted consultation with Victoria Police himself that has told him otherwise, because

the lengthy consultation we have undertaken, through a group, which I will get to in more detail later, did actually consult quite heavily and at length with Victoria Police. So there is a reason why they are not the ones who will be seeking to make these orders.

Members interjecting.

Daniela DE MARTINO: Through consultation with them. On other points as well –

Members interjecting.

Daniela DE MARTINO: That is a matter for Victoria Police. In terms of time, there was an assertion also made that last year somehow our government had no idea about WPOs at all. That is clearly false. That we had no plan to bring them in was –

Members interjecting.

Daniela DE MARTINO: We certainly did. I can tell you, I spoke in this chamber several times on the fact that we were introducing WPOs into this chamber this year. A stunt was pulled the other sitting week trying to introduce an opposition bill into the chamber, which I spoke on as a procedural motion. Moments after that was done, the legislation was introduced. It certainly was not conjured in a back room somewhere in 5 seconds; it was ready to go. Those opposite knew it was ready to go, and so it was done as a stunt. We have to be careful with this, and there is a reason why it is taking time. Part of that is because we are establishing a new regime, not moderating or modifying an existing one. The courts have to be prepared. Victoria Police have to be prepared. The better the consultation and the more in-depth with the union representatives and the employer associations as well – it is important that those representing employees and employers are consulted at length, and that is exactly what has been happening. My good friend Mr Galea in the other place has led that steering group, and I am incredibly proud of the work that he has done, and we now are going to see this legislation introduced.

Another thing I would like to address is about victims not having consent rights. It is because this is about the workplace. It is a workplace protection order, as opposed to an individual's protection order. It is about the threat to the workplace and all employees in there. So it is incumbent upon either the employer or the union, if it is going in and applying for the protection order, to consider the safety of the entire workplace, which is why no equivalent regime actually has victims requiring their consent. No other equivalent regime has that. I just wanted to address that too. In terms of the definition of 'retail', it is up to the courts to make that decision, and they will be given time as well to determine exactly what workplaces they consider fall underneath this regime, and they will do so.

I will now get to my speech. I would like to say that the sad fact is that retail and transport workers are simply not as safe as they once were in workplaces, and that is why this is a vital piece of legislation for half a million workers across the retail and transport sector in Victoria.

James Newbury interjected.

Daniela DE MARTINO: I note the interjection from the member for Brighton about the time that this will come in, in July. That is a default date. If the parties to it, the courts and VicPol, are ready to go before then, it can commence before then. July 2027 is the latest date at which it will commence. I just want to put that on the record too, because a lot of assertions were made, so I think it is important to address them.

But this piece of legislation is key to addressing what are frankly shocking acts of violence and aggression that we have seen escalating in severity and frequency over the past few years towards crucial frontline workers, and I know it is welcomed by so many, because it is going to make a real difference to the safety of workers across these sectors. We all deserve to feel safe wherever we live, work and play. I note that we have made an announcement too of additional PSOs to be deployed across areas of concern, including shopping strips. I know that will be welcomed by many too.

This work we are getting on with is about protecting workplaces, as I said just before. It is about protecting them from offenders returning to commit acts of violence and aggression. That is key to achieving our obligation to keep workplaces as safe as possible. This is a really personal bill for me. I have spoken in here before about my years working in retail. I was eight years old when I started working in my parents' video libraries. I was 12 when I was allowed to serve on my own at Alchester Village video store in Boronia.

Cindy McLeish interjected.

Daniela DE MARTINO: When it is a family business it is completely legal, member for Eildon. I then worked for the Shop, Distributive & Allied Employees' Association (SDA) as a national industrial officer, and I worked hard, along with all my colleagues there, to defend and protect retail workers and their working conditions. Then I became a shop owner myself. I owned a grocery store. Over the nearly seven years my husband and I owned that store, not only did we work in there, our children did and 100 different employees we employed over time, including in the cafe that we opened as well. So it is deeply personal.

I know the violence and aggression that can happen, but even with what I experienced – and I copped some terrible stuff coming my way and so did my staff, especially during 2020 and 2021 – it is worse now out there, and that is a real concern. These workplace protection orders are vital; they are fundamental to being able to bar and ban someone from coming. I could say to people, 'I will not let you come and cross the threshold of my store.' While I was there, I could look out for them. There were some where I had to just say, 'You are not allowed to come back here, and if you do try, it's trespass.' That is all I could then say to them. There were some people who threatened my store and threatened me. The aggression, this entitlement out there from some people who think that it is okay to attack what is predominantly a female workforce as well in retail – and I know this goes to transport as well but clearly I am focusing on retail as I know it best – is obscene. To see how some people think they can treat others is atrocious. That is why we need this regime to come into our state of Victoria, because these people need to be banned from doing what they are doing and the harm they are causing, because we all deserve to go to work and feel safe in our workplace. We deserve to come home from work in the condition we went in.

I spoke last year about a couple of examples of terrible, terrible violence and aggression against retail workers. Unfortunately, because I was dealing with some assertions from those opposite I have lost a bit of time on the clock, but before I do anything else I really do want to commend the Attorney-General and her team and everyone involved in bringing this legislation into the Parliament. I would like to particularly thank Michael Donovan, who is the secretary of the Victorian branch of the SDA, for his absolute commitment to advocating for retail workers and seeing this come in, for championing this legislation. As I mentioned before, Mr Galea has done an exceptional job chairing the worker protection consultation group, which contributed to the development of the bill. That group was comprised of unions and employer associations, Victoria Police and the Office of Public Prosecutions. I really want to thank them all for the work they did, because there are people like Shefali, who I spoke of last year in the chamber when I was saying we would introduce this legislation this year. I met her, and she was a great worker at her Woolworths. There was a guy at the check-out, and security had approached him. He brandished a knife, and she felt the blade go across her belly. It did not cut her, but it was the end of her career in retail. She moved into child care after that because she could not deal with it. She had only just recently witnessed two others being attacked in a fight in the store. No-one deserves that at work. No-one deserves anything like that at work.

That is why this Workplace Protection Orders Bill is crucial to making sure that employers are going to be able to say, 'You can't come back here ever again, because what you've done is beyond unreasonable.' It is not about me having to go out and take a personal intervention order against a person, it is a workplace that says, 'We will protect all of you within here, all of you.' That is what people deserve, nothing less than that. Unfortunately, Shefali's story is not an isolated one, and we are seeing more of it, as I have said before.

We brought in legislation last year. We have built on the Crimes Amendment (Retail, Fast Food, Hospitality and Transport Worker Harm) Act 2025, which we passed to create tougher criminal penalties for those who assault and threaten workers. We have to do everything we can in this chamber for the people of Victoria, and that is what we are getting on with doing. I am incredibly proud of the work that has been done. I look forward to this coming in, and I look forward to it having a tangible effect on the working conditions for people across retail and transport to ensure that none of them – none of them – have to deal with this kind of abuse ever again. That is what this bill goes towards the heart of: keeping them protected. It is our duty to do so. I commend the bill to the house.

Sitting suspended 1:00 pm until 2:02 pm.

Business interrupted under standing orders.

Announcements

Photography in chamber

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (14:02): I advise the house that the Speaker has given approval for a photographer to take photos from the upper and lower galleries and the Hansard box during question time today. The photographs will be used by the Parliament for community engagement purposes. I also remind the house that props are disorderly and members may be removed, should things happen or not happen.

Questions without notice and ministers statements

Government integrity

Jess WILSON (Kew – Leader of the Opposition) (14:02): My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier always treated taxpayer money with respect?

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:03): With respect, responsibly and carefully.

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I know it is the last day of the week, but we can do this civilly. The member for Footscray is warned.

Jess WILSON (Kew – Leader of the Opposition) (14:03): If the Premier has always treated taxpayer money with respect –

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Essendon is also warned. I am making a list.

Jess WILSON: If the Premier has always treated taxpayer money with respect, why did WorkSafe spend nearly $600,000 on coffee machines under his watch?

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I can see my knees are going to get a workout today. Point Cook! Essendon – that is twice.

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:04): I will make two comments. First and foremost, WorkSafe are an independent agency. Secondly, why did you approve farewell first-class tours overseas for the people that are exiting Parliament?

Brad Rowswell: On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, I would like to make available to the house a more economic alternative to whatever that was.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Sandringham can apologise and leave the chamber for an hour and a half.

Brad Rowswell: I apologise.

Member for Sandringham withdrew from chamber.

James Newbury: On a further point of order, Deputy Speaker, if it assists the Premier, I can provide the contract details of that expense.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order, member for Brighton.

Ben CARROLL: We respect our money. We do not let people travel overseas when they are exiting Parliament.

Ministers statements: police resources

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:06): Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Michael O'Brien: It's coffee boy.

Ben CARROLL: I am proud of my history serving coffee at Kmart. Do you know where the opposition leader started her career? KPMG. Read it on her website.

We are very proud on this side to stand with police, and today it was more PSOs, more often, in more places – places like Footscray, Springvale and Sunshine. We are making sure that our protective services officers and our police are extended to the places they are needed most. It is why we also announced we are extending Operation Pulse to the end of 2027 – 1700 arrests, 3500 more charges. Everyone deserves to feel safe where they shop, where they work and where they live, and that is why we will continue to invest in police and protective services officers. I stood with the Minister for Police today and the Chief Commissioner of Police, increasing our PSO presence from 1450 to 1650, making sure that every community feels safe and every person out in the community – every shopper, every person going home, whether it is on a train or whether it is on the bus, wherever they go, they feel safe. Where they do not feel safe is $40 billion in cuts.

James Newbury: On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, it is inappropriate for the Premier to use these robotic attacks on the opposition during his ministers statement – completely out of order.

Anthony Carbines: On the point of order, Deputy Speaker, FOMO is not a point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Premier to continue.

Ben CARROLL: We are proud to be sitting and standing with Victoria Police today, while those opposite talk about sitting down with Barnaby Joyce, putting meat on the bone with confidence and supply. Barnaby is in the building, and we all know –

James Newbury: On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, Speaker Brooks's previous ruling is clear that what the Premier is doing is completely out of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Premier knows not to attack the opposition using ministers statements. He can compare and contrast.

Ben CARROLL: Let us be very clear. Sophie Torney is sitting down with the constituents of Kew while the member for Kew is sitting down with Barnaby Joyce.

Construction industry

Danny O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) (14:09): My question is to the Premier. The Premier said his first action would be to call a royal commission. Since then the Premier has put out 14 media releases, and a royal commission is yet to be called. Why did the Premier break his very first promise?

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:10): I have said this on numerous occasions: this is a serious endeavour. It is not for political leaders to be politicising an independent royal commission.

Danny O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) (14:10): The Premier also said he would immediately establish a special prosecutor. Given it has been almost three weeks, why has the Premier already broken that promise?

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet. I did not hear the end of the Leader of the Nationals' question, so I have to ask him to repeat it.

Danny O'BRIEN: Given it has been almost three weeks, why has the Premier already broken that promise?

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:11): It has been three weeks, and we are just getting started.

Ministers statements: police resources

Paul EDBROOKE (Frankston – Minister for Police, Minister for Crime Prevention, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (14:11): This morning I was proud to stand alongside the Premier and the Chief Commissioner of Police to announce that the Carroll Labor government is giving Victoria Police the resources it needs to fight crime. We will recruit an additional 150 protective services officers, taking the total to 200 new PSOs – every one of them funded, every one of them real. We are also extending Operation Pulse till the end of next year – Operation Pulse has already delivered more than 1700 arrests and 3500 charges – because on this side of the chamber we take the safety of Victorians seriously, and we will always back Victoria Police by giving them the powers they need to keep Victorians safe. That is why we will also change the regulations so that PSOs can patrol more shopping centres and local shopping strips, the precincts at the heart of every Victorian community – more police, more PSOs, more places, more often.

Now contrast that with the sad lot opposite. They promised PSOs for hospitals, but they forgot to ask anyone if that was actually a good idea. They promised PSOs for shopping centres, and then they cut that and they promised the same PSOs somewhere else, because every promise they make carries the same asterisk: $40 billion in cuts. You cannot fund police while you are cutting $40 billion. Only the Carroll Labor –

James Newbury: Deputy Speaker, I renew my earlier point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: And I renew my counsel – thank you, member for Brighton – that ministers statements, as our former Speaker Brooks eloquently said, are not used for attacking the opposition. Come back without doing that, please.

Paul EDBROOKE: I love Speaker Brooks. Maybe the member for Brighton needs a Moccona. Only the Carroll Labor government will give Victoria Police, the biggest force in the nation, the powers, the funding and the support they need to keep every Victorian safe.

Construction industry

Jess WILSON (Kew – Leader of the Opposition) (14:14): My question is to the Premier. The Premier has said he will call a royal commission into the construction sector. Can the Premier guarantee that the terms of reference will not be limited to the construction sector but will also examine the Labor government's design, procurement and delivery of Big Build projects?

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:14): I have made it very clear that the terms of reference will cover top-tier business, labour hire, trade unions and everyone else involved. They will be exhaustive terms of reference. I will not sit here as a political leader doing a year 9 essay on crime and a year 9 essay on a royal commission that does not pass the test.

Jess WILSON (Kew – Leader of the Opposition) (14:15): Will the Premier guarantee that his royal commission will investigate not just what bikies, criminals and union officials did on the Big Build but the decisions Labor premiers and ministers made that allowed it to happen?

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:15): They will be comprehensive, as they should be.

Ministers statements: police resources

Natalie SULEYMAN (St Albans – Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Minister for Small and Family Business, Minister for Veterans) (14:15): I rise to update the house on how the Carroll Labor government is making local shopping strips safer – safer for community and safer for business. The tragic death of Van Viet Truong has shaken us all, and soon after the incident last week I, the Premier, the Minister for Police and the member for Laverton paid our respects and met with local traders on Hampshire Road in Sunshine. The community made it clear that they want action, and today the Carroll Labor government has delivered, giving Victoria Police additional resources to fight crime and keep our shopping strips safe. We will recruit an additional 150 protective services officers, taking the number to 200, and PSOs will be patrolling our main streets, with the powers to make a real difference. This morning I started the day with local traders in St Albans, talking to them about today's announcement, and let me say this is welcome news for the business community. They want to see Victoria Police and PSOs out at the shopping strips, at shopping centres and wherever they are needed most. We know that there is more to do, and only a Carroll Labor government will deliver real action on community safety, unlike those opposite, who will form a coalition of cuts with One Nation.

Construction industry

Matthew GUY (Bulleen) (14:17): My question is to the Premier. At least $15 billion of taxpayers money has inappropriately been siphoned off the Big Build –

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member is entitled to be heard, and if interruptions occur we will repeat the question until it is finished.

Matthew GUY: At least $15 billion of taxpayers money was inappropriately siphoned off the Big Build into the hands of groups such as bikie gangs while the Premier was a member of state cabinet. Will the Premier's royal commission be empowered to investigate whether this Labor government delivered an expanding pipeline of unionised Big Build work in exchange for any factional support or internal deals?

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:18): I thought Dorothy Dixers were banned. From Mr Integrity himself, the only member of Parliament in this chamber to refer himself to IBAC – a world record in the Guinness book of records: 'I'll refer myself to IBAC.' We will get on and do what we need to do with the royal commission.

Matthew GUY (Bulleen) (14:18): I thank the taut-faced, well-groomed Premier for his answer.

Members interjecting.

Matthew GUY: It is up the road from your botox clinic, Benny. Will the Premier guarantee –

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us try that again, member for Bulleen.

Matthew GUY: It is to the well-groomed Premier. Will the Premier guarantee that no Labor factional official, union official or former Premier or minister will be protected from any royal commission scrutiny?

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:19): The royal commission will be robust and independent.

Ministers statements: community safety

Sonya KILKENNY (Carrum – Attorney-General, Minister for Planning, Minister for Prevention of Family Violence) (14:20): The safety of all Victorians is this government's priority. That is why this Labor government has legislated adult time for violent crime, legislated the toughest bail laws in the nation and funded the largest police force in the country, and we have set up the nation-leading violence reduction unit. This is all part of the Carroll Labor government's comprehensive approach to community safety. Meanwhile, others seeking office have said that the VRU is 'a waste of money', all the while hiding behind a $40 billion black hole that threatens our courts, child protection and other frontline services. The cuts are bad, but the incompetence is worse. Can you believe that the very people seeking government are also seeking to introduce laws that already exist? They have called for things like manslaughter to be part of our adult time for violent crime. It already is. They have called for things like jail for people who offend on bail. That already exists too. Worse yet – and get this – they have proposed something truly terrifying: a coalition with One Nation, the very people who describe family violence as a two-way street, something that the Leader of the Opposition is still yet to condemn. There is no brighter future with the member for Brighton, and the member for Kew is taking her cue from Pauline Hanson.

James Newbury: On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, this is a completely inappropriate use of a ministers statement, and nasty.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister has finished her statement and knows not to attack the opposition in ministers statements.

Paul Edbrooke interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you can leave the chamber for 10 minutes.

Minister for Police withdrew from chamber.

Construction industry

James NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:23): My question is to the Premier. Why is a man who police allege is the sergeant-at-arms of the Finks outlaw motorcycle gang working on the North East Link?

Members interjecting.

James NEWBURY: On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, is it appropriate for the Premier to be scripted in his response? I asked the Premier. He should be capable of answering.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order, member for Brighton.

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:23): We have zero tolerance for any of that poor behaviour, and I understand –

Members interjecting.

Ben CARROLL: Do you want the answer?

James Newbury: On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, on relevance, he is working on a government project.

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! To assist the house, members have every right to raise points of order on any conduct in the house, but members also know what is a point of order and what is not. It is frustrating when points of order are raised continually that are not points of order. I am not about to stop members raising points of order, because they have the right to do so, but it is frustrating and it does not help the conduct of the house. I would prefer it if members realised that.

Ben CARROLL: If the member for Brighton had let me finish, I was going to inform him that this person has been stood down.

James NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:25): The Mick Gatto–linked M1 Group is still licensed to operate on the North East Link. I am happy to provide that active licence to the Premier. There is the licence. If integrity is no longer optional, why hasn't the Premier cut the licence –

Members interjecting.

James NEWBURY: May I start again?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Start again, without assistance. This can take a very long time. It is up to all of you.

James NEWBURY: The Mick Gatto–linked M1 Group is still licensed to operate on the North East Link, and I have provided the licence to the Premier. If integrity is no longer optional, why hasn't the Premier cut the licence and kicked M1 off the Big Build?

Ben CARROLL (Niddrie – Premier) (14:26): We have zero tolerance for any illegal sort of behaviour, and that is why I have called a royal commission into the construction sector.

Ministers statements: police resources

Gabrielle WILLIAMS (Dandenong – Minister for Education, Minister for Skills and Training, Minister for First Peoples, Minister for Women and Gender Equality) (14:26): On this side of the house we will always give police the funding and support that they need to keep Victorians safe. Labor is putting more police and PSOs in the places where they are needed most. As we heard today, the Premier and the wonderful Minister for Police announced an additional 150 PSOs to help keep local communities safe. We are changing the regulations to ensure maximum impact from PSO deployment, allowing them to protect local shopping strips and the retailers and shoppers who make our suburbs tick. We are expanding Operation Pulse and extending it into next year – an operation that has already seen more than 3500 charges laid. We are protecting commuters by deploying PSOs to the train stations where police data says they are needed the most.

None of this can happen in isolation. It is made possible by our $5 billion investment in Victoria Police. It complements our investment in police reservists. It sits alongside our new regional training programs that keep local police close to home, serving the communities they know best. It bolsters our introduction of stronger bail laws and sentencing, and it supports the violence reduction unit established by this Labor government because the best approach is always, always to stop crime before it starts. The alternative is $40 billion in cuts from the Liberal–One Nation coalition. You cannot cut $40 billion without cutting police and without cutting PSOs. Barnaby is in the Parliament today –

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Deputy Premier, resume your seat.

Gabrielle WILLIAMS: Barnaby is in the Parliament today to do a deal with the opposition leader.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier!

Rachel Westaway: Deputy Speaker, the point of order is that the member is required to be factual. There is absolutely no coalition between One Nation and the Liberal Party. There is a coalition between the Greens and Labor.

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Eureka, 10 minutes. Tarneit, 10 minutes. Anyone else?

Matthew Guy interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bulleen, 10 minutes.

Minister for Rural and Regional Development and members for Tarneit and Bulleen withdrew from chamber.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order, member for Prahran. All members are expected to be factual at all times. Deputy Premier, you should be listening when I ask you to resume your seat.

Gabrielle WILLIAMS: Barnaby Joyce is in the Parliament today to do a deal with the Leader of the Opposition. No dog is safe, and community safety is on the chopping block.

Constituency questions

Northcote electorate

Kat THEOPHANOUS (Northcote) (14:30): (1758) My question is to the Minister for Planning. How can our planning framework better moderate the proliferation of fast-food outlets like the McDonald's slated for Northcote and instead promote healthier communities? Earlier this year Labor passed major reforms to Victoria's planning laws, which for the first time recognise health and wellbeing as a core objective in planning decisions. It has created an important opportunity to consider how planning can better support nutrition and help prevent chronic disease. In Northcote we are seeing firsthand why this matters. A new McDonald's is set to open just 50 metres from Northcote Primary School. The community does not want it. We know multinational fast-food outlets have a disproportionate influence on food environments and everyday nutritional choices, but as it is in a commercial zone, it has been really difficult to contest. In the UK and Ireland 'no fry zones' around schools have helped curb the expansion of fast food and encourage healthier communities. I would like to see our planning system do more heavy lifting on this front, and I look forward to the minister's response.

Gippsland East electorate

Tim BULL (Gippsland East) (14:31): (1759) My constituency question is to the Minister for Public Transport, and the information I am seeking is why the new V/Line timetable that was released last week has two services commencing at Flinders Street and one terminating at Flinders Street rather than Southern Cross. This is a huge inconvenience to the travellers from my electorate who need to get to Southern Cross for the airport links and various other reasons. The information I seek is the rationale behind that determination.

Monbulk electorate

Daniela DE MARTINO (Monbulk) (14:32): (1760) My question is for the Minister for Environment. Minister, what is being done to address the concerning and growing problem of deer across the district of Monbulk? There are fewer things more frightening than driving along our winding roads in the twilight or dark and coming across a large male sambar deer in the middle of the road and slamming on your brakes to avoid a collision, or actually colliding with one. They are a road hazard, and the environmental damage that deer wreak is truly terrible. They can change habitat, spread diseases, pathogens and weed seeds and affect water quality. They damage soils through erosion and compaction. They may also even change plant communities through selective browsing. They threaten the habitat of many of the native fauna across the Dandenong Ranges, including the critically endangered helmeted honeyeater. For our growers in the agricultural sector, deer impact their product, trampling and/or eating whatever takes their fancy. They are a menace, and we need to do more to address their growing population. I look forward to the minister's response.

Mornington electorate

Chris CREWTHER (Mornington) (14:33): (1761) My constituency question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. What is the timetable of this government for fixing dangerous road

conditions and safety hazards on state roads in the Mornington electorate? Residents in Mornington, Mount Eliza, Mount Martha, Moorooduc, Tuerong and Baxter describe our roads as atrocious, reporting potholes, failed services, inadequate lighting, broken signs and neglected maintenance on Nepean Highway, Esplanade, Moorooduc Highway, Mornington-Tyabb Road, Coolart Road and other state roads. My office has received thousands of complaints, despite repeated representations to the minister. More than 40 reports have already been received through roadtoruin.com.au/mornington, set up by the member for Nepean, whose own tyre was damaged this week on a pothole in my electorate on the way to Parliament. These have all been forwarded to authorities, but the government has not yet acted. Residents have said they are death traps. We have even had a retired Victoria Police officer say that one patrol vehicle incurred $30,000 in rim damage in a year, with $200,000 spent across the fleet.

Hastings electorate

Paul MERCURIO (Hastings) (14:34): (1762) My constituency question is to the Minister for Government Services in the other place. During the many doorknocks, phone calls and street stalls I have done since the rego rebate offer came out, many people have expressed their thanks and relief regarding getting some money back in their bank accounts to assist with the cost of living. A question often asked when I am out and about is how many people in the electorate have taken up this offer and how much money has been given back. So my question to the minister is: please tell me how much money the rebate has actually put back into the pockets of those community members in our electorates who have applied. I do know that in the first 24 hours over 600,000 people across Victoria applied for and received their rebate, and the total number of people to date is well over 3 million. And to those cynical people who think the rego rebate is just for votes, I say these three words: power saving bonus.

Ringwood electorate

Will FOWLES (Ringwood) (14:35): (1763) My constituency question today is to the Minister for Public Transport. What plans does the government have to increase the frequency of train services through Ringwood station? Road congestion is an increasing concern across the Ringwood electorate, particularly along Maroondah Highway, Canterbury Road and other major arterial roads. Ringwood station is a major transport interchange and sits at the junction of the Belgrave and Lilydale lines. It is well placed to give people across Melbourne's east a genuine alternative to travelling by car. With significant population growth and new housing planned around Ringwood and along the rail corridor, demand on both our roads and public transport network will continue to increase. More frequent services through Ringwood, particularly outside the traditional morning and afternoon peaks, could make train travel a more practical option for more people, including Sam Connellan, and help reduce pressure on our local roads.

Narre Warren South electorate

Gary MAAS (Narre Warren South) (14:36): (1764) My constituency question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety and concerns the upgrade of the Thompsons Road and Berwick-Cranbourne Road intersection. Minister, how will the upgrade to this intersection assist people in my community of Narre Warren South to get around safely and more efficiently? I was pleased recently to visit the site of the Thompsons Road and Berwick-Cranbourne Road intersection alongside the member for Cranbourne and to meet some of the hardworking crew and to see the progress there. Works are well underway on the upgrade, with the old roundabout now removed to make way for new, much-needed traffic lights. The work so far is really impressive. It was fantastic to see this road investment by our state government and federal Labor government as well. It was great to see those works taking shape, and I look forward to sharing the minister's response with my community.

Croydon electorate

David HODGETT (Croydon) (14:37): (1765) My question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. I have been contacted by parents, carers and members of the school council at Ruskin Park

Primary School, who are concerned about the safety of students and families travelling to and from school. Recent changes to parking arrangements around the school implemented by Maroondah City Council have resulted in more families being forced to park further away from the school, including on the westbound side of Mount Dandenong Road, and walking. Consequently there has been a noticeable increase in the number of students, parents and carers using the pedestrian crossing on Mount Dandenong Road during school drop-off and pick-up times. The Ruskin Park Primary School council has requested that the speed limit on Mount Dandenong Road be reduced to 40 kilometres per hour during school times under the school zone speed limit legislation. This would improve safety outcomes for students and families. Minister, what measures can be implemented to enhance the safety of students, families and other pedestrians using the crossing at Mount Dandenong Road adjacent to Ruskin Avenue, Croydon, during school drop-off and pick-up times?

Sunbury electorate

Josh BULL (Sunbury) (14:38): (1766) My question is to the Minister for Government Services in the other place. Minister, how many residents in my electorate have applied for this government's 20 per cent rego rebate? As the minister knows, this is a significant and important cost-of-living measure that many residents within my electorate have discussed with me, and it is really pleasing to see what has been a significant uptake. This of course builds on a number of cost-of-living measures that this government is working hard to deliver, ensuring that we are supporting local communities. I look forward to the minister's timely response.

Caulfield electorate

David SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) (14:39): (1767) My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education. When will the minister provide the critical funding to Caulfield Primary School that is desperately needed for basic upgrades to ensure the safety of the school? I wrote to the now Premier about this issue a few months back and have heard nothing. We have had bits of glass falling from one of the windows; bathrooms have been written up in the newspaper as being not fit for purpose. These are basic service upgrades to the total of about $300,000, half the cost of the coffee machines that have been provided by the government and less than the $1.6 million for pot plants that has also been provided to the Suburban Rail Loop. This is basic funding for our schools, which are in desperate need of repair. I ask the minister to respond to the school, which needs some answers and needs to ensure that our kids are kept safe in our schools.

Rulings from the Chair

Constituency questions

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (14:40): I have a ruling here from the Speaker, who has reviewed the constituency questions from yesterday. The member for Evelyn asked the Treasurer a question about the Labor Party, which is not a matter of government administration. Further, although the Speaker has allowed some latitude for members linking constituency questions to their electorate or constituency, the member did not refer at all to her electorate in her question. The member for Evelyn's constituency question is therefore ruled out of order. The member for Prahran asked two questions of the minister. *Rulings from the Chair* only allows one constituency question to be asked. Therefore, the member for Prahran's question is also ruled out of order.

Bills

Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026

Second reading

Debate resumed.

Tim McCURDY (Ovens Valley) (14:41): I will start my contribution by commending the contribution by the member for Brighton. It was a very thorough contribution on the Workplace

Protection Orders Bill 2026 and certainly highlighted the failures of this government, which I will go into a bit further as well. As people know, the coalition strongly supports protecting frontline workers from violence, threats, intimidation, abuse and repeated antisocial behaviour, unlike the Carroll Labor government, who have let violence and intimidation run rampant, particularly on the Big Build worksites. Workplace violence is a serious law and order problem, particularly in retail, hospitality, public transport and, as I mentioned, the Big Build. Around 5000 attacks on retail workers occur each year, which is disgraceful, particularly when the Labor government says every worker deserves a safe working environment and then does absolutely nothing about it. Labor has been way too slow to act on this. We have previously attempted to introduce workplace protection measures, which the government rejected earlier on two opportunities, and to bring in these changes to offset poor behaviour under their watch. After nearly 4500 days in government, this government, with only 100 days to go before an election, has finally realised we have got a problem with workplace bullying, intimidation and culture. What an amazing coincidence: we are only 100 days out from election, but they have had nearly 4500 days to work it out. This coincidence is quite surprising.

We attempted to bring forward our own workplace protection legislation immediately before Labor introduced its bill on 29 July this year, but the government used its numbers to defeat that attempt. In fact, I think it was last year when they brought it in. That is not uncommon. We often see in this place Labor using their numbers to cancel and to stop debate on a particular issue, only for them to reintroduce it when they find it is a good idea that we have put forward. As the Leader of the Nationals pointed out recently, if Labor now accepts that workplace protection orders are necessary, it should explain why similar coalition proposals were previously rejected. What I can say to the Leader of the Nationals, which he already knows, is it is actually the polls that have changed. Every decision that is being made at the moment is based on the polls. It is not based on community concern. It is certainly not based on crime statistics or even logic. It is the polling, and that is how this Premier is deciding his priorities as we go forward. He is the third Premier in as many years, and now we find Victoria is being governed and controlled by, or the directions and priorities are via, the polls.

This bill allows employers or unions to apply for protection orders to protect workers from people engaging in unacceptable conduct connected with certain workplaces. These orders can exclude offenders from a workplace, and this provides an important preventative tool rather than requiring workers to simply endure repeated offending. The Magistrates' Court and the Children's Court will have power to make the orders depending on the circumstances, and breaching an order will become a criminal offence carrying a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment or a $50,000 fine. We on this side of the house support strong penalties for deliberate breaches. An exclusion order needs meaningful consequences if it is going to genuinely protect workers. This needs to target genuinely threatening or dangerous behaviour, and the definition of 'unacceptable conduct' needs to be clear enough so that police, businesses, courts and the public understand where that threshold lies. It is important that everybody knows where we stand on 'unacceptable conduct' so it can be universally agreed upon. Time and time again we see magistrates and judges using the wet lettuce leaf when sentencing criminals in this state. That is a real concern, and again, the polls are saying that, so it is not surprising that we are seeing some changes in direction by this government.

We know that procedural fairness remains important. Strong orders should protect workers without creating unnecessarily broad restrictions against people who do not pose a genuine threat. Small businesses need a simple system. A family-owned shop, pub, service station or takeaway should not require expensive lawyers or complicated court proceedings simply to protect its staff. Regional Victoria must receive equal protection. Workplace aggression is not confined to Melbourne. Workers in country supermarkets, service stations, hospitality venues and public transport deserve that same protection. We need to ensure that in small regional communities like mine and others – Katamatite, Tungamah, Tawonga South, Everton and the likes of those smaller communities – they have the protections they deserve in the workplace as well, not just in metropolitan Melbourne, not just in the big, major regional centres, but all communities and even small communities, as I have mentioned. We also know that police need adequate powers and resources to enforce the orders. A court order is

of little value if repeat offenders can just game the system where breaches will not be detected or prosecuted, so it is important that that occurs.

Protection orders cannot be a substitute for broader action on crime. On this side of the house we continue to argue that Victoria still needs stronger policing, consequences for repeat offenders and effective bail and sentencing laws. Labor needs to acknowledge that the Liberals and Nationals were pushing this policy earlier. We sought workplace protection measures through amendments to the crimes amendment bill, which Labor opposed. We support the objective but highlight that workers should not have to wait another year for protection when a workable scheme can be established sooner. We do support workplace protection orders because nobody should go to work fearing violence or abuse, but Labor needs to explain why it rejected earlier coalition action, which allowed the problem to worsen. It is only now adopting an approach that the opposition and frontline businesses have been calling for for many, many months. As I said, because we are now at 100 days out from an election, all of a sudden, remarkably, there is this coincidence and things start to change. Making good decisions is relative to the amount of days that we are out from an election, by the sounds of it.

We do have some areas of concern, as was mentioned by the member for Brighton. The bill is to commence on 26 July 2027, which seems to be a long time away. If this is such a concern to the Labor government now, why would they not bring it in much sooner? Why are we waiting till 26 July next year, 12 months away? Given the delay in introducing the bill, the commencement date just certainly is not appropriate. My understanding is that even the department gave feedback to the government agencies to request this delay. The other concerns include police being excluded from applying for an order, as well as clause 17, which confines standing to an applicable business operator or an employee union. An individual worker, including the victim of the conduct, cannot apply in their own right. In addition to our concerns, neither Victoria Police nor the Chief Commissioner of Police can seek an order, even when police have attended repeated incidents and hold material evidence of an escalating risk.

As the member for Brighton said in his opening remarks, we will not be opposing this bill, but we do have some amendments – and they were circulated earlier by the member for Brighton – certainly to amend the date of the commencement to royal assent, so removing that default of July 2027. We also intend to extend the right to apply for an order to police and expand the industry definition of 'worker' to capture all retail and service-based industry instead of only the retail and transport sectors. The other amendment is to require victim consent in seeking an order, except in cases of a police application.

With these comments, I do support workplace protection orders. We need to make our workplaces safer. As I have said through my contribution, I am just concerned it has taken so long. As we head towards 4500 days of this government being in office, we are waiting until the last hundred days, until the death knock, for things like this. It is not as though intimidation, violence and threats in the workplace have only just started; this has been going on for many, many years. It is just surprising that we waited until we are a hundred days out from an election to debate this. With that, as I said, we are not opposing the bill, but we are tabling these amendments and we will take them through to the upper house.

Anthony CARBINES (Ivanhoe – Leader of the House, Minister for Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Economy, Minister for Major Events, Minister for Medical Research, Minister for Racing, Minister for Economic Development) (14:50): I move:

> That debate be now adjourned.

Motion agreed to and debate adjourned.

Ordered that debate be adjourned until later this day.

Business of the house

Adjournment

Anthony CARBINES (Ivanhoe – Leader of the House, Minister for Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Economy, Minister for Major Events, Minister for Medical Research, Minister for Racing, Minister for Economic Development) (14:50): I move:

> That the house, at its rising, adjourns until 25 August 2026.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026

Second reading

Debated resumed on motion of Sonya Kilkenny:

> That this bill be now read a second time.

Iwan WALTERS (Greenvale) (14:51): It is great to be back to speak on this important item on the notice paper, the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. I want to begin my comments by taking some exception to the mischaracterisation that the member for Ovens Valley engaged in during his commentary on this bill. This bill has been some time in gestation, and those opposite might have been out of power for so long that they have forgotten what policymaking looks like and what good government looks like. But when you are undertaking substantive reform to keep workers safe, you cannot just drop a bill in here as a stunt on a morning of Parliament and suggest that that in and of itself is going to achieve anything. Instead you have to engage in substantive discussion, negotiation and work with the stakeholders who represent workers in this state: organisations and unions like the Shop, Distributive & Allied Employees' Association (SDA), the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) and the Transport Workers Union (TWU), who represent their workers and who understand the nuances of how this legislation will work in practice, as well as employer organisations and retailers themselves. You cannot do it through a stunt, as it were. It needs to be done in a way that actually ensures that the legislation on the table will have the effect that is intended, because it matters.

It matters that every worker has the right to be safe at work. It should not be controversial. Yet for far too many retail workers, abuse, threats and violence have become an accepted part of their working lives. That is also the case for far too many passenger transport workers, and that is why workplace protection orders matter. It is why the role of a good Labor government that works with employers and with worker representatives like the SDA matters. I want to acknowledge the work of the SDA, secretary Michael Donovan and the entire team, who have been working for years to protect retail workers from customer abuse and violence. It is not a recent interest. It is not something driven by polling. It is not a political stunt. It is not a convenient position that has been adopted because the issue has become politically popular. The SDA and this government have been listening to retail workers. Workers have come into this place to bravely tell me, my caucus colleagues and my fellow parliamentarians about the abuse, the threats, the intimidation and the assaults that they have encountered from repeat offenders returning to their workplaces. Unions have taken those experiences and turned them into a sustained campaign for change, and that change is represented by the bill that is on the table. Unions like the SDA, like the TWU and like the RTBU have worked with this government to develop a practical solution – one that will work, one that will keep workers safe in their workplaces – and that solution is workplace protection orders.

WPOs, as I will refer to them henceforth, are about protecting workers before the next incident occurs. They recognise – and I think this is an important truth to acknowledge – that some offenders are not simply difficult customers. The customer is not always right. Some are repeat offenders. Some are violent offenders who repeatedly threaten, abuse and assault workers who are often the lowest paid in our community, often the youngest workers in our community and often those in their first jobs. The

workers who I represent as the member for Greenvale who work in retail at places like Roxburgh Park, at the Greenvale shops and at the Broadmeadows shops do not deserve – as no worker deserves – to go to work to be threatened, to be abused, to be spat on or to be assaulted. That is why WPOs matter.

Workers should not have to wonder whether the person who threatened them yesterday will walk back through those doors tomorrow to do the same thing. Businesses, as we have heard through the consultation engaged in by the Carroll Labor government, need a mechanism to keep repeat serious offenders away from their workers. That is what WPOs provide. Too often – and other members have noted this in their contributions – the response to workplace violence is to deal with what happened after the event. Police are called, an incident is recorded but a worker is left traumatised, and then the offender can potentially come back. It is unacceptable. We need to prevent the next incident, and a WPO gives us a way to intervene before another worker is harmed. It is a practical workplace safety measure. It is about prevention, and prevention must be our first priority when it comes to community safety more broadly but workplace and worker safety in particular.

The retail worker who is abused at the check-out does not care about political theatre. They do not care about the tactics that have been engaged in in this place. They care about whether they are safe at work. Parents who send their children, as it were, to work – though those children may be teenagers – care that they go to work safely, they are safe at work and they come home safely. The worker who is threatened in the stockroom does not need another speech in this place telling them that violence is unacceptable, they need protection. They need legislation in the form of this WPO act. The worker who sees a repeat offender walk back into their workplace wants to know that somebody has their back. That is the role that their worker representatives in the form of the SDA, the Transport Workers Union, the Rail, Tram and Bus Union and others have played. The SDA has stood beside those workers. It has taken their concerns seriously. It has advocated for them to government, and their parliamentary representatives have advocated for them as well. We have taken their concerns seriously, and we have ensured that work has been undertaken – serious work, proper consultation – to get to the point where we have the WPO bill on the table.

It is all about dignity at work. No worker should be expected to tolerate abuse because they work in retail, in passenger transport or in any other sector. No worker should be told that dealing with aggressive customers is simply part of the job. No worker should have to choose between earning a living and feeling safe. Work should provide dignity. That is the entire premise of the labour movement, which I am proud to belong to. Work should provide security, and it should provide a safe environment. Workplace violence undermines all three premises. We need to draw a clear line. A customer, yes, is entitled to complain, and a customer may be unhappy with a product or a service, but nobody is entitled to threaten or to assault a worker. Nobody is entitled to repeatedly intimidate staff, and nobody should be able to repeatedly target the same workers and the same workplaces without consequences. WPOs send a really simple message in that regard: if you repeatedly abuse or threaten workers, then you can be kept out of their workplace.

I want to return to some of the comments I made the last time the party opposite sought to engage in what I would characterise as a stunt on this issue, and I want to reflect upon their industrial relations record, because there is a broader question about who has consistently stood up for the rights of retail workers. We must not rewrite history in this place, and we must not let those opposite rewrite history. The Liberal Party has a long record of pursuing industrial relations reforms that have not strengthened workplace safety but weakened the bargaining power of working people. Victorian retail workers remember the Kennett government. They remember the government which pursued sweeping changes to industrial relations and workplace arrangements which were part of a broader agenda to reduce the role of unions and to weaken collective bargaining. Retail workers know precisely what happens when workers have less power to negotiate their pay and conditions. It means less security, less bargaining power, less ability to stand together when employers seek to cut their conditions. Then at a federal level the Howard government introduced WorkChoices. They expanded the individualised contracts for Australian workplace agreements. This represented an even more aggressive attack on the

collective rights of working people, stripped away important workplace protections and made it easier to put downward pressure on wages and conditions. It reduced the ability of workers and their unions to collectively bargain. So you will forgive me if I am slightly sceptical about the new-found conversion of those opposite when it comes to suddenly wanting to work with those same unions to strengthen the rights of workers to be safe and to have dignity at work.

We understand on this side of the house that when individual workers are forced to negotiate with powerful employers on their own, the balance of power is not equal. That is why unions like the SDA campaigned so strongly against WorkChoices. That history matters, because the same people who once supported measures that weakened workers' bargaining power cannot suddenly present themselves as champions of those same workers and the great defenders of retail workers without themselves being held to account. Protecting workers is not only about what happens when someone walks into a shop and becomes violent; it is also about the fundamental rights that workers have every single day. It is about wages. It is about penalty rates. It is about secure employment. It is about bargaining rights. It is about union representation, and it is about having a collective voice at work. Fundamentally, it is about dignity and respect. This party, this government and the unions that we are affiliated with have fought for those things for decades. It is why the advocacy for WPOs is part of a much, much bigger tradition, but it is the same principle: workers deserve to have a voice, workers deserve to have respect and workers deserve protection.

I thank the SDA and others for their role in making this legislation happen, for bringing this bill to the table and for working with the Carroll Labor government, working with successive attorneys-general and with others in this government to ensure that we have laws which keep workers safe. Laws like this do not come out of nowhere; they come from workers raising their concerns, from those concerns being heard by their parliamentary representatives and from their industrial representatives bringing bills to this place which will make a change. So I commend this bill to the house, and I hope it has a speedy passage.

David SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) (15:01): I rise to speak on the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026 and say at the very outset that the Liberal–Nationals support workers, we support small businesses and we understand without having those workers properly protected in the workplace and supporting the workplace, then we would not be able to have those businesses survive and thrive. We know that the number of employees that are supported through small businesses represents over half of employees across the state. It is so significant in terms of those that rely on their livelihoods and are supported through many of those small businesses.

I am quite sick of this government trying to play games with something that is so important as this. It is not a them and us. It is always ideological when it comes to the Labor Party. It is always hating on and bashing up small business, and it is always, 'Oh, you Liberals don't understand workers or don't care about workers.' I think this is an absolute example of the fact that we do care. And I can demonstrate this, because back in November of last year we actually provided a set of frameworks of policy that could have been debated in this chamber, supported in this chamber in a bipartisan manner, and have had workplace protection orders in place. But instead, what does this government call it? A stunt, because if it is not the government's idea then it is a stunt. Nobody else can have an idea except the Allan–Andrews–Carroll governments. Premiers and former Premiers – none of them can have such an idea.

This absolutely goes to show it, because what we had at that time was the ability to bring workplace protection orders in, supported by retailers and supported by the Shop, Distributive & Allied Employees' Association. I was very proud to meet with the SDA, work through it with them and see the frustration that the SDA had with not being able to get these laws up. And this is something that the retailers had as well. We had Bunnings stand out at the front here with their workers, talking about how vulnerable they were. We had a number of retailers – Coles, Kmart – also involved. We had Independent Grocers of Australia, the independent stores, also involved. A number of these retail stores all time and time again said to the government, 'You've got to do something.' If you look at the

time it has taken until now to get this law debated in the chamber, that is 100,000 assaults that we could have avoided if we had actually brought the laws in back in November. Now this government says, 'We're getting on with it.' What does getting on with it look like? Getting on with it looks like this law not coming into place until 26 July 2027. By that time we will have another 100,000 assaults in Victoria because we do not have the protection. So this government can cry me a river when it comes to supporting and backing workers. How about actually backing them by introducing these laws and having them implemented tomorrow? What are we waiting for?

We will go into another busy Christmas period where these workers are the most vulnerable, where you have customers at their worst running around in retail stores. Where is the protection this Christmas? MIA. The government gets up here and grandstands and says, 'We're for the worker.' But when they have got a chance of backing workers, protecting workers, they are running a mile and saying, 'We'll do it in a year and a half.' Bad luck – it is too late. Everything is too late with this government. Every 50 seconds we see a crime committed in this state. Every 10 minutes we see a theft from a retail store. Every 28 minutes there is a serious assault. Every week there are nine carjackings. There are over 1500 police vacancies on top of those that are on extended WorkCover. We have got police vacancies. We will deliver the 3000 police that are needed. The government talked about PSOs today. We announced back in November an additional 200 PSOs – again this government is late to the party. We also announced back then Jack's law, to take knives off the hands of criminals before they use them. What was the government's answer? $13 million worth of machete bins. Let us not use other people's ideas from Queensland that are working – no, this government just wants to spend $13 million on machete bins, and crooks will hand the machetes into a police station on their way back from committing a crime. What a joke. What an absolute waste of money this has been.

This government has the audacity to stand up here and say, 'We're for the worker. We're protecting people. We're out there supporting people.' The only thing that the government are protecting is their jobs. The only thing that they care about is their own jobs. This government do not care about retail workers, because if the government cared about retail workers they would support the amendment that the member for Brighton has put up today. The amendment talks about bringing these laws forward. Let us not wait until July next year. What are you waiting for? You have had this for over a year. You want to wait another 11 months? What a joke. What are you waiting for? Is it because the government have again not done their homework and instead are governing by press release? The government are presiding over a crime crisis and have done nothing to tackle the crime crisis other than issuing press release after press release after press release, and all we see as a result of it is a revolving door of crime. Police do their job. They arrest and take them through the courts, and off they go. They get let out again. That is why things need to change.

These workplace protection orders need to work. It is no use if the definition is so broad that we pass a bit of legislation today only to find that we see workers intimidated at the check-out, intimidated in the retail store, feeling vulnerable and not feeling supported. We know for many of these retail workers it is their first job. They are young people in their first job. They need to be supported more than anybody, and they are not. This government has failed them. The government keeps talking about being for the worker – 'Labor for the worker'. If Labor is for the worker, Labor should have done this 18 months ago. If Labor is for the worker, Labor should support our amendments today and have them implemented before Christmas, before the busy period, before the most vulnerable are going to be targeted again. That is what this government needs to do if they are serious, rather than having to worry about being governed by press release and spin, because that is what this government is very good at doing. This government are very, very good at spin, making it up as they go along.

Our amendments are very simple. Our amendments are to amend the date of commencement of royal assent, removing the July 2027 default period, extend the right to apply for an order to police, so the police that are there, and it will give them the opportunity to apply the right too. Our amendments will expand the industry definition of 'the worker' to capture all retail and service-based industries instead of only retail and transport. Let us cover everybody. Let us not be picky and choosy; let us make sure

that everybody is covered in this. Our amendments will require victim consent in seeking an order, except in cases of police applicants, because again, we need to put victims first. That is why we will ensure that we have victim consent in everything that we do, and we would encourage the government to do the same. We have said many retailers, like Woolworths, BWS, Bunnings and Coles, have written to the Labor government begging for action on retail crime, saying:

> Without urgent action from the Victorian government, these already alarming trends will continue to worsen. This will further impact the safety of retail workers, the viability of businesses, and community confidence across the state.

I have been through the state. I have been to the likes of Shepparton to look at a Rebel store that only opens one side of the store because it cannot deal with the other side because of the crime coming through. I have seen stores have to close completely because of the safety issues. We have seen it with the firebombing. We have seen retail stores really suffering. It has gone from firebombing tobacco to firebombing restaurants. Only in Victoria are we seeing these kinds of threats: the machete attacks in retail stores that continue despite the government spending $13 million on machete bins. What a waste of taxpayer money that was. What a joke that was. If the government were serious, they would bring in these WPOs straightaway. They would get on with the job, stop talking about it, ensure the safety of all workers, put them first and listen to retailers, listen to small business and listen to the very workers that they claim to support, claim to protect and claim to stand up for. This is not a political exercise; this is about worker safety.

Nina TAYLOR (Albert Park) (15:11): It is extremely disappointing in fact to see the behaviour that is not infrequently manifested against people in their place of work, and my seat is not excluded from that either. I have had traders in my area complain in particular about certain people who often attack young females and just pick on them and frighten them to the extent that sometimes they cannot even recruit young women. They are of the appropriate age to work – let me put that in those parameters – but they will not do the pm shifts, particularly in places like Acland Street et cetera, because of some of this dreadful antagonistic behaviour. It is not only there. Also, in parts of South Melbourne I have had retail traders complain about the behaviour of certain persons, whether it is a cafe, whether it is a clothing store or whether it is a bar. They are really taking advantage of people literally just trying to earn a living and to provide a quality service. There would be other parts of my seat as well. I have been very alive to these elements. This is why I am so pleased about these reforms – and it is an evolution of reform in this space; it is not a beginning point – because they are not only sending a signal but specifically targeting behaviours which are completely unacceptable: violence, threats, intimidation. They are building on offences we have introduced for attacking workers. This scheme will allow another flexible layer of protection.

Under this scheme someone who engages in unacceptable conduct against a retail or transport worker at their workplace can now be banned from that workplace, because they should not have to fear coming to work and having these very inappropriate behaviours manifest against them for no good reason at all. These workplace protection orders can also be subject to any other conditions that the court considers necessary, hence the flexibility of the model. I think that we do need to be careful when we are talking about the due diligence that has been undertaken to make sure that these workplace protection orders actually can have the desired impact. Therefore making sure that the legislation is appropriately crafted is important.

There is a broad discretion in the conditions that a court can order. Examples of this might include a requirement that the person not contact the worker, not access a particular shopping centre or parking lot, not come within a specific distance, not engage in threatening behaviour at a particular location et cetera. This therefore allows a necessary element of nuance to be able to target where and how that particular person or persons is making the lives of our retail and transport workers really unpalatable, to say the least. Because the safety of workers is non-negotiable, breaching any condition of a workplace protection order will be a criminal offence. Penalties of up to two years imprisonment or a fine of over $50,000 will apply.

Another really important element of this reform is ensuring that employers and unions will be able to make these applications on behalf of impacted workers. This is a really important feature because this means the burden of protecting workers at their workplace does not fall on individual workers. I can imagine that particularly for some younger workers – but not only them; people have different personalities and different ways that they handle stress and difficult situations – making sure it does not fall on individual workers who have been subjected to unacceptable conduct is a really important foundation in terms of making sure these reforms will be carried through.

'Unacceptable conduct' means physical violence or abuse, sexual violence or abuse, stalking or anything that causes a reasonable fear of harm. This new scheme will operate alongside and in addition to existing criminal sanctions. That is another important element. It is not in a silo; it is not in isolation. There are other reforms that have led the way, if you like, to these further protections for the benefit of retail and transport workers. I should say, businesses will also still be able to take all the steps they are currently able to in order to protect their workers. This scheme is about providing an additional tool in the toolkit to ensure workers are safe at work. Hence this is not the magic pudding, this is not the whole story, and I think painting it that way is a distortion. We need to see it in the whole framework of the various protections and legislation that are already in place.

At the same time as making sure that these new orders are accessible and effective to protect workers from unacceptable conduct, we have also carefully designed them to make sure that courts can take into account the specific context and circumstances of each situation. The courts are required to consider whether making an order is and any conditions under that order are appropriate in all circumstances. Furthermore, an order must be sought within 12 months of unacceptable conduct occurring against the worker and can last for up to 12 months. We can see – well, I would like to put it forward to the chamber – that these are reasonable boundaries to ensure the timeliness of applications in this domain. I should say a further caveat: the courts are only able to make an order when they are satisfied that unacceptable conduct is likely to occur again – it is not just a once-off – if not for the order. Therefore the order has a sound rationale for being put in place because it is actually genuinely seeking to prevent a repetition of disgraceful behaviour. Orders cannot be obtained against people younger than 14 years old or against another staff member at the same workplace, and there will be, importantly, a statutory review of the scheme three years after commencement to make sure it is working effectively and as intended to protect workers.

Who is covered under this scheme? The scheme covers workers at retail and transport workplaces. Retail workers include all workers in workplaces that are primarily retail businesses – that is, whose business is primarily selling things. This includes retail in the traditional sense but also may include something like a restaurant, which is primarily selling food and/or drink to customers. Transport workers include workers on passenger trains, trams or buses; those who work in valid ticket areas; and those who work where tickets are sold.

There were a number of points made about why only now and why this has not already been done, and I think it is important to think about the key stakeholders who are involved in terms of being able to enforce these orders. We have worked closely with stakeholders – and I am going to get to those stakeholders because that is significant in this discussion – to ensure that the scheme can commence as quickly as possible, on 26 July 2027. This is necessary to provide the minimum necessary amount of time for agencies to be ready to operationalise this novel new scheme, including for Victoria Police to be ready to assist. You say, 'Bring it forward immediately.' Well, we do have to factor in how the actual stakeholders are going to enforce this. We are working with them to make sure it has the greatest possible impact and also for the courts to be ready to hear applications and make these new orders to ensure that criminal processes which might be running alongside are not jeopardised and to ensure that the justice system is ready. I think, respectfully, you can see that there is a logic behind the proposed implementation timeline, and therefore passing this legislation is very, very important so that we can stick to that timeline.

I would like to close out by saying that I do give thanks to workers more broadly, but specifically I do want to reflect on those who may have already to date experienced things they should never have had to experience. It is completely unacceptable. Certainly I do take on board and have listened very closely and carefully to traders in my seat, and therefore I am pleased and I will be sharing with this them, assuming the timely passage of this legislation, that there are further controls being put in place to keep workers safe in their workplaces, as they are entitled to be.

Cindy McLEISH (Eildon) (15:21): I am pleased to rise and have the opportunity to speak on the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. What we have here is the creation of a scheme of civil workplace protections orders which are aimed at keeping our retail and transport workers safe in their workplace. I think it is important for us to all take a moment and reflect that this is a new bill; it is not an amendment to an existing bill. I wondered whether it could not have been incorporated into the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, but that was not to be at this time. Sadly, though, there is a real need for us to be implementing this legislation, because things are not like they used to be. Things have got a lot worse. People are on much higher levels of adrenaline and tension and treat people very, very poorly. The bill is targeted to retail workers and workers in passenger transport, and it is about unacceptable conduct at the workplace from others where they are fearful that they may be harmed in some way. This is about repeated actions as well. The opposition, as has been mentioned already, is not opposing the bill at all, but we do not think it is quite right and have some amendments that we will be introducing and talking through here and introducing again in the Council.

Too often workers in these settings have been subjected to violence, physical abuse, harassment and stalking, whether that is to or from work, and people hanging around. They might follow them, and then they are hanging around in the workplace and making people feel very uneasy. As I mentioned earlier, this is about repeated acts – repeated acts of violence, repeated acts of abuse and harassment – and that stalking and hanging around where people are uncomfortable, and workers too often have experienced this. The workplace orders are at the core of this legislation, and they limit access of somebody to a workplace and/or to a worker, and I think that is really at the nub of this, that we are restricting access to areas where people have pretty well been behaving poorly in a number of different ways.

The workplace orders that will be put in place occur at a normal place of business during normal hours, and that can vary. If you are at the food court at the casino, which may finish at midnight or later, the regular operating hours might be different to a food court in another area which shuts up shop by 6 o'clock or 4 o'clock. It is not just in retail areas but, as I mentioned earlier, in passenger transport, so on the train, tram or bus or in the ticketing area. These workplace orders can be in place for 12 months. If somebody is looking to have that revoked or altered in any way, they can apply to the court. The legislation allows for flexibility so that somebody can still get access to goods and services should they require them. Sometimes in regional areas the services are much less, as you would know, Acting Speaker Farnham. They are much more limited than in the city, and options and availability can be quite limited at times. Also, there is a statutory review three years from commencement. I think those sorts of things are always particularly useful.

I want to mention just briefly that we have occupational health and safety law in Victoria, the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, which is about protecting people from health and safety risks arising from work and workplace activities. This is something that is a bit different. Although an employer has an obligation to secure the health, safety and welfare of employees and other people at work and look at eliminating or reducing workplace hazards, this is something that probably was not really thought about: exactly what you do in these situations. An employer does need to have a workplace that is safe for their employees, absolutely, but they are limited in something like this as to how they keep that pest away – that person who is abusive, who is hanging around all the time, saying things and making people feel very uncomfortable and fearing for their own safety. I think that having this in place is not a bad thing.

Among the sorts of abuse that workers are subject to is verbal hostility. That can be shouting or swearing, mocking over policies or pricing, and insulting, derogatory remarks. People might come in every single day and continue to do this – that physical assaulting, whether they are shoving or pushing. Sometimes it can be pushing with shopping trolleys filled with stuff. Often they may be people who have a substance abuse issue who continue to behave like this, and the staff will know. People know – 'Oh, here's that person again' – and feel fearful. It could be something like sexual harassment, making unwanted or intimidatory comments and threats, like threatening to get somebody fired, or tracking them to their car – things like that.

We have got a few concerns. This is why that we have got some amendments in place. It has taken a long time to get here, and the government have tried to mock what work we have done in this space previously to try to push this along and get it up. In November last year when the member for Caulfield was working on this he actually worked with the Shop, Distributive & Allied Employees' Association, and they were exceptionally frustrated that they could not get headway to get this up and running through the government benches. But I think now that we are closer to an election people in this place who perhaps will benefit from SDA donations want to sweeten them up a little bit and are a lot more open to getting these changes done. Let me tell you, 12 months ago they were very, very frustrated with the government. It has taken quite some time, and it is going to be another 11 months before this is implemented. In that time, on current numbers, there will be another 100,000 assaults on retail workers. So in the time between passing this legislation and it being implemented, given the rate of assaults on retail workers, that is what you could very easily predict will happen.

We would like to see the right to apply for an order extended. At the moment it is the operators, so whether they are retail operators or the tram, train or bus operators, they can do it – and of course the unions can do it independently of the operators, but they have got to let any relevant eligible applicant know – but the police cannot. Often if there is an issue going on where somebody is consistently harassing people – we would know this with our offices, and we will get security involved and sometimes they will get the police involved – the police are there. They might think, 'Actually, this is what we need. A workplace protection order is a good solution here.' So we would like to see the right to apply for an order extended to the police. They do not need to be the lead agent at all. But the perpetrators might be so bad that that power should be there to draw on should it be needed, because as I mentioned, it is the police who are there to protect in times of a crime. And when things get pretty dicey, that 000 call to the police will be first up.

We want to expand the industry definition of 'worker' to capture all retail and service-based industry instead of just retail and transport. We have got to distinguish here between goods and services. The Shadow Attorney-General, the member for Brighton, referred to an example of a cinema complex where the cinema workers are not covered but the retail workers at shops just beside them are covered.

We would like to see the date of commencement brought forward. We do not want to wait another 11 months; we think that is too long. We would also like the victim to consent in terms of when an order has been sought, except perhaps in the case of police application. But if somebody is applying for a workplace protection order for a particular worker, they should be consenting to it happening. If that was me in a particular situation, if somebody wanted to make something on my behalf, I would actually like to have the opportunity to say yea or nay rather than just have no say in the matter at all. They are fairly simple amendments and very reasonable amendments that I think could be dealt with a little bit more in the other place, and I hope that they can get dealt with. At the end of the day, though, the opposition will not be opposing this legislation.

Kathleen MATTHEWS-WARD (Broadmeadows) (15:31): I am really proud to rise today in support of the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. For over 100 years the mighty SDA has worked towards better wages and conditions for workers, and I am so proud that my dad was part of their history as both an organiser and an assistant state secretary. We grew up knowing the importance of unions and their role in making sure workers and their rights were protected. Michael Donovan has recently celebrated 30 years at the SDA and has achieved much, including recognition of public

holidays and most recently the 'adult wage for adult age' campaign, which has seen the Fair Work Commission recognise that 18-year-olds do not get discounts on rent or utilities and as adults deserve the same wages as anyone else.

The SDA began the No-one Deserves a Serve campaign in 2017, and in 2025 they surveyed members in relation to the nature and prevalence of abuse and violence by customers. Over 3000 retail and fast-food employees provided feedback on their experiences. The survey found that in the preceding 12 months 88 per cent of workers said they had experienced verbal abuse from a customer, 25 per cent had been the victim of physical violence from a customer, a shocking 10 per cent of respondents said they had been spat on and 19 per cent of respondents reported that the incidents they experienced were of a sexual nature. The survey also asked whether workers had experienced abuse, harassment or violence from a customer that referenced their ethnicity, race or cultural background. Tragically, 31 per cent of workers responded that they had – almost one in three. Those workers who identified as other than white were most likely to have been spat on by a customer – absolutely abhorrent and disgusting in every way. I am really ashamed of those on the other side who continue to stay silent on the race-baiting and violence encouraged by One Nation, because their only pathway to government is a coalition with them. They do not deserve a seat in this place, and they should be deeply ashamed of themselves, as should those who abuse workers.

Workplace aggression and abuse can have long-lasting effects on workers' physical and mental health, with stress and anxiety impacting almost three-quarters of workers, which is why this bill is so important. One of our Premier's first actions was to announce today's bill at his first workplace, Kmart in Airport West, where so many start their first jobs, including my best friend's daughter, who I have known since she was in kindergarten with my daughter. As a kid myself, I just could not wait until I was 14 and nine months to get a part-time job. My first job was at the Chicken Machine, a Glenroy institution with the best chips and gravy and roast chooks in town. My next part-time job was at Payless Superbarn, which was renamed Festival IGA and is now the Pascoe Vale Road Market. This is where I joined the SDA. I found my membership card from 1995 the other day: member 3556. I am not sure what member number they are up to now, but I am sure it is no longer a four-digit number, given they represent over 200,000 workers across Australia. Back in 1995 the worst that I had to put up with was old blokes singing the Foster and Allen song *I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen* to me. Whilst I was lucky to never need the union, I always felt that they had my back and I happily paid my dues so that workers across Australia had the collective advocacy and protections they needed.

Sadly, abuse and disrespect are so much more common these days, and for nearly 10 years the SDA has made it a priority focus. I thank the union workers who support and represent workers every day, and those who have pushed and advocated for this important legislation, including Michael Galea in the other place, who stood beside the Premier in Kmart where these reforms were announced, and my good friend Daniela, the member for Monbulk, who spoke so well on this earlier today and of her experience working at the union as well as being a retail worker and a shop owner. Whilst customer abuse has been a priority focus for the union for over 10 years, COVID brought the issue front and centre to the wider public's attention, with workers getting abused over toilet paper – a sad indictment on society.

I believe one of the best things you can do for your kids is encourage them to get a part-time job where they learn responsibility, time management and self-sufficiency. While my teenage kids both now have part-time jobs, I do worry about them being abused or sexually assaulted at work. Statistics show my worry for them and all customer-facing workers is justified. Three incidents last week by a repeat offender at the Broadmeadows shopping centre where my office is show why this legislation is so important. The perpetrator has been arrested, but the fear and trauma for the workers will live on. I thank Ali Haider, security manager, for meeting with me about these incidents. I thank the security guards on the front line of this abuse and the local police, who work so hard every day to ensure the community is safe and that perpetrators are held accountable.

Community safety is the Carroll Labor government's number one priority, and we have introduced the toughest bail laws in the country. Offenders must face consequences. The courts need to play their role, ensuring community expectations are met and people are kept safe and have confidence that our justice system will keep them and their loved ones free from harm. In this place we make the laws. Police are doing their very best to enforce the laws, and it is the courts' job to give effect to the laws made in this place.

Today's announcement of 150 extra PSOs has been warmly welcomed, and I thank Premier Carroll and Minister Edbrooke for allocating these important extra resources to support the critical work of our police. Just like the courts, police are independent of government due to the separation of powers, one of the fundamental tenets of our democracy. The police decide where PSO resources are most needed based on crime data. The successful Operation Pulse has seen the deployment of PSOs in shopping centres. It has resulted in 84 per cent of customers feeling safer, and retail theft is down by over 70 per cent. More than 1700 arrests have been made and more than 3500 charges laid since it started. Our police also do a wonderful job keeping us safe, and our police force is larger than every other state and territory's. We have invested over $4.5 billion and funded more than 3600 new police. The PSOs play a critical role in supporting Victoria Police, and it is heartening to know that many of them go on and join the police force and they appreciate the special pathways that have been opened for them to do so. Today's announcement significantly expands the number of PSOs across the state and goes hand in hand with this legislation, making people – and importantly workers – feel safe in their workplaces and as they go about their daily activities.

This legislation also complements the previous laws that we have passed to crack down on crimes against customer-facing workers, such as assault and using threatening, abusive, obscene or offensive language. The Crimes Amendment (Retail, Fast Food, Hospitality and Transport Worker Harm) Bill 2025 introduced a new indictable offence for assaulting or threatening to assault one of these workers and carries a penalty of up to five years in jail. Importantly, it protects workers both on shift or on a break, as well as when they are arriving at or leaving work. It includes not just workers that perform customer-facing duties in retail or hospitality, but also others that unfortunately experience threatening behaviour going about their work, such as cleaners in food courts or security guards in shopping centres. The bill also covers customer-facing workers in transport, including bus drivers, taxi and rideshare drivers, delivery drivers and people working at train stations.

Today's Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026 goes even further to back our workers and address unacceptable conduct such as violence, sexual abuse, stalking or threats towards staff. It will target repeat offenders, who make up nearly 60 per cent of incidents. A workplace protection order, or WPO, can be sought as a flexible order and used to ban people from the workplace or impose specific conditions that the court considers applicable to protect the worker – for example, not contacting the worker, not accessing a particular shopping centre and not coming within a specified distance from a workplace. The workplace protection orders will be kept in place for up to 12 months, and breaches of their conditions will carry a significant criminal consequence of up to two years imprisonment, a fine of up to $50,000 or both.

Retail and passenger transport workers are crucial to the Victorian employment landscape and to our economy. Everyone deserves to feel safe at work. This legislation will protect retail and specified transport workers from the unfortunate few who think it is okay to subject other people to unacceptable violence, abuse, stalking and other harassment. The bill sends a clear message to the community that the work of retail and passenger transport workers is valued and that it is never okay to abuse or threaten these workers who are doing their job. Thankfully, the majority of my community acknowledge that our workers deserve respect. This bill is to combat those who do not and to keep workers protected from them. All the workers I know and work with will warmly welcome the protection this bill and this Carroll Labor government afford them. I commend the bill to the house.

Gabrielle DE VIETRI (Richmond) (15:41): I rise today to speak on the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. Every worker deserves to feel safe at work, and no-one should be threatened or

attacked in their workplace. For that reason I can appreciate the intention of this bill, but it is a risky kneejerk reaction that ignores the symptoms that are causing poor behaviour directed towards workers. The fact of the matter is that this bill and these orders will disproportionately impact First Nations people and those experiencing homelessness, addiction or mental ill health. It risks pushing more vulnerable people into our criminal legal system without doing anything to address the reasons they behaved this way in the first place.

Banning people from public transport will have a huge impact on already marginalised communities. Think about those out in regional and rural Victoria. Banning someone from train or bus services could have vast impacts on their lives and make it impossible for them to get to work, to visit family or to see a doctor. This will have an even bigger impact on young people who do not have the option to drive. Many teenagers rely heavily on public transport to get around. If they are banned from a particular train or a station – we are not even clear how these bans will actually operate yet – what sort of effect will this have on them? Including public transport in these apparent workplace bans really takes them to a whole new level.

The bill introduces these workplace protection orders, or WPOs, which allow retail, hospitality and public transport operators to ban people from accessing the location following 'unacceptable behaviour' that has been committed at some point over the past 12 months. I absolutely want our retail, hospo and transport workers to be safe at work, but allowing shops and stations to ban people access for up to a year is not an appropriate solution. There is just too much risk that these bans will be used disproportionately against First Nations people, people of colour and people who need mental health support or housing. The government's own statement of treaty compatibility had to admit that the First Peoples' Assembly was not provided with a copy of the bill. The compatibility statement says:

> The Assembly understands that extensive feedback was provided by First Peoples experts and organisations to the State and that the substantive concerns raised have not been addressed. The Assembly has significant concerns about the disproportionate impact that the Workplace Protection Order scheme may have on First Peoples.

The same statement of compatibility also admits:

> There is a risk that First Peoples will be disproportionately the subject of WPOs given their overrepresentation in the criminal justice system.

And it says:

> Given that WPOs may be made against any person aged 14 or older, there is also a risk that the new offence will increase the number of young First Peoples persons in detention or otherwise engaged with the criminal justice system.

The government needs to be investing in mental health services and in addiction support. We need desperately to build more public housing. If people in our community are well supported to live secure, healthy, connected lives, then they are much less likely to cause strife to workers. If people are actually committing violent crimes or abuse, these things are already illegal and can be dealt with in the usual manner. The threshold of unacceptable behaviour that can trigger a ban is extremely low and extremely vague. What I do not want to see is this ban being used to keep undesirables out of shops or unable to access public transport. Workers need to be safe at work; there is no argument at all on that. If people are committing crimes, such as physical or sexual violence, stalking and so on, then they should be held accountable under the existing laws. We will not stand by and support a law that, by the government's own admission, is likely to have a disproportionate impact on First Nations people, who are already racialised and already overpoliced. The Greens will oppose this bill, and we will be considering amendments in the other place.

Kat THEOPHANOUS (Northcote) (15:46): I rise to speak in strong support of the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. In Northcote we are incredibly proud of our local shops, cafes, restaurants and our beautiful retail precincts. High Street has even been named, and is the proud titleholder of, the coolest street in the world. That is something that brings visitors from near and far to our suburbs. Of

course, behind the venues that make up our wonderful retail precincts, which we all love, are the thousands of people simply doing their jobs – the person opening the cafe really early in the morning, the young person on the supermarket check-out at Northcote Plaza, the pharmacy worker helping someone access their medication, the shop assistant working late, the tram driver getting people home.

Some 2.8 per cent of employed people in Northcote work in cafes and restaurants. It is above the Victorian average of 2.4 per cent and the fourth largest industry of employment in my electorate. Another 6 per cent of employees in Northcote are sales workers, and these workers form an enormous part of our local economy, our community and the fabric of our suburbs. They should be able to go to work, to do their job and to come home safely. For many young Victorians, a supermarket, a cafe, a fast-food restaurant, a local shop or a clothing store is their first experience of work. Around a third of retail workers are under the age of 24, and most retail workers are women.

Your first job should be about earning some money, learning some new skills and gaining some independence. It should not be where you learn that being screamed at is something that you should tolerate, and it certainly should not be somewhere you are expected to accept violence, yet almost nine in 10 retail workers have reported experiencing verbal abuse. More than half of retailers report experiencing physical abuse monthly or even more often, and around 800,000 retail crime incidents were reported across Australia in a single year. Behind every one of those statistics is a person who has to come back and do their next shift, and that is hard.

There are particular workers who do find themselves on the front line. I recall just a few weeks ago my husband and I were at one of the local restaurants in Northcote on High Street. We went for dinner, and we were just chatting casually to one of the floor staff. We could see that she was a little bit off, and so we inquired a little bit. Just a few hours earlier they had had a really awful incident with a customer who became increasingly aggressive, asking for things that were not on the menu and demanding more alcohol, to the point where they ended up smashing the front door glass pane of the restaurant itself. These workers and the team that are at that restaurant pulled themselves together and carried on. They kept going with the lunch service and the dinner service, but you could see that they were shaken up. They were shaken and rattled by it, yet they had to just persevere. That is not what we want in Victoria.

People should not have to face threats or intimidation or violence just for doing their jobs and for serving people, so Labor does not accept that violence and abuse are simply part of doing the job. That belief sits within a much longer record that we have in Victoria. When we have seen gaps in the protections available to working people, the Victorian Labor government has acted. We have introduced workplace manslaughter laws that I was very proud to speak on, because nobody should go to work and then not come home and because the most serious failures to keep workers safe should have serious consequences. We established labour hire licensing to tackle exploitation and lift standards for vulnerable workers. We established portable long service leave in industries where the nature of employment means workers could otherwise spend years doing the same work without ever receiving that entitlement. We strengthened protections against sexual harassment at work through restricting the use of non-disclosure agreements. And last year, when retail, fast food, hospo and transport workers told us about the violence and abuse they were experiencing, we acted again: we introduced new criminal offences for assaulting, threatening and intimidating these workers. Serious assault or threats of assault can now attract up to five years imprisonment, alongside separate offences for lower level assaults, threats and intimidation.

These reforms all respond to different problems, but there is a common principle behind them: the law should keep pace with what people are experiencing at work. That brings us directly to this bill, because after strengthening the consequences for attacking a worker, there was another practical problem we needed to address. What happens when they come back? What happens when someone has already threatened a pharmacy worker or a shop assistant or a supermarket worker and they know exactly where that person will be the next day? What happens when someone has repeatedly caused trouble at the same workplace and the people working there see them walking towards the door again?

The criminal law can deal with what someone has already done, but the workplace protection orders give us another way to help prevent them from doing it again, and that is the gap that this bill addresses.

Where someone has engaged in unacceptable conduct at a covered workplace, there is a true likelihood that they will do it again, and a court can consider an order appropriate, and the protections can be put in place. That might mean preventing someone from returning to the workplace. It might mean preventing them from contacting a worker. It could mean requiring them to stay away from a particular shopping centre or car park or to keep a specified distance from the workplace. And the orders have teeth: breaching a workplace protection order will be a criminal offence carrying up to two years imprisonment, a fine of more than $50,000 or both. Importantly, the worker who has already been subjected to that behaviour does not then have to carry the entire responsibility of seeking protection themselves: an eligible employer can seek an order on behalf of their workers.

Registered employee unions can also apply, including independently, where an employer is unable or unwilling to act. That gives workers more than one pathway to protection and recognises something very practical: someone who has already been assaulted, stalked or seriously threatened should not simply be told what happens next is entirely up to them. This is an additional tool for workplaces to keep their people safe, and I know there will be questions about the scope of this scheme, but what about workers in other industries, that sort of thing? Those workers matter too, and this bill does not suggest otherwise, nor does it pretend to solve every form of occupational violence in every workplace, but it establishes a targeted new preventative scheme for particular customer-facing workplaces where there is a demonstrated problem of repeat, unacceptable conduct. It also builds on the broader criminal protections we introduced last year, which extend across retail, fast food, hospitality and transport. People on the front line told government they needed another way to deal with repeat threatening and violent behaviour. Employers told us they needed another tool to keep their workplaces safe, and we listened, and this is the outcome of that listening.

There is also a bit of a political history here that is worth reflecting on. The protections working Victorians have today did not simply appear out of nowhere: people fought for safer workplaces; they fought for fair pay and decent conditions; they fought for leave and time with their families; and they fought for the principle that when you go to work your employer and your government have obligations to you too. The mighty union movement has been at the centre of those fights, and I particularly want to acknowledge the SDA and the Transport Workers Union for their collective action and their leadership across many domains of workers rights. Our Labor government has turned so many of their principles into rights protected in law, and that history matters because workplace protections can never be taken for granted.

We know the Liberal Party's record when it comes to strengthening workplace rights, and now Victorians face the prospect of a Liberal Party increasingly looking to One Nation for support – a party with its own woeful record of opposing stronger rights and protections for working people. There is a very big difference between putting on a high-vis vest and shaking the hand of a retail worker for a photo and actually doing the work of government and strengthening rights for the person wearing that retail outfit. When politicians argue that workplace protections have gone too far, working people are entitled to ask: which protections? Which protections have gone too far? We do not think any have gone too far, and we will defend them to the last. I commend the bill.

Tim BULL (Gippsland East) (15:56): It is a pleasure to rise to make a contribution on this bill. We have got a cohort of people in our community who you would probably best describe as gutless individuals who think it is okay and see fit to assault, spit on and abuse people who are doing their job. I think it is, to a large degree, unfortunate that we have to bring in legislation like this. It is a blight on our society that we need to bring in harsher penalties for those who are abusing people who are simply doing their job, whether they be in retail or transport workers or the like. I can remember in my first term in this place, back in 2014, when we introduced harsher penalties and new laws to better protect emergency services workers because they were getting abused on the job, and subsequent parliaments have also strengthened those laws. We have also had instances where we brought in new laws to afford

greater protections and impose greater disincentives, if you like, for those who would like to abuse teachers. We have also had changes to laws relating to road rage when people lose the plot and go off their head. As I said, it is a sad indictment, I reckon, on society.

You and I, Acting Speaker Farnham, represent rural and regional electorates, and we know that the vast majority of people are good people. They do the right thing. They are respectful. They go about their way of life. When they are under stress or pressure, yes, they might get a bit niggly, but they do not go into abusing, spitting on or assaulting individuals who are doing their jobs. But we have this small cohort of gutless wonders who want to engage in this sort of activity. I cannot believe what I just heard up here a minute ago from the Greens. Our legal system is based on taking into consideration people who have underlying issues or needs, whether they have some form of disability or not. It is up to our magistrates and judges to make those determinations. But we should not be making excuses based on race for appalling behaviour. We have got to have one rule for all in relation to that.

The term in the bill is 'unacceptable conduct'. When we are talking about unacceptable conduct – and I will quote the bill – it covers 'physical violence or abuse', it covers 'sexual violence or abuse', stalking or 'other conduct that causes a person to experience a reasonable fear of harm', so threats. In increasing amounts, we are seeing people engaging in these activities against workers. We cannot have a scenario where, based on your race, whatever it be, you are treated differently, and I note that this bill, in the statement, did not align with the outcomes of treaty because it may result in greater levels of incarceration rates. This bill should not be a consideration for treaty. There is no excuse or exception for appalling behaviour when people are assaulted while doing their own work. It is high time that we made people more accountable for their actions and held them responsible for these inappropriate behaviours that they undertake. We cannot go down the pathway that we just heard a moment ago of making apologies for poor behaviour. That is just not in line with community standards. The judges and our courts and our legal system will make provision for that, but we should not be making laws for different people within our community when it comes to these sorts of actions. It is just not right.

We have read cases in the media in relatively recent times of shop assistants being manhandled and transport industry workers being spat on and constantly abused, and unfortunately we have got to introduce this bill to have these cowards and bullies held accountable for what they are doing. In my own family I have had one of my kids on the receiving end of abuse – she is at uni – at her job over the Christmas period, being abused by some bloody nitwit Neanderthal who thinks it is fit as an adult male to abuse a young female for basically no reason. These are just self-entitled fools who think that they have the right to impose their anger or their frustrations on others who are completely innocent, and I will make the point that for young people it can have very profound consequences. If a young person is off at work and they are seriously abused, they are spat on – which we have seen in some cases – or they are manhandled, it can have an impact on that young person's life for an extended period of time. We do not need to be apologists for that. We do not need to be saying, 'Hang on, if this person has experienced this sort of interaction.' There are no excuses for those sorts of behaviours.

I support the amendments that have been put forward by our side, but we support this bill generally. The overwhelming majority of Victorians do do the right thing. It is right that we stand up for those workers and we afford them these greater protections. As I said, it is sad that we have to do that for the gutless few in our community who do not show that level of respect and who maintain that sense of entitlement, and as a result we as legislators now have to make these amendments. Where does it stop, I put to you. In my time in this chamber we have changed the laws to protect emergency workers, we have changed the laws to protect teachers from parents who are going off their cruet, we have changed the laws around road rage. We are constantly coming into this chamber changing laws the basis and the genesis of which is simply a lack of respect for others in the community, and this is the latest raft of those changes. I will conclude my remarks by saying that whether the bill is amended or not, we support the basis of this bill. It is sad that we have to bring this in, but we need to hold these Neanderthals to account and change their behaviour with tougher consequences.

Anthony CIANFLONE (Pascoe Vale) (16:04): I rise to support the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026, and of course, on a sombre note, I just want to acknowledge Van Viet Truong, the 60-year-old owner of the Hong Hung Asian Grocery in Sunshine, whose tragic death obviously deeply affected many people across Melbourne's western suburbs, particularly our Vietnamese community. It is all the more reason why this bill is more important than ever. I am proud to support this bill as the Parliamentary Secretary for Community Safety. I am proud to support it as the member for Pascoe Vale, Coburg and Brunswick West, which is home to so many proud local retail shopping strips right across the community, whether it is the Pentridge precinct, Sydney Road, the Victoria Street mall, Boundary Road, Pascoe Street out the front of Westbreen Primary School, along Devon Road, Coburg North village, the Bell Street–Melville Road shopping precinct with the amazing Mancini hair studio there, the Moreland–Melville roads intersection shops as well, Nicholson Street, Harding Street, Kent Road in Pascoe Vale, Merlyn Street in Merlynston, Albion Street in Brunswick West or so many other little pockets. We are home to so many proud retailers.

I am proud to support this bill as a proud member of the Transport Workers' Union. Many of our workers work day in and day out to carry this country, this state and this community, and they should not be abused by anybody because of their work and what they do. I am also proud to support this as someone who grew up as a hospitality worker in my formative years – from about the age of 12, admittedly – working up and down many of the different restaurants and cafes on Lygon Street over the years as a high school student and then as a university student and beyond. I experienced my fair share of interactions with customers, which overwhelmingly were very, very positive.

I am pleased to support this bill, which complements the Crimes Amendment (Retail, Fast Food, Hospitality and Transport Worker Harm) Act 2025, which we moved in November 2025 to deliver on the Victorian government's commitment to vulnerable customer-facing workers having greater protections against assaults, threats and abuse. The bill creates a new workplace protection order scheme to address unacceptable conduct such as violence, sexual abuse, stalking or threats towards staff in retail and certain transport workplaces. While a workplace protection order – or WPO, as it will be informally known – will be a civil mechanism for preventing harm, breaches of a condition of a WPO will carry a significant criminal consequence of up to two years imprisonment, a fine of approximately $50,000, or both.

Retail and passenger transport workers are absolutely vital to a thriving Victorian community. The retail industry contributes over $73 billion to the Victorian economy annually, while more than 490 million trips were recorded across the Victorian public transport network in 2025. These workers keep our economy growing and keep us moving around our state safely. However, they often experience violence, abuse and harassment just for doing their job. The purpose of the bill is to protect retail and specified transport workers from people likely to engage in repeated acts of unacceptable violence, abuse, stalking or other harassment. The introduction of the WPO scheme safeguards retail and specified transport workers by limiting a person's access to a workplace and/or workers where that person is likely to engage in repeated acts of unacceptable conduct at that workplace. This sends a clear message to the community that the work of passenger transport and retail workers is valued and that it is never okay to abuse or threaten these workers just for doing their job.

Applications for a WPO under the bill may be made under retail operators; specified passenger train, tram or bus operators; or certain registered employee unions where at least one of the workers at the workplace is, or is eligible to be, a member of the union. A union applicant may seek a WPO independently of a retail or transport operator, allowing it to step in where a retail transport operator is unable or unwilling to apply for a WPO. A union applying for a WPO must also notify any other eligible applicants of its intention to apply, and it may be made in relation to a person aged 14 years and above if the court is satisfied that the person has engaged in unacceptable conduct in connection with the retail or specified transport workplace within the previous 12 months, is likely to do so again and the order is appropriate in all circumstances. 'Unacceptable conduct' means physical violence or abuse, sexual violence or abuse, stalking or conduct that causes a person at the workplace to experience

a reasonable fear of harm. A WPO can be sought for unacceptable conduct that occurs at the workplace that is covered by the scheme. In determining any conditions of a WPO, the court must give paramount consideration to the safety and protection of the workers in the workplace but also must have regard to other factors, such as hardship that is likely to be caused by any person subject to the order. The orders may be enforced for a maximum duration of 12 months, and the applicant or the respondent to the WPO may apply to the court to have the WPO revoked or the conditions of that order varied. This is all about improving safety for those in the retail and transport sectors. As I said, it builds on our previous work under the Crimes Amendment (Retail, Fast Food, Hospitality and Transport Worker Harm) Act 2025 of November 2025, because as I said, the economic value of these sectors is absolutely critical.

Across my local community both the transport and indeed the retail sectors play a very, very important role. In terms of local businesses across Merri-bek, retail makes up 7.1 per cent of our local businesses, with 1774 shops. In terms of transport, they are 13 per cent of our local businesses, with 2200 in the transport sector. In terms of retail workers, they make up 8 per cent of the local workforce, with about 7500 employed in retail. In terms of transport workers, there are 4000 local residents, or 4.2 per cent of our local workforce. We know as jobs have grown across these sectors that retail and customer abuse being experienced has, sadly, also continued to rise. This is confirmed by the data, with the Australian Retailers Association reporting some 800,000 retail crime incidents across Australia, 70 per cent of retailers reporting increasing customer theft and 51 per cent of retailers experiencing physical abuse monthly or more. That is just totally unacceptable, and that is why we need to crack down in that regard. The bill contains three offences to address violence and aggression towards workers in these circumstances, including a summary offence of assaulting an applicable customer-facing worker in connection with the worker's duties and a summary offence of using, without lawful excuse, language that is profane, indecent, obscene, threatening, abusive or insulting or otherwise engaging in conduct that is threatening, indecent, offensive or insulting towards an applicable customer-facing worker in connection to their duties. The offences have a maximum six-month imprisonment.

I want to acknowledge the SDA, the Transport Workers' Union and the Rail, Tram and Bus Union for their work and their advocacy in helping us progress these changes. Of course they will also help local safety outcomes through the local retail precincts in my community. For example, on 11 February 2025, last year, the Central Coburg Business Association wrote to me about these very, very issues. They said:

> Addressing safety concerns in Coburg requires an approach that includes both immediate interventions and long-term structural solutions …
>
> - A greater and more visible police presence in Central Coburg would serve as a deterrent to crime and antisocial behaviour. Consideration should be given to a dedicated local unit patrolling high traffic areas such as the Mall, surrounding shopping precincts (Sydney Road, Munro Street, Bell Street) in Central Coburg and public transport hubs.

Safety remains an ongoing issue in Coburg. In response, Merri-bek council has deployed security guards and CCTV outside the Coburg Library, and some traders, particularly those for whom English is a second language, have expressed concerns about engaging with antisocial behaviour and are seeking those effective solutions. As they say, a greater and more visible police presence in central Coburg serves really as the first step as a deterrent to crime and that antisocial behaviour. Many business owners and workers are from those diverse backgrounds and face many barriers reporting the crime, and expanded access to Victoria Police's multilingual support services and proactive community policing efforts would help bridge those gaps. Crime data collection methods and resource allocation should be reviewed to ensure they accurately reflect the safety concerns in the area and support effective responses. Investments in lighting, CCTV and urban design improvements could enhance security in key areas, particularly around the Central Coburg malls, laneways and overall precinct.

This issue intersects with multiple areas of government, including community safety, policing, small business, economic growth, multicultural affairs, local government, mental health, and urban planning. A coordinated cross-portfolio approach is necessary to address these concerns effectively. Safety concerns in Coburg impact business confidence, livability and economic growth. A thriving local economy depends on safe and welcoming spaces where people feel comfortable to work, shop and socialise. Addressing these issues will contribute positively to the community's overall wellbeing and design.

I want to acknowledge a couple of residents who have approached me on these issues, including Layal, who said:

> I am reaching out because in the last few months I've noticed an increase in drug/alcohol/wellbeing affected people in the area …
>
> While walking on Sydney road near Coburg Mall, myself and my baby (luckily she was in the baby carrier) were verbally abused by a lady for no apparent reason as we walked past. She specifically said disgusting words about my baby.
>
> …
>
> I was walking with my husband and baby and a tall largely built man came up to my husbands FACE and asked for money …
>
> I was walking from Sydney road to my home in Pentridge with my four children, including a baby in the pram and the man –

from the earlier incident –

> … Was following us. I turned into urquhart street and by some miracle, a police car had stopped another car. Once I approached the police officers, the man following us turned and walked back in the opposite direction.

And Alex, a local dad, said that back in April 2025, while shopping with his wife and seven-month-old child at Coburg shopping precinct, he was assaulted in broad daylight whilst walking past the Coburg Library. But since these letters and this experience, we are continuing to take strong action in this regard. We are revitalising central Coburg, and we have the activity centre plan and ongoing investments to uplift the entire precinct, including the Victoria Street Mall. Outstanding work has been done by our local Victoria Police through Operation Priority and Operation Bluestone, which are targeting dangerous violent offenders.

Will FOWLES (Ringwood) (16:14): I rise to make a contribution to the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. I am grateful for the opportunity. I do support the intent of this bill. It is an important principle, and I am pleased that I think it broadly has the support of the whole chamber. No worker should go to work expecting to be threatened or intimidated or stalked or assaulted simply because they work in a public-facing role. However, the evidence tells us this is increasingly what retail workers are experiencing. I think anecdotally many of us will have seen it or perhaps not seen it directly but had it reported to us. We certainly know that you basically cannot walk into a workplace anymore without there being some reminder to people to treat their staff with respect. The signage is both unfortunate and probably useless. It is unfortunate that we have to remind people of that basic premise, and it is probably useless because I do not think the sorts of people who are going to behave like that, frankly, are going to take any notice of a sign either. But it nonetheless points to a broader social and cultural issue we have in our retail workspaces around safety and around treating people with just a modicum of decency.

We know that in the year to March 2026, stalking, harassment and threatening behaviour at Victorian retail locations increased by 10 per cent. That is 10 per cent in just one year, and since 2022 they have increased by over a third – in just four years. This appears to be something of a cancer – it is spreading, it is growing and it is making workplaces less and less safe, less and less pleasant and, frankly, less and less like the sorts of places most of us would want to be. That has an impact not just on the workers involved but of course on the commercial viability of the workplaces themselves. There were also – and this is a staggering number – 4823 assault and related offences at Victorian retail locations in the

year to March 2026. That is according to the Australian Retail Council's numbers. That is nearly 5000 assault and related offences at Victorian retail locations last year, nearly 100 a week. That is a breathtaking number. Indeed a survey found that 71 per cent of shoppers had witnessed abuse directed at retail or fast-food workers, and of those that witnessed that abuse – more than two-thirds – more than a quarter had seen physical aggression, 20 per cent had seen sexual harassment or abuse and more than one in 10 had witnessed threats involving a weapon. WorkSafe data also shows that claims for injuries caused by workplace aggression or violence more than doubled between 2014 and 2024, over the space of a decade. Let there be no doubt. There are sometimes bills brought into this place for performative or political purposes. Sometimes they are responding to a manufactured problem, not a real one. That is not the case today. This is a real problem, and it needs a real response. I commend the government for delivering a response. I do have some reservations, and I will get to those in a moment.

The bill creates these workplace protection orders. An employer or an employee can apply for that order, and the court can act where a person has engaged in unacceptable conduct. I think these matters have been pretty well canvassed over the course of this debate, so I want to turn to the issue that I see with this bill, which is about what happens before the protection order is issued. What happens before the worker gets that protection? Under the bill an employer or union makes an application to the court, and that I think is the nub of the issue. The application has to be in writing. Sure, identify the respondent, set out the grounds. All of that makes sense. You have got to serve the details on the respondent. That all makes sense too. But there is no interim step; there is no interim workplace protection order. My submission is that a big gap in the protection that is available to workers. The worker still has to turn up tomorrow, even if they have been repeatedly threatened. Their employer has to believe the behaviour is serious enough to seek a workplace protection order, so there is already one level of review; why then not have an interim system or a system by which these matters are prioritised?

In the briefing that my staff participated in the other day it was clear that the government does not have a view yet about the operationalisation of this bill and does not have a view yet about the likely timeframes between application and receipt of a workplace protection order. That is alarming to me, because it seems to me that if it tracks along at the pace of many other matters before the court, like bail applications, then you are talking about six, nine or 12 months, maybe more. I would say at that point, if you are a 16-year-old working in a retail environment, you are probably long gone by the time the WPO comes through. The reality is that is just simply not quick enough. The period when a worker is waiting for an order may very well be the period when they are in fact most at risk, so I urge the government to make sure that we consider the fastest model, and there are different ways you could go about it.

The opposition has proposed a different model, including allowing police to be the processing agency or allowing police to even make the applications. I support the intent of the amendments put by the member for Brighton. I think they are good amendments. You will not often hear me saying this. I think they are sensible amendments from the member for Brighton. Having things like worker consent; having a mechanism by which police can make application; having a broader definition of the businesses covered to include retail services, for example, hairdressers, beauty services and such like; and making sure that the bill operationalises immediately from assent rather than being pushed back to July 2027 are principles that I support. We will not be voting on those amendments in this chamber. They are textual amendments, but I do support them. Were I to be sitting in the other place I would be supporting those amendments. I assume that the coalition will move those amendments in the other place, and I wish them success in that endeavour.

Coming back to my primary urging to the government, that is around the speed with which these matters are dealt with, I do not think we need to be overly prescriptive about that in legislation. I think there is scope to allow government to make that happen without broadscale legislative amendment, and certainly not the sort of amendment that would defeat the intent of this bill. I urge the government to have a proper think about what mechanisms work. You could just push these things to the front of

the queue, but it comes back to this issue about resourcing of the court system. We know that in planning resourcing creates a huge economic knock-on far greater than the cost of appropriate resourcing. We know that in bail applications the lack of an ability to get a speedy trial means that more and more people are put on bail. That has a consequence to community safety. And more and more people are held in remand, which has an economic consequence. Again, those consequences massively outweigh the cost of resourcing the court system appropriately to deal with those problems. Whether it is bail or whether it is these workplace protection orders, whether it is interim personal violence orders or all manner of those categories of things that come before the courts, the appropriate resourcing of the court system would greatly assist not just the efficient administration of justice but the community safety knock-on effects and the economic knock-on effects. I urge the government to take a proper look at that as well.

I think getting Victoria Police better involved is potentially a means by which these things are sped up, but we should also have a good look at the way in which the lists are managed at the court level so that these matters are dealt with expeditiously, because getting a workplace protection order six, nine or 12 months after the behaviour in question might have exposed that worker to any number of additional unpleasant or unsafe events, and that is absolutely what we do not want to see happening. We need to move quickly to protect the worker who is just frightened to turn up to their next shift. I would urge the government to take a closer look at the ACT. They have workplace protection orders, but they have a mechanism to provide protection in advance of the final order being issued. By having interim orders you have the ability to make sure that protection is in place. The scheme defaults to protecting the worker as the interim measure before it is dealt with finally by the court. I think that would be a preferable process in this circumstance. Ultimately the question should be simple: if a worker is threatened today, what is going to protect them tomorrow? We ought to make sure that the system is as responsive and as speedily responsive as it possibly can be. These court delays matter, and protection delayed very likely will be protection denied. Worker safety ought to be paramount. We need to make sure that this bill responds to that very real threat in our community in a way that is balanced but also quick.

John LISTER (Werribee) (16:24): It is a privilege to be in this place as someone who for many years worked in retail in Werribee as well as around the City of Melbourne and has seen my own fair share of violence directed towards retail workers and customer-facing workers. It is something that is shocking. No-one deserves a serve, and I really want to make sure that I put this bill that is in front of us, the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026, in the context of some of the work that I have been doing out on the ground for the last 12 to 18 months since I was elected around understanding the problem, consulting with the community and consulting with their representatives, because in the end listening is one of the most important things that we can do in this place. We are making sure that what we put forward in legislation is not just done for political point-scoring and stunts but going to stand the test of our criminal justice system, because community safety is our priority on this side.

From my experience teaching at Wyndham Central College I recall a couple of cases where I would have my year 10s come in and talk about how the night before someone came up and was yelling in their face. They are a regular that comes in and just gets angry. We have seen an increase in this kind of behaviour towards people who are just doing their jobs – an increase in aggressive behaviour but also violent behaviour. It has been increasing over these past years. There have been a lot of different social pressures out there that have led to this increase, and there has been a lot written about this. But what is important about this bill is that it puts together a scheme that is structured in a way that will work, and it will give those agencies time to make sure that it will work, because once these WPOs come in, we want to make sure that they work.

Last year I was contacted very early in the year by the Shop, Distributive & Allied Employees' Association representing workers at Sims supermarket, which is a great supermarket up on Shaws Road. I used to spend much of my time there after school picking up lollies, mostly. Sims is a great community supermarket, and those workers were really concerned, particularly in the liquor section,

about a lot of regular faces coming in who would be there just to have a go at them about different things. I also spoke late last year to workers at the Woolworths store in central Werribee about their experience when it comes to violence in the workplace. I know last year we debated in this house additional safeguards and protections when it comes to assaulting people in those contexts and making sure that there were penalties that matched the severity of them.

I also last year had the time to speak to the executive team at Bunnings at the opening of the Manor Lakes Bunnings store about WPOs and some of the considerations that they wanted government to have. I went away and spoke to the then Minister for Police about some of those considerations, because it is not clear-cut. Traditionally an intervention order that is done by courts is assigned for an individual to an individual. This order goes to a workplace or a particular setting and is applied for by that workplace or by the industrial representatives of that workplace towards an individual, so it does change the way that things have to work.

This is particularly important for my electorate because in Werribee 10.1 per cent of the workforce are employed in retail and customer-facing jobs – one in 10 – and the majority of those are women and younger people. I have had conversations with people down at Werribee train station and the station staff down there, because quite often people moving through that space either can be in a rush or are under a lot of intense pressure, particularly if there is something happening on the train line, and they choose the first person to take it out on, which is quite often that poor Metro staffer who is just trying to do their job. We are sick and tired of this antisocial conduct. It cannot be condoned, and those who do it should face strong and serious consequences. This legislation introduces workplace protection orders. Those check-out kids and those workers down at the train station and those small business workers and employers need to feel safe, and we want to make sure that this legislation works.

There has been a lot of discussion in this place about the start date. Having a commencement date in 12 months, or July 2027, means that there is time for the courts and for police to be ready to implement these reforms. If there are current cases underway, it means that they can be managed and dealt with, but it also means that the Victoria Police manual, all those procedures, can be updated and people can be trained to be able to do this, because this will be something different for a lot of officers and a lot of people working in our courts.

Quite often we see things introduced into this place by those opposite that seem to be an interesting thought bubble or perhaps drafted by Shannon Deery at the *Herald Sun* that morning and then brought into this place as a desperate grab for a headline. All the time I sit here in this place and I hear those opposite verballing police on what they should be doing, not respecting section 10 of the Victoria Police Act 2013, to make sure that these laws give the Chief Commissioner of Police the delegated powers to be able to implement this, to have that operational independence. Having that is so important. We have seen what happened when those opposite got involved with Victoria Police and challenged that operational independence back in their time – in fact there was a whole report about it called *Crossing the Line*. They come into this place and they try and propose these things –

Brad Battin: On a point of order, Acting Speaker, the member on his feet needs to be factual when he is talking about section 10. Just this morning the government came out with a policy which directed Victoria Police on what they are to do with staff. That is absolutely against section 10. I think he needs to understand the facts in this.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Nathan Lambert): I will rule immediately on the point of order. Members are expected to be factual, but points of order pointing out purported factual errors are not an opportunity for other members to take up the debate. Other members will have their turn.

John LISTER: Having these safeguards built into the bill is really important in ensuring that we have that operational independence for Victoria Police and our courts to be able to implement. This is so important. We need to make sure that they are accessible and effective to protect workers, but we also need to make sure that they stick, particularly for the workers that I spoke about earlier that we

have consulted with. I do not want to see circumstances where these WPOs do not work. We have seen the importance of taking the time to consult with those unions and consult with those representatives of the different retail associations to make sure that these work and they work from the moment that they are ready to go. Having the default commencement date does not mean that they cannot start earlier. In fact if Victoria Police and the courts are ready to implement it, they can do so – that is up to them – but we need to make sure that they are given that ability to do so.

It is so important to consult. It is so important to listen and do it properly. We have seen the farce of those opposite when it comes to some of their policies and the consultation with hospitals that occurred before they had their thought bubble announcement on the weekend. It was actually incredibly hard to watch that press conference with the shadow health minister, and that shows just how much, after 12 years, they still do not quite get the idea of consultation, of going out there and genuinely understanding what the impact of different policies might mean. You cannot just throw these things into the Parliament and expect them to stick. That is why it is important to go through this process and make sure that it works.

This scheme covers retail and transport workers. Those particular workers, we found in consultation, are at risk when it comes to this kind of behaviour that we are addressing. Other critical workers, like emergency service workers, are also protected by laws, and I know we are reviewing those at the moment to make sure that those convictions can stick when it comes to those emergency service worker provisions. When it comes to retail workers and transport workplaces, we want to make sure that WPOs can be taken out, they are clearly defined, and that person is not able to go to those businesses. The other thing about it is that we also need to be sensible. Some of these businesses, particularly in country towns, are the only places that people can go to get food. We need to have mechanisms to make sure that they are reasonable and for the court to be able to make sure that they are reasonable as well. Working closely with those stakeholders, we want it to start as quickly as possible. We need to make sure that Victoria Police and the courts have the operational independence to be able to implement this. I commend this bill to the house.

Wayne FARNHAM (Narracan) (16:34): I am pleased to rise to speak on the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. I might just reference the member for Werribee at the start of this bill. The member for Werribee has got up here and given us all a lecture again for another 10 minutes about what we do well and what we do poorly, but this is coming from the same member that stated his community was whingeing about crime. Then he got up here and spruiked. I find that pretty hard to stomach. He escaped quickly. Gee, he took off quick: run, rabbit, run – unbelievable.

Let us talk about this actual bill. It is good that the government have decided to turn up to the party on this bill, because they are a little bit late. They are a little bit reactive at the moment, this government. They are becoming just reactive. Everything we do, they jump on board, and that is what they are doing with this bill as well. They are late to the party again, but they have turned up, and for the benefit of the retail workers of Victoria it is a good thing.

We do not oppose this bill at all. There are some amendments that have been circulated by the member for Brighton. I have heard a lot of the debate today about them, and they will get discussed. But I am going to go to what annoys me about this place, and this is not the first time that it has happened. It seems to be that if we on this side bring in a bill, the government will not support it.

Mary-Anne Thomas interjected.

Wayne FARNHAM: I am happy to take up the interjection from up there. We have brought in bills in this place before that the government have not taken up, yet we have had to come back and discuss exactly the same bill. The Denyer bill is a classic example. The opposition introduced a bill twice, and the government knocked it back twice and then came back with literally exactly the same bill and it passed the Parliament. If it had not been for the member for Frankston, that would have never happened. I have said this before in this chamber, and I will say it again: I give the member for

Frankston a lot of credit for pushing that through his caucus once there was a change of Premier. Then we got the bill through, and that is a fact. That is what happened. But this is where Victorians get frustrated. Bills come into this Parliament, whether on that side or from us putting forward private members bills on this side. Victorians have had enough. They go 'Well, there's a good intent behind this bill' or 'This bill should be passed through, even if it comes from the opposition'. Then they are just pushed away by the government. When we went to introduce this bill last November, I think it was, how many people –

Mary-Anne Thomas interjected.

Wayne FARNHAM: The member up the back that is continually mouthing off really needs to listen. It is probably lucky she is retiring, but she needs to listen. Since we tried to introduce this bill back in November, how many assaults have happened on retail workers? I tell you what, if they were assaulted in my electorate, they would be sitting in the waiting room for about 12 hours, because the government have failed to build the new hospital that they promised. My point is that whoever brings a bill into this Parliament both sides of this chamber should look at the bill and go, 'You know what, we like the intent of the bill; we should support it, we should work with them and we should pass it through this chamber,' not be here seven months later, eight months later or nine months later talking about the same bill, because that is what we are doing today.

My partner is up in the gallery. She used to work in retail, and I am 100 per cent sure that she would have been abused at some point or spat on at some point or that somebody has thrown a coffee at her because they probably ordered something and she made it and it was not what they wanted or whatever was the case. That behaviour is unacceptable.

We had the Greens stand up today and want to make it based on race or colour. I am going to reference the member for Gippsland East in his contribution when he said that we do have a proportion of the community that are ratbags and that this behaviour is unacceptable. It does not matter what colour you are or what race you are; this applies to everyone, and so it should.

I have listened today to those opposite saying that we on this side do not care about workers. That is not true at all. Between 2010 and 2014 we had a body in this state that was protecting workers which this government got rid of. It was the anti-corruption body for union behaviour. Between 2010 and 2014 we had a state-based union watchdog. This government got rid of it. It was similar to this. If someone had a complaint on a construction site, they could go to the union watchdog, and that person could be blocked from union sites. How many people now, since this government has been in, have been abused on building sites? We have all seen it. We have seen it on the television. We had a system in place to protect construction workers from the behaviour of the CFMEU. This government removed that protection and put workers at risk, and no-one over that side can deny that. As much as they want to sit there and sledge me, no-one on that side can deny it. We have all seen the footage. We have all heard the stories, because they removed a protection that we had in place for people to take the union to the watchdog to curb their behaviour, to stop the bullying, to stop the harassment, to stop the extortion and to stop the threats. That is what we did.

Mary-Anne Thomas interjected.

Wayne FARNHAM: I do not hate unions. I have said in this chamber before I was a member of the CFMEU. For those opposite, I did work at the Yallourn power station at the SEC. They cannot sit there and try and sledge me and say I hate unions. Unions have a place, but when their behaviour gets out of control you need to jump on that. This government has failed to do that and put construction workers at risk in this state. It is well documented. We have seen the videos on TV. We have seen the road crews getting abused by people. Where they have failed the construction workers in this state is by removing that watchdog. I know those over that side object because they actually do not like hearing the truth. They get a bit sensitive. They get very, very sensitive when we talk about this subject

because they know we were right and they know they were wrong and they did nothing to protect the construction workers in this state.

But I will come back to the workplace protection orders. We do not oppose this bill, and it is a good thing. Retail workers should be protected; we see it time and time again. I will say again what I have said in this chamber: I hate it when I see people videoing an incident and doing nothing about it. And I always say this too: if you are physically capable of helping, you should help; you should not be videoing. We saw the member for Footscray step in and try and help someone the other day, probably from someone that could have fallen under this bill. She actually hurt her hand quite severely. So it is a good bill. We need to protect our retail workers. We have to do that, and if this bill helps that, then all well and good. But we should not deny the fact that there are other workers that also are under threat. To the case in point that I just talked about with the CFMEU, where was the law to protect those workers? They have been under threat for the best part of a decade.

As I said, we do not oppose this bill. As I started by saying, it is great to see the government finally turning up and actually endorsing something we put forward again. It is just a shame in this chamber that it ends up being a competition: 'if it's not our idea, it's no good until we believe it's our idea.' That is what is happening with this government. Even the royal commission now is a good idea. It was not a good idea three weeks ago.

Mary-Anne Thomas interjected.

Wayne FARNHAM: Even the member interjecting said we did not need a royal commission, but now everyone is on board. The backflips of this government in trying to play catch-up to what the opposition is doing – well, that is the way it is. They do say imitation is the best form of flattery.

Steve McGHIE (Melton) (16:44): I rise to contribute to the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. It is great to be in government, putting up legislation and passing legislation and having a great majority. One day those over there may get back into government, but hopefully not in my time. I am pleased to talk about this very important legislation. It is a Labor government that is protecting workers. That is fundamentally what we do; we look after workers. It is interesting to hear the friends of the workers over there. It is really interesting. I will tell you what, they were not too friendly to paramedics back in 2014. You can thank Mr Davis in the other chamber for why you are sitting on that side of the chamber. He was not too friendly to paramedics, let me assure you. What did he call them? Thugs and something else. That is how he treated the paramedics. That only went on for about two years, though. He cost you government; that is what he did.

This bill at its heart is about something very simple, and that is keeping people safe in their workplace. Everyone should be able to go to work each day and be safe and not be threatened, abused and intimidated. I just want to acknowledge the announcement this morning by the Premier, the Minister for Police and the Chief Commissioner of Police in regard to the additional 150 PSOs that will be patrolling shopping strips and shopping centres. I think it is a very good announcement, and it just adds to this legislation being put up and debated. It will add to the protection of people in their workplace, in particular in retail and hospitality. The other area is the transport area, where people are harassed, intimidated, abused and in some cases spat on in their workplace. It is just uncalled for, and unfortunately we have an element in our community that think they have a right to do it. Again, it is a fundamental issue for our community. It probably stems from what happens in a lot of households. They extend that out into the retail area. We have seen that people going to work are being threatened, stalked and assaulted, sometimes with weapons. I do want to acknowledge the member for Footscray on her efforts the other week. Unfortunately, she sustained an injury, but I commend her for her efforts, for stepping in and trying to help someone that was being abused and assaulted. So again, I just want to commend her efforts, and I wish her well for her recovery from her injury.

We know that retail workers can find themselves on the receiving end of this abuse, aggression, threats and intimidation from people. Some of them are really serious situations, and some of it goes to

physical violence. I do not know why anyone would resort to even thinking of spitting on someone. I remember it happened to me once when playing football. The little bludger that spat on me – I chased him all day, and if I had got him I would have killed him, I tell you, but he was too quick. But in the good old days of football there was always an interval, and you would always catch up with them when the game stopped. But there is nothing worse than being spat on. It is the most insulting thing that can happen, and it is the weakest thing that anyone can do. To think that someone could go into a retail outlet and spit at a young person that is serving them – it is just disgraceful. It is certainly not acceptable in our society. But as I say, there are some people that think they have a right to do it.

Most, the majority, of our retail workers are women and young people. About one-third of our retail workers are under 24, and for some of them it is their first job. To think that they are confronted with some of this violence and threats at their workplace – it can really damage them for the rest of their lives. That is shameful. I have seen many times and have actually responded to many cases where people working in retail, hospitality and even the transport industry have been abused and assaulted. When I was a paramedic, I responded to a number of cases of violence against people in retail and hospitality. They are not good situations to be involved in, and yet some people think this is just normalised behaviour. It is just ridiculous.

About 800,000 retail crime incidents were reported across Australia in the last year, and unfortunately the scale of the problem tells us very clearly why further action like this bill is needed. Our local retail workers are part of the fabric of our community. As I said, they are our partners, they are our kids, they are our sons, daughters and relatives that are working in these outlets. As I said before, in some cases it is their first job. We see them in situations at the grocery stores, the retail outlets and the fast-food chains. It might be that you are driving through a McDonald's and there has been an incident where the young kids behind the counter at McDonald's have had hamburgers or drinks and that thrown back at them for whatever reason – who knows. But we see these situations happen. In some cases they are working for big companies, or they work for themselves. It might be that their parents own the business. It is just a terrible situation. Again, they are the reasons for this bill being put up.

My electorate of Melton is one of the fastest growing communities within the country, certainly within our state. Of course, as our population grows, so too do the retail centres, the supermarkets, the shopping precincts, the pubs, the coffee shops, the bars, the hardware stores, the kebab shops and the food trucks. We are seeing food trucks pop up everywhere, and you can see these situations occur in these particular areas where there are all these food trucks now that are popping up in different communities. We have people not only at the counters but also behind the scenes in supermarkets, where they might be stocking shelves or waiting on tables at restaurants, emptying bins, helping families and keeping businesses operating. We want people to be at work. We want people to have jobs like this, to earn a good wage and for them to be able to deal with the cost of living, deal with day-to-day life and buy things for themselves.

This Workplace Protection Orders Bill builds upon the work this government has already done and undertaken through the Crimes Amendment (Retail, Fast Food, Hospitality and Transport Worker Harm) Act 2025. Together, these reforms send a very clear message that violence and abuse against workers will not be tolerated and accepted here in Victoria. Many of these workers live locally. A lot of them are students. A lot of them are our neighbours. They are our friends. As I said before, they are our relatives and our family, and of course they are our future. We want to support them as much as we can, and we do not want them to be damaged by some of these incidents within the workplace.

You do not have to go far to find someone who has had to call security or the police to their workplace because of an incident like this because they were worried about their safety or they were worried about someone that was stalking them within the business that they work in. If there is security close by, it obviously assists, in particular at the bigger shopping centres. We see it a lot at some of the bigger shopping centres, like Woodgrove shopping centre here in Melton, and I know at Highpoint it is very similar. The response by security and police has been very good, but we should not have people going

to work and having to be provided security just to get through their working day. It should be a safe workplace.

You have just got to wonder: would we in this chamber think about expressing any anger towards anyone in retail, hospitality or transport? I know sometimes we get frustrated with Uber and taxis and things like that when they want to charge you too much just to go a couple of kilometres down the road or something like that, but it is still no excuse to express your anger and violence, at times, towards those people that are serving our community. I know there is very little time left, but as I said, it is, in a lot of cases, our younger generation working in these settings. The majority of them are female, and, as I said, a lot of them are our friends or our relatives. We would expect for our kids and for our relatives to be safe at work. That is why I think this is such an important bill, and I commend the bill.

Brad BATTIN (Berwick) (16:54): I rise on the Workplace Protection Orders Bill 2026. I am going to first of all agree very much with something the member for Melton said then, and that was when he spoke about working and people spitting on particularly emergency services workers. I remember specifically having this conversation about one of the worst things in previous roles. It was actually the fact that I would prefer to be punched than spat on. I think it is just one of the lowest acts that you can see. I know they are different roles, a paramedic to a police officer. I am not saying either should ever expect it. Paramedics are generally there to help; sometimes coppers are going into more violent situations. It does not make it right. But to think that someone could go into a Macca's and spit at a staff member in a Macca's, throw a thickshake across the counter or try and attack one of the young people who are in one of those stores is just simply disgraceful. I would say most people in this place have started their career in a Macca's or working in a local shop. My kids did it.

Wayne Farnham interjected.

Brad BATTIN: Sorry, the member for Narracan started his life in a pub. He is still there. But there are many different roles where you put yourself on the front line, just for a normal job. But I will say from when I was there and working in some of these retail stores compared to the next generation coming through them, the level of anger and violence has changed, and we are seeing it rapidly change more still. The only part that I do disagree with is obviously in relation to the timing of this. It has taken a long time for the government. They can talk about the consultation, they can talk about the process, but the reality is they voted against bringing in this legislation when it was desperately needed here in this state in November last year. Since then we have continued to see an increase in attacks on staff. I think it is vital now – taking all that out of it – that we do get together and put it through as fast as possible to protect that next generation in our workplaces.

The legislation itself will obviously allow workplace protection orders to ensure that people who are regular offenders can be banned from a location. We have seen that too often, where a regular offender will continuously go back. I was down in Colac with the member for Polwarth, and we were speaking to one of the businesses down there where a regular would go into the store but the staff did not know what to do and did not know how to handle it. If they had had the workplace protection orders, they could have gone to the police and gone through a process to ensure that person could not come back to the store, because it is not just while the staff are in the store. They are afraid to walk out while that person is outside, and it creates all of those extra fears for those people out there.

But we know whilst workplace protection orders are very important and they will make a difference in the way you can keep staff safe in many of these workplaces, like they have in South Australia, it has got to be added to, obviously with what we have committed to, with the extra police here in Victoria to fill the 1500-plus vacancies. We have been speaking for a while around the vacancies here in Victoria. It delays the response. There are less police on the beat to go out and respond to crimes or to 000 calls. We are seeing those response times slowing down all the way across Victoria, and that includes to people in retail areas.

One of the things I think that should be raised is in relation to people ringing 000 for theft in a store. As we know, if people get away with crimes, they slowly get worse, more violent. That is why these orders are in. But if we had had the police responses when they called 000, just maybe we would not be seeing the crimes that we are today. Retail theft in Victoria in the last couple of years under the Labor government is up about 33 per cent. That retail theft is part of the reason this young cohort, like we saw in Mordialloc, think they can just run through a store and do what they want because there are zero consequences for their actions. That is the message that we need to send as well. It is not going to be just a workplace order, in the same way an intervention order does not solve all domestic violence; you need to have a whole world of other elements around it.

We still believe on this side of the house that one of the best things that we can do is ensure we have that Victoria Police presence around those shops. We are not against Operation Pulse, but we are definitely wanting to see the extra police – the vans, the proactive patrols, the police working with kids in schools and explaining to them about the consequences for violence, particularly against workers here in Victoria and those on the front line. As I said, everyone in the house says one of the best things we can do in here is do our best to work towards providing a safe workplace for all people in their workplaces across Victoria. We are just sad that it took so long for the Labor government to follow our policy.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time set down for consideration of items on the government business program has arrived, and I am required to interrupt business.

Assembly divided on motion:

Ayes (76): Brad Battin, Jade Benham, Roma Britnell, Colin Brooks, Josh Bull, Tim Bull, Martin Cameron, Anthony Carbines, Ben Carroll, Anthony Cianflone, Sarah Connolly, Chris Couzens, Chris Crewther, Jordan Crugnale, Lily D'Ambrosio, Daniela De Martino, Steve Dimopoulos, Paul Edbrooke, Wayne Farnham, Eden Foster, Will Fowles, Ella George, Luba Grigorovitch, Matthew Guy, Bronwyn Halfpenny, Katie Hall, Paul Hamer, Martha Haylett, Mathew Hilakari, David Hodgett, Melissa Horne, Natalie Hutchins, Lauren Kathage, Emma Kealy, Sonya Kilkenny, Nathan Lambert, John Lister, Gary Maas, Alison Marchant, Anthony Marsh, Kathleen Matthews-Ward, Tim McCurdy, Steve McGhie, Cindy McLeish, Paul Mercurio, John Mullahy, James Newbury, Danny O'Brien, Michael O'Brien, Kim O'Keeffe, Danny Pearson, John Pesutto, Pauline Richards, Tim Richardson, Richard Riordan, Brad Rowswell, Michaela Settle, David Southwick, Ros Spence, Nick Staikos, Natalie Suleyman, Meng Heang Tak, Jackson Taylor, Nina Taylor, Kat Theophanous, Mary-Anne Thomas, Bridget Vallence, Iwan Walters, Vicki Ward, Kim Wells, Nicole Werner, Rachel Westaway, Dylan Wight, Gabrielle Williams, Belinda Wilson, Jess Wilson

Noes (2): Gabrielle de Vietri, Tim Read

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The bill will now be sent to the Legislative Council and their agreement requested.

Crimes Amendment (Recruitment of Children for Criminal Activity) Bill 2026

Second reading

Debate resumed on motion of Sonya Kilkenny:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

That this bill be now read a second time and a third time.

Assembly divided on question:

Ayes (76): Brad Battin, Jade Benham, Roma Britnell, Colin Brooks, Josh Bull, Tim Bull, Martin Cameron, Anthony Carbines, Ben Carroll, Anthony Cianflone, Sarah Connolly, Chris Couzens, Chris Crewther, Jordan Crugnale, Lily D'Ambrosio, Daniela De Martino, Steve Dimopoulos, Paul Edbrooke, Wayne Farnham, Eden Foster, Will Fowles, Ella George, Luba Grigorovitch, Matthew Guy, Bronwyn Halfpenny, Katie Hall, Paul Hamer, Martha Haylett, Mathew Hilakari, David Hodgett, Melissa Horne, Natalie Hutchins, Lauren Kathage, Emma Kealy, Sonya Kilkenny, Nathan Lambert, John Lister, Gary Maas, Alison Marchant, Anthony Marsh, Kathleen Matthews-Ward, Tim McCurdy, Steve McGhie, Cindy McLeish, Paul Mercurio, John Mullahy, James Newbury, Danny O'Brien, Michael O'Brien, Kim O'Keeffe, Danny Pearson, John Pesutto, Pauline Richards, Tim Richardson, Richard Riordan, Brad Rowswell, Michaela Settle, David Southwick, Ros Spence, Nick Staikos, Natalie Suleyman, Meng Heang Tak, Jackson Taylor, Nina Taylor, Kat Theophanous, Mary-Anne Thomas, Bridget Vallence, Iwan Walters, Vicki Ward, Kim Wells, Nicole Werner, Rachel Westaway, Dylan Wight, Gabrielle Williams, Belinda Wilson, Jess Wilson

Noes (2): Gabrielle de Vietri, Tim Read

Question agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The bill will now be sent to the Legislative Council and their agreement requested.

Multicultural Victoria Amendment Bill 2026

Second reading

Debate resumed on motion of Sonya Kilkenny:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The bill will now be sent to the Legislative Council and their agreement requested.

Energy and Resources Legislation Amendment (VEET Strategic Review and Other Matters) Bill 2026

Second reading

Debate resumed on motion of Lily D'Ambrosio:

> That this bill be now read a second time.

And Matthew Guy's amendment:

> That all the words after 'That' be omitted and replaced with the words 'this house refuses to read this bill a second time until the government releases the strategic review of the Victorian energy upgrades scheme undertaken by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.'

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister has moved that this bill be now read a second time. The member for Bulleen has moved a reasoned amendment to this motion. He has proposed to omit all the words after 'That' and replace them with the words that appear on the notice paper. The question is:

> That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question.

Those supporting the reasoned amendment by the member for Bulleen should vote no.

Assembly divided on question:

Ayes (52): Colin Brooks, Josh Bull, Anthony Carbines, Ben Carroll, Anthony Cianflone, Sarah Connolly, Chris Couzens, Jordan Crugnale, Lily D'Ambrosio, Daniela De Martino, Gabrielle de Vietri, Steve Dimopoulos, Paul Edbrooke, Eden Foster, Will Fowles, Ella George, Luba Grigorovitch, Bronwyn Halfpenny, Katie Hall, Paul Hamer, Martha Haylett, Mathew Hilakari, Melissa Horne, Natalie Hutchins, Lauren Kathage, Sonya Kilkenny, Nathan Lambert, John Lister, Gary Maas, Alison Marchant, Kathleen Matthews-Ward, Steve McGhie, Paul Mercurio, John Mullahy, Danny Pearson, Tim Read, Pauline Richards, Tim Richardson, Michaela Settle, Ros Spence, Nick Staikos, Natalie Suleyman, Meng Heang Tak, Jackson Taylor, Nina Taylor, Kat Theophanous, Mary-Anne Thomas, Iwan Walters, Vicki Ward, Dylan Wight, Gabrielle Williams, Belinda Wilson

Noes (26): Brad Battin, Jade Benham, Roma Britnell, Tim Bull, Martin Cameron, Chris Crewther, Wayne Farnham, Matthew Guy, David Hodgett, Emma Kealy, Anthony Marsh, Tim McCurdy, Cindy McLeish, James Newbury, Danny O'Brien, Michael O'Brien, Kim O'Keeffe, John Pesutto, Richard Riordan, Brad Rowswell, David Southwick, Bridget Vallence, Kim Wells, Nicole Werner, Rachel Westaway, Jess Wilson

Question agreed to.

Motion agreed to

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The bill will now be sent to the Legislative Council and their agreement requested.

Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2026

Second reading

Debate resumed on motion of Melissa Horne:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The bill will now be sent to the Legislative Council and their agreement requested.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

Adjournment

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

Gippsland South electorate housing

Danny O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) (17:13): (1779) My adjournment matter this evening is for the Minister for Housing, Building and Precincts. The action I seek is for the minister to accelerate maintenance and renewal of public housing stock in the electorate of Gippsland South. This is an issue that has been gaining traction in the worst way possible over the last 12 or 18 months, particularly with certain individual circumstances of houses that have been off the market for use by people in need, simply because the government has not done the work on maintenance or renewal. I did ask the minister a couple of months ago for an update on the number of vacant properties in Gippsland South, and he was good enough to actually give me those figures: 147 vacant properties, 40 of which are scoped for general capital upgrade works and a further 11 properties which are earmarked for disposal through demolition or sale. So that is 51 homes that are currently not available, with 40 of them waiting for upgrade works.

We appreciate that at the end of a tenancy, or whatever the issues might be with maintenance, sometimes it does take a period of time for the government to get tradesmen in to undertake these upgrade works, but I hear anecdotally repeatedly about the number of homes that are left vacant where, for example, there might be a window smashed and it is simply boarded up and left untenanted for a very long time. We had a particular situation in Station Road in Foster where a property was vacant for about 12 months, and I still have at least two elderly couples who are in need of housing in the Foster area. They have seen this property; they know it is Homes Victoria stock. It has finally, after 12 months, been renovated and looked after. I believe the department is now trying to put someone into it. But it is emblematic of the problems that we have, and it is very, very sad.

I am sure many of my colleagues will be aware that 12 years ago, when I got elected to Parliament, you did not see someone sleeping rough. It just did not happen. But it is now happening in our country towns all the time. I do not believe for a moment that prior to that there were no homeless people; it was just that there were not the people sleeping rough. It is now happening time and time again. That is an issue with the private market, but it is particularly an issue with government housing. We have had the government trumpet for a long time just how much money it is supposedly spending on the Big Housing Build, particularly in regional areas, but it is just not getting through. To have 147 homes sitting empty at any given time, 40 of which were in my electorate and which are waiting for capital

upgrade works, is leaving those families and people without somewhere to live. I ask the minister to take action to actually get on top of this issue and make sure that the homes that are there are fit for habitation and to get someone into them as quickly as possible.

Casey Malayalee Onam celebrations

Pauline RICHARDS (Cranbourne) (17:16): (1780) My adjournment is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, and the action I seek is an update on how the Carroll Labor government is supporting our strong and diverse community. Happy Onam. I am proud to represent a strong and growing community of people from Kerala. I know the Malayalam-speaking community well, and I am grateful for their emphasis on family, faith, aspiration and altruism. Last weekend I was fortunate to attend the Casey Malayalee community's Onam celebration alongside my colleagues the member for Narre Warren North and member for the South-East Metropolitan Region Mr Tarlamis in the other place. I take the opportunity to congratulate president Raigen Joseph on an extraordinary event, with many hundreds of families enjoying cultural celebrations and the solemn lighting of the lamp. Of course the attendance of King Mahabali was a highlight for us all but especially the children. As the newly appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Health, I took the opportunity to thank the community particularly for their contributions as clinicians in our health sector. Next weekend I will be attending the Malayalee Association of Victoria's Onam celebrations and very much look forward to this event. Our strong and diverse community enhances us, and I look forward to the minister's response.

Tram Road–Grand Boulevard, Doncaster

Matthew GUY (Bulleen) (17:17): (1781) My adjournment tonight is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and it concerns the intersection of Tram Road and Grand Boulevard in Doncaster, which is where the Applewood nursing home has a primary intersection. At the moment the intersection is signalised, but the traffic lights that are there are only located on the side of Tram Road. This is quite a substantial road; it comes off the Eastern Freeway and goes up the hill to Doncaster Shoppingtown Westfield and the major part of central Doncaster. It is obviously a fairly busy and fairly broad road – two lanes each way with a turning lane in the centre going into the Applewood nursing home. Applewood is quite substantial. It is one of the largest in the City of Manningham. In fact I think it is the largest in terms of retirement living. It has got hundreds of individual homes and an apartment tower with units in it as well. It is very well regarded, it has got a great reputation and it has a very active committee. What has come to light recently, from Applewood residents and locals alike, is that the traffic lights at that location cannot be seen at certain times of the day in particular, and also given the extent of traffic on Tram Road, particularly going northbound now, it is difficult to see those traffic lights on the left-hand side of the road as you are going northbound up Tram Road. The action that I am seeking from the minister for roads tonight is for him to improve that intersection and to put a north- and southbound traffic light arm over the intersection so that there is a set of traffic lights both north- and southbound that extends out over the intersection, which is clearer for residents, provides better safety for residents and ultimately leads to a better outcome for everyone.

Glenroy road safety

Kathleen MATTHEWS-WARD (Broadmeadows) (17:19): (1782) My adjournment is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and the action I seek is for an independent road safety audit to be undertaken in the Glenroy activity centre, including Glenroy Road between Pascoe Vale Road and Plumpton Avenue. I met with police officers, local traders, traffic engineers and Cr Chris Miles last Thursday at the corner of Glenroy Road and Station Road to discuss the unacceptable level of accidents and near misses that occur in the vicinity. Having raised concerns previously, I understand that council and the Department of Transport and Planning have been working on infrastructure improvements at the intersection and that police have also increased enforcement of the area. While we were there, we also looked at the frustrating changes that were made to Dowd Place and Coles car park in 2022. Whilst we brainstormed some ideas together, a road safety audit would comprehensively assess the areas, including traffic and pedestrian movements and the pros and cons of different

treatments, and consider any potential unintended consequences across the broader centre. It could also consider the long daily waits to enter Glenroy Road from Pascoe Vale Road and the frequent red-light offences that occur at pedestrian crossings.

Mount Concord repeater station

Cindy McLEISH (Eildon) (17:20): (1783) I have a matter for the Minister for Emergency Services, and I am thrilled he is in the chamber to listen. The action I seek is for the minister to provide funding for the replacement of the UHF CB repeater station at Mount Concord above Molesworth, which was completely destroyed during the Longwood fires in January. The Mount Concord repeater has been a vital communications link for the communities of Yarck, Molesworth, Gobur, Cathkin, Kanumbra, Yea and surrounding areas, providing reliable coverage across the region, particularly during emergencies, when timely information is critical to community safety. Multiple people have brought this matter to my attention and want to see it actioned as soon as possible. The tower is compromised, and the guy wires holding it up will need replacing. The communications hut was burnt to the ground, and the antennas need replacing. It is solar powered and needs new panels and new batteries.

The loss of this repeater during the Longwood fires has left a major gap in local communications capability. Residents, emergency volunteers and community organisations have relied on the service it provided not only as a source of local information but also as a means of maintaining communications during bushfires, storms, floods, power outages and other emergencies. It is such an essential backup when phones fall over, and in the Murrindindi shire there have been plenty of natural disasters. The communities of Yarck, Molesworth and Gobur understand the importance of reliable communications during emergencies. The destruction of the repeater has exposed a gap in critical infrastructure that should be supported by government. Replacing it would strengthen community resilience, improve public safety and ensure residents continue to receive vital information when it matters most.

Murphy's law was in action here too. The station was refurbished through a state government grant for floods some 12 to 18 months ago. The 30-year-old device got a full makeover. However, this time it needs to be fully replaced. Seventy per cent of the Longwood fires burnt in Murrindindi, and there is still so much more to be done to help communities and people recover. The shire is doing all it can but needs so much assistance. As the newly minted minister gets to understand the extent of the Longwood fires, he will appreciate why residents in Fawcett are desperate for their bridges to be replaced. So, Minister, while you are at it, just be aware that there are many local bridges – nine probably – that need replacing, and find a way to make it happen. Communities need to be connected, and emergency services need access to all areas. As local Sam Hicks said:

> For someone looking at this from outside our district, these may simply appear to be damaged bridges on a map.

But they are community connectors. There is so much to do, including infrastructure like bridges, but I am really keen to see that the repeater station at Mount Concord is funded to be replaced.

Artificial intelligence

Nathan LAMBERT (Preston) (17:23): (1784) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Economy, and the action I seek is for the minister to report back on his department's consideration of international proposals to pace the frontier of automated AI development. I normally raise fairly specific Preston and Reservoir matters, but we did have a debate earlier this week about data centres and AI, and I want to pick up some of the points from that debate. I will not repeat the important points that were made about planning, energy use and water use, but rather I would like to pick up on this important notion that data centres are not really data centres. As we spoke about, these centres are not full of traditional file servers. They are not storing people's data, photos or anything else. Rather, they are predominantly filled with processing units, GPUs, and they

actually are the giant artificial brains that we are building to do our thinking for us when we use applications like Claude and ChatGPT. They should properly be called 'compute centres' or 'inference centres'. I do not think it is deliberate, but I think calling them data centres makes them sound more innocuous and underplays just how radical this technology is.

A second thing that I think causes people to underestimate how radical this technology is is the fact that the standard models of Claude or ChatGPT that we have on our phones, whilst remarkable technology, are very neutered compared to the extraordinary capacity of the frontier models that these companies have built already, let alone the ones they are attempting to build. We have this strange situation with AI which is the reverse of what normally happens. What normally happens is that the public outside an industry are worried and the people inside an industry, be it fracking or the nuclear industry, are less worried. That is the normal course of things. With AI it is the other way round. Even the criticisms of the Greens and the Victorian Socialists are mainly focusing on things like water and energy use. They are important issues, but when you listen to some of the software engineers and researchers who have built these frontier models and used them day to day, they are seriously worried about what it will look like when we deploy at massive scale these artificial creatures that can out-think humans across a broad domain of tasks. They are worried about not only what that will do economically but what it might do in a military sense and what it might do in a very fundamental, existential way for humanity. Of course there are all sorts of positive things that can come from this. I want to be clear that I am just talking about the long-tail risks.

As someone with a little bit of work experience in this sector, the thing that I am most worried about now for my children is no longer climate change, and it is not nuclear weapons; it is where AI might go. I just encourage the other parties, the Greens and the Liberals, who I think have not yet fully engaged with this issue, to think clearly about it, as the minister and as our Labor government are doing, because I do think that this will be one of the most significant regulatory challenges that we in the Victorian government and indeed governments across the globe face in the coming decades.

Diggers Rest rubbish dumping

Brad BATTIN (Berwick) (17:26): (1785) I rise with my adjournment for the Minister for Environment. The action I seek is for the minister to join me and the candidate for Sunbury Simone Cottam at 230 Bulla-Diggers Rest Road, Diggers Rest. The reason I bring up this address is Suji An, who owns this property and leased the property out on 25 June 2026, with a contract signed to rent the property out. It is a large property. It has got a four-bedroom home. On 28 June 2026, just three days later, the first illegal dumping activity at the property occurred and was identified. The landowner stated there were large quantities of waste that began to be brought onto the property at the time. On 30 June a neighbouring property also notified them about it from 220 Diggers Rest Road and reported and made a complaint to Hume City Council. From 1 and 2 July further reports about this happening went to the EPA, including a report from the neighbouring property. On 3 July 2026 the landowner attended Sunbury police station seeking assistance after becoming concerned about the activities on this property. On 6 July 2026 the landowner personally attended Hume City Council and EPA Victoria. The dates go on about the different visits she has had to the police, going to councils, speaking to EPA and trying to get people out to assist her. She identified this issue just two or three days after the lease was signed.

The problem now for Suji An is that every time she wants to speak to someone in council or with the EPA, effectively it is via lawyers, because now she has been given clean-up orders on this property because as the owner of the property she has fallen responsible for it. I have gone out to the property and had a look, and we are talking acres of tonnes of waste – asbestos, dangerous goods, building waste, building rubble. Trucks are breaking in through the entrance now to go in there. Suji just cannot get the support she needs. This is just a family who are trying to get on with life. The reality is they have just been sent a clean-up order. It will probably cost them $1 million to clean up this property. We are talking 4000 tonnes of waste that has been dumped on this property. What they should be doing is ensuring that the person who leased the property can be fined, charged and followed up, and

they should be held accountable. Every time they get contacted they say, 'We'll get to it. We'll clean it soon,' and then another letter comes through for Suji An. I think it is just unfair on someone who is a landlord of this property to have to continue to put up with this. I say to the minister that I think it is desperate. We need to get you out there. You need to see how this is impacting not just them but all of the other communities around, where if you get wind in, it is not protected. It is not like a normal tip, but let me assure you, it has been treated as a tip. The minister must come out, visit this and find a way and find a solution.

Werribee police station

John LISTER (Werribee) (17:29): (1786) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Police and Minister for Emergency Services, and the action I seek is for the minister to join me at Werribee police station to meet with the amazing teams working out of there. Community safety is our priority on this side. In Wyndham the Labor government has delivered $45 million for our police complex, which I hope the minister will come and visit with me and see for himself. It is the largest outside the Melbourne CBD. We have also funded programs like the embedded youth outreach program, which runs alongside the proactive unit based there at Werribee police station.

Not only are we doing more to fund those particular services at the station, we are also working with the violence reduction unit and starting up an early intervention officer program and a school sport engagement program at Manor Lakes college nearby. Not only that, we have also seen PSO deployment extended at Werribee and Wyndham Vale railway stations, where shifts start from approximately 9:30 in the morning and go all the way through until the last train. We have actually seen them assist with general duties and assist other specialist units in making arrests on the main street of Werribee quite recently, being a really effective quick response to that part. I look forward to seeing how the announcement today will also assist shopping precincts like Watton Street and Manor Lakes as well. We have also, in the last budget, delivered $7 million for more police prosecutors at the nearby Wyndham law courts, and I look forward to meeting with that team, which works quite closely with the police station there as well. We have also today said we are extending the funding for Operation Pulse until 2027, which has operated successfully at the plaza just up the road from the police station.

One of the things we have seen with our investment and changes in laws is an impact in Wyndham, with the number of offences stabilising; dedicated tasking of general duties to different high-visibility areas; Operation Shows targeting motor vehicle theft, with the helicopter and highway patrol out over Wyndham Vale nearly every couple of nights; and our youth crime taskforce and proactive unit working closely with schools and other services, like our hospital, to try and help and intervene earlier with people who may be at risk of offending or networked with other people who are doing that offending. This amazing work is having results, and they are showing in the data. I look forward to joining the minister at our station to see their amazing work firsthand.

Narracan electorate battery energy storage systems

Wayne FARNHAM (Narracan) (17:32): (1787) My adjournment tonight is for the Minister for Planning, and the action I seek is that the minister take immediate action to prevent the destruction of rural and regional prime agricultural land, particularly around the BESS developments in my electorate. I have brought this up, I think, three or four times this year. I still have not had an answer to this question. The problem I have got is that these BESS projects – battery energy storage systems – are going on prime agricultural land in my community, but there is no community consultation. There is a tick-and-flick system that the providers – the people doing the development – use. They will do a meeting in a town hall and go, 'Yep, that's community consultation,' and move on. But it is not. With these projects, especially the Samsung project out at Shady Creek, which is placed in the middle of two bushfire overlays, the minister actually has the power to remove those overlays, and that is frightening for my community and not fair on the community. Developments like this should go back to local council. That is our position on it. Local councils should do the community consultation and then decide what is best for their community, not someone in Spring Street just jamming these things

through. I know these applications are in and have been submitted, and my community, rightly so, is very, very concerned now because they know they have no power. All the power lies with the minister.

I have asked several times for the minister to respond. I would be more than happy to have a cup of coffee with the minister out the back and talk to her about these issues. But it is not just in my community. We see it out in the west with VNI West being jammed through communities. This is what is happening: the government is riding roughshod over rural communities. It is cutting them out of having a say in what happens in their community, and that is not fair on any community. I am nearly to the point of pleading with the minister to consult with me, to have a conversation with me and have a conversation with the locals to see what they actually want, because these things are popping up all over regional Victoria. I have got five BESS projects in my electorate now and none of them are in a renewable energy zone. That is why the zones were set up, so why isn't the infrastructure put in those zones? You cannot keep taking up prime farmland in this state. We still have to feed people. We still have to produce milk, and if the government keep putting these across this state with no community consultation, well, they are taking up farmland that could be feeding people. I ask the minister to get in contact with me urgently.

Lyndhurst Secondary College

Gary MAAS (Narre Warren South) (17:35): (1788) The adjournment matter that I wish to raise is for the Minister for Education and concerns the upgrade currently underway at Lyndhurst Secondary College in my electorate of Narre Warren South. The action that I seek is for the minister to provide an update on the progress of these works. Lyndhurst Secondary College is really a terrific local school, and I was pleased to advocate alongside their principal Eloise Haynes for a $13.6 million upgrade and modernisation, as announced in the 2024–25 state budget. Following that announcement I was delighted to have the Premier visit the school in his former capacity as the Minister for Education. We spoke to the students about the upgrade, and they were pretty excited, particularly the year 7s, who will still be there to see those works finished. This upgrade will support the college well into the future, with a new double gym, food tech spaces, canteen, music spaces, an auditorium and more classrooms on the way. Throughout my time as the member for Narre Warren South I have been just so proud to work alongside our local hardworking principals to deliver school upgrades and give the students the very best possible chance in life and the very best possible environments to learn and grow whilst supporting teachers and school staff to do the important work that they do every day. Our Carroll Labor government knows the importance of every child having access to an excellent local public school education regardless of their postcode or their background so they have every opportunity to reach their full potential. I look forward to sharing the response with my community.

Responses

Anthony CARBINES (Ivanhoe – Leader of the House, Minister for Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Economy, Minister for Major Events, Minister for Medical Research, Minister for Racing, Minister for Economic Development) (17:37): With regard to the member for Preston, I know of his deep interest in these matters from my discussions with him. In response to his adjournment, I will report back to the member for Preston at a later time and look forward to doing that.

I note that the Leader of the Nationals raised a matter for the Minister for Housing, Building and Precincts, and the action that he sought was with regard to renewal and maintenance matters that need to be attended to in his Gippsland South electorate with regard to public housing and the like. The member for Cranbourne raised a matter for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs seeking an update on how the Carroll Labor government is supporting our strong and diverse communities. The member for Broadmeadows raised a matter for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety around an independent road safety audit being undertaken in the Glenroy activity centre, including Glenroy Road between Pascoe Vale Road and Plumpton Avenue. The honourable member for Bulleen, who is no longer with us, did raise a matter for the minister for roads in regard to Tram Road and Grand Boulevard in Doncaster, and I will be sure that is passed on. The member for Eildon is very much with us, and she

raised a matter for the Minister for Emergency Services about replacing the UHF repeater station at Mount Concord, and I will ensure that is also passed on.

The member for Werribee raised a matter for the Minister for Police, and the action that was sought there was for the minister to join him at the Werribee police station to meet the amazing team that work at Werribee. I certainly know firsthand the significant work they do there. Of the many police stations I have visited, I have certainly seen some very tough people being held to account at Werribee police station. They do an amazing job there. It is one of those significant places that we have invested in, and it does a huge power of work for the western suburbs out at Werribee. The member for Berwick raised a matter for the Minister for Environment to join him in Sunbury, particularly around Diggers Rest, on matters of illegal dumping. The member for Narracan raised a matter for the Minister for Planning seeking action to stop the destruction of prime agricultural land for battery storage as a planning matter. The member for Narre Warren South raised a matter for the Minister for Education, the Deputy Premier, with regard to an update on Lyndhurst Secondary College and the significant investments and works happening there. I commend all those matters.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the clerks, the attendants, the Department of Parliamentary Services staff and obviously our catering people, who keep us all going. The house stands adjourned until it is not.

House adjourned 5:40 pm.