

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**Thursday, 7 June 2012**

**(Extract from book 8)**

**Internet: [www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard)**

**By authority of the Victorian Government Printer**



## **The Governor**

The Honourable ALEX CHERNOV, AC, QC

## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

## **The ministry**

Premier and Minister for the Arts .....	The Hon. E. N. Baillieu, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Bushfire Response, and Minister for Regional and Rural Development .....	The Hon. P. J. Ryan, MP
Treasurer .....	The Hon. K. A. Wells, MP
Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business, and Minister for Tourism and Major Events .....	The Hon. Louise Asher, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Finance .....	The Hon. R. W. Clark, MP
Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, and Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade .....	The Hon. R. A. G. Dalla-Riva, MLC
Minister for Health and Minister for Ageing .....	The Hon. D. M. Davis, MLC
Minister for Sport and Recreation, and Minister for Veterans' Affairs ....	The Hon. H. F. Delahunty, MP
Minister for Education .....	The Hon. M. F. Dixon, MP
Minister for Planning .....	The Hon. M. J. Guy, MLC
Minister for Higher Education and Skills, and Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession .....	The Hon. P. R. Hall, MLC
Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship .....	The Hon. N. Kotsiras, MP
Minister for Housing, and Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development .....	The Hon. W. A. Lovell, MLC
Minister for Corrections, Minister for Crime Prevention and Minister responsible for the establishment of an anti-corruption commission ...	The Hon. A. J. McIntosh, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Roads .....	The Hon. T. W. Mulder, MP
Minister for Ports, Minister for Major Projects, Minister for Regional Cities and Minister for Racing .....	The Hon. D. V. Napthine, MP
Minister for Gaming, Minister for Consumer Affairs, and Minister for Energy and Resources .....	The Hon. M. A. O'Brien, MP
Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. ....	The Hon. E. J. Powell, MP
Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Technology and Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry .....	The Hon. G. K. Rich-Phillips, MLC
Minister for Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Youth Affairs .....	The Hon. R. Smith, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, and Minister for Water. ....	The Hon. P. L. Walsh, MP
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women's Affairs and Minister for Community Services .....	The Hon. M. L. N. Wooldridge, MP
Cabinet Secretary .....	Mr D. J. Hodgett, MP

### Legislative Assembly committees

**Privileges Committee** — Ms Barker, Mr Clark, Ms Green, Mr McIntosh, Mr Morris, Dr Napthine, Mr Nardella, Mr Pandazopoulos and Mr Walsh.

**Standing Orders Committee** — The Speaker, Ms Barker, Mr Brooks, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Green, Mr Hodgett, Mr McIntosh and Mrs Powell.

### Joint committees

**Dispute Resolution Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Clark, Ms Hennessy, Mr Holding, Mr McIntosh, Mr Merlino, Dr Napthine and Mr Walsh. (*Council*): Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Lovell and Ms Pennicuik.

**Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Battin and Mr McCurdy. (*Council*): Mr Leane, Mr Ramsay and Mr Scheffer.

**Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Burgess, Mr Foley, Mr Noonan and Mr Shaw. (*Council*): Mrs Peulich.

**Education and Training Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Ms Miller and Mr Southwick. (*Council*): Mr Elasmarr and Ms Tierney.

**Electoral Matters Committee** — (*Assembly*): Ms Ryall and Mrs Victoria. (*Council*): Mr Finn, Mr Somyurek and Mr Tarlamis.

**Environment and Natural Resources Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Bull, Ms Duncan, Mr Pandazopoulos and Ms Wreford. (*Council*): Mr Koch.

**Family and Community Development Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mrs Bauer, Ms Halfpenny, Mr McGuire and Mr Wakeling. (*Council*): Mrs Coote and Ms Crozier.

**House Committee** — (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Ms Beattie, Ms Campbell, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Graley, Mr Wakeling and Mr Weller. (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Drum, Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, and Mr P. Davis.

**Law Reform Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Carbines, Ms Garrett, Mr Newton-Brown and Mr Northe. (*Council*): Mrs Petrovich.

**Outer Suburban/Interface Services and Development Committee** — (*Assembly*): Ms Graley, Ms Hutchins and Ms McLeish. (*Council*): Mrs Kronberg and Mr Ondarchie.

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Ms Hennessey, Mr Morris and Mr Scott. (*Council*): Mr P. Davis, Mr O'Brien and Mr Pakula.

**Road Safety Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Languiller, Mr Perera, Mr Tilley and Mr Thompson. (*Council*): Mr Elsbury.

**Rural and Regional Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Howard, Mr Katos, Mr Trezise and Mr Weller. (*Council*): Mr Drum.

**Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Brooks, Ms Campbell, Mr Gidley, Mr Nardella and Mr Watt. (*Council*): Mr O'Brien and Mr O'Donohue.

### Heads of parliamentary departments

*Assembly* — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

*Council* — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr W. R. Tunnecliffe

*Parliamentary Services* — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

**Speaker:** The Hon. K. M. SMITH

**Deputy Speaker:** Mrs C. A. FYFFE

**Acting Speakers:** Ms Beattie, Mr Blackwood, Mr Burgess, Ms Campbell, Mr Eren, Mr Languiller, Mr Morris, Mr Nardella, Mr Northe, Mr Pandazopoulos, Dr Sykes, Mr Thompson, Mr Tilley, Mrs Victoria and Mr Weller.

**Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Premier:**

The Hon. E. N. BAILLIEU

**Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party:**

The Hon. LOUISE ASHER

**Leader of The Nationals and Deputy Premier:**

The Hon. P. J. RYAN

**Deputy Leader of The Nationals:**

The Hon. P. L. WALSH

**Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Leader of the Opposition:**

The Hon. D. M. ANDREWS

**Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition:**

The Hon. J. A. MERLINO

Member	District	Party	Member	District	Party
Allan, Ms Jacinta Marie	Bendigo East	ALP	Lim, Mr Muy Hong	Clayton	ALP
Andrews, Mr Daniel Michael	Mulgrave	ALP	McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan	Murray Valley	Nats
Angus, Mr Neil Andrew Warwick	Forest Hill	LP	McGuire, Mr Frank <sup>4</sup>	Broadmeadows	ALP
Asher, Ms Louise	Brighton	LP	McIntosh, Mr Andrew John	Kew	LP
Baillieu, Mr Edward Norman	Hawthorn	LP	McLeish, Ms Lucinda Gaye	Seymour	LP
Barker, Ms Ann Patricia	Oakleigh	ALP	Madden, Mr Justin Mark	Essendon	ALP
Battin, Mr Bradley William	Gembrook	LP	Merlino, Mr James Anthony	Monbulk	ALP
Bauer, Mrs Donna Jane	Carrum	LP	Miller, Ms Elizabeth Eileen	Bentleigh	LP
Beattie, Ms Elizabeth Jean	Yuroke	ALP	Morris, Mr David Charles	Mornington	LP
Blackwood, Mr Gary John	Narracan	LP	Mulder, Mr Terence Wynn	Polwarth	LP
Brooks, Mr Colin William	Bundoora	ALP	Napthine, Dr Denis Vincent	South-West Coast	LP
Brumby, Mr John Mansfield <sup>1</sup>	Broadmeadows	ALP	Nardella, Mr Donato Antonio	Melton	ALP
Bull, Mr Timothy Owen	Gippsland East	Nats	Neville, Ms Lisa Mary	Bellarine	ALP
Burgess, Mr Neale Ronald	Hastings	LP	Newton-Brown, Mr Clement Arundel	Prahran	LP
Campbell, Ms Christine Mary	Pascoe Vale	ALP	Noonan, Mr Wade Mathew	Williamstown	ALP
Carbines, Mr Anthony Richard	Ivanhoe	ALP	Northe, Mr Russell John	Morwell	Nats
Carroll, Mr Benjamin Alan <sup>2</sup>	Niddrie	ALP	O'Brien, Mr Michael Anthony	Malvern	LP
Clark, Mr Robert William	Box Hill	LP	Pallas, Mr Timothy Hugh	Tarneit	ALP
Crisp, Mr Peter Laurence	Mildura	Nats	Pandazopoulos, Mr John	Dandenong	ALP
D'Ambrosio, Ms Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Perera, Mr Jude	Cranbourne	ALP
Delahunty, Mr Hugh Francis	Lowan	Nats	Pike, Ms Bronwyn Jane <sup>5</sup>	Melbourne	ALP
Dixon, Mr Martin Francis	Nepean	LP	Powell, Mrs Elizabeth Jeanette	Shepparton	Nats
Donnellan, Mr Luke Anthony	Narre Warren North	ALP	Richardson, Ms Fiona Catherine Alison	Northcote	ALP
Duncan, Ms Joanne Therese	Macedon	ALP	Ryall, Ms Deanne Sharon	Mitcham	LP
Edwards, Ms Janice Maree	Bendigo West	ALP	Ryan, Mr Peter Julian	Gippsland South	Nats
Eren, Mr John Hamdi	Lara	ALP	Scott, Mr Robin David	Preston	ALP
Foley, Mr Martin Peter	Albert Park	ALP	Shaw, Mr Geoffrey Page	Frankston	LP
Fyffe, Mrs Christine Ann	Evelyn	LP	Smith, Mr Kenneth Maurice	Bass	LP
Garrett, Ms Jane Furneaux	Brunswick	ALP	Smith, Mr Ryan	Warrandyte	LP
Gidley, Mr Michael Xavier Charles	Mount Waverley	LP	Southwick, Mr David James	Caulfield	LP
Graley, Ms Judith Ann	Narre Warren South	ALP	Sykes, Dr William Everett	Benalla	Nats
Green, Ms Danielle Louise	Yan Yean	ALP	Thompson, Mr Murray Hamilton Ross	Sandringham	LP
Halfpenny, Ms Bronwyn	Thomastown	ALP	Thomson, Ms Marsha Rose	Footscray	ALP
Helper, Mr Jochen	Ripon	ALP	Tilley, Mr William John	Benambra	LP
Hennessy, Ms Jill	Altona	ALP	Trezise, Mr Ian Douglas	Geelong	ALP
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph	Eltham	ALP	Victoria, Mrs Heidi	Bayswater	LP
Hodgett, Mr David John	Kilsyth	LP	Wakeling, Mr Nicholas	Ferntree Gully	LP
Holding, Mr Timothy James	Lyndhurst	ALP	Walsh, Mr Peter Lindsay	Swan Hill	Nats
Howard, Mr Geoffrey Kemp	Ballarat East	ALP	Watt, Mr Graham Travis	Burwood	LP
Hulls, Mr Rob Justin <sup>3</sup>	Niddrie	ALP	Weller, Mr Paul	Rodney	Nats
Hutchins, Ms Natalie Maree Sykes	Keilor	ALP	Wells, Mr Kimberley Arthur	Scoresby	LP
Kairouz, Ms Marlene	Kororoit	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Doncaster	LP
Katos, Mr Andrew	South Barwon	LP	Wreford, Ms Lorraine Joan	Mordialloc	LP
Knight, Ms Sharon Patricia	Ballarat West	ALP	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP
Kotsiras, Mr Nicholas	Bulleen	LP			
Languiller, Mr Telmo Ramon	Derrimut	ALP			

<sup>1</sup> Resigned 21 December 2010

<sup>2</sup> Elected 24 March 2012

<sup>3</sup> Resigned 27 January 2012

<sup>4</sup> Elected 19 February 2011

<sup>5</sup> Resigned 7 May 2012



# CONTENTS

## THURSDAY, 7 JUNE 2012

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.....	2597	Parktone Primary School: leadership day.....	2605
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE		Mentone Girls Grammar School: student leaders.....	2605
<i>Notices of motion: removal</i> .....	2597	Kingston Charitable Trust: art show.....	2605
<i>Adjournment</i> .....	2597	Public transport: fares.....	2605
PETITIONS		APPROPRIATION (2012/2013) BILL 2012	
<i>Planning: Kingston green wedge</i> .....	2597	<i>Second reading</i> .....	2606, 2630, 2644, 2645
PARTNERSHIPS VICTORIA		<i>Third reading</i> .....	2654
<i>Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre</i> .....	2597	RULINGS BY THE CHAIR	
DOCUMENTS .....	2597	<i>Questions without notice: answers</i> .....	2630
MEMBERS STATEMENTS		ABSENCE OF MINISTER .....	2633
<i>Indigenous returned servicemen and women:</i>		QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	
<i>annual service</i> .....	2598	<i>Teachers: enterprise bargaining</i> .....	2634, 2635, 2636
<i>Mount Eliza: skate park</i> .....	2598	<i>Floods: Gippsland</i> .....	2634
<i>Mount Lilydale Mercy College: honour roll</i> .....	2598	<i>Police: single-officer stations</i> .....	2636
<i>Floods: Gippsland</i> .....	2598	<i>Schools: education</i>	
<i>Buddhist Sri Lankan Association of Victoria:</i>		<i>maintenance allowance</i> .....	2637, 2638, 2639
<i>Sinhala language school</i> .....	2599	<i>Disability services: national insurance scheme</i> .....	2639
<i>Language schools: achievements</i> .....	2599	<i>Higher education: TAFE funding</i> .....	2640, 2641, 2642, 2643
<i>National Day of Thanksgiving</i> .....	2599	<i>Hamer Hall: reopening</i> .....	2641
<i>Kambrya College: 10th anniversary</i> .....	2599	<i>Dingley bypass: construction</i> .....	2643
<i>Floods: Gippsland East electorate</i> .....	2600	SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS	
<i>Bert Rodd</i> .....	2600	<i>Member for Lara</i> .....	2635
<i>Judith Henderson</i> .....	2600	<i>Members for Ballarat East, Pascoe Vale and</i>	
<i>Alan Loader</i> .....	2600	<i>Ripon</i> .....	2636
<i>Geraldine Kowal</i> .....	2600	<i>Member for Yan Yean</i> .....	2638
<i>Japan: trade partnerships</i> .....	2601	<i>Member for Monbulk</i> .....	2638
<i>Jason Wood</i> .....	2601, 2603	<i>Member for Bundoora</i> .....	2639
<i>Wallan-Kilmore bypass: route</i> .....	2601	<i>Member for Footscray</i> .....	2641
<i>Water: Yarrowonga irrigation project</i> .....	2601	<i>Member for Eltham</i> .....	2642
<i>Rutherglen Winery Walkabout</i> .....	2602	<i>Member for Ballarat East</i> .....	2645
<i>Royal Flying Doctor Service: annual car rally</i> .....	2602	HEALTH (COMMONWEALTH STATE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS) BILL 2012	
<i>Eldorado Museum</i> .....	2602	<i>Second reading</i> .....	2654
<i>Floods: shire of Moira</i> .....	2602	<i>Third reading</i> .....	2654
<i>South Melbourne District Sports Club:</i>		DUTIES AMENDMENT (LANDHOLDER) BILL 2012	
<i>centenary</i> .....	2602	<i>Second reading</i> .....	2654
<i>Minister for Innovation, Services and Small</i>		<i>Third reading</i> .....	2654
<i>Business: Hastings electorate visit</i> .....	2602	STATE TAXATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL 2012	
<i>St Joseph's Catholic Primary School: member</i>		<i>Second reading</i> .....	2654
<i>visit</i> .....	2602	<i>Third reading</i> .....	2654
<i>Crafty Cakes: cake decorating competition</i> .....	2603	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (BRIMBANK CITY COUNCIL) AMENDMENT BILL 2012	
<i>Woodend Winter Arts Festival</i> .....	2603	<i>Second reading</i> .....	2654
<i>Derinya Primary School: expansion</i> .....	2603	<i>Third reading</i> .....	2655
<i>Kananook Creek: desilting</i> .....	2603	POLICE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2012	
<i>Mount Erin College: funding</i> .....	2603	<i>Council's amendments</i> .....	2655
<i>Frankston Nature Conservation Reserve</i> .....	2603	EVIDENCE AMENDMENT (JOURNALIST PRIVILEGE) BILL 2012	
<i>Greek Orthodox Church, Frankston: foundation</i>		<i>Statement of compatibility</i> .....	2658
<i>stone</i> .....	2604	<i>Second reading</i> .....	2659
<i>Geelong Advertiser: job losses</i> .....	2604	ADJOURNMENT	
<i>Prahran Mission: winter breakfast program</i> .....	2604	<i>Mount Ridley College: funding</i> .....	2661
<i>Schools: Prahran electorate</i> .....	2604	<i>Melbourne Festival: funding</i> .....	2662
<i>Planning: Armadale development</i> .....	2604	<i>Rail: Pakenham and Cranbourne lines</i> .....	2662
<i>Australia China Business Week</i> .....	2604	<i>Libraries: Bairnsdale</i> .....	2663
<i>Israel: Melbourne protests</i> .....	2604	<i>Police: Bellarine electorate</i> .....	2663
<i>National Reconciliation Week</i> .....	2604		
<i>Chinese Community Council of Australia:</i>			
<i>national conference</i> .....	2605		
<i>Evesham Road Preschool: grandparents day</i> .....	2605		

# CONTENTS

---

<i>State Library of Victoria: Dromkeen Collection</i> .....	2664
<i>HM Prison Ararat: expansion project</i> .....	2664
<i>Ferntree Gully electorate: sporting facilities</i> .....	2665
<i>Forensicare: job losses</i> .....	2665
<i>Planning: Sandringham electorate</i> .....	2666
<i>Responses</i> .....	2666

**Thursday, 7 June 2012**

**The SPEAKER (Hon. Ken Smith) took the chair at 9.33 a.m. and read the prayer.**

**Ms Hennessy** — On a point of order, Speaker, yesterday during question time the Minister responsible for the establishment of an anti-corruption commission, in answer to a question from the Leader of the Opposition regarding the member for Frankston, advised the house that the Premier had sought and received advice from the Department of Premier and Cabinet that under the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 he was powerless to answer questions in this house. There is no provision in the Whistleblowers Protection Act that would prohibit any answer; in fact parliamentary privilege is expressly protected under section 10 of that act. Given that the minister has relied on this advice, I ask that you direct him to table it or, failing that, require him in future to answer questions as per sessional order 6.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I will seek some advice in regard to this matter and report back to the house.

**DISTINGUISHED VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Before commencing I would like to welcome to the gallery of the Parliament of Victoria His Excellency Mr Rui Quartin-Santos, who is the Ambassador of Portugal. We welcome him to the Parliament.

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE****Notices of motion: removal**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I advise the house that under standing order 144 notices of motion 12 to 21 will be removed from the notice paper on the next sitting day unless members wishing their notice to remain advise the Clerk in writing before 2.00 p.m. today.

**PETITIONS**

**Following petition presented to house:**

**Planning: Kingston green wedge**

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of residents of Victoria draws to the attention of the house that:

the Kingston green wedge is no longer an attractive green urban break, but is instead a patchwork of smelly tips, dusty run-down farms, below-standard roads and unattractive industries that impact negatively on surrounding suburbs.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

develop a vision including the provision of facilities and comprehensively reviewing zoning to allow a range of uses, property sizes (maybe more semi-urban lifestyle lots) and parks to provide a much more practical and attractive outcome for the whole community.

**By Ms WREFORD (Mordialloc) (676 signatures).**

**Tabled.**

**Ordered that petition be considered next day on motion of Ms WREFORD (Mordialloc).**

**PARTNERSHIPS VICTORIA****Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre**

**Dr NAPTHINE (Minister for Ports), by leave, presented project summary.**

**Tabled.**

**DOCUMENTS**

**Tabled by Clerk:**

*Parliamentary Committees Act 2003* — Government response to the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee's Report on the Inquiry into Violence and Security Arrangements in Victorian Hospitals and, in particular, Emergency Departments.

*Subordinate Legislation Act 1994* — Documents under s 16B in relation to a Revocation of the 2009 Ministerial Directions, "Directions about Fees", under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE****Adjournment**

**Mr McINTOSH (Minister for Corrections)** — I move:

That the house, at its rising, adjourns until Tuesday, 19 June 2012.

## MEMBERS STATEMENTS

### Indigenous returned servicemen and women: annual service

**Mr MORRIS** (Mornington) — Last Thursday I had the pleasure of attending and speaking at the annual service at the Shrine of Remembrance to honour Victorian indigenous returned servicemen and women. As was entirely appropriate, there were many senior military officers and other dignitaries present. However, I particularly want to recognise today Aunty Dot Peters of the Victorian Indigenous Remembrance Committee, and two Vietnam veterans, Graham Atkinson and Glenn James. Both men spoke of their experiences in the armed services, at home and abroad, with dignity, compassion and great insight. My congratulations to both. I also congratulate Aunty Dot and all members of the committee, the driving force behind the day, which goes from strength to strength as each year passes.

### Mount Eliza: skate park

**Mr MORRIS** — On another matter, last Sunday morning I attended the official opening of a new skate park in Mount Eliza. The park is a great facility, certainly the best skate park I have ever set eyes on. It includes a skate bowl varying in depth from 1.8 to 2.85 metres, a 1.2-metre-high half pipe, mini-ramps and a variety of other features. It has now been functioning for some weeks, and whenever I pass in daylight hours it is in use. The completion of this \$400 000 facility fills a longstanding void for Mount Eliza skaters. I congratulate the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, and in particular ward councillor Leigh Eustace, on a wonderful outcome.

### Mount Lilydale Mercy College: honour roll

**Mr MERLINO** (Monbulk) — Congratulations to my old school, Mount Lilydale Mercy College, and the Old Collegians Association on the recent gala dinner where we celebrated the very first inductees into the school's Mercy honour roll. The inductees included Sister Beth Calthorpe, RSM, who was principal for 14 years between 1976 and 1989 — a period of great change and growth. Five of my six years at Mount Lilydale were under the leadership of Sister Beth, a formidable woman and a brilliant educator. The college newsletter pays tribute to her, saying:

Much of the current structure of the college reflects the vision and energy of Sr Beth. After leaving Lilydale, Sr Beth was principal at other Mercy schools and to this day is still heavily involved in the leadership of Catholic education.

Peter Anderson is a former teacher of mine and one of the most inspirational people I have ever met. Pete has lived with motor neurone disease (MND) for more than a decade. To quote again:

An outstanding educator, Peter inspired all who worked with him. Since his diagnosis with MND, he continues to model so many qualities that reflect a life of mercy — courage, determination, humility, humour, compassion and most importantly love. It says much about Peter's character that he has written a book that speaks about the way in which his battle with MND has provided him with a greater insight into the true meaning of life.

Sister Carol Terpestra is an old collegian who is now a nursing sister with the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart. Passionate about human rights, Sister Carol has devoted her life to helping poor and vulnerable people overseas.

Dr Julia Harrison is an old collegian who has had a brilliant and award-winning career as a clinician and teacher. In 2009 Julia was awarded the Australian Learning and Teaching Council award for excellence in university teaching.

Those four individuals represent the very best of Mercy education. Congratulations and well done.

### Floods: Gippsland

**Mr NORTHE** (Morwell) — Floods this week in Gippsland have created havoc, and in the Morwell electorate many homes and properties have unfortunately been impacted upon. I understand at least 12 homes have been inundated, and many other properties have sustained damage to assets such as vehicles, sheds and garages. A number of significant community and sporting facilities have also borne the brunt of these floods. The Traralgon tennis complex, the Agnes Brereton Reserve and the Harold Preston Reserve were all impacted. These and other community reserves host a number of sporting and recreation pursuits including netball, cricket, football, soccer and athletics. Traralgon Recreation Reserve, which incorporates the Traralgon men's shed and the Traralgon Agricultural Society, also sustained substantial flood damage.

At these trying times we should afford due recognition to our emergency service personnel and volunteers, who are an integral part of assisting in response and recovery. Our local State Emergency Service and Country Fire Authority crews are absolutely sensational in incredibly difficult circumstances, and the feedback from our local community is one of respect and admiration. Of course these teams are ably supported by Victoria Police, the Department of Human Services,

VicRoads, Latrobe City Council and other government and community agencies, such as Red Cross. The municipal emergency coordination centre plays an important role, as do the relief centres, with its multi-agency approach to such events, and I understand a number of locals have registered at the relief centre seeking support and assistance. On behalf of the Gippsland community I want to say a big thankyou to all involved.

### **Buddhist Sri Lankan Association of Victoria: Sinhala language school**

**Mr HOLDING** (Lyndhurst) — I was thrilled recently to attend the annual children's new year festival of the Sinhala language school of the Buddhist Sri Lankan Association of Victoria in Keysborough in my electorate of Lyndhurst. The celebration was held in the presence of the Chief Incumbent of the temple, the Most Venerable Naotunne Vijitha Thero, who has been the resident monk in my community since 1993.

The event was superbly organised, and I congratulate Mrs Sharmini Pathinayake, the Buddhism and language teacher, who played a key role in organising the event. I also acknowledge the generous funding provided by the City of Greater Dandenong and the Victorian Multicultural Commission. The school provides a wonderful environment in which students can learn the Sinhalese language and more about Sri Lankan Buddhist culture.

### **Language schools: achievements**

**Mr HOLDING** — This morning I wish to acknowledge all those organisations passionately promoting the learning of languages other than English here in Victoria. Whether it is the Victorian School of Languages, under the superb leadership of principal Frank Merlino, with all the wonderful teaching staff there who promote many different languages across Victoria or the many other organisations based around specific languages and ethnic communities, the teachers who work in those schools do a wonderful job promoting the acquisition of languages for so many different students. I just hope more and more students — not just students from Victoria's diverse multicultural backgrounds but also students from Anglo-Saxon backgrounds — take up the challenge of learning new languages. It would be great for Victoria and for Australia if more people learnt new languages.

### **National Day of Thanksgiving**

**Mrs FYFFE** (Evelyn) — It was my pleasure to attend the National Day of Thanksgiving mayoral breakfast at Foothills Conference Centre on Saturday, 26 May, where I was joined by my colleagues the members for Kilsyth and Monbulk. It was the sixth such breakfast organised by a caring, supportive group of local ministers and pastors from the Yarra Valley. The day of thanksgiving was officially launched in 2004 by then Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffery, AC, and is celebrated on the last Saturday of May. The day is designed to give thanks for the contributions to society made by everyone but in particular those whose work we take for granted. This year's focus was on the unsung heroes of local sport, and two residents from Evelyn were acknowledged at the breakfast.

Ken Peel started the Coldstream Tennis Club over 28 years ago, being the inaugural club president while holding down the job of president at Lilydale Scouts Club. The club now has four courts and a pavilion, thanks to Ken's dedication.

Jim Dixon was born in England and naturally grew up playing soccer. In 1960 Jim moved from playing to refereeing. Prior to emigrating to Australia in 1965 he was already qualified as a grade 2 referee. A Chirside Park resident for nearly 50 years, Jim devoted himself to soccer in Victoria, eventually being recognised in 1976 by soccer's peak governing body, FIFA, as a listed referee.

I thank the chairman, Graham Nelson, the organiser and master of ceremonies, Randall Bouchier, and everyone else who made the breakfast possible. I especially thank musical group Rejouir, consisting of students from Oxley Christian College, and the soloist Justin Chan and accompanist Susannah Fletcher, who provided beautiful music.

### **Kambrya College: 10th anniversary**

**Ms GRALEY** (Narre Warren South) — I recently had the pleasure of attending Kambrya College's 10th anniversary celebrations and the opening of its new gymnasium. Kambrya College began life in 2002 as Berwick South Secondary College with a little over 90 students and 15 staff members. Its first principal was Ian McKenzie, who set the school on a path of rapid growth and innovation. Wendy Kerr and John Shaw also deserve recognition for their contributions to the original planning committee in 2001. Within only five short years Berwick South Secondary College grew from its humble beginnings to cater for almost

1600 students. In 2005 Berwick South Secondary College became Kambrya College. ‘Kambrya’, like the word ‘Canberra’, means meeting place in the local Aboriginal language.

Kambrya’s new gymnasium was established through a partnership with Recrosport; it boasts two courts, amenities and a meeting room. It is a great new facility that I know the school — especially school council members, school council president David Denny, and former school council president Leo Hemmes — has fought hard for.

I must make special mention of Nadeem Hekmat, the 2009 school captain, whose speech was very impressive and highlighted the wonderful impact Kambrya has on each and every student. Kambrya College’s commitment to civic education has ensured each student not only receives a quality education but is prepared for life after school and is willing to get involved in improving their local community. This year’s school captains, Kelly Lenehan and Joshua Lipari, are perfect examples of this — remarkable young leaders with bright futures ahead of them.

Michael Muscat and his team at Kambrya College have achieved wonderful results; however, they deserve far greater support from this government to ensure their students receive the best possible education in the college’s next decade.

### **Floods: Gippsland East electorate**

**Mr BULL** (Gippsland East) — I wish to make mention of the flood and storm damage in my electorate, which has impacted on many in the Maffra, Heyfield, Newry and Tinamba areas, the Lindenow Flats and the Tambo Valley, while many areas east of Orbost continue to have power outages and road closures. In recent hours the focus has switched to the Gippsland Lakes townships of Lakes Entrance, Paynesville and Metung. Much of the damage is storm related, with many trees falling and roads being closed. As I speak, works continue in the affected communities. I thank all those who have been involved in the response.

### **Bert Rodd**

**Mr BULL** — I pay respects to Bert Rodd, OAM, who recently passed away. He was a man who was well known for his integrity and honour. Having served with the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II, one of Bert’s many achievements was his work in bringing to fruition the Beaufort Memorial Gardens project. Bert was instrumental in seeing the project through to its recent completion and was present at the

official opening ceremony just a few weeks ago. His legacy will live on through the memorial and the many community groups he represented.

### **Judith Henderson**

**Mr BULL** — I also pay tribute to Judith Henderson, another respected resident of East Gippsland and more specifically the Gelantipy community. A past shire president and councillor of the Shire of Tambo, Judith was an individual who dedicated herself to giving back to her community.

### **Alan Loader**

**Mr BULL** — A steadfast supporter of local football in East Gippsland, Alan Loader was a former player and committee member of Wy Yung Football Club and also a past president of Lucknow Football Club. He also represented many community groups, such as the Lions Club of Bairnsdale, for many years. His contribution to his community will long be remembered after his recent passing.

### **Geraldine Kowal**

**Ms NEVILLE** (Bellarine) — Ms Geraldine Kowal, known as Gedda, was an extraordinary woman and her recent, untimely death at 60 has brought a great sense of loss to all those who knew her. I knew Gedda for some time, and she was a larger-than-life character. She had a strong personality and was a wonderful advocate for people with a disability, particularly for younger people who have to live in aged-care facilities. Gedda lived her life with the effects of polio but this did not stop her from having a family and pursuing a career as a nurse.

She also managed Geelong’s community radio station and had her own program, *Does She Take Sugar?*. The program focused on disability rights and issues, the name indicating how many people talk to staff or carers rather than directly to the person with a disability. Gedda was passionate about these issues and the need for a more inclusive, understanding community.

Following a stroke several years ago Gedda found herself living in an aged-care facility. This was an extremely difficult time for her and her family, and she was determined to return home. With courage and persistence she achieved that goal. She was an inspiration to many, including disability workers who considered her a colleague. She has left a significant legacy, including co-founding with Peter McQuillan the peer support and self-advocacy group MAINH — Middle Aged in Nursing Homes — which was launched in February this year. MAINH also stands for meetings advocacy information networks and hope,

which reflects Gedda's strategies and skills as well as her character.

Sincere condolences to Gedda's family, friends and colleagues, particularly her husband, John, and children, Patrice, Mark, Travis and Mitchell. She will be greatly missed, and her inspiration and contribution will always be gratefully remembered.

### **Japan: trade partnerships**

**Mr BATTIN** (Gembrook) — Victoria is a great place to live. It is the multicultural capital of Australia. We have many different cultures, religions and communities that make this place great. On 20 May this year I attended the Japan Festival 2012 on behalf of the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship. The event showcased the Japanese community and the value it brings to our state. I would like to thank Sobashima San, who has always made me very welcome at any such events and in particular at this outstanding event in Box Hill.

The Japanese community holds regular events showcasing art, tourism and food. The events also highlight the trade partnerships with Japan that are very important to our economy and the trade relationships that have continually gone from strength to strength. The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Mr Dalla-Riva, recently visited Japan to ensure that Victoria remains a strong financial friend of Japan. As Japan looks to invest around the world Victoria is well placed to hold discussions with Japanese businesses as they look to invest further.

I visited Japan this year and was impressed by the Victorian commissioner, Mr Adam Cunneen. He and his staff work exceptionally hard to deliver positive outcomes for Victoria. With Mr Cunneen we visited many businesses to improve relationships and discuss how we can encourage further investment in Victoria.

### **Jason Wood**

**Mr BATTIN** — I would like to congratulate Jason Wood, the Liberal candidate for the federal electorate of La Trobe. He is a hardworking local who has delivered for La Trobe in the past. I look forward to working with Mr Wood to ensure that we get the best result for the communities in our electorates. As both of us have had a career in the police force we understand the strength needed and the importance of communication.

### **Wallan-Kilmore bypass: route**

**Mr DONNELLAN** (Narre Warren North) — Yesterday with Candy Broad, a member for Northern Victoria Region in the Council, on the steps of Parliament House I was fortunate to meet members of the Kilmore and Wallan communities, including people such as Laurie Boyd, Kevin Butler and Brian Mawhinney. They were out the front protesting against the poor consultation of the Baillieu government and VicRoads in relation to the Kilmore bypass. Shoes had been taken off and laid on the steps à la Bush and Howard, but of course these people were never intending to throw the shoes; it was just a symbolic effort.

The community members are asking, firstly, for the Minister for Roads, the Premier and the member for Seymour to stick to their promise to consider a northern bypass. Secondly, they want a bypass outside the boundaries of the town, which the council presently says it cannot define. That is a bit strange. Thirdly, they are asking that the minister meet them, which is something he has not done since the government was elected. Fourthly, they are indicating that they hate the eastern option, which to the community is very much a dead parrot. It goes straight through Monument Hill, an area set aside in 1853 for public use. It will affect all of the sporting clubs domiciled in that area.

Community members are also concerned, realistically, that the council will not reflect the heritage study done some years ago by applying for a heritage overlay. That outcome would be quite disappointing. A heritage overlay would protect Monument Hill and its history — it is part of the oldest inland development in Victoria. The community also wants a proper traffic study, and they want Sydney Street back.

### **Water: Yarrawonga irrigation project**

**Mr McCURDY** (Murray Valley) — On Saturday I had the honour of opening the Ryan family's irrigation project, a 6-kilometre pipeline from the Murray River, near Yarrawonga, to their property, a project which delivers for the irrigator, the community and the environment. The \$1.5 million pipeline project, completed under round 1 of the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency program, replaces a 15-kilometre open channel irrigation system constructed in 1956. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority needs to learn from these initiatives instead of engaging in buybacks that will destroy our communities.

### **Rutherglen Winery Walkabout**

**Mr McCURDY** — On Sunday I will be defending my grape treading champion title at the Rutherglen Country Fair, held as part of the Winery Walkabout Weekend. Rutherglen tourism hits an all-time high on the Queen's Birthday long weekend, and this year will be no exception. The service clubs and community groups look forward to hosting all visitors to this wonderful part of the world.

### **Royal Flying Doctor Service: annual car rally**

**Mr McCURDY** — Last Sunday Yarrawonga hosted the Royal Flying Doctor Service annual car rally, the first time the rally has ever begun in Victoria. The vehicles were waved off on their way north to Townsville. This year's rally raised \$1.8 million, and the total raised over the last 23 years exceeds \$20 million.

### **Eldorado Museum**

**Mr McCURDY** — Eldorado Museum continues to impress with the grand opening of the interpretive panels showing the history of the Woolshed Valley. It is hard to believe that over 6000 miners and their families lived in this valley where the Kelly gang used to roam. I challenge anyone who has not been to see the Eldorado Museum and dredge and the new tourism signs to deny that they are missing out on Victoria's best kept secret.

### **Floods: shire of Moira**

**Mr McCURDY** — Congratulations to the volunteers coming from all over Victoria to continue clean-up operations on rural properties in the shire of Moira which were devastated by the floods earlier this year. Country Fire Authority groups, Rotary clubs, farmer groups and the Toyota Landcruiser club have all been involved in the working bees.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member's time has expired.

### **South Melbourne District Sports Club: centenary**

**Mr FOLEY** (Albert Park) — I rise to draw the attention of members of the house to a milestone event in the sporting history of Victoria — the centenary of South Melbourne District Sports Club. One hundred years ago the real 'Bloods', in the form of the South Melbourne District Sports Club, ran out for the very first time. Since then the club has survived both the good times and the bad times. It has been a rock on

which the South Melbourne community has been built and has defined much of its social capital as a tough, resilient, competitive, never-to-be-under-estimated and endlessly innovative club and community.

In more recent times this innovation has enabled the football club to respond to tougher times by recreating itself as a multisports club, incorporating a range of sporting activities including athletics and senior and junior level cricket. Its eyes are now on soccer. Whether one of the biggest Auskick competitions or the newest Little Athletics competition in the state is involved, the South Melbourne District Sports Club has lived up to its commitment of being a club that develops life skills as well as sporting skills in a safe and enjoyable environment. Although the club had only one senior football team for almost 50 years, it is now a multisports club that caters for more than 1000 junior and 100 senior participants.

From its beginnings the club has had a close association with the South Melbourne Football Club. This club was an important feeder club until the Swans relocated to Sydney, which broke the hearts of many but not their resolve. South Melbourne District Sports Club was the breeding ground for many famous Victorian Football League players such as Keith Forbes, Danny Jacobs, Allan Miller, Jack 'Basher' Williams and, the best known of all, Roy Cazaly. We look forward to the next 100 years of the club, which will be the home of many champions across a range of sports.

### **Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business: Hastings electorate visit**

**Mr BURGESS** (Hastings) — The Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business, who is also the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, visited my electorate again on Tuesday, 29 May. The minister met with members of the Oberon Business Association and braved the cold to go out on the water to inspect the HMAS *Otama* submarine. The minister also met with members of both the Western Port Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Tooradin chamber of commerce to discuss tourism, small business initiatives and issues in the respective regions. The visit was well received and the support provided by the minister continues to be greatly appreciated by my community.

### **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School: member visit**

**Mr BURGESS** — It was a great pleasure to be invited to speak to grades 5 and 6 students at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Crib Point on Wednesday, 9 May about the role of MPs and the

functions of Parliament. I was able to give the students valuable insight into the making of new laws, representing constituents on a wide range of community issues and the structure of our parliamentary system, including the important role of both houses of Parliament. I would like to thank St Joseph's Catholic Primary School for this opportunity.

### **Crafty Cakes: cake decorating competition**

**Mr BURGESS** — I wish to thank Crafty Cakes of Somerville for giving me the opportunity to be one of three judges at its cake decorating competition last Saturday. The competition was planned to create a bit of fun and community involvement and to promote the benefits of this new small business in the local area. I congratulate the winners of the competition on their creativity and cake decorating skills.

### **Jason Wood**

**Mr BURGESS** — I take this opportunity to congratulate Jason Wood on his federal preselection last night. Jason was an outstanding federal member for La Trobe during the time of the previous Howard government. He will make a good member again in the next federal government, led by Tony Abbott.

### **Woodend Winter Arts Festival**

**Ms DUNCAN** (Macedon) — I encourage all members to visit Woodend this weekend to attend the eighth annual Woodend Winter Arts Festival. There are 30 events across the weekend, including a fireworks display on Friday night. The festival will be opened by Paul Grabowsky and the sound of jazz. This festival has something for everyone who loves music and the arts in a variety of forms. There will be the very best of classical music by Schubert, Beethoven and Vivaldi, to name just a few. This festival brings together Australian and international talent, along with the music and arts community, right in the heart of arguably the best wine and food region in Victoria — which is of course the magnificent Macedon Ranges.

The concerts go for about an hour, so there is plenty of time to move between events and venues to enjoy the food and wine of our region. Members should come for a day or even spend the whole weekend there. The literary program includes a panel involving comic and graphic artist Bernard Caleo and Kerry Greenwood and discussions with George Megalogenis and our own Lindsay Tanner. To learn what brings all of these people together, members will have to go to the festival and see for themselves.

This festival uses a range of venues around town and on the mount and goes from strength to strength. It includes free events for children as well as a schools program; it is a great event for the whole family. Members will also see some of the magnificent Dromkeen collection of Australian children's literature on display at Woodend for the first time.

This is a not-for-profit event supported by an incredibly dedicated team of volunteers under the direction of the founder and artistic director, Jacqueline Ogeil. I congratulate the committee and all involved in bringing this together, and I wish them all the very best for this weekend.

### **Derinya Primary School: expansion**

**Mr SHAW** (Frankston) — Three days after the budget was announced it was my pleasure to announce in front of an assembly at Derinya Primary School that we will be delivering \$1 million to purchase much-needed land adjacent to the school. I congratulate the school council, parents, teachers and the principal, Jenny Roth, for their commitment in advocating for a much-needed outdoor playing area for the over 650 primary school children.

### **Kananook Creek: desilting**

**Mr SHAW** — One of our election campaign commitments was to desilt Kananook Creek. For this to progress I set up a working group of various stakeholders involving the Kananook Creek Association, the local council, Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water to advise the government on what would be the most appropriate department to handle this task. After 20 years of passing the buck of responsibility, I look forward to settling this issue.

### **Mount Erin College: funding**

**Mr SHAW** — It was a pleasure also to attend Mount Erin College to announce to the school community a \$900 000 initial instalment from this budget for architectural plans for the renovation of the school. A \$9 million commitment in this term of government has been gratefully received by the school community, including parents and school leaders, after 14 years of no renovations or upgrades. I look forward with excitement to the journey towards the completed project.

### **Frankston Nature Conservation Reserve**

**Mr SHAW** — It was a pleasure to join the Minister for Environment and Climate Change at the Frankston Reservoir reserve to announce it as a nature

conservation reserve, following Parliament having passed legislation to that effect recently. I extend a huge thankyou to all involved. Special thanks to the minister, who has been so supportive of Frankston, and also to Quinn McCormack, president of Friends of Frankston Reservoir, which has secured this jewel in Frankston to preserve the fauna and flora and has enabled it to be available for all the community to enjoy.

### **Greek Orthodox Church, Frankston: foundation stone**

**Mr SHAW** — A couple of weekends ago I was happy to attend the Greek Orthodox Church in Frankston to celebrate the laying of the foundation stone at its new church site directly opposite the current one.

### **Geelong Advertiser: job losses**

**Mr CARBINES** (Ivanhoe) — I rise to condemn Fairfax Media for its decision to send subediting jobs offshore to New Zealand and also to express my disappointment at the decision of News Ltd to sack up to 10 subeditors from the *Geelong Advertiser*. I stand here as a 20-year member of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance and a former journalist and subeditor at the *Geelong Advertiser*. I certainly feel for my colleagues at the newspaper, who seem to be taking the hit for mismanagement at News Ltd. What I would say also is that at least News Ltd is seeking to retain some of the jobs in Melbourne, unlike Fairfax, which is determining that the best decision it can make is to punt the jobs of professional Australian journalists over to New Zealand.

I say to our colleagues over the ditch that they should get no joy from the fact that newspaper management at Fairfax seems to think, 'We'll send jobs offshore to New Zealand because they have worse and cheaper working conditions, which we will exploit at the expense of Australian jobs'. Fairfax stands condemned for that. I offer my absolute support to my former colleagues at the *Geelong Advertiser* and to all journalists who seek to retain their working conditions as subeditors making a strong contribution to journalism in Victoria and Australia. I wish them every success in their fight to retain their jobs here in Victoria.

### **Prahran Mission: winter breakfast program**

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** (Prahran) — Well done to Prahran Mission for yet another successful winter breakfast fundraiser on 29 May. I was pleased to yet again host the Minister for Health in Prahran during his second visit to this local community icon. The catering

done by staff trained by the mission was magnificent, and the food was ably dished out by volunteers from local marketing gurus from the Taboo group.

### **Schools: Prahran electorate**

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — Recently I was pleased to host a local primary school forum in my office with the Minister for Education and local school principals Julie Manallack, Anne McPhee, Pam Bishop, Peter Clifton and Margaret Carlei. The minister was most concerned about the secondary school situation in Prahran and following this meeting announced a \$200 000 feasibility study into a new secondary school for Prahran.

### **Planning: Armadale development**

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — Last week I attended a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal hearing to support my local community in its fight against the Orrong Towers development at 590 Orrong Road. Several local residents presented well-reasoned and passionate arguments against this proposed development. The residents were ably assisted by barrister Paul Connor, who delivered a convincing argument as to why the application should be rejected.

### **Australia China Business Week**

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — The business ties between Australia and China were strengthened last week at a lunch at the Hotel Windsor during Australia China Business Week.

### **Israel: Melbourne protests**

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — Well done to Victoria Police for their magnificent work this week at the Israel Independence Day celebrations at the Windsor Hotel. It was extremely important that representatives of the Liberal, Nationals and Labor parties were able to attend this event, which was violently disrupted by a fringe group of protesters. Victoria Police officers calmly and efficiently provided firm but restrained control over the situation, providing safe passage for all MPs to attend this event. You did us all proud.

### **National Reconciliation Week**

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — Aunty Nellie's welcome to country at the National Reconciliation Week flag raising at the city of Stonnington was an inspirational and moving event and a poignant reminder to those present that — —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Weller)** — Order!  
The member's time has expired.

### **Chinese Community Council of Australia: national conference**

**Mr LIM** (Clayton) — The Chinese Community Council of Australia will be holding its second national conference on 18 and 19 August at the Victoria University campus in Melbourne. The council is a not-for-profit, non-political and non-partisan organisation formed by leaders of the Chinese community from around Australia. It aims to be the leading advocacy body for the 900 000-strong Chinese Australian community in matters concerning their development and access to legal, social, economic, political and sustainability equity.

This year's annual conference is entitled *Moving On!* and aims to establish an effective Australian Chinese voice. The conference will present Australian and overseas expert leaders in Asian studies and reputed Chinese achievers in the presence of around 200 attendees. It will receive full coverage from the major Chinese Australian newspapers and the mainstream media.

The host organisation of this conference is the Chinese Community Council of Australia (Vic). CCCAV, as the umbrella organisation to its 38-member organisations in Victoria, plays a pivotal role in enabling sustained cooperation and collaboration among Australians of Chinese descent. It represents and advocates on behalf of Chinese Australians to ensure the community can rise to the challenges of the 21st century and develop to be an effective contributor to Australia's local and international developments. With the vision of playing a leadership role in promoting Chinese community interests and establishing its rightful place, CCCAV hopes — —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Weller)** — Order!  
The member's time has expired.

### **Evesham Road Preschool: grandparents day**

**Ms WREFORD** (Mordialloc) — Last Thursday I visited Evesham Road Preschool in Cheltenham on grandparents day. It is a wonderful preschool under the leadership of Olenia Woodyatt, Shirley Keen, Lisa Worland, Karen Rosenbrock, Sharon Lewis and Melanie Gratton, but it will be even better in a short time as it has received \$300 000 for an extension provided from the coalition's record investment in childhood infrastructure.

### **Parktone Primary School: leadership day**

**Ms WREFORD** — On 30 May I attended the Leader in Me leadership day at Parktone Primary School. This is a brilliant program based on Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. A vision has been developed, all staff have written a personal mission statement that they share with their classes and there is much more. The program has made a huge difference to the school, which is growing and seeing better and better outcomes. Well done to principal George Danson, his team and students.

### **Mentone Girls Grammar School: student leaders**

**Ms WREFORD** — I recently met with Xafina, Bianca and Olivia, the student executive at Mentone Girls Grammar School, and their principal, Fran Reddan. It was fantastic to hear their views and, more importantly, their future aspirations. It is a very impressive team.

### **Kingston Charitable Trust: art show**

**Ms WREFORD** — I recently attended the Kingston Charitable Trust art show. It is fair to say that Kingston is certainly home to some talented and creative people. A whole range of people participated in the show and an extremely high quality of work was exhibited, with profits of sales going to charity.

### **Public transport: fares**

**Ms RICHARDSON** (Northcote) — The Minister for Public Transport has hit a new low with confirmation of his decision to slug commuters with another fare hike from 1 January next year on top of this year's record fair hike. This hike comes on top of the minister's timetable changes that see nearly two out of three peak-hour services run against the peak-hour crush, stations regularly being skipped by Metro while the minister sits on his hands, the premium station program having been scrapped to pay for toilets for the exclusive use of protective service officers, and trams, buses and trains in particular increasingly jam-packed while the minister allocates more funding for studies.

In short, while things are clearly getting worse on his watch, the minister has the gall to increase fares and then seek to blame Labor for these fare increases. If it is Labor's fault, why did the minister say last year that he agonised over the decision if the decision had already been made by the former Labor government? Why did the President of the Legislative Council say yesterday about the fare increase:

What the previous government did is irrelevant, because the government has struck two budgets already and the position

has changed completely ... The government cannot simply lift what is convenient out of the previous government's forward estimates and say, 'This is ours as well'. The government owns this one now.

I could not have said it better myself. The government owns this one now because it scrapped Labor's transport plan while latching on to its proposed fare increases, designed to help pay for the service improvements. The minister should have the courage — —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Weller)** — Order! The member's time has expired. The time set aside for members statements has concluded.

## APPROPRIATION (2012/2013) BILL 2012

### *Second reading*

#### **Debate resumed from 6 June; motion of Mr WELLS (Treasurer).**

**Mr BURGESS (Hastings)** — It is a great pleasure to rise to speak on the budget for 2012. Victoria has found itself, and particularly this government has found itself, over the last two budgets trying to reverse the trend of increasing debt and expenditure that was established by the previous government and looking to put in place many of the changes that are needed to address much of the structural damage that was done to this state. The government has put together a plan and is executing that plan over a series of budgets, and this budget takes that plan further along the line.

One of the most important things is that the government is moving the economics of the state into strong fundamentals with efficiencies and productivity and away from Labor's rat-on-a-treadmill reliance on population growth to fund the things that were happening in the state. Everyone knows that as soon as population growth slows so does your revenue, and therefore your budget goes into the red, which is the situation that Labor has always left this state in. I challenge members on the other side of the house to stand up and tell us the last time they left government without leaving the state with a major black hole — or a red hole in this case.

The future is particularly bright in my area because we are reaping the benefits not only of the statewide structures and strategies that the state government is putting in place but also of the major redevelopment of the port of Hastings, which is going to make a major difference to the situation surrounding my electorate. One of the most important things a state government can do is work to provide long-term and sustainable,

gainful employment for the members of the community. The plan that this state government is putting in place is one of those plans that must be worked at for a period of time, because there is a lot of damage to be undone and a lot of ground to be made up. Nevertheless, the fundamentals that have been put in place mean that this government will implement a plan that will sustain this state for a long time. The port of Hastings is part of that plan.

We only need to reflect on what has happened over the last 10 years as far as port planning is concerned to understand exactly the sort of approach that members of the previous government took to planning for this state. Their approach was to look and say, 'There is a problem — oh, my God!' and put their heads down. It was interesting to listen during the adjournment debate last night to the previous Minister for Roads and Ports, the member for Tarneit, come up with another solution we should consider to the problem that Victoria is shortly going to run out of space for containers — which will put a great deal of pressure on our ability to trade internationally — when in over 11 years he did nothing. He left this state to rot in a situation where there would be no future for container growth.

We know that while containers are now at about 2.5 million TEUs (20-foot equivalent units), by 2035 they will be up to 8 million TEUs, and the previous Labor government had no plan at all to address that. We have put in place a plan to expand the port of Hastings. We have gone through the legislation to break it away from the port of Melbourne and appoint a board, members of the board and a chair, and shortly we will announce the new CEO. Members of the previous government had really just thrown their hands in the air and said, 'This is all too hard'.

There is a range of things we are working through in my local area, including something I just spoke about in a members statement, in which I sought to have the Minister for Tourism and Major Events come down to inspect the Otama submarine. There is a great opportunity for us to put in place a wonderful tourism facility that would be self-generating and would generate income for the local community. In fact the feasibility studies that have been conducted into the Otama submarine — although they are a little bit out of date now because the submarine sat in the water for 10 years under the previous government — said that it would bring in at least \$5 million per year to the local community. That is something we are working to achieve.

It is interesting to sit and listen to the petty criticisms of the latest budget by members of the previous

government. Very often the best way of looking at what is planned and what will happen in the future is to look at the past. The past is often a great predictor of the future. As we have seen, and as I referred to earlier, previous governments and their various approaches to the way the state is run are a fairly good indicator of where we are going to go.

Look at the previous Labor government and go back to the Cain and Kirner years. I think most members of this house would realise that the state was run to the brink of bankruptcy during the Cain and Kirner years — to the point where public servants were being paid with State Electricity Commission of Victoria cheques because the government had no money left; it was just incapable of paying its bills. It is totally beyond me that members of the opposition do not hang their heads in shame at being members of a party that drove this great state to the brink of insolvency and certainly put great pressure on all its residents. Over their 10 years in office the Cain and Kirner governments drove the state into about a \$33 billion debt.

What is really interesting is that when the Brumby government finished, what did we have again? We had a \$30-odd billion debt. In the intervening period we had seven years of the Kennett government. When the Kennett government took over, as I said, the state was basically insolvent, and I emphasise the fact that the Labor government had lost Victoria's AAA rating. The Kennett government set about its task, earned that AAA rating back again, turned around the debt of \$30-odd million —

**Ms Duncan** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Weller)** — Order! The member for Macedon will get her turn. She will desist interjecting.

**Mr BURGESS** — The Kennett government then managed to return the state to the hands of Labor again with virtually no debt. What did Labor do? Over the next 10 years it had \$400 billion of GST income, but have a look around the state and see what it achieved. If you compared what Labor achieved with the Kennett government, you realise that Jeff Kennett's government ran this state on \$19 billion a year. Out of that \$19 billion, he had a \$1.8 billion surplus, so in effect the Kennett government ran this state on \$17.2 billion.

When the state was handed over, basically debt free, what did the incoming Bracks and then Brumby governments do? They spent all of the money. They spent the \$1.8 billion and then went about spending \$400 billion over the next 10 years, not only that but

still they went into debt. How could you contemplate spending that amount of money after the Kennett government had been able to run the state on \$17.2 billion? Over the next 10 years there was \$400 billion and the Labor government still went into debt and had nothing to show for it. What an incredible performance from another failed Labor government.

One could go on all day about the failures of the previous government. One of the interesting statistics to look at is also a predictor of the future, so we need to keep this in mind for the future. Over the previous decade the average expenditure growth was 7.3 per cent per year under the Brumby Labor government and the income average was 6.9 per cent, so in anyone's terms the Labor government was spending more than it was earning, and it is little wonder that again the state has been handed over to a Liberal government in a shambles.

This government is going about fixing the problems which occurred over those 11 years but are concentrated in a few iconic black holes and really should be linked to members of the previous government for all eternity. Some of the things they managed to achieve are simply gobsmacking — breathtaking. A \$32.8 billion debt is enough in itself, but, in terms of the desalination plant, to be paying \$2 million a day every day for 27 years is just an incredible achievement by the now opposition. The desalination plant was supposed to produce water, but we do not get any for that \$2 million a day. I have never heard opposition members stand up and say, 'You know, look, we made a mistake. We got it wrong'. One day they really should stand up and explain to the state what they did and why they did it.

There was \$2 billion spent on what the Ombudsman found to be flawed ICT projects. In his investigation into 10 Labor government information and communications technology projects the Ombudsman found that on average the projects had more than doubled in cost. This is another incredible achievement. The growth of public services at 5.3 per cent per year far outstripped the 2 per cent increase in population, and productivity declined from 2.8 per cent to 1 per cent.

Every statistic that is a measurement of the ability of the previous government to manage the state shows that it failed. Opposition members should understand that they failed in government and should admit that to the state and explain why. The myki project blew out by \$857 million, smart meters by \$800 million — the list goes on and on. If I continue along that line, I am not

going to get any opportunity at all to speak on the strategies this government is putting in place.

One thing worth mentioning is that apart from all those things that the Labor state government did, and it involves the state opposition as well, and on top of the fundamentals from around the world being very difficult — the eurozone having a major problem, us having a very high Australian dollar and there being slowed national growth — the Labor federal government is putting in place a carbon tax, which is just going to put hurt on hurt for this state and for this country. What we are all waiting for is for somebody on that side — —

**Ms Duncan** interjected.

**Mr BURGESS** — I have noticed they have gone particularly quiet over there. The member for Macedon in particular has not said anything about the carbon tax. It would be very handy just to hear them say whether they support it or whether they are lobbying hard in the background for Prime Minister Gillard to pull it away and get rid of it, because we all want them to. But they seem, even in opposition, to be failing the state of Victoria and doing very little to help anybody.

I will get on to some of the things that are being done in the Hastings electorate. In this particular budget we have \$20.3 million to buy land for future schools around the very quickly growing Cranbourne South area and, importantly — this harks back to something I said earlier — \$4 million for the development of the port of Hastings. I referred earlier to the fact that the previous government had left the state without any plan of moving forward in one of the most important areas of our economy — that is, the ability to run our trade through our ports. Most people would know that the port of Melbourne is iconic. It is the biggest and the best port in Australia, but it is struggling for capacity.

The \$4 million that has been put in to help develop the port of Hastings over the coming years is designed to start the economic, social and environmental studies. That \$4 million is critical to the development of that port and critical to the ability of Victoria to handle its freight task in the coming years. Following the removal of the port of Hastings from the ownership and control of the port of Melbourne, a new board with a very high-powered membership has been put in place, including a very good chairman in Yehudi Blacher, and another announcement is expected shortly, following a worldwide search for the best possible available CEO. This augurs well for the future of the port of Hastings and the task it will perform for the state as a whole.

To date our government has been able to achieve an enormous amount for my electorate, which is in stark contrast to the previous 10 years. Some of the things that have been achieved are that we managed to stop development of Labor's bitumen plant at Crib Point, which was a pretty important one, and as we speak we are redoing the Hastings jetty in the way the community wants it to be done instead of it being bulldozed, as Labor wanted to do. The design of a new police station at Somerville is under way, and there has been an announcement of a new police station at Langwarrin. Funding has been provided for a new ambulance station in Somerville, which the community has welcomed with wide open arms. There is funding of \$250 000 for the Somerville Netball Club and \$300 000 each for Lloyd Park in Langwarrin and the Balnarring football club. We have seen the passage of legislation to establish the Port of Hastings Development Authority. There are closed-circuit television cameras for Hastings — —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Weller)** — Order! Time!

**Ms BARKER (Oakleigh)** — I am pleased to add some comments to the debate on the state budget for 2012–13. I will start by acknowledging some good news. I note in budget paper 3, under the Department of Transport, that the express bus from Monash University, route 601, has been funded through to 2014–15. I thank the Minister for Public Transport for listening to Monash University staff and students, who have campaigned for some time for this. A trial was put in place last year. The route 601 express bus has been very well used, and I am pleased to see that it has been funded through to 2014–15. Unfortunately that is the end of any positive news for the Oakleigh electorate.

There was one other little piece of good news that I noted recently, but it is not actually clear whether this initiative was part of last year's budget or this year's budget. It was the recent announcement of the installation of a Parkiteer bike cage at Ormond railway station. These cages are always a very welcome initiative; we have one at Oakleigh. However, I would suggest to those opposite that many residents, particularly senior residents, who use Ormond station on a very regular basis would have much preferred to see Labor's commitment to upgrade Ormond to premium status undertaken, rather than just installing a Parkiteer bike cage and upgrading and opening the toilets on that station for protective services officers. A premium station upgrade would have seen Ormond staffed from first to last train and, importantly, would have seen all of these facilities opened.

The other thing with bike cages is that while they are always a very welcome initiative, you also need to encourage riders to use their bikes to get to stations, and to do that you need to invest in bicycle infrastructure projects — bike lanes, intersection upgrades and bike trails. That makes it safer and easier. There has been a lot of investment in bike infrastructure over a period of years and quite a number of roads in both the Glen Eira and Monash areas have bike lanes, which makes it easier for people to get to stations and onto work and school. But the Baillieu-Ryan conservative government has not committed any additional dollars to the VicRoads bicycle program, so none of that work can continue.

These are very important matters to Oakleigh residents, but there are many other failures in this budget which will have an even greater negative impact on our community, and I would just like to touch on some of them. I cannot go on speaking on this budget without mentioning the Monash Children's hospital. We had a clear commitment from the then opposition leader and now Premier during the election campaign. He immediately matched Labor's promise. He was quoted by the Australian Associated Press as supporting the additional children's services out at Monash, saying:

We certainly make the same commitment.

The commitment was to build these services by 2014, but that is now not going to happen.

I note that this year's budget allocates \$7.3 million and that last year's budget allocated \$8.5 million. After \$8.5 million was allocated last year for the acquisition of land, the Minister for Health was quoted in the papers as saying that \$60 million would be allocated. I cannot find that \$60 million in either last year's budget or this year's budget; instead we have \$8.5 million and now \$7.3 million. We do not have the \$60 million that the government apparently said it would add last year.

Yesterday we heard in the news that Monash Medical Centre is now cutting medical support for surgery, radiology and endoscopy, which are areas of great need. Some of those cuts are up to 20 per cent. The simple reality is that you just cannot take a further \$134 million out of the health budget, as is proposed this year, on top of the reduction of \$482 million last year and not expect more patients to be added to the elective waiting surgery list and more emergency patients not to be treated on time. In the case of Monash Children's, up to 30 000 sick children are treated there every year; they need that hospital.

We have population growth and an ageing population. Demand is growing in health; it always grows in health.

We need plans that actually deliver on those important health services. In talking about plans, I would just like to quote something the Premier said in this place on 10 February 2011 as part of his speech on the annual Victorian families statement. I note that we have not had a families statement this year, so it is hardly an annual statement. In his 2011 speech the Premier said:

Our health system needs to have the capacity to care for people when they need it most.

I agree with that —

There is room for improvement in our health system. For example, over a quarter of emergency patients are made to wait longer than clinically recommended for medical attention.

That is correct but it has not improved. The Premier went on to say:

The government will develop the new Victorian health plan including specific plans for both the metropolitan and rural and regional health-care systems and a capital works plan for the next 12 years.

So we are going to have a new Victorian health plan; this was said in February 2011. It is now June 2012, and we still do not have a Victorian health plan. What we do have are cuts to the health budget.

The other thing I will just very quickly touch on is preventive health. In preventive health we have seen the abandonment of the cancer action plan. In terms of preventive health, community health services are very important to all our communities, and we are lucky to have MonashLink Community Health Service in the Monash area. I note that there is a line in the budget papers that says that the MonashLink Community Health Centre in Oakleigh has been completed. It has not been completed. There was \$2.5 million allocated to purchase a site, but the project has not been completed. We have a site in Johnson Street, Oakleigh, but we need to upgrade it. It is only a single-storey building, and we need more space.

Over a number of years there has been a gradual progression and planning of the relocation of the MonashLink health services. In 1999 or 2000 we had two sites — the older Chadstone community health centre site in Hughesdale and one in Mount Waverley which did not really meet the appropriate occupational health and safety standards for modern community health. So there has been a gradual planning and progression of the relocation of community health into areas of need in Monash.

Monash is a big area. It is geographically quite large, as is the population. At all times we have tried to work in

partnership with Monash City Council. We have had some partnership proposals with Monash City Council made fairly easy by some of the locations. When the old Clayton swimming pool site was redeveloped to become the Clayton community centre, the state government allocated something like \$8.1 million and a second storey was added so that MonashLink could be established in the Clayton area. That also included an upgrade of dental chairs from 6 to 10. We have just had the \$9.1 million community health service in Glen Waverley open, and again that is a partnership proposal with MonashLink. Then there is the Ashwood hub, which also saw the co-location of community health.

We have had a problem in Oakleigh because we did not have a site where Monash could co-locate with us. Monash suggested one site in Chester Street, Oakleigh, but it was actually an old toilet block, and when we investigated it and had some plans drawn up I asked the question, as did many others, as to whether they were going to relocate the substation that was on the same site. The answer was, 'No, can't you just build around it?'. You do not build a community health centre next door to a substation, so we quickly abandoned the proposal for the old toilet block in Chester Street, but we have had trouble finding another site.

The sum of \$2.5 million was allocated to find a site but MonashLink will still need help to develop the full service for the Oakleigh area. We have it in the other areas of Monash, and Oakleigh needs it. Oakleigh is an area of high need, and it should get the support that has been consistent and ongoing elsewhere throughout the Monash area. I hope that support will come for MonashLink.

Education and training is also an area of high concern. The scrapping of the School Start bonus will affect many low-income families in the area, and the removal of the education maintenance allowance school component is also of great concern. Parents are very concerned about education in our area. There are obviously no plans for further upgrades of schools in the Oakleigh electorate. We have been able to progressively upgrade them, but there are no plans to continue doing that, and that is a shame.

I will just give an example of how that can be done without necessarily involving a huge amount of money. I was at Carnegie Primary School recently for the opening of its Building the Education Revolution building. It opted for a classroom rather than a big hall, and it is a beautiful building. The school now has its junior school located in that beautiful building. The Carnegie Primary School was part of a progression upgrade. The former Labor government provided

\$100 000 for modernisation of the prep area, and \$300 000 for modernisation of the senior class and administration areas and there was also work done on the toilet block. We were progressively upgrading that school, and it is a shame that the government cannot continue the planning and development of this great school, which has gone from a population of some 200 to more than 400 children.

Of course the great concern at the moment in the education area is the \$300 million cuts to TAFE. I have already spoken in the house about the cut to Holmesglen, which will see \$25.5 million removed from its budget in one year. I will quote again from the *2011 Victorian Families Statement*. The quote in large print at the top of page 9 of the statement says:

In today's world, having the right skills is increasingly important to securing and keeping a good job.

There is quite a good section on having the skills to secure a good job. I will not read all of it as I would run out of time. I agree wholeheartedly with what is said in that section of the Victorian families statement, but unfortunately in 18 months the government has changed its mind. It does not understand why TAFE institutes exist. That is quite clear from its cutting \$300 million out of their budgets.

In the time I have left I would like to say that I think the greatest concern in education is the deceit that has been perpetrated on teachers in our education system. Very clearly during the election campaign statements were made by the then opposition leader and now Premier, who clearly stated, along with other Liberal candidates — I have the newspaper clippings from the Liberal candidate who stood against me in Oakleigh — that they would make Victorian teachers the highest paid teachers in Australia. It is a very different story now, as we know, and I can assure all members on the other side that we will continue to remind them that they should not make promises they will not fulfil. Of course we will clearly see the strength of the campaign against that broken promise today on the front steps of Parliament.

The greatest disaster for Victoria, though, is the loss of jobs and the threat to so many more jobs. I am now being contacted by people in my electorate who work in the public sector, people who have very valuable jobs and who work very hard in that sector. They do not know if they are going to be sacked, but they are asking me if I can do something to guarantee their jobs or if I can make some suggestion as to how they can keep their jobs. I cannot do that, and there are 4200 people who are going to be sacked from the public sector.

To be quite honest I am a bit tired of the way in which it is being said that somehow or other these people in the public sector do not contribute to the wellbeing and the good economics of this state. They are valuable workers and there are so many of them now working with this threat hanging over their heads, not knowing what is going to happen to them in the future. The most important thing you can do as a government at any time is to provide jobs — to provide secure jobs and to provide pathways and training to those jobs — and that is the one thing this government is taking away. Government members should be ashamed of themselves.

It is about priorities. A recent headline in the *Herald Sun* states, 'Ted Baillieu's adventure costs us \$1 million'. The article refers to the 'super trade mission to India' which cost more than \$1 million. It is not an adventure being in government; it is hard work — —

**Mr Angus** interjected.

**Ms BARKER** — I suggest to the member for Forest Hill that the first thing this government should do is withdraw the \$50 million it has committed for overseas trips and get its priorities right.

**Ms MILLER** (Bentleigh) — I am delighted to rise to speak on the 2012–13 appropriation bill on behalf of the community of the Bentleigh electorate. I would like to put on the record that I have the utmost respect for the Treasurer and his team. The Treasurer has worked tirelessly to put together a responsible budget. It was a tough budget, but it was a responsible one. It was the right budget for the time, and Victorians will now be living back within their means.

I would like to make a comment in response to the member for Oakleigh, who has just made a contribution to the debate, in relation to the Monash Children's hospital and health services. The Baillieu government has just contributed \$13.7 billion to Victoria's hospital and health-care system. This is an increase of \$883 million in funding for our public hospital system, and I can say, with a background in health care, that that is a far cry from what the previous government ever contributed in the 11 years it was in office.

I would also like to talk about a comment that was made last night. It was quite an interesting debate and lots of contributions were made on finances in Victoria. The debate ranged from talking about art classes and Napoleon to talking about Easter Island. The member for Essendon commented about cutting people adrift. That is exactly what the former government did when it

built the north–south pipeline: it took the water away, left Victorians up the creek without a paddle and waved them goodbye. Victorians certainly did say goodbye when they cut Labor loose, and we saw it sink into opposition on 27 November 2010.

As I said, this is a responsible budget. It was a budget we had to deliver in order to fix the problems and build for the future of Victorians. There is no question that Victoria is currently faced with challenges, including being in the midst of global and national financial challenges. We also have reduced revenue and a high Australian dollar. When you look at the mix from a state, national and global perspective, it is evident that we are in uncertain times, and when the Victorian people went to the election they wanted certainty. They wanted stability and leadership. They did not want spin; they did not want commitments that were never going to be delivered. They wanted commitments that could be properly costed, fully funded and delivered, and that is exactly what the Baillieu government is delivering.

This is our second budget, and it is a tough one. We have had to make some tough decisions, but it is a responsible and fair budget. It is a budget which means we will all begin to work and live within our means. Anyone who runs a household or a small business budget knows that you cannot live on a credit card. We could not continue to run the state of Victoria in the condition it was in. Do you know what the economy has been doing recently, Acting Speaker? Over the last decade to 2010–11 the average growth in expenditure was 7.3 per cent a year while average revenue growth was 6.9 per cent. You do not need to be an economist to work out that if you sustain that mathematical situation you are going to be living beyond your means. Anyone who has done maths 101 knows that. What does that mean? It means that basically we were up the creek.

The other thing that is important to acknowledge is that the federal government has denied Victoria its fair share of GST revenue. We have lost \$6.1 billion in GST revenue. Imagine how many hospitals or schools we could build, police stations we could open and jobs we could offer with that revenue? If members of the Victorian opposition were serious they would go to their federal colleagues in the Labor-Greens government and say to Julia Gillard, 'Victoria needs its fair share. Victoria needs its GST back'. Victorian families would all benefit if that were to happen. Members of the Labor opposition say, 'We care'. If they care about Victorians, if they care about working families and if they care about the situation we are faced with right now, that is exactly what they should do. They should pick up the telephone, ring Julia

Gillard and say, 'Show us the money! Give Victoria back the money it is entitled to'.

I want to go back to the health-care sector. We are delivering a responsible budget in challenging times, and the Victorian government has increased health spending to \$13.68 billion in the 2012–13 state budget. We cannot ignore the reality that under the national partnership agreement on improving hospital services the commonwealth government funded increased activity in emergency departments and elective surgery, only subsequently to let that funding lapse, resulting in a \$15 million reduction in 2012–13. This is in addition to a loss of \$6.1 billion, as I said earlier, in GST revenue since we came to office. If Labor members cared they would go to their federal colleagues, pick up the phone, knock on the door — do what ever they needed to do — and deliver for Victorians.

In terms of projects and infrastructure, we have a record state infrastructure spend of \$5.8 billion. What is important is our transport; we are investing a lot in our transport infrastructure. We are looking at port terminals and other major regional rail links et cetera, and at level crossings. The list goes on. This government understands that in order to be economically responsible, to grow the economy and to create jobs for Victoria this is the investment we need to make. We are delivering for Victorians.

Under this budget in the Bentleigh electorate I was delighted to receive \$260 000 for Coatesville Primary School. This is the start of a major infrastructure project for that school, which was forgotten by the previous government and certainly by the previous member for Bentleigh. I am delighted that I have gone in, listened, fought the fight and been able to deliver some funding that is going to start that process. I know that all those children who go to the school now and those who will enrol in years to come, and their parents, will benefit from improvements to this wonderful school in my electorate. I also mention that we have had an input of \$7 million for further planning and development for the Monash Children's centre. Whilst the opposition says that nothing is happening, members should make no mistake: we are delivering.

The other thing I am delighted about in this budget is \$20 million for the Dingley bypass, which abuts Warrigal Road in Moorabbin, which for those who do not know it, is a very industrialised area, so this is great news for people who live there. It is great news because it will increase jobs and will be great for business. It is a terrific initiative.

Not only are we being responsible with our management of money — because it is obvious that Labor cannot manage money — but we are kicking along the economy, we are increasing jobs and we are making sure that people live within their means and are not living on the old plastic fantastic. We are not going to put the state of Victoria into the financial disarray that we saw back in the Cain and Kirner days. It is important to say that had the economic climate under the previous government been sustained, in some time to come we would be something like \$60 billion in debt. That is absolutely frightening. We are going to fix the problems and build for the future.

In talking about funding for training, courses that experience the greatest demand will receive increased funding to accommodate increased enrolments for jobs training. That is important to acknowledge. We are also increasing funding for keeping our streets safe, and that includes putting an additional 1700 police officers and 940 protective services officers on the streets of Victoria by 2014.

I have to say that this week we saw a good indication of how hard Victorian police work, when they were protecting Victorians from protesters in Spring Street. There were mounted police, there were foot patrol police, there were riot police, there were divisional police cars — there was a sea of people. That is a true indication of how potentially violent our streets can get and the importance of investing in these areas.

In terms of financial funding, I want to reiterate and highlight the four pillars of our budget. The first one is about creating significantly stronger budget capacity. It is about fixing infrastructure projects that were overfunded by the previous government and not delivered on time. The second pillar is about improving productivity through a range of measures. The third pillar is about growing our export markets, and that is very important if we are to grow our economy. We are going to create jobs and help our small businesses because without those small businesses we will not have the jobs. The fourth pillar is about supporting industries and employees in transition.

These are the four critical pillars on which the budget just handed down by the Baillieu government has been founded. All the policies that we put to the Victorian people when we went to the election in 2010 will be delivered. They will be delivered in a timely, cost-effective, budgeted time frame. We will not be pushed and railroaded by anyone because we know what is responsible. The Baillieu government is proving to be responsible in that area.

I also want to look at economics. I refer to the Victorian Auditor-General's report of June 2011 on the gaming area and the sale of gaming licences. The revenue obtained from the sale of gaming entitlements was around \$3 billion less than the assessed fair market value of the assets. A member in the other place who was the Treasurer — and who has recently housed his office in Bentleigh — and a member in this house, a previous finance minister and water minister, were responsible. They cannot manage money. In the report, in black and white, that is what it says. The auction was ended prematurely. The auction was closed while bids were still being placed. How does that work? Any person running an auction would clearly understand that it is not a difficult thing to do.

Another thing it is really important to mention when talking about the economics of Victoria is the desalination plant. That is costing Victorians \$2 million a day. That is just the start.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms MILLER** — We have got the myki — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms MILLER** — In terms of mismanagement, \$1.4 billion.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms Duncan** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Weller)** — Order! The member for Macedon will get her turn.

**Ms MILLER** — And the poker machine auction, \$3 billion. We are basically paying for a Holding charge. We are paying for something that we are not even using.

When I look at the budget that was handed down and at the benefits for my constituents in Bentleigh, it is a responsible budget, it is a fair budget and it is a budget that had to be delivered at this point in time. We are going to do the right thing by Victorians. We are going to get the economy going, we are going to increase productivity and we are going to create more jobs. For the future of Victorians and for working families it is important that we set the record straight and we get the finances in order, and then we can move forward. I would like to congratulate the Treasurer and congratulate the team for their hard work and dedication and the benefits that my Bentleigh constituents will receive. I commend the budget to the house.

**Ms DUNCAN (Macedon)** — It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak on the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012 and to correct the record for some of the newbies in particular. I will give them the benefit of the doubt; they have been here 5 minutes, and some will be here for less than 5 minutes, so they have no way of knowing what went on before them.

But what has been interesting in listening to this debate is that they would rather speak about events that occurred 25 years ago than talk about their own budget. In fact the member for Hastings is so proud of this budget that he went on for 14 minutes and 7 seconds about history and events that occurred 20 something years ago and spent just 53 seconds talking about his electorate and what this budget is supposedly delivering for the good people of Hastings. He had nothing to say about it at all; that just shows how proud he is of the budget.

Let us make no mistake about the cuts we have seen with this budget. I want to talk about what it delivers for Macedon — and it did deliver some things for Macedon, I acknowledge that, because unlike those on the other side I give credit where credit is due. If members opposite were to give credit where credit is due, they would have been giving members on this side credit for the last 18 months as they have cut ribbons on Labor Party projects. I think we are yet to see a ribbon cut on one of their own projects.

Make no mistake: the cuts we see with this budget are largely ideological. Members opposite go on about black holes and sustainable finances, but we know this is what conservatives do. They get into office and they then proceed to cut everything around them. They do not like government services that much. They do not much like the government doing too much at all. We know they believe in a very small government. Their view of the world is very different to our view of the world. We think governments need to be involved in services and need to do things for communities and not just back off and let the market rule. We know what happens when we let markets rule: there is the survival of the fittest, and I guess those people might see that as an okay thing to do.

They get themselves elected and then they proceed to withdraw from a large part of government activity. We know there were no black holes, and there are no black holes in this budget. We know that the Treasurer and Premier said early on in the piece that there were no black holes and no surprises in the budget. They knew they needed to honour all of the promises they made during the last election campaign and they knew they could honour them because of the budget position they

found themselves in, but they then quickly realised, 'Whoops! Shouldn't have said that. How are we going to justify all of our cuts if we say that the budget does not have black holes?'. We know that economic conditions have changed — property values have stalled, GST revenue is down — and any government of any persuasion would have needed to deal with that in its future budgets.

Members opposite like to go on about the desalination plant without ever telling us how they would have done it and what model they were going to use. We know they were going to put one in the bay, so environmentally it would have been extremely damaging, but they were never put in a position where they had to plan it, fund it and have it built. I understand they were going to use a model very similar to the one we used, but I guess when you never have to deliver it, you can just stand there and bang on about it. In 25 years time the conservatives will be banging on about the desalination plant — 'Back in 2007 they built a desalination plant'. They will be saying that in 2037, as they are doing here.

What is interesting is that these guys opposite have really only done one thing since they have been in office — that is, try to roll out protective services officers to railway stations. We watch that with great interest, because we have already seen a major budget blow-out. In the one project they have undertaken we have already seen a massive budget blow-out. They will probably — or hopefully — not get more than one term, and we will see what their record looks like after one term in office.

I want to speak about the electorate of Macedon and what the budget has delivered for it. To the government's credit it promised very little to the seat of Macedon, and that is exactly what it has delivered. There is a huge amount of confusion around even the little it has delivered. For example, prior to the last election the then government promised to fund stage 4 of the redevelopment of Gisborne Secondary College. The then opposition promised to build an indoor sports stadium at the school. When the budget papers came out this year I quickly looked at what was in there for Gisborne Secondary College — because it was not delivered in the last budget, I was hopeful that there would be something for it in this year's budget — and there was a line item of \$3.5 million for refurbishments to Gisborne Secondary College.

I rang the principal and said, 'Look, it reads like it is stage 4 of your upgrade'. The principal advised me that while he was grateful for the money, he was unclear about what project it was funding — our election

commitment or the government's. I rang the regional office of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and it was equally unclear about what this money funds, so I raised this very issue — what the money is for, and how no-one seems to know — with the Treasurer in the adjournment debate.

A Liberal Party member for Northern Victoria Region in the Council has been talking to the community about joint-use agreements. She has been meeting with a range of sporting clubs to talk about how they might use this facility, which she is obviously assuming will be an indoor sports stadium. There is some confusion in the community as well, because while it was always intended that the stadium would be built on the grounds of Gisborne Secondary College, there is now the view that it would be better on a greenfield site away from the college. The member has made it clear that the government will not fund it at another location; the promise is to build it on the grounds of Gisborne Secondary College, and that is what the government will do. To some extent that is a fair enough position.

The member has been out there talking about joint use agreements and negotiating with netball players, et cetera, but meanwhile in an attempt to get some clarity about all this I raised the matter with the Treasurer in the adjournment debate. Just recently I received a letter from the Treasurer in which he says, among other things:

I refer to the adjournment debate item you raised in the Legislative Assembly on 17 April ...

He goes on to say:

Of this total allocation, \$3.5 million has been made available to complete the fourth and final stage of the redevelopment of Gisborne Secondary College, and \$250 000 towards a feasibility study to establish a secondary college in Romsey.

I will talk about that feasibility study in a moment. This demonstrates the level of confusion. Here is a budget allocation that actually funds the previous government's election commitment but does not seem to fund the government's own election commitment. I am not sure why the member is talking to netballers about indoor sports stadiums when the Treasurer is telling me the money is for stage 4 of the Gisborne Secondary College redevelopment.

Whatever it is for, I have to say it is warmly welcomed by me and my community, but it is a worry if the government does not know what it is funding and neither does the school community. I urge the government and the member to make it clear what this money is for and let people know what it is about,

because there is a lot of money going into that stadium, including council money and community fundraising money. That is the confusion around Gisborne Secondary College.

In regard to the feasibility study for a Romsey secondary college, I would describe it as a sham feasibility study. One of the staff members at the regional office told me that unless the government is going to change the rules regarding starting a new school — and there has been no suggestion that those rules will change — it is not clear how that \$250 000 will be spent. As the staff member said to me, you really only need to know how to add up how many people live in the area, how many attend local schools, what the growth rate is and what it is projected to be.

The government could save itself some money — put aside the \$250 000 — by letting me predict what the outcome will be. The school will be established when there is sufficient population to start up a new school, and at the current rate of population growth that will be around 2025. That is what the regional office has been telling the community for the last 10 years. Goodness knows what the government is spending the \$250 000 on, because this is core work for the regional offices of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development — this is what they do all the time; they are constantly evaluating population growth and determining where new schools need to be built. That feasibility study money is another mystery in this year's budget.

However, my community also received funding for passing lanes on the Melbourne-Lancefield Road. I welcome the announcement of that funding, and I know the community is looking forward to the commencement of those works, which will complement the work that has already been done on the road, funded by our government — not that you would know that if you were to listen to the local members taking the credit for the efforts of our government.

I would also like to refer to Sunbury, which has again been left off the map. It is the forgotten town when it comes to the Baillieu government. There is nothing in this year's budget for health, education, jobs or kindergartens. Sunbury will share in the inaction of this government, and it will also share in the cuts across the state — including the abolition of the first home bonus. This will have a severe impact on towns such as Sunbury that have a high proportion of tradespeople involved in residential housing. They will certainly feel that cut as it kicks in — as it starts to bite.

There are many teachers and many public servants who will also feel the pain of this year's budget. In last year's budget the Baillieu government promised it would create 55 000 jobs, but despite the rhetoric from those opposite, this year's budget shows employment growth at zero — and this is a budget the government is proud of! It is quite a worry. We have also seen increases in car registration fees — up by more than 16 per cent — and a further hit to low-income earners and pensioners, with the concessional discounts on utilities, health, social services and transport no longer keeping up with inflation. The impact of that will be felt in time to come. All this is in spite of Victoria's GST revenue increasing by 6.3 per cent.

I return to some of the comments that have been made previously. Those opposite go on and on about black holes. Of course there is an absence of The Nationals members in the chamber. The Minister for Sport and Recreation is at the table, but as usual, and as was the case with last night's debate, most members of The Nationals are missing in action. I will quote from an article by Malcolm Maiden published on 21 April 2011:

The discovery of budget 'black holes' is a standard political device for incoming administrations, but in Victoria the Baillieu government is starting to test its limits.

The article goes on:

That is not the case in Victoria. The Baillieu government would have to overturn conventional wisdom, in the markets and the business community, if it were to portray the previous Brumby government as serially incompetent.

It goes on:

... there were no general revenue estimates in the report, and \$2 billion in project cost blow-outs that Treasury said could be revised upward were not fully explained —

in this year's budget.

Another article, by Peter Hunt, again about the budget debate, comments on the Premier's statement that the '\$5 billion impact on Victoria's finances makes the task of preparing this year's budget particularly challenging'. The article says that what the Premier fails to say is that the \$5 billion shortfall makes up less than 2.5 per cent of Victoria's budget revenue over the next four years. Those opposite never let the facts get in the way of a good story. It suits their political agenda to try to suggest that the previous government managed poorly in some way, yet under the previous government we had relatively conservative management of our state and maintained a AAA credit rating. Those opposite have never known how to explain that. We were supposedly such a basket case, and we were supposedly

so poor at managing money. We hear time and again the phrase 'Labor cannot manage money'. If we are such poor money managers, it seems it must be an oddly easy process to get a AAA credit rating

Let us see what happens with the first efforts of those opposite to actually do something and not live on the legacy of the previous government, as they have for the last 18 months. With their one little project, the rollout of protective services officers, they have already blown the budget big time — they are \$200 million over already. Only 18 months into their first term they have only one project delivered, or partially delivered — at least there has been an effort made to deliver it. Of course we are also seeing broken promises all over the place, and we are seeing another demonstration of that as the cause of the protest on the steps of Parliament House today.

**Mr WAKELING** (Ferntree Gully) — Dear, oh dear — you only need to listen to the contribution of the member who spoke before me to gain a sense of where those opposite are at in terms of grappling with being in opposition. The thing about being in opposition is that you have to learn that the community has sent you a message. That is the point. Those opposite are in opposition because the community — not the government, not the Liberal Party, not The Nationals — sent them a very clear message that they could not manage money. That is why they are sitting on that side of the house.

I am very pleased to stand here today to speak about the 2012–13 budget handed down recently by the Treasurer. It is another demonstration of why governments of the Liberal and Nationals persuasion, not only in this state but throughout this nation, have been empowered to fix the financial messes that have been left by Labor governments. You only need to look at what has happened in Western Australia, you only need to look at what has happened in New South Wales, you only need to look at what has happened in Queensland and you only need to look at the debacle that is the federal government to see the DNA of the Labor Party and its incapacity to manage other people's money.

Socialism, as someone once said, is a great idea until you run out of other people's money, and that is exactly what those on the other side do not understand. If you give someone \$100, they only have \$100 to spend, but those opposite do not understand that. They do not understand the concept of living within your means. I was recently talking to a group of grade 5 students, and I said, 'If I gave you \$50, and you went to the shop, how much money have you got to spend?'. The answer

is \$50! Those opposite do not understand that; they do not understand about living within your means. Members opposite should explain to me why, when in government they had revenue growth of 6.9 per cent, expenditure growth was 7.3 per cent. Those opposite should explain to me how when you have revenue growth of 6.9 per cent — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr WAKELING** — I am very pleased to take up the interjections, if I may, Acting Speaker. I would be interested to understand the logic of having expenditure growth of 7.3 per cent when you have revenue growth of 6.9 per cent. In that case you are spending more than you earn. That does not work for me at home; it does not work for any of us at home. It does not work for people running businesses. If a small business has revenue growth of 6.9 per cent, it does not go out and raise spending by 7.3 per cent. Do members know what would happen? It would go broke. That is what would happen. That is the sheer economics of it.

Those opposite do not understand that. And do members know why they do not understand it? It is because it is someone else's money, not their own. They do not understand it, because it involves the community's money. That is the problem; that is the DNA of Labor members of Parliament — they do not know how to manage money.

Those opposite were talking about the fact that they left a legacy. In the short amount of time I have — 11 minutes — let me talk about the legacy that members opposite wanted us to talk about. There is the desalination plant. Members opposite laugh, scoff and say, 'Let's forget about the desalination plant'. Let me say this: Victorians are forgetting about the desalination plant. How are Victorians going to be reminded of the desalination plant? They will be reminded every time they get their water bill. The cost of it is \$2 million per day, every day, for 30 years.

I would like any member on the other side of the chamber to tell me I am wrong to stand in this house and say, 'The former government leaves to the state a legacy of \$2 million per day, every day for 30 years'. I am happy to take up interjections by members opposite. They are very quiet. No points of order are being taken. I am happy to stand corrected. We were told that they were economic giants and that they knew how to manage this state. I am a mere backbencher. I will stand corrected by those economic geniuses opposite! The silence is deafening.

We can look at the way in which the former government managed poker machines. The member for Mitcham sits beside me in the chamber. I remember the former member for Mitcham, the former Minister for Gaming, standing up in this house and telling us chapter and verse about how well he was managing the process. I can only say that the former member for Mitcham has left a legacy, and it has not been a great one with respect to poker machines. There is myki — —

**Mr McGuire** interjected.

**Mr WAKELING** — Looking backwards! This is the problem. Those opposite have created the mess. It is easy: they can create a mess, walk away and say, 'It is not our problem any more. The mess has disappeared'. I can tell members one thing: the desalination plant has not disappeared, myki has not disappeared, the poker machine mess has not disappeared and the HealthSMART problem has not disappeared.

There was the regional rail link. A train line was built, the trains were forgotten and the signals were not put in place, but the train line was expected to work. I raised the issue in the house, and I was advised by one of the opposition members that 'We do not provide cars when we build freeways, so why would we provide trains?'. Sorry; I did not realise that a train needed to be provided if I wanted to use the public transport system. That was the ludicrous proposition that was put to me by one of my colleagues opposite. That has just dissipated into the ether. Of course it fixed itself!

There are the ICT problems that we inherited. There is the Melbourne Markets situation that we inherited. They have disappeared into the ether! Members opposite like to stand up in this house and lecture us, saying, 'Don't talk about the past'. There is one problem: we are the ones who have to fix the mess that has been left by those opposite; we are the ones who have to fix this state to put it back on a strong keel and take the state forward. That is exactly what this government is doing: it is fixing the mess that was left by those opposite and is building for the future. I am very pleased that this budget funds a wide range of projects.

A point was made earlier about protective services officers. I can tell you, Acting Speaker, that there is only one side of the house that stands in support of the work of protective services officers. It is my side of the house. Those opposite condemn our protective services officers, those people who protect us in the Parliament, who protect people at courts or who now work on our railway stations. Members opposite have called them

'plastic police'. I, for one, will not stand for it. I support the work of the protective services officers, and I condemn members opposite for their lack of support for the initiative.

I know something: when protective services officers are put on railway stations in my electorate of Ferntree Gully, there is no guarantee they will stay there, because a change of government will mean that protective services officers will be removed from stations, because the hearts of those opposite are not in it. They do not believe in them; they do not support them; they condemn them all the way along. Victorians know that our protective services officers who are currently working every night at the CBD railway stations, Footscray station and Dandenong station provide support and protection and arrest people who are causing trouble on stations. The people of Victoria know that if there is a change of government, those opposite will remove protective services officers.

I am pleased that in this year's budget there is the delivery of further benefits to my own community. We have had partial funding for the upgrade of Mountain Gate Primary School. Many weeks before the election, towards the end of the 11 long, dark years, the then shadow Minister for Education came to my electorate to make a funding commitment to upgrade four schools at a cost of \$15 million. The previous government had 11 years to do that but it failed. Many weeks before the election I called on the Labor government to match our funding commitments and say, 'Let's ensure, regardless of the outcome of the election, that this community has a guarantee that the four schools in the Ferntree Gully electorate will have funding for upgrades'. Many of those schools are 60 years old.

We made a funding commitment that we would upgrade those schools within our first term of government. Members opposite, when they were asked to do this, refused point blank. They said, 'We are not interested in the Knox community or people who live in the Ferntree Gully electorate. We are not interested in children who attend primary schools in Ferntree Gully. We will not commit to it. If you re-elect us, there will be 15 years of a Labor government that has not delivered one upgrade in respect of that promise — —

**Mr Nardella** interjected.

**Mr WAKELING** — I am happy to take up the interjection. I am pleased to hear a contribution from a Labor member on this issue. If what the member for Melton has just said were true, why was it that the then Minister for Education refused to tell my community that the government was going to upgrade those

schools, which is something that was promised under its policies? It was for only one reason: the policy was never going to be delivered for my community.

**Mr Nardella** — Wrong!

**Mr WAKELING** — Clearly that is the nub of the argument: there was never an expectation that those projects would be delivered for my community. Members should understand this: this government will deliver the \$15 million during our first term, as promised. That will be in addition to the \$8 million that we had to find last year to fix the Eastern Autistic School. When we entered government we realised that there was an \$8 million black hole which had to be fixed in that first budget in order that the school could open. We determined that it was \$8 million and we allocated the \$8 million.

In a neighbouring electorate, \$15 million has been allocated to finish the Boronia K–12 College project. That was another problem left to us by the former government. It wanted to merge two schools but the money for that had not been allocated. We had to find \$15 million to finish that project. It happens to be in the electorate of the shadow Minister for Education, the member for Monbulk. We had to fix the problem that had been left to us by the former government.

That means that during this term this government will deliver \$38 million of investment in schools in Knox. That is the biggest state government investment in my local schools, and it took a coalition government to do it. It was not done by a Labor government; it took a coalition government to invest \$38 million in one term of government. Those opposite can sit, whine and carp, as they do in this house, but I remind them that it took a coalition government to listen and to act. I am very pleased to see that a coalition government has actually delivered.

I am mindful that the Minister for Sport and Recreation is at the table. He is one who is interested in local communities, he is a very passionate advocate for local sport, and he has delivered. He has delivered in spades for my community. I know he is very receptive to further pushes and requests from my community, but we understand that we will go through a budgetary process for any request. I guarantee my community that I will press the point.

Clearly there is a lot that we have done and clearly there is a lot more that we need to do. In the time that is left to me, I note that the budget provides \$5.8 billion for long-term infrastructure. We will see the elimination of rail level crossings on Springvale Road in Springvale

and on Mitcham and Rooks roads in Mitcham. It took a Liberal-Nationals government to eliminate a level crossing in the electorate of the member for Lyndhurst. It was something that he could not deliver in 11 years as a local member. I congratulate the member for Mitcham on her hard work and advocacy for the elimination of the level crossings on Mitcham and Rooks roads, which will help my community as well.

**Mr NARDELLA** (Melton) — This is a miserable government. It is a cruel government, one that punishes people, including families and communities. Again with this budget we have the situation where Melton has missed out. There is no Melton day hospital, no relocation of the Melton community health centre and no upgrade of the Melton Highway, which is extremely dangerous. There are no new bus services in Melton or Bacchus Marsh, especially to implement the Bacchus Marsh bus review and to cover the new estates springing up in Melton. There are no lights for the Ferris Road–Western Highway intersection. Like the Melton Highway, that intersection is dangerous and lights are desperately needed at the intersection. It is frustrating as the work is needed to be done now. I will be working with the community in a campaign to get the intersection upgraded and the traffic lights put in.

The budget has no Woolpack Road heavy vehicle bypass for Bacchus Marsh. There is no desperately needed school upgrade for Bacchus Marsh Secondary College and the Melton Specialist School, both of which had their master plans done two years ago under the Labor government. There are no mental health services for the district. There is no new school for the north-west estates and no new railway station for Toolern and Caroline Springs, where the money was ripped out. There are no extra train services for the overcrowded peak services to and from Bacchus Marsh and Melton, where people have to stand up all the way when travelling to and from school or work. There are no funds to rebuild the Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional Hospital — \$72 million should have been allocated for a master plan — and there are no funds to plan for the new primary school needed at Eynesbury.

Victorian certificate of applied learning coordinators have been cut, Victoria University has had its TAFE funding cut and there have been cuts to funding of vocational education and training in schools and to global funding for state schools. With this budget there will be no planning for the duplication and electrification of the rail line. Along with my residents, I am really angry that we are being punished by the Liberals.

Today I call on the government to review and cease the Department of Sustainability and Environment's war against Raymond Hoser and Snakebusters. He is being targeted by DSE after having had his livelihood taken from him and his 10 workers, along with his former workers being raided just recently by DSE and police officers. An independent review needs to be instituted urgently to make sure that Mr Hoser, his family, his workers and his former workers are not continually targeted, charged and punished.

Today I also call on the Baillieu government to uphold the agreement with Boris and Lana Zaitsen to meet them now that the Building Practitioners Board has found the builder and surveyor guilty of all charges relating to defective work at Cromwell Street, and to have the Zaitsens dream home completed.

I want to talk now about the failed, miserable bunch on the other side of the house. You cannot believe them, because that failed, miserable bunch on the other side of the house will say and do anything if they think that people will, in fact, believe them. I am angry with the Baillieu government because it is attacking the very people it should be protecting, nurturing, teaching and skilling.

This is no more stark than in the country, in rural and provincial Victoria. The Nationals are destroying country Victoria. That is what they are doing. Day after day the legacy of The Nationals is to leave an absolute swathe of destruction across country and provincial Victoria. It is as if a meteor had dropped on Victoria and cut rural and provincial Victoria apart. Let us look at how they are systematically destroying country Victoria, these Nationals who are concerned only with procuring the white car and the driver for the white car. The government even went so far 18 months ago as to expand its cabinet to make more room for ministers from The Nationals so they could sit in the white cars and go travelling around the country while their legacy of destroying country Victoria is being put in place.

Let us look at the editorial on page 6 of the *Ararat Advertiser* of 11 May. It says about the closure of the Ararat Department of Primary Industries office that:

The state government has shown little regard for regional and rural areas in this budget and the closure of the Ararat DPI office is one of its most appalling decisions.

That is what country people are saying about The Nationals. The Nationals are closing seven DPI offices in country Victoria. There are the white knights of country Victoria, doing only what they know how to do best, and that is to shut down country Victoria! The seven DPI offices that will be closed are those in

Ararat, Birchip, Camperdown, Cobram, Kyneton, Ouyen and St Arnaud. Here we are with the Kennett government back in force, treating country Victoria like the toenails of Victoria. The Nationals are urging the Liberals on. Are they standing up for country Victoria? Of course not!

What did the *Pyrenees Advocate* of 18 May quote the Victorian Farmers Federation president, Peter Tuohey, as saying? On page 1 he is quoted as having said:

There can be long-term impacts on communities when you relocate staff ... It's not just about the DPI staff. It's also other groups who use these DPI facilities, who'll be left in the lurch.

That is what The Nationals are doing — they are leaving country Victoria in the lurch. According to the *Mallee Ag News* of 17 May 2012, The Nationals are relocating DPI staff out the 11 sites shared with the DSE to larger sites. That is The Nationals' commitment to rural and country Victoria — take staff out of country Victoria and put them into the large sites because The Nationals do not care.

Not only are The Nationals closing these vital DPI offices in places that are their core constituency but they are going further to hurt these farming families who are still coming out of a 13-year drought and many of them out of terrible floods. This is a cruel government. It is attacking farming families by shutting down agricultural education in the TAFE system. These people are the future of country Victoria and the government is shutting them down. The Nationals keep their white cars while making it impossible for young people to do courses at TAFE to stay on the land, to stay in their communities — to gain the skills to stay and work on the land. This is the great Nationals, the country party of Victoria, doing this to their own constituency.

On page 143 of the *Ballarat Courier* of 19 May 2012 the VFF is reported to be appalled that in 2011 enrolments in private industry courses — listen to this — fell 26 per cent in the Sunraysia, Ballarat, Bendigo, central and East Gippsland TAFEs, South West TAFE in Hamilton and Wodonga TAFE. That is from the *Ballarat Courier*. All The Nationals members are out there saying, 'Wrong'. They are calling the *Ballarat Courier* wrong. They are calling the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF), their own supporters, wrong.

Already there are job skill shortages in these areas. What are The Nationals doing? They are cutting another \$290 million out of the TAFE system, which is an absolute disgrace. These TAFE cuts will make it

worse. It may mean that TAFEs in rural areas close altogether — places like Wodonga and Sunraysia, up in Mildura and elsewhere — because these cuts are cruel cuts and these cuts are affecting country Victoria. Mr Jochinke, the vice-president of the VFF, said:

We'll end up with more regional jobs lost and more young people having to leave the farm to get access to the courses they need.

This is the legacy of the Honourable Peter Hall, the Minister for Higher Education and Skills. Young people leaving country Victoria is the legacy of not only Mr Hall but also The Nationals.

The disappointment continues. In the *Country News* of 7 May 2012, on page 3, Mr Hoey from the United Dairyfarmers of Victoria — not our friends but friends of The Nationals — said about his friends, his colleagues, his advocates, in The Nationals:

Dairy in northern Victoria is still missing out.

Missing out under The Nationals government, under their advocacy and under their leadership!

There is more disappointment. At 6.45 a.m. on 24 May this year on 3WM Peter Tuohey, the VFF president, said that farmers and regional businesses will have to pay more for the fire services levy, with the rise being a disincentive. One of the farmers in Toolern Vale in my electorate, Brad MacPherson, says his insurance fee has gone from \$2500 this year to \$5000. That is being replicated all throughout country Victoria.

Let us have a look at The Nationals conference and the policies of The Nationals in Victoria. Let me quote the Leader of The Nationals in this great Parliament, as reported in the media:

'In opposition, you can be everybody's champ', he admitted. 'In government, it's time to deliver. You cannot do it all. You'd love to, but you can't.'

Why is he there? Why is he there if he cannot deliver for this constituency when he promised to deliver for his constituency?

Andrew Broad from the VFF said in an article in the *Sunday Age* of 20 May:

What have we got out of the state government? Very little.

I would put to members that the state government is actually out there hurting country Victoria.

According to On Track data published in the *Weekly Times* of 6 June 2012, page 9, 56.7 per cent of year 12 metropolitan students go on to study bachelor degrees at university. Only 37.1 per cent from rural and regional

school leavers get to do this. This is the legacy of The Nationals and the Honourable Peter Hall.

Let us have look at jobs. In May 2012, 16 400 full-time jobs were lost in country Victoria. What is the government's target for job growth in this budget? Zero, absolutely zero! Members of the government come in here time and again. Even today at Keppel Prince in Portland another 25 jobs have gone because The Nationals, the climate change deniers, the followers of those great intellectuals, are not supporting these industries in the state.

I want to refer honourable members to Austin Powers — The Spy Who Sacked Me. Imagine The Nationals in the party room. They are all around the board table. You have Dr Evil. He is patting his hairless cat, like he does, the Leader of The Nationals. He is stroking the cat like Dr Evil and he brings his little finger to the edge of his lips. They are all around the boardroom table — you have got Robert Wagner, and Frau Farbissina is there as well — and he says, '\$1 billion', and they all whisper, '\$1 billion'. That is what they are on about, but in actual fact it is a fraud. This Dr Evil is a fraud. The Nationals are frauds.

There is not \$1 billion in the Regional Growth Fund; there is not \$900 million, \$800 million, \$700 million or \$600 million. There is \$500 million in the '\$1 billion' growth fund that they all refer to. In actual fact, most of those programs were Labor programs and continue to be Labor programs. The Nationals want to repackage them as their own because they are letting down country Victoria. They do not care about country Victoria. The legacy of The Nationals is the same legacy left after Kennett, and that is the destruction of country Victoria, which we will have to rebuild.

**Mr HODGETT** (Kilsyth) — I am delighted to rise to speak on the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012. It is always a great pleasure to follow the member for Melton to correct his distorted view of the facts. I state at the outset that this is a tough budget but a good budget. This is a responsible and necessary budget given the current economic climate and Labor's legacy of waste. It is a budget about rebuilding the state's finances, and I will explain how and why in the time I have available to me today.

I want to break my contribution into three main areas and speak on three specific topics. Firstly, I want to place on record why we are here and why we require a tough but fair and responsible budget. I will highlight that the state Labor government wasted the boom years and that we are now all paying for it. We will see why Victoria needs to live within its means and how the

2012–13 budget sets us back on the right track. Secondly, as the representative of the people of Kilsyth, I want to highlight the positive news that this budget is delivering for my electorate and how hard work and effort pays off with good local projects and results being delivered. Finally, I want to make some general comments on how this budget is delivering for Victorians.

To commence with the first topic, I will kick off with the commonly held household view that Labor cannot manage money. I am going to spend a bit of time on this because it is important that we all understand it. Under the previous Labor government total expenses grew at an unsustainable average of 7.3 per cent per year over 10 years to 2010–11. Victoria's public service, in particular, grew at an average of 5.3 per cent between 2006 and 2010, compared to just a 2 per cent average annual population growth over the same period.

Let us look at Labor's track record on projects. The Wonthaggi desalination plant will cost billions of dollars for decades to come. Labor signed up to a desalination plant mess that will cost Victorians \$2 million per day every day for the next 30 years. It is now known as the Holding tax, aptly named after the member for Lyndhurst, who is responsible for this mess. The regional rail link project has blown out by up to \$1.1 billion. The myki public transport ticketing system was massively over budget and late in its implementation. The Melbourne wholesale market redevelopment project was plagued by cost overruns and delays from the day it was announced by Labor. The LINK police database project was abandoned after a further \$100 million was needed to make it operational. The HealthSMART database project needs a further \$80 million to be completed. Labor has sold 27 000 10-year electronic gaming entitlements for just \$980 million, gaining \$3 billion less revenue than the assessed fair market value of these assets. Project after project has been mismanaged, with cost blow-outs, budget overruns and waste. The list goes on and on.

Did Labor have a plan? Some say no, but others say yes. Their plan is that every so often the coalition, the Liberal and Nationals team of responsible financial managers, will get into government and take the hard, tough and the financially responsibly decisions for the long-term future of our great state. And we did get elected, as the people of Victoria had had enough of the squandering, reckless misuse of public money — Victorian taxpayers money — being thrown away by an irresponsible Labor government. So what are we to do? Are we to continue on the reckless path that Labor set or change direction for the benefit of all Victorians?

A report entitled *Independent Review of State Finances — Interim Report — April 2011* states:

The panel concludes that a fresh approach to financial management is required if the state's finances are to be sustainable into the future.

Referring to the past 10 years, the report further states:

If these trend growth rates continue, Victoria's general government sector will, without policy change, record a negative net operating balance of around \$6.5 billion by 2020–21 ...

Shame on those opposite; they are an absolute disgrace, yet they have the audacity to come in here after 11 years and trot out all the needs of their electorates. It is amazing how many problems have popped up in the last 18 months, since we have been in government. The mob opposite was in government for 4063 days, and we have been in office for 557 days, yet these clowns opposite want us to take responsibility for fixing all the problems they neglected for 11 years. The conclusion of this independent review of the state's finances over the past 10 years was:

Victoria's financial position is projected to deteriorate unless there is significant improvement in the net operating balance of the state's general government sector.

Without a change of direction, the future financial position will be characterised by an undesirable combination of negative net operating balances and an increasing accumulation of debt.

If this occurs, Victoria will need to borrow to fund operating expenditure as well as infrastructure investment or sacrifice the latter. In the panel's view, this prospect is unsustainable, undesirable and inconsistent with the principles of responsible financial management.

Does that not sum up Labor and the 11 years we had under Labor — 11 dark, long years? Labor wasted the boom years, and now we need to live within our means. The truth of the matter is that Labor let Victoria down badly with its neglect and poor management over 11 years. The Labor government failed to plan and left Victoria in a mess.

I know deep down opposition members are ashamed of the legacy the former government left Victoria. Case after case confirms Labor's reputation for squandering taxpayers money. More than \$4 billion was blown by the Labor government through waste, incompetence and mismanagement. We can never go back to Labor because Labor members are about unions and mates first and Victorians second. They just do not care.

That is where we have come from and, members should make no mistake, that is where we sit after 11 dark years of Labor's waste and mismanagement. That is

what we have to face. That is the reality of Labor in government, and we are seeing it play out at the federal level. Labor cannot manage money and cannot deliver projects on time or on budget. They see a problem, appoint a union mate and throw more money at it, hoping it will fix itself. That is why the Treasurer of Victoria has brought down this responsible budget in difficult and challenging times.

I turn now to what this budget will deliver for the residents of Kilsyth. This is the positive news that this budget is delivering for my electorate. It demonstrates how hard work and effort pay off with good local projects and results being delivered for the benefit of local communities. The Baillieu government's 2012–13 budget delivers a responsible plan to drive economic growth, generate jobs, deliver major infrastructure and improve community services for Victorian families. Labor wasted the boom years, and we know we now need to live within our means. The budget focuses squarely on reversing the previous government's reckless legacy of excessive spending and project cost blow-outs.

Despite these challenges the Baillieu government's budget addresses Victoria's current economic challenges and delivers on projects that will benefit the local community — for example, the rebuilding of Eastwood Primary School in Ringwood. I am thrilled that the school will get \$350 000 to fund the schematic and detailed design stages of the school rebuild. Eastwood is a leader in education, and this funding brings it a step closer to the goal of operating out of brand-new, state-of-the-art facilities that the parents, teachers and students deserve. It is a great win for Ringwood East residents, and it is fantastic news for the school community.

A 3 per cent reduction in the WorkCover premium from 1 July 2012 will assist manufacturing, business and industry in Bayswater North and Kilsyth. The budget gives great support to local business and industry. The WorkCover premium reduction will provide a welcome boost for many local businesses in the manufacturing hubs of Kilsyth and Bayswater North and will ease the burden on small business, which is great news for the industrial sector in my electorate. The Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade, Richard Dalla-Riva, recently spoke of the Baillieu government's support for manufacturing when he visited the following local companies in my electorate: Assemco, Denso, Hychill, PACCAR and Kenworth, and Radio Frequency Systems. With this premium reduction the government reaffirms its commitment to local business and industry.

There is an extra \$883 million for public hospitals and \$364 million for capital works as part of a \$13.68 billion investment in health. Maroondah hospital is in my electorate, so that is terrific news. A record \$5.8 billion will be invested in infrastructure to generate jobs and help grow Victoria's economy. As we have all heard in other contributions from this side of the house, the 2012–13 budget makes a record \$5.8 billion investment in infrastructure — and it will create jobs.

I have spoken about the Montrose roundabout before in this house, and now the upgrade of the roundabout has been funded for completion in the 2012–13 financial year. The roundabout will be upgraded to improve safety and traffic flow at the intersection. We made an election commitment and funding has now been allocated. Work will start in the coming months to install signalled metering at the intersection. This will involve installing sensors that are triggered during peak times to moderate traffic flow. This follows extensive consultation by VicRoads with local residents. I thank the parliamentary secretary for roads and transport, Edward O'Donohue, a member for Eastern Victoria Region in the other place, for his assistance in bringing this about.

Further, funding has been delivered for new safety and traffic improvements in Mooroolbark. Traffic lights will be installed at the corner of Brice Avenue, Hull Road and Cardigan Road and a new pedestrian crossing is also being built at Hull Road, north of the five-ways roundabout. The traffic lights will help manage traffic flow and improve pedestrian safety and will link in with the Mooroolbark Country Fire Authority unit to allow speedy and safe egress for fire engines in emergencies. We spent quite a bit of time consulting with the CFA to ensure that was part of this project.

The budget sets out a clear and responsible plan to meet Victoria's challenges and positions us to take advantage of current and future opportunities. It is a clear plan to secure the future. For more than 10 years we saw reckless, irresponsible fiscal management from the Labor government, involving waste of massive proportions and bungled projects. We are still seeing the same incompetent management from the federal Labor Gillard government. Over Labor's decade in government expenditure growth averaged 7.3 per cent while revenue growth averaged 6.9 per cent. It was unsustainable, and now Victorians are paying the price.

Given these significant challenges, I commend the Baillieu government for focusing on securing the future, and I congratulate the Treasurer, the Premier and the entire coalition team on producing a responsible and

very good budget that delivers on our election promises for the people of Victoria. This is a responsible budget. It is the type of budget that Victoria needs, and it shows that the Baillieu government will not emulate the Labor tradition of recklessly throwing money at headlines. This budget will drive economic activity, productivity and jobs, and this responsible approach shows that Victoria is in safe hands.

In conclusion, we can never go back to Labor's waste and mismanagement. This budget sets out a clear plan to get Victoria's finances back on track and includes a record investment in long-term infrastructure projects. We have retained the AAA credit rating. We will spend \$5.8 billion on infrastructure and support people in hardship, while at the same time going against the flow of GST revenue and stamp duty. The Treasurer and the Premier have set the foundations for a stable economy and a future that we will all be proud of. I conclude with a comment made by one of my colleagues:

We will look back on this budget of 2012–13 as a building block for Victoria — the year that we lived within our means and yet still managed to achieve so much.

I commend the bill to the house.

**Ms THOMSON** (Footscray) — I rise to speak in the debate on the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012, but it is with no pleasure that I do so. I have listened to members opposite, and it is apparently no pleasure for most of them either because they did not have a lot of positive things to say about their budget. They spent most of the time talking about Labor in government. This is their second budget, and if I think back to Labor's budgets in 1999 and 2000, I recall that our members of Parliament proudly got to their feet and talked about the initiatives of 'our government', the things that we were striving to do and the vision we had for Victoria. I have not heard one member on the government side mention 'vision' — a vision of what Victoria should be and how this budget fits within that context. Victorians want a government that has a vision. Instead we have had a mantra about budget surpluses.

The member for Ferntree Gully decided that he should give those of us on this side of the house a lecture about deficit, and I will say this: the Labor government in its whole 11 years ran a recurrent surplus. We actually ran a surplus. If members look at the debt, they will see it was debt for infrastructure. If Sir Rupert Hamer were alive to hear the contributions of members opposite, he would be horrified. If members look back at the level of debt under Sir Rupert Hamer's government, they will find it was much larger than it was under the Bracks and Brumby governments. Do we talk about that? Is

that Sir Rupert Hamer's legacy to Victoria? No, it is not. Sir Rupert Hamer's legacy to Victoria was a vibrant arts community and the infrastructure to support it. It was the West Gate Bridge; it is infrastructure that Victoria now relies on. It was the city loop that we now rely on.

If we look back to the time that Sir Rupert Hamer was Premier of this state, we see that he knew that going into debt to provide infrastructure was the right thing to do, and it was certainly the right thing for the Bracks and Brumby governments to do. Victorians will look back in 20 to 30 years and say, 'Thank God the Bracks and Brumby governments put that infrastructure in place so we can rely on it today'. The shame is we did not get the chance to finish the job. I have heard from those opposite for almost two years now that we had 11 years. The truth is that if everything that could be done were done in 11 years, there would be no need for a government now. The truth is that the job continues and it continues to need to be done.

When you reflect on budgets you ask yourself what is it that you really want the budget to achieve. What is it that you want Victorians to see when they look at the budget and what benefits will they receive from it? I looked around to find out what a good government is, what a real government is, because governments have changed over the last 20 to 30 years, as have the expectations of government, and I came across a quote from Herman Henry Lehman. He was the 45th governor of New York and went on to become a US senator. He said:

You can't run a government solely on a business basis ...  
Government should be human. It should have a heart.

This government has no heart. I know it has no heart because it has deliberately cut money from the people who have no voice and who need it most. That goes to the heart of the issue for me, which is education.

When we talk about education, we see it as an opportunity for people who come from low-income families. We see it as the basis on which country Victoria can continue to flourish. When we drove around country towns in 1999 half the shops in those towns were closed. But we invested in the country over our 11 years, and through drought and through bushfires those towns continued to flourish. We invested in education in those areas and we gave children and their parents hope for their children's future. Those opposite are depriving those people of their hope for the future. The decisions they make today on education affect a generation of young people, and the choices they have made will damage a generation of young people — the most vulnerable young people in

our community. Government members should hang their heads in shame for the state that they are going to leave the education sector in, particularly the TAFE sector.

The government has cut \$300 million out of the TAFE sector. That is immediate — effectively it is an immediate cut. What does this mean to the most vulnerable in our community who rely on TAFE? I can imagine a family in my electorate where a parent has lost his job because he was in manufacturing and this government does not have a jobs policy and does not have a local content component in its industry policy. I can see that family saying to their young son or daughter, ‘You could have gone on to a TAFE course, you could have gone on to do vocational education and training in schools and you could have made something of your life, but the reality is these programs have been cut and I now have to find \$3000 or \$6000 so that you can do that course. But we don’t have that money, so go stack the shelves at Coles’.

That is not the future I want to paint for the constituents in my electorate who want their kids to do better than they did, who want their kids to have the future that they could not have. That is not what good government is about. That is not about heart in government. That is about saying, ‘We do not care about you. You do not matter’.

Today we will see unprecedented numbers of teachers come to the steps of Parliament House. Yes, it is about the Premier keeping his promises to these teachers, but it is also about the fact that the government is going to cut psychologists, it is going to cut counsellors, it is going to cut speech pathology supports to those very teachers who need them to support those children —

**Dr Sykes** — Where’s your money tree? Tell us about your money tree.

**Ms THOMSON** — ‘Where is the money tree?’, I hear. That is where the vision comes in. If you have a vision that prioritises where your money goes, you will find the money for the things that matter, and education matters. It is a fundamental responsibility of state government to provide good educational opportunities for people in this state. It is a priority for government to provide that, and government members are failing Victorians. Government members are failing Victorians in their own electorates and they are certainly failing them in the electorates of those of us on this side of the house.

I had the opportunity to meet with representatives of Victoria University to talk about the effect of the TAFE

funding cuts on VU, and they are horrendous. I do not know that you can ask institutions to take these cuts without them having diabolical effects, and I will go through some of those effects on VU TAFE. VU TAFE will be keeping 180 courses but scrapping 106, and that is not the end of it. It will be looking at a number of the courses it is keeping, and it will have to increase the fees for them. It does not yet know, because of those increases, whether the courses will remain viable. VU has done an amazing job of creating pathways from TAFE to degree courses. That is going to be drastically affected by the decisions this government has made about cutting TAFE. It is privatisation by stealth, and it is absolutely shameful.

Victoria University specialises in fitness. It has agreements in place with the Western Bulldogs and Melbourne University concerning how to develop a full program in the fitness arena. Whether it is in sports, physiotherapy or nursing, it has built very strong partnerships across a range of areas as well as an amazing new facility at its Ballarat Road campus. VU is now wondering how much that program is going to be affected by the cuts imposed upon it by this government. Fifty staff have been told that they are immediately redundant; they are gone. The concern is that another 50 might have to be told exactly the same thing at the beginning of next year.

This is not what we are put in government to do. We are not put in this chamber to deprive people of an education; we are put in government to make sure that people have access to one. While the government makes cuts here, we had another member — I think it might have been the member for Melton — mention the additional white cars, the extended catering and the things that are being done to build the cabinet. I have sat around that cabinet table and I would like to know how government members all fit. I well remember that when we sat around the cabinet table we had a vision. We knew that education was a priority, we funded it and we delivered. When Labor was elected to office in 1999 student retention rates were 76.2 per cent. In 2010 it was closer to 90 per cent. We had our priorities right. We aimed to deliver and we did. That is what having a vision can do. It delivers real outcomes, because you have a reason to make decisions.

This government has made a hotchpotch of policy commitments that it made during the election. It wanted to keep some of those promises, but some have obviously fallen by the wayside. Teachers pay has fallen by the wayside. It is that hotchpotch of policy promises the government made before the election that has created the budgetary problems it now faces. These problems are not the making of the previous

government; they are the making of this government. This is the government's second budget. It is responsible for the budget bottom line, not the previous government.

The government was left with a budget in good condition, which the current Premier admitted on the Jon Faine radio program just after the election. He believed there were no black holes. He believed he was handed a budget in good condition, and he was. It is just that this government had to deliver on its own hotchpotch promises, and how could it do that when it had to retain Labor's programs because it did not have any others to replace them with? This government has no ideas; it is devoid of ideas. It has no vision. It is a shameful government.

If this government really wants to leave a legacy like that of Sir Rupert Hamer, one that will last forever, then it should get a vision, because he had a vision. He had a vision for Victoria that is still very much alive today. He would be ashamed of the Liberal Party and the government today because it does not meet any of the criteria of a visionary government that is there to support the very people who cannot support themselves. It is there to build an education system for everyone. I am proud to be able to say that we will be able to look back on the Labor government's legacy, because it will last and this government's will not.

**Mr SHAW** (Frankston) — I would like to start off first of all by talking about the positives that the Frankston electorate has received from this budget. The member for Footscray said that there is no legacy in this budget. She does not come from Frankston; she comes from Footscray. Let me tell you about the legacy that this budget has left for Frankston. First of all, Derinya Primary School actively advocated for extra land for its 650 primary school students. A big thankyou to Courtney Smith, Narelle Debenham, Natasha Jantsz, Kitrina Andrews, Emma Limpens, Ric Daikin and Jenny Roth, the principal, who advocated for this land. They came to me. I took the Minister for Education to their school. They lobbied us and gave us a great presentation and now in this budget they have been granted \$1 million for extra land.

The biggest legacy for Frankston in this budget is the Frankston Hospital, where \$40 million has been allocated to the emergency department, something that was very much required in Frankston. The Minister for Health heard that cry and said, 'Here is \$40 million'. That is on top of \$36 million last year to fund 64 acute beds for inpatient care.

Funding has been continued for Frankston Heights Primary School so that it can complete its \$2 million modernisation project this year. Overport Primary School also has \$5 million to complete its modernisation this year.

South East Water is continuing with its works worth \$40 million, as is Melbourne Water with \$73 million in works. The guys over there say, 'Wait for the drought!'. But Melbourne Water says, 'No, we are flood proofing Frankston with \$73 million'. It is not listening to the global warming alarmists over there; it is saying 'No, we are going to flood proof Frankston to the tune of \$73 million'.

We had Lord Farquaad rock up to Frankston. He came to Mount Erin Secondary College. He went to the principal and said, 'You're not going to get any money from Geoff Shaw's campaign commitment; you're going to get nothing in this budget'. Thankfully principal Karen Lee said, 'On your bike, Lord Farquaad', and off he went. The school got \$900 000 this year for an architectural plan as part of our \$9 million for the revitalisation and modernisation of Mount Erin Secondary College.

The biggest issue that on which we campaigned in the election was law and order and safety. Frankston has been allocated the largest number of police. We heard the member for Footscray say, 'There is no legacy!'. There is a legacy in Frankston just on the basis of the projects I have just outlined. We had the highest allocation of police in the state. Whilst I want to talk up Frankston, and people on this side want to talk up Frankston, those on the other side and up in the gallery want to talk down Frankston. They want to talk it down because they are upset that they lost Frankston. In the history of the Frankston electorate, those opposite have only ever held it for three terms, yet somehow they think it is theirs. It is not theirs!

Why does Labor not care about Frankston? Why does Labor hate Frankston? Why under the Labor government did Frankston receive the lowest allocation, \$12.5 million, of the six central activities districts, which include Footscray, Broadmeadows, Box Hill, Ringwood and Dandenong? Then, a couple of months out from the election, Labor decided to whack on another \$10 million to take the total up to around \$24 million, which was still the lowest allocation compared to the \$292 million allocated to Dandenong. Labor abandoned Frankston; it neglected it. Labor does not care about Frankston.

When we were coming into the election campaign the Police Association said, when I spoke to members of it

directly, 'We are 111 police short in Frankston'. Those opposite do not care about the safety of Frankston. Lord Farquaad, who was the very short-term police minister, did not care about safety, and now Lord Farquaad as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition — —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! I was not sure who the member meant by 'Lord Farquaad'. He must refer to members by their proper titles.

**Mr SHAW** — Yes, excuse me, Deputy Speaker. The member for Monbulk, when he was on the other side of the house, pointed to the protective services officers (PSOs) and called them 'plastic police'. What a disgrace! As the police minister he did not care about protective services officers, but now he is on the bandwagon saying, 'Yeah, we need them; why aren't they delivered in Frankston?'. Frankston, in case members do not know the figures, is the only municipality to have had its crime rate reduce. We will get the PSOs when operations put them there. That is what we will be lobbying for, that is what I am fighting for and that is an election commitment that will be kept.

Those opposite talk about jobs. We are talking about PSOs, 940 PSOs, and that equates to jobs. There are the 1700 police and transit police, and that equals jobs. There is the redevelopment of Frankston Hospital, and someone has to construct its emergency department. That sounds like it will provide jobs.

**Dr Sykes** interjected.

**Mr SHAW** — Thank you. I would think governments should work together. I would think local governments should work with the state government, and there are some that do. The current mayor of Frankston, for example, has some great goals. He says here in his bio that he has lived in Frankston all his life and that he:

... intends to work towards making the city a safer place for residents and visitors and is keen to improve Frankston's image.

That is a great goal! You go, 'That guy has got a goal; that's fantastic!'. The former mayor, Glenn Aitken, said he:

... advocates on behalf of the community on a range of issues ...

such as beautification and the importance of good architecture and planning. Fantastic! He has got a plan; that is really good. Christine Richards, former mayor, is:

... passionate about Frankston and is working hard to see it realise its full potential.

Fantastic! Then we have a Labor hack called Colin Hampton in council, and according to his bio on the Frankston City Council website his main objective as mayor, after having been there since 1987, for 20-plus years — it is on the website; look it up — was:

... to bring the newly elected councillors up to date with the complex nature of local government.

It is inspiring work, is it not? He has no idea. For 20 years he has been there, this Labor hack — and he needs to go in the next council election. State government and local government should be working together.

I want to really bring it back to basics. We have heard on this side of the house that Labor cannot manage money, and we know that to be a fact. I would like to take the focus off Frankston for a minute. The spotlight has been on Frankston for the last 7 or so minutes that I have been speaking. I want to take it to a state level and look at the incompetence of the prior government and the competence of this government. So many times we have seen that those of us on this side know how to manage money. Why? It is because of our life experiences, such as running businesses — not being union hacks or electorate officers and not necessarily coming up through local government. We have had some life experiences in business. We have put our houses on the line, and we often take home less and work more than the people we employ.

The people over there have not employed anyone. They have employed no-one at all. They strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. They get upset when they do not put a notice of motion in properly, and they run out all angry, but they do not apologise for the desal plant, for the ICT stuff-ups, for myki or for the \$3 billion loss in the gaming licences. They do not apologise for those, but it is 'Boohoo' when the opposition leader does not get a notice of motion in, and he walks out.

While I am on the subject of the opposition leader and why Labor does not care, why is it that we have a natural disaster here in Victoria with the floods in East Gippsland and we do not hear squat from those opposite? We hear the member for Melton get up and say, 'The Nationals don't care about country Victorians'. Where do you think the two leaders are today? Has the member for East Gippsland not been talking about it? But these guys do not care.

What is their major vision? The member for Footscray said before, 'You don't have a vision'. Let us have a listen to what the vision of those opposite is. They offer no solutions except, 'Let's have a public holiday'. That is absolutely marvellous! The other one was to put

4200 public servants back. What disastrous economic management! As has been said before, they are black belts in incompetence; that is what they are. They have degrees in mismanagement and waste. They are a disgrace.

We have got floods in East Gippsland when not so long ago the previous government could have dammed the Mitchell River, but it was, 'Oh no, let's not dam the Mitchell, because it may never rain again'. They bowed to the Greens. They bowed to the left, the global warming alarmists who are over there, and they put in a desal plant that is going to be with us for 30-odd years and costing us \$2 million a day. I have presented the legacies left to Frankston. To the member for Footscray and the opposition I present the legacy Labor is leaving Victoria for the next 27 years.

Those opposite have no solutions. They whinge and whine and offer no solutions whatsoever, which was true even of the opposition leader when he was health minister. The Ombudsman's report into Victorian ICT projects dealt with 10 projects and the waste that went on. There was over \$1.4 billion of waste in projects, and some of them have been scrapped. We have HealthSMART. Fair is fair — the Leader of the Opposition was not the Minister for Health when that program started. However, when he started in 2007 that program was still running. He signed off on the papers; he knew exactly what happened. The key issue here for the Leader of the Opposition is that even as the project was running off the rails he was still signing off on this train wreck. That is exactly what he was doing, and it shows the incompetence of Labor, even at the highest level. Labor cannot manage money.

Let us break it down. When it comes to businesses and households the member for Ferntree Gully expressed it very well earlier when he said that you only have a certain amount of money to spend. If you spend more than that, you put pressure on yourself and on your household budget. It is a very simple thing.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr SHAW** — Talking about credit cards, if you do not have the money to buy what you want, you pull out a credit card or you take out a bank loan. There are spendthrift spouses who spend on a glamour dress and get that one photo shot of them in the glamour dress. The Labor Party has those glamour dresses. One of them was a \$750 million north-south pipeline, a huge credit card expense that has just been wiped, among many other ICT projects. There is a big spend on them and then they are wiped. The HealthSMART program, for example, while the current Leader of the Opposition was health minister went over budget by 33 per cent —

over \$200 million — and was years from completion. It has still not been completed and will possibly be wiped and will run in only a few hospitals. It has cost over \$500 million.

The Ombudsman's report revealed a lack of leadership. It pointed to poor expertise in all things, including finance and knowledge. There were poor decisions and there were poorly developed business cases. To me that equals Labor all the time. If you look up Labor in my dictionary, you will see what it stands for: poor expertise, poor decisions and poorly developed planning — and it cannot manage money. That is a common theme throughout the report.

Not only are Labor members incompetent in relation to finance, they are also very incompetent when it comes to the environment. To illustrate why Labor members do not care about the environment, I refer to the Auditor-General's report entitled *Facilitating Renewable Energy Development*. It says that in 2002 the government at the time said it wanted to 'increase the share of Victoria's electricity consumption from renewable sources from 4 per cent to 10 per cent by 2010'.

That is quite a noble goal, I guess, if you are a global warming alarmist. However, what happened during that time was that consumption from renewable sources went from 3.6 per cent to 3.9 per cent. At the time the former government had wanted it at 10 per cent, it had gone to 3.9 per cent. Even with its left wing green agenda Labor could not meet its renewable targets. Labor members talk about a goal but they cannot deliver. They are all talk, they do not deliver, they cannot manage money. This is the budget for Victoria. This is a responsible budget that is providing stability. It is giving us a surplus, and it is building for the future. I commend the budget to the house.

**Mr CARROLL** (Niddrie) — I am pleased to rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012 — my first budget reply speech. I want to focus on the impact the bill will have on the Niddrie electorate in particular but also on the whole of Victoria. I intend to focus on jobs, education and training, which are the key indicators for constituents of the Niddrie electorate.

It needs to be stated at the outset that the state budget provides a critical opportunity for the government of the day to highlight what it stands for: its priorities and its vision for where it wants to take the state. In relation to this vision, on 2 May the *Age* economics editor, Tim Colebatch, wrote about the budget. The article states:

... there was nothing to answer the question Victorians are asking: why does Ted Baillieu want to be Premier? Where does he want to take us? At some point, his government is

going to have to tell us what it stands for. The budget was a missed chance to do that.

In the 2012–13 state budget the Baillieu government has missed a golden opportunity to outline a positive blueprint for the future of the state of Victoria. Instead the budget highlights a vision which includes no jobs plan or infrastructure investment strategy to create jobs. What the budget does highlight, though, is an orchestrated campaign to reduce funding in education and training, senselessly hurting our most vulnerable. This budget narrows the equality of opportunity and disadvantages people in Melbourne's north-west, the constituents of the Niddrie electorate.

A jobs plan is the most important policy of any government. In Victoria, unemployment is higher than the national average. There is no jobs plan in this budget. Instead it targets our most vulnerable and shifts the burden of tough economic times squarely onto the shoulders of working families and vulnerable Victorians. On the subject of jobs, again in the *Age* of 2 May, the economics editor, Tim Colebatch, described the budget in these terms. The article says:

... nor was there anything resembling a jobs plan, or anything aiming to get the economy to fire on all cylinders again.

However, if you go back to 2009, when Labor was in office in the middle of the global financial crisis, you find that 92 per cent of the full-time jobs created in Australia were generated right here in Victoria. Last year the Treasurer promised us 55 000 jobs a year, instead we are losing 900 a week. The government's 2012–13 budget reveals that employment growth is now forecast at 0.00 per cent. We must do better.

The Niddrie electorate is a feeder to the local aviation industry, which is located at the nearby Tullamarine and Essendon airports. Regrettably Qantas last month announced that more than 400 maintenance jobs will be axed at Tullamarine airport. This will have a direct impact on my constituents. Indeed it will have a direct impact on many friends of mine who work at Qantas. They now find themselves with a very uncertain employment future. We must do better.

As I went from door to door in the recent by-election for the seat of Niddrie there was one conversation that kept resonating when I talked to voters, and that was about the lack of visible infrastructure investment by the current state government. I often heard the comment, 'Where are the next projects: the Royal Children's Hospital, the Spencer Street station redevelopment, the County Court redevelopment, the synchrotron, the Geelong bypass, the Wimmera–Mallee pipeline?'

When it comes to infrastructure investment the Baillieu government appears to be at a standstill. It has no momentum or pipeline of infrastructure ready to go. A brief look at history will show that the Kennett Liberal government did move to create the CityLink tollway and the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. Its predecessor, the Cain government, built the tennis centre and redeveloped the MCG with new light towers and a new southern stand. The Bracks and Brumby governments provided record smart infrastructure investments which stimulated the Victorian economy and created jobs, such as the new Royal Children's Hospital or the Wimmera–Mallee pipeline. In the 11 years that Labor was in office an average of \$581 million was invested in health building projects each year.

One and a half years into the first term of this government Victorians are still wondering what are the government's infrastructure priorities. In fact if you pick up today's *Age*, you will see that one anonymous backbencher is quoted as lamenting the government's lack of an economic strategy and saying:

'The government is firstly still struggling to come to a view as to what its key message is and, secondly, it is struggling to communicate it ...

That is from a government backbencher one and a half years into the new government.

In its budget overview the government talks up the east–west link, describing it as transformational infrastructure, but as the shadow Treasurer, the member for Lyndhurst, highlighted in his budget reply, \$50 million buys approximately 15 metres of this \$5 billion to \$7 billion project. We must do better.

In the budget overview the government says:

Victoria's future economic growth will be underpinned by a better educated and skilled workforce, increasing productivity and workforce participation.

This positive statement flies in the face of what the budget actually does to create and instil a better educated and skilled workforce. The *Sunday Age* editorial on 27 May put it best:

If you were to choose just one weapon to fight entrenched disadvantage, the sort of grinding poverty and unemployment that passes from one generation to another, that weapon would be education.

...

... the Baillieu government appears to be targeting those who most need a good education, but are also at the highest risk of not getting one.

I could not agree more. Education is the great social leveller. It provides opportunities for self-actualisation. It provides pathways to jobs, to higher incomes and even to better health. With good-quality education it is possible to transcend disadvantage and to choose your own future. However, the Baillieu government is systematically sabotaging education in Victoria, particularly educational programs designed to assist our most vulnerable.

Last year's \$48 million cuts to the Victorian certificate of applied learning (VCAL) program directly impacted schools and constituents in the Niddrie electorate, particularly students at Rosehill Secondary College, formerly Niddrie Technical School. The VCAL program was developed in response to the *Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria* — the Kirby report — which was released in August 2000. VCAL assists those disaffected from mainstream education with alternative pathways.

Cuts to VCAL have been followed up in this year's budget with devastating cuts to the TAFE sector. Over \$290 million will be stripped from TAFE budgets, costing as many as 1500 jobs. Conservative estimates show that at least 550 TAFE teaching and support jobs will be lost in the near future. The \$290 million cut to TAFE represents a 20 to 40 per cent cut to the average TAFE institute.

In this context it is worth noting that the importance of TAFE is highlighted on page 73 of the Kirby report. The report states that TAFE provides support for some young people who have the poorest education experiences and most difficult personal circumstances. This sentiment was recently echoed by the chief executive of the Holmesglen Institute of TAFE, Bruce Mackenzie, who described the budget cuts to the TAFE sector as an 'attack on the most vulnerable people'.

I recently received a letter from Ray Griffiths, the chief executive officer of the Kangan Institute, a major provider of TAFE in Melbourne's north-western suburbs. In his letter he outlined the effect of these budget cuts on the Kangan Institute, saying:

Fifty-two courses with significantly reduced government subsidy levels will be terminated as no projected mix of student fee increase and delivery improvement can be seen as sustainable. Regrettably, many of these courses have served as entry-level pathways for disadvantaged learners. No new enrolments will be taken in these course areas from 30 June 2012 with current students being taught out until the end of 2012.

In summary, we project that the direct impact of the budget will see a reduction on Kangan's government-subsidised

business of around \$25 m with places for 1000+ prospective students no longer available in the short to medium term and job losses of up to 175 over the next 18 months.

Last night many of my colleagues and I met with staff from Victoria University, who should be commended for their commitment to providing opportunities to students living in Melbourne's west. Reductions in TAFE funding will see a \$29 million cut to VU's annual vocational funding. These TAFE cuts will close the doors for skills, training and alternative education pathways to constituents in the Niddrie electorate at a time when many people are struggling to stay afloat in a tough labour market. Statewide these cuts to TAFE are nothing short of a tragedy.

When I first got my hands on the budget papers there was one project I was looking for, and that was funding for Essendon Keilor College, my top priority in the Niddrie electorate. As many members would be aware, in my inaugural speech I highlighted that as an immediate task. Recently in Parliament I called on the Minister for Education to create a school environment that sends the message to students that their school matters, their education matters and their futures matter.

Unfortunately this school was neglected in the 2012–13 budget, despite the Minister for Education himself stating last year:

... the conditions out at that school are disgusting, they are not safe for teachers, they are not good for those students ...

Since my election I have visited the school and spoken with both students and staff and reiterated my ongoing commitment to see that Essendon Keilor College is given the funding it so desperately deserves. I have seen firsthand not only the school's need for funding but the great commitment the school has for learning. I intend to keep up the pressure over the next 12 months leading up to the next budget. To this end I welcome the recent remarks by the Minister for Education about Essendon Keilor College in the Parliament when he said:

It is a good school, and it will certainly be part of our future budget considerations when we are working up to next year's budget in terms of capital commitments.

I thank the education minister for those remarks.

I will finish where I began. The state budget was a missed opportunity for the government to highlight what it stands for, its priorities and its vision for where it wants to take the state. Instead the budget has no jobs plan or jobs-creating infrastructure investment strategy. What the budget does have, though, is an orchestrated campaign to reduce funding in education and training, senselessly hurting our most vulnerable and narrowing

equality of opportunity. The Baillieu government's response to rising unemployment, tougher economic conditions and cost of living pressures is to cut programs that provide pathways to jobs and skills training for our most vulnerable.

Perhaps it is best that I conclude with the words of the anonymous government backbencher quoted in today's *Age* newspaper:

'The government is firstly still struggling to come to a view as to what its key message is and, secondly, it is struggling to communicate it ...

'If you don't get that right you are going to fail at micromanaging smaller issues such as TAFE [cuts]. To me that is a concern'.

The Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012 is a concern for all.

**Debate adjourned on motion of Mr NEWTON-BROWN (Pahran).**

**Debate adjourned until later this day.**

## RULINGS BY THE CHAIR

### Questions without notice: answers

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Earlier today the member for Altona raised a point of order regarding an answer to a question without notice given by the Minister responsible for the establishment of an anti-corruption commission yesterday. Standing order 58(2) provides a minister with the discretion to determine the content of any answer. The Chair has no power to direct a minister how to answer a question except to ensure that the answer is relevant and that the minister does not debate the matter.

During his answer the minister informed the house that the Premier had received advice from the Department of Premier and Cabinet relating to the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001. As the minister did not quote directly from the advice, there is no obligation for him to make that advice available to the house. I do not uphold the point of order.

### APPROPRIATION (2012/2013) BILL 2012

*Second reading*

**Debate resumed from earlier this day; motion of Mr WELLS (Treasurer).**

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN (Pahran)** — As members of the Liberal Party and The Nationals, we are used to people coming up to us on the streets and saying, 'Thank God you are back in control. Thank God you are back to clean up the financial mess'. The common refrain we hear in our communities is, 'The state could not have afforded one more term of Labor'. As much as the Bracks and Brumby teams embraced corporate culture and tried to unshackle themselves from their union roots, it did not really work.

Time does not permit me to go into the history of the Bracks and Brumby governments in depth, but to go a little further back, who could forget the mess that Premier Kennett found himself in after the Cain and Kirner governments? The pain we all had to go through was like a hangover after drinking cheap champagne at a wild party. Liberal members were the sensible parents who turned up after the party. And as we turned up, there were the members opposite, scurrying over the back fence, denying their responsibility. We were brought in to clean up the mess. The Victorian community voted us in then, as they voted us in recently, to clean up the mess left by Labor and to help lift the state off its knees.

This state was reduced to being a laughing-stock back then. This great state, which has historically been the economic powerhouse of the country, which was the envy of the world with its abundant natural resources, and which was able to build magnificent buildings such as the one we are in, became a laughing-stock both nationally and internationally, and the Kennett Liberal government sorted it out in just seven short years.

When Premier Bracks took over, he was haunted by this era. Like a chameleon, he refashioned the Labor Party. It reinvented itself, focusing on spin, advertising and slick marketing campaigns, complete with helicopter props. This ragtag crew of professional staffers and unionists donned their shiny suits, put on their fat ties, polished their shoes and slicked back their hair — it was not a bad caricature of successful businessmen! There they were for a decade, wooing the corporate world with \$1000 dinners with Progressive Business. They said, 'Come to us; we are one of you now'. It worked for a while, but the problem was they did not actually know what to do other than create this image. Labor members created the illusion: they acted big, they talked big and they spent big. It is easy to do that when you are doing it with someone else's money — the Victorian people's money. While the Victorian economy was propped up by the international circumstances and the buoyant economy they inherited, they could not mask their hopeless grasp of what was actually required to run the state sustainably.

Over the 11 years of Labor governments the failures and dud deals added up. The government collected barnacles one by one, and eventually Bracks jumped that ship and Brumby went down with it. Yet again the Liberal-Nationals coalition was brought in to patch it up, to bring the state together and make it all well again. We did Brumby a favour. He was never elected by the people, and he was mercifully euthanased by them. Victoria was on the verge of being totally crippled again. What a legacy Labor would have left after one more term.

Let us look at some of Labor's failures and mismanagement in recent times. I refer to the Vertigan review. It found that each year the Labor government was spending more than it received.

**Mr Nardella** interjected.

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — I say to the member for Melton that somewhere there is a village looking for its idiot.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the member for Prahran to watch his language when he refers to members on the other side of the chamber.

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — This part of the budget is very simple. It does not require a degree in economics. Kids learn it very quickly when they move out of home. You have the money you have to spend, you spend it and it has gone. When it is gone what do you do? If you have access to credit, you can put it on a credit card, but then you will find yourself in even more trouble. It is a very simple lesson.

Being in government can be hard. There is no end to the amazing ideas on which you could spend money, no end to the worthy causes or the people that should be paid more money for the great work they do, but being Premier is not being Father Christmas. It is not just a matter of endlessly handing out money for these good ideas and good causes. You have to weigh up the options and how you will most responsibly and sustainably expend the money you have.

This is one thing the Liberal-Nationals coalition remembers: it is not our money, it is the Victorian people's money, and it should always be treated as such. Labor was gifted by the previous coalition government; it took over government with a gift of a \$1.7 billion surplus, and it blew it very quickly.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — Members on the opposition are trying to howl me down now, but they

cannot hide from the fact that they were left with a \$1.7 billion surplus and it was blown in a few short years.

Let us take a few examples. I turn to the sale of poker machine licences. It was incumbent on the then government to maximise the income from the sale of this asset for the state. What happened? The government sold for \$980 million what was actually worth \$4.5 billion. That is like flogging your \$500 lawnmower to Cash Converters for \$100. It is irresponsible.

I turn to myki. Who could forget the humorous footage on television news? The former Minister for Public Transport was proudly showing off this amazing new system, but as she reached over with her myki card and lightly touched the corner of the machine, it fell off the wall. Myki was delivered three years too late and \$350 million over budget. How could that possibly happen?

I turn to the food bowl modernisation project. It comprised \$2 billion in irrigation projects, but there was not adequate research to justify the expenditure. As the member for Benalla often reminds us, the \$750 million north-south pipeline is a rusting white elephant. It is a permanent scar on our landscape, a scar that should remind regional Victorians of the injury that the former Labor government inflicted on the state.

The issue of the desalination plant arises so often and in so many debates. I suppose it is the flagship legacy of the Labor government. How could the former Labor government sign us up to a deal that costs us almost \$2 million per day before the bloody thing is even turned on? It will cost us \$2 million per day for 30 years. What else could we spend that money on?

The members of the Brumby government were so out of touch and so arrogant even when dealing with things that did not cost money, such as the clearways they installed in my area and around inner Melbourne. They did not listen. Former Premier Brumby did not listen. There was the most enormous community uprising. The member for Richmond will well remember the uprising in Richmond. But what did he do? Did he step up to the plate and represent his community?

So out of touch was Brumby he just ignored the community and ploughed through: 'We are not going to reverse this decision. We are going to plough through with it. We are going to destroy the amenity of local neighbourhoods. We are going to destroy local businesses'. Then the people spoke, and they spoke decisively. He was a Premier gone mad.

It was all a con, this illusion those opposite had built up. It was a movie set. It was a stage with no substance — in some cases quite literally. The Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre was a fantastic project; the problem was it was a building with a sign on it. There was nothing inside. Nothing had been funded. That is what we were left with when we came in. I recall Premier Brumby on the nightly news calling on Olivia Newton-John to serenade him; I think it was *Hopelessly Devoted to You* or *You're the One that I Want*. There was Premier Brumby, blushing like a schoolboy. It was an embarrassment to him, it was an embarrassment to the Labor Party and it was an embarrassment to the state.

What Olivia Newton-John should have been singing was *Xanadu*. *Xanadu* is referred to in a poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge about a beautiful but imaginary and mythical place. That was Brumby's Victoria — an imaginary, mythical place complete with the magical, mythical fairy lights he proposed for the West Gate Bridge. It was all a con.

I turn now to our budget. The Treasurer has been applauded by media commentators. This budget is a responsible budget with modest surpluses maintained. It maintains the AAA rating, and it enables us to invest in infrastructure and even build up a bit of a war chest to tide us over in tough times. We are going to keep the economy strong, and we are going to be the state best placed to take advantage of changing circumstances globally and nationally. We are well set up, and that is something that is well recognised by the community and the commentators.

Labor could never be competitive or productive when it ran this state, because it was beholden to too many interests. It was beholden to the party's union mates, who sucked the state dry. Now we are picking up the pieces. We are making those hard decisions. We are bringing Victoria back to spending within its means — to spending on a sustainable basis — and we are even putting a little away for a rainy day. We have budgeted for a \$155 million surplus, and this will build to \$2.5 billion. We will be growing business, we will be cutting red tape, we will be implementing responsible wages policies, we are reaching out to Asian and other international markets and we are assisting industry while at the same time protecting and supporting our community's most vulnerable people.

This is all being done in very difficult financial circumstances. We have falling GST revenue and falling stamp duty revenue — we are down \$7.6 billion on those two items alone — yet the Treasurer has still delivered a surplus. We are planning a record state

infrastructure spend of \$5.8 billion. We are getting rid of level crossings in Springvale and Mitcham, we are constructing the Dingley bypass, we are constructing the Koo Wee Rup bypass, we are funding the Ballarat western link road, we are funding the Stud Road duplication — —

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr NEWTON-BROWN** — There is the Geelong Hospital, as my friend, the member sitting next to me says. We are also going to provide additional maintenance funding for the West Gate Bridge.

I turn to Prahran. I am mightily pleased that the \$200 000 feasibility study for the new secondary education facility in Prahran — the state secondary high school — has been funded in this budget. That feasibility study is going to be occurring this year. Of all my local policies, that is the one I am most approached about in the street and in my office in Prahran, and it is one I am very proud to be delivering on this year.

Other projects which benefit Prahran include \$22.5 million to expand exhibition and education space at the Shrine of Remembrance and \$49 million going into police and protective services officers — and the Prahran community has already seen the benefits of these increased front-line resources. There are increased concessions, meaning that 35 000 additional households will access electricity concessions and an extra 25 000 households will get water and sewerage concessions. This will ease cost of living pressures, which is what the Premier said he would do before the last election.

We have funding for the acquisition of 1150 new social housing homes and for the provision of much-needed upgrades to 1600 public housing dwellings — upgrades required because of the neglect of the Labor government. This will also reduce wait times for many of my constituents in Prahran. Two hundred million dollars has been allocated to prevent homelessness and support those at risk of homelessness — and there are many in Prahran who are at risk of homelessness. A record \$1.4 billion will be spent on mental health, and some of that will be on gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex mental health, with new earmarking of funds for this particularly vulnerable community. There is \$7 million to boost the number of schools teaching languages, and this will be of great assistance to the culturally diverse community in Prahran. This is a responsible, well-balanced budget, and I commend it to the house.

**Mr TREZISE** (Geelong) — I rise to speak on the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012 with grave concern. I emphasise the phrase ‘grave concern’, because I can genuinely say this is the worst budget that has been delivered in this house since I have been here — since 1999. This budget has been delivered at a time when Geelong electorate and the region of Geelong are at a crossroads in relation to jobs, in relation to health and in relation to education.

This budget delivers absolutely nothing for Geelong. On the jobs front we have seen absolutely no action from this government. We have seen no dollars for education in Geelong. In the past we saw the Bracks and Brumby governments deliver bucketloads in relation to health. This government pays lip service to Geelong in this 2012–13 budget.

What is disappointing is that prior to the 2010 election this government promised the world to those in the Geelong electorate and region and promised the world to Victorians. The government has delivered absolutely nothing except a list of broken promises and smoke-and-mirrors policies.

As I said, Geelong is currently at a crossroads in relation to local jobs. Members are well aware — especially the member for Lara, who is a very good member — that Qantas is presently shedding more than 100 jobs at Avalon Airport. Future operations are still in doubt. Jobs at Alcoa at Point Henry are currently under review, and something like 660 jobs may be lost. Each week we hear that jobs are under threat across the region. In the last 18 months hundreds of jobs have been lost in the Geelong region and across the south-west region. This Baillieu government — —

**Mr Watt** — Tell the truth!

**Mr TREZISE** — I will tell the truth. The Baillieu government has done absolutely nothing to keep those jobs. As a matter of fact, quite to the contrary — this government has created more uncertainty by slashing 4200 of its own jobs across Victoria. Because there is a large public sector workforce in Geelong, many of those people are now feeling pressure.

Only a couple of months ago the member for Lara, the Leader of the Opposition and I met with a number of public service representatives in Geelong to discuss their concerns about the government’s slashing of the public service workforce. These people worked in various state government departments and offices, including the Transport Accident Commission (TAC). At that meeting on that day all the public service representatives expressed their concerns about the

future and when the axe would be hovering over them. The TAC representatives at the meeting had particular concerns and mentioned that they had moved their families from Melbourne to Geelong. They are now concerned that their jobs are under threat.

When I mention the TAC it reminds me of the absolute contrast between the inaction of this government, which includes the member for South Barwon who sits in the chamber and is mute, and the former Labor government under the leadership of Premier Bracks and then Premier Brumby. At a time when entities like Alcoa and Qantas are shedding or reviewing jobs, this government has sat on its hands. People genuinely ask me, ‘What is the Premier doing for Geelong?’. The answer is absolutely nothing. In contrast, as I said before, the former Labor governments were different. Hundreds of jobs were going to be lost at Ford in 2005–06. The then Premier and Treasurer were constantly in Geelong and working with the then Ford CEO, Marin Burela, to come up with effective alternatives to those job losses. They succeeded.

I must say, as I look at the member for Lara, that the member for Lara and I travelled to the United States and raised the issue with the then Ford executives there. Primarily because of the actions of the then Premier and Treasurer we not only saved jobs at Ford but also established the Geelong Investment and Innovation Fund that has, particularly, created hundreds of new jobs in Geelong from that dilemma. It was a great success. I see that you, Deputy Speaker, are about to ask me to continue speaking after the lunch break.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! It is now time for the debate to be interrupted. The member will have the call when the debate resumes.

**Sitting suspended 1.00 p.m. until 2.02 p.m.**

**Business interrupted pursuant to standing orders.**

### ABSENCE OF MINISTER

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I wish to advise the house that the Minister for Energy and Resources will be absent from the house today, as he is attending to ministerial business interstate. Questions on the energy and resources, gaming and consumer affairs portfolios should, in the minister’s absence, be addressed to the Minister for Ports.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**Teachers: enterprise bargaining**

**Mr ANDREWS** (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Premier, and I ask: is it not a fact that the tens of thousands of teachers on strike today want nothing more and nothing less than what the Premier promised them before the last election?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Before calling the Premier, I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to remove that from the bench in front of him.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask him to remove that poster from the bench in front of him.

**Ms Hennessy** — On a point of order, Speaker, in relation to your previous request of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, could you just outline in detail the basis upon which a piece of paper on the table that stands up for public education is unparliamentary or is not allowed to be on the table?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I consider it to be a political banner — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I do not believe it is an appropriate place for it to be during question time.

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — I do thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. The government has a very clear wages policy that is 2.5 per cent — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr BAILLIEU** — The government has a very clear wages policy. That wages policy is consistent with our policy to maintain a sustainable fiscal position in this state and a responsible budget. That policy is for a 2.5 per cent increases plus productivity improvements as they are negotiated. Discussions in regard to this were started with the union in August of last year — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! That is enough from the member for Ballarat East.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — Discussions with the union started in August last year, and we are disappointed that the AEU (Australian Education Union) walked away from those negotiations.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the house to come to order. I know that this is a Thursday, but I am not prepared to put up with any more of this yelling across the chamber when ministers are on their feet answering questions.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — As I was saying, we are disappointed that the AEU chose to walk away — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Stop the clock. I am not going to tolerate it. Be warned.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — We are disappointed that the AEU chose to walk away from those negotiations. The government has an offer on the table — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! If I do not get some silence, I will be leaving the chair until the house comes to order. Members can make up their minds. If they want question time to continue, they will be quiet.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — The government has an offer on the table for teachers which would see 70 per cent of teachers in Victoria receive bonuses of up to 10 per cent on top of the 2.5 per cent. We believe that is a fair and reasonable offer, and it is consistent with the government's desire to advance the quality of teaching in Victoria. We urge the teachers in Victoria to come back to the negotiating table and complete this negotiation. We believe that there is an offer on the table and that a position can be negotiated which is in the best interests of teachers, the best interests of students, the best interests of parents and the best interests of taxpayers. That is the responsible position to take, and that is the position the government takes.

**Floods: Gippsland**

**Mr NORTHE** (Morwell) — My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier report to the house on his visit with the Deputy Premier to flood-affected areas today?

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — I had the opportunity this morning, with the Deputy Premier, to visit Bairnsdale and the Lindenow Valley and meet with farmers, with representatives of the Department of Sustainability and Environment, the State Emergency Service, Victoria Police and with volunteer workers at the incident control centre in Bairnsdale. There is no doubt that the floods over recent days in Gippsland and

in other places as well have been very significant. Some places received more than 200 millimetres of rain in 24 hours. As anybody who knows Gippsland would be aware, many of its rivers are prone to flood quickly and often can surprise.

I am pleased to say that the immediate threat has eased, particularly for those around the Gippsland Lakes and Lakes Entrance in particular. It had been anticipated overnight that at high tide the water level around Lakes Entrance may have risen to around 1.4 metres, which would have been considerable and would have involved a large amount of inundation of properties, both residential and commercial, in Lakes Entrance. That did not occur, and we can be pleased about and grateful for that. I understand that the water level rose to around 0.8 or 0.85 metres instead. That is an upside.

Nevertheless there are properties that have been affected and a number have been inundated. The Deputy Premier has previously announced in the house the emergency grants that are made available. Today we were also able to announce loans of up to \$200 000 for businesses and not-for-profit organisations that have been impacted. We had the opportunity today to visit the Bulmer vegetable-growing enterprise at Lindenow in the valley. They received water across their crop that was over 1.2 or 1.5 metres high.

Fortunately the water has receded, but nevertheless the damage has been done — and significant damage has been done. Over half a million dollars worth of crops — crops which go right across Victoria, into the kitchens and meals of all sorts of Victorians and people interstate as well — has been lost. This is obviously not the first time that Gippsland has suffered these floods, but nevertheless it is significant. The Victorian government will stand by those businesses and those farmers and those facilities will be available.

Members would also be aware that in the course of these floods damage has been done to the Yallourn power station facility. The damage is not to the generators themselves, but the Morwell River diversion, which was put in place some seven or eight years ago, has been breached, and in the course of that breaching a large amount of water has entered one of the coalmines around the Yallourn power station. I think members would have seen the footage and the photographs of that — and they are dramatic photographs.

However, I do want to make the point very clearly that when it comes to that breach the majority of that water is cascading into an unused mine. There is nevertheless water penetration into some of the tunnels containing

some of the conveyor belts that carry coal from another part of the mine to the operating generators. That has left one of the four Yallourn generators out of service for maintenance, two shut down and one operating at part capacity. Coal is being transported by truck to that generator, and the expectation of TRUenergy is that it will be able to continue that.

Nevertheless, significant damage has been done. The damage will have to wait until the water has receded. Already a plug has been placed in the Latrobe River where it enters the Morwell River, and that has helped to ease the flow. Nevertheless, assessments will have to be made about the diversion, and the government will wait for those assessments. I am confident, though, that the supply of power in Victoria will be maintained.

### **Teachers: enterprise bargaining**

**Mr ANDREWS** (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is again to the Premier. Is it not a fact that the tens of thousands of teachers on strike and in the streets today are on strike because when this Premier promised to make every Victorian teacher the highest paid in Australia before the last election he misled them?

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions interrupted.**

### **SUSPENSION OF MEMBER**

#### **Member for Lara**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Lara will leave the chamber for half an hour.

**Honourable member for Lara withdrew from chamber.**

### **QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

#### **Teachers: enterprise bargaining**

**Questions resumed.**

**Dr Napthine** — On a point of order, Speaker, I suggest that you ask the Leader of the Opposition to rephrase the question. As I understood the wording of the question, he was asking the Premier to comment on why the teachers are on strike. Only the teachers can answer as to why they are on strike; the Premier cannot put himself in their minds. I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition be asked to rephrase the question and make sure it genuinely relates to government business.

**Ms Hennessy** — On the point of order, Speaker, the Minister for Ports has clearly misconceived, misunderstood and misquoted the Leader of the Opposition in respect of his question. The Leader of the Opposition is asking about the facts. He is not asking a question of the teachers or the teachers union, he is asking a question of the Premier and whether or not the Premier has in fact misled them.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Before the Minister for Ports got up I was considering the question that was put. Given the wording of it, I believe that the Leader of the Opposition was seeking an opinion. I ask the Leader of the Opposition if he would like to rephrase his question.

**Mr ANDREWS** (Leader of the Opposition) — I am happy to defer to you, Speaker, and reword the question. My question is to the Premier. Is it not a fact that when the Premier promised every Victorian teacher that they would be the highest paid in the nation, he misled them?

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I make it clear again: we have an offer on the table which represents — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions interrupted.**

## SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS

### Members for Ballarat East, Pascoe Vale and Ripon

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The members for Ballarat East and Pascoe Vale can leave the chamber for half an hour.

**Honourable members for Ballarat East and Pascoe Vale withdrew from chamber.**

**Mr Helper** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! If the member for Ripon thinks it is outrageous, he is disagreeing with my opinion. He can leave the chamber for half an hour too.

**Honourable member for Ripon withdrew from the chamber.**

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Teachers: enterprise bargaining

**Questions resumed.**

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — As I said before, we have an offer on the table which would see all teachers receive 2.5 per cent plus any productivity improvements, plus 70 per cent of Victorian teachers — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the house to come to order.

**Mr Trezise** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Geelong! I did ask the house to come to order. The member will not get any further warnings.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — We have an offer on the table which would see all Victorian teachers received 2.5 per cent plus productivity improvements, and 70 per cent of — —

**Mr Andrews** — On a point of order, Speaker, the question did not relate to the government's offer. The question related to whether the Premier misled Victorian teachers. I am amazed that the Premier has not taken the opportunity to deny that he misled Victorian teachers, but the answer is not relevant to the question. Did he or did he not mislead Victorian teachers?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I believe the answer was relevant to the question that was asked.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — All Victorian teachers would receive a 2.5 per cent increase plus productivity improvements, plus 70 per cent of Victorian teachers would receive reward bonuses up to 10 per cent. In addition, 80 per cent of Victorian teachers would continue to progress every year to additional salary categories. That is a fair, reasonable and responsible offer in the circumstances. That is what Victorians expect us to deliver. That is what the government will deliver, and we urge Victorian teachers to come back to the negotiating table.

### Police: single-officer stations

**Dr SYKES** (Benalla) — My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Can the minister advise the house on what action is being taken

to secure the future of single-officer police stations in country communities across Victoria?

**Mr RYAN** (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) — I thank the member for Benalla for his very important and timely question. The coalition government is committed to appropriately resourcing police in Victoria. That is a change from recent times, as the house would be aware. We are intent upon recruiting, training and deploying 1700 additional front-line operational police in the course of our first term of government, and we intend to do that by November 2014.

I might say that by the end of this month 850 of those police will have been recruited, trained and deployed not only in the metropolitan area but in country regions as well. We are very proud of that achievement to date, and the rest will be delivered. This is to fix the mess that was left to us when we came to government. The state of Victoria was spending less per capita on police resourcing than any other state in the Australian nation. It was an appalling legacy of the former government, and here we are in the course of addressing this mess.

An important element of policing is that which occurs right throughout the regions of Victoria. Importantly, in many of our country communities there are single-officer police stations. Indeed there are somewhere of the order of 99 of them here in the —

**Mr Carbines** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! That is enough from the member for Ivanhoe, or he will be out.

**Mr RYAN** — There are 99 one-officer police stations across country Victoria, and we as a government are intent on being able to provide appropriate resourcing to police to ensure that those one-officer police stations are maintained. It is for this reason that I have great pleasure in welcoming today's announcement by the Chief Commissioner of Police, who outlined Victoria Police's commitment to permanently maintain all 99 one-officer police stations across the state. Over many years there has been concern about the future of these stations, and we are very pleased that the matter has finally been resolved.

This operational policy decision by police command comes after a review of eight of the stations, which are currently unmanned. A number of factors have been considered in relation to those particular locations, which are at Chiltern and Katamatite in the eastern region and at Manangatang, Murrayville, Piangil, Cressy, Merino and Learmonth in the western region. The review by the chief commissioner confirmed that it

is essential for these stations to be occupied on the usual time basis which applies to them.

Victoria Police is going to focus on ways to fill those vacancies. It is going to promote the opportunities internally and have local area management work with the local communities. In the meantime, police from nearby stations will continue to provide services for a limited number of hours each week to those stations that are currently open, until full-time officers are recruited and allocated to them.

I commend Victoria Police on this great announcement. It will be very well received across the country regions of Victoria, because this has been a matter of uncertainty for a long time. We are very pleased as a government to see this occurring. One of the driving issues around all this is that not only are those single-officer police stations important in their own right but so often the officer who mans a particular police station is a person of significant regard in the general community, who forms part of the community in many aspects and who becomes a pivotal element of making sure that those communities are able to function properly. It is a great announcement. We are thrilled to see it happen. This is another aspect of what we are doing to repair Labor's damage.

### **Schools: education maintenance allowance**

**Mr ANDREWS** (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is again to the Premier. I refer the Premier to his education maintenance allowance (EMA) cuts, which will hurt schools — schools like St Matthew's Primary School, whose EMA supports Reading Recovery; Cambridge Primary School, whose EMA supports school camps, excursions and netbook leases; and Merri Creek Primary School, which is already in deficit and uses its EMA for school sports programs — and I ask: does the Premier even care?

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question — and the answer is yes. We care about the education system, we care about the health system, we care about community safety and we care about the fundamental obligations that we have to the people of Victoria — and one of those fundamental obligations is to maintain a responsible budget position. In the course of dealing with the shocks to the budget which we have inherited —

**Ms Green** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Yan Yean!

**Mr BAILLIEU** — and which we face from the international economy and the national economy, and about which some people do not care — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The house will come to order and remain in order.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — Some people do not care to understand — —

**Mr Andrews** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Leader of the Opposition has asked his question and should listen to the answer.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — Some people do not care, and they substitute — —

**Ms Green** interjected.

**Questions interrupted.**

### SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

#### Member for Yan Yean

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Yan Yean will leave the chamber for 30 minutes.

**Honourable member for Yan Yean withdrew from chamber.**

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### Schools: education maintenance allowance

**Questions resumed.**

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — Some people do not care, and they substitute abuse for an intelligent response to the challenges Victorians face. When it comes to the education maintenance allowance, the allowance for preps will go from \$117 to \$200, for year 1 from \$117 to \$150, for year 2 from \$117 to \$150, for year 3 from \$117 to \$150, for year 4 from \$117 to \$150, for year 5 from \$117 to \$150 — —

**Mr Andrews** — On a point of order, Speaker, the question related to cutbacks to EMA and the Premier, who would have it that if you make the cuts, you care, but if you ask about them, you do not, needs to answer the question. He is cutting the EMA and hurting

schools and students. That is what the question was about.

**Mr Ryan** — On the point of order, Speaker, I respectfully put to you that this is a point of order which should not be upheld. The Premier is directing his answer to the question which has been asked. He is outlining the issues that are applicable to the payments that are currently being made under the new arrangements, and that is in specific response to the matters that were put to him. I suggest to you, Speaker, again respectfully, that what we are hearing from the opposition today is an absolute pattern of abuse which is intended to break up — —

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Points of order will be heard in silence. I have said that many times before. I will not ask again.

**Mr Merlino** — On the point of order, Speaker, the Premier is not being relevant to the question. The question was about cutbacks to the most vulnerable children in our state. We are talking about books, computers, Reading Recovery, school uniforms and bags. Those are the cuts that the Premier does not care about, and he should come back to answering the question.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! A point of order is not a time to enter into a debate. I do not uphold the point of order. I call on the Premier.

**Mr Merlino** interjected.

**Questions interrupted.**

### SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

#### Member for Monbulk

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will leave the chamber for 30 minutes. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will leave the chamber immediately.

**Honourable member for Monbulk withdrew from chamber.**

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### Schools: education maintenance allowance

**Questions resumed.**

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — I think I got to year 6, when the EMA will go from \$117 to \$150, year 7 will

go from \$235 to \$300, year 8 will go from \$235 to \$250, year 9 will go from \$235 to \$250 — —

**Mr Andrews** — On a point of order, Speaker, the question related to the EMA component that has been cut by this government — that is, the component that goes to schools. Instead of trying to avoid answering the question the Premier ought just answer it.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Premier I believe was answering it, and the answer was relevant to the question that you asked in regard to EMAs.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — Year 8 will go from \$235 to \$250, year 9 will go from \$235 to \$250, year 10 will go from \$235 to \$250, year 11 from \$235 to \$250 — —

**Mr Carbines** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Ivanhoe has been warned before.

**Mr Brooks** interjected.

**Questions interrupted.**

## SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

### Member for Bundoora

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Bundoora will also leave the chamber for 30 minutes.

**Honourable member for Bundoora withdrew from chamber.**

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Schools: education maintenance allowance

**Questions resumed.**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I am not sure when some of you people are going to learn that when I ask for silence that is what I want, including from the member for Melton.

**Mr Andrews** — On a point of order, Speaker, can I put it to you that some might take offence at being referred to as ‘you people’? It is the form of this house to refer to you in respectful terms, Speaker. I cannot always speak for the tone, but the terms should be respectful, and I put it to you respectfully, Sir, that you ought to refer to members either by their electorate or collectively as ‘honourable members’, not ‘you people’.

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — Year 12 will go from \$235 to \$250. In the process of consolidating the EMA, we are also setting aside tens and tens of millions of dollars for schools, particularly those schools that have a high EMA component. The EMA will increase across the board at all levels. There will be significant sums of money available at schools with a high EMA component.

### Disability services: national insurance scheme

**Mr ANGUS** (Forest Hill) — My question is to the Minister for Community Services. Will the minister update the house on the status of the proposed national disability insurance scheme (NDIS)?

**Ms WOOLDRIDGE** (Minister for Community Services) — I thank the honourable member for Forest Hill for his question and for passion and commitment to people with a disability in his electorate. The national disability insurance scheme will make such a difference to people with severe and profound disabilities and their families and carers. However, the status of the scheme is still uncertain.

The Productivity Commission, a respected independent adviser, put forward a road map for the scheme which included the mechanism by which to make it certain and to give it viability and sustainability for the future. That mechanism was that the commonwealth government had to fund the \$7 billion to \$8 billion that would be required to make the scheme a reality. The Victorian government has always indicated that it wants to actively participate in the development of the scheme. The Premier has been a leader in the discussions at the Council of Australian Governments.

Victoria is leading on the majority of the national development work for the scheme in order to put it into place. We invested in the recent budget to get NDIS ready, but a week after the budget and with no consultation with the states and territories, the Gillard government announced \$1 billion for four launch sites from the middle of next year.

I think it is really important to have the facts on the table in relation to this funding. Firstly, the federal government is saying that its funding is contingent on an additional \$288 million from the states and territories, characterising this as a 78 per cent to 22 per cent funding split between the states and the commonwealth. In fact \$660 million of this \$1 billion is predominately for more bureaucrats, more advisers and a \$240 million IT system.

In terms of the direct costs to provide support to people with a disability, the states are being told that they may have to contribute up to 60 per cent of the new funding to provide those direct services. That is in addition to the thousands of individual support packages that we already provide. The Gillard government has clearly walked away from the recommendations of the Productivity Commission that the additional funding needs to come from the commonwealth in order to make the scheme a reality.

Interestingly, in this chamber the Productivity Commission's recommendations have also been rejected, with one member describing Victoria's approach as 'a cost shift to the commonwealth'. Either that member has not read the Productivity Commission's arguments in relation to certainty and sufficiency of the funding of the scheme to make it a reality or the member for Yan Yean simply does not understand what this scheme is all about.

If the opposition cared about people with a disability, it would be advocating — —

**Mr Nardella** — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is debating the question. I ask you to bring her back to answering the question on government business.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the minister to come back to answering the question.

**Ms WOOLDRIDGE** — The Baillieu government is working to make the NDIS a reality, and it is leading in that process. But before that can happen, the Gillard government must finally put to bed the perception many people have that instead of delivering a scheme such as is desired, it may turn out to be nothing more than a cruel hoax for people with a disability, their families and their carers.

Federal Labor must commit to the Productivity Commission's recommendation to fund the scheme to give it certainty, to give it viability and to give it sustainability in the future. That is what it is going to take to make this scheme happen. That is what people with a disability, their families and their carers need. Victoria supports the scheme, but the federal government must commit to the independent adviser's recommendations and make this scheme a reality.

### Higher education: TAFE funding

**Mr ANDREWS** (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is again to the Premier. I refer the Premier to correspondence from KPMG regarding the government's cuts to TAFE, and that correspondence

refers to two recent examples of work that has been undertaken by KPMG:

Impact of 2012–13 state budget on Victorian skill system:

KPMG was engaged to model the financial impact of the reduced budget envelope on each TAFE institute.

I ask: will the Premier immediately release this analysis prepared for his government detailing the cutbacks to each TAFE institute prepared by KPMG?

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Premier) — I have said on many occasions in this house that we inherited a vocational training and education system which was budgeted to cost around \$850 million in this financial year. Instead it has cost \$1.3 billion-plus. That is a blow-out of massive proportions. In response to that and mindful of the obligation we have to take a responsible budget position to the people of Victoria, we have announced changes to the vocational education system which will see more than \$1 billion extra over and above the base put into the vocational education and training sector.

**Ms Hennessy** — On a point of order, Speaker, in relation to relevance, the Premier was asked whether or not he would release the KPMG analysis that has been done. Despite the Premier's mendacious use of the words 'boost in funding', KPMG was engaged to model the financial impact of the reduced budget envelope. The question was: will the Premier release this report or not?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I believe the answer was relevant to the question that was asked. I ask the Premier to continue answering the question.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — The changes that were introduced in the vocational education and training system some three years were introduced by the previous government — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I have nearly had enough of the member for Footscray today!

**Mr BAILLIEU** — Indeed the federal minister gets it, and he understands that it was, to be fair, the fault of the Labor government — and he said so.

**Mr Nardella** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier is debating the question. Government business is not about the federal minister. The question was quite clear and succinct, and I ask you to bring him back to answering the question on government business.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I believe the Premier was answering the question and his answer was relevant to the question that was asked.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — What was evident when we came to office, indeed the now minister warned the then government when the now minister was in opposition — —

**Mr Nardella** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier is again debating the question. The question was quite clear and succinct, and it was about releasing the report. I ask you to bring him back to answering that question.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I do not uphold the point of order. I believe the Premier was answering the question.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — The blow-outs that occurred were warned about before the previous government introduced the new system — —

**Ms Thomson** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Footscray!

**Mr BAILLIEU** — The new system is set to roll out across the country, but the problem that the system had was that the fees were capped but subsidies were not; it was demand driven, on demand and made for blow-outs. What is very apparent and has been reported on is that the previous government did no modelling to assess how this would impact on the system. We commissioned the Essential Services Commission to look at this problem, and the commission made it very clear that changes had to be put in place. We have put in place those changes in two steps, including in spring of last year and in the budget. The budget is the first opportunity the government has had to address this issue meaningfully.

**Mr Andrews** — On a further point of order, Speaker, I am grateful to the Premier for his answer, but can he at least mention the KPMG document the question sought? Will he release it or will he not? If not, he should spare us the rant and sit down.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The answer being given by the Premier was relevant to the question that was asked.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions interrupted.**

## SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

### Member for Footscray

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Footscray can vacate the chamber for an hour.

**Honourable member for Footscray withdrew from chamber.**

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Higher education: TAFE funding

**Questions resumed.**

**Mr BAILLIEU (Premier)** — All vocational providers, whether they are private providers, ACE (adult community education) providers or TAFEs, will have the opportunity to share in a pool of funds which is hundreds of millions of dollars more than what was provided and budgeted for by the now opposition when it was in government. This gives TAFEs, ACE providers and private providers an opportunity, and the minister is working through those opportunities — —

**Ms Hennessy** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier was simply asked whether he will release a KPMG report which models the impact of the reduced budget envelope on each TAFE institution. He has had 3 minutes and 40 seconds and has not come anywhere close to answering that question. We just ask for a yes or a no.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I am not in a position to direct a minister to answer a question. As long as the answer is relevant to the question that was asked, I will continue to hear the Premier.

**Mr BAILLIEU** — As I said, all providers in Victoria will have an opportunity to bid for money from a pool of funds, which is hundreds of millions of dollars a year more than was provided by the previous government.

### Hamer Hall: reopening

**Mrs VICTORIA (Bayswater)** — My question is to the Minister for Major Projects. Can the minister inform the house about the reopening of Melbourne's Hamer Hall?

**Dr NAPHTHINE (Minister for Major Projects)** — I thank the member for Bayswater for her question, and I congratulate her on the terrific work that she is doing as Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier and Assisting the Premier with the Arts. Built over 30 years ago,

Hamer Hall has served Victoria and Melbourne as a great concert hall. But it was badly in need of refurbishment and a major technical back-of-house upgrade. I am pleased to advise the house that, after a \$136 million refurbishment, Hamer Hall will reopen on Thursday, 26 July.

The redevelopment of Hamer Hall will deliver significantly improved acoustics, new and better seating, and cutting-edge staging systems and technology. The Premier is impressed by the magnificent new and expanded foyer and entrance areas to Hamer Hall, which has improved access for everybody, particularly people with disabilities. I believe one of the great advances in the redevelopment of Hamer Hall is the exciting new connections that Hamer Hall will provide to the city, the river and Southbank.

The reopening of Hamer Hall will be celebrated with a four-day festival of activities. There will be two opening concerts on Thursday, 26 July, and Friday, 27 July. The concerts will feature a star-studded line-up of international and Australian artists, including k. d. lang, Australian soprano Rachelle Durkin, Australian West End star Caroline O'Connor, Eddie Perfect, indigenous performers Archie Roach and Jack Charles, Lior, IDJA dance theatre, an opera octet and an orchestra including members of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the Australian National Academy of Music Orchestra.

Half of the available tickets for both concerts went on sale earlier this week and were snapped up within hours. The other half of the tickets will be made available through a public ballot, providing a free opportunity to all Victorians to come to these concerts. Anyone over the age of 18 can apply for two free tickets online, by phone or at the box office from 9.00 a.m. on Saturday, 9 June. The ballot closes at 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 22 June, and the lucky winners will be notified on 29 June.

Not only do we have these two great concerts to celebrate the reopening of Hamer Hall but the festival will continue all weekend with an open house on Saturday and Sunday and guided tours of the magnificently refurbished Hamer Hall. There will be a host of celebrations, including a 15-metre art installation on the lawn, roving performers, live music, a 200-strong dance-off by young local dancers from the western suburbs through to Ballarat, and specially curated exhibitions celebrating those great Australian icons Kylie Minogue and Barry Humphries. This is going to be a mini festival of great events to celebrate the reopening of Hamer Hall.

We on this side of the house recognise that the project was initiated under the previous government, and we thank it for it. We also understand that an additional \$7.3 million was required, which the Premier in his role of Minister for the Arts provided, to fill the budget black hole for that project. It is a project that has been undertaken by both sides of the house. All Victorians can celebrate the reopening of this great concert hall, and I urge people to get involved in the free ballot for tickets to these great concerts.

### Higher education: TAFE funding

**Mr ANDREWS** (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Treasurer. I refer the Treasurer to the following comments:

There is something wrong with a government that raises fees for training at a time of rising unemployment ... The fee hikes will prevent many people taking up vocational training, including both young and mature students, just when they need these services the most.

Given that the Treasurer made these comments in a pre-budget paper dated April 2009, why is he now, at a time of rising unemployment, taking the axe to Victoria's TAFEs?

**Mr WELLS** (Treasurer) — The issue with which the government was faced was a TAFE system that was clearly unsustainable. It was a system inherited from the previous government where proper costings and governance had not been done — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the house to come to order. I really do not want to ask again.

**Mr WELLS** — As I was saying, we inherited an unsustainable vocational education and training system — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions interrupted.**

### SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

#### Member for Eltham

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Eltham can leave the chamber for half an hour.

**Honourable member for Eltham withdrew from chamber.**

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**Higher education: TAFE funding**

**Questions resumed.**

**Mr WELLS** (Treasurer) — It was a system on which clearly the previous Labor government had not done its sums, had not done due diligence. It did not have proper governance in place for a situation we had to fix. It was another Labor mess that we had to deal with. We had a situation where the base of \$850 million increased by 50 per cent in just two years. That was completely and utterly unsustainable.

**Mr Andrews** — On a point of order, Speaker, the question related to the then shadow Treasurer’s fine words in 2009 and his savage cutbacks in 2012, and that is what his answer should be confined to.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The answer was relevant to the question that was asked.

**Mr WELLS** — This was another example of the previous Labor government promising all things to all people but not being able to afford it. It was not about living within their means — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr WELLS** — It was never about living within your means, but a system that we inherited that we need to fix.

**Mr Nardella** — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is debating the question. The question was quite specific, and when a minister is answering a question, the answer should be relevant to the question asked. I ask you to ask the Treasurer to come back to answering the question that was asked.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I do ask the Treasurer to come back and answer the question that was asked.

**Mr WELLS** — The facts are these: there was base funding of \$850 million for vocational education and training. That increased by 50 per cent in just two years, so we had an unsustainable situation, and that is why the government had to take the steps it did. But we have to remember that there is an extra \$1 billion of new money going into the TAFE system, and you cannot have a system in which anyone could study anything at any time and expect the taxpayer to pay for it.

Let me give an example. We had about 9000 people studying fitness training, and yet there are jobs for only about 800. It was not sustainable, and that is the reason

we had to take responsible action to make sure that the vocational education and training system was sustainable and was put on a proper footing for future years.

**Dingley bypass: construction**

**Mrs BAUER** (Carrum) — My question is to the Minister for Roads. Can the minister update the house on the progress of the government’s commitment to the Dingley bypass?

**Mr MULDER** (Minister for Roads) — I thank the honourable member for her question. There is no doubt that anyone who has been in this chamber over a long period of time will recall the debates that went on and on about the Dingley bypass and indeed the commitments given by the former government on the Dingley bypass, yet the Dingley bypass was never completed under the former government. It has taken the work of the coalition government in making a significant commitment in relation to the Dingley bypass to make those very important road connections from Dingley Village, connecting the very important area of Moorabbin, to make sure we can join our road network to get the best possible outcome for productivity across the state.

This project would not have been delivered by a Labor government. This project, along with a group of other major road projects, was committed to in the recent budget by a coalition government in what have been extremely difficult financial times. There is the Koo Wee Rup bypass for instance, which you would be very much aware of, Speaker, and the Kilmore-Wallan bypass, as well as the Dingley bypass. There are five major grade separation projects. There is a host of money invested in very important road infrastructure projects right across the state, but of course headed up by this very important project on the outskirts of Melbourne. Making sure that we complete the uncompleted section of the Dingley bypass will make an enormous difference to heavy vehicle operators and to people who use those roads on a day-to-day basis.

The former government had the chance; it had the opportunity, to do the work on this particular road. The lobbying continued right across the board. If you were to go back through *Hansard* and have a look at how many times the Dingley bypass has been raised in this house, you would probably find that it has been one of the most prominent issues to be raised on an ongoing basis. It has taken a coalition government in a very tight financial situation to deliver that project. We were not in the position of the former Labor government of having money flowing into the coffers — GST and

stamp duty revenue — yet with all of that money at its fingertips Labor left the Dingley bypass incomplete.

There was no consideration at all by the Labor government of the completion of that road. As I say, it has taken a coalition government to come out and give a commitment to making sure that that very important piece of road infrastructure for the people of Victoria is completed. I congratulate the member for Carrum for raising it in the house. The next time members hear about the Dingley bypass it will be about its opening, not about calls in this house for the job to be done. It will be about the opening and the completion of the Dingley bypass, which is a very important piece of road infrastructure for the people of Victoria.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The time for questions has concluded.

**Mr Howard** — On a point of order, Speaker, at the commencement of question time today you asked the member for Monbulk to remove a document from his desk because you described it as political.

**The SPEAKER** — A poster.

**Mr Howard** — I am seeking for the benefit of all honourable members within the house clarification about what form of documents you consider to be political. I have had a look at this document. It carries no party political banner. It simply carries the words ‘Honour your word, Mr Baillieu’. The only — —

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the member for Ballarat East to resume his seat.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — I will not recognise the member.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms Hennessy** — On a point of order, Speaker, all members have a right under standing orders to raise points of order. It may be that you do not like the member’s point of order, but he is still entitled to raise a point of order. I request that the member for Ballarat East be entitled to raise his point of order.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Ballarat East raised his point of order. We are moving on with the government business program.

## APPROPRIATION (2012/2013) BILL 2012

*Second reading*

### Debate resumed.

**Mr Andrews** — On a point of order, Speaker, even with extreme powers of perception, how can you possibly know that the further point of order you denied the member for Ballarat East the opportunity to raise was the same as the one he raised earlier. I do not have a crystal ball. If you do, good luck to you, Speaker, but I do not have one, and I cannot say for certain what the member for Ballarat East was seeking the call to raise on a point of order. It is completely inappropriate to deny him that opportunity — he did after all get elected to this place — to represent his constituents and raise a point of order. Once you had heard that point of order, of course you would be within your rights to rule on it; in fact you would be required to. But to shut the member down is not in keeping with the forms of this house or the expectations of the Victorian community.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I have heard enough of the Leader of the Opposition’s point of order, and I do not uphold it. We are moving on with the government business program.

**Mr Howard** — On a point of order, Speaker — —

**The SPEAKER** — Order! A point of order from the member for Ballarat East. Is this a further point of order, because I ruled on the last one?

**Mr Howard** — Speaker, I will raise it slightly differently, but I ask you, in the interests of all members present in the house, to clarify for us what forms of documentation we are allowed to bring in and have on our desks while in Parliament and what forms of documentation — —

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Posters are not allowed into the house. I refer to the rulings of previous speakers, in particular the rulings of Speaker Lindell on bringing posters into the house when she ordered out a large number of members of the Labor Party. Posters are not allowed into the house, let me put it that way.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! We are moving on. The member for Geelong has the call.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Debate interrupted.**

**SUSPENSION OF MEMBER****Member for Ballarat East**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Ballarat East can take an hour and a half out of the chamber.

**Honourable member for Ballarat East withdrew from the chamber.**

**APPROPRIATION (2012/2013) BILL 2012***Second reading***Debate resumed.**

**Mr TREZISE** (Geelong) — Just before the lunch break, which seems a long time ago, I was talking about the importance of decentralisation and the fact that the Bracks and Brumby governments did a terrific job of decentralisation. There was, for example, the relocation of the Transport Accident Commission to Geelong, where hundreds of new jobs were introduced into the community and the economy of Geelong not only at that time but also in the future. But of course decentralisation did not only occur in Geelong. There were other examples of decentralisation, as the Speaker is well aware, such as in Ballarat, for example. These are great examples of what state governments can do for job creation in a region. In contrast, this government blames everyone and everything else for its lack of action and insight when it comes to jobs.

Given this lack of action, the opposition last week came up with a number of concrete suggestions for this government to implement to assist Geelong in tackling our current crisis. Late last week, together with Geelong's other Labor members and the shadow Treasurer, the member for Lyndhurst, I met with, amongst other people, the mayor of the City of Greater Geelong, Cr John Mitchell, and his chief executive officer, Stephen Griffin, to discuss the city's concerns. Following this meeting the opposition, through the shadow Treasurer — and I might say he is probably the best shadow Treasurer I have worked under in this Parliament — released a five-point plan the government could implement that would assist Geelong jobs.

I will share those five points that we raised last week with the mayor. They are: no. 1, establish a Geelong innovation fund; no. 2, urgently reinstate the \$14.6 million slashed from the Gordon Institute of TAFE; no. 3, announce a rescue package for Alcoa; no. 4, guarantee that none of the 4200 public servants losing their job will come from Geelong; and no. 5,

release a package to support the retraining of maintenance workers set to lose their jobs at Avalon — unfortunately 100-plus workers.

Closely aligned with this job crisis — and it is a job crisis — in Geelong is a crisis created directly by this government in the state's TAFE colleges, including the Gordon TAFE in Geelong. As we all know, in its wisdom this government has cut hundreds of millions of dollars out of TAFE colleges, in doing so decimating the sector and the hopes of many people, both young and old, who are seeking training and education through their local TAFE. I can assure you, Acting Speaker, that the Gordon TAFE is absolutely no exception.

My two oldest daughters, for example, went through the TAFE. They chose not to go to university but to go to TAFE and are both now gainfully and happily employed in their careers of choice. That was thanks to the Gordon TAFE. I can assure the house that the Gordon TAFE, under the guidance of its CEO, Grant Sutherland, and the team, is a great and highly respected institute in Geelong. This year Gordon TAFE is celebrating its 125th anniversary. That is a great milestone.

As I have said on a number of occasions, in the history of the Gordon TAFE I do not think there has been any time more important than now — when every year hundreds of young people in Geelong rely on the Gordon TAFE for their education and training and when workers from organisations such as Qantas are losing their jobs and there is the threat of job losses at Alcoa — for it to be in a position to serve Geelong and provide effective training. Instead we are seeing the tragic irony that the very TAFE teachers who would be at the forefront of retraining these workers are now under a redundancy cloud themselves. That is a deplorable position to be put in by this uncaring — and it is uncaring — government.

I can assure the house that the community of Geelong is angry that \$14.6 million is being slashed from the Gordon TAFE. If members want proof of that, only last Thursday, together with the other Geelong Labor MPs and the shadow minister for skills and apprenticeships, I attended the rally to save the Gordon TAFE, which attracted 1200 people, as estimated by the *Geelong Advertiser*. Those in attendance were not just teachers, students or politicians; we saw people from right across the community of Geelong, including the mayor and other local councillors, local businessmen, trade unionists — and the list goes on. The only ones who were not there and did not have the backbone to turn up were the local Liberal Geelong MPs, including the

member for South Barwon, who is sitting across there in the chamber at the present time.

With the available time left I would like to raise another main issue of concern to the Geelong community at the moment, especially the thousands of people who commute by train to Melbourne each day — that is, the planned route for the regional rail link and the issue of the North Melbourne station. As a former daily commuter of nearly 10 years, I fully understand and appreciate the grind of daily commuting. On a regular basis I make it a habit to travel to Melbourne for work, and I alight from the train at the North Melbourne station and travel around to Parliament station. V/Line figures show that nearly half of Geelong–Melbourne commuters get off at the North Melbourne station, so it is hard to believe that the regional rail link train will bypass the North Melbourne station.

I have raised this issue on a number of occasions with previous transport ministers and with the current transport minister. In recent days I have received numerous emails from commuters calling on the government to reverse the decision, and through the Public Transport Users Association a petition is being circulated among train travellers. It is ridiculous that the regional rail link will not stop at the North Melbourne station. On behalf of all the daily commuters now and in the future I call on the minister to review this matter as a matter of urgency to ensure that the regional rail link train does stop at the North Melbourne station.

I have 40 seconds left, and there is lots I could talk about in relation to Geelong. I will now go on to health. In 2010 the government promised \$93 million for Barwon Health, but in the last two budgets a total of \$3 million of that \$93 million has been delivered. The government has also failed on health in Geelong. As I said from the outset, the Baillieu government budget of 2012–13 is the worst budget I have seen in this house, and it has failed the people of Geelong.

**Dr NAPHTHINE** (Minister for Ports) — I rise to speak on the 2012–13 budget. As many speakers have said, speaking on the budget is a great opportunity for members of Parliament to express their views and speak on behalf of their electorates but also outline their ideas and alternatives if they disagree with the budget. One would have thought that some of the leaders of the house would have taken that opportunity.

I refer to *Hansard* of 22 May 2003, when the then Treasurer is reported as saying:

... I would have thought that the Leader of the Opposition would have wanted to put a view about the budget. I would have thought that the Leader of the Opposition would have

wanted to put up alternative policies. What about the policies? Where are the policies?

That is what former Premier Brumby said in 2003. The Labor Party was happy to attack the then Leader of the Opposition for failing to contribute to the budget debate. But I ask: where is the Leader of the Opposition in today's budget debate? The budget will be passed at 4.00 o'clock today, but the Leader of the Opposition is missing in action. He has made absolutely no contribution to the budget debate. Obviously he supports the budget, because he has made no contribution outlining any opposition to the budget.

**Mr Madden** — Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

**Quorum formed.**

**Dr NAPHTHINE** — I thank the member for Essendon for his cunning call for a quorum to make sure he got the Leader of the Opposition in to make a contribution to the budget debate before the bill passes at 4.00 o'clock. We are still waiting — we are waiting, waiting, waiting — for the Leader of the Opposition to get up on his feet and speak on the budget. We heard speaker after speaker from the opposition, but there was no contribution on the budget from the Leader of the Opposition. There have been no comments on the budget and no alternative policies from the Leader of the Opposition.

As I have said, I remember John Brumby when he was Treasurer being scathing of the then Leader of the Opposition for not speaking on the budget. Yet here we have the leader of the Labor opposition failing to speak on the budget. It clearly shows what a disorganised rabble the opposition members are. Even when the member for Essendon used a cunning tactic — because he is a very smart man, the member for Essendon — to get the Leader of the Opposition in here to speak on the budget, still the Leader of the Opposition did not appear. Perhaps the member for Essendon could call for another quorum to get the Leader of the Opposition in here.

Let me talk about what is a tough but responsible budget, a budget framed under challenging circumstances — the high Australian dollar, continuing world economic uncertainty, especially in Europe, and massive reductions in GST revenue from the federal Labor government, which simply does not care about Victoria. There is also the ongoing impact of the mismanagement and black holes of the previous Labor government — myki, the desalination plant, the north–south pipeline and a \$3 billion gaming machine entitlement giveaway. The previous Labor government

could not even sell at a reasonable price a licence to print money through gaming machines.

Under the previous Labor government we had years of spending increasing at a rate of 7.2 per cent per annum when revenue was only growing at 6.9 per cent per annum. It was absolutely unsustainable. The rate of growth in the public sector was almost double the rate of population growth. Despite these difficulties, the Treasurer — because he is a very skilled Treasurer — with the support of the Premier and the team, has delivered a budget with a surplus that maintains Victoria's AAA credit rating. Compare this with the South Australian Labor government which has lost South Australia its AAA rating.

Despite the challenges, we see in this budget a \$5.8 billion investment in infrastructure in this state — a record level of infrastructure spending. We also see a 3 per cent cut in WorkCover premiums. That is assistance for the private sector, assistance for employers, assistance for business, and also a massive investment in infrastructure in this state, plus an ongoing commitment to the \$1 billion Regional Growth Fund that is doing so much good work around regional and rural Victoria.

I quote from Terry McCrann, an esteemed and astute economic commentator. In the *Herald Sun* of 2 May he said:

Kim Wells has produced a pretty well balanced — even creative — budget in very tough circumstances.

Indeed in the *Age* of 2 May Shane Green said:

The second budget of the Baillieu government is a study in austerity, the result of economic forces largely beyond its control ...

Let me refer to my electorate of South-West Coast, a beautiful part of Victoria that I am proud to represent. We have seen the allocation of \$2.5 million to redevelop Woolsthorpe Primary School. The school has been waiting for years for a much-promised redevelopment. It was promised by the previous Labor government but simply not funded, but it will be delivered under the coalition government.

There is also a \$5 million contribution towards radiotherapy cancer treatment services and the building of a cancer centre for south-western Victoria to service that region and also to service people from south-eastern South Australia. There is also funding for six new Country Fire Authority stations, at Cudgee, Hotspur, Lyons, Mepunga, Milltown and Toolong, on top of the funding of stations at Woolsthorpe and Warrong in last year's budget.

In the 2010 election campaign the member for Polwarth, now the Minister for Roads, and I promised six passing lanes on the Princes Highway between Colac and the South Australian border to significantly improve road safety and to improve transport productivity. Since we have come to office a passing lane has been opened at Illowa, just outside Warrnambool. Two passing lanes between Port Fairy and Yambuk, at Goose Lagoon, are currently under construction. One passing lane at Lyons, between Heywood and the South Australian border, is ready for tender. Just last week I announced another important passing lane between Port Fairy and Warrnambool. There are also additional passing lanes in the Terang-Garvoc area. They were promised by the coalition, and they are being delivered by the coalition government.

Work is under way on other promises we made, such as a new Heywood police residence, fixing the Anderson Point steps erosion issue, a new pedestrian overpass on the ring-road at Portland and a rail passing loop. This passing loop was ripped out by the previous Labor government, restricting the ability to get additional trains on the Melbourne–Warrnambool line, but it is being funded and restored by the coalition government. There is also the \$6.1 million Portland harbour project. We have seen additional funding in this budget for more country trains and the ongoing commitment to extra police and ambulance officers to ensure the safety of our community, plus \$351 000 for local halls at Grassmere, Willatook and Purnim.

I now want to talk about some aspects of my portfolios. With regard to ports, we have seen a situation where we have had increasing demand for the use of our ports, particularly by containers, and a need to address capacity issues. These are capacity issues that were ignored and neglected by the previous Labor government. It dithered, delayed and refused to make a decision, but this government gets on with the job. We have announced a \$1.2 billion expansion of port capacity at the port of Melbourne, including expanding the East and West Swanson docks, building a new container terminal at Webb Dock and improving the amenity of the area as we do it.

We have also announced funding for groundbreaking leadership to develop the port of Hastings as a much-needed container port for Melbourne and Victoria in the medium to longer term future. In local ports, Acting Speaker, as the member for Mornington you would be aware that there is a specific allocation in the budget of \$23 million for critical infrastructure works, including rebuilding the Mornington pier. It had been half built under the previous Labor government.

Labor built half a pier and then left a gap with the decaying pier at the end of it — —

**Ms Duncan** — Dis-a-pier!

**Dr NAPHTHINE** — As the member rightly suggests, that half a pier was under threat of disappearing because Labor forgot to put in the wave screens to protect it. I was with the member for Mornington to announce that we will fund the proper, full reconstruction of that pier and the installation of wave screens.

We have seen a range of major projects undertaken by this government. In this budget there is \$22.5 million towards a \$45 million project to further develop the Shrine of Remembrance as we approach the centenary of the Anzac campaign at Gallipoli and the start of World War I. There is \$5.5 million for project scoping for the early design work of stage 2 of the redevelopment of Melbourne Park. This builds on the coalition government's \$360 million funding of stage 1. Work is under way at the moment on this vital upgrade of the national tennis centre. This will include an upgrade to Margaret Court Arena, involving putting a roof up and expanding the seating capacity. It will make sure the Melbourne tennis centre is home to a grand slam event for years to come. While I am on that matter, all the best wishes for Sam Stosur as she competes in the finals of the French Open.

The E-gate site is one of the most exciting opportunities in Melbourne and in Victoria. I will quote from the *Age* of 19 May:

... Mr Jenkins —

that is Knight Frank's director of research in Victoria, Richard Jenkins —

said the government would also fund a detailed business case to assess the potential of the E-gate site in West Melbourne, which becomes available for redevelopment from 2014. Owned by VicTrack, E-gate is a 23-hectare site in the Melbourne rail yards. Two kilometres from the CBD, it is bounded by Moonee Ponds Creek, Footscray Road, Dudley Street and the North Melbourne rail corridor.

Preliminary government figures suggested the site had the potential to generate \$6 billion in economic activity over 10 to 15 years, including thousands of jobs in the construction and planning phases.

E-gate is a great opportunity, and it is being progressed by a progressive coalition government that is delivering on major projects.

The racing industry is a significant industry. Racing is not just a great sport; it is a \$2.5 billion to \$3 billion industry providing 70 000 jobs, many of them in

regional and rural Victoria. Through the coalition government's innovative Victorian Racing Industry Fund, which uses unclaimed dividends, funding has been provided for a new greyhound track at Bendigo, which opened last year, and we have announced the construction of another track in Ballarat. We have seen funding of breeding schemes such as VOBIS Gold, which is the Victorian owners and breeders incentive scheme, Vicbred Platinum and an enhanced greyhound owners and breeders incentive scheme to encourage the breeding industry in the three codes. The breeding industry creates jobs and economic benefits, particularly in country Victoria. There is \$2 million to top up the black hole for the lights at the Cranbourne thoroughbred track there, and we have seen the funding of the harness racing training complex at Cranbourne as well as upgrades to harness tracks at Ballarat and Bendigo.

There is a vast array of things happening in our regional cities. For example, the \$38 million Ballarat western link road is a strategic investment to help enhance the West Ballarat employment zone and help link it to the Alfredton West 4000-home development, to accommodate which the Minister for Planning has approved planning changes. We have a planning minister who really consults and really makes a difference. In regional cities we will also see a \$93 million upgrade of Geelong Hospital, \$47 million for Ballarat hospital and over \$600 million for the Bendigo hospital.

One of the key areas which, among all the things we fund, I consider really important in regional Victoria is the \$6 million leadership program. It is absolutely vital that we invest in leadership opportunities for people in regional and rural Victoria, and that program is very well targeted. We are making a difference with the Regional Growth Fund in Victoria's regional areas. This is a responsible budget in difficult times. It is also a budget for the future — for the growth and development of Victoria.

**Mr WYNNE (Richmond)** — I rise to make a contribution to the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012. In doing so I want to firstly reflect on the first two budgets of the Baillieu government. When you look at the economic circumstances of this state, by any measure — and this is not commentary I seek to make myself; I refer to expert commentary and expert evidence — you see it is in quite severe trouble. We have seen that 43 000 jobs have been lost in this state against a budget prediction of jobs growth in the order of 50 000 to 55 000 jobs. It is an indisputable fact that the economy in this state is extremely fragile. What is the response of the Victorian government to this?

Further job cuts. There will be further job cuts to the Victorian public service; 4200 public servants will be cut from the workforce. That excludes, as we would all be aware, a number of people who hold contract or part-time positions within the Victorian public service. We are seeing a massive slashing of the Victorian public service.

Let there be no doubt about this. Whilst there is a rhetoric that surrounds these job cuts which suggests there will be no cuts to front-line services, I simply submit to the house that you cannot cut 4200 full-time public service positions and not have any direct impact on front-line services. I do not believe it is possible, and given the context I referred to of contract employees and so forth, over the next few years we will see severe cuts to critical services in this state.

I do not want to reflect for any length of time on some of the themes that came out of today's question time except to say that one of the cruellest cuts was the cut to the education maintenance allowance (EMA). Whilst the Premier sought to confect an answer about this issue today, saying there will be increases to the subsidy provided to students, the fact remains that there is a cut to the portion of funding that is directed to schools; that is beyond dispute. Frankly when answering a question today the Premier simply failed to address what was at the heart of the opposition's inquiry.

What does this situation mean in practical terms? Schools use those funds for crucial services, like breakfast clubs, for some of the most vulnerable and some of the poorest students in our community. Many schools in my electorate are attended by children who come from families on very low incomes. The breakfast programs that are run at schools are absolutely fundamental to ensuring that these young people are properly nourished before being taught the daily school curriculum. Programs like Reading Recovery, camps and the provision of basic things like books, bags and other activities are affected.

We do not want to see students from low-income backgrounds being deprived of things that students whose parents are better off can afford. That is not fair; that is not equal. We think the cuts the government is making to the EMA are wrong and poorly targeted, and they will affect the most vulnerable students in our community. The government needs to reconsider this dreadfully cruel cut.

During the time I have served in this Parliament I have not seen a cut as vicious or deep or one that had as much impact as this government's cut to TAFE. These cuts will continue to have these impacts as they fold out

and are expressed in the next 12 months as TAFE providers have to come to terms with cuts to their budgets of \$290 million. There is also a cut in the order of 1500 staff.

Many members would be aware that Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE and Kangan Institute are major institutions in my electorate. These major teaching institutions offer absolutely crucial pathways for many young students who wish to take an alternative pathway to further education and may not wish to take up university degree studies. They may seek to use a TAFE program as a stepping stone towards university. Many programs in teaching institutions have been structured so that you can get a TAFE qualification and, in some circumstances, get a guaranteed place at a university.

This fantastic outcome is being potentially undermined by the sorts of cuts we will see emerge over the next 12 months! We have to understand that education is about providing opportunities for all. These TAFE cuts will deprive many young people, and people of more mature years who wish to retrain or follow other career paths, of a way to do that through TAFE. This cut by the government is reprehensible.

This was echoed most powerfully only a couple of weeks ago. A young woman who was clearly agitated came into my office unannounced. She wanted to see me, but she did not have an appointment. She said, 'I need to see you', so she came into my office. She lives in Collingwood. I will not mention her name. Her family name is very well known in political life in this state, particularly on the conservative side of politics. She came into my office to express in deeply heartfelt terms just what the TAFE cuts mean to her. She was going to take a TAFE-sponsored Auslan course. As members know, the Auslan course is a program that teaches sign language to communicate with deaf people. It is a unique program in this state.

Her representations to me were deeply felt. She was deeply hurt that the opportunity to complete Auslan studies was going to be taken away from her. She had seen an opportunity to create a new career path for herself. She is now in the advertising industry, but she said, 'This is not the place I want to be in. I would like to be an Auslan teacher. I would like to be able to teach Auslan and offer my services to young deaf children'. Can you imagine it, Acting Speaker? This course is being taken away from these people. What a cruel thing to do; what an unfair thing to do. It is unjust to deprive a good young woman like her. She wants to provide a public service and move her career from where she is in the media industry to follow a different career path.

This cut to Auslan services means that opportunity will be taken away from her. That is of deep regret to me; that is a deep shame for this government. They are the sorts of impacts that will occur because of these TAFE cuts.

I will not waste much time talking about how many portfolio initiatives there are for the Richmond electorate. The answer is: zero. There is not one cracker. There is nothing. There is not one dollar. So I will not waste a minute talking about what we in the electorate of Richmond got, because the answer is: a big, fat zero. Can I say — —

**Mr Watt** interjected.

**Mr WYNNE** — The east–west link. The member for Burwood; there is a star! There is a bloke on his way to the front bench!

There is the hoax of the east–west tunnel. Government members said, ‘Let’s get out there and see if we can create a wedge here with a by-election coming up’. So they got out there with a bit of a hand drill and did a bit of drilling down the middle of the median strip and got the television cameras out there. There is \$15 million for a project that will cost at least \$5 billion, with not a cracker — nothing — from the commonwealth government. We on this side will have more to say about this project as it goes on.

In the couple of minutes I have left I want to touch briefly on what is, needless to say, one of my passions — that is, public housing. What a shameful budget this is for public and social housing. There is nothing in the budget — no increase in funding — for public housing. In fact there is a cut in spending on housing. This is at a time when you have to say that there ought to have been an increase. Social housing investment has dropped by 2.2 per cent from \$181.3 million in 2011–12 to \$177.3 million in 2012–13. For housing support and homelessness assistance, which is provided to the most vulnerable in our community, there has been — what a surprise! — a 1.5 per cent cut as well, from \$226 million in 2011–12 to \$222.8 million in 2012–13.

Not to be deterred, the Minister for Housing in the upper house, Minister Lovell, is out and about all over the place announcing project after project. Not one of them is state government funded and indeed not one of them is funded by this government. She was out at the Mews project in Broadmeadows — the member for Broadmeadows has advocated for the redevelopment of Broadmeadows — which was funded by the Brumby government.

**Mr McGuire** — It is a visionary project.

**Mr WYNNE** — It is a visionary project. The Minister for Housing was out there, strutting around and saying what a great project it is. Yes, it is a great project — funded by the Brumby government. The Minister for Housing goes around laying claim to every federal government funded project in the state. The truth of the matter is that the budget papers speak for themselves. In fact there is not one new dollar in the budget for the acquisition or provision of new public or social housing. This government has even lowered the target for upgrading housing down to 1600, which is the lowest figure for the upgrade of housing in more than a decade.

One of the cruellest cuts is that to SHASP, the social housing advocacy and support program. This program supports some of the most vulnerable in our community in maintaining their tenancy in public housing. The government will be cutting this program by literally millions of dollars. That will mean that 20 front-line staff will potentially lose their positions. We will leave some of the most vulnerable people — those with serious mental illness and other serious problems — who want to maintain their tenancy with a program that will be cut.

There is nothing in this budget that you could look at and say, ‘Well, this is a budget that stands up for the most vulnerable in our community’. There is no new public and social housing; there are vicious cuts to the TAFE program, which provides pathways to training and education for some of our poorest people; and there is that cruel cut to the education maintenance allowance. Shame on this government!

**Mr WATT** (Burwood) — I take great delight in standing up to speak on the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012. As others have said, we are facing some tough times with this budget. Global economies are facing tough times. In my contribution I will talk about some external factors, such as the tough times that we are facing, the legacy that we were left with and some of the spin from members of the previous government, the current opposition, and about the effect of this budget on Burwood. As I said, economies around the world are facing tough times.

If you look at the budgets of all the governments in Australasia, you see that only two governments are predicting cumulative surpluses through their forward estimates, those being Victoria and the resource-rich Western Australia. The federal Labor government has cut funding of GST contributions to Victoria by \$6.1 billion over the forward estimates. The other effect

that the federal government has on the Victorian budget and economy is through the carbon tax. I know that those on the other side do not want to talk about the carbon tax, but the simple fact of the matter is that the carbon tax will have an effect on schools, hospitals and the police force. Yet the Victorian government has received no compensation for the effect of the carbon tax on increased electricity prices and on the costs of running hospitals, schools and the police force.

If members of the Labor opposition really cared, they would be going down to Werribee, knocking on the door of the member for Lalor, the Prime Minister, and talking to her, saying, 'This ain't fair'. If Labor members really cared, they would be arguing for the \$6.1 billion in GST. If Labor members really cared, they would be talking about the carbon tax and arguing for compensation for Victoria, but Labor members just do not care.

I want to talk about the lousy legacy left by Labor. If you look at expenditure growth — and others have talked about this — you see that over the 11 long, dark, miserable years of Labor governments it was running at 7.3 per cent while revenue growth was running at 6.9 per cent. Everybody knows, and all those on this side have said it, that when running a budget you cannot have expenditure outpacing the growth in revenue, because eventually you will have a big problem.

While thinking of the lousy legacy left by the Labor Party, I am reminded of a *Yes Minister* episode and some of the projects that the previous Labor government left us with. I refer to the episode of *Yes Minister* in which the cast did a tour of the most hygienic and most efficient hospital. It happened to be a hospital with 500 staff but no medical staff and no patients. To confirm the lousy Labor legacy, all I have to do is look at the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre, which needed a \$45 million fit-out. It was nice to have a building, but a building is not a hospital unless you have a fit-out. The Labor legacy was to leave us with no money for the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre fit-out. At the Royal Children's Hospital they forgot to fund the computers or IT.

Not too long ago I was in this chamber listening to the member for Ripon interjecting and saying, 'Why do you need to account for trains if you are building a train line? You don't account for cars when you're building a freeway'. I was just astounded. You would think that when you are building a train line you would account for the trains on the track and the signalling. In the style

of a *Yes Minister* approach, the previous Labor government left a lousy legacy with no trains.

The Melbourne wholesale market is one of my favourites. You plan for a wholesale market, you make it six years late, you build it for twice as much as you said it would cost and you do it without any tenants — no market traders, nobody in the market. That was the lousy legacy left by Labor.

I have a nice little document here in the form of a Victorian Ombudsman's report entitled *Own Motion Investigation into ICT-enabled Projects — November 2011 — In Consultation with the Victorian Auditor-General*. Ten ICT projects were looked into. The report states:

On average, projects will have more than doubled in cost by the time they are finished. Two of the projects will have more than tripled their original budgets in order to reach their completion ...

It also says:

Each of the 10 projects I examined failed to meet expectations; most failed to meet delivery time frames; and all ran over budget. The original budgets for these projects totalled \$1.3 billion. The latest ... cost is \$2.74 billion — an additional \$1.44 billion cost to government.

Everybody knows about myki. I still get people coming into my office complaining about the lousy legacy Labor left to us with myki. It is the same again with smart meters. A Liberal-Nationals coalition government has to fix the mess left by Labor with myki and smart meters — and do not get me started on HealthSMART. Labor poured \$3 billion down the drain on gaming licences. While we are talking about drains and water, there is always the desalination plant. We will pay nearly \$2 million a day for almost 30 years — and that is not even for water, that is just for the holding charge.

We hear those opposite moaning that they want us to fund this and they want us to fund that. I listened to the member for Melton, who went through a very extensive list of the things the previous government neglected to do over its 11 long, dark, miserable years in office. This list, I have to say, was second only to the list that was presented by the member for Yan Yean some 18 months ago on my first day in this place. It is amazing to hear those opposite stand, yell and scream after 11 long, dark, miserable years and ask us to fund the things that they never could or never would. If you listen to those opposite — and I have listened intently to their contributions — you would think that every single school in Victoria was the next one on the list that was going to be rebuilt under a 13-year plan by the Labor government. You would think after 11 long,

dark, miserable years they might actually have done something. Opposition members hate this budget because it is delivering on our commitments to the people of Victoria — it is delivering for the Burwood electorate and it is delivering for Victoria.

I will refer to some of the other contributions I have heard. The member for Richmond asked what the government's response was to a fragile economy. I will answer quite simply: \$5.8 billion in infrastructure funding. That is one of the things we are doing for our fragile economy. It was interesting to listen to the member for Macedon. I agreed with one thing she said, and I thought it was the only thing in her contribution that was any good. I agreed with the member for Macedon when she said that there are no black holes in this budget. That is because this is a Liberal-Nationals coalition budget, not a Labor budget.

**Ms Miller** interjected.

**Mr WATT** — It is a responsible budget, as the member for Bentleigh says.

I will discuss some of the things the Labor Party has said about TAFE. I am happy to talk about TAFE, because extra funding has been budgeted for TAFE over the forward estimates for vocational education and training. All apprenticeship courses will receive an increase in funding. Funding will increase for certificate III and IV courses in skills such as carpentry, bricklaying, plumbing, engineering, automotive, children's services, aged care and disability.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr WATT** — That creates jobs. It is disturbing to have my constituents email me or come into my office and cry because of the misinformation they have been given by the Labor Party. Misinformation from the Labor Party is getting out to certain sections of the community. Once the reality is explained to them, I think the people of Burwood particularly, and the people of Victoria in general, understand that our plan for a sustainable budget is a good plan.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr WATT** — It is a responsible budget. I know those opposite want to rewrite history, but the one thing they cannot rewrite in history is that the former government did not fund things in Burwood. This budget contains \$10.5 million towards the redevelopment of Ashwood College. You hear people out there arguing and screaming about the fact that Ashwood College was not funded over 11 long, dark, miserable years of Labor. Labor did not fund it. We

hear Labor members all the time talking about schools being next. I do not think Ashwood was next, but we in this budget have funded Ashwood College.

We are also continuing the \$447.5 million funding commitment to the Box Hill Hospital redevelopment. That is an increase in funding over what the previous government allocated, and it is a great result for the people of the eastern suburbs. I see the member for Warrandyte, the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and Minister for Youth Affairs, is in the chamber. I know the minister has a great interest in the Box Hill Hospital, a hospital that he and his constituents are glad to see funded by the Liberal-Nationals coalition government.

The \$7.3 million allocated towards planning and development of the Monash Children's hospital will bring the total so far to \$15.8 million. We are committed to getting this done, and we are fulfilling our commitments. We also recently announced \$300 000 for the Surrey Hills Baptist Children's Centre redevelopment. This redevelopment is required to allow the centre to provide 15 hours of universal access, and it is great that we as a government have been able to help achieve that. Boroondara City Council has received \$45 000 funding for the Strengthening the World Game program for Riversdale Soccer Club at Hartwell Reserve. It is great to see that we have been to get some money for lights.

We are investing in rail infrastructure. The \$3 million investment on the Alamein train line is to replace 13 400 sleepers. There is a \$12 million investment in the Glen Waverley train line to replace 45 000 rotten, old, tired, worn-out sleepers. The newer members opposite would certainly understand about tired, old, worn-out sleepers. We are replacing them on the Glen Waverley line, and in a couple of years we will replace them on the opposition benches. Those tired, worn-out sleepers will be gone.

Ashburton Primary School received \$6 million in this budget for a continuation of its redevelopment. The Mount Waverley police station received \$250 000. I place on the record my thanks to the Deputy Premier for a \$43 155 grant towards the Ashburton neighbourhood harmony project under the community support grants program. I also recently called for funding for Kids under Cover, and I appreciate the Minister for Consumer Affairs providing new funding of \$2.2 million over three years for that organisation, which cares for some of the most vulnerable children in the community.

I also wish to place on the record my thanks for the \$8 million that has been provided for a fire station in the nearby electorate of Malvern, which will help my electorate. Some \$336 million will be spent on protecting the most vulnerable children in Victoria, and I am sure that is something everyone in this house would be appreciative of. The budget contains a \$155 million surplus and a record \$13.7 billion for the health and hospital system, including an \$883 million increase in funding for public hospitals.

There is one other thing in the budget I should talk about, and that is the \$17.2 million recently announced for the Living Libraries Infrastructure program. We have a good library in my electorate of Burwood, one that services the majority of people there — those in Ashwood, Alamein, Solway, Glen Iris, Camberwell, Chadstone, Burwood, Surrey Hills and Box Hill South. These people are all interested in the Ashburton Library. The council has applied for funding for this library from the Living Libraries program. Although the recipients have not been announced, I would strongly encourage the minister to give consideration to the Ashburton Library for part of the \$17.2 million that was announced.

This particular library has a nice little room called the Copland Room, which was named after a local resident who has done a lot for the Ashburton community and the Burwood electorate. It would be great to see this government, as part of the \$17.2 million that has been announced for the Living Libraries Infrastructure program, put some money into the Ashburton Library. I ask the Minister for Local Government to give that some consideration when she decides who will be granted those funds. This is a great and responsible budget. I commend the Treasurer on his work, and I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr R. SMITH** (Minister for Environment and Climate Change) — When talking about this budget it is worth giving some personal context and my observations about Labor and coalition budgets over the years. From 1989 to 2006 I had a career in the banking and finance industry. During that time I developed a keen understanding of the importance of having a very well-managed budget, both at a state and at a national level. Many times when I was looking at various currencies to trade, one of the major things I looked at were the budgets of various countries, and indeed that flowed through to looking at the budgets of various states around the country. I entered the workforce, as I said, in 1989 — a time when the Cain Labor government was decimating the Victorian economy. Over the next few years I watched as Hawke and

Keating racked up continuing and completely unsustainable debt in the federal arena.

During that time I grew to admire coalition governments, as I saw Premier Jeff Kennett through the 1990s bring Victoria back from the gutter. I also admired Costello and Howard as they went through the herculean effort of paying back Labor's \$90 billion debt. My admiration for coalition governments' economic management actually came long before my subsequent understanding and embracing of liberal philosophies, and it has endured to this day. I still have an admiration for the way coalition governments throughout the country have dealt with the often very difficult economic conditions they inherit.

We see time and again that the pattern never changes. We have certainly seen examples of that in very recent times. The Labor government in New South Wales put that state into debt. There was an absolute rejection of Labor's philosophies and economic management in Queensland, where the Labor opposition has been reduced to just seven seats. The combination of the Rudd and Gillard governments has destroyed Costello's legacy of a debt-free Australia, and now we see that Australians are clamouring for an election on a national level.

In Victoria, obviously, the pattern continued over the 10 years under the previous Labor government. When we came into government we were left with a ballooning public service, a surplus that was propped up in recent years by federal government largesse and unfunded and underfunded project commitments that we have had to honour and find money for. In addition we also had the federal Labor government depriving Victorians of an incredible amount of GST. Billions and billions of dollars worth of GST is not coming to this state now. Throughout this entire debate on the budget I have yet to hear anyone from the other side actually stand up for Victorians and comment on — and condemn — the federal Labor government with regard to its removal of so much GST money from this state. We accept the challenges that we were given when we came into government; coalition governments across this nation always do.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The time set down for consideration of items on the government business program has expired, and I am required to interrupt business.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Read second time.**

*Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.****HEALTH (COMMONWEALTH STATE  
FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS) BILL 2012***Second reading***Debate resumed from 6 June; motion of  
Dr NAPHTHINE (Minister for Ports).****Motion agreed to.****Read second time.***Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.****DUTIES AMENDMENT (LANDHOLDER)  
BILL 2012***Second reading***Debate resumed from 5 June; motion of  
Mr WELLS (Treasurer).****Motion agreed to.****Read second time.***Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.****STATE TAXATION ACTS AMENDMENT  
BILL 2012***Second reading***Debate resumed from 5 June; motion of  
Mr WELLS (Treasurer).****Motion agreed to.****Read second time.***Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.****LOCAL GOVERNMENT (BRIMBANK CITY  
COUNCIL) AMENDMENT BILL 2012***Second reading***Debate resumed from 6 June; motion of  
Mrs POWELL (Minister for Local Government).****The SPEAKER** — Order! The question is:

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

**House divided on question:***Ayes, 43*

Angus, Mr	Mulder, Mr
Asher, Ms	Naphtine, Dr
Baillieu, Mr	Newton-Brown, Mr
Battin, Mr	Northe, Mr
Bauer, Mrs	Powell, Mrs
Blackwood, Mr	Ryall, Ms
Bull, Mr	Ryan, Mr
Burgess, Mr	Shaw, Mr
Clark, Mr	Smith, Mr R.
Crisp, Mr	Southwick, Mr
Delahunty, Mr	Sykes, Dr
Dixon, Mr	Thompson, Mr
Fyffe, Mrs	Tilley, Mr
Gidley, Mr	Victoria, Mrs
Hodgett, Mr	Wakeling, Mr
Katos, Mr	Walsh, Mr
Kotsiras, Mr	Watt, Mr
McCurdy, Mr	Weller, Mr
McIntosh, Mr	Wells, Mr
McLeish, Ms	Wooldridge, Ms
Miller, Ms	Wreford, Ms
Morris, Mr	

*Noes, 40*

Andrews, Mr	Howard, Mr
Barker, Ms	Hutchins, Ms
Beattie, Ms	Kairouz, Ms
Brooks, Mr	Knight, Ms
Campbell, Ms	Languiller, Mr
Carbines, Mr	Lim, Mr
Carroll, Mr	McGuire, Mr
D' Ambrosio, Ms	Madden, Mr
Donnellan, Mr	Merlino, Mr
Duncan, Ms	Nardella, Mr
Edwards, Ms	Neville, Ms
Eren, Mr	Noonan, Mr
Foley, Mr	Pallas, Mr
Graley, Ms	Pandazopoulos, Mr
Green, Ms	Perera, Mr
Halfpenny, Ms	Richardson, Ms
Helper, Mr	Scott, Mr
Hennessy, Ms	Thomson, Ms
Herbert, Mr	Trezise, Mr
Holding, Mr	Wynne, Mr

**Question agreed to.****Read second time.**

*Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.****Business interrupted pursuant to sessional orders.****Sitting continued on motion of Mr McINTOSH  
(Minister for Corrections).****POLICE AND EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL 2012***Council's amendments***Message from Council relating to following  
amendments considered:**

1. Clause 1, line 25, omit "area." and insert "area; and".
2. Clause 1, after line 25 insert —  
  
“(e) to amend the **Control of Weapons Act 1990** to further provide for the granting of exemptions, approvals and search warrants under that Act in respect of prohibited weapons and to make other amendments to that Act.”
3. Clause 2, lines 27 to 29, omit all words and expressions on these lines and insert —  
  
“(1) This Part comes into operation on the day on which this Act receives the Royal Assent.  
  
(2) Sections 11, 12, 13, 14 and 17 are taken to have come into operation on 16 May 2012.  
  
(3) Parts 2, 3, 4 and 7 and the remaining provisions of Part 6 come into operation on the day after the day on which this Act receives the Royal Assent.”
4. Clause 2, line 30, omit "(3)" and insert "(5)".
5. Page 9, before the heading to Part 6 insert —

**“PART 6— AMENDMENTS TO CONTROL OF  
WEAPONS ACT 1990”.****NEW CLAUSES**

6. Insert the following New Clauses to follow the heading inserted by Amendment No. 5 —  
  
**“AA Exemption of health service workers**
  - (1) In section 7A(1) of the **Control of Weapons Act 1990** after “section 5,” insert “5AA, 5AB(1),”.
  - (2) In section 7A(2) of the **Control of Weapons Act 1990** after “section 5,” insert “5AA, 5AB(1),”.

**BB Exemption of person exercising power under  
the Education and Training Reform Act 2006**In section 7B(1) of the **Control of Weapons Act 1990** after “section 5,” insert “5AA, 5AB(1),”.**CC Exemptions for prohibited weapons and body  
armour**In section 8B(1)(a) of the **Control of Weapons Act 1990** after “(except section 5(1AC) or (1AD))” insert “, 5AA, 5AB(1)”.**DD Approvals for prohibited weapons and body  
armour**In section 8C(1) of the **Control of Weapons Act 1990**, after “(except section 5(1AC) or (1AD))” insert “, 5AA, 5AB(1)”.**EE Power to require production of approval**In section 8G(1)(a) of the **Control of Weapons Act 1990** after “section 5” insert “, 5AA or 5AB(1)”.**FF Warrant to search**In section 11(1) of the **Control of Weapons Act 1990**, after “section 5” (wherever occurring) insert “, 5AA or 5AB”.**GG New section 17 inserted**After section 16 of the **Control of Weapons Act 1990** insert —**“17 Savings provision — Police and  
Emergency Management Legislation  
Amendment Act 2012**

- (1) On and from the commencement of section 4 of the **Control of Weapons and Firearms Acts Amendment Act 2012**, any Order made by the Governor in Council under section 8B(1), being an Order in force immediately before that commencement exempting a class of person, or a class of prohibited weapons (other than imitation firearms) or a corrections officer, military officer or police officer from any provision of section 5(1) is taken also to have the effect of an exemption from the provisions of section 5AA, to the same extent as that Order has provided for an exemption from the provisions of section 5(1).
- (2) On and from the commencement of section 4 of the **Control of Weapons and Firearms Acts Amendment Act 2012**, any Order made by the Governor in Council under section 8B(1), being an Order in force immediately before that commencement exempting a class of person, or a class of prohibited weapons (being imitation firearms) or a corrections officer, military officer or police officer from any provision of section 5(1) is taken also to have the effect of an exemption from the provisions of section 5AB(1), to the same

extent as that Order has provided for an exemption from the provisions of section 5(1).

- (3) On and from the commencement of section 4 of the **Control of Weapons and Firearms Acts Amendment Act 2012**, any approval granted by the Chief Commissioner under section 8C, being an approval in force immediately before that commencement, that —
- (a) in relation to prohibited weapons (other than imitation firearms), approves a person to do anything that is otherwise prohibited by any provision of section 5 (except section 5(1A) or (1D)) is taken also to have the effect of an approval to do anything otherwise prohibited by any provision of section 5AA, to the same extent as the approval provides for section 5(1); or
- (b) in relation to imitation firearms, approves a person to do anything that is otherwise prohibited by any provision of section 5 (except section 5(1A) or (1D)) is taken also to have the effect of an approval to do anything otherwise prohibited by any provision of section 5AB(1), to the same extent as the approval provides for section 5(1).”.

7. Page 9, heading to Part 6, omit “6” and insert “7”.

#### AMENDMENT OF LONG TITLE

8. In the long title, after “area” insert “and to amend the **Control of Weapons Act 1990**”.

**Mr McIntosh** (Minister for Corrections) — I move:

That the amendments be agreed to.

In moving this motion I note that these amendments to the Police and Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 relate to an amendment that was put through in the upper house in relation to the Control of Weapons Act 1990. As I understand it these current amendments were made because of a drafting error made in the principal legislation relating to the control of weapons. Given the fact that these amendments relate to police matters, in the upper house the President ruled that there was an opportunity to amend the Control of Weapons Act 1990 to overcome the drafting error. I understand opposition members supported those amendments in the other house and opposition members will also support the amendments here in this chamber.

In doing so they recognise the significance of the amendments which correct that drafting error. The error in the principal legislation which also appeared in the

former act meant that an emergency service worker, for example an ambulance driver, who came into possession of a prohibited weapon — which may have belonged to the person being treated by the ambulance officer — could have technically been committing an offence. That was an oversight in the original control of weapons act and, given the consistency between that act and the police and emergency management act, an amendment correcting the original oversight in the drafting of the control of weapons act could be placed in this bill.

Accordingly I ask the house to support this very important piece of legislation which ensures that people like emergency service workers or even teachers would be covered by the provisions if they accidentally came into possession of a firearm or, more likely, an imitation firearm that is a prohibited weapon. This was an anomaly in the amendments that were made to the control of weapons act by this government. It was in the previous act and was inadvertently omitted from the legislation.

That amendment is a very important matter, but I should mention that there are a number of insertions. There is an insertion in clause 1 of the Police and Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Bill that specifically amends the Control of Weapons Act 1990 to further provide for the granting of exemptions, approvals and search warrants under the act in respect of prohibited weapons and to make other amendments. Again that was an accidental omission.

A new part 6 is proposed to insert a number of additional clauses into the Control of Weapons Act. Again these should have been in the principal act. They include exemptions for health workers — for example, ambulance officers or someone working in a hospital; and exemptions for persons exercising power under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006. They also include exemptions and approvals for not only firearms and imitation firearms but also for other forms of prohibited weapons as well as body armour, and very important amendments in relation to search warrants. These are critical amendments that were left out of the bill.

A new section 17 is proposed for insertion into the Control of Weapons Act 1990 through the amendments to the Police and Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The very important amendments in new section 17 are in the form of a savings provision in relation to the Police and Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2012. As I said, these are very important amendments, and I look forward to the support of the house for them.

**Mr MERLINO** (Monbulk) — This must be killing The Nationals — the business of government continuing after 4.00 p.m — but they have only one person to blame, and that is their leader, the Deputy Premier and Minister for Police and Emergency Services. There is nothing that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services touches that he does not stuff up, and this is another stuff-up by him.

Members will recall the bill that was before the house in March and was passed, the Control of Weapons and Firearms Acts Amendment Bill 2011. The original bill was a complete stuff-up by the government and the police minister. The bill categorically did not reflect the agreement reached with the sporting shooters.

**Ms Kairouz** interjected.

**Mr MERLINO** — The minister was reading the wrong bill? You are kidding me.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Monbulk should ignore interjections; he does not need the assistance of members of the opposition.

**Mr MERLINO** — If members go back to the original bill, the Control of Weapons and Firearms Acts Amendment Bill, they will recall that it was an embarrassment for the government. The government did not reflect in that legislation the agreement reached with the sporting shooters. Members of the Labor opposition actually spoke to sporting shooters; we got a briefing from them and engaged and consulted with them and found out about the raft of mistakes in the bill. We proposed amendments, and at the 11th hour the government realised that it had made a mistake with the bill and put up its own amendments.

Perhaps among all the confusion and the discussions with the sporting shooters the government forgot that it had made some further mistakes in the bill. It failed to detect that there were consequential amendments that should have been made to the Control of Weapons Act at the time. The amendments that we debated in this place in March related to the Control of Weapons Act and were to insert offences: the offence to possess, use or carry a prohibited weapon without an exemption; an offence for a non-prohibited person to possess, use or carry an imitation firearm; and an offence for a prohibited person to possess, use or carry an imitation firearm. What the government forgot was that it needed to make further consequential amendments to sections 7 and 8, because there are people in our community who have a legitimate reason to possess, use or carry a weapon.

Under Governor in Council orders there are a whole range of people and organisations who are exempted, whether they be corrections officers, wildlife and fisheries officers, scientists, historical re-enactment groups, martial arts groups, fencing groups, theatre groups, galleries, scout groups, hunting groups, target shooting clubs or Scottish highland dancers. There is a long list of people who are exempted. The government missed these important consequential amendments. In the amendments before us today there are also some savings provisions that make sure that those people who should have been exempted when we debated this bill in March are not subject to any risk by virtue of the fact that that bill came into effect on 16 May.

The last point I want to make is that this government is treating the Parliament as if it were a rubber stamp. The opposition was advised last week that there were urgent amendments coming before the house this week. We sought briefings last week. We sought briefings on Monday. We did not know what urgent amendments were being put to this house until the Tuesday morning of this sitting week. It is an absolute disgrace. So much for the openness, transparency and accountability that the Premier touted back in 2010.

We will not be opposing these amendments. They are amendments that should have been included in the original bill but for the stuff-up in the drafting of the legislation, the stuff-up in the agreements reached with sporting shooters and now further stuff-ups and mistakes in regard to these consequential amendments. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services has been an abject failure. He is nowhere to be seen.

**Mr Weller** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Rodney!

**Mr MERLINO** — We needed a member of the government, and the Liberals were once again required to come in to protect the Leader of The Nationals. I reckon the Liberal Party is getting well and truly sick of the Leader of The Nationals. I reckon they are getting well and truly sick of protecting The Nationals.

**Mr McIntosh** — On a point of order, Speaker, the member is getting extremely excited about nothing. Could you bring him back to the very narrow debate, which is in relation to the amendments from the upper house?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I do not uphold the point of order, but I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to address the bill before the house and reach his conclusion.

**Mr MERLINO** — Liberal Party members could be forgiven for thinking that their job is fixing up the mess of The Nationals, and that is why in the budget we have seen the Liberal Party get back at The Nationals, and The Nationals have absolutely forgotten the communities they are supposed to represent — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Ivanhoe survived question time; he will not do it again.

**Dr Napthine** — On a point of order, Speaker, this is a very narrow debate on some amendments that were made by the Legislative Council. I ask you to bring the speaker back to the narrow debate on the amendments from the Legislative Council.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to come back to the motion that is before the house, which relates to amendments to the bill.

**Mr MERLINO** — I will come back to the motion before the house, which is about fixing up the mistakes of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and we are well and truly sick of it. There are so many points of order. Obviously members of The Nationals are on their phones saying, ‘Please can we go home’ — —

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I will sit the member down in a moment if he does not stop this.

**Mr MERLINO** — The Labor opposition will not oppose these amendments. We will allow members of The Nationals to get in their cars and go home.

**Motion agreed to.**

## EVIDENCE AMENDMENT (JOURNALIST PRIVILEGE) BILL 2012

### *Statement of compatibility*

**Mr CLARK (Attorney-General) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:**

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, (charter act), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Evidence Amendment (Journalist Privilege) Bill 2012.

In my opinion, the Evidence Amendment (Journalist Privilege) Bill 2012, as introduced to the Legislative Assembly, is compatible with human rights as set out in the

charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

### **Overview of bill**

The purposes of the bill are to:

- (a) amend the Evidence Act 2008 to —
  - provide for a journalist privilege;
  - provide for mutual recognition of self-incrimination certificates issued under provisions in other jurisdictions which are equivalent to sections 128 and 128A of the Evidence Act 2008;
  - implement other technical amendments approved by the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General to bring the Evidence Act 2008 into line with the Model Uniform Evidence Bill;
  - make other minor technical amendments to the Evidence Act 2008;
- b) amend the Coroners Act 2008 to apply the statutory privileges in part 3.10 of the Evidence Act 2008 to the Coroners Court; and
- c) make necessary consequential amendments and provide for transitional arrangements.

### **Human rights issues**

#### **1. Human rights protected by the charter act that are relevant to the bill**

#### **Freedom of expression**

Section 15(2) of the charter act provides that every person has the right to freedom of expression. The bill is compatible with this right as it does not limit any person’s freedom to express themselves including to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds.

Clause 3 of the bill protects a journalist from having to disclose the identity of a source who has been promised confidentiality, unless a court considers that a balance of public and private interests requires disclosure.

Clause 3 provides more protection to journalists’ confidential sources than the common law.

Cases under the European Convention on Human Rights have held that the human right to freedom of expression requires protection from compelled disclosure of journalists’ sources. However, the Supreme Court of Canada has held that the Canadian charter right to freedom of expression does not require protection of the confidentiality of journalists’ sources and instead has developed a common law privilege for case-by-case application. The United States Supreme Court has also held that the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech and freedom of the press does not protect the confidentiality of journalists’ sources, and left the issue to the legislature.

It is therefore doubtful whether the right to freedom of expression in section 15(2) of the charter act affords protection from compelled disclosure of a journalist’s

sources. Even if it did, clause 3 of the bill is compatible with section 15(2) because the right to freedom of expression is subject to an internal limitation under section 15(3) of the charter act, which provides that the right may be subject to lawful restrictions that are reasonably necessary to respect the rights and reputation of other persons or for the protection of national security, public order, public health or public morality.

The discretion given to the court to compel a journalist to answer questions in clause 3 of the bill is reasonably necessary both to respect the rights of other persons, particularly the right to a fair hearing, and for the maintenance of public order.

Parts 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11 of the bill provide that the journalist privilege is not available in the non-curial settings established under the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011, the Major Crime (Investigative Powers) Act 2004, the Ombudsman Act 1973, the Police Integrity Act 2008, the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001, and the Victorian Inspectorate Act 2011. As noted above, it is doubtful whether section 15(2) of the charter act affords protection from compelled disclosure of journalist's source. However, even if it did, the internal limitation under section 15(3) of the charter act means that the exclusion of the journalist privilege from these settings which concern the investigation of corruption and major crime is compatible with the charter act.

Clauses 11 and 12 of the bill extend the statutory privileges in part 3.10 of the Evidence Act 2008, including the journalist privilege, to investigations and inquests conducted by the Coroners Court. The statutory privileges replace existing common law privileges. In doing so, the bill brings the Coroners Court into line with all other Victorian courts to which the privileges in part 3.10 already apply. These privileges do not limit any person's ability to express themselves and are compatible with section 15(2) of the charter act.

Some commentators have suggested that there is a negative freedom of expression right, that is, a right to remain silent. Some international jurisprudence suggests a person may have a right not to be compelled to express views that he or she does not hold. However, international jurisprudence does not support any broader negative freedom of expression right to remain silent and, for example, to refuse to provide factual information.

#### **Right to a fair hearing**

Under clause 24 of the charter act, persons charged with a criminal offence and parties to civil proceedings have the right to have the charge or proceeding decided after a 'fair and public hearing' by a court or tribunal. The bill is compatible with that right.

The conduct of a 'fair' hearing in any given case depends on striking an appropriate balance between the relevant interests of stakeholders. These may include the accused, the victim, parties to civil proceedings, witnesses and society. What is in the interests of the accused in a criminal proceeding or the defendant in a civil proceeding will not necessarily be taken to outweigh a conflicting interest of the public, the victim, a witness or an opposing party.

The creation of the journalist privilege under clause 3 of the bill is compatible with the right to a fair hearing. The privilege is not absolute. The court has the discretion to compel a journalist to provide evidence that will disclose the identity of an informant. The exercise of this discretion will depend on the court's assessment of the competing interests of the relevant stakeholders in each case.

Clauses 11 and 12 of the bill, which extend the statutory privileges in part 3.10 of the Evidence Act 2008 to investigations and inquests conducted by the Coroners Court, are also compatible with the fair hearing right as they reflect the balances previously struck by the courts in conducting fair trials.

#### **Protection against self-incrimination**

Section 25(2)(k) of the charter guarantees the right of a defendant in criminal proceedings not to be compelled to testify against himself or herself or to confess guilt. Clauses 4 and 5 of the bill are compatible with this right and promote it.

Section 128 of the Evidence Act 2008 currently provides protection where a witness is required to give evidence that may be self-incriminating. The court will issue a certificate prohibiting the subsequent use of that evidence, and any evidence derived from it, against the witness in other proceedings. The new provisions in the bill prevent evidence being led for which a certificate has been issued in another jurisdiction under legislation comparable to section 128 of the Evidence Act 2008.

#### **Right to privacy and reputation**

The bill is compatible with section 13(a) of the charter act, which provides that a person has the right not to have his or her privacy, family or home unlawfully or arbitrarily interfered with.

The discretion given to the court by clause 3 to order a journalist to identify an informant is neither unlawful nor arbitrary because it is made on the evidence after considering and balancing the competing interests described in the clause. The clause is therefore compatible with section 13(a). The clause also promotes the protection of other rights in the charter act, including the right to a fair hearing.

Similarly, under the other statutory privileges and their limitations which are extended to the Coroners Court, a witness may be required to divulge personal information in certain circumstances. However, these provisions do not authorise arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy.

Robert Clark, MP  
Attorney-General

#### *Second reading*

**Mr CLARK** (Attorney-General) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill amends the Evidence Act 2008 to create a journalist privilege. The bill implements the government's commitment to provide protection to journalists by introducing a shield law to protect journalists from being compelled to give evidence in

court proceedings that would reveal their confidential sources.

The bill strengthens the capacity of journalists to maintain the anonymity of their sources. It creates a privilege that will allow a journalist who is being questioned in a court to refuse to answer any question that would disclose the identity of a source where the journalist has promised to keep the source's identity a secret. The privilege is a rebuttable presumption that a journalist is not compellable to give evidence that would disclose the identity of their source.

If a party to the proceeding wants to argue that the privilege should not apply, the court will consider whether the public interest in the disclosure of the identity of the source outweighs:

any likely adverse effect of the disclosure on the source or any other person; and

the public interest in the communication of facts and opinion to the public by the news media and, accordingly also, the ability of the news media to access sources of facts.

This is a decision that will be made in each individual case, on the facts of that case.

By this means, the bill strikes the right balance between the public's right to know and the capacity of our courts to access the information needed to uphold justice.

The privilege recognises the important role that journalists play in a democracy. Some sources of information that is of legitimate interest to the public will only provide that information to journalists on condition of anonymity. Most journalists subscribe to an ethical code which requires that they be cautious in promising confidentiality to informants. However, when a journalist promises confidentiality, he or she must respect that promise. Journalists can, therefore, face an ethical dilemma when questioned in a court proceeding about the identity of an anonymous source.

The privilege conferred by the bill will apply in carefully specified circumstances. Only a 'journalist' can claim this privilege. 'Journalist' is defined as a person engaged in the profession or occupation of journalism in connection with the publication of information in a news medium. The definition is not intended to cover amateur bloggers.

The limitation of the privilege to people who are professionally engaged or occupied as journalists is reinforced by a number of factors to which a court may have regard when determining whether a person is a

'journalist'. These factors include accountability to a recognised professional standard.

The bill also makes clear that journalists must have received the information when acting in their capacity as a journalist. Further, the privilege only applies when a journalist has specifically promised the informant anonymity.

These provisions reflect the policy underpinning the privilege: to provide an appropriate balance between support for the capacity of journalists to investigate and report on matters of legitimate public interest, and the public interest in a court having before it all relevant and probative evidence.

The privilege is not absolute. The court will exercise its discretion on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the journalist will be required to provide evidence that will identify the informant. As can be seen from the key New Zealand case of *Police v. Campbell* [2010] 1 NZLR 483, the court evaluates a number of factors, including the harm that would be caused to the informant if their identity were to be disclosed and the right of the defendant to know all relevant information on which to construct their defence.

The nature of the proceeding or the seriousness of the charge in a criminal proceeding and the public interest in the court having before it all relevant and probative evidence to facilitate a just outcome will also be relevant to the court's decision. *Police v. Campbell* also refers to the public interest in the investigation and prosecution of crime, the nature of the information obtained from the source and the manner in which the information was obtained by the source.

The amendments made by this bill will generally apply to court hearings that commence on or after the commencement date regardless of when a journalist made a promise to an informant. This is consistent with the approach taken to the implementation of the Evidence Act 2008.

The bill also includes some other important amendments to the laws of evidence in Victoria.

The Statute Law Amendment (Evidence Consequential Provisions) Act 2009 amended the definition of 'unavailability of persons' within the Evidence Act 2008. The other Uniform Evidence Act jurisdictions have now agreed to similar changes in their Evidence Acts. Consequently, this bill adjusts the numbering of these provisions to ensure uniformity. This amendment does not alter the substance of the definition of 'unavailability of persons', it only makes the form consistent with the Model Uniform Evidence Bill.

The implementation of mutual recognition of certificates issued in other state and territory jurisdictions is another important aspect of this bill. These certificates are provided by a court when a person is required to give evidence which may incriminate the person. The certificate ensures that the evidence the person is required to give, and evidence derived from that evidence, cannot be used against the person in any other court proceedings. As more court proceedings have cross-jurisdictional implications, it is important to ensure that potentially incriminating evidence obtained in one jurisdiction, which is subject to an immunity, is not used in another jurisdiction.

The bill also brings the Coroners Court into line with all other courts in Victoria by replacing the operation of common law privileges with the statutory privileges found in part 3.10 of the Evidence Act 2008.

Freedom of the press is vitally important in a democratic society. The bill recognises the public interest in the communication of facts and opinion and the need for the media to be able to access information. The introduction of a journalist privilege adds to a healthy democracy in Victoria. This bill delivers on the government's commitment to enact a privilege to protect journalists from being forced to make a decision between revealing their confidential sources or contempt of court. It supports the capacity of journalists to investigate and disseminate matters of public interest without compromising the information available to a court in civil and criminal proceedings.

I commend the bill to the house.

**Debate adjourned on motion of Ms GREEN (Yan Yean).**

**Debate adjourned until Thursday, 21 June.**

**Remaining business postponed on motion of Mr McINTOSH (Minister for Corrections).**

## ADJOURNMENT

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

### **Mount Ridley College: funding**

**Ms BEATTIE** (Yuroke) — I rise to raise a matter for the urgent attention of the Minister for Education. The urgent action I seek is for the minister to commit funding for stage 5 of development of the Mount Ridley P-12 college in Craigieburn. Many parents have contacted my office in the past weeks to outline their

utter shock and disappointment that funding for the next stage of this growing school was not included in the recently handed down state budget. The minister was only too willing to attend the school for a media event last year, doing some shameless self-promotion, but when the time came to cough up the cash, where was he? He was missing in action again.

I am very proud to have been part of the Brumby Labor government, which delivered this fantastic new school in the growing suburb of Craigieburn, and I was even prouder of the fact that each year we budgeted for its future growth and development. In 2008 the state Labor government allocated \$7 million for stage 2 of the development of the college, and in 2009 state Labor budgeted \$4.1 million for the construction of science and administration wings. The 2010 state budget committed \$9 million for stage 4 of the college, which saw the construction of science, technology, art, graphics, fabrics and general-use classrooms.

However, in 2012 there is nothing, zero, zilch. Not a cent has been allocated by this government, a government that has already slashed hundreds of millions of dollars from education in this state. With a growing enrolment and being in a rapidly growing area, Mount Ridley College will soon be running out of classrooms in which to teach children. The minister, being a former principal, would know it is extremely difficult to teach students without classrooms to teach them in.

Parents, teachers and students are now all asking when Mount Ridley College will be finished. I am asking the same question. Education is going backwards under this Premier. It is the minister's responsibility to stand up at the cabinet table for the students and staff of Mount Ridley College and every student across the state. He needs to deliver what he promised and provide the essential support and services that schools require. This minister also suggested to the people of Greenvale that he would consider building a Greenvale secondary college, but he has not been seen in that area since the government was elected.

Staff, parents and students of Mount Ridley eagerly await news about the stage 5 development, and it is up to the minister to deliver the funding. I seek the minister's urgent intervention in this matter and call on him to finish building Mount Ridley College and to instil some faith in education in our young people in Victoria.

### Melbourne Festival: funding

**Mr SOUTHWICK** (Caulfield) — The matter I wish to raise is for the attention of the hardworking Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and it is regarding the Melbourne Festival, formerly known as the Melbourne International Arts Festival. This is a major tourism attraction which brings together world-class artistic groups and class acts to perform in Australia's cultural capital, Melbourne. The action I seek is for the minister to support the marketing and promotion of this fantastic festival so it continues to grow in stature and patronage.

We in Victoria are rightly proud of our place as the home of culture and arts in this country. To grow this reputation we must continue to market the programs and festivals that contribute to our cultural fabric and ensure that Melbourne continues to be a global destination for arts and entertainment. The Melbourne Festival is a cultural icon of Melbourne and, because it exclusively debuts and premieres many events, it is the only occasion in Australia that many of these key festival projects are presented and so ensures that Melbourne is an ongoing destination for arts tourism from across Australia and the world.

Tourism is at the heart of our export trade, and there is no better way to promote Melbourne than through arts and culture. The festival continues to flourish, with attendance up 83 per cent in 2011. The figures went from 503 000 in 2010 to 925 000 in 2011. This shows the potential of this festival to continue to grow, bringing more visitors to our city. In 2011 almost 10 per cent of attendees came from outside metropolitan Melbourne. If this growth continues at anywhere near the level it has in previous years, it will be a massive boon for tourism operators and will provide great opportunities for us to showcase the wonder that is Melbourne. An investment of marketing funds from the Victorian government will certainly give us the opportunity to continue to promote and develop this great event.

I want to acknowledge the Melbourne Festival for the great work it does in bringing together class acts of dance, theatre, music, visual arts, multimedia and outdoor events and for becoming an organic part of our city. Over 25 years it has grown and continued to flourish under the leadership of artistic directors, from inaugural director Gian Carlo Menotti through to Brett Sheehy, and presidents including Marc Besen, Harold Mitchell, Carol Schwartz and currently Carrillo Gantner.

My electorate of Caulfield has a vibrant arts community with a number of performing arts groups, and it continues to support events such as this. I have no doubt that many of my constituents are regular patrons of the Melbourne Festival, and I call on the government to ensure that the festival continues to be a great success for Melbourne and a great not-for-profit event which brings people out during the month of October to attend the wonderful events on offer.

### Rail: Pakenham and Cranbourne lines

**Mr LIM** (Clayton) — I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Public Transport. The specific action I seek is for him to provide to the house full details of the proposed Springvale rail crossing elimination project and future works planned along the Pakenham and Cranbourne rail lines over the life of this Parliament. I raise this issue following the contribution by the member for Mordialloc on 22 May to the budget debate. In that contribution she said:

Then there is the \$349 million to replace with bridges the Springvale rail crossing and two others in Melbourne.

I view this statement with alarm and extreme concern, as will all shopkeepers and local residents. I am aware that the member for Mordialloc's domain is mainly along the Frankston rail line and that only a very small section of the suburb of Springvale South is included in the Mordialloc electoral district. However, as the member is part of the government she would probably be privy to the plan for this important rail crossing elimination project which will greatly affect this shopping centre precinct forever.

I have been critical of the minister for fast-tracking the level crossing at New Street, Brighton, which is no. 223 on the Department of Transport's priority list. My view is that the people residing between that former crossing and South Road are incensed by the works to reopen it. I also understand that the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for Brighton, gets her way because of her factional strength in the party and that she only wants the crossing reopened because Labor closed it.

The crossing in Springvale is not part of the Liberal Party kingdom, although there is a member in the other place who likes to throw her weight around because she thinks that is the case. This crossing is no. 1 on the Department of Transport's priority list and should be eliminated correctly, with the station and rail line being placed underground. If the bridge option has been approved, I call on the minister to reject this option forthwith and to seriously sit down with the community and the local traders and their business associations and

listen to their views as there are genuine concerns about the bridge option.

### **Libraries: Bairnsdale**

**Mr BULL** (Gippsland East) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Local Government. The action I seek is for the minister to support the redevelopment and extension of the Bairnsdale library. East Gippsland Shire Council has applied to the Living Libraries Infrastructure program for \$750 000 as part of what is an exciting overall project budgeted at \$3.7 million. The project includes a major upgrade to the current heritage-listed building and extension of the building to cater for the growing needs of the community. In recent weeks I have had the pleasure of attending functions at the library with the shire mayor, Dick Ellis, and the chief executive officer, Steve Kozlowski, where we discussed with staff the need for the upgrade. The staff do a great job but they could offer significantly improved and expanded programs with a new facility. The upgrade would enable a variety of improvements, including enhanced programs for children, youth and seniors and the creation of an outdoor space to be used for study and meetings.

The library is a hub for community activity, and with increasing demand it requires a significant upgrade to meet current and increasing needs as there is ongoing pressure on the limited space available in the existing facility. The original redesign of the library caused a little consternation within the local community, but the latest design has been exceptionally well received right across the board. This project responds to increasing community need. It provides great public-access computers for the community to utilise, the ability to run a variety of programs, an expanded core library area and facilities that could be better utilised by a much wider array of local community groups.

In Gippsland East we have had some significant infrastructure upgrades announced recently, including \$10 million for the Bairnsdale Secondary College in the recent budget and several major kindergarten and preschool upgrades. However, this new library facility would be of great benefit to the wider community and provide a great asset for people of all ages. I call on the minister to strongly consider the council's application under the Living Libraries Infrastructure program for this facility in Bairnsdale.

### **Police: Bellarine electorate**

**Ms NEVILLE** (Bellarine) — The matter I raise is for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. The action I seek is that the minister urgently undertake

a review of the decision to roster Bellarine police in Geelong and Corio and not to provide additional police in Bellarine during the peak summer months. This decision has raised serious concerns amongst Bellarine residents, particularly in Queenscliff, Ocean Grove, Portarlington and Drysdale. One recent report indicated that the Bellarine Peninsula was without police on duty for about 5 hours on a Saturday night. That situation is totally unacceptable and extremely distressing, particularly for the many older residents of Bellarine. The inevitable delay in responding to local emergencies also puts unreasonable pressure on Bellarine police. The notion of filling rosters in Geelong and Corio with police from Bellarine to make up for staff shortages in those areas is a strategy that is bound to fail.

Residents of Bellarine are obviously being disadvantaged by this strategy, as are the people of Geelong and Corio. On top of this, the decision includes not providing additional police during the busy summer holiday months. This concerns residents, local businesses and the tourism industry, which continues to grow each year. The decision is a short-sighted, cost-cutting exercise that puts at risk the reputation of Bellarine as a safe, peaceful destination for families, older people and increasing numbers of tourists from interstate and overseas. It is vital that Bellarine have additional police, as it has always had, certainly over the last decade, to ensure that during the peak season our towns, highways and roads are kept safe and incidents and emergencies are dealt with quickly.

Having a visible police presence on the roads and, where appropriate, in town centres and at events, is important to maintain the safety of visitors and the whole community. However, to achieve this there must be additional police on the Bellarine Peninsula in summer when we have a virtual population explosion in our towns. The Baillieu government made all sorts of promises about law and order during the election campaign, including increasing police numbers in the Geelong region by 70 — so far there are only 20 — supposedly starting in July. The situation in Bellarine and Geelong looks like yet another example of the government not keeping its promises — of being all talk and no action.

Other concerns local residents have at the moment are about the future of the police stations in Queenscliff, Portarlington and Drysdale. I hope I will not have to raise these issues with the minister in the future. I call on the minister to act now to undertake a review of this decision and to ensure that Bellarine residents, businesses and police members are not disadvantaged or put at risk.

### State Library of Victoria: Dromkeen Collection

**Mrs VICTORIA** (Bayswater) — The matter I raise is with the Minister for Planning, and I ask that he meet with members of Heritage Victoria to seek approval to allow the trustees of the State Library of Victoria to erect several important bronze sculptures of picture book characters that form part of the Dromkeen Collection of children's book illustrations as a welcoming feature in the forecourt and garden area of the state library.

The Dromkeen Collection is an extremely significant collection of not only children's books — especially Australian — but also the transcripts, the artwork and, in this case, some of the sculptures. I place on record my sincerest thanks to John Oldmeadow, who is the director of Dromkeen and the head of the collection but also a member of the Oldmeadow family who had the foresight to put this collection together for the sake of all Australians in the future. It has been looked after and paid for quite selflessly by Scholastic Australia, the book company, and especially by Dick Robinson, who is the head of Scholastic in the USA. Scholastic in the USA has been paying for the upkeep of the collection for some 35 years, and now it is time to hand the collection over to the people of Australia. It has chosen the State Library of Victoria, for which we are terribly grateful. We thank Mr Robinson for his many years of contribution. I also want to thank Ken Jolly, who is the head of Scholastic in Australia, for helping with the ultimate decision to give the collection to the State Library of Victoria for safekeeping.

The beautiful sculptures I am talking about are currently located at the Dromkeen National Centre for Picture Book Art at Riddells Creek. I was there recently with my colleague Mrs Petrovich, a member for Northern Victoria Region in another place. She implored that I go up there and look at the collection in situ before it gets moved to the state library, and I am so glad she did so. It is an amazing treasure trove. I am pleased that it is coming to Melbourne and that we will be the custodians of it for future generations.

The state library would like to include some of the sculptures as a welcoming feature for visitors to the library and to let them know that it has not only academic books for students who are at university or in high school to look at but also great collections that a lot of people do not know about. There would be two in particular that would be located into the forecourt; others would go within the state library building. This is a multimillion-dollar collection and the most valuable and significant of its kind in Australia. I ask the Minister for Planning to meet with Heritage Victoria to

help enable these beautiful sculptures to be put on display for all Victorians now and in the future.

### HM Prison Ararat: expansion project

**Mr HELPER** (Ripon) — At the outset may I extend my thanks to you, Speaker, for the courtesy you showed me during question time.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I would like to thank you for the courtesy you gave to me.

**Mr HELPER** — The matter I wish to raise is for the Minister for Corrections, and I thank the minister for joining us in the chamber for this matter. The action I seek of the minister is that he lead a whole-of-government response to the stalled Ararat prison expansion project. As the minister is aware, the matter is quite complex, and I take at face value that he and his team from Corrections Victoria are working frantically to resolve contractual issues to get this project back on the road. I do foreshadow to the minister that the patience of the community, and mine indeed, is limited and that we expect to see some developments come out of those contractual negotiations to get that project on the road again.

However, that is not the only response that the community of Ararat wish to see from members of state government. They wish to see a whole-of-government response, including a response from a whole range of ministers. It is sad for the community of Ararat that the Premier of this state has chosen not to lead a whole-of-government response on behalf of this community, which is feeling considerable anxiety as a consequence of this project having halted. Let me explain what other ministers may be able to do. I would expect the Minister for Regional and Rural Development to come to Ararat to talk to the council and to the community about what projects can be put in place to build the confidence of that community.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I take it that the member addressed his question to the Minister for Corrections.

**Mr HELPER** — I did. I am asking — —

**The SPEAKER** — The member is now going in another direction. There is one matter to be raised during an adjournment, which in this case is a request to the Minister for Corrections.

**Mr HELPER** — I understand that after 12 years in this place.

**The SPEAKER** — I just follow the directions.

**Mr HELPER** — The action I sought from the minister was that he lead a whole-of-government response to this issue, which is of course made up of the activities of individual ministers within this government. As I say, in that context the Minister for Regional and Rural Development has a role to play, and so does the Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business. Many contractors are facing extraordinarily difficult circumstances. I would seek that the Minister for Corrections solicit the support of the minister for small business to ensure that all possible assistance is provided to the contractors who are suffering in that community.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member's time has expired.

### **Ferntree Gully electorate: sporting facilities**

**Mr WAKELING** (Ferntree Gully) — I ask the Minister for Sport and Recreation to take action and to meet with representatives from sporting clubs in the Ferntree Gully electorate. The Minister for Sport and Recreation has been gracious enough during his time as minister to visit many sporting clubs throughout the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, and sporting clubs throughout the eastern suburbs are pleased that the minister is taking action. I would specifically like him to meet with clubs with which the government has made funding agreements to provide upgrades. It has committed in excess of \$30 000 each to upgrade nine sporting facilities in my electorate.

Funding agreements with the City of Knox have already been finalised for Liberty Reserve, Rowville, which is home to St Simons Junior Football Club — a club that produced Jonathon Patton, the no. 1 draft pick last year — Heany Park Auskick and Rowville Cricket Club. The funding will be used to replace existing kitchen equipment, install PVC blinds to enclose the veranda, install synthetic grass and provide a pitch cover for the concrete cricket pitch. Another facility is at Pickett Reserve in Ferntree Gully, which is home to the Ferntree Gully Footballers Cricket Club and the Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club. The funding will be spent on the installation of new kitchen appliances, shelving, audiovisual equipment, blinds, minor shower and toilet upgrades, new signage and seating which will enhance the overall appeal of the pavilion and the reserve. Another is the H. V. Jones Reserve in Ferntree Gully, home to the Mountain Gate Cricket Club, the Boronia junior and senior soccer clubs and the Knox United Soccer Club. They will be utilising their \$30 000 of state government funding to facilitate the installation of an important new veranda.

Funding commitments have also been made for Eildon Reserve, home of the Rowville Junior Football Club and Eildon Park Cricket Club; Lakesfield Reserve, home of the Lysterfield Junior Football Club and Lysterfield Cricket Club; Wally Tew Reserve, home of the Ferntree junior and senior football and cricket clubs; Dobson Reserve, home of the Upper Ferntree Gully Junior Football Club and the Ferntree Gully Cricket Club; Seebeck Reserve, home of the Rowville cricket and football clubs and where the government recently allocated \$60 000 for new lighting and where \$100 000 will be allocated for resurfacing; and Fairpark Reserve, home of the Eastern Lions Football Club and Johnson Park Cricket Club. In addition to this significant investment, the government has also committed \$1.5 million to the Knox City Council to help upgrade the sporting facilities with the provision of warm season grass.

I call on the Minister for Sport and Recreation to take action and meet with representatives from those sporting clubs and talk about the development of these important projects in the Ferntree Gully electorate.

### **Forensicare: job losses**

**Mr NOONAN** (Williamstown) — I wish to raise a matter for the Minister for Mental Health. The action I seek from the minister is for her to urgently intervene and reverse a decision by Forensicare, the government's own forensic mental health institute, to halve the number of front-line clinical staff employed to deliver its community integration program. As the minister would be aware, Forensicare performs a vital role in providing specialist statewide forensic mental health services to meet the needs of mentally disordered offenders, the mental health and justice sectors and the community.

Forensicare operates the Thomas Embling Hospital in Fairfield, a 116-bed secure hospital for patients from the criminal justice system and other patients who require specialised management. It is also responsible for providing outpatient programs and services to high-risk mentally disordered offenders with significant forensic issues. One of Forensicare's key services is the community integration program. This program is squarely targeted at individuals who have a clinically diagnosed mental illness and have committed a serious offence but are nearing the end of a prison term and need intensive support to transition back into the community. The community integration program also supports individuals who are living in our community who pose a high risk of serious offending. Such is the importance of Forensicare's community integration

program that its online brochure states that ‘it is proposed to extend the program’.

People with a mental illness are overrepresented in our criminal justice system. At any one time Victorian prisons hold around 1150 people — or approximately 28 per cent of the prison population — with a diagnosed mental illness, including 500 with psychosis and 700 with depressive conditions. Unfortunately the Baillieu government seems determined to lock offenders up at all costs. Locking mentally ill prisoners away while reducing their pre-release and post-release treatment support services is akin to simply throwing away the key for many of our most complex offenders. While this might be a populist approach and might sit neatly within a tough-on-crime agenda, the reality is that it is bad policy that will ultimately pose a greater risk to our community.

In the lead-up to the 2010 state election the coalition stated that it is a basic responsibility of government to protect its citizens. Cutting front-line clinical forensic mental health staff will not only leave the most marginalised members of our community without the support they need but also promises to reduce community safety. Forensicare has made it clear that the halving of this program has been triggered because there is no ongoing funding commitment from the Department of Health. To the best of my knowledge this decision has been made without any type of impact assessment being completed. This decision seems simply to be about balancing the books. With increasing numbers of people being sent to Victoria’s prisons, the Minister for Mental Health must take immediate action. I remind the minister that these are front-line clinical staff.

### **Planning: Sandringham electorate**

**Mr THOMPSON** (Sandringham) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Planning. The action I seek, through the Minister for Ports, who is at the table, is for the Minister for Planning to visit the Sandringham electorate and review the application of planning policy to the differential demands of the Sandringham electorate as it absorbs population growth over the next period of time.

By way of general background, successive federal and state governments have supported population growth for Australia and Victoria. The Labor government devised a plan, Melbourne 2030, whereby residential development would be focused around activity centres — principal activity centres, major activity centres and neighbourhood activity centres. Local boundary lines were drawn in concert with local

government. In addition the former government developed amendment VC71, which was approved on 20 September 2010. It restructured the state planning policy framework to reflect the government’s Melbourne @ 5 Million policy to commit to growth areas being serviced by high-capacity public transport. Corridors were earmarked for increased density of development. The then opposition, now government, indicated that it would repeal that planning policy.

The new government introduced amendment VC75 on 16 December 2010, and it was passed. It reflects the position of the Victorian government that protection should be given to established residential neighbourhoods that are located outside areas designated for intensification. The amendment changed the state planning policy framework by removing references to the Melbourne @ 5 Million policy, which explicitly directed that more intensive housing development be located along public transport routes like tram routes in the inner Melbourne area as well as orbital bus routes, such as Bay Road, Sandringham.

As members would appreciate, planning is an ongoing issue. There are striking differences between the level of density of development in different suburbs. Suburbs like Fitzroy and St Kilda have a level of detached residential development of 13 per cent and 17 per cent compared with Sandringham, where over 70 per cent of housing has been of a detached residential nature. There are some major activity centre areas where there are established housing styles, such as Edwardian houses on residential blocks, and the planning change is a way that you could get a harmonised outcome that will protect both the existing residential character and the aspirations of people, while accommodating what will ultimately prove to be an infill development. I would like to meet with the minister to discuss the application of housing policy in this particular context.

### **Responses**

**Ms ASHER** (Minister for Tourism and Major Events) — The member for Caulfield has raised an important issue with me in relation to funding for the marketing of the Melbourne Festival. He is a very active and hardworking member of my backbench committee, and he is to be commended on his full understanding of how important tourism is to the economy. Indeed he is one of those who are well aware that the 2009–10 tourism satellite account released by Tourism Australia Research on 4 June shows the value of tourism to Victoria to be \$15.3 billion. I am pleased to advise the member that funding of \$75 000 will be provided by the coalition government to assist with interstate and international promotion to increase

visitation and event-related economic yield to the state. The member referred to the significant increase in visitation for the most recent festival. I am advised that in 2011 the economic value of the festival to the state was \$83 million.

The funding will be used to support activities such as program distribution to tourism outlets in Melbourne, interstate and internationally; direct mail to target interstate and international arts patrons; promotion in international and national magazines and newspapers; television commercials to be played on the Foxtel network and at venues around Melbourne such as Federation Square; a festival ticketing and information booth at Federation Square to provide a resource to visitors regarding the festival; and engagement with international journalists to undertake reviews and interviews of international artists and companies to help increase the event's exposure. The coalition government is proud to be able to support this longstanding world-class arts and cultural event. I commend the member for Caulfield on his interest in this matter.

**Mr DELAHUNTY** (Minister for Sport and Recreation) — I rise to respond to a matter raised with me by the member for Ferntree Gully, who is continually pushing for improvements to sporting facilities in his electorate. I think he is the most common member in my — no, that is not —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr DELAHUNTY** — He is commonly in my office, representing his electorate! I congratulate him on his persistence and on the work he does in this Parliament as Parliamentary Secretary for Health and for the people of the Ferntree Gully electorate. In fact I am looking forward to meeting up with the member in a few weeks time. We are catching up with people in his electorate to present the Victoria Day certificates to volunteers. As you know, Speaker, about 580 000 volunteers help sporting clubs on an annual basis. I will be looking forward to catching up with the member out there to present certificates to these very important volunteers. Volunteers help many of our sporting stars on the road to stardom. We wish Sam Stosur, who is a great Australian, all the best in the French Open. As the last member of the Australian team there, she is doing very well. She has come through a process that involved volunteers helping her too.

The member and I know that sport and recreation play a vital role in Victorian communities, particularly in the electorate of Ferntree Gully. During the 2010 election

campaign the coalition pushed to have high-quality and accessible community sport and recreation facilities across Victoria. I have visited the member in his electorate, and one of the facilities I remember going to — it was unfortunately Black Saturday, and I remember it vividly — was at Eildon Park. I met there with people from the Rowville junior footy club and the Eildon Park Cricket Club. That oval has now been upgraded, but club members are looking for further funding to do further upgrades on their back oval.

Following the election the government has committed nearly \$300 000 to upgrade nine sporting facilities in the Ferntree Gully electorate in response to the hard lobbying done by the member for Ferntree Gully. We are delivering. In fact \$30 000 has recently been provided to build a new veranda at the popular H. V. Jones Reserve. The new veranda will enhance the facility and enable home clubs such as the Fountain Gate Cricket Club to encourage more people to join in and participate in a safe, friendly sporting environment with other members of the community.

I inform the house that \$30 000 will also be provided for Liberty Avenue Reserve to upgrade kitchen equipment and install polyvinyl chloride blinds to enclose the veranda, synthetic grass and a pitch cover on the cricket ground. The member for Ferntree Gully and the people of his electorate will also be pleased to know that \$30 000 will be provided for Pickett Reserve for the installation of new kitchen appliances, shelving, audiovisual equipment and blinds, and minor shower and toilet upgrades, new signage and seating. This will enhance the overall appeal of the pavilion and the reserve for members of the Ferntree Gully Footballers Cricket Club and the Ferntree Gully junior footy club.

These three projects are examples of the Victorian coalition government's commitment to working with local councils, clubs and the community to develop quality facilities to bring more people together to be active through sport. I encourage Knox City Council to work with Sport and Recreation Victoria to help deliver all the many projects outlined by the member here tonight and to work with the member for Ferntree Gully, because, like him, I want to see more people more active more often.

**Mrs POWELL** (Minister for Local Government) — The member for Gippsland East raised with me a request for funding for the Bairnsdale library redevelopment. Before I respond, I acknowledge the hard work the member has been doing. Our thoughts are with his community. Over the last few days that area has had heavy rains and quite a lot of flooding. I spoke to the chief executive officer of the Shire of East

Gippsland, Steve Kozlowski, and told him our thoughts are with the shire and its community.

On the issue of public libraries, the member has obviously spoken to the East Gippsland shire CEO and mayor, who have lobbied him strongly about the importance of the library redevelopment and what it means for their community. The member said it would be a major upgrade and an extension of a heritage-listed building to cater for the growing needs of the community. That is the important part — when a community grows, its needs and wants also grow. Programs that could be enhanced at the facility include children's, youth and seniors' programs. There is also an intention to create an outdoor plaza space that will be used for wi-fi, study groups and meetings. The member for Gippsland East also spoke about the increased use of computers and the need for people to be able to access those sorts of facilities.

I think most of us in this place know, in terms of the importance of libraries, that they are no longer just lending libraries. They have a lot of other facilities now. They have become meeting places; members of organisations meet in their meeting rooms. The government understands these issues. We have committed \$17.2 million over four years to allow councils and regional library corporations to access the relevant grant funding. Last year we increased the funding they could apply for from \$500 000 to \$750 000, acknowledging increases in the building and extension of libraries. The funding is also for mobile libraries.

After presenting a relevant letter to all councils and the regional libraries I received a number of project applications. I think there are about 28 of them. We are looking at those at the moment. There is an independent panel that gives me recommendations as to what areas should get funding for libraries, and I can assure the member that the relevant announcements will come fairly shortly. The member can go back and tell his council he has lobbied strongly for that funding. I am sure the shire representatives are happy for the member to have done that, because I know they have been asking him where that funding is at the moment. The shire itself is very generously providing an amount of money for that large upgrade. I thank the member for raising the issue with me, and I advise that those announcements will be made probably in the next few weeks.

**Mr McINTOSH** (Minister for Corrections) — The member for Ripon raised with me the unfortunate circumstances the people of Ararat and surrounding districts are currently facing in relation to the Ararat

prison. I say at the very outset that the government is absolutely committed to this project and sees that the best way forward is getting work started at Ararat prison as soon as possible.

Most importantly — and I remind the member of this — this is a public-private partnership that was initiated by the former government. While we are committed to delivering this project, an unfortunate circumstance comes out of the contractual arrangements that were entered into by the former government in that those arrangements bind the parties to a certain course of action. That process is being undertaken.

Many officers of the Department of Justice, the Department of Treasury and Finance and other departments are meeting on many occasions long into the night to try to resolve this issue. It is a significant issue we face under this contract. Most importantly, we see the best way forward as ensuring that that contract is adhered to by the consortium partners. Since the liquidation of an entity that was represented by one of the members of the consortium, all work has stopped at Ararat. No-one is more aware of the predicament the people of Ararat and surrounding districts face as a result of that than I am.

There is a significant issue in relation to unpaid workers and subcontractors. The government has made it perfectly clear to the consortium that the consortium must pay, as a priority, the subcontractors and workers. That is an important matter that must be handled expeditiously and immediately. I cannot be more solid regarding what we are saying to the consortium partners.

I have spoken to many members of the community. I have had the opportunity to meet with members of the Ararat Rural City Council on a number of occasions. I have had the opportunity of communicating with them and keeping them up to date by providing regular updates. I have had the opportunity of speaking to some of the workers and subcontractors who have not been paid. Their stories are extremely frightening. My heart goes out to them given the difficulties they face in relation to that issue. But they should rest assured that the government is working to resolve this issue as expeditiously as possible. We are committed to the project. We see the delivery of this project as being important not only in relation to the corrections portfolio but also, and most importantly, to the people of Ararat.

I indicate that the member for Ripon sought a briefing from the department. I was able to be present at that

briefing. The member for Ripon can rest assured that if he seeks further updates and briefings, he will be provided with them, and they will be provided to the council and traders organisations.

Finally, there was a public meeting last Monday where a great deal of community concern was expressed. I was unable to attend that meeting because it was held the night before a parliamentary sitting week, but I had the opportunity to write to the council. I understand that letter was read out at the meeting. The government is aware of the circumstances of the people of Ararat. We are working tirelessly to resolve this issue. We are bound by the strictures of the contract that was brought into being by the former government. We are equally committed to this project, which we expect will be delivered by the consortium. That is the best way forward in relation to all of these matters.

**Mr DIXON** (Minister for Education) — The member for Yuroke raised with me an issue regarding Mount Ridley College, a P-12 school, and funding for stage 5 of the building project there. She mentioned that last year I had been there for a media event; I think she called it self-promotion. I was actually at that event because I was invited by those at the school to open the school. I would not have gatecrashed the school event. Obviously if I had turned down the invitation, the member would have had a go at me in the chamber for doing that. Sometimes you cannot win. But it was good to be there; it is a good school. Therefore I know the circumstances of that school.

I understand that under the previous government there was not enough money to finish stage 4, so it was divided up and another stage was created. Stage 5 now represents the finishing of the former stage 4. We have not cut spending in education. This year's budget not only contains \$200 million for capital works but there is an increase of 3 per cent in our total funding. We take education very seriously in very serious economic times. The project is under active consideration. I know the project. As I have said, I have been to the school. As we develop our projects for next year's budget, that project will certainly be considered as part of those budget deliberations.

**Ms WOOLDRIDGE** (Minister for Mental Health) — I thank the member for Williamstown for raising an adjournment matter on this important issue about the care of people who are in Forensicare's area of responsibility and their effective integration into the community.

Forensicare articulated in its 2010-11 annual report that:

The final financial outcome for the year was disappointing ... The coming year will require discipline, further

efficiencies ... This alignment between funding and outputs will be the key focus in 2011-12.

When we came into government we identified that this was an organisation that had been living beyond its means for a number of years and that the former government had topped it up to cover the deficit rather than address the fundamental delivery of services and ensure that it was an organisation that could deliver the services it was supported to deliver within its budget. Instead of encouraging an independent health service, which this is, to effectively budget for the delivery of services, the former government topped it up year after year and allowed the gap — as it said — between funding and outputs to continue. That is a poor circumstance for an important independent health service.

We have been working with the board to plan how this organisation can get back on a secure financial footing in the future. I need to say clearly that this year Forensicare is receiving more funding in relation to the delivery of services than ever before. The board has been going through challenges in relation to how it can ensure that it can deliver services with the record funding it has received.

The board went through an extensive planning process and assessment process. There was a risk assessment and an impact assessment. The board — as any board would be expected to do — went through a very thorough process in terms of its decision making. Some of that decision making has been about which services will be fully delivered and which will be adjusted. The community integration program is clearly one that the board has decided to change. Of course the health department and the Victorian government work with our independent health services such as Forensicare on the delivery of services. We are confident that the area mental health services, which also have forensic capability in relation to the community programs, will ensure that they step up to the community-based programs that are currently the full suite of Forensicare's service delivery.

From the perspective of a person coming out of Forensicare, they will still continue to receive the service that they need to support their integration back into the community. The difference is that it will not be delivered by Forensicare in terms of the whole client group; a portion of those people will receive that service through the area mental health service, as is appropriate. If you are focused, as we are, on making sure that individuals in the system get the support they need, their experience will continue to be maintained; it will just be delivered by a different service provider. In the context of that, we will have an independent health service that can operate and function and deliver its

services within the significant budget that it is provided with.

These changes have nothing to do with the sustainable government initiative. These were foreshadowed in the previous year's annual report. The issue has been going on for many years and was not addressed by the previous government, which did not require matching between the delivery of services and the funding provided. We will make sure that those services are still received but in a different form.

I thank the member for raising this in the adjournment debate. I can assure him that there was clear thinking in the process. This is a way that an independent health service can run its budget responsibly and deliver its services. From an individual's perspective, they will still be receiving that vital community integration support, although for some it will be delivered by a different service provider.

**Dr NAPTHINE** (Minister for Ports) — It is good to see the respect that ministers are showing for the Parliament and MPs on both sides of the house in being here in large numbers to respond to adjournment matters. It shows that we on this side of the house care about ministerial portfolios, the state of Victoria and looking after MPs on both sides of the house.

The member for Sandringham raised a matter in which he called on the Minister for Planning to visit his Sandringham electorate to review planning policy on population growth and its impact on the Sandringham area. I will pass that on to the Minister for Planning.

The member for Bayswater also raised a matter for the Minister for Planning. She called on the minister to arrange a meeting with Heritage Victoria to discuss allowing the State Library of Victoria to erect in the forecourt area of the library statues of picture book characters from the Dromkeen collection. Given the enthusiasm and passion with which the member for Bayswater raised this matter, it seems to be a very positive move, and I am sure that the Minister for Planning will take up that matter with Heritage Victoria so that it can be discussed with the state library.

The member for Bellarine, who unfortunately seems not to be here but to be missing in action, raised an issue for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. She asked the minister to review certain decisions, which I understand are decisions made by police command, about police rosters. I have been in this house for a long time, and I seem to recall that under the previous government all those issues were considered to be operational matters for the police. I

suspect that this is an operational matter for the Chief Commissioner of Police. As the member has raised it, I will pass it on for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to examine and if necessary get back to the member for Bellarine. The member for Bellarine would be aware also that this government is well ahead on its commitment to deliver 1700 extra police to make sure that our communities are safe.

The member for Clayton raised for the Minister for Roads a matter about the Springvale Road level crossing and was seeking the minister's involvement in the decision-making process about that level crossing. It is interesting to note that this is a very important crossing, and it does cause a lot of congestion on the road. I am sure that the member for Clayton would appreciate the fact that, after 11 years of inaction by the previous Labor government, this government is committed to fixing that level crossing and having a grade separation there. I am sure that the Minister for Roads will respond appropriately to the issue raised by the member for Clayton.

**The SPEAKER** — I thank the six ministers who attended tonight and responded to matters raised. It is very good that that occurs. The house is now adjourned.

**House adjourned 5.21 p.m. until Tuesday, 19 June.**