

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

Tuesday, 1 May 2012

(Extract from book 6)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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The Hon. P. L. WALSH

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The Hon. D. M. ANDREWS

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The Hon. J. A. MERLINO

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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			

¹ Resigned 21 December 2010

² Elected 24 March 2012

³ Resigned 27 January 2012

⁴ Elected 19 February 2011

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Tuesday, 1 May 2012

The SPEAKER (Hon. Ken Smith) took the chair at 2.06 p.m. and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Qantas: maintenance jobs

Ms BEATTIE (Yuroke) — My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's statement in this place that he would meet with 'the people who matter' to save Qantas maintenance jobs at Tullamarine and Avalon, and I ask: given today's revelations that up to 1000 jobs may be axed, will he now meet with Qantas workers, the real people that matter, and tell them what he is doing to save their jobs?

Mr BAILLIEU (Premier) — I thank the member for her question. I have to take issue with one of the presumptions in the question, which is that there were revelations today. If the member thinks these were revelations in today's media, then the member is not in touch. The material that was made available in the media this morning was made available in February and again in March. Since Qantas made its initial announcement that it was reviewing its maintenance facility, we have been working with the stakeholders and with Qantas at both Melbourne Airport and Avalon Airport with a view to ensuring that Victoria has the best possible chance of getting the heavy maintenance facilities here in Melbourne. Some people might wish to talk it down — —

Mr Merlino interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! If the member for Monbulk wants to see the rest of question time out, he should be quiet.

Mr BAILLIEU — The member for Monbulk interjects — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier should ignore all interjections.

Mr BAILLIEU — I am just observing that the member for Monbulk interjects.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier should ignore interjections.

Mr BAILLIEU — You are quite right, Speaker. I am now in a position to remind the house that Qantas has three maintenance facilities: at Avalon, at Melbourne Airport and in Brisbane. Qantas has

announced that with the new profile of the fleet it is purchasing, it will not require the same maintenance levels that exist. As a consequence, the maintenance requirements will be reduced, and there will be fewer jobs. Qantas has made that clear, and the unions have acknowledged that. It is our commitment to work with the stakeholders, including Avalon Airport, Melbourne Airport and Qantas.

Someone was out there today suggesting that we provide all the details of our discussions with Qantas, which are part of a commercial decision and a commercial negotiation, and put those in the public arena.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! This is the first question of question time, and already I have had to ask members on a number of occasions to be quiet. The next person who speaks will be out — except for the Premier if he is answering a question.

Mr BAILLIEU — This may be a Marcel Marceau effort! Some are out there saying we should put all the details in the public arena. How naive — —

Ms Beattie — On a point of order, Speaker, while I am not interested in interrupting a comedy routine, the question was: will the Premier now meet with the Qantas workers?

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Yuroke should know that she does not get a chance to ask a question a second time around as a point of order.

Mr BAILLIEU — It would be an act of incompetence to put all the details out in the public arena, but perhaps we should not be surprised by who suggested that. I am reminded of an article on 'The city', a Brisbane City Council website — —

Ms Hennessy — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier was asked whether or not he would meet with Qantas workers. It was a simple question, and he should be required to answer it under standing order 58.

The SPEAKER — Order! I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr BAILLIEU — That article refers to the decision, and it reads:

The state government —

that is, the Queensland government —

secured the ... heavy maintenance facility for Queensland in 2002, after competing with Victoria and Auckland.

I wonder who had a senior role in the ALP at the time that decision was made. I suspect there is some sensitivity; there is certainly incompetence on that side of the house.

Port of Melbourne: capacity

Mr GIDLEY (Mount Waverley) — My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier inform the house of action the government is taking to expand the capacity of Australia's busiest port, the port of Melbourne?

Mr BAILLIEU (Premier) — I thank the member for his question. Certainly everybody on this side of the house, and I suspect some on the other side of the house, appreciates that the port of Melbourne is the busiest and biggest port in Australia and is Victoria's gateway to the world. The port handles close to 38 per cent of the nation's container trade. It is estimated that by 2035 the number of containers shipped through the port is expected to increase from 2.5 million to 8 million 20-foot equivalent units. By supplying a sufficient level of container-handling capacity, we are doing what is vital to managing this growing national freight task efficiently and competitively.

Last week I was pleased to join the Minister for Ports in announcing the government's \$1.2 billion commitment to provide additional container capacity at the port of Melbourne. That commitment is to meet the state's short-to-medium-term needs. This builds on the planning the government has already commenced for the provision of container capacity at the port of Hastings, something the previous government ignored. The project is to generate about 2500 jobs — 700 direct and more than 500 during construction, plus indirect jobs across the state. That is according to a PricewaterhouseCoopers study.

The new Webb Dock terminal will cater for the equivalent of at least 1 million additional containers per year. Victoria's container trade, which has been growing at around 6 to 8 per cent, needs this addition, and it needs it urgently. That decision has been warmly welcomed by the business community — certainly by stevedores and those involved in the export and import trade. Last year a record 2.5 million containers were handled through the port; that is an average of nearly 7000 a day.

It is the right decision, it is a timely decision and it is a decision that is absolutely essential to the economy of this state. No-one could oppose that decision — save,

perhaps, for someone who was really not up to it, someone who wants to put a cork in the port. And what did we get from the opposition? We said, 'This is an inappropriate thing to do. Don't do it, don't proceed' — and he is still sitting there doing it.

Aviation industry: maintenance facilities

Mr ANDREWS (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Premier. I ask: what is the Premier's understanding of the investment required to make Victoria's aviation maintenance facilities competitive with those in Brisbane?

Mr BAILLIEU (Premier) — Sometimes the incompetence of some people in this chamber is staggering.

Ms Hennessy — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier opened up his answer with a blatant attack. He was asked a very simple question about his understanding of the investment required. All we seek is an answer, not an attack.

The SPEAKER — Order! I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr BAILLIEU — I suspect the member who took the point of order is a bit sensitive to the subject. Having been out there today to say, 'Put all the details in the public arena', and having been scoffed at by anybody in the business community who knows what they are doing, the opposition is at it again. We know what is required. We know what it takes to govern this state, and it is very clear that the Leader of the Opposition has not got any idea, nor does he have any interest. He is a merchant of doom seeking to talk the state down.

We will continue to work with Qantas and with the stakeholders, and we will advance the case for Victoria getting the heavy maintenance facilities. Indeed I would have thought that the Leader of the Opposition would know better. It is my understanding that the opposition has had briefings on this issue from Qantas, and it should be behind the government's efforts in this regard, not talking them down, not hoping and anticipating — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the member for Monbulk and the Leader of the Opposition to desist.

Mr BAILLIEU — Anybody who took the view that the Leader of the Opposition is taking — —

Mr Andrews — On a point of order, Speaker, apparently my interjecting is disorderly, and I fully accept your ruling on that matter, but it was very difficult not to interject when every part of this alleged answer has been an attack on me as the questioner and on everyone on this side of the house. We are off to a pretty ordinary start for budget day. If the Premier does not have an answer, he ought to sit down and spare us this limp rot.

The SPEAKER — Order! I do not uphold the point of order, but I do say to the Premier that he should come back to answering the question.

Mr BAILLIEU — We are engaged in a commercial negotiation. I have no intention of conducting that commercial negotiation in the chamber or in the public arena. Anybody who thinks that should happen is quite clearly incompetent, and anybody who was observing that incompetence would be entitled to think that they could probably do a better job — and I would welcome the backbench to come to the frontbench and do that better job.

Regional Victoria Living Expo

Mr WELLER (Rodney) — My question is to the Deputy Premier, who is the Minister for Regional and Rural Development. Can the Deputy Premier inform the house of the success of the inaugural Regional Victoria Living Expo and of the community feedback received from across regional and rural Victoria?

Mr RYAN (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) — I thank the member for his very timely question. When I was in Echuca with him late last week we were in expectation of a great weekend, and I can tell the house it was an absolute blinder! Everybody saw it as such. It was a wonderful event, and I am sure we will see much more success arise from it.

The event was held over last weekend — 27, 28 and 29 April — and it gave Melburnians who are considering the option of moving to the regions the opportunity to come along and meet with the 48 rural councils, together with more than 130 exhibitors from the regions of Victoria who were there to provide various displays as to their regions' attributes. Bearing in mind that just late last week I released some figures resulting from recent research that indicated that something like 11 per cent of Melburnians — some 450 000 people — are actually considering moving to the regions in the next three years and another 39 per cent are considering doing so at some stage in the future, the opportunities for us in the regional parts of Victoria are absolutely huge.

We as a government have dedicated \$3 million to the expo over the course of our first four-year term, and I am thrilled to be able to say that at the expo all 48 of the rural municipalities were represented, and as I said, more than 130 exhibitors were there. Over 8000 people attended over the three days. I want to thank the many ambassadors who loaned their various talents to the weekend's events. Amongst them were Athol Guy, Margot Spalding, Billy Brownless, David Mann — that man about town — and Bronwen Clark, and there were a number of others who came along and contributed so well to those three days.

I also pay tribute to the councils, the many councillors who attended and the departmental staff, who really threw themselves into this three-day event. Importantly a large proportion of the visitors to the expo were family groups. A number of mayors and councillors have reported back to us since the expo that they have received inquiries from a vast array of people with different forms of expertise who are now actively pursuing the prospect of being able to move into regional Victoria.

On Saturday night I had the great pleasure of presenting awards to three of the exhibitors. That included an award for the best council stand, which went to the City of Wodonga, an award for the best commercial stand, which went to the Bruck Group in that great Rural City of Wangaratta, and the minister's award, which went to the Rural City of Mildura and that region.

The feedback from the councils has been absolutely wonderful. I will quote just a few bits and pieces. A representative of the City of Wodonga said:

... the City of Wodonga has in excess of 150 known ... people to follow up in order to provide additional information, including further information on jobs, business opportunities, lifestyle and housing options.

The mayor of Mildura said:

We are really pleased the state government gave the regions the opportunity to display what makes living in rural and regional Victoria so fantastic.

Representatives of the Golden Plains Shire Council said:

The state government made it ... easy for us to showcase how we offer life as it should be in Golden Plains. The expo exceeded all expectations, and we were really pleased to be part of it.

Similar comments came from the Towong, Moira, Campaspe and Alpine shire councils. The comment we had from Campaspe Shire Council — and I am just quoting this — was:

This is bloody unreal — I have been run off my feet.

That is the quote!

I am able to tell the house that there was enormous enthusiasm for this great event over the course of these three days. We are going to ensure that we continue to conduct it over the next couple of years. It has been a wonderful event. The best is yet to come.

Economy: government policy

Mr ANDREWS (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to comments made by the Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade last night, in which he said that there was a fifth pillar to the Premier’s four-pillar economic strategy, and I ask: will the Premier detail for the house each of the five pillars that make up his four-pillar economic strategy — a strategy that sees only Tasmania with a higher unemployment rate?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! When we have some quiet I will call the Premier.

Mr BAILLIEU (Premier) — I thank the member for his question. I think even the Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade would concede that he had a slip of the tongue in that regard, as has been reported.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr BAILLIEU — Fifth and fourth — not too much difference. In good humour I think he would acknowledge that, but I am delighted to have the opportunity to remind the house that we have committed to a responsible budget. Unlike the previous government, which left an unsustainable budget behind, we have committed to a responsible budget and to building budget capacity over time.

The second approach is a focus on productivity — again, something that the previous government ignored. Indeed productivity declined under the previous government, but we have committed to it. I have been surprised at the silence of the opposition in regard to occupational health and safety and construction costs. Let us help — —

Mr Andrews interjected.

Mr BAILLIEU — The Leader of the Opposition has two fingers up. He has got two to go, has he?

Mr Andrews — He has got four up.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition!

Mr BAILLIEU — Speaker, in good humour the Leader of the Opposition is giving me the finger, I suspect.

The third approach, as we have said many times, is to grow our economy and grow our markets, and that is what we have been doing. The fourth is to assist industry in transitioning and restructuring. There you have it. That is what we have said in this Parliament many times. I am prepared to afford anybody a slip of the tongue, but not incompetence such as comes from the Leader of the Opposition.

Melbourne Youth Justice Centre: upgrade

Mrs FYFFE (Evelyn) — My question is to the Minister for Community Services. Can the minister inform the house of action the government is taking to improve youth justice facilities at Parkville after years of neglect?

Ms WOOLDRIDGE (Minister for Community Services) — I thank the member for Evelyn for her very important question and for her interest in the futures of vulnerable young Victorians. In October 2010 the Ombudsman’s *Investigation into Conditions at the Melbourne Youth Justice Precinct* report was tabled in Parliament. As members opposite may well remember, he found the Parkville precinct to be ‘dirty, unhygienic and ill maintained’, and actually in breach of a number of international and national accords and standards. His report was absolutely shameful reading. Page after page showed how young people had been failed by the former government.

The Ombudsman gave us 27 recommendations, which we have been working on. These were in addition to eight themes that were part of Neil Comrie’s report, which had been handed to the then government earlier in the year. I am very pleased to be able to say that we have now committed to and completed all 27 of the Ombudsman’s recommendations and we have completed action on all the major action items out of Neil Comrie’s report. The whole of the precinct has been refurbished. It is a much safer and healthier environment now. I was very pleased last week to open the single entry point and a new, improved reception and security centre. Importantly we have invested in what was an undervalued and underskilled workforce at Parkville.

The Ombudsman was also scathing about the state of the education provided. Many residents who were there

for up to two years were getting no education or only a few hours of education per week. In fact most of the detainees at the Parkville precinct spent every day watching television. We have a statutory obligation in relation to the education of teenagers, and we know that education can make a real difference. How could anyone have expected young people who had been incarcerated to develop aspirations, to hope for a job or even to develop their skills in an environment that was not helping them to achieve that?

The Baillieu government has not only remedied the educational system at Parkville but we now have a model we believe to be national best practice and potentially international best practice. With the leadership of the Minister for Education, along with that of Brendan Murray and Maddie Witter, we now have a new model of education configured for disadvantaged young people in a custodial environment.

We have to recognise that most of the detainees in the youth justice system have been involved in significant truancy, and two-thirds of them have been expelled or suspended from school. Since the first day of school in mid-February the results have been quite stunning. Attendance is at 100 per cent for 25 hours a week, and classes are being conducted in an orderly fashion. Thirty-four of the first 52 students reported having read a book independently for the first time in their lives since the school started.

In terms of reading and numeracy skills, there has been a reported increase of two years in the first two months. These are absolutely substantial results. Magistrates of the Children's Court are donating books to the library, and we have pathways to ensure that when children leave the custodial environment they are getting incorporated into the broader education system.

As a result of the changes we have made at Parkville, critical incidents and violent assaults have dropped by more than half. This is a great outcome. This is an investment in young people and in broader community safety. I am very proud that we are drawing a line and closing the disgraceful Labor era at Parkville by providing a better future for young people.

City of Casey: councillor conduct

Mr WYNNE (Richmond) — My question is to the Minister for Local Government. I refer the minister to multiple revelations at the City of Casey, including an alleged secret payment authorised by the member for Mordialloc when she was the mayor of Casey to settle a sexual harassment matter, the alleged bullying of

councillors and the attendance of Victoria Police at the last council meeting. What further evidence does the minister need before she will act and appoint a municipal inspector to this dysfunctional council?

Mrs POWELL (Minister for Local Government) — I thank the member for his question. As I answered the last time the member asked me a question on this matter, these matters are being looked at, and it is not appropriate for me to make any more comment while they are under investigation.

Waste management: government action

Mr BURGESS (Hastings) — My question is to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. Can the minister update the house on action by the Victorian government to increase the recycling of organic and food waste and to reduce waste going into landfill?

Mr R. SMITH (Minister for Environment and Climate Change) — I thank the member for Hastings for his question and for his interest in the important issue of waste management. An Auditor-General's report handed down last year demonstrated that the previous government directed very little attention to the issue of waste management, saying that:

The reasons for underachievement —

on the part of the former government —

in relation to municipal solid waste encompass a lack of effective planning, leadership, coordination and oversight.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister is quoting from a book.

Mr R. SMITH — Under the previous government the landfill levy was wasted on a range of awareness-raising programs that had very little to do with managing waste in this state. When we came to government I made a very strong commitment to the waste sector and the waste industry that the landfill levy would be reinvested back into that sector, as was the original intent of the levy.

Victoria generates around 2 million tonnes of organic waste each year, with about 70 per cent of that going to landfill. Last week I was very pleased to be able to announce for the metropolitan organics plan a total of \$3.8 million, funds that will be used to support a new multimillion-dollar organics processing facility in Bulla. The government will be working very closely with 11 councils across the northern suburbs to ensure that members of that very diverse community are

educated on the best way to dispose of their organic waste. Through bin standardisation, household support and the upgrade of transfer station facilities, we plan to get as much organic material out of landfill as we possibly can.

As part of the use of the funding we will also be undertaking a feasibility study to determine where a similar facility can be located in the south-east. There have been a number of problems around waste management in the south-east, not the least of which have been odour issues. We are going to make sure that with that feasibility study we put in place a facility that can deal with a lot of those issues. In addition we will be investing another \$500 000 to develop end markets for recycled organic products to complement the broader investment in the organics recycling facilities. This \$3.8 million comes on top of \$5.5 million that I announced previously for similar projects that will target the processing of organics in regional Victoria in areas such as Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Gippsland.

The reinvestment of the landfill levy into the waste industry will provide tangible environmental outcomes by accelerating the collection and processing of garden and food organics to improve the long-term management of organics across metropolitan Melbourne. Of course the funding will stimulate growth in the organics processing industry as well as create jobs. It is anticipated that with the construction and ongoing operation of the new facility in Bulla we are going to be able to create around 50 new jobs, which is great news for the area.

This sort of investment is what this government is about. It is about generating long-term outcomes. The previous government wasted the opportunity to invest the landfill levy in the sector and, further to that, wasted taxpayers money on a whole range of awareness-raising programs that really did not generate any outcomes and did not generate any jobs, and in the years of doing that it really did not have anything to show for its investment. In contrast, this government is about getting on with the job and making sure that we invest taxpayers funds in programs that have long-term outcomes and long-term benefits for all Victorians.

Member for Frankston: conduct

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) — My question is to the Minister for Community Services. I refer the minister to the appalling treatment of Deborah Walsh, the mother of a teenager with Asperger's syndrome, by the member for Frankston, and I ask: how is it appropriate that a mother seeking affordable accommodation for

her 19-year-old disabled son is told, 'Don't bug me'; 'I have given you more than enough of my time'?

Dr Napthine — On a point of order, Speaker, the question contained an imputation. I ask you to rule the question out of order. Imputations can be made only by way of substantive motion, and I ask that the question be reworded by the member to remove the imputation.

Ms Hennessy — On the point of order, Speaker, we suggest that you do not accept the submission of the Minister for Ports submission that there was an imputation. That was in fact a direct quote from the *Herald Sun*. 'Don't bug me'; 'I have given you more than enough of my time' was a quote. That is not an imputation.

Mr O'Brien — On the point of order, Speaker, the member for Yan Yean used the term 'appalling'. If that is not a clear imputation, I do not know what is. The standing orders are quite clear that there is only one way in which an imputation can be made against a member of this place, and that is by way of substantive motion, not by asking a question. I ask you to rule the question out of order.

Mr Merlino — On the point of order, Speaker, there was no imputation. There is a direct quote, 'I have given you more than enough of my time', and the article goes on to say, 'A spokeswoman for Mr Shaw confirmed the conversation took place'. There was no imputation. The behaviour was appalling.

Mr Clark — On the point of order, Speaker, standing order 118 says in relevant part:

Imputations of improper motives and personal reflections on ... members of the Assembly or the Council are disorderly other than by substantive motion.

It is in order to ask a factual question on the matter concerned, but it is not in order to include imputations of improper motives or personal reflections in the way the question is put.

The SPEAKER — Order! I uphold the point of order. I ask the member for Yan Yean to — —

Ms Thomson interjected.

Questions interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Footscray

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

Honourable member for Footscray withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Member for Frankston: conduct

Questions resumed.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the member for Yan Yean to quickly look at the question and take the imputations out of it.

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) — My question is to the Minister for Community Services. I refer the minister to the reported treatment of Deborah Walsh, the mother of a teenager with Asperger's syndrome, by the member for Frankston, and I ask: how is it appropriate that a mother seeking affordable accommodation for her 19-year-old disabled son is told, 'Don't bug me'; 'I have given you more than enough of my time'?

Dr Naphthine — On a point of order, Speaker, my understanding is that the way the question has been worded this time is seeking an opinion from the minister, and I ask again that you suggest that the member reword the question according to the standing orders, rather than seeking an opinion.

Ms Hennessy — On the point of order, Speaker, if government members wish to identify the grounds upon which they object to this question, they ought to have done so earlier before you requested that the question be reworded. It clearly does not ask for an opinion. It clearly asks whether or not that is acceptable behaviour.

The SPEAKER — Order! I uphold the point of order. I ask the member to reword the question.

Ms GREEN — My question is to the Minister for Community Services. I refer the minister to the reported treatment of Deborah Walsh, the mother of a young teenager with Asperger's syndrome, by the member for Frankston, and I ask: is it government policy that a mother seeking affordable accommodation for her 19-year-old disabled son should be told, 'Don't bug me'; 'I have given you more than enough of my time'?

Ms WOOLDRIDGE (Minister for Community Services) — I am glad that — third time lucky — we have finally got a question that is acceptable to this house.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms WOOLDRIDGE — I reject the premise of the question. For the member's benefit I remind her that this is a public housing issue and that as such the community services minister does not have responsibility for housing; that is something that perhaps the honourable member should learn in relation to ministerial responsibilities.

I understand the Minister for Housing is working proactively with the family to try to resolve the housing issues, as the government will continue to do with anyone, including those with a family member with a disability who needs accommodation and support. We are dealing with years of neglect and gaps in relation to disability housing — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Monbulk was warned earlier. He will not be warned again.

Ms WOOLDRIDGE — As a result of years of neglect there are significant gaps in our capacity to support people with a disability and provide appropriate housing and supported accommodation. We will continue to work with people with a disability and their families and carers to make sure they get the support they need. We will have an appropriate response to and support for them so they can have good prospects in relation to future housing and accommodation.

Migrants: government initiatives

Mr HODGETT (Kilsyth) — My question is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship. Can the minister advise the house of the action the government is taking to assist new migrants to successfully become part of the Victorian community?

Mr KOTSIRAS (Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship) — I thank the member for Kilsyth for his question and for his interest in ensuring that there are programs that meet the individual needs of newly arrived migrants and refugees to make sure they become active members of the community.

As members will know, Australia's migration intake is about 200 000 people per year — 185 000 come under the family and skilled categories and 15 000 are part of

the humanitarian component. Victoria takes in about 30 per cent of all newly arrived migrants, which equates to about 60 000 people a year, of which about 5000 are refugees. It is therefore no surprise that 44 per cent of Victorians were either born overseas or have one parent who was born overseas. Past Victorian governments have supported and embraced newly arrived migrants, as does the current government, because it sees the enormous benefits migration provides to Victoria, whether they be economic, social or cultural.

There are also challenges in relation to these new migrants. As was the case in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, we face challenges as a result of this large migration intake. There are 5000 refugees, and we need to provide programs to make sure those refugees become active in our community. That is why the government is pleased to announce the introduction of rights and responsibilities seminars — I launched the first one in Bendigo a few weeks ago — to ensure that migrants are able to understand and know about the services provided by the government and that they understand their rights and responsibilities, because you cannot have only one side of the equation.

Migrants and refugees, indeed all Victorians, have to understand their rights as well as their responsibilities. We have put aside \$800 000 over four years to make sure that the seminars that are provided across the state, including in regional Victoria, provide the information necessary to make sure that the settlement needs of migrants are met. The seminars will cover issues in relation to migration, law and order, the three tiers of government and safe driving. They will also provide information on volunteerism and on many more issues. They will be specific to each region — each seminar will be different depending on the region in which the seminar is delivered.

As well as that, the refugee support program was introduced by the previous government at a cost of \$1.6 million per year. That also ensures that migrants engage with the community and understand the different types of services they can access. On top of that is a leadership program for African youth to increase their understanding of what it means to live in Victoria and to improve their leadership skills so that they can teach others to do the same.

To coordinate programs we have established the settlement unit in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. That unit ensures that there is coordination between the three tiers of government and between all government departments. We have a coordinated approach to make sure that the needs of all refugees are

met. We will continue to do so, because we believe that migration is good for Victoria and good for Australia. History has shown that we are a much better state for having a large number of migrants settle in Victoria.

POLICE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2012

Introduction and first reading

Mr RYAN (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) introduced a bill for an act to amend the Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitor Act 2011 to extend the operation of that act, to amend the Country Fire Authority Act 1958 as to persons who are able to exercise the powers of the chief officer of the Country Fire Authority where an officer of the Country Fire Authority is not present, to amend the Police Regulation Act 1958 as to appointments of deputy and assistant commissioners and as to standards as to grooming and clothing accessories, and to amend the Sale of Land Act 1962 to require a vendor's statement to disclose when land is in a bushfire-prone area and for other purposes.

Read first time.

PARLIAMENTARY SALARIES AND SUPERANNUATION AMENDMENT (SALARY RESTRAINT) BILL 2012

Introduction and first reading

Ms ASHER (Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business) introduced a bill for an act to amend the Parliamentary Salaries and Superannuation Act 1968 and for other purposes.

Read first time.

ROAD SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL 2012

Introduction and first reading

Mr MULDER (Minister for Roads) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to amend the Road Safety Act 1986 and for other purposes.

Mr DONNELLAN (Narre Warren North) — I ask the minister for a brief explanation.

Mr MULDER (Minister for Roads) — The bill puts in place the government's policy announcement that it would ensure that those hoon drivers who are caught for a first offence of hoon driving attend a safety course. That course is currently being developed by VicRoads and will be in place as early as next year. All first-time offenders will have to attend the course. They will have to pay the full cost of attending the course plus the full cost of government expenses in relation to that course. The bill also tightens up on issues in relation to the impoundment of vehicles, making it easier for police to dispose of vehicles that have been caught in the impoundment scheme in a quicker and easier manner.

Motion agreed to.

Read first time.

DUTIES AMENDMENT (LANDHOLDER) BILL 2012

Introduction and first reading

Mr CLARK (Minister for Finance) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to amend the Duties Act 2000 to make further provision for the imposition of duty on the acquisition of interests in certain land-holding entities, to amend the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as a result of changes to the Duties Act 2000, to amend the Financial Sector Reform (Victoria) Act 1999 as a result of the change of name of the Financial Sector (Transfers of Business) Act 1999 of the commonwealth and for other purposes.

Mr WYNNE (Richmond) — Can we get a brief explanation of the bill?

Mr CLARK (Minister for Finance) — The primary purpose of the bill is to give effect to changes to land-holder duty that have previously been announced.

Motion agreed to.

Read first time.

STATE TAXATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL 2012

Introduction and first reading

Mr CLARK (Minister for Finance) introduced a bill for an act to amend the Duties Act 2000 and the National Taxation Reform (Consequential Provisions) Act 2000 and for other purposes.

Read first time.

MONETARY UNITS AMENDMENT BILL 2012

Introduction and first reading

Mr CLARK (Minister for Finance) introduced a bill for an act to amend the Monetary Units Act 2004 to provide for the value of a fee unit, the value of a penalty unit and the annual rate for the financial year commencing on 1 July 2012 and for other purposes.

Read first time.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Ms D'AMBROSIO having given notice of motion:

Dr Napthine — On a point of order, Speaker, I seek your ruling on whether the notice of motion that refers to the member for Bentleigh should include her name. I wonder whether that should be excluded from the notice of motion.

The SPEAKER — Order! The house should be aware that members are referred to by the name of the district they represent. A corrected version will appear on the notice paper.

Further notices of motion given.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Notices of motion: removal

The SPEAKER — Order! I advise the house that notices of motion 12 to 21 will be removed from the notice paper unless members wishing their notice to remain advise the Clerk in writing before 6.00 p.m. today.

PETITIONS

Following petitions presented to house:

Liquefied petroleum gas: pricing

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of R. and L. Hamilton of Croydon North, Victoria, 3136, points out to the house that:

the recent increase in the price of LPG in Victoria is unjustified and is caused by blatant profiteering because:

- a. the increase is not caused by the increase in the world price of LPG as maintained by the fuel industry because Victoria does not import any LPG;
- b. as LPG in Victoria costs only about 3 cents per litre (CPL) (2.087 CPL for naturally occurring LPG and 3.056 CPL for waste LPG collected from refineries), after adding storage, distribution costs and profits, its wholesale price is about 12 CPL and after adding retail costs, profits and the new tax of 2.5 CPL, it can be retailed for as low as 20.5 CPL; selling it for 80 CPL is profiteering at an exorbitant and unreasonable level;
- c. the ACCC advises that there is no legislation that permits the fuel industry to base retail prices on world prices (import parity price) or to add imaginary freight cost from Saudi Arabia plus insurance and wharfage costs, as none of these apply to LPG retailed in Victoria as no LPG is imported; and
- d. the threat by the oil industry that if it is not permitted to sell at the world price, it can export all LPG sourced from Victoria and not provide any for local consumption is baseless because the government of Victoria will not permit its citizens to be deprived of an essential natural resource that belongs to the people of Victoria.

The petitioner therefore requests that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria either reintroduces price control for LPG in Victoria or de-links the import parity price from the retail price of LPG in Victoria, because:

- a. it is the responsibility of the government of Victoria to protect the people from exploitation;
- b. introducing price control for LPG in Victoria or de-linking a non-existent IPP cost from the retail price is the responsibility of the government of Victoria and not the federal government;
- c. there is no legislation that authorises the use of the IPP to calculate the price of LPG in Victoria;
- d. it is probably fraudulent to include non-existing cost factors when calculating the price of an essential commodity, thereby misleading consumers and law-makers;
- e. the price of LPG was controlled until 1991 and though one of the justifications for deregulation of prices was that it would reduce prices through competition, the reverse has taken place; and
- f. the oil industry has proved itself unable to regulate itself to provide reasonable prices.

By Mr HODGETT (Kilsyth) (3 signatures).

Horsham College: redevelopment

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of Business Horsham and residents of Horsham draws to the attention of the house or points out to the house the importance of the rebuilding of Horsham College.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria consider the high importance of the rebuilding of Horsham College as a matter of priority.

By Mr DELAHUNTY (Lowan) (1141 signatures).

Tabled.

Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Kilsyth be considered next day on motion of Mr HODGETT (Kilsyth).

BUDGET 2012–13

Budget papers

Mr WELLS (Treasurer), by leave, presented budget overview; budget paper 4, state capital program; budget information paper 1, regional and rural Victoria; budget information paper 2, Victorian families; and budget information paper 3, federal financial relations.

Tabled.

SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Alert Digest No. 7

Ms CAMPBELL (Pascoe Vale) presented *Alert Digest No. 7* of 2012 on:

Courts and Sentencing Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

Forests Amendment Bill 2012

Gambling Legislation Amendment (Transition) Bill 2012

Independent broadbased anticorruption Commission Amendment (Examinations) Bill 2012

Port Management Further Amendment Bill 2012

Primary Industries Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

together with appendices.

Tabled.

Ordered to be printed.

DOCUMENTS**Tabled by Clerk:***Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978:*

Order under s 17B granting licences over:

Phillip Island Nature Park

Sandringham Beach Reserve

Orders under s 17D granting leases over:

Albert Park Reserve

Mount Martha Public Park Reserve

Financial Management Act 1994:

Budget Paper No. 2 — Strategy and Outlook 2012–13

Budget Paper No. 3 — Service Delivery 2012–13

Budget Paper No. 5 — Statement of Finances 2012–13
incorporating Quarterly Financial Report No. 3

Planning and Environment Act 1987 — Notices of approval of amendments to the following Planning Schemes:

Ballarat — C104

Banyule — C78

Benalla — C5

Boroondara — C170

Cardinia — C163

Darebin — C87

Knox — C116

Melbourne — C168

Monash — C66, C88

Moyne — C47

Statutory Rule under the *Road Safety Act 1986* — SR 26

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — Documents under s 15 in relation to Statutory Rules 20, 26.

ROYAL ASSENT**Messages read advising royal assent to:****24 April**

**Accident Compensation Amendment
(Repayments and Dividends) Bill 2012
Victorian Inspectorate Amendment Bill 2012**

1 May**Associations Incorporation Reform Bill 2011.****APPROPRIATION (2012/2013) BILL 2012**

Message read recommending appropriation and transmitting estimates of expenditure for 2012–13.

Estimates tabled.*Introduction and first reading*

Mr WELLS (Treasurer) introduced a bill for an act for the appropriation of certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund for the ordinary annual services of the government for the financial year 2012–13 and for other purposes.

Read first time.*Statement of compatibility*

Mr WELLS (Treasurer) 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 Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012.

In my opinion, the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012, as introduced to the Legislative Assembly, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of bill

The Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012 will provide appropriation 'authority' for payments from the Consolidated Fund for the ordinary annual services of government for the 2012–13 financial year.

The amounts contained in schedule 1 to the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill 2012 provide for the ongoing operations of departments, including new output and asset investment funded through annual appropriation.

Schedules 2 and 3 of the bill contain details concerning payments from advances pursuant to section 35 of the Financial Management Act 1994 and payments from the advance to Treasurer in 2010–2011 respectively.

Human rights issues

- 1. Human rights protected by the charter act that are relevant to the bill**

The bill does not raise any human rights issues.

2 Consideration of reasonable limitations — section 7(2)

As the bill does not raise any human rights issues, it does not limit any human rights and therefore it is not necessary to consider section 7(2) of the charter act.

Conclusion

I consider that the bill is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 because it does not raise a human rights issue.

Kim Wells, MP
Treasurer

Second reading

Mr WELLS (Treasurer) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Introduction

The 2012–13 budget is shaped by the economic challenges of the present.

But its focus is on securing the future.

Victoria's challenges are real and they are substantial.

Global and national economic factors have resulted in a softer economy and significant reductions in government revenue.

These forces are placing real pressure on Victorian businesses and families and on the government's capacity to meet community needs.

The government cannot ignore those realities. But nor can we afford to passively accept them.

This budget sets out a clear plan to meet these challenges and position Victoria to take full advantage of current and future opportunities.

The budget is about driving economic activity, productivity and jobs.

It is about rebuilding the state's finances.

It is about investing in state infrastructure, enhancing front-line services, taking new measures to protect the most vulnerable Victorians and meeting the community's needs in health, education and community safety.

This is a responsible and necessary approach.

As a state — as a community — we will be defined not by the challenges we face, but by the collective actions we take to address them.

The economic and fiscal context

Victoria's economy is being affected by significant global and national factors.

World growth has slowed. The euro zone recession, and concern about sovereign debt, has affected local consumer and business sentiment.

The Australian dollar remains high by historical standards, placing significant pressure on Victoria's manufacturing, tourism and education sectors.

Household spending is subdued, impacting on the retail industry.

These factors have resulted in significant revenue write-downs.

Compared with the estimates made in late 2010, Victoria has lost \$6.1 billion in GST revenue over the four years from 2012–13.

Much of this is due to slower consumption growth, but some is due to the reduction in Victoria's share of the GST.

Revenue estimates from GST and stamp duty on land transfers have been reduced by \$7.6 billion over four years.

This represents an average of \$1.9 billion a year, or around 7 per cent of Victoria's revenue from state taxes and GST.

This is a bigger revenue hit than occurred during the 2008 global financial crisis.

However, from 2008, the commonwealth government provided Victoria with significant stimulus funding.

By contrast, at present the commonwealth government is withdrawing that funding and leaving a range of national partnership funding programs in doubt.

This is the biggest fiscal challenge to confront Victoria in two decades.

But the fiscal practices of the past decade left Victoria vulnerable to this shock.

Over the decade to 2010–11, expenditure growth averaged 7.3 per cent a year.

Revenue growth averaged 6.9 per cent.

Between 2008 and 2010, an increasing share of the annual capital spend was being funded from additional borrowing.

A number of projects faced significant cost overruns.

It is simply not an option for Victoria to continue down this course.

If spending growth continued at the levels of the past decade, we would today be looking at an operating deficit for the 2012–13 year of \$4 billion. Net debt would rise to almost \$60 billion in just four years time.

This would be completely unsustainable, irresponsible and inconsistent with a AAA credit rating.

It would undermine the government's capacity to fund infrastructure, schools, transport, hospitals and police.

Strong state finances

We had to change course, and we have.

Last year's budget achieved \$2.2 billion in savings and constrained spending growth to 3.2 per cent on average over the forward estimates period.

Last December, we announced a further \$1.9 billion in efficiencies focused on public service back-office and administrative functions.

In this budget, the government is achieving a further \$1 billion in savings over four years.

These measures require difficult decisions.

The 2012–13 budget delivers further targeted departmental efficiencies. In addition, savings will be made in a range of program areas. These savings will lead to a further reduction in staff numbers by around 600. The government will continue to protect front-line service delivery.

It is important during challenging times that the community knows its elected representatives and senior public servants' remuneration is consistent with community expectations. Today I announce that parliamentary and ministerial salaries will be limited to a maximum 2.5 per cent increase for the next 12 months. In addition, allowances paid to the Premier, ministers and parliamentarians will be fixed at their current terms and conditions for the next 12 months. The legislative nexus between the salary of a commonwealth parliamentarian and that of a Victorian parliamentarian will be severed. A review will be conducted of the salaries, allowances and other arrangements for parliamentarians.

The salaries of senior public servants will be limited to a maximum increase of 2.5 per cent for the next 12 months. In addition, the government will review the

executive bonus scheme. Instructions will be issued that where bonuses are paid, attention should be shown to the need for restraint.

The government is constraining expenditure growth to an average of 2.9 per cent over the forward estimates. This compares with revenue growth of 4.4 per cent.

Despite global uncertainty, a softer economy and a significant fall in revenue, the 2012–13 budget will be in surplus by \$155 million.

The budget projects surpluses in every year.

The forecast surplus will grow over the next four years to \$2.5 billion by 2015–16.

Surpluses are not an end in themselves.

Surpluses are important because they build the capacity to fund infrastructure and better services. They reduce our reliance on debt and they help protect Victoria against future economic shocks.

In 2010–11, more than half of the state's infrastructure program was funded by debt. Under the measures taken by the government to improve the sustainability of our finances, we will rely less on debt to fund new infrastructure.

General government sector net debt is forecast to fall from a peak of 6.5 per cent of GSP to 6 per cent by June 2016.

In the face of economic challenges, it is vital to restore strong state finances in order to build infrastructure, ensure sustainable service delivery and keep our taxes competitive.

It is not a realistic option to simply spend money that Victoria does not have.

Strong finances underpin the government's economic strategy, improvements to front-line services and measures to protect the vulnerable.

Economic activity, productivity and jobs

The 2012–13 budget promotes economic growth to generate jobs and improve living standards for the Victorian community.

It funds a record state infrastructure spend, cuts business costs, keeps taxes competitive and invests over \$1 billion in skills.

It funds new programs to drive productivity growth in Victoria's manufacturing industry and enhances the competitiveness of our agriculture and food sector.

And it unveils a new strategy to drive international engagement — to help Victorian businesses realise the export and investment potential flowing from the rise of Asia and other emerging economies.

Productivity-enhancing infrastructure

High-quality infrastructure is a key contributor to productivity growth.

The 2012–13 infrastructure investment of \$5.8 billion, after excluding the impact of fiscal stimulus projects, is the biggest ever.

This includes important new projects with an estimated value of \$2.7 billion.

Overall, in 2012–13 there will be \$41 billion in public sector capital projects, including public-private partnerships, under way in Victoria.

The new projects funded in this budget include important transport investments which will help ease congestion, reduce bottlenecks and increase the efficiency of the supply chain for Victorian businesses.

The development of a container terminal at Webb Dock, funded by the Port of Melbourne Corporation and the private sector, will increase capacity and competition at the port and confirm Melbourne's status as the leading container port in Australia.

The 2012–13 budget funds solutions to three of Melbourne's most significant transport bottlenecks. Level crossings at Springvale Road, Springvale, and Mitcham and Rooks Roads in Mitcham will be eliminated.

At present, during the 2-hour morning peak, the boom gates at Springvale Road are closed for 50 minutes — around 40 per cent of the time.

At Mitcham Road, they are down for 45 per cent of the time, sometimes for up to 7 minutes at a stretch.

It has been estimated that the removal of these level crossings — funded with \$350 million over the next three years — will reduce travel times in the area by up to 25 per cent.

In addition, the 2012–13 budget funds the Dingley bypass.

This vital road link will help reduce the burden caused by heavy trucks in residential areas in the south-east.

It provides the final link in the arterial road connecting the manufacturing hubs of Moorabbin and Dandenong.

Currently, one of the biggest infrastructure programs under way in Australia is the regional rail link, building dedicated rail lines for trains from Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong into Southern Cross station. When we came to government, this project was beset by cost pressures, including the glaring omission that no rolling stock had been costed into the overall project budget.

The government is delivering the project with enhanced scrutiny under the high-value high-risk process. Tenders have been let and work is commencing.

The 2012–13 budget will fund new rolling stock for the regional rail network.

This will allow us to realise the benefits of the rail link, reduce overcrowding and improve services across the whole of V/Line's network.

The government will push for this rolling stock to be manufactured locally.

This represents a major boost to the livability of our regional centres and a major boost to Victoria's manufacturing industry.

A further \$172 million will be spent on regional rail maintenance, improving the infrastructure which supports both our freight and passenger services.

A series of road upgrades will improve safety and reduce bottlenecks, particularly in high-growth areas:

the Koo Wee Rup bypass will be built with a \$66 million investment;

\$49 million will be provided to upgrade the Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road;

\$38 million will construct the Ballarat western link road and a further \$42 million will continue the duplication of the Western Highway between Beaufort and Buangor.

It is important to ensure that Victoria's road network keeps up with a growing population and keeps people and freight moving efficiently across the state.

CityLink was a major transformational project in the mid-1990s. EastLink has improved the network by linking Dandenong and the south-eastern suburbs to the Eastern Freeway.

But in the long term, more needs to be done. We need to link the Eastern Freeway to the Tullamarine Freeway

to create a seamless freeway network and reduce the congestion currently seen at Hoddle Street and Alexandra Parade.

And we need to reduce the strain on the West Gate Bridge by progressing a second river crossing to link the Western Ring Road to the port.

The 2012–3 budget commits money to complete a business case on the proposed east–west link.

The government will immediately commence engineering survey work and geotechnical drilling as part of this process and will progress relevant statutory approval processes as a matter of urgency.

The business case is expected to be finalised in 2013, allowing a funding decision to be taken. This project is large and has the potential to transform Victoria’s transport network. It requires a commonwealth government contribution and possible private sector involvement.

The government will be working hard to advance this project in the interests of all Victorians.

In addition, the budget provides a further \$50 million for planning and development work in relation to the Melbourne Metro rail project.

And \$4 million has been provided to commence planning for the development of Hastings as a container port.

The government has implemented more rigorous processes to improve infrastructure project delivery and reduce cost pressures which have affected major projects in the past. The government has also taken decisive steps to improve productivity in the construction sector through the new guidelines for the building and construction industry to drive value for money for Victorian taxpayers.

Medium-term fiscal strategy

Delivering the infrastructure needs of the state is costly. It requires the government to maintain strong finances to deliver projects without incurring unsustainable debt.

The 2012–13 budget sets out a medium-term fiscal strategy to help make this a reality.

The strategy involves the following key parameters:

infrastructure spending of 1.3 per cent of GSP as a five-year rolling average;

reducing net debt as a percentage of GSP over the decade to 2022;

fully funding the unfunded superannuation liability by 2035; and

running an operating balance of at least \$100 million and enough to be consistent with the infrastructure and net debt parameters.

These parameters are interlinked. More infrastructure can be funded if the state’s finances are kept strong.

Cutting business costs

A stronger financial position allows taxes to be kept competitive.

Today I announce that WorkCover premiums for Victorian employers will be reduced by 3 per cent from 1 July 2012.

This will generate savings for Victorian businesses and entrench our competitive position as the state with the lowest workers compensation premiums in Australia, in addition to an outstanding workplace safety record.

This is on top of the government’s commitment to cut red tape, particularly benefiting small business.

Supporting key industries and exports

The budget funds new programs to enhance productivity, secure jobs and support Victorian industries.

Manufacturing is central to Victoria’s economy and will continue to play a major role as a source of employment and economic output into the future. The sector is the largest source of full-time employment in Victoria.

The industry is facing challenges — including a high Australian dollar and the new impost associated with the carbon tax. The Victorian government is strongly committed to manufacturing and has a detailed strategy to improve the industry’s competitiveness.

Last year, the government released its manufacturing blueprint, *A More Competitive Manufacturing Industry*.

That document outlined a new model of industry support based on lifting firm-level productivity through closer grassroots business engagement. The Department of Business and Innovation is opening new government business offices in Ringwood and Tottenham.

An additional \$58 million will be provided to support manufacturing, including:

working with medium-sized manufacturers to help them achieve world-class service standards including through certification;

\$25 million to provide incentives for local manufacturers to invest in transformative new technologies — effectively using the strong dollar to their advantage in retooling for the future;

additional support for business-to-business networks to assist with the sharing of knowledge, information and technology;

\$9 million for small manufacturers to provide better access to information and government programs.

The budget also funds additional support for Victoria's highly successful agriculture sector.

The budget injects \$61 million into a new agriculture and food industry plan to help the sector maximise the opportunities from improved prices and better climatic conditions.

The strategy focuses on improved biosecurity, as well as innovation and productivity across our dairy, grains, red meat and horticulture sectors.

As the global population grows, and incomes rise, Victoria's agriculture and food producers are well positioned to benefit.

But they are not alone. Opportunities will emerge from the rapid growth in the Asian middle class. New markets, new possibilities, even new industries will emerge over the coming decades.

It is vital that Victoria be well positioned.

The government is taking steps to unlock Victoria's energy resources in order to boost exports.

The government has also strengthened trade and investment ties with China, India and the Middle East, including significant trade missions.

The 2012–13 budget commits \$50 million to an international engagement strategy to further support businesses in their efforts to tap into new export markets and attract new investment.

Investing in skills

A key to increasing productivity and generating jobs is a skilled workforce.

The budget commits \$1 billion over four years to Victoria's training system. This funding helps to meet the massive growth in enrolments which has occurred since the move to a demand-driven model.

The previous government introduced that demand-driven model, but failed to forecast its true cost.

Between 2008 and 2011, enrolments increased by 44 per cent. Expenditure on training subsidies also increased by 50 per cent over that period.

This trend was financially unsustainable, and it was not clear that the spending was being well targeted to deliver the right outcomes for students or the economy. So in addition to making a substantial new investment, the government is ensuring that funding is sustainable, focused on quality and promotes competition.

High-priority courses will see an increase in their funding rate. Funding for certificate III and IV courses in skills like carpentry, bricklaying, plumbing, engineering, automotive, children's services, aged care and disability will rise.

All apprenticeship courses will see an increase in funding.

Other courses will have their funding levels reduced, reflecting the massive growth in enrolment in recent years.

Quality oversight will be improved, and the funding rates for TAFE and private training organisations will be aligned to promote competition and choice. The government will work with our TAFE institutes to help them adapt their business models where necessary, helping to ensure a strong future for our TAFE system.

Supporting regional and rural Victoria

The government is proud to include strong representation from regional and rural Victoria.

More than one in every four Victorians lives in a regional or rural area and they deserve strong representation in government.

The government's strategy has as its centrepiece the \$1 billion Regional Growth Fund.

The strategy includes a focus on major regional centres, but it also extends beyond them to towns and small country communities.

The 2012–13 budget continues the government's record of investing in regional Victoria, with a particular focus on generating economic growth and employment — building stronger and more resilient regional communities.

The agriculture package, the manufacturing strategy, purchase of regional rolling stock and the large commitment to regional rail maintenance are examples of this approach.

In total, \$199 million is committed to upgrading regional and rural hospitals.

The 2012–13 budget commences phase 2 of the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project.

The budget provides additional funding for forestry roads and continues the successful mode shift incentive scheme to encourage freight to be carried on rail rather than road.

Regional Victoria has a diverse economic base, incorporating agriculture, tourism and manufacturing.

The outlook for our regions is strong, and the investments being made by the government, through the Regional Growth Fund and continued in the 2012–13 budget, are vital to realising those opportunities.

The government's package of economic measures — a record infrastructure spend, a better transport network, reduced WorkCover premiums, a manufacturing strategy, the agriculture plan, the international engagement strategy and the \$1 billion skills package — all contribute to growing the economy, boosting productivity and generating jobs across the whole state.

Better front-line services

Ultimately, a strong economy and strong government finances underpin the ability to fund services for the Victorian community.

It is our efforts to deliver a responsible budget position, despite tough conditions, that are the key to maintaining high-quality, efficient, sustainable services.

In order to enhance those services, we need to be efficient — removing waste and mismanagement and focusing on priorities.

The government has always put priority on service delivery.

We need a strong front-line workforce, backed up by efficient and streamlined head and regional offices.

Under the previous government growth in head office numbers outpaced the growth in front-line workers and the population as a whole.

The government is reducing the headcount of the VPS in non-front-line roles.

The government is also working to improve the flexibility of our workforce. It is important to keep our experienced, high-quality staff on the front line and give them avenues for promotion and advancement that don't force them into administrative roles.

This is particularly the case in areas like child protection and teaching.

More must be done to free up local decision making and service delivery.

To help achieve this, the government recently announced the Better Services Implementation Taskforce.

The task force brings together experienced executives from the public and private sectors to oversee revitalised services that will deliver better outcomes for all Victorians.

These measures will empower staff and give them autonomy and flexibility, to ensure that Victorians have access to services which meet their individual needs. In particular, this approach is vital to meet the needs of indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Health

It is important that services keep pace with a growing population.

The budget provides an additional \$1.5 billion for health and aged-care services.

Over the next four years, \$883 million is provided in increased funding for the public hospital system. The budget also provides \$364 million of new infrastructure investment for health and aged-care services.

The government will fulfil its election commitment to continue and expand the Vision 2020 initiative to raise awareness about eye health.

Mental health service capacity will be boosted through a range of investments, including to modify, refurbish and redevelop community-based mental health infrastructure.

Key health investments include:

further development at the Sunshine Hospital to improve services for people living in the western suburbs of Melbourne;

a new purpose-built facility, jointly funded with the commonwealth, to replace the Charlton hospital, which was extensively damaged in the 2011 floods;

the Frankston Hospital emergency department will be expanded and reconfigured to improve its capacity to meet current and future demand;

a \$93 million major upgrade of Geelong Hospital; and

additional beds and a helipad at Ballarat base hospital.

A better justice system and safer communities

The government is taking steps to meet growing pressures in the justice system and to strengthen community safety.

Last year's budget funded 1700 additional police and 940 protective services officers to increase community safety.

The 2012–13 budget funds additional capital upgrades to accommodate these additional Victoria Police personnel, supporting them in their vitally important work.

A new police station will be completed at Waurm Ponds, co-located with the SES. There will also be a new 24-hour police station at Emerald.

The budget also addresses much-needed upgrades in Victoria's corrections system.

It funds an additional 395 prison beds across Victoria's existing prisons, as well as a new 500-bed male prison.

It also provides more than \$113 million over four years for stronger management of known serious sex offenders.

Further funding will strengthen the justice system through measures to increase access and efficiency, including funding for Victoria Legal Aid.

The safety of Victorian communities during bushfires and other emergencies is also a paramount concern for the government.

The budget delivers a range of measures to strengthen our outstanding volunteer firefighting workforce in rural areas, regional centres and on the urban fringe.

This includes additional funding for the Country Fire Authority for more firefighting vehicles and construction or upgrade of CFA rural fire stations.

The planned burning program will be expanded to reduce fuel load and protect communities.

The government will provide an additional \$200 million to progressively replace the highest risk powerlines with safer technology.

Emergency communication will be enhanced through upgrades to computer-aided dispatch infrastructure for the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority.

Schools

A package of \$200 million for school capital projects will modernise and regenerate government schools, providing new schools and school upgrades across the state.

This includes important upgrades to Seaford primary, Mirboo North Secondary College and Golden Square primary.

A new school will be built at Doreen South to cater for a growing population and further land acquisition will occur in growth areas to plan for the future.

Victorian schools will benefit from an additional \$40 million in 2012–13 to fund enrolment growth.

And an additional \$30 million over three years will support specialist education.

In total, the 2012–13 budget delivers \$1.4 billion in new funding for early childhood development, education and training.

Protecting vulnerable children

Last year, the government commissioned the independent Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry. That inquiry made a number of stark findings about the plight of vulnerable children and recommended actions to start addressing the issues.

The government is developing a response to the findings of the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry. To be released in 2013, this broadbased strategy will focus on early intervention, education and care, health services and the legal system as well as core child protection services.

In this budget the government will provide \$336 million over five years to deliver front-line service improvements across the health, education, justice and human services portfolios to help meet the needs of Victorian children and families in crisis.

This includes three new multidisciplinary centres where police, child protection workers and specialist counsellors will be co-located and work together to address the needs of victims.

Reform of child protection court processes to be less adversarial and more child friendly is also a priority. In addition the government is funding a new Children's Court at the Broadmeadows court.

Helping vulnerable families and children before they reach crisis point is a priority for the government, with ongoing support for early intervention, community-based care and education programs.

Environment and community assets

The budget also funds a range of measures to improve Victoria's water management and promote strong environmental outcomes.

The budget provides:

\$100 million to improve the environmental condition of the state's high-priority rivers, wetlands and estuaries;

\$50 million for sustainable water management, monitoring and reporting systems; and

\$10 million to promote improvements to the state's urban water use and establish the Office of Living Victoria.

The government is committed to cleaner coal technology that promotes economic development while managing Victoria's response to the commonwealth's Clean Energy Future reforms.

The government continues to invest in community services and infrastructure.

Community infrastructure investment includes funding to maintain the State Athletics Centre at Lakeside Stadium, the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre at Albert Park and the State Netball and Hockey Centre at Royal Park.

The Anzac centenary strategy will fund expanded facilities at the Shrine of Remembrance to help the shrine meet growing demand ahead of the centenary of Anzac and World War I.

Zoos Victoria will receive \$13.7 million over two years to improve outdated infrastructure at Melbourne Zoo and Werribee Open Range Zoo.

A stronger Victoria

Victoria has great strengths — a flexible, knowledge-based economy, a skilled workforce and a diverse multicultural community.

The 2012–13 budget helps position Victoria to meet present challenges. It strengthens our finances and better insulates Victoria against future downturns.

It promotes growth, productivity and jobs despite the economic pressures which many of our industries are now experiencing.

The government will continue to vigorously promote Victoria.

And the government will advocate for Victoria against decisions or proposals which have the potential to disadvantage the state or compromise our future.

That is why the government will continue to argue for a fairer distribution of GST revenue.

If GST was distributed on an equal per capita basis, Victorians would receive \$900 million a year more than is currently the case — \$900 million for additional roads, schools, hospitals or police.

The government will continue to push the commonwealth government to commit to ongoing funding of expiring national partnership agreements where they have clearly increased ongoing service demand.

The government will not sign up to the current proposal for harmonised legislation for occupational health and safety. It offers little benefit for Victoria to offset the \$3.4 billion of estimated costs, the majority of which falls on small business. Victoria will continue to work towards best practice legislation.

Conclusion

Speaker, tough economic times and reduced revenue call for discipline and careful decisions about expenditure.

The government's spending priorities are focused on driving economic growth, generating jobs, improving front-line service delivery and protecting the state's most vulnerable citizens.

This can only be done when the finances are sound.

There will be no compromise when it comes to delivering a responsible budget.

Victorian families know that in challenging times you have to act responsibly and eliminate waste. They expect their governments to improve efficiency, deliver better services and build a stronger foundation for the future.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr HOLDING (Lyndhurst).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 3 May.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT 2012/2013) BILL 2012

Message read recommending appropriation and transmitting estimates of expenditure for 2012–13.

Estimates tabled.

Introduction and first reading

Mr WELLS (Treasurer) introduced a bill for an act for the appropriation of certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund for the Parliament in respect of the financial year 2012–13 and for other purposes.

Read first time.

Statement of compatibility

Mr WELLS (Treasurer) 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 Appropriation (Parliament 2012/2013) Bill 2012.

In my opinion, the Appropriation (Parliament 2012/2013) Bill 2012, as introduced to the Legislative Assembly, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of bill

The purpose of the Appropriation (Parliament 2012/2013) Bill 2012 is to provide appropriation authority for payments from the Consolidated Fund to the Parliament in respect of the 2012–2013 financial year.

Human rights issues

- 1. Human rights protected by the charter act that are relevant to the bill**

The bill does not raise any human rights issues.

- 2. Consideration of reasonable limitations — section 7(2)**

As the bill does not raise any human rights issues, it does not limit any human rights, and therefore it is not necessary to consider section 7(2) of the charter act.

Conclusion

I consider that the bill is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 because it does not raise a human rights issue.

Kim Wells, MP
Treasurer

Second reading

Mr WELLS (Treasurer) — I move:

That this bill be read a second time.

The bill provides appropriation authority for payments from the Consolidated Fund to the Parliament in respect of the 2012–13 financial year including ongoing liabilities incurred by the Parliament such as employee entitlements that may be realised in the future.

Honourable members will be aware that other funds are appropriated for parliamentary purposes by way of special appropriations contained in other legislation. In addition, unapplied appropriations under the Appropriation (Parliament 2011/2012) Act 2011 have been estimated and included in the budget papers. Prior to 30 June actual unapplied appropriation will be finalised and the 2012–13 appropriations adjusted by the approved carryover amounts pursuant to the provisions of section 32 of the Financial Management Act 1994.

In line with the wishes of the presiding officers, appropriations in the bill are made to the departments of the Parliament.

The total appropriation authority sought in this bill is \$101 175 000 (clause 3 of the bill) for Parliament in respect of the 2012–13 financial year.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr EREN (Lara).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 3 May.

APPROPRIATION MESSAGES

Messages read recommending appropriations for:

Courts and Sentencing Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

**Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption
Commission Amendment (Examinations)
Bill 2012.**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**

Reporting date

Mr McINTOSH (Minister for Corrections) — By leave, I move:

That the resolution of the house of 8 December 2011 be amended to extend the reporting date for the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee's inquiry into the benefits and drivers of greenfields mineral exploration and project development in Victoria to no later than 22 May 2012.

Motion agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Program

Mr McINTOSH (Minister for Corrections) — I move:

That, under standing order 94(2), the orders of the day, government business, relating to the following bills be considered and completed by 4.00 p.m. on Thursday, 3 May 2012:

Courts and Sentencing Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Amendment (Examinations) Bill 2012

Primary Industries Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012.

In moving this motion I will perhaps just outline the government's intention for the program this week. Obviously there has been notice given of a motion that the government intends to proceed with debating today. We will complete the day with a discussion on the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012. Tomorrow the primary industries bill and courts and sentencing legislation bill will be available to be debated. It would be our intention to start with primary industries and move on to courts later in the day. Then on Thursday, as indicated, and according to the normal traditions of the house, budget responses will commence. As I understand it, the shadow Treasurer will be giving the principal speech in relation to those responses on behalf of the opposition. Then we will proceed through the day with further budget responses.

Regrettably, my bill, the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Amendment (Examinations) Bill 2012 is not available to be debated by the house until Thursday. There was an opportunity to bring the debate forward to Wednesday, but unfortunately the opposition refused that. I thought that was a bit bizarre.

Ms Hennessy interjected.

Mr McINTOSH — We agreed. You wanted to do it, so fine. But the reality is that on Thursday there will be a significant debate on the budget and there will be only a very short time after lunch to debate the IBAC bill before it is dealt with under the government business program. As I said, it was a bizarre act by the opposition. Its members had the opportunity to have the bill fully debated on Wednesday. They chose to stick to Thursday, notwithstanding that they understood that in the normal traditions of the house Thursday would be budget responses day.

The debate on the budget will of course continue into the next sitting week. It would be our intention to have it passed in the sitting week after that, which would then leave enough time for the upper house to deal with it, along with the other appropriation bill that has been introduced today, before 30 June.

The government business program is confined to the four bills I have mentioned. As I indicated, there will be debate on the motion that is on the notice paper as the first item of government business today, then the IBAC bill will conclude government business at about 4 o'clock on Thursday.

Ms HENNESSY (Altona) — I rise to oppose the government business program. It is quite outrageous to me that on the day the government has brought down its budget — and what a disappointing budget it is — it has populated the government business program with a notice of motion from the likes of the Minister for Energy and Resources. Members of the government are not capable of getting up and actually selling their vision to the Victorian people. On the day we have Qantas workers living with the unemployment sword of Damocles hanging over their heads, the government has put forward this government business program.

Mr McIntosh — On a point of order, Speaker, this is a very narrow debate about the government business program. It is not an opportunity to fling all sorts of ridicule around the chamber. I ask you to bring the member back to the government business program.

The SPEAKER — Order! I was just about to bring the member for Altona back to the motion before the house.

Ms HENNESSY — My contribution to the debate on the government business program goes to what the government's priorities on the government business program are. Certainly the notice of motion that appears on the notice paper under government business is pretty compelling evidence of a government business program that contains no vision and does not reflect the challenges of the budget that the Victorian government has handed down today.

The government does not want to talk about its budget because it is in fact a deeply disappointing one. Instead we have bills such as the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012, a technical bill which dots the i's and crosses the t's, and we have two other matters that are reasonably technical in nature. The government simply has not done the public policy work, except for its work on the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission bill; however, this is the sixth bill and it is a year late. We are pleased to finally see what we hope will be the penultimate piece of legislation debated on Thursday, but again, the ineptitude and incompetence in establishing what was one of its flagship institutions must cause a high degree of embarrassment to the government. Instead we see three technical bills on the government business program. The government has tried to fill the program with a government business motion because the members opposite do not want to talk about issues related to the Victorian budget.

In opposing the government business program it would be negligent of me to fail to mention that we maintain our objection to the Wednesday afternoons during parliamentary sitting weeks being used for the government's second-reading speeches. On that basis, we oppose the government business program.

Mr CRISP (Mildura) — I rise to support the government business program. We have a list of bills that are important. The Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012 deals with annual housekeeping, and it has to be done. The Primary Industries Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, which amends provisions for the use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals, is really important to country people. The Courts and Sentencing Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 is important — we need say no more about law and order. Then there is the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) bill, and I will get to that.

I would like to discuss some of those issues raised by the member for Altona. Firstly, it is vital that we discuss the carbon tax — this terrible impost on Victorians. All are concerned about the impacts, and I do not need to remind members on the other side of the house how important it is. Some of the issues raised by the member for Altona will not be helped by the carbon tax. It will be an impost on business and a chain around the neck of employers in this state.

I would also like to remind the member for Altona that out of parliamentary courtesy we do not debate the budget until the opposition has had adequate time to prepare. Naturally we have business to do tomorrow. The members opposite could have brought on the debate forthwith and had the shadow Treasurer on his feet delivering his reply now. He is very wise to have adjourned the debate and gone away to prepare. The Treasurer has outlined the history of this budget, and there is much to explain about its past.

The IBAC bill is also important to Victoria. However, I remind the opposition members that they chose to be where we are now. On the Thursday afternoon of the last sitting week they refused leave to bring the bill on earlier, so we could well have been debating that this evening had they wanted to. But no, they chose this, so it is their doing and they will need to manage it and be responsible for their actions. This is a good program, and I am happy to support it.

Ms KAIROUZ (Kororoit) — I rise to support the manager of opposition business and the member for Altona in opposing the government business program. Today is one of the most important days in the parliamentary calendar on which the government announces its budget. What a dull budget it is. Rather than allowing members to debate the budget and talk about other significant issues in the state, the government has decided to pull a stunt where we will debate a notice of motion by Minister O'Brien —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member will refer to the member as the Minister for Energy and Resources.

Ms KAIROUZ — The Minister for Energy and Resources. Rather than setting aside that time to discuss important matters, the members of the government have chosen to pull this cheap political stunt and blame everybody else but themselves. Rather than discussing essential services, the jobs crisis and a jobs plan for Victorians or the population growth, they have decided to head down that path.

There are a number of bills on the government business program. These are technical bills without substantial

policy. There is one bill that is very important — nobody disputes that — and that is the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) bill. We on this side of the house would like to debate it, but we would like the time extended to debate it. Rather than adjourning at 4.00 p.m. on Thursday, the government can extend the sitting so we can debate the bill. Nobody is disputing its importance, and we thank the government for agreeing to debate this bill and bring it on for debate on Thursday. It was not just our decision; the government agreed to that as well. Rather than going home at 4.00 p.m. like The Nationals usually do — they always like to go home at 4.00 p.m., bags packed and ready and sitting in the car at 4.00 p.m. — we can extend the sitting on Thursday to debate the IBAC bill and other important matters before the house.

On that basis the opposition will be opposing the government business program.

Mr THOMPSON (Sandringham) — In strongly supporting the government business program for the week I would like to make the point that members on the other side of the house did have the opportunity to debate the budget. It was they who chose to defer debate on this important piece of legislation that will secure Victoria's position as a global leader in a range of fields and establish a strong basis of prosperity for Victoria as we move into the future in challenging global times. I note in passing that that particular bill contains important infrastructure investment in the completion of the Dingley bypass connecting manufacturing hubs in Dandenong and Moorabbin, so it becomes a very important issue in my region.

The other important bills before the house as part of the government business program this week include the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012, which will reduce the red tape burden in Victoria as the process is undertaken to succinctly and evocatively recall aspects of Victoria's past. It is a bill that will be of interest to members and allow them to focus upon matters pertaining to their electorates which were considered by this house in yesteryear, and it might also provide a finer understanding of the platform for future legislative reform.

The Primary Industries Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 is very important and will be of interest to primary producers. It will improve the veterinary processes that take place in this state and ensure that food has appropriate prescriptions pertaining to it and that good products will be supplied to the marketplace.

The Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission legislation is just another aspect of a tranche of bills that the opposition has been asking questions about, including, 'Where is it?'. They are rolling through the houses of Parliament in good form and in good time to ensure timely implementation. The Courts and Sentencing Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 is important as it makes a number of changes to the justice system. Aspects of it deal with important issues in relation to the Koori Court and judicial education, and those issues should be brought before the house in legislation to be enacted earlier rather than later.

Other aspects of the government business program this week are important to the deliberations of the house. The government is in a position to introduce a constructive legislative framework during the course of this week. The opposition had the opportunity to debate the budget this week. We on this side of the house are ready to advance on it. The opposition elected to not proceed with that opportunity by seeking to defer debate on the appropriation bill. There could have been strong and robust debate if the bill had been brought straight on to the program. A number of members on this side of the house have seen debates being brought straight on to the program.

Opposition members had the opportunity to raise issues of importance on behalf of their electorates, to point out the finer features of the budget in their commentary and to understand the legacy they had left the state with — the \$10 billion funds shortfall. We would have used the funds spent on ICT, the desalination plant and the north-south pipeline on other things. It would have provided opportunities for opposition members to fund initiatives in their electorates. During recent adjournment debates in this chamber members have heard some plaintive requests for funding, but the opposition had 11 years in government to deliver those initiatives and it did not. With those brief remarks, I am pleased to support the government business program.

Mr NARDELLA (Melton) — I rise to oppose the government business program, a program which will mean a great deal of time will be wasted this week. This motion before the house is about punishing the opposition; it is not about government business, the critical issues of the day or the things that are uppermost in people's minds as they go about their day-to-day living. This motion is about bringing nonsense before the house and wasting time. The government could debate other bills. If the other bills are so important — —

Mr R. Smith interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Minister for Environment and Climate Change is out of his seat and out of his place; he will be out of this place if he keeps that up.

Mr NARDELLA — The Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012, the Primary Industries Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 and the Courts and Sentencing Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 could be debated today and tomorrow. Then there will be a situation where we will debate the appropriation bill, and after a couple of members have spoken, we will debate the Independent broadbased anticorruption Commission Amendment (Examinations) Bill 2012. But this government does not like scrutiny and does not want to debate the real issues of the day. This government does not want a situation where it is brought to account for the actions that come about because of the legislation brought into this house.

The government runs away from legislation and away from debate. It wants to punish the opposition, but in the process it is punishing the people of Victoria. When legislation like the IBAC (Independent broadbased anticorruption Commission) legislation is brought on and there is not an opportunity to debate it except late on Thursday during the hour before 4.00 p.m., when the guillotine, the sword of Damocles, comes down at that time — when the debate is shut down and the legislation passes — it shows that this government despises debate on the most important legislation to come before this house and this Parliament this week.

The budget is absolutely important. We will talk about its importance, and we will analyse and deal with it on Thursday. The Minister responsible for the establishment of an anticorruption commission does not want to have a debate about the most important piece of legislation in the program before this house. This IBAC bill will be the sixth piece of IBAC legislation to come before the house; it will be the sixth time this sort of legislation has come before the house. The minister does not want to debate it, except in the one measly, pitiful hour at the end of the parliamentary sitting week before the guillotine comes down. Then he will say, ‘Let’s have a debate; let’s talk about issues that are important to the Victorian community, but we will leave it until the last hour’.

This government is all about hubris and retribution; it is all about putting down the Labor Party and minimising the real debates that need to be had in this Parliament. This government is all about saying to the community, ‘We don’t care; we don’t care that this legislation is nearly 12 months late’. This should have been put in place halfway through last year — on 1 July 2011 — yet the government does not want to debate IBAC. It

does not want to debate us because at every opportunity we expose and bring to account this miserable government that despises the Parliament. This government brings this legislation into Parliament but arranges things so that issues cannot be debated and so that it cannot be brought to account for its actions.

In our 11 years in government we did one thing that was critical with the then opposition and with the community; that one thing was consultation. Not only would we consult with the community with regard to important upcoming issues, we would also consult with the opposition with regard to important bills before the house. Sure, the opposition did not always get its way, but it was consulted. This government is arrogant. That is why it does not consult with the opposition.

House divided on motion:

Ayes, 44

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

Noes, 40

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
Garrett, Ms	Pandazopoulos, Mr
Graley, Ms	Perera, Mr
Green, Ms	Pike, Ms
Halfpenny, Ms	Richardson, Ms
Helper, Mr	Scott, Mr
Hennessy, Ms	Thomson, Ms
Herbert, Mr	Treize, Mr

Howard, Mr

Wynne, Mr

Motion agreed to.**MEMBERS STATEMENTS****Budget: small business**

Ms ASHER (Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business) — I wish to draw the house's attention to an important budget measure to assist businesses to create jobs. We have a challenging economic environment — I think that is recognised by everyone — and we have an extra challenge in this state which is that we have relatively small markets. Victoria desperately needs to develop export markets.

One significant budgetary measure is the Victorian international engagement strategy, which will be funded to the tune of \$50 million over four years. This aims to build on the success of the trade mission programs to India, the Middle East and China later this year. The idea is to take a greater number of people outbound and to have a greater number of inbound missions to assist those small businesses that are unable to participate in missions. We are aiming to take a greater number of companies on these missions and hoping to expose a far greater number of companies to inbound missions as well.

Over the past 10 years the previous government took 300 to 400 companies into international markets each year. We expect to significantly increase that capacity. Our aim is to boost exports, and recent results of the Middle Eastern and Indian trade missions show this. Export markets are vitally important for all businesses. They are especially important for small businesses that need to grow their markets, and this important budgetary measure will help achieve this.

Mill Park electorate: public transport and roads

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Mill Park) — I rise to express my great regret and disappointment in the Baillieu government's failure to deal with the public transport and roads needs of my electorate of Mill Park and surrounds. In this very place in the last sitting week I spoke about some very serious concerns raised by constituents and community organisations, including schools, in my electorate regarding this government's decision to take services away from needy areas of the community by rerouting bus services that connect families, especially young families, with schools, community centres and activity hubs.

What we have here today is no remedy to that problem. There is no remedy whatsoever from the Baillieu government with respect to growing public transport services in my electorate. In fact we have a shrinkage of bus services. The fact is that this government failed to even consult with the community about which bus services would be re-routed or taken away. This is an example of abject failure on the part of this government, and it is seeing Victorians in areas such as the north going backwards with respect to bus services and access to public transport. The road system is no better. There are no commitments whatsoever from the government for further improvements to Plenty Road, the duplication of High Street or the removal of a roundabout at Dalton and Childs roads, and the list goes on.

Member for Melton: comments

Mrs FYFFE (Evelyn) — Many fine words of support and understanding have been spoken on both sides of this house in relation to victims of crime, so it was with dismay that I listened to the adjournment matter raised by the member for Melton on the last sitting day. He sarcastically and unsympathetically attempted to ridicule the member for Mordialloc. Apparently the member needs to be reminded of how serious the events experienced by the member for Mordialloc truly were. The member's house was fired upon at least six times, and bullets were found in various places throughout the house and her car. Had the member been standing in the wrong room, the topic of conversation in this chamber may have been quite different indeed. The member for Melton mocked the person whom the member for Mordialloc telephoned. He clearly has no comprehension of the state of mind a woman can find herself in after such a traumatic, violent and life-threatening event. It is natural for a woman to turn to someone she trusts, who is strong and who can help. It is an instinctive and recognised response for a victim who is in shock.

Attacking another member in this house on any personal matter is shameful. It is demeaning and unbecoming to the member making the attack. The member for Melton obviously cannot see past the chauvinistically inflated bravado he exhibited by sarcastically attempting to insult a woman and trivialising a serious crime with references to cartoon characters. A line has been crossed on parliamentary standards, and I call on the member to apologise. I call on the Leader of the Opposition to stand up for and enforce decent standards of behaviour towards every victim, whether they be a victim of violent crime or sexual harassment.

Budget: western suburbs

Ms THOMSON (Footscray) — At this point in time we need steady hands governing this state. With high levels of unemployment and more job losses to come, that is certainly not what we saw in today's budget, nor is it what has been demonstrated by the leader, the Premier. There is nothing in this budget for the west in relation to roads and rail and necessary infrastructure. There are some nice words about supporting WestLink, but there is no money — zero dollars. On the Melbourne Metro rail tunnel we hear nice words, but there is no money — zero. There is nothing in it for the people in the inner west.

As for the truck action plan, the government did not talk about the plan, but it did talk about increasing freight carriage to the port with the Webb Dock expansion. It talked about increasing the number of trucks that would travel on these roads, but there was zero by way of assistance to the people in the inner west to ensure that they would be able to move around their streets with the same sort of comfort that the people in the east have the luxury of being able to do. This is a zero budget for the people in Footscray. There are no steady hands at the helm of this government. It is nothing but a disaster for the people of the west. There is only one thing that they can take comfort in: the underfunding of the critical care unit at Sunshine Hospital.

Regional Victoria Living Expo

Mr CRISP (Mildura) — The 2012 Regional Victoria Living Expo was conducted at the Exhibition Centre from 27 to 29 April. I attended to support the Mildura stands on Sunday. Mildura's efforts were rewarded when it won the inaugural minister's award. Congratulations to the team that made this happen. Mildura's presence was coordinated by Mildura Rural City Council's Julie Jewell and partners Mildura Development Corporation, Mildura Tourism, Sunraysia TAFE and Mallee Track Health and Community Service. Volunteers were key to the success: people with local experience, local contacts and enthusiasm, including Julie and Dennis Jewell, Wayne Scott, Jenny Grigg, Jenny Heaslip, Dalton Kendrigan, Sarah Gilmore, Steve Valence, Kylie Rich, Ashlee Leorke, Andrew Millen and Georgia Clifford.

Support from councillors Sharyon Peart and Nick Cavallo, the mayor and the CEO of Mildura Rural City Council respectively, added to a confident presence. The huge effort was rewarded with a positive response from a huge crowd. There was a surprising level of serious interest and a large number of follow-ups to be

pursued. It should give the people of Mildura a real sense of satisfaction, given the level of interest in moving to our wonderful region. Mildura's ambassadors did us proud. Thanks to Richie Vanderberg, Dale Weightman and Todd Kelly. The controversial shirts worked well in the expo. Only Cr Cavallo wore his outside. I understand a shirt is on its way to the Deputy Premier, who admired it.

Anzac Day: Mildura electorate

Mr CRISP — Just as a quick concluding comment, well done to the RSL clubs in my electorate on a wonderful Anzac Day.

Olive Kids: fundraiser

Ms HALFPENNY (Thomastown) — On 29 April I was pleased to attend the Olive Kids fifth annual fundraiser upon invitation from constituents in my electorate. Olive Kids has a mission to improve the lives of Palestinian children who are robbed of their childhood as a consequence of war. Wars have resulted in thousands of Palestinian children becoming orphans. Olive Kids, a Victorian-based charity, provides sponsorship for those children who tragically are left without family; it also supports many general educational and health programs. The night was a fantastic success and was attended by people from all walks of life: Liberal and Labor members, people of many different religions, people of many different cultural backgrounds and representatives of a variety of businesses and community organisations. Full credit goes to Amin Abbas, the Karkar and Mashni families, the Palestinian Community Association of Victoria and many others who work so hard for this cause.

Lipton Drive–Mahoneys Road, Thomastown: traffic lights

Ms HALFPENNY — On another matter, this morning I attended a barbecue at La Ionica poultry. First I have to say the chicken sausages manufactured there, and in this case cooked by the workers, were delicious. At this gathering, along with the shadow Minister for Roads, I was presented with a petition signed by many people in the Lipton Drive, Thomastown, industrial estate requesting traffic lights on the corner of Lipton Drive and Mahoneys Road. This intersection is very dangerous and meets the criteria for a black spot. There have been a number of fatalities and many accidents, bottlenecks, delays and frustrations at the intersection. The people of Thomastown will be bitterly disappointed with the budget that the government has presented, because we need decent funding for roads to make our streets safe

and for the installation of traffic lights at this intersection.

Flinders Community Christian College: community outreach lecture

Mr BURGESS (Hastings) — On Thursday, 26 April, I addressed students at Flinders Community Christian College and gave the community outreach lecture. I spoke to the students regarding the dangers of cyberbullying and social media. This is a critically important and relevant issue to the many young people who were present, and it is an issue confronting youth generally. While many benefits come from using social media, there are many dangers, such as cyberbullying, which can have serious consequences for both for the victim and the offender. I was impressed with the engagement by the students, and the thought behind the questions asked showed a genuine engagement.

Anzac Day: Hastings electorate

Mr BURGESS — On Anzac Day, 25 April, I attended the dawn service at the Somerville cenotaph. It was a great pleasure to lay a wreath in tribute to the fallen diggers who gave their lives for our great nation. I subsequently attended the Anzac Day memorial service at the Crib Point cenotaph where I laid a wreath. This ceremony was preceded by a very impressive parade. Anzac Day has a special place in the spirit of our nation. The sacrifice that those brave diggers made meant Australia was protected and defended, and from that freedom and prosperity was able to flourish. It is a sacrifice we will never forget.

Gateway Worship and Performing Arts Centre: opening

Mr BURGESS — It was my great pleasure to be present to witness the opening of the new worship and performing arts centre of the Gateway Church in Seaford Road, Seaford, on 22 April this year by the Minister for Planning, the Honourable Matthew Guy. I congratulate Rick and Marcy Paynter and the Gateway congregation on their hard work, application and enormous achievement in establishing this wonderful new community asset.

Keilor Views Primary School: achievements

Ms HUTCHINS (Keilor) — I rise today to talk about a beautiful school in my electorate, Keilor Views Primary School, which I visited last week. I was impressed with the newly completed renovation of the school facilities and with the amazing teaching and support staff I met. Congratulations to the principal,

Charles Branciforte, for the great leadership and vision he has demonstrated in bringing this school forward over the last three years in particular. I acknowledge the sixth session program that runs at the school, which is for select students to study with their parents for a 1-hour session twice a week to improve their skills.

Parkwood Green Primary School: student leaders

Ms HUTCHINS — Another great school in my electorate is Parkwood Green Primary School. It is a thriving and vibrant school located in one of the fastest growing regions of Melbourne. It is led by the principal, Eric Sealey. The school captains are Lachlan Pettigrove and Ishmeet Kaur, and the vice-captains are Mitchell Hearne and Ebony Wilkie, who led an Anzac Day ceremony last week with excellence and pride. I acknowledge two great students at the school, Cooper and Reilly Purcell in grades 3 and 5. Unfortunately in today's budget these schools have failed to receive any further assistance that may be needed in the fast-growing region that I represent. The cuts to the education maintenance allowance relied upon by many families in schools in the western suburbs should be condemned, and the minister should be ashamed for taking away money from needy students.

Budget: Caulfield electorate

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — Firstly I would like to congratulate the Treasurer on delivering a tough but fair and responsible budget, and I look forward to making announcements for the benefit of my constituents.

Caulfield South Primary School: member visit

Mr SOUTHWICK — Congratulations to grade 6 students and teachers at Caulfield South Primary School, who are learning about politics and government, facilitated by their teachers John Dawson-Wink, Kate Tarrant and Justin Cole. I enjoyed speaking to the students and being grilled with tough questions from the students that would put the opposition to shame.

Croatian and Jewish communities: dinner

Mr SOUTHWICK — On Sunday evening I, along with the member for Geelong, attended a dinner in Corio hosted by the Croatian Consul-General, Mr Antun Babic, and designed to build ties between the Croatian and Jewish communities of Victoria. I would like to commend Mr Babic and the Jewish Community Council of Victoria for their strong leadership in

bringing members of both communities together. The Croatian and Jewish communities should be commended for their efforts. This is a great example of how multiculturalism works in Victoria, even under the most challenging circumstances.

St Kilda Primary School: Walk Safely to School Day

Mr SOUTHWICK — Recently I joined the students and staff at St Kilda Primary School to celebrate Walk Safely to School Day, a great initiative that promotes an active lifestyle by encouraging young people to walk or ride a bike all or part of the way to school. I commend principal Sue Higgins, organiser Cassandra King and the students for their involvement.

Israel Independence Day

Mr SOUTHWICK — I congratulate the state of Israel on its 64th birthday. Many celebrations have taken place. Today I joined the Melbourne University Jewish Students Society for a barbecue, and last week I attended a fantastic concert hosted by the Zionist Council of Victoria as well as a great family afternoon at Luna Park.

Anzac Day: Caulfield electorate

Mr SOUTHWICK — I also commend all the people who attended Anzac Day commemorations in my electorate.

Anzac Day: Niddrie electorate

Mr CARROLL (Niddrie) — I rise to commend the Essendon RSL and the Keilor East RSL for their outstanding work on the recent 2012 Anzac Day commemorative events. I had the privilege of attending both their Sunday services on 22 April and the Keilor East RSL dawn service on 25 April.

It was so encouraging to see many hundreds of locals — both young and young at heart — take the time to pay their respects at each of these important events. I believe it is a great reflection of the manner in which the members of these RSL branches pay tribute to the sacrifices of servicemen and servicewomen and celebrate the Anzac spirit that participation at these local ceremonies is continually growing. I acknowledge and record my appreciation for the Essendon RSL and the Keilor East RSL for ensuring that our servicemen and servicewomen are respectfully honoured.

Regional Victoria Living Expo

Mr BULL (Gippsland East) — It was fantastic to see firsthand East Gippsland being so well represented at last weekend's inaugural Regional Victoria Living Expo at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. All stands were extremely busy with constant inquiries from people wanting to relocate permanently, invest in a second residence or find out about East Gippsland as a holiday destination. This was a great initiative by the coalition government, and it was well received by all regions.

Orbost Secondary College: centenary

Mr BULL — It was my pleasure to attend Orbost Secondary College's centenary celebration last Saturday, a great milestone in the town's history. Orbost Secondary College prides itself on being a caring and progressive college. In 1912, the first senior class consisted of 26 pupils, and the junior class consisted of 16 pupils. Most of those original students' names still remain well known in the Orbost district.

Country Fire Authority: Paynesville brigade

Mr BULL — I acknowledge all Country Fire Authority brigades throughout East Gippsland and the incredible service they provide to the local community. I had the pleasure of attending Paynesville CFA's annual service awards last Saturday night. My congratulations go to Norris May and Albert Ah Yee, who received their 55-year and 60-year clasps respectively. Gary Wood was announced as Paynesville fire brigade's firefighter of the year, and Captain Ross McGregor was presented with the Eric Eaton Memorial Trophy.

Anzac Day: Gippsland East electorate

Mr BULL — It was great to see the terrific attendances at this year's Anzac Day services despite what was terrible weather. I attended the dawn service at Maffra and then the main services at Paynesville and Bairnsdale. The number of young people involved in and attending those services was particularly pleasing.

Anzac Day: commemoration

Mr McGUIRE (Broadmeadows) — Within days I have had the privilege of laying a wreath at Gallipoli and planting a sapling from the seed of its poignant lone pine at Meadows Primary School in Broadmeadows. The juxtaposition is testimony to Faulkner's insight that the past is never dead and buried — it is not even the past.

Australia and Turkey forged new identities at Gallipoli. Diggers and Turks fought in trenches sometimes only metres apart, shooting to kill then exchanging water and chocolate amid the heat, snow and carnage. Prime Minister Julia Gillard summed up Gallipoli's impact as representing to all Australians the deepest values of mateship, good behaviour, endurance and bravery. This theme resonates in Broadmeadows, home of the army barracks where the diggers were trained, which decades later accommodated Turkish migrants calling Australia home. This is virtually the United Nations in one neighbourhood, with families from more than 140 countries. Dressed in the national costume of their country of origin, students from the Meadows and St Dominic's primary schools honoured the Anzac spirit by singing 'I am, you are, we are Australian'.

Planting a sapling from the lone pine, which symbolises one of the bloodiest battles, was an elegant dismissal of a recent report to the federal government claiming that multiculturalism may cause divisions in Australia for the centenary of Gallipoli in 2015.

In Broadmeadows the countdown to the centenary of Gallipoli is an opportunity to commemorate the values that unite us as Australians. The community is determined to demonstrate that, like the sapling lone pine standing in the playground at Meadows Primary School, Australians will grow and thrive beyond the burden of history, side by side.

Shadow minister for manufacturing: media release

Mrs BAUER (Carrum) — Last week Victorians were treated to a rare event: a media release from the so-called shadow minister for manufacturing, Mr Somyurek, a member for South Eastern Metropolitan in the Council, which was his first for over a month. I say 'so-called' shadow minister for manufacturing because, as Mr Somyurek recently complained in a letter to the opposition leader that was leaked to the press and quoted by the *Age*:

... I feel that I am the shadow minister assisting the real shadow minister for manufacturing and my title as the shadow minister for manufacturing is nothing more than a charade.

Mr Somyurek went on to lament in his letter to the opposition leader that 'others have encroached on the manufacturing portfolio and redefined the portfolio by stealth'. Mr Somyurek complained that the shadow Treasurer pilfered his manufacturing policy and leaked it to the press. As readers of the *Age* will know, Mr Somyurek put these concerns in writing, displaying a touching faith in his leader's integrity.

But let us leave Mr Somyurek to his existential crisis and return to the media release, which marks the beginning of his fight-back against the stealth forces cannibalising his portfolio. In the media release — —

Mr Lim — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, on casting aspersions — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I am sorry; I do not know what point of order the member is taking. I ask him to start again.

Mr Lim — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, the member is casting aspersions on a member of the other place. I ask that you ask her to stop this members statement.

Ms Asher — On the point of order, Deputy Speaker, firstly, the convention of this place is that points of order are taken at the end of the 90-second statement bracket, and generally there has been agreement on both sides of the house on this. That has been the practice. I urge you to reiterate your advice to the member that that is the practice. Secondly, the member for Carrum is not casting aspersions on anybody; she is simply reading out material that has been made publicly available and can be easily read in the *Age*. Her comments are well within the ambit of what members are permitted to say in 90-second statements. I urge you to rule the member for Clayton's point of order out of order and to do the member for Carrum the courtesy of allowing her to finish her statement.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member for Clayton wishes to expand on his point of order.

Mr Lim — The minister is misinterpreting the member for Carrum's statement — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I ask the member for Clayton to sit down. I do not uphold the point of order.

Mrs BAUER — In the media release Mr Somyurek defiantly wades into economic policy, discussing economic growth, retail spending and the property market, none of which would come under even the most generous definition of manufacturing. Mr Somyurek also presumes to tell the government what to do in the state budget, which sounds a lot like the sort of thing a shadow Treasurer usually does. Mr Somyurek clearly believes the shadow Treasurer is trying to steal his portfolio, and his media release shows that he is now returning the favour.

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

Yuroke electorate: government performance

Ms BEATTIE (Yuroke) — Imagine my surprise a couple of weeks ago when I turned on the news only to see the Minister for Roads and Minister for Public Transport, the member for Polwarth, in a hard hat and fluoro jacket, cutting the ribbon at the Craigieburn train stabling facility. This project was funded by Labor as part of the \$440 million allocated for nine metropolitan train stabling upgrades in 2009.

For over one year now I have been inviting the honourable minister to Yuroke to address two major and very serious problems affecting the lives of residents in my electorate each and every day. The minister slunk into Yuroke to cut a ribbon on a Labor-planned and financed project and then ran out of the electorate faster than you could say 'Fix the problems and build the future'. If the minister had informed me that he would be in Yuroke, I would have been more than happy to have picked him up and dropped him off so that he could inspect the death trap that is Somerton Road and the disaster that is the parking at the Craigieburn rail station.

How will the minister fix these problems? I have written to him on numerous occasions, tabled petitions and raised these matters frequently in the house. Enough with the mantra of 'Fixing the problems' — just do something. It is budget day. Where is the action the minister and his government have promised? The residents of Yuroke deserve better than a government that is more interested in conducting a public relations exercise than addressing serious issues. I ask the minister to get real.

Scleroderma Victoria

Mr BLACKWOOD (Narracan) — Twenty-nine June this year is World Scleroderma Day, and there will be a range of activities designed to raise community awareness of this debilitating disease. I only became aware of this disease after being approached by Frank Leach. Frank has met with me on a number of occasions, specifically to seek my support for further funding for research into the disease. Thanks to Frank, I have become far more aware of this condition and the terrible impact it can have on people's lives. I will continue to work with the Minister for Health to raise the priority of the need for more research funds for this disease. Scleroderma is a chronic condition that causes inflammation and thickening of the skin. The cause of scleroderma is not known. Researchers have found some evidence that genes are important factors, but the environment also seems to play a role.

Scleroderma Victoria began in July 1979 as a self-help group under the guidance of Jenny Gould and Roland Airey, who were social workers at the Alfred hospital working with Dr Alf Barnett. Membership has grown steadily throughout the years from 26 financial members in 1980 to over 300 in 2009. From 1982 Scleroderma Victoria has financially assisted research into better managing the symptoms of scleroderma and into attempts to find a cure. In the last 18 months Scleroderma Victoria has funded the position of a scleroderma nurse operating a weekly clinic for patients at St Vincent's Hospital and the Monash Medical Centre. I commend Scleroderma Victoria for the work it does in raising funds for research and providing much-needed support for scleroderma sufferers and their families.

Monash Medical Centre: children's centre

Mr LIM (Clayton) — I am dismayed that in the budget papers today this government still has not committed the full amount of \$250 million for the building of the Monash Children's hospital at the Monash Medical Centre, as promised by them prior to the 2010 election. Mr Baillieu as opposition leader said at the time:

We certainly make the same commitment.

Sadly, this was an empty promise to mislead the electorate at the 2010 state election. On March 24 2011 the Premier made the following statement in this place:

The Monash children's centre will be an important addition to the Royal Children's Hospital and health services in this state. We are committed to it. We were committed to it in the election campaign period and we are committed to it on a time frame which we stand by.

The Premier also made the following statement in this place on 7 April 2011:

Our commitment to the Monash children's centre was made in the election campaign, and that was a clear commitment. I referred to that when this question was asked previously. We stand by that commitment, and it has been accurately described by the Minister for Health.

With only \$8.5 million allocated to purchase land in the 2011 budget, I wish to remind the Liberal Party and the Premier that time is running out and that residents in the Clayton electorate and the inner south-east are furious. On behalf of all constituents in the south-east corridor I call on the Premier to act now.

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

Shadow ministry: performance

Dr SYKES (Benalla) — Mr Somyurek, the Labor shadow minister for manufacturing, last week issued his first media statement in over a month. We can only speculate about what the failed Brumby government ministers thought about Mr Somyurek's blundering excursion into economic policy. An anonymous Labor source accuses these failed ministers of exercising a 'pervasive, suffocating influence' on the opposition, which is what they used to do to the whole state of Victoria.

Henry Kissinger once said that university politics is so vicious because the stakes are so low. What we have here is the vicious politics of the Labor Party in opposition, because while the Leader of the Opposition claims to be frank with the Victorian people, the real Frank is sitting behind him.

Victorians were memorably promised the 'real Julia' at the last federal election. How long will it be until Victorians are confronted with the real Frank? It could be quite soon, because while the Leader of the Opposition pretends to be frank with the Victorian people, his colleagues no longer think they that he can be frank with him. As one Labor source told the *Australian*:

... put nothing in writing to the leader because he or his office can't be trusted.

Previous targets of the Labor leader's notorious dirt unit would probably agree with this. What they might not have expected is friendly fire directed at Labor caucus colleagues by a leader who is not waving but drowning.

Greece: Anzac study tour

Mr PANDAZOPOULOS (Dandenong) — It was an honour to recently participate in an Anzac study tour to Greece that commemorated Australia's cultural heritage over the last 100 years in Greece. This all started in World War I in preparation for the Gallipoli campaign, as the island of Lemnos was the staging post for the Gallipoli campaign. It was where the hospitals were, it was where the bases were, it was where the recreation camps were and it was even where desalination plants were built to transport drinkable water across 100 kilometres of the Aegean to the battlefield sites, as well as food, munitions and supplies.

It was an honour to participate in three Anzac services, and I want to commend the Australian ambassador to Greece, Jenny Bloomfield, and Katerina Kapsani from her office for organising those events. There were three events on Lemnos Island, where there are

commonwealth war cemeteries, including a memorial for the Turkish prisoners of war who are buried there. I also thank them for the Anzac services at the Kalamaki war cemetery, which is a World War II cemetery. The Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Nick Kotsiras, was also present at that very moving ceremony. I thank the authorities of the island of Lemnos and the regional government of the North Aegean for their work, their planning and their role in the Gallipoli commemorations, noting the important role they played in that campaign.

I also had the honour of participating in an Anzac service where no services have been held since 1991, to commemorate the Battle of Vevi, the first Allied campaign against the advancing German army in northern Greece in World War II.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member for Seymour has 44 seconds.

Seymour: television program

Ms McLEISH (Seymour) — Seymour is a town of about 6000 people set along the banks of the beautiful Goulburn River. Like many in Seymour, I was disappointed and angry with the portrayal of Seymour in the ABC's new series *Two on the Great Divide*. The ABC chose to selectively ignore the many positive attributes of our beautiful town and area and instead focused on the negatives — both in what was said and in the images shown. Targeted negative images that could be found in so many other towns were used to depict a distorted view of Seymour.

Seymour has much to be proud of, including the wonderful Goulburn River, which offers beautiful walks and great fishing; talented local artists, whose work we see regularly displayed; historic buildings such as the Old Post Office Seymour and the Courthouse Gallery; a thriving equine industry; and attractions such as the Tastes of the Goulburn, the Seymour Cup and the well-attended Seymour Alternative Farming Expo, which draws some 45 000 people to the town.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member's time has expired. I remind all members that taking points of order during members statements limits speakers' time, and we have one member of the opposition who has now missed his opportunity to make a members statement. The convention of taking points of order at the end of members statements makes it easier and fairer for everyone.

CARBON TAX: ECONOMIC IMPACT

Mr O'BRIEN (Minister for Energy and Resources) — I move:

That this house notes that the federal Labor government's proposed carbon dioxide tax will —

- (1) increase the cost of living for all Victorian families, notably in relation to the cost of electricity and gas;
- (2) hurt Victorian business and destroy jobs by increasing costs, especially in manufacturing, food processing and agriculture;
- (3) short-change Victorian families and businesses with inadequate compensation arrangements;
- (4) increase costs for all Victorian schools, hospitals and public transport;
- (5) disproportionately hurt Victoria for being endowed with world-class brown coal resources and generation;
- (6) undermine Victoria's export position and the international competitiveness of Australia relative to its major trading partners;
- (7) according to federal Treasury modelling, hit Victoria first and hardest by damaging Victoria's gross state product more than that of any other state for the next 25 years; and —

that this house therefore condemns the federal Labor government for undertaking this action with no electoral mandate and in a direct betrayal of commitments made to the Australian public before the 2010 federal election.

Today, being state budget day, it is absolutely appropriate that we discuss in this house one of the greatest economic threats to this state. It was fascinating to hear the member for Altona earlier, in the debate about the government business program, get to her feet and claim that discussing the impact of the carbon tax on Victoria was not important. This shows, if any further proof was needed, just how out of touch the opposition is with the reality of economics in this state. The carbon tax will have a devastating impact on this state. It will hurt jobs, it will cost families and it will cost businesses. It is a key economic threat to the state, and for that reason it is absolutely appropriate that we discuss it on the day of the state budget.

I record initially my gratitude to the Treasurer for an outstanding, sound, disciplined and responsible budget that will help this state get through these difficult economic times. We all know that the difficult economic times we face are caused by a variety of factors. There is the fact that the value of the Australian dollar is high and some global commodity prices are low, and that impacts on our economy and particularly the manufacturing base in this state. However,

governments can make bad decisions that make difficult times worse, and that is exactly what we have had with the federal Labor government's carbon tax.

If we look at this motion, we can break it down into a number of parts. It notes:

... that the federal Labor government's proposed carbon dioxide tax will —

- (1) increase the cost of living for all Victorian families, notably in relation to the cost of electricity and gas ...

Let us start there. We all know, on this side of the house at least, that rising utility prices are a source of great discomfort to the hip pockets of Victorian families. We understand that, and that is why one of the first things we did when we came to office was double the energy concession that applies in this state. Under this coalition government, pensioners get concessions not just for six months of the year but every day, every week, every month and every year. We have doubled those concessions. They now apply year round because the coalition government is committed to looking after those in our community who are less well off. We understand that rising gas and electricity prices cause concern, that rising water prices cause concern and that massive desalination plants that add to water bills cause concern; therefore we try to do practical things to help families adjust to those rising prices. That is why we doubled the concession.

What is this carbon tax going to do? According to the federal Treasury's own modelling, we are going to see an immediate 10 per cent increase in electricity prices and a 9 per cent increase in gas prices in the first year alone. While the state coalition government is increasing concessions to reduce the cost of utilities, federal Labor is jacking the cost of utilities up. It is putting them up across the board, whether it is gas or whether it is electricity, making it harder for people to have their heaters on in winter and making it harder for people to run a fan during summer. That is the economic policy of the federal Labor Party.

It is useful to have this debate in Parliament because we might finally get a chance to have on the record where those opposite stand when it comes to federal Labor's carbon tax. Will they stand up for Victoria, or will they stand up for Labor? That is a very interesting question, and we look forward to hearing the answer. While we are trying to cut the cost of living through increasing concessions, federal Labor is increasing it through a carbon tax which will directly hit electricity and gas prices.

What will be the broader impact in terms of jobs? I move to point 2 of my motion, which says that the carbon tax will 'hurt Victorian business and destroy jobs'. The Victorian government commissioned Deloitte Access Economics to undertake modelling in relation to the carbon tax, which was released in September 2011. I would be delighted if any of the economic geniuses opposite wanted to challenge what Deloitte Access Economics said about that modelling. I would be delighted to hear them do that, but I am hearing a lot of silence at the moment. What did Deloitte Access Economics say in its modelling? It said that by 2015, just three years hence, we would see 35 000 fewer jobs in Victoria than would otherwise have been the case. Federal Labor's carbon tax will cost this state 35 000 jobs. It is the greatest job-killing policy ever to hit this state, and those opposite support it. They support Victoria having 35 000 fewer jobs.

We get some regional breakdowns as well. We see that there will be about 1600 fewer jobs in the Barwon area, 1250 fewer jobs in Gippsland and over 1750 fewer jobs in Bendigo, Ballarat, Ararat, Bacchus Marsh and Gisborne. The modelling shows that our gross state product (GSP) will be almost 1.8 per cent or \$6.14 billion lower than it would have been without a carbon tax. Per capita income will be more than \$1050 lower. Investment will be down by 6.63 per cent or almost \$6.3 billion. By 2020 there will be an even greater reduction in GSP, down \$7.7 billion or almost 2 per cent.

Today we have had from the Treasurer a very responsible budget in very tough economic times. You can only wonder how it would have been if there had been some more money in the till. Maybe if those opposite had not blown \$3 billion on a botched gaming licence auction that money could have been spent on more infrastructure or more front-line services.

But we are talking about the carbon tax — —

Mr Merlino — Deputy Speaker, I bring your attention to the number of members in the chamber.

Quorum formed.

Mr O'BRIEN — I am always happy to have a larger audience to hear about the \$3 billion that members opposite lost in a botched gaming licence auction.

In terms of the carbon tax the Deloitte Access Economics modelling shows that by 2015, in three years time, the budget position is predicted to be almost \$660 million worse off compared to what would have been the case without the tax. That is \$660 million

worth of investment in schools, in hospitals, in police, in roads and in public transport and \$660 million worth of business tax cuts and manufacturing support that we will not have because members opposite support their federal Labor mates in imposing this carbon tax on Victoria. By 2020 the budget position is expected to be \$850 million worse off. That is a dreadful economic impact on this state.

Members opposite may say, 'There is some compensation. Some people are being compensated for this tax'. What does the Gillard government itself say about the so-called compensation? The Gillard government says that around 8 million households will pay more through the carbon tax than they get back. At least 8 million households across Australia and, assuming we are 25 per cent of the population, about 2 million Victorian households will be ripped off by the carbon tax. On the federal government's own estimates even some temporary compensation will not be enough to make up for the extra costs Victorians are going to have to pay. Given that 35 000 Victorians who would have been in work will not be because of the carbon tax, you wonder how much compensation can make up for losing your job. How much compensation can make up for not getting a job that you would have had if it had not been for the Labor Party's carbon tax? That is what the Deloitte Access Economics figures show.

Members opposite might say that Deloitte Access Economics is simply one modeller. What do the architects of the carbon tax themselves say? You may well ask the federal Department of the Treasury. You would say that federal Treasury officers are straight shooters in lots of ways. They may not have any particular reason to try to sugar coat the impact of the policy. Look at the federal Treasury modelling in relation to the impact of the carbon tax on Victoria. I take members to chart 5.37 in the federal Treasury modelling. It is entitled, 'Gross state product — Clean energy future — Change from global action scenario'. It is a graph. The graph shows the hit to gross state product for every state in Australia as a result of the carbon tax. It models it from the introduction of the carbon tax right out to 2050. What that graph shows is that Victoria gets hit first and hardest for the next 25 years because of the carbon tax. We will be hit first and hardest, and that pain will endure for 25 years. In 25 years time we will be the second worst hit. We can look forward in 2038 to being the second worst hit state in the commonwealth as opposed to the worst hit.

One of the reasons the carbon tax will hit us so badly is that we have a large manufacturing base. One of the reasons we have a large manufacturing base is that we have had affordable, reliable and secure power supplies.

We get 93 per cent of our power from the Latrobe Valley — from those coal-fired generators that have kept generations of Victorians in work and provided generations of Victorians with affordable, reliable power. Of course the federal government has a carbon tax that specifically hits coal-fired generators. In fact if you wanted to come up with a policy that singled out Victoria for pain and punishment, it would look like the carbon tax. That is what it would look like. We hear members opposite saying that they will support their federal brothers and sisters, that they will support the federal carbon tax despite what it does to this state — or even because of what it does to this state. They are Labor first and Victorians last; that is the way they are.

We have gone through the modelling, and it could not be clearer in terms of the damage that will be done. We have looked at the impact on jobs and on power bills. Let us have a look at the impact on the costs of providing services to Victorians — our schools and our public hospitals.

The Gillard government's carbon tax is going to increase power bills to Victoria's public hospitals by around \$13.6 million a year from this year. Based on current electricity usage, from the date of its introduction until 2020 the total cost of the carbon tax on the power bills of public hospitals will be about \$143 million — and the commonwealth will not be providing one dollar of compensation to cover that. That is \$143 million worth of operations that will not occur, it is \$143 million worth of nurses and doctors who will not be employed and it is \$143 million of capital expenditure that will now never happen because those opposite support their federal mates' carbon tax. There will be people who will not get the medical treatment that they should get because the carbon tax is going to eat into the operating budgets of our public hospitals right here in Victoria.

In regard to schools, based on a conservative estimate of a 10 per cent impact on utility prices, government schools will be hit by an extra \$4.2 million in power prices, and that is going to rise after that. That is not just an impact on the government school sector; the non-government school sector will also be impacted. Whether you go to a state school, an independent school, a Catholic school, a Christian school or a non-denominational school, you will get hit. That is extra money that our kids will not get in terms of better teaching services, better infrastructure, better books and better opportunities, because that money will be going to the federal Labor government in Canberra to pay for its carbon tax. Again, there will be no compensation at all.

In regard to public transport, it is a bizarre concept to have a so-called green tax — an environmental tax — that actually makes public transport more expensive for users and makes cars relatively cheaper to run. You would have to be an absolute fool to think that encouraging people to get into their cars and drive is a better alternative than encouraging people to use public transport. The Department of Transport estimates that between 2012–13 and 2014–15 the carbon tax will cost Victoria's public transport services \$48 million. That is \$48 million that will be sucked out of our public transport system. That will lead to higher fares or reduced services compared to what would have been the case. For \$48 million you could put eight new trams on the network to Brunswick and Preston, you could buy 194 000 concrete sleepers, you could pay for 160 kilometres of shared cycle and pedestrian paths or you could build a major road duplication in Narre Warren South. There are real projects, real spending and real infrastructure that will not occur because of federal Labor's carbon tax and the support of members opposite for that tax. They are hitting our schools, they are hitting our hospitals and they are hitting our public transport.

As I discussed earlier, this is a tax that discriminates against Victoria. When we are talking about compensation, it is known that the federal government has acknowledged that because the carbon tax will have such a heavy impact on business costs there are so-called energy-intensive trade-exposed industries — EITEs — that should be eligible for compensation. These companies and businesses will be very much affected by the carbon tax. They operate in an international trade environment in which other countries do not have that same carbon tax impost, so they would be unable to recoup their losses. The federal Labor government is going to put in temporary compensation measures for EITEs.

These industries will get up to 94.5 per cent of their carbon tax burden as so-called free permits. The trouble is that the federal Labor government has calculated the entitlements for EITEs based on the emissions intensity of black coal electricity. So a steel mill or a smelter operating in New South Wales that uses black-coal-fired electricity will be compensated with free permits for 94.5 per cent of its carbon tax impost, but for a Victorian aluminium smelter — like, for example, the Alcoa smelter at Point Henry, which we all know is being reviewed because of difficult financial circumstances — because the energy intensity of brown coal is about 1.25 tonnes of carbon dioxide per megawatt hour, the effective compensation will be only about 70 per cent.

The federal government has said, 'We'll give 94.5 per cent compensation if you are a smelter in New South Wales, but if you are an aluminium smelter in Victoria' — in Geelong, for example — 'you will get only 70 per cent'. This is a discriminatory tax designed to hurt Victoria — designed to hurt Victorian families and designed to hurt Victorian businesses. Any member of this Parliament who wants to put their own state first could not possibly stand up and support such discriminatory measures against this state and its industries.

I turn to the subject of brown coal. As I have said in this house before, Victoria has world-class resources of brown coal. We have over 500 years worth of brown coal at current usage rates. It has been a source of competitive advantage for this state for over 80 years, and it was the vision of —

Mr McIntosh — John Monash.

Mr O'BRIEN — I thank the Leader of the House. It was the vision of Sir John Monash, who was the father of the State Electricity Commission, to set up the Latrobe Valley generation infrastructure, which has held this state in terrifically good stead over decades. That advantage is now facing the axe as a result of the federal carbon tax, because the federal government is not supporting the Latrobe Valley. Remember when Kevin Rudd was Prime Minister? I am tipping that we might hear more from him in the future. When Kevin Rudd was Prime Minister he made an attempt at introducing an emissions trading scheme (ETS) and he planned for compensation for regions that would be affected by his ETS. He planned for \$200 million in compensation over five years for affected regions. There is a very strong argument to make that that amount was completely inadequate, but that was back in 2008 or 2009. Then obviously the ETS was not proceeded with. When the Gillard government came up with its carbon tax proposal, it said, 'We should do something for the regions that we're taking the baseball bat to with our carbon tax' — the Latrobe Valley being a key one — 'so we should have a compensation arrangement to help restructure those industries and areas'.

While Kevin Rudd was prepared to spend \$200 million over five years to help support affected areas, Julia Gillard is going to spend \$200 million over seven years. I am not sure about the economic geniuses from the Labor Party, but when I studied commerce at university \$200 million over five years was worth more than \$200 million over seven years. Years down the track from Kevin Rudd's failed attempt at an ETS the Gillard government thinks we need less compensation and less

support for what its policy is going to do to our vulnerable regions. How could any member of this house in good conscience stand up and support a carbon tax that provides such obviously inadequate compensation measures?

This will have a very significant impact. We have discussed the compensation arrangements that are completely inadequate. The timing of this really could not be worse. If anyone was going to come up with a tax on carbon, you would think the time to do it might be, all things being equal, when the economy is strong, when we have rising employment, when we have strong industries and when our exporters have the economic conditions in which they can compete with an added impost. Instead the federal government has introduced a carbon tax at a time when we have slowing economic growth and a federal government that has massive debt and deficits.

This tax is coming at a time when the value of the Australian dollar has never been higher — at least since it was floated — making it the worst possible time for our exporters to have an additional tax impost put onto them. It is coming at a time when we have rising utility prices and when families and businesses are finding it harder than ever to pay for their gas, electricity and hot water. The timing could not be worse, the compensation is completely inadequate and the impact of this tax on Victoria will be massive.

When you look at the people who designed the carbon tax, you have to wonder just how in touch they are. The federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Greg Combet, whom I will be seeing at a Council of Australian Governments meeting on Friday, was asked on 8 March on Neil Mitchell's program on 3AW about the impact of the carbon tax on average household bills, particularly electricity bills. You might have thought that somebody whose job it was to impose a carbon tax that would drive up electricity bills might have actually done a little bit of homework about the impact of his government's policy. Here is what Minister Combet said:

I wouldn't know what the average power bill is ...

If you have spent your life in the trade union movement and you get shoehorned into a seat and then put into a ministry, I suppose you would not really know what the average power bill was. You would not know and you would not care, and that is why I think the Labor government is being incredibly short-sighted in what it is doing with this carbon tax policy. As I said, by contrast, one of the first things the coalition government did when it was elected was to extend those

concessions for pensioners and for vulnerable Victorian families. We give them concessions 365 days a year as opposed to the measly six months a year that those concessions operated for under the former government.

Another issue is our energy security and security of supply. We are very significantly reliant on the baseload generators in the Latrobe Valley; we get 93 per cent of our power from the coal-fired generators in the Latrobe Valley. I should mention at this point that the former Brumby government, when it had its massive lurch to the left while trying to suck up to the inner city greenies before the last election, decided it was going to shut down a quarter of the Hazelwood power station. It did not have any money to pay for it, of course, and it did not know where the alternative power was going to come from. It just made this commitment to shut down a quarter of Hazelwood.

It is interesting because it was only in 2005 that the Bracks government signed a deal to extend the life of Hazelwood; it extended the life of Hazelwood. At the time, then Premier Bracks said that International Power's 1600-megawatt Hazelwood power station contributed about 25 per cent of Victoria's baseload electricity. It was one of the most crucial and important generators in this state and was obviously also crucial for its security of supply. Announcing the extension of the life of Hazelwood, the former Premier said:

It also secures the future of some 800 Hazelwood workers and their families, which is also extremely important.

Back then, when there was somebody who was not a complete captive of the Greens leading the Labor Party, it actually thought that extending the life of Hazelwood would add to our energy security, protect jobs and decrease power prices. This was a positive thing, but now we have a federal Labor government, supported by its state colleagues, which wants to see Hazelwood shut down entirely. It has a contract-for-closure proposal that will target 2000 megawatts of brown coal-fired generation. Hazelwood produces, as former Premier Bracks said, about 25 per cent of our power. If you are sitting down on a chair with four legs and you suddenly pull one of those legs away, you are going to fall over. The same will happen with our power supplies. If you close down Hazelwood precipitously or if you close down Hazelwood without knowing where that replacement baseload is going to come from, you will jeopardise Victoria's security of energy supplies. You cannot afford to do that.

You will have the Labor Party and the Greens saying, 'We should just rely on wind'. Unfortunately the Australian Energy Market Operator, which is the organisation that runs the national electricity market,

said in its most recent statement of operations that you can only rely on wind power for 8 per cent of its capacity during summer peak times. So on those very hot days when power is at a premium and there is a great amount of demand, the Labor Party would presumably have the car companies looking out the window to see whether it was windy enough to keep those machines operating and whether it was windy enough to keep people in work, because you cannot replace baseload electricity, like that generated by Hazelwood, with wind power, which you can only rely on for 8 per cent of the time when it comes to peak demand.

We have a federal government policy that aims to close down 2000 megawatts of brown coal-fired generation. Obviously the bulk of that will be in Victoria. It is no secret that Hazelwood has been in the frame in relation to this policy. I wonder what happened to the Labor Party that once talked about securing the future for those 800 workers and their families. What happened to that Labor Party? It has been hijacked, I think. It has been hijacked by the Greens, and we are seeing that in relation to other matters in the other place, where they are trying to push for moratoriums on any exploration for new gas. What has happened is that the Labor Party has sold its political soul to the Greens, and the Greens have said, 'Thank you very much'. They will return the favour by eating the Labor Party's base. You cannot do deals with a crocodile; eventually the crocodile is going to eat you. We still see a Labor Party that does deals with the crocodile that is the Greens.

In conclusion, I will make just a brief reference — because I know my colleague the member for Morwell will also make reference to this — to a media release put out today by Industrial Energy Pty Ltd, which runs a briquette manufacturing business in the Latrobe Valley. It says:

With the introduction of the carbon tax on 1 July 2012, the future of Victoria's only brown coal briquette manufacturer is expected to be unsustainable under a business as usual scenario.

If we needed any more proof that this federal Labor carbon tax is bad for all, worse for Victoria and far worse for the Latrobe Valley, we have it in this press release today. This is a carbon tax that is killing jobs, putting up prices for Victorian families and businesses, singling Victoria out for special, unfair treatment and providing inadequate compensation, and the timing could not be worse. It is quite clear where this side of the house stands. It is time for those opposite to start putting Victoria first instead of the Labor Party.

Mr MERLINO (Monbulk) — Does this pathetic motion not sum up the Baillieu government? Does it not sum it up? On the very day that the budget is handed down, the most significant day of the parliamentary year, the Parliament's precious debating time is wasted on a stunt. On the very day that a further 1060 Victorian jobs are at risk or lost, those opposite think it is more important to spend the day blaming someone else.

The message the government is sending to the 400 Qantas workers at Tullamarine who have lost their jobs and the 660 at Avalon who are in grave danger of losing theirs is that the most vital issue for the government — the most vital issue on the government's business program — is a puerile stunt. Some bright spark thought, 'I know what we'll do: straight after the Treasurer has delivered the budget, let's spend hours blaming someone else. That will get them off our scent!'

The government is fooling nobody. Qantas workers are certainly not fooled. The Baillieu government just does not get it. Seventeen months into this pathetic administration, government members still think they are in opposition. Victoria has been leaderless for 17 months. On budget day, of all days, we have this juvenile game. This motion will be treated by everyone both in this place and outside it with the contempt it deserves. This blaming and not leading has been a common theme of the Baillieu government. At the Liberal Party state conference the statue masquerading as the Premier spent more time during his speech providing a commentary on the Labor Party and its policies than on what he was doing as Premier. The Premiership of this great state is not a plaything, but that is not so according to the current Premier.

What of the Sleepwalker's ministers? This stunt is under the name of the Minister for Energy and Resources, whose daily breakfast routine is fig jam on toast. That gets him up and bouncing through the day. It gets him up and about for gimmicks such as this motion. It is a pity he does not have the same passion for protecting — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member for Monbulk will not use props.

Mr Southwick — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, I ask you to draw the member back to the motion. He has been talking about a whole range of different things and has not once mentioned the carbon tax and whether those opposite support it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The lead speaker does have some leniency in terms of a wide-ranging debate, but I do ask him to concentrate on the motion before the house.

Mr MERLINO — Before I go on, I make the point that the motion before us mentions business and jobs, so I think it is entirely relevant for us to talk about the fact that Victoria is bleeding jobs and the Baillieu government is making it worse. It is no surprise that the minister put his name to this motion. He loves to get his name up in lights. The story goes that he put in a call to the Premier the night before the election and said, 'If you lose, I'm going to challenge for the leadership on Monday'. He certainly has a high opinion of himself. The problem for the Minister for Energy and Resources is that he is stuck in student politics mode.

The motion also exposes the Minister for Environment and Climate Change for the utter failure he is. Is he the minister for the environment? I think not. If ever there was a misleading title for a minister of this place, it is that one. The Minister against the Environment or the Minister for Anti-environment Policies might be better. All the minister and his government do is act against the environment. The reintroduction of cattle grazing — —

Mr Southwick — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, all we are hearing now are personal attacks on ministers and debate about whether a minister was a leadership challenger or not. Let us return to the motion. I ask you to draw the member back to the motion.

Ms Neville — On the point of order, Deputy Speaker, this is a pretty broad motion, which obviously relates — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms Neville — In case those opposite do not understand this, it absolutely relates to, for example, jobs. We have talked about jobs, and we have heard the minister talk about jobs. It relates to the environment and its protection. The issues the shadow minister and deputy leader is raising are absolutely relevant in a wide-ranging debate about a measure that relates to jobs and the environment. I ask you to give the member the same sort of leniency the minister was given when he spoke on this motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I will not uphold the point of order at this point. However, I ask the member for Monbulk to try to stay within the motion on the notice paper.

Mr MERLINO — Let me go to the environmental policies — if we can call them that — of the Baillieu government and the minister: the reintroduction of cattle grazing in the high country; the destruction of Victoria's wind farm industry; the scrapping of the 20 per cent target to reduce emissions; the abolition of the premium solar feed-in tariff; the cuts to public service jobs, which are impacting on the front line of environment initiatives and programs and on volunteers in our community; the minister's conflicts of interest, including interests in a coal seam gas explorer and a solar company that received a \$50 million government grant; and the collection of firewood from our national parks.

The minister's own colleagues know what a lightweight he is. Just prior to Christmas he lost several key responsibilities, including logging and hunting. The deputy leader and soon-to-be Leader of The Nationals was given these responsibilities, responsibilities he alone now has. Not only was the Minister for Environment and Climate Change embarrassingly demoted but this also showed absolutely that when it comes to environmental policy in Victoria, The Nationals run the show.

Mr Weller — Hear, hear!

Mr MERLINO — 'Hear, hear!', The Nationals say. They are in complete control.

The combustible one, the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, does not like being asked questions. There is the initial look of horror when a question is asked. Then the blood starts to rise to his face until he looks like he is going to explode. He falls short of that, but he does present some absolute gems in this place and outside. Who can forget his answer to the question about what kinds of climate change programs he oversees? His answer was 'Beaches and that sort of thing'. That is the quality of the minister for the environment we have in the Baillieu government.

Mr O'Brien — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, I appreciate that there is latitude for the principal speaker on a motion. However, even by the most generous definitions, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition may be straying a little bit too far from the text of the motion, and I ask that he be gently drawn back — within the immediate postcode would be terrific.

Ms Neville — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is actually speaking about the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and the issue of the carbon price is

related to climate change. It is absolutely appropriate that the member for Monbulk has the opportunity to canvass the work that the Minister for Environment and Climate Change is involved in in relation to the issues that the carbon tax is dealing with in respect of greenhouse gas emissions.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) — Order! Personal reflections on members are disorderly. The motion covers a range of matters. I invite the member for Monbulk to come back to addressing the motion in those specific terms.

Mr MERLINO — To finish listing the trifecta of ministers exposed by this stunt of a debate — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr MERLINO — No, I am not ignoring it. I am actually referring to the Treasurer's infamous press conference about the Deloitte report, which goes to the heart of this motion and the debate on it.

We cannot go past the Treasurer's conference reported on ABC radio on 22 September 2011. I think this press conference deserves to be included in full in *Hansard* because it goes to the quality of those opposite and their understanding of climate change.

Mr Burgess — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, the member for Monbulk is trying to put something on the record when in fact what should be on the record is whether he supports the carbon tax. The one thing that has not been put on the record is whether those on the opposition benches support the carbon tax.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) — Order! There is no point of order. I invite the member for Monbulk to come back to the motion.

Mr MERLINO — I am absolutely on the motion. The press conference related to the Deloitte report, which contains modelling based on the decisions of the Victorian government. I will read from the transcript of the press conference, which states:

ABC's ALISON CALDWELL: It began with a shambolic press conference featuring a decidedly uncomfortable state Treasurer Kim Wells.

He was promoting a Deloitte's report on the carbon tax. He said the report proved his government's claims that Victoria would be first hit and hardest hit.

KIM WELLS: This confirms what the Baillieu government have been saying for some time, is that the carbon tax will hit Victoria first and it will hit it hard.

ALISON CALDWELL: But the report itself says that's not the case, predicting W. A. and Queensland will be hit harder than Victoria.

JOURNALIST: Your government has for months been saying it will hit Victoria hardest; that's proved to be wrong, hasn't it?

KIM WELLS: Well, we say that we'll be fighting every single — —

JOURNALIST: Sorry, do you back your — do you back the economists you have paid who disagree with what you've been saying for months?

KIM WELLS: We say that this will hit Victoria very, very hard.

ALISON CALDWELL: The Deloitte's report doesn't factor in industry assistance. It also contradicts the Treasurer's claim that its modelling is the same as that done by federal Treasury. But that didn't stop Kim Wells.

KIM WELLS: Our claim very strongly is that we maintain that Deloitte's have based their modelling on the Treasury modelling. However — —

JOURNALIST: It doesn't say that; have you read the report?

KIM WELLS: Well, let me just say, we say that the Deloitte's modelling has been based on the federal Treasury modelling but there are some difference in assumptions and we maintain that those two difference in assumptions are correct.

Acting Speaker, do you like the logic there? The transcript continues:

ALISON CALDWELL: Last year in opposition, the Liberal-National Party voted with the Brumby government to adopt a legislated 20 per cent cut in the state's carbon emissions by 2020.

But in May this year, following talks with managers at Hazelwood power station, the Baillieu government shifted and began referring to the 20 per cent target as 'aspirational'.

The Treasurer Kim Wells repeated the phrase at his press conference.

KIM WELLS: Well it's an aspirational target, the 20 per cent, and as I say it's not in legislation, it's an aspirational target.

A NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS: It is in legislation.

KIM WELLS: And in regards to, there's a requirement by the state government to look at the climate change act and we will look at that if the carbon tax comes in. But let me tell you, we'll be fighting this every single step of the way because we do not want it to proceed.

What a farce of a press conference. The government refuses to release the Deloitte report. At the press conference the Treasurer could not answer any questions about domestic abatement, the cost of his own report or the difference between the commonwealth's and the Deloitte modelling. He repeated the false claim that Victoria would be hardest

hit by a carbon tax and he claimed the reduction target was not in legislation. The Treasurer called that press conference. This was not spun out of the blue so that he had to appear without being able to do the required homework. The Treasurer called the conference, yet he could not answer any questions.

Ms Ryall — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, not once have we heard the substance of the motion, carbon tax, being addressed. I ask you to draw the member for Monbulk back to addressing the substance of the motion.

Ms Neville — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, I refer you to the motion which the Minister for Energy and Resources has moved and specifically to point 7, in which it states that the federal Treasury modelling will hit Victoria 'first and hardest'. The member for Monbulk has been absolutely relevant to that issue. What he has said has related to both the federal Treasury modelling, the modelling that was done by the Victorian government and the claim made by the Victorian government, including in here, that it will be hit hardest and first. The member for Monbulk has been absolutely relevant, and I ask that you allow him to continue.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) — Order! I do not uphold the point of order. The member for Monbulk should continue but focus on the matters forming part of the motion.

Mr MERLINO — Going to the end of the transcript of the press conference, the Treasurer's comment was 'we do not want it to proceed'.

That brings me to the absolute hypocrisy of the Baillieu government. The Minister for Environment and Climate Change said this on 17 April:

... the federal government's carbon tax is widely judged as the primary way of reducing emissions in this country.

They are recent comments from the minister.

On 23 March 2011 the Premier said:

We have had a number of debates in this chamber in recent years, and our side of politics was prepared to support the emissions trading scheme post-2007; we were prepared to support a carbon pollution reduction scheme, which was debated in this house in, I think, November 2009; and we have made the point that if we are going to reduce emissions, there will be a price for and cost to that.

Those were the comments of the Premier in 2011.

In 2009 he said:

We want to see carbon emissions reduced. We support an ETS or a CPRS.

So on the one hand those opposite support a carbon price but on the other hand members of the Baillieu government blame it for literally everything in a desperate bid to cover up their own mismanagement and incompetence that has led Victoria from being the engine room of job creation just over two years ago to having the worst unemployment rate, bar Tasmania.

The hypocrisy goes even further. The government's reasoning for scrapping the 20 per cent target is that there will be a national price on carbon, yet that is exactly what the government is opposing. The twisted logic of this government is breathtaking: we will scrap a whole range of state government programs to reduce emissions on the basis that there will be a national price on carbon, yet we do not want a national price on carbon. That is the logic of the Baillieu government.

The motion talks about business and jobs. Let us examine the Baillieu government's performance in the area of environment and jobs rather than spending our time blaming someone else. Let us look at the Baillieu government's wind farm policy, which was seemingly developed to appease members of the Baillieu family or very special Liberal Party powerbrokers who may live in the McHarg Ranges or Bald Hills or elsewhere. This government has comprehensively destroyed the wind farm industry in Victoria. An article in the *Age* of 31 March 2012 reports:

The coalition's approach to wind development has raised concerns across business, planning and local government circles. The Australian Industry Group, which represents more than 60 000 businesses across the country, says it is costing the state billions in investment. Victorian group chief Tim Piper says he raised his concerns — primarily about a lack of flexibility — with the government but was told the laws would not be changed.

Tim Piper is then quoted as having said:

We know investment has been lost, and we know there have also been unintended consequences ... We have companies that have wanted to put up small turbines on industrial plants well away from homes and they have been prevented because of these regulations.

In the same article Andrew Richards from Pacific Hydro is quoted as having said:

We are just concerned about a planning framework that is not merit based and a policy framework that creates an impression that our industry is somehow bad or harmful ... We just want to be treated in the same way that all other developers of infrastructure are treated in the planning scheme.

In an article in the *Age* of 30 August 2011 the general manager of Pacific Hydro is quoted as having said:

... Unfortunately these new wind farm rules will hold Victoria back while other states power ahead ...

The article also says:

The Clean Energy Council said the change would cost hundreds of new jobs in regional areas and billions of dollars in investment.

An analysis for the council by consultants Carbon Market Economics before last year's election estimated that between 50 and 70 per cent of proposed wind farms, worth up to \$3.6 billion, would not be developed under coalition policy.

These concerns are not being raised by the environment groups, which this government completely disregards; these are leaders in the wind farm industry in Australia and Victoria who would have hoped to develop and invest billions of dollars in Victoria, which they cannot do under the government's flawed wind farm policy.

In relation to the abolition of the premium solar feed-in tariff, the Clean Energy Council has forecast that around 1800 jobs would go from Victoria's solar industry if the Baillieu government scrapped the premium scheme. The council has said a price below 35 cents per kilowatt would effectively kill off industry growth. This is absolutely damning news for Victorian jobs, and given the replacement scheme is priced at a measly 25 cents per kilowatt — barely above the retail price — this is a paltry incentive for households to invest in solar systems that can cost up to \$30 000. One of the world's leading renewable energy companies, the Mark Group, has now abandoned expansion plans to open offices in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and the Latrobe Valley which would have supported 200 new jobs. Let us not talk about the carbon price at a national level; it is what this government is doing in Victoria that is destroying Victorian jobs and stopping billions of dollars worth of investment. That is what is happening under the stewardship, if you can call it that, of the Premier and his Minister for Environment and Climate Change.

This motion is a gimmick; it is a stunt. Concern about jobs? Give me a break! Jobs in Victoria in climate change industries have been lost at the hands of the Baillieu government. Decisions it has made have sent thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in clean energy investment out of the state. Just today with the handing down of the budget we have seen \$130 million cut from the environment. I am talking about the EPA (Environment Protection Authority), coastal management, biodiversity programs, public land management and water management; all of those things have been cut today. On budget day, a day when a further thousand Victorian jobs are at risk, this government thinks it is better to deliver this stand.

In further commentary on the environmental credentials of this government, Environment Victoria chief Kelly O'Shanassy said on the news that the government was scrapping the 20 per cent legislated target:

Either the Baillieu government doesn't understand the threat climate change presents, or they are ignoring it ... Either way it's an irresponsible decision environmentally and economically ...

I refer to jobs, not those included in the job cuts announced today but the previous 3600 public sector jobs, around 200 of which will come from the environment department. There have been reports of future job losses including those of Coastcare facilitators in south-western Victoria and six scientists at the state's biodiversity research agency, the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research, who do incredible work looking after Victoria's endangered species. Coastcare facilitators organise volunteers, which is absolutely crucial. I will quote the words of two individuals. Lou Hollis at Killarney Coastcare is reported to have said about these job cuts:

Most volunteer groups rely on having somebody to access to help with projects and funding opportunities ... By taking away the facilitator it shows the government has a total disregard for volunteers in the community ...

Kristie King, a volunteer with Warmambool Coastcare, is reported to have said:

Without access to a facilitator we are fearful we are going to see widespread volunteer burnout as they have to take on more administration ...

The Victorian National Parks Association said —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) — Order! I encourage the member to relate his comments to the motion before the house. I do not see that the employment issues in south-western Victoria, while significant, are immediately aligned to the motion.

Mr MERLINO — The motion is about environment policy and protecting jobs. I have made a point in relation to wind energy and solar feed-in tariffs. Across the minister's department jobs are being lost and investment is being forgone because of decisions made by the Baillieu government. There has been an about-face regarding the 6-star energy ratings of buildings. It is an innovative program targeted directly at reducing emissions and the cost of living of Victorian families. There has been an attempt by the Treasurer and the government to scrap that.

This motion is a total stunt; it is a disgrace. On the day the budget is handed down, it is apparent that this government thinks the most important thing on the

government business program is a stunt. This Baillieu government has made an art form of blaming everybody else for the woes that beset it today. It blames the federal government, and it blames the carbon price. But the point is that tackling climate change is affected by the decisions and cuts of the Baillieu government and the failed Minister for Environment and Climate Change. There is certainly going to be a Ryan that will be shortly shown the door — we do not know if it will be the disgraced Minister for Police and Emergency Services or the incompetent Minister for Environment and Climate Change. It is about the government's decision in relation to wind energy and solar feed-in tariffs.

We will see what the government does in the other place in regard to coal seam gas exploration. But one thing is certain: this government has failed the people of Victoria. It has cost Victoria hundreds and hundreds of jobs in the climate change area and billions of dollars of investment. This motion should be treated with the contempt it deserves.

Mr R. SMITH (Minister for Environment and Climate Change) — In 1949 former Labor Prime Minister Ben Chifley made his famous speech entitled 'The light on the hill' to the party faithful. That speech and the sentiment behind it was the rallying point for the Labor Party for decades after it was made. Mr Chifley said in his speech:

I try to think of the labour movement, not as putting an extra sixpence into somebody's pocket, or making somebody Prime Minister or Premier, but as a movement bringing something better to the people, better standards of living, greater happiness to the mass of the people. We have a great objective — the light on the hill — which we aim to reach by working for the betterment of mankind not only here but anywhere we may give a helping hand. If it were not for that, the labour movement would not be worth fighting for.

It could not be clearer to any Australian or Victorian that the Labor movement is now mostly about making someone Prime Minister. The idea of Labor bringing something better to the people or bringing better standards of living has been trashed by the introduction of the Gillard government's carbon tax. The carbon tax could not have been introduced at a worse time in Australia's recent economic history, and its introduction has reduced Chifley's light on the hill to a flickering, fluorescent tube — albeit a carbon-neutral one. Prime Minister Gillard said before the last federal election, 'There will be no carbon tax under a government that I lead'. I accept that it is arguable that the Prime Minister is actually leading the federal government. It is clear to many Australians at water coolers and barbecues that Bob Brown, the former federal leader of the Greens, is actually calling the

shots, so there may be a kernel of truth in the pre-election statement of the Prime Minister.

In any event the carbon tax is now anathema to the Australian people, and because Victorians are set to feel the worst of this tax it is no wonder that support for the Labor federal government has fallen to historical lows. A snapshot of what lies ahead — the Minister for Energy and Resources has already raised this, but I think it bears repeating — can be found in a report by Deloitte Access Economics. It shows that by 2015 there will be 35 000 fewer jobs than would have been the case if a carbon tax were not introduced, that investment will be down by almost \$6.3 billion, that per capita income will be around \$1050 lower and that the Victorian state budget will be almost \$660 million worse off. It is clear that Labor's carbon tax is going to hurt Victoria, yet the silence from those opposite is absolutely deafening. They are definitely Labor first and Victorian second.

In relation to paragraph (a) of the motion, which says the carbon tax will increase the cost of living for all Victorian families, the modelling of the commonwealth Treasury — the federal government's own modelling — shows that the average household is expected to face increased costs of around \$500 a year accompanied by an increased consumer price index of around 0.7 per cent in 2012–13. The federal government tells us that families will be compensated for those extra costs, but therein lies the real reason for introducing the tax. In the absence of any discernible or quantifiable forecast of a reduction in temperature as a result of the tax, it is a redistribution of wealth by another name.

On top of this cost there are those opposite who want to see Victorians further burdened by seeing this state government retain the target of reducing emissions by 20 per cent by 2020. Those opposite want to see Victorians spend an extra \$2.2 billion in buying international carbon permits and make it easier for the other states to contribute to the national target of a 50 per cent reduction at the expense of the state.

Just to make it clear for the member for Monbulk, we on this side of the house strongly oppose the Gillard government's tax, but while the Gillard government remains in power — and I have to say that that is probably a week-by-week proposition at the moment — we are stuck with this particular tax. For those opposite to be advocating that this state and Victorians pay additional costs on top of those imposed by the federal government shows that, for the Labor Party, ideology will trump common sense every day of the week.

It has been widely accepted that Victoria's small and medium size businesses will be very hard hit by the carbon tax. It is very pleasing to see many small and medium sized businesses in this state already doing their bit to ensure that they are sustainable by cutting their own costs through energy efficiency and that sort of thing. However, while businesses are taking steps to improve those particular credentials whilst trying to remain competitive, it is really clear to everyone that Labor just does not understand basic business operations.

Many small businesses operate on a year-to-year basis. Many actually operate on a month-to-month basis. In order for those businesses to cope with the carbon tax it requires a lot of long-term planning. In fact in many cases it will also require a huge up-front cost, and that is money that many small businesses just will not be able to find. As the carbon tax takes away a big competitive advantage for Victorian businesses, which is a comparatively low energy cost, that is going to have a direct flowthrough to job losses. We hear the crocodile tears from those opposite about jobs, yet in this whole debate it is very clear that the carbon tax is going to cost jobs, and we do not hear anything from those opposite in relation to that.

Many in the house will recall when federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency Greg Combet said:

... millions of Australian households will be better off under a carbon price.

The reality, as I have said, is that the commonwealth Labor government is offering little support to small to medium-sized enterprises and this decision is going to have a flow-on effect on Victorian households.

I go back to Ben Chifley's speech, in which he said:

If the movement can make someone more comfortable, give to some father or mother a greater feeling of security for their children, a feeling that ... the government is striving its hardest to do its best, then the labour movement will be completely justified.

You do not give someone a sense of security by tightening their household budget; you do not make someone more comfortable when you force them to make sacrifices in their own budgets and indeed their own businesses. The fact is that Labor just does not grasp the comments made by Ben Chifley in that speech all that time ago; in fact it is making it difficult for households and businesses right across the state.

The Minister for Energy and Resources raised the issue of the carbon price's impact on hospitals, schools and

transport. There is no doubt that the impacts raised by the minister will constrain the state's capacity to deliver key services. Another one of those key services is in the area of waste disposal. The carbon tax is going to directly hit landfills which annually emit around 25 000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. As a number of those landfills are operated by local government, this liability is ultimately going to be borne by Victorians as the cost is passed through via rate notices.

Through the carbon tax landfill operators are going to be required to calculate their emissions using a highly complex formula that assumes different carbon contents and decay rates for different waste materials. For landfill operators and councils it is going to be an administration nightmare. The government through its Metropolitan Waste Management Group is working through these issues with local governments, the MAV (Municipal Association of Victoria) and the waste sector to help understand the implications of the carbon tax on these operations. We have anticipated, and the MAV has said, that council rates will rise by up to 3.3 per cent as a result of these issues for landfill. The Gillard government's compensation package is simply not going to be able to match these types of flow-on costs with its carbon tax compensation.

On the issue of compensation, as the minister mentioned earlier, the commonwealth's offer of \$200 million over seven years is completely inadequate for regions like the Latrobe Valley, which is very reliant on its power stations for employment and for its economy. Indeed, as the minister said, under Kevin Rudd's carbon pollution reduction scheme the same level of assistance was considered inadequate for a five-year period. With the compensation package now being the same amount over seven years, it is just not going to be enough for those regions to cope.

Victoria has the second largest reserve of brown coal in the world, which as the minister pointed out again supplies us with just over 90 per cent of our electricity. The key challenge for the future of coal in Victoria is how we can reduce emissions to an acceptable level rather than shutting down an entire sector in which numerous Victorians are employed and which has great economic importance to those areas. This means providing support for early development of new low-emission and high-efficiency technologies such as carbon capture and storage and coal gasification, areas which various groups are opposed to, but these technologies are ones that are going to take Victoria forward by using our reserves of brown coal.

The Victorian government has an eye on renewable energy, and it is important to point out some of its programs. We have invested a great deal of money in a number of renewable energy schemes, including solar energy, a geothermal project in Geelong and wave power, as the minister pointed out, in the south-west. We are investing in hydro-electricity in the north. A number of these projects are being put in place to make sure that we are furthering the progress of renewable energy into the future. We have also put a lot of money into organic waste recovery, as I mentioned during question time today. These are tangible projects that have a real benefit for Victorians.

In contrast it is clear that the commonwealth government's carbon tax is going to destroy jobs, increase living costs, slow the economy, hurt Victorian exports and undermine the state's ability to deliver services, including environmental ones. None of these outcomes are good for Victorians. If those opposite really want to support Victorians, then I urge them to support this motion.

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Mill Park) — I wish to contribute to the debate that has been brought forward for no other reason than to distract from the reality that this government has taken Victorian families backwards on the cost of living issues. That is the stark reality here. Rather than defending and spruiking any benefits that arise from this budget, it wants to run a hundred miles away from it.

The motion presents an array of purported impacts on Victoria's cost of living and jobs, yet what we really needed today was a jobs plan. That was what we needed from this budget, and we got nothing. In its motion this government talks about how important jobs are to it, but it would not have a clue. That is the reality. Today of all days, budget day, this government remains without the know-how, the will or the leadership to come up with a jobs plan that will help Victorians in work. It puts on a show, a song and dance, which says, 'Don't look at us and what we do; look at someone else. Look somewhere else; it's not our fault'. This is the government's hallmark. This is its stock-in-trade. It is quite clear that this government needs to start showing leadership. It needs to start governing. Today is yet another squandered opportunity.

This is an embarrassing day for this government. All it really knows how to do is distract from what is essentially a terrible budget. The government has presented us today with an utterly cynical motion. The motion does nothing but expose the hypocrisy of this government. Only a few months ago this government backed a price on carbon and Victorian Labor's climate

change legislation, but it has absolutely squandered every single opportunity in its first 18 months in government to stimulate the economy, grow jobs and drive investment in industry. It has done this and overseen an increase in the cost of living of Victorians. That is something the government won an election on: reducing the cost of living. It is no mean feat, that is for sure, that the only thing the Baillieu government has managed to achieve in these 18 months in government is to increase Victoria's debt, slash thousands of public sector jobs — we have seen an extra 600 hundred added to those today — and dump key services and programs that were actually helping families and businesses manage their cost of living.

In the motion, the government talks about and cries crocodile tears over the cost of living of ordinary Victorians, yet everything it has done, everything it represents and stands for has been to achieve the exact opposite. It has actually increased the cost of living of Victorians. Today we have Qantas jobs on the line. This is an example of this government's loss of control. Somehow we have a Premier who likes to be a bystander and wave at the passing crowd. The passing crowd is an ever-increasing queue of people losing their jobs. I will tell the Premier one clear thing: these people are not waving back at him and saying, 'Thank you for your inspiring leadership'. They are struggling and waiting for a jobs plan, not a bogus and cynical motion that really at heart shows no interest in the Victorian population. What Victorians really have to fear is not the content of this motion. It is more of the same from this government, which sits idly by blaming everybody else except itself. That is what this government is best at doing.

Let us have a look at what this government has said and done when it comes to this motion. Here is what the Premier said in this house as recently as 22 March last year:

... our side of politics was prepared to support the emissions trading scheme post-2007; we were prepared to support a carbon pollution reduction scheme, which was debated in this house in ... November 2009; and we have made the point that if we are going to reduce emissions, there will be a price for and a cost to that.

That statement recorded in *Hansard* was made by none other than the now Premier. Yet here we are debating a motion that attempts to rewrite history. On our side of politics, unlike the government, we stand by our position in support of a price on carbon and the prospect of thousands of new green industries and jobs that should be embraced, not driven away by the short-sighted and irresponsible policies of the Baillieu government. In the motion the government cries

crocodile tears over the costs of jobs, over the increasing costs for Victorian schools, hospitals and public transport, over the cost of electricity and gas, over the Victorian businesses that will be destroyed and over the jobs that will go, especially in manufacturing and the like. I can repeat that motion ad nauseam, but the facts speak very differently.

As we debate this very point today, let us have a look at the record of this government when it comes to jobs and support for renewable energy. I note that the Minister for Environment and Climate Change made some points about renewable energy. The government dumped the premium solar feed-in tariff scheme. The coalition supported that scheme in this house when the Labor government put it forward, and it restated its commitment to keep that policy and said that it would continue to be supported until the replacement gross feed-in tariff scheme was introduced. Let me tell the house that today Victoria has neither the premium solar feed-in tariff scheme nor a gross feed-in tariff. This point has to do with the jobs that are dealt with in the motion, because neither do Victorians have the jobs that the Mark Group was going to put in place through investment in regional Victoria. It was going to generate jobs in the Latrobe Valley, Bendigo, Geelong and Ballarat. It was going to have an office in each one of those key and important regional cities in Victoria. Two hundred new jobs were going to be generated by the world-leading Mark Group, which, I remind the house, was attracted to invest in Australia and in Victoria in particular by Invest Victoria under the previous Labor government. Instead the government has shut that down and driven those jobs away.

The Clean Energy Council estimated that the government's axing of the premium tariff scheme would cost Victorian families around 1800 jobs, with the replacement price below 35 cents effectively killing off the industry. This is the hallmark of this government. This is the true test of the government's sincerity, which it tries to show through this motion, when it comes to jobs and caring for families. The premium solar feed-in tariff scheme was a sure way to help families manage their cost of living. That is the reality of it, a reality that this government refuses to take on board.

Let us also have a look at the wind energy industry: \$3 billion of investment is now grinding to a halt, courtesy of this government's failed and embarrassing position and its ill-informed policy on wind energy. This will now result in hundreds of jobs in regional Victoria going. Keppel Prince Engineering in Portland announced in March this year that it had to call for voluntary redundancies among its 450 employees. This

company was prospering. It was looking at expanding, with a plan for a \$10 million upgrade of its engineering factory, but now under this government it is actually shrinking. So much for the statements of the member for South-West Coast, now the Minister for Ports, who stated when in opposition not that long ago that he wanted the great south coast to become the wind energy hub. What a surprise! We now have a government that has refused to even acknowledge its role in that history.

How does the government explain this motion on the carbon price to people along the great south coast? This area has a group of councils made it very clear that, if it had not been kyboshed by this government, the wind energy industry would have been the largest single source of investment and jobs for the region within the next five years. I ask the government: how will this motion help with the cost of living for families along the great south coast? I do not think it does, and I do not think that was this government's intention when it listed this notice of motion.

What we can see from today's budget is simply cut after cut. We have had the education maintenance allowance, which is a key factor in helping families manage their cost of living, cut from schools, and the School Start bonus has been totally scrapped. We know of course the way the government has dealt with the Victorian certificate of applied learning. The Victorian Council of Social Service has today put out a media release, saying that in terms of real, effective increases in terms of output for concessions, it is 2.3 per cent.

Mr BLACKWOOD (Narracan) — It is with pleasure that I rise to make a contribution to the debate on this motion in relation to the carbon tax. Can I compliment the Minister for Energy and Resources on his contribution and the way he was able to stick to the motion and really highlight the impact, compensation and timing issues with this carbon tax. Two months from today the Gillard government will introduce this new tax on everything — that is in just 61 days. The introduction of this tax on 1 July will mark two years since we heard the Prime Minister promise there would be no carbon tax under the government she led. What an abject betrayal of faith that has been.

As I said, the carbon tax will have a massive impact on the cost of living. Worse still, it will have a massive impact on jobs. We heard about the jobs plan from members opposite, but they are supporting a plan that will wipe out tens of thousands of jobs from the Victorian economy. More broadly, in relation to modelling of the economic impacts, the commonwealth Treasury modelling has indicated there will be an immediate 10 per cent increase in the price of electricity

and a 9 per cent increase in the price of gas in the first year. This modelling shows, and the federal government has admitted, that across Australia around 8 million households will pay more through the carbon tax than they will receive in compensation, while there is no direct compensation for small business or the state government here in Victoria.

The commonwealth Treasury figures also show that Victoria will be first hit by the carbon tax and hardest hit until about 2038. The modelling from Deloitte Access Economics indicates that under a carbon tax, by 2015 there will be 35 000 fewer jobs in Victoria than would otherwise be the case, including 1600 fewer jobs in the Barwon area, 1250 fewer jobs in Gippsland and over 1750 fewer jobs in Bendigo, Ballarat, Ararat, Bacchus Marsh and Gisborne. All these regional Victorian areas will be hardest hit by the carbon tax. Gross state product will be almost 1.8 per cent or \$6.14 billion lower than it would be without a carbon tax. Per capita income will be more than \$1050 lower with the introduction of a carbon price. Investment will be down 6.63 per cent or almost \$6.3 billion. By 2020 there will be an even greater reduction in gross state product, down \$7.7 billion or almost 2 per cent. By 2015 the budget position is predicted to be almost \$660 million worse than it would be without a carbon price.

I will concentrate on the impact of the carbon tax on the Latrobe Valley for the rest of my contribution. The impact there will be significant.

Ms Neville — Acting Speaker, I direct your attention to the state of the house.

Quorum formed.

Mr BLACKWOOD — The impact of the carbon tax on the Latrobe Valley, in particular those parts of the Latrobe Valley that are in my electorate, is my biggest concern.

As most members would understand, Victoria's brown coal deposit is the second-largest in the world. For decades this resource has powered the growth of Victoria's economy at a very low cost. Brown coal continues to supply over 90 per cent of the state's electricity needs. The introduction of a price on carbon imposes significant challenges on the continued use of Victoria's brown coal, and these challenges will have implications for the security of Victoria's electricity supply and the growth of the state's economy. The Latrobe Valley in particular will be impacted.

I highlight a couple of direct examples of how the Latrobe Valley will be impacted. I have a press release

from Industrial Energy Pty Ltd in response to the introduction of the carbon tax. This document was released today, and it discusses the carbon tax and what the company will have to do to prepare for its introduction. It says:

Industrial Energy Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of HRL Limited, announced today that the future of its Latrobe Valley brown coal briquette manufacturing and supply business was under review.

Industrial Energy general manager Tony Ferguson said, 'with the introduction of the carbon tax on 1 July 2012, the future of Victoria's only brown coal briquette manufacturer is expected to be unsustainable under a business-as-usual scenario.

The briquette manufacturing process uses low-pressure steam generated by the combustion of raw brown coal in the adjacent Energy Brix power station at Morwell.

The introduction of the carbon price introduces uncertainty regarding the future supply of this steam and its cost.

...

The briquetting operation employs directly and indirectly approximately 200 people within the Latrobe Valley, while our customers (excluding the power stations) employ over 2500 people in regional Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania'.

More importantly, the briquettes that are made at this facility supply Murray Goulburn Co-operative in Leongatha. It uses the briquettes to produce steam in its processing of milk. Much of the milk produced there is for export. The carbon tax will clearly make this milk uncompetitive in the export market, and that is the real issue.

The uncertainty created by the carbon tax is already having a major impact on businesses and employment in the Latrobe Valley. The power generators in the Latrobe Valley have scaled back their maintenance programs because of the uncertainties surrounding their future. I particularly refer to those power generators targeted by the federal government's contract-for-closure program. This is having a significant impact on many companies that provide maintenance services to the power industry.

One very real example of this is a Gippsland-based company that has been providing maintenance services to the power industry for nearly 20 years. Up until around two years ago this company had consistently been called upon to quote on up to \$20 million worth of maintenance work per year and has had a workforce of around 16 to 20 people. This year the company has had the opportunity to tender on only \$2 million worth of maintenance work for the industry. As a result, 11 employees have been laid off. That has already happened. The carbon tax is not even here yet, and this

company has had to lay off 11 people. To make matters worse, three years ago this particular company invested \$750 000 in specialised tooling equipment to support the maintenance tasks required by the power industry. The company may have to close its doors very soon. Even if it struggles through the next six months, there is no guarantee it will qualify for compensation or assistance from the federal government.

The service industries that support the power industry in the Latrobe Valley are among the massive drivers of Gippsland's economy, but they are being hung out to dry by this insidious carbon tax and the uncertainty it has created. They have been hung out to dry by the incompetence of the Gillard government, by the hypocrisy of the state opposition and by sections of the trade union movement that are putting political expediency and Greens ideology before the interests of their members. The Leader of the Opposition constantly accuses the Baillieu government of having no jobs plan — we have heard it here tonight. Yet he is supporting a carbon tax that will wipe out thousands of Victorian jobs. What absolute hypocrisy!

We all know the dangers of dancing with the devil. Federal and state Labor has taken it one step further by choosing to stay in bed with the hardcore Greens — people whose single-minded agenda is to destroy the economy of Australia, an agenda that is often very well concealed by the emotion triggered in the minds of well-meaning Australians who are quite rightly concerned about our environment. With this ill-timed, ill-conceived carbon tax, state and federal Labor and the Greens have been totally exposed.

Debate interrupted.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER — Order! Before calling the next speaker, I would like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Mr Don Kilgour, the former member for Shepparton — or his twin brother; I am not sure!

CARBON TAX: ECONOMIC IMPACT

Debate resumed.

Ms NEVILLE (Bellarine) — On this day of all days, what we have here is a stunt motion. This morning I woke up in Geelong and opened the *Geelong Advertiser*. Lo and behold, I saw that the big issue was not the notice of motion that has been moved by the Minister for Energy and Resources; it was the fact that we are risking the loss of 660 Qantas jobs at Avalon.

As the front-page headline says, 'Brace for jobs loss impact at Avalon'. I can tell you that those opposite are not braced for the impact at all. They are more concerned about putting forward a stunt of a motion — a motion that delivers nothing for any Victorian here and does nothing for the Qantas jobs that are at risk at Avalon. What people in Victoria are asking is: what is this government actually doing? It is not just putting on stunts but it is also moving motions in this Parliament that deliver absolutely nothing to Victorians.

What we have seen today in the state budget and in this motion is basically the blame game. Victoria's economy is asleep, and apparently it is everybody else's fault. It is the federal government's fault because of the carbon tax and the GST despite the fact that the budget papers clearly show that in the 2012–13 period GST revenue is actually up. But let us not let the facts get in the way of telling a good blame story here in Victoria. We have a state budget that is all about shifting the blame — 'It has nothing to do with us'. Any issues in this budget are all to do with the GST or the carbon tax — the carbon tax that has actually not yet commenced! All the job losses, including the maintenance jobs at Qantas and the potential job losses at Alcoa, are happening under a Victorian government when there is no carbon tax in place.

This motion says it all — after the budget, what we have is a stunt. This government is asleep when it comes to the economy and jobs. We have seen no plan released today in relation to jobs — no strategies or steps being taken to protect current jobs and to create jobs. The government's attitude seems to be, 'Let us not spend our energy this afternoon debating those important issues around jobs and how to protect the jobs that are currently at risk'. Many of them are in my community of Geelong and Bellarine. Its attitude is let us not do that, but let us debate a motion that again delivers nothing for any Victorian'.

One has to ask: what has happened to this once great state of Victoria, a state that led so many debates and that defied all the trends during the 2008–09 global financial crisis, but a state that apparently now is completely at the mercy of the federal government, and those opposite who are in government who can do nothing about it? Instead we have a stunt motion before us. This is a state where we have a government that wrings its hands and says, 'It is not our fault'. We heard that from the assistant Treasurer this morning on the radio: 'It is not our fault — we cannot do anything'. We cannot even protect the property industry. No, the government says, 'Let us instead get rid of the first home bonus'. That is certainly going to help the property industry and revenues that are created from

stamp duty! That is not the Victorian way, and it is not what previous governments in Victoria have done.

What we have here is a motion that could easily have been drafted by Tony Abbott the federal Leader of the Opposition. It is a motion that reeks of hypocrisy. It is a motion that indicates that this government was happy to say and do one thing in opposition, to have misled the Victorian community before being elected and now lets its true colours show after the election. A couple of members have mentioned this, but it is worth mentioning again. Back in November 2009 the Premier made this comment in this house:

We support an ETS or a CPRS.

You might argue that things have changed, but just over a year ago, in March 2011, after being elected, the Premier again stood up in this Parliament and said that the government supports an emissions trading scheme and a carbon pollution reduction scheme. He went on to say:

... we have made the point that if we are going to reduce emissions, there will be a price for and a cost to that.

Despite the clear position that those opposite stood by in the election campaign in 2010, we have had a complete reversal. This government then has the absolute arrogance to ask this house to condemn the federal government for not keeping its commitments to the public. Maybe this house should condemn the state government for not keeping the commitments that it made to the public.

As Victoria faces a job crisis, we do not have a plan for that. What we have is a motion designed to distract everyone from the government's failures and an attempt to put the blame on someone else. What is also extraordinary about this motion is the complete hypocrisy of this government's stand. Just a few weeks ago in this house the government tabled three reports: one was a review of the Climate Change Act 2010, another was the government's response to that review and the third was a report on climate change and greenhouse gas emissions here in Victoria. That final report makes it clear that temperature changes in Victoria will be greater than the Australian average and that based on current emissions we are likely to see temperatures continue to rise, the frequency of droughts likely to double, an increasing frequency of high fire danger days and fewer heavy rainfall days. I am not saying this — this is the government's own report that was tabled in this Parliament.

Sitting suspended 6.30 p.m. until 8.01 p.m.

Ms NEVILLE — I will continue from where I was before the dinner break. I was referring to the three reports that the government recently released, one of which is the government's response to the review of the Climate Change Act 2010. On page 3 of its response the government's report states that:

The Victorian government acknowledges there is risk posed by climate change and a need to support national and global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The report goes on to say that the Victorian government accepts the review's finding that the carbon price is the primary means to reduce emissions. Based on its review of the Climate Change Act the government then announced that it is going to get rid of the target of a 20 per cent reduction in emissions here in Victoria. It said it is going to remove the Victorian target because there is a carbon price coming in and that carbon price remains the best way to reduce emissions. On the one hand we have the government saying that the carbon price is the best way to reduce emissions and that we need to reduce emissions. On the other hand the government is using that to justify the removal of the 20 per cent target. Yet members of the government are standing up here tonight saying that they are against the carbon price. What hypocrisy!

Where is the minister responsible? This afternoon we heard him speak about the value of brown coal and of coal seam gas. I remind him that he is the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. That statement does not equate to a minister advocating for climate change or one committed to taking action on climate change. I had some hope in the last sitting week that the minister might be doing that when he said:

As I was saying ... the federal government's carbon tax is widely judged as the primary way of reducing emissions in this country.

Given that the government is now trying to argue against the carbon price, what is the minister going to do to reduce emissions in Victoria? Looking at the report the government tabled which showed that if we do not reduce emissions, we will have substantially increased temperatures, rises in sea level and an increase in droughts in this state, it needs to do something. But apparently the only action the minister is going to take is to put money towards beaches and those sorts of things.

This government has walked away from millions of dollars of investment and thousands of potential jobs as a result of getting rid of the 20 per cent target. It is not surprising that the Minister for Environment and Climate Change is not standing up for the environment considering the conflict he has had in relation to the

shares he owns in coal seam gas companies. Perhaps he is a minister biased towards mining and energy companies. This motion should be opposed by this house and seen for what it is: a stunt. We need to reduce emissions in this country, and we need to vote against this motion.

Mr NORTHE (Morwell) — It gives me great pleasure to rise this evening to speak on the motion put forward by the Minister for Energy and Resources, and I fully support the motion that this house notes that the federal Labor government's proposed carbon dioxide (CO₂) tax will do a number of things. Unfortunately most of those things are very negative. I want to confine my contribution to the debate this evening to speaking about the Latrobe Valley and the wider Gippsland region and the impacts a carbon tax will have upon that region.

I preface my comments by stating that we are fully supportive of ensuring that our government improves the environmental performance of business, industry and enterprise across Victoria. That has been demonstrated on a number of different fronts by the Minister for Energy and Resources and the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, whether it be the additional \$41 million the state government has put forward for the ETIS (energy technology innovation scheme) or the Energy Saver Incentive scheme that businesses can now access, which was not the case under the previous Labor government. We have also extended the winter concessions for electricity bills for those doing it tough in our communities. It is important that renewables are part of the overall mix; however, brown coal has a future. It is important that we invest in research and development of new technologies that can reduce CO₂ emissions through brown coal production, particularly energy production.

The fact is that the carbon tax is a significant threat to the Latrobe Valley and the wider Gippsland region. One only has to be aware of the power generation that comes out of the Latrobe Valley. In his contribution to the debate the Minister for Energy and Resources referred to the importance and the critical nature of the power generation sector and what it does not only for the Latrobe Valley but for Gippsland and Victoria as a whole.

There are five coal-fired power stations in the Latrobe Valley: Loy Yang A, which produces 2200 megawatts of power and has some 600 employees; Loy Yang B, which produces 1000 megawatts of power and has 200 employees plus; Hazelwood, which produces 1760 megawatts of power and has 540 employees, not taking into consideration that there could be

300 subcontractors on that site at any one time; TRUenergy Yallourn, which produces 1480 megawatts of power and has in excess of 500 employees; and Energy Brix, which is sometimes forgotten, but this Morwell power station, whilst it is minimal in terms of output, at 170 megawatts, is critical, and I will refer to that further in my contribution. In total you have around 1800 direct employees in the energy industry in the Latrobe Valley. That is not taking into account indirect employees. The benefits to the Gippsland and Latrobe Valley communities are absolutely profound. Indeed the gross regional product of the energy sector in Latrobe is in excess of 20 per cent.

What are some of the impacts of the carbon tax? I want to quickly refer to three reports. Modelling done by the commonwealth Department of the Treasury basically says the carbon tax will cause an immediate 10 per cent increase in electricity prices.

Mr Weller — Ten per cent!

Mr NORTHE — Ten per cent; that's right. There will be an immediate impact of a 9 per cent increase in gas prices, and around 8 million households will pay more due to the carbon tax than they will receive through compensation. It is important to note that there is absolutely no direct compensation for small businesses, which is an indictment of the federal government. The Deloitte Access Economics report to which the minister referred basically states that there will be 35 000 fewer jobs in Victoria, including 1250 fewer jobs in Gippsland.

I want to refer to a report by Victoria University's Centre for Strategic Economic Studies. The centre provided a report on the regional effects of pricing carbon emissions and an adjustment strategy for the Latrobe Valley. The report not only notes the importance of the Latrobe Valley in the electricity sector but also says that 15 per cent of total employment is directly attributable to the coal-fired electricity industry and 26 per cent of wage income in the Latrobe Valley is directly related to the electricity sector. If you are going to put in place legislation that will compromise that sector, you can quickly understand the ramifications across the whole of the community — not just on those directly employed in the sector but also those in small businesses and other businesses associated with the sector directly and indirectly.

The Prime Minister came out on Carbon Sunday and announced what the federal government intends to do. A contract-for-closure regime was put in place, which in effect says the federal government wants to close

down 2000 megawatts of brown coal electricity generation by 2020 at power stations including Playford and Collinsville but also at three Latrobe Valley power generators — Energy Brix, Hazelwood power station and TRUenergy Yallourn. One could understand that there has been significant angst within the local community with respect to that. The package offered by the federal government in that context includes \$200 million over seven years to assist impacted regions, of which Latrobe Valley is one. One would say that is inadequate but also that there is no direct compensation — communities need to bid for that compensation.

In terms of local impacts, my good friend and colleague the member for Narracan noted that we do not need to wait until 1 July 2012 to feel the impacts of the carbon tax; they are already being felt within our community. That is a fact, and unfortunately the federal government has a view that we will deal with some of the ramifications post-1 July 2012. That is an absolute nonsense, and I will explain why in a minute. Two major power generators, Loy Yang A and International Power Hazelwood, have already gone through significant restructuring in terms of the efficiency with which they conduct their operations. As a consequence, a number of people have already been offered voluntary departure packages or will lose their jobs. That is a direct consequence of the carbon tax; it is nothing else. Those particular businesses have clearly articulated that they have had to do this because of the carbon tax. Also, for the reference of members in the chamber at the moment, all these power generators have had to undergo significant refinancing of their assets. This is difficult in the current climate, particularly when the federal government's agenda is to close some of these power generators. The impacts are quite profound.

The other thing the member for Narracan mentioned in his contribution to the debate is the fact that long-term maintenance within the power generation sector in the Latrobe Valley is not taking place as it once was. The reason power stations are not undertaking that long-term maintenance is that they are unsure of their long-term future. That has consequences for local engineering firms that have historically undertaken that long-term maintenance. The member for Narracan gave a prime example of a business that has already lost 11 employees because long-term maintenance has not been undertaken within the energy sector. These are real examples with real people.

We have the example of Industrial Energy, which published a media release today that says its operations are under review because of the direct threat of the carbon tax. This particular business manufactures

briquettes and sells them to the market, including for export overseas. It is reliant upon steam produced at the Morwell power station to undertake this particular operation. Because of the threats to it and the increase in costs associated with its business, Industrial Energy is saying to our community right here and now, 'As a direct consequence of the carbon tax we are likely to at least reduce our workforce, if not close'. That has significant ramifications for others. People in this chamber might not be aware of this, but briquettes are still utilised for the purposes of major companies such as Auschar, Murray Goulburn Co-operative, which is located here in Leongatha and also in Cobram, and other businesses. If Industrial Energy is not able to produce briquettes in that particular form, there will be major ramifications not just for these businesses but for subsidiary businesses as well.

If I had enough time to go on, I could provide some other real examples, but the fact is that the carbon tax is a bad thing for our particular region. The timing is not right, it is not good for Victoria and it is certainly not good for the Latrobe Valley.

Mr NARDELLA (Melton) — What is this motion all about? What is the real reason the government is talking about opposing the reduction of carbon pollution when Victorians are losing jobs and when the government is sacking people, increasing the cost of living for pensioners and families and not building for the future? I will tell members a secret about this motion. In the offices of both the Minister for Energy and Resources and the Minister for Environment and Climate Change there is a photo in a gold-embossed frame. The photo is of former federal senator Nick Minchin, the climate change denier. That is what this motion is about. It is about this Liberal-Nationals government opposing and denying the fact that pollution and climate change are real. This government is actually paying homage to the great man, former senator Nick Minchin. This motion was put together with the help of people like Lord Monckton. That is who the government is getting its advice from. This motion comes from the party that has Gina Rinehart, Clive Palmer and Andrew 'Twiggy' Forrest, the richest people in Australia, developing its policies. That is the reason we have this motion before the house.

How does Victoria jump on top and create the new jobs of the 21st century — the new jobs that are absolutely necessary to deal with climate change and carbon pollution in this changing world? Innovation is required by the government to respond to the changes coming in the world. We need to look into programs to reduce carbon pollution in Victoria. In Germany there are 35 000 jobs in the renewables sector, whether they are

involved with solar panels, wind energy or other renewable sources of energy. It is the way of the future to replace carbon-producing power plants with renewable and clean sources of energy. That is where the government should be focusing its attention. It should not be focusing its attention on these types of motions that are distracting us from the real issues and challenges we are facing.

During the last term of this Parliament, a parliamentary committee went overseas to look at Spain's baseload renewable power stations that power its industries. If honourable members were interjecting, I would absolutely concur that Spain is not the economic powerhouse of Europe. I would absolutely agree with that, but Spain is dealing with the challenges that this world is facing in relation to reducing carbon pollution. Sweden and some of the other Scandinavian countries are producing renewable energy through other means — through the decomposition of foodstuffs and other carbon matter. That should be further investigated, and the jobs that come with that should be put in place.

Unfortunately the government is missing in action when it comes to the future. What is its vision? What is its vision for people who will need to have jobs in the future and for the community to be able to link into those jobs and create that power in, for example, our economy? I put to you, Acting Speaker, that the government should not be creating exclusions to these new energy sources in the new economy that is being developed in Australian society.

I will give the house a prime example. In regard to wind power, what this government has done and what it has telegraphed to the entire wind industry, not only in Victoria but throughout Australia and the globe, is, 'We do not want you. We do not want wind power. We do not want you to manufacture wind turbines or generators here or provide any of the other manufacturing jobs that come with this important new industry. What we will do is put a 2-kilometre exclusion zone around any wind turbines, and if anybody objects, that means you cannot build a turbine'. What type of certainty for the wind industry and the new developing industries is this government providing? I go back to my original point: it is the wrong policy for the times we are facing in our world and in our society.

The member for Morwell talked about the Deloitte report which the government will not release and which we paid for. The only thing the government released under FOI was that the report cost \$56 000. It blanked

out a couple of the names, but that is the only thing the government released.

Mr O'Brien — Wrong!

Mr NARDELLA — I am absolutely correct. Bring it into the Parliament, because I cannot get a copy.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Morris) — Order! The Minister for Energy and Resources may care to move to the table if he is going to interject.

Mr NARDELLA — Members in this place and the Minister for Energy and Resources cannot actually produce a copy of the Deloitte report, because the report has not been released, nor have the figures from that report supporting the government's position. The Treasurer had not even read his own report. He had no understanding of what was in the report but said that Victoria is going to be the first hit and the hardest hit in regard to the changes when in fact that is not the case.

This motion is about the government running a scare campaign. It is running a scare campaign because Victoria is unlike New South Wales, where the unemployment rate is 5.2 per cent. We have Barry O'Farrell, the new Liberal Premier in New South Wales, out there chasing work in the new economy, out there with renewables and taking our jobs — taking Victorian jobs from Victorians — by developing the wind industry and the renewables industry in his state. What do we have here? We have an unemployment rate of 5.8 per cent. What is the trend? The trend is going the wrong way; the trend is going up. The trend is going to a point where people and their families are losing their jobs.

Where are they losing their jobs? The carbon tax is not even here and this government is forcing people out of jobs. Keppel Prince Engineering has undertaken redundancies because this government is shutting down the wind industry and the renewables industry here in Victoria. Those jobs will go to New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia; they are not staying here.

Then we have renewable solar energy, where the government has reduced the premium feed-in tariff from 66 cents to 25 cents a kilowatt hour.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr NARDELLA — They are all saying 'Wrong' because they do not know their own government policy. I actually got some solar panels. I could not access the 66-cents-per-kilowatt-hour rate because it is no longer available; it is down to 25 cents per kilowatt

hour. This motion is about a scare campaign, because those opposite have nothing positive to say, especially after this state budget.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr WELLER (Rodney).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

STATUTE LAW REPEALS BILL 2012

Second reading

Debate resumed from 29 February; motion of Mr McINTOSH (Minister for Corrections).

Mr BROOKS (Bundoora) — The Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012 repeals 5 principal acts and 14 amending acts. The bill was referred to the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee by the Assembly on 29 February this year, and that committee took evidence from the chief parliamentary counsel, Ms Gemma Varley, and provided a report for the benefit of both houses. The recommendations of the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee report were, firstly, that the committee consider that the repeal of the five spent principal acts listed in the schedule is appropriate; secondly, that the committee considers that the repeal of the 12 amending acts in the schedule with transitional or substantive provisions is appropriate; and thirdly, that the committee considers that the repeal of the two amending acts in the schedule with no savings or transitional provisions is appropriate.

At this point in time it is worth me commenting on the fact that this is a fairly straightforward machinery of government bill by which redundant acts will be cleared from the statute books, and the opposition will obviously not be opposing this bill. At the outset I want to make the point that in a week in which we are going to be debating the budget — the budget has been released today amidst significant concerns in the Victorian community about job losses — it is a shame that we have had such a portion of today taken up with the debate that we had just previously on the motion in relation to the carbon tax, which was obviously a stunt by the government to distract attention from the very poor budget. Also I understand that a very short time this week is going to be devoted to debating the latest tranche of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission legislation. This Statute Law Repeals Bill is an important one, but I think most Victorians would rather that we in this house were debating matters such as employment opportunities or even the independent, broadbased anticorruption commission legislation.

To return to the bill, it is clear that the spent principal acts contained in it are no longer needed on the statute books because the actions provided for within the acts have been completed. I want to run quickly through the schedule in the bill, which lists the acts that will be repealed. The Australian Alliance Assurance Company's Act 1867 is no longer required because the Australian Alliance Assurance Company no longer exists in its original form. The Australian Alliance Assurance Company's ownership has changed many times in its long history, and it now operates within the Suncorp group of companies. Given that this act is being repealed some 145 years after its proclamation, I think it is worthwhile that we reflect on the context of its creation in the early days of our state.

The Australian Alliance Assurance Company began with a meeting at the old Scott's Hotel in Collins Street, Melbourne, on 28 May 1862, with the creation of a prospectus and the appointment of provisional directors. These provisional directors were members of the Legislative Council and included the state's Chief Secretary — the equivalent of today's Premier — Sir John O'Shanassy, or 'Big Jack' O'Shanassy, as he was known. O'Shanassy was one of the most prominent political leaders of Victoria's early years. He had arrived in Melbourne from Ireland in 1839 at the age of 21, en route to Sydney. After his attempts at farming near Western Port were ended by the economic depression of 1843, he relocated back to Melbourne, where he began what would become a very successful drapery business.

He was one of the 20 members elected to the state's first Legislative Council following the proclamation of Victoria as a colony on 1 July 1851. Following the development and adoption of Victoria's constitution O'Shanassy was elected to the Legislative Assembly for the electorate of Kilmore and later served again in both the Council and the Assembly. He was the Chief Secretary three times and was also appointed as one of the goldfields royal commissioners following the Eureka rebellion, possibly because of his Irish Catholic background.

O'Shanassy was the founder and chairman of the Colonial Bank of Australasia, and as the historical review of the Australian Alliance Insurance Company notes, the first shareholders meeting of that company was held later in 1862 on 16 October at the company's principal office at the corner of Collins and Elizabeth streets. Directors were appointed to the new company, with the Honourable Robert S. Anderson — a member of this house at the time — being elected as chairman and provisional directors being thanked for their

performance. Nominal capital of the company at that time was £100 000 in 20 000 shares at £5 each.

I will move through the rest of these acts in a speedier fashion. The Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Functions) Act 1974 originally repealed the Aboriginal Affairs Act 1967. It also amended the Aboriginal Lands Act 1970 and the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972, which has now been repealed. This act largely related to the transfer of land to the housing commission. It also included a number of administrative provisions relating to the transfer of land to the housing commission and to the commonwealth. These provisions and others contained in the act have been completed, so it is no longer required.

The Aboriginal Land (Manatunga Land) Act 1992 transferred land in the Robinvale area across to the Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative Limited. This has now occurred. The act also listed a number of administrative provisions, including the extinguishment of the Crown lease and amendments to the register of titles, which have now been completed. The act also included a section which emphasised that the Crown did not have to pay any compensation resulting from the provisions contained in the act. Section 14 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984 will preserve the effect of this section.

The Appropriation (2008/2009) Act 2008 and the Appropriation (Parliament 2008/2009) Act 2008 were obviously introduced in that particular year. Appropriation bills are introduced every year, and of course they are no longer required on the statute book after their provisions have been exhausted.

Spent amending acts with transitional or substantive provisions include the Port Authorities (Amendment) Act 1986. The act originally made amendments to the following acts: the Port of Melbourne Authority Act 1958; the Port of Geelong Authority Act 1958; the Port of Portland Authority Act 1958; the Harbor Boards Act 1958; the Transport Act 1983, since renamed the Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983; and the Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986. In general the act was designed to provide a consistent set of guidelines for commercial operations of the ports. The act also tried to assist with the efficient execution of major government projects which the ports were involved in. These amendments have now been implemented, and therefore the act is no longer required.

The Legal Aid Commission (Amendment) Act 1989 made a range of amendments to the Legal Aid Commission Act 1978. Many of the amending

provisions have already taken effect, and some sections of the act have been superseded by legislation which has been passed since 1989.

The Kew and Heidelberg Lands (Trust) Act 1990 incorporated the trustees of land in both the city of Northcote and the city of Kew. It also legislated further conditions for the management of those lands. These provisions have now been enacted and are no longer required to be on the statute book. Section 10 of the act related to a number of transitional provisions in regard to the Yarra Bend Park Trust, which has now ceased to exist due to the dissolution of the trust in 2009.

The Subdivision (Further Amendment) Act 1994 made amendments to the Subdivision Act 1988 to clarify compulsory acquisition, removal of easements and removal of rights-of-way provisions. The act had the intention of changing public open space requirements. Any sections of this act, such as section 9, which are still of relevance will be preserved in section 14 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984.

The University Acts (Amendment) Act 1994 amended the following acts which have since been repealed: the Melbourne University Act 1958, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Act 1992 and the Victoria University of Technology Act 1990. The amending sections within this act have all taken effect, including section 7(2), which is related to the preservation of resolutions made by the council of the University of Melbourne, which will be preserved by section 14 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984. Sections 25 and 26 made reference to changes in the membership of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology council. Sections 37 and 38 made reference to changes in the membership of the Victoria University council.

The principal aim of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks (Amendment) Act 1995 was to amend the National Tennis Centre Act 1985. It made a number of changes, including amending the title of the National Tennis Centre Act 1985 to the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Act 1985 and replacing the National Tennis Centre Trust with the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust. The act also contained a number of administrative and governance provisions relating to the operation of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust. This act also amended the Melbourne Cricket Ground Act 1933 and the Melbourne Cricket Ground Act 1984, which have since been repealed. There are a select number of provisions whose effect will be maintained through the provisions set out in the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984.

The Retail Tenancies (Amendment) Act 1995 amended the Retail Tenancies Act 1986, which has since been repealed. The main aim of this act was to introduce a clear set of guidelines for the effective conciliation of disputes and to extend the prohibition on the receipt of key money. Any residual effects of section 7(2), which dealt with arbitrations in force prior to the 1995 act, will be preserved under the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984 if required.

The Professional Boxing and Martial Arts Act 1996 repealed the Martial Arts Control Act 1986 and transferred certain functions to the Professional Boxing Control Act 1985, which was renamed the Professional Boxing and Martial Arts Act 1985. This act was subsequently renamed the Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Act 1985. The act also made reforms to the structure of the Professional Boxing Control Board. The change of name from the Professional Boxing Control Act 1985 and transitional and savings provisions relating to the continuity of relevant boards established by these acts will be preserved by the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984. Transitional and savings provisions relating to the expiration of permits, registrations and licences which allowed for the continuation of permits granted prior to the operation of the 1996 act are no longer required; therefore, that particular section is now redundant.

The Transport Acts (Amendment) Act 1997 made amendments to the Transport Act 1983, now renamed the Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983, and the Public Transport Competition Act 1995, now renamed the Bus Services Act 1995. The amendment act also repealed the South Australian and Victoria Border Railways Act 1930, the King-street Bridge Act 1957 and the Railways (Standardization Agreement) Act 1958. Section 37 of Transport Acts (Amendment) Act 1997, relating to the repeal of the Railways (Standardization Agreement) Act 1958, is now redundant, as no money is owed to the commonwealth under that agreement.

The Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 1997 was the infamous piece of legislation that, as many members will remember, abolished common-law rights for injured workers. To have extinguished anyone's common-law rights would have been a serious matter, but the then Liberal-National party government went further. I understand there are still members in this house on the opposite side who were in the Parliament at that time and voted for that bill — and members on this side of the house find that action quite scandalous. It was legislation that was inflicted on working Victorians by a government that included the current Treasurer, so its

not hard to see why he does not mind cutting nearly half a billion dollars from WorkCover and then, as I noted today in the relation to the budget, making a big deal of the fact that he is providing a 3 per cent WorkCover premium cut, which I do not think equates to even half the money he had earlier grabbed. Someone put it to me in a colloquial way: they said it was like someone stealing a slab of beer out of your fridge and giving you 12 cans back and telling you what a great bloke he is. While it is very disappointing, it is certainly not surprising. The abolition of common-law rights for injured workers was one of the many reasons Victorians kicked Jeff Kennett and the Liberals and The National out of office, and one thing that has not changed with the Liberals and The Nationals is their disregard for working Victorians.

The Investigative, Enforcement and Police Powers Acts (Amendment) Act 2005 made amendments to the Crimes (Assumed Identities) Act 2004; the Crimes (Controlled Operations) Act 2004; the Fisheries Act 1995; the Major Crime Legislation (Office of Police Integrity) Act 2004, which has now been repealed; the Major Crime (Investigative Powers) Act 2004; the Police Regulation Act 1958; the Surveillance Devices (Amendment) Act 2004, which has also now been repealed; the Telecommunications (Interception) (State Provisions) Act 1988; and the Magistrates' Court Act 1989. Except for section 8 of the Investigative, Enforcement and Police Powers Acts (Amendment) Act 2005, which is no longer necessary, all of the amending provisions have now taken effect.

The Consumer Credit (Victoria) and Other Acts Amendment Act 2008 amended the Consumer Credit (Victoria) Act 1995 by changing provisions relating to credit providers. It has also allowed proceedings under the Consumer Credit (Victoria) Code to be brought in a court rather than in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The act also amended the Credit (Administration) Act 1984, the Fair Trading Act 1999, the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 and the Sale of Land Act 1962, and it repealed the Credit Reporting Act 1978. A number of sections in that act have already taken effect and therefore are no longer required. There are also a number of sections which do not have a legislated commencement date and therefore rely on a specific proclamation in order to come into operation. However, they are now not required, as parts 4 and 6 of the Consumer Credit (Victoria) Act 1995 to which they refer have been repealed by the Credit (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2010.

The last part of the schedule deals with spent amending acts wholly in operation and relates to the House Contracts Guarantee (HIH) Act 2001 and the Fire

Services Funding (Feasibility Study) Act 2009. Those acts are now wholly in operation and their amending purposes have taken full effect, and therefore they are no longer required.

In conclusion, all the acts that are listed in the schedule to this bill have been deemed appropriate for repeal by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, the relevant government departments, the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee (SARC) and the minister who introduced this bill. On the issue of the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee report, I was a member of that committee in the previous Parliament and am a member again now. It is worth placing on the record for the benefit of the house that when members see the report of the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee I think they have the impression that the committee has undertaken a thorough investigation of each of the particular acts that have been repealed. It is important for members to note that while the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee does a good job and relies on the solid evidence of the parliamentary counsel, whom I have the utmost respect for, the committee does not conduct a thorough, detailed investigation of each of those acts. I am not suggesting that it should do so but that members need to be aware of that. For example, stakeholders who may be interested in those acts being repealed have not been contacted, so far as the committee knows. It may well be that government departments or the Chief Parliamentary Counsel have, but that information is not provided to SARC.

That is not something that has changed recently; it is something that in my own experience has always been the case. It is important for members to note that in the future the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee may wish to look at that in terms of the way it investigates these repeal bills before it removes an act from the statute books. However, the passage of this bill has followed the appropriate process and its path through this chamber has been the correct one. I repeat that the opposition will not be opposing the bill.

Mr THOMPSON (Sandringham) — A number of years ago when I had occasion to speak on a statute law repeal bill, the briefing note for it from parliamentary counsel contained words to the effect that such bills provided an opportunity to succinctly, and perhaps at times evocatively, recall aspects of Victoria's history. A perusal of the acts being repealed in the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012 provides an interesting insight into the different aspects of Victoria's political, social and community history.

The first act I would like to comment on is the Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Functions) Act 1974. At the time the bill was introduced into the house high regard was paid to Reg Worthy, who was at the time Director of Aboriginal Affairs in Victoria. It was said that his understanding of the Aboriginal people, his ability to get along with them and to get them to confide in him, and his capacity to think of ways in which they could be helped to greater independence were outstanding. Other matters subject to comment at the time included a description of a number of hostels that were run in Victoria but were being transferred to the commonwealth under the legislation. They included the Lionel Rose Centre at Morwell, which comprised hostels for boys and girls, an administrative block, a recreation centre and a staff house; the family group home at Wright Street, Essendon; the hostel in King George Parade, Dandenong; the hostel at Bairnsdale; and Camp Jungai, the camp and conference complex on the river at Thornton. A number of remarks commended the new financial arrangements which saw the transfer of a number of functions to the commonwealth, among other matters. In the debate at the time comments were made by other speakers on the bill, including Mr Jones in this place.

Having spoken of Aboriginal affairs, I move on to the act that relates to the Melbourne and Olympic parks sports precinct. The arrangements that were set up and have since been executed regarding the transfer of athletics in Victoria from the Olympic Park sports precinct to South Melbourne have been of keen interest to numbers of my constituents. It was pointed out to me that at the conclusion of the 1956 Olympic Games there was an understanding that the Olympic Park ground might have been gifted to the Victorian community in perpetuity under the rubric of Olympic Park. This has been commented on by numbers of people who may not barrack for the Collingwood football team. There is some dismay that athletics training and competition has been relocated from a precinct that served athletics in Victoria to a high degree in the Olympic Park area, not far from Richmond railway station, down to South Melbourne. Albeit that there is a fine new track down there, it is a little bit more remote, and a single football club with 50 players has the sole use of a precinct that was once enjoyed by thousands of schoolchildren and amateur athletes in Australia. It remains a matter of ongoing concern to numbers of people.

Another act that is being repealed is the Retail Tenancies (Amendment) Act 1995. The explanatory memorandum for the bill notes that that act amended the Retail Tenancies Act 1986. The social and political commentary on that would be that around that time the then Labor government was proposing to introduce an

ad valorem tax on the purchase price of a new business. That meant that when a business proprietor had paid for the goodwill of a business, his leasing expenses, his accounting expenses, his electricity bond and his stock, the then government, in order to shore up the finances of the state, was proposing to charge an ad valorem tax similar to the stamp duty paid on the purchase price of a property. At the time there was uproar and outrage in the community, and ultimately that particular legislation was not implemented, but it showed the financial desperation of the then government in the late stages of the 1980s.

In commenting on the Professional Boxing and Martial Arts Act 1996, I am reminded of Tom Reynolds, who at the time was the member for Gisborne and the Minister for Sport, Recreation and Racing. He was a former shearer, hardware store owner, a great enthusiast for all matters sporting and a very good cricketer. The one sport to which he had a strong aversion was boxing, as he understood that it could cause damage. In his role as sports minister he had a hand in bringing sumo wrestlers to Melbourne for a major event. He was very pleased to observe their contribution to physical contest, but the idea of boxers punching each other in the head and causing later brain damage was something to which he took great exception. It is perhaps evident in some of the late life journeys of people who have sustained injuries through the sport of boxing.

My comments tonight on the bill will be brief. I am pleased to support the bill before the house.

Ms BEATTIE (Yuroke) — I rise to make a few brief remarks on the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012. The bill is part of a regular mechanism for repealing statute law in Victoria. Members recognise that it is a tidying up bill, so to speak. It is important that laws remain clear and relevant to not only the Parliament but also the general public. The member for Bundoora gave a very erudite summary of the bill.

I also would like to thank members of the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee for their work on the bill. They received advice from parliamentary counsel and SARC then recommended the acts listed in the bill as being appropriate for repeal. When I was on the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee some time ago many bills came up for repeal; it is a tidying up process, as I said.

I will go through some of the important acts to be repealed by the bill. The Australian Alliance Assurance Company's Act 1867 was relevant to the shareholders of an unincorporated joint stock insurance company established in the colony of Victoria. It is an old act. All

the provisions of the Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Functions) Act 1974 have taken effect and are spent. Section 3 of that act vested in the then housing commission land and other real estate and personal property for the minister to administer. Section 3 has taken effect and is spent. The Aboriginal Land (Manatunga Land) Act 1992 under section 3 provided for land at Robinvale to be granted to the Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd and has become redundant. We all know new appropriation acts are enacted each year, and it is absolutely fitting that the Appropriation (2008/2009) Act 2008 and the Appropriation (Parliament 2008/2009) Act 2008 be repealed.

Spent amending acts with transitional or substantive provisions to be repealed include the Port Authorities (Amendment) Act 1986, the Legal Aid Commission (Amendment) Act 1989, the Kew and Heidelberg Lands (Trust) Act 1990, the Subdivision (Further Amendment) Act 1994, the University Acts (Amendment) Act 1994 and the Melbourne and Olympic Parks (Amendment) Act 1995, which the member for Sandringham touched upon. The member for Sandringham thought it was only relevant to Collingwood supporters. I doubt that is true, but perhaps he was being a little biased in his contribution as far as that was concerned. Other acts to be repealed include the Retail Tenancies (Amendment) Act 1995 and the Professional Boxing and Martial Arts Act 1996. Again, the member for Sandringham referred to sumo wrestling — —

Mr Wakeling interjected.

Ms BEATTIE — On the Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Act 1985, I am sure the member talking to me would perhaps like to indulge in a few boxing matches. I am happy to accommodate him if he wishes, although I do not think either one of us is suitable for that particular sport.

The Transport Acts (Amendment) Act 1997, the Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 1997, the Investigative, Enforcement and Police Powers Acts (Amendment) Act 2005 and the Consumer Credit (Victoria) and Other Acts Amendment Act 2008 are other redundant acts which can be repealed. To recap, this is a necessary bill which tidies up the statute books. From time to time these sorts of bills are brought to the house, and we do not oppose the bill.

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — I rise to speak about the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012, which will effectively delete a number of irrelevant and redundant items from the Victorian statute book. It will ensure that

the Victorian statutes are updated and maintained in an orderly manner and will improve the administration of Victorian law. It effectively ensures that there are proper housekeeping measures put in place. It covers a number of bills that this Parliament has made over the years which have now become redundant or have been superseded by other bills, and it ensures that these acts are relevant and in keeping with the laws of today.

Before I make a specific contribution I would like to congratulate the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee on the great work it does in going through the detail of acts, because the detail needs to be constantly monitored, evaluated and reviewed to ensure that we have appropriate and tidy bills.

There are a number of bills that have been tidied up in this repeal which other speakers have already mentioned. These include the Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Functions) Act 1974; the Port Authorities (Amendment) Act 1986; the Legal Aid Commission (Amendment) Act 1989; the Kew and Heidelberg Lands (Trust) Act 1990; the University Acts (Amendment) Act 1994, which looks particularly at RMIT and tidying up its relationship with Melbourne University; the Melbourne and Olympic Parks (Amendment) Act 1995, which the member for Sandringham has spoken of; the Professional Boxing and Martial Arts Act 1996, which members from both sides of the house could probably learn from, given the combat that takes place in this house from time to time; and the Transport Acts (Amendment) Act 1997. A number of these acts remind us again of the work that we do in this chamber and the responsibilities we have as members of Parliament.

In the time that I have remaining I want to focus on the repeal of the Appropriation (2008/2009) Act 2008 and the Appropriation (Parliament 2008/2009) Act 2008, which deal with the budgetary measures of the former government. I took the opportunity to research the work of the former Treasurer and now opposition member in the other place, Mr Lenders, who delivered a budget to Parliament which thankfully we now have the good fortune to be able to repeal in more ways than one. If there was anything that actually set the opposition up for failure, it was this budget. The budget of 2008–09 talked about a whole lot of things that left us in the mess that we are now in. It has meant that we have once again had to come in, clean up the problems and fix the mess. It is only timely that we should be talking about this bill today — on the day we are delivering a responsible and sensible budget.

I want to highlight a couple of things that were in the appropriation bill that was delivered by the former

Treasurer, Mr Lenders. Firstly there was the \$175 million fight against cancer centre which translated into the clinical care and support services for the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre, and there is absolutely no question that this funding was paramount. However, again there was a lack of detail and foresight shown in providing funding without including the cost of the fit-out for the centre, which equated to a further \$45 million. This again highlights the inefficiencies of the former government.

There was also a move to look at delivering a number of water projects. If anything needed to be repealed under this legislation, it was the former government's Appropriation (2008/2009) Act, which speaks about some of the water projects of the former government. Those projects include the north-south pipeline and the desalination plant. Some \$117 million was spent on the first stage of the desalination plant in Wonthaggi, and then a further \$129 million was spent on the new north-south pipeline, including \$99 million to fast-track the Wimmera-Mallee pipeline project, and \$600 million for the food bowl modernisation project. Here we go: it is a perfect example of a budget handed down and left as Labor's legacy.

The appropriation bill of the former government provided \$112 million to relieve congestion through the Keeping Melbourne Moving plan. This was fantastic, because that plan looked at extending clearway times. We can all remember — particularly my colleague the member for Prahran and a number of members of this government — standing up for small businesses which were going to be poorly affected by the decision to not allow people to park along High Street and in many other retail precincts. Those businesses would have been affected by the short-sightedness of the former government.

The Appropriation (2008/2009) Act also made a tax grab for stamp duty — and there was a cry about that from many members at that time, and certainly from the former member for Caulfield. The impact of that budget was felt in terms of stamp duty and land tax, and that budget's effect was absolutely horrific due to the measures of the former government. It will be interesting to hear members of the opposition make their contributions to the debate on the Appropriation (2012/2013) Bill, because in the second-reading speech for the Appropriation (2008/2009) Bill the former Treasurer talked about the importance of a budget surplus. Many times he mentioned just how important it is to keep the budget in surplus and to ensure that there is responsible management. In fact he said:

The increase in budget surpluses will ensure that we can meet our future financial obligations — in combination with a disciplined use of Victoria's balance sheet and our regular monitoring of the economic outlook.

If only members of the former government had been able to not only deliver a surplus but also be responsible in their economic management. The next paragraph of the 2008 second-reading speech goes on to talk about \$20 billion of infrastructure projects and a further \$17 billion of additional infrastructure programs that went on to assist myki, the desalination plant and a whole lot of inept, poorly managed and poorly funded programs of the former government.

I am very pleased that we can finally repeal the Appropriation (2008/2009) Act of the former government. Effectively it was a blueprint of how its members behaved with Victorian taxpayers money. Members of that government effectively took money that was not theirs and spent it like there was no tomorrow. The people of Victoria are fortunate that we now have a responsible government that today delivered a responsible budget which will ensure that members of this government watch every penny we spend and that the people of Victoria have a government they can rely on and whose members will not make outlandish and ridiculous promises similar to the ones made in the budgets of members of the former government.

I commend this bill to the house, and I look forward to hearing many contributions from the opposite side. I hope they will be able to commend us for delivering a budget surplus, which they themselves acknowledged the importance of when they were in government, and for delivering a tight and responsible fiscal management.

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Mill Park) — I rise to speak on the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012. Numerous bills of this ilk have been presented to the Parliament from time to time, the purpose of which is to remove from Victoria's statutes, acts that are no longer relevant, that are redundant or that are spent. It is part of the ongoing process of modernising the way government and the Parliament operate in terms of maintaining the Victorian statutes so they are relevant and applicable to modern times by removing provisions and acts that are no longer relevant rather than leaving them in the statute book.

The Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012 repeals a number of acts in the Victorian statute book, and there is some detail about them in the bill. A number of the acts are very broad ranging. But it is important to remember that this is budget day, and we are debating a bill which

is fairly perfunctory and quite pedestrian. It is not a bill that is about the future; it tidies up the past. That is the hallmark of the budget that was presented today and of the Baillieu government. That is the reality of it. This is a government that does nothing — it presents bills in the Parliament and it spends budget day dealing with a motion that has nothing to do with the budget. You would have thought that the budget was something to be spruiked about in the community. Instead this government bunkered down and laid that motion on us.

The Statute Law Repeals Bill that is before us adds nothing to a plan about jobs, but nevertheless we need to go through the bill because it is a part of a tidying up process that this government likes to go through instead of doing more proactive things.

The Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee is robust and does some terrific work. I know the committee has been very satisfied with the list of acts being repealed by this bill that has been presented in Parliament. That is an important function of the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee. I wish to thank the current committee members for the work they have undertaken in relation to this bill. It is a committee that ought to — and does — take its role very seriously. It provides a service to enable the good functioning of debates in the Parliament. It ensures that the bills that are presented are checked against very important principles, whether they are principles in relation to human rights or maintaining privacy or the types of issues that all bills need to be tested against. I put on the record my thanks to the current Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee for its work.

The contents of this bill are fairly uncontroversial. My understanding is that the chief parliamentary counsel, as per usual, has certified that this bill only and appropriately contains repeals of redundant legislation. Transitional functions have been placed in the bill to ensure that relevant sections of acts that need to be maintained are preserved under section 14 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984.

I will refer to and comment on some of the acts that the bill repeals. As I mentioned earlier, there is a broad range of acts. I turn to one that is of particular interest in a modern historical sense, and that is the Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 1997. That act amended the Accident Compensation Act 1985 which, I will remind members of Parliament, was very much a landmark piece of legislation introduced by the Cain Labor government. It was made possible because for a short period of time Labor had a majority of members in the upper house. That provided a window of opportunity — if my memory serves me

correctly — which allowed the Cain government to introduce a groundbreaking, modern, fair compensation scheme for injured workers.

It was very much the model for other jurisdictions across the country to follow. The Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 1997 amended the Accident Compensation Act 1985. By altering the definition of the term ‘worker’, it excluded, as is described in the bill itself, a person from participating in an approved program or work for the unemployment payment program under the Commonwealth Social Security Act 1991 and so on. This was a very traumatic period in Victoria’s history, when bills such as this sought to curtail access to accident compensation for people who were injured at work in terms of their gaining the necessary support either by way of payment or medical assistance to assist them at their time of greatest need. I feel no great sadness in seeing the back of this bill, frankly, because what it represented, along with a whole range of other bills that were introduced by the Kennett government, was very much a diminution of hard fought for compensation provisions for injured workers.

Other acts covered by this bill are to be repealed for a variety of reasons. They include the Consumer Credit (Victoria) and Other Acts Amendment Act 2008. The primary purpose of that act was to amend the Consumer Credit (Victoria) Act 1995 in relation to credit providers and to allow proceedings under the Consumer Credit (Victoria) Code to be brought in a court rather than in the Victorian Administrative Appeals Tribunal. That act also amended several other acts. The repeal provisions in the 2008 act, except for a number of sections described in this bill, have taken effect and are now spent. The remaining sections do not have a forced commencement date and rely on being proclaimed to come into operation; however, the sections can no longer be proclaimed as the bill describes because they would amend parts 4 and 6 of the Consumer Credit (Victoria) Act, which have now been repealed by the Credit (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2010. That was part of the national harmonisation of consumer credit laws — one of many forward-thinking and important regulatory reforms that were undertaken and led by the previous Labor government in Victoria. It cut red tape, decreased costs to business and preserved very important consumer protections for consumers.

Those are just two parts of the bill that jumped out at me and that I wished to comment on. As I said, the bill is very uncontroversial. It does the usual tidying up, which is now a regular part of doing business in terms of cleaning up the statute book in Victoria, and that is a good thing. We should not treat it with commentary

without really considering that it is an important reform mechanism for us. It ensures that we are kept up to date and that Victoria's statute book contains modern-day acts and regulations that are relevant and remain relevant to people's work, life, living and the rest. We do not oppose the bill.

Mr McCURDY (Murray Valley) — I too am delighted to rise to speak about this very important bill, the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012. One thing about this bill is that you can wrap it in Christmas paper, you can put a ribbon around its neck, but at the end of the day it is basically housekeeping and it is important that we do that in order to stay relevant, clear and accurate. That is what this coalition government is all about, and it will remain that way. As you have seen in the budget today, we will make the hard decisions and we will do what has to be done.

The Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012 is a regular mechanism for repealing statute law in Victoria. This bill is important to the management of the state statutes so that the laws remain clear, as I said earlier on. The bill repeals redundant acts that have been identified by the Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and departments. The acts to be repealed are listed in a schedule in the bill. I will go over some of those in detail and skip over a few of the others.

The bill repeals both principal acts which have no ongoing operation and amending acts which are spent, in effect, and have no further purpose. Most of the amending acts contain transitional — —

Ms Hennessy — Acting Speaker, I would just like to draw your attention to state of the house.

Quorum formed.

Mr McCURDY — As I was saying before I was rudely interrupted, the transitional provisions are no longer required because of time or recent legislative enactments. The amending provisions are no longer required because they amended or repealed the provisions of the principal acts which they were enacted to amend or repeal. Any residual effect of the transitional and savings provisions will be saved by section 14 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984.

Importantly the bill should be seen as part of the Victorian Parliament's regular housekeeping arrangements. The government has an obligation to bring forward on a regular basis legislation of this nature to ensure that the law of Victoria is as current as possible, which the government obviously wants it to be. By repealing redundant acts, the bill will ensure that the Victorian statutes are updated and maintained in a

regular and orderly manner so they remain relevant to the Victorian community.

The Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012 applies to the Melbourne and Olympic Parks (Amendment) Act 1995. The main purposes of that particular act were to amend the National Tennis Centre Act 1985 to change the title of that act to the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Act 1985, replace the National Tennis Centre Trust, otherwise known as the old trust, with the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust — or the new trust, so to speak — and to provide for the administration of Olympic Park and the National Tennis Centre.

I bring your attention to this particular act because it stands out to me as an example of the positive impact the development of Melbourne Park and Olympic Park has had on Melbourne, Victoria and indeed Australia. The trust's vision is to be recognised as being among the world's best and most successful sport and entertainment precincts. The mission of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust is to manage one of the world's leading destinations for sport, entertainment and recreation.

The trust provides venues, services and infrastructure of an international standard to provide a home for Tennis Australia and the Australian Open Tennis Championships, attracts and supports the delivery of large spectator-based indoor and outdoor sporting and entertainment events, enhances Melbourne's public recreational amenities and most importantly supports Victoria's major events, tourism and sport strategies.

I could go on a bit more about this — —

Mr Weller interjected.

Mr McCURDY — The member for Rodney asks me to say a bit more on this particular act that will be repealed. In the chairman's report Russell Caplan indicated that the Melbourne and Olympic parks precinct enjoyed record operations in 2010–11, which were financially driven by the Australian Open tennis attendees and the first full year of operation of the new stadium, AAMI Park, which is an outstanding international concert venue, as members would no doubt be aware. There have been improvements and extensions to the western concourse behind Rod Laver Arena, and I would say this was the catalyst for the building of the Brumby Stadium, down at Wonthaggi. Brumby Stadium seems to have plenty of games being played, but Victorians never seem to win down there.

Looking to other parts of this bill, I know I have a limited amount of time — —

Mr Delahunty interjected.

Mr McCURDY — I may need an extension. I thank the member for Lowan for pointing that out. I will also just cover the Port Authorities (Amendment) Act 1986, which is another act being repealed. It primarily amended the Port of Melbourne Authority Act 1958, the Port of Geelong Authority Act 1958 and the Port of Portland Authority Act 1958.

We know ports are an important part of our community and certainly of Victoria. We have heard the Minister for Ports say on many occasions that perhaps 38 per cent of Australia's shipping containers come through the port of Melbourne. Last year there was, I believe, a 6 per cent increase in imports and a more than 11 per cent increase in exports. The port of Melbourne is a well-used facility, and it is a classic example of the lack of vision that has been shown over the years. We certainly need to make some changes to improve the facilities at the port of Melbourne. Currently 2.5 million 20-foot equivalent containers go through there, and that is set to grow, primarily through agriculture, as cereal grain and dairy products come through the port. Some products are in bulk in containers, but many are containerised. By the year 2025 it is expected there will be 5.5 million 20-foot equivalent containers going through. The housekeeping changes dealt with in the bill make certain provisions redundant and tidy up the legislation, so the Port Authorities (Amendment) Act 1986 can now be repealed.

There are many other acts that this bill repeals, including the Kew and Heidelberg Lands (Trust) Act 1990. I believe that was covered by a previous speaker. Also repealed is the Transport Acts (Amendment) Act 1997, and another one that comes to mind is the Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 1997. The amendment to the definition of 'worker' in the Accident Compensation Act 1985 is no longer considered necessary, so the Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 1997 can be repealed.

I sense I am running out of time, so let me summarise by saying that the repealing of these acts is a mechanism that is regularly used for repealing statute law in Victoria, and it is important that we continue to do this housekeeping. As we move forward there will be other opportunities to do this, I am sure. I commend this bill to the house.

Mr LIM (Clayton) — I am pleased to rise to speak on the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012. This is a technical and housekeeping bill. Its purpose is to repeal more than 19 redundant acts of the Victorian

Parliament. These acts are redundant because, owing to the passage of time, they are no longer operational or, as in the case of amending acts, their provisions are fully spent. The acts being repealed pursuant to clause 3 of the bill are specified in the schedule to the bill.

The explanatory memorandum also lists the acts under repeal and separates them into three categories. The first category covers five principal acts which are spent or redundant because their provisions have taken effect. They are the Australian Alliance Assurance Company's Act 1867, the Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Functions) Act 1974, the Aboriginal Land (Manatunga Land) Act 1992, the Appropriation (2008/2009) Act 2008 (No. 32/2008) and the Appropriation (Parliament 2008/2009) Act 2008 (No. 33/2008). The Australian Alliance Assurance Company, now known as Australian Alliance Insurance (AAI), was founded in Melbourne in 1862 — the member who spoke before me has referred to that already — and in a pub, no less! Originally Alliance was an unincorporated company. The purpose of the 1867 act was to allow the shareholders to sue and be sued in the name of the chairman. In the following century and a half Alliance has gone through a number of mergers and is now a niche company. Clearly the original act has served any useful purpose.

The second category is 'Spent amending acts with transitional or substantive provisions'. There are 12 acts in this category: the Port Authorities (Amendment) Act 1986, the Legal Aid Commission (Amendment) Act 1989, the Kew and Heidelberg Lands (Trust) Act 1990, the Subdivision (Further Amendment) Act 1994, the University Acts (Amendment) Act 1994, the Melbourne and Olympic Parks (Amendment) Act 1995, the Retail Tenancies (Amendment) Act 1995, the Professional Boxing and Martial Arts Act 1996, the Transport Acts (Amendment) Act 1997, the Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 1997, the Investigative, Enforcement and Police Powers Acts (Amendment) Act 2005 and the Consumer Credit (Victoria) and Other Acts Amendment Act 2008.

The third category of acts to be repealed contains two acts which are spent because their provisions are wholly in operation and have amended the acts they were intended to amend. They are the House Contracts Guarantee (HIH) Act 2001 and the Fire Services Funding (Feasibility Study) Act 2009.

In its report on this bill the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee has found no problems and it has received the appropriate chief parliamentary counsel's certificate.

The final comment I would like to make is that section 14 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984 makes various provisions in respect of the repeal of acts. Section 14(1) prevents acts being revived that were previously repealed by the acts now being repealed. Section 14(2) prevents things that have been done from being undone, and importantly it does not affect rights acquired under the repealed acts. With those few words, I have no difficulty with the passage of this bill.

Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully) — It gives me great pleasure to rise to contribute to this debate on the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012. As has been mentioned by members who have spoken before me, this is important legislation because it is a process by which Parliament has the capacity to remove spent legislation to ensure that the legislation on our statute book is appropriate. I recall my time in opposition when, in my previous capacity as the shadow parliamentary secretary to the Leader of the Opposition, I had carriage in this house of similar legislation. I remember having to deal with these types of measures for many years, so I understand the significance and importance of these bills before the house. As has been mentioned, they deal principally with three types. There are 5 spent principal acts being repealed by this bill, 12 spent amending acts with transitional or substantive provisions and 2 spent amending acts.

One of the acts being repealed relates to the 2008–09 budget, and it is interesting to revisit the budget of that year. Those who were members of this Parliament in 2008 will recall that with great fanfare the then Treasurer indicated that he was going to fix this state. Clearly history will prove that was not the outcome the then Treasurer, Mr Lenders, indicated would occur. I note that in his commentary he talked about the government engaging in ‘the biggest infrastructure program in Victoria’s history’. As a member I represent the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, as you do, Acting Speaker, and we both understand the issues of people who live in that part of Melbourne, and the 2008 budget did little for the people in the communities that we represent.

I could go through a raft of projects and a raft of issues that were concerning residents in Melbourne’s east and which the then government was unwilling and unable to address. Tormore Road has been a significant issue for residents in my area and has been the cause of great angst. In opposition we called on the then government to address the problem, and it had the opportunity in the 2008 budget to deal with that important issue. History will tell us that was not the case, and in fact it took an incoming coalition government to take action and

ensure that money was provided for the future development of that project.

In the then Treasurer’s speech in 2008 he said that ‘today’s surpluses will be tomorrow’s schools, hospitals, roads and trains’. It is interesting when we talk about trains because in 1999 the former government promised my community that it would deliver a feasibility study for a potential rail line to Rowville. The 2008 budget was the perfect opportunity for the former government to deliver on that commitment, but again history tells us that the former government, ignoring the needs of the people in Melbourne’s east, failed to deliver on its own commitment to deliver a feasibility study. Again it took an incoming coalition government to fix the mess, do the work and provide the funding for the contracts for an engineering firm to start the process which should have been started by those opposite. This is another example from the 2008 budget, which is being dealt with by this legislation, of an issue that the former government could have dealt with.

With regard to schools, when we look at today’s budget we see there is provision for the future upgrade of Mountain Gate Primary School within my own electorate. The 2008 budget was another example of the former government talking about its infrastructure program, which was going to be ‘substantial and unprecedented’. That was a project that could have been delivered within 11 years, but it was not, and it could have been included in the 2008 budget.

Looking at that budget speech by Mr Lenders there are a few issues I will draw to the attention of members. In the speech he said:

The Brumby Labor government is investing \$4.9 billion in new water infrastructure projects across the state, with this budget confirming —

he said with a grin and a smirk —

\$117 million for the first stage of the desalination plant at Wonthaggi ...

He said it would cost Victorians \$117 million — if only! It will cost \$2 million a day, every day for 27 years. That is the legacy those opposite have left this state. They talk about \$117 million for stage 1, but that budget did not talk about stage 2, did not talk about the debt, and did not talk about the \$2 million a day for 27 years. When Mr Lenders stood in this house he did not tell the people of Victoria that the program he was championing in the 2008 budget was going to be an albatross around the neck of every Victorian in terms of future expenditure. For 27 years every Victorian will be paying for the legacy left by those opposite.

Another quote I will highlight in the short time that has been allocated to me is this, from the same speech:

In this budget, we provide \$112 million to relieve congestion in the short term through our Keeping Melbourne Moving plan, including an extension of clearway times ...

I thought that was quite interesting. I turn to look at the new member for Prahran, who is in the house. He has been a strong, hardworking member in this house, and he was also a strong advocate for the removal of the ridiculous clearways policy that was put in place by those opposite. In 2008 the then Treasurer stood in this house and proudly said he would extend clearway times. I do not know whether the former member for Prahran, Mr Lupton, was consulted on the policy — I think he might have been a cabinet secretary at the time — or maybe he was just asleep at the wheel, because that was clearly an issue that he paid for at the ballot box in 2010. It is clear that the government paid for this issue at the ballot box.

As I have said, a number of issues in this budget had to be remedied by the incoming coalition government. I draw on my role as Parliamentary Secretary for Health and further quote from the 2008 budget speech:

We will also provide \$25 million for the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Centre to deliver specialist cancer treatment at the Austin Hospital.

What did the former government deliver? It delivered a concrete shell. It took the incoming coalition government to stand up for the people of Heidelberg and deliver that project. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms HALFPENNY (Thomastown) — I rise to speak on the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012 and state at the start that there is no opposition to the bill. I acknowledge that this is a housekeeping bill, introduced to the house to strike out redundant legislation — legislation that no longer has any purpose and is unnecessary because it has been overtaken by legislation.

I recall the lyrics of a song by an Australian singer, Vanessa Amorosi: ‘Nothing lasts forever’. This is true of the legislation we are repealing tonight, but it also rings true in terms of the government, which should take note of these lyrics as a warning, because the way it is going it will also not last forever — in fact it will not last long at all.

Rather than go through each of the pieces of legislation being repealed, because I know most other speakers have done that, I would like to refer to a couple of the acts that are being repealed. One of them is the

Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 1997. This bill came into effect during the long, dark years of the Kennett government. Many of us remember the cruel actions the then Premier, Jeff Kennett, took against injured workers — he completely destroyed the benefits and entitlements that injured workers had had under the workers compensation insurance system. In talking about the repeal of this legislation, I would like to refer to the current government’s budget, where it is going to cut premiums for employers in terms of workers compensation. Legislation has recently been passed in this house to allow this government to take almost half a billion dollars out of the WorkCover system.

We are still waiting to see and wondering whether there is going to be any legislation brought into the house to improve benefits for injured workers so that it is a system that not only profits employers and the government but also looks after injured workers, because I have to say that in the electorate of Thomastown I have a number of people coming into my office who are currently on disability pensions and have all sorts of financial problems. When you talk to them, a lot of those people are injured workers who sustained long-term injuries and who are now on disability pensions. Of course those pensions are being paid by taxpayers rather than by the insurance scheme they should really be entitled to.

I would also like to raise the fact that, as we have said, this bill gets rid of redundant pieces of legislation, but, as we have also said before, it would be good to see some legislation come into this house that is substantial and life changing, which is going to provide a vision for the future of Victorians and something they can look forward to in terms of security and prosperity. That is not what Victorians are seeing in the type of legislation that is coming into this house at the moment.

As we have said, this bill repeals a series of redundant acts that have been identified by the Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel Victoria and departments. No doubt they have done a lot of good, long work to identify those acts that are no longer necessary and have no purpose. In saying that, I commend this legislation to the house, noting that it is a piece of housekeeping legislation that is removing many pieces of redundant legislation. I hope that we can now get on to the business of introducing and debating legislation that will do things for Victorians and take them forward.

Mr WATT (Burwood) — I take great delight in rising to speak on this Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012. Some people say this bill is just machinery in nature,

but I would like to think that this bill is plucking from history some of the wrongs of the past, including the ninth budget of 11 long, dark, miserable years of Labor government. I would like to concentrate my contribution on the ninth budget of 11 long, dark years of hard Labor. I realise that I only get 10 minutes, but if I get enough time, I would also like to talk about the Melbourne and Olympic Parks (Amendment) Act 1995.

Firstly I would like to look at a number of suburbs in my electorate. Interestingly enough, I did a search of the 2008 budget papers. There are a number of budget papers. Here we have budget papers 1, 2 and 3, and budget information paper 1, so we have a number of different budget papers to go through. When going through those budget papers I looked for something as simple as Ashburton. I think you would be interested to know, Acting Speaker, that the word 'Ashburton' does not appear at all in the 2008 budget papers.

The previous government ripped out Ashburton's heart when it removed all of the police from the Ashburton police station. We campaigned hard on it. It is interesting to note that we delivered \$500 000 in our first budget to get that station back up and running. Interestingly enough, Ashburton does not factor. Ashburton Primary School was in need of funds and was allowed to run down by the previous government. At this point, being the ninth budget, it was only nine long, hard, miserable years of Labor. Still, there was no mention of Ashburton Primary School in the budget. If you look in the budget papers today, \$6 million is available for Ashburton Primary School to spend on rebuilding the school.

Ashwood is another part of my electorate. I realise that I am nearly 2½ minutes into my speech and I am still only up to the As. Ashwood College is a classic example of what happens when a government is asleep at the wheel. Ashwood College has had no major works done in a very long time. I looked for Ashwood College in the 2008 budget papers. I looked hard, I looked low, I looked high and I just could not find it. Interestingly enough, it was only weeks out from the 2010 budget, six months after a fire that destroyed a quarter of the school, that the previous government even bothered to put Ashwood College on to its radar. There were unfunded promises in the dying days of the long, dark, miserable years of Labor, and here we are, proud to announce \$10.5 million to rebuild Ashwood College in today's budget, in our second year. It will be done, and I am proud of the fact that we have listened to the people of Ashwood.

We move on to Box Hill Hospital. The previous government promised and it promised and it promised,

then it promised and it promised and it promised. Strangely enough, it took until the dying days of the Labor government — we had 11 long, dark, miserable years of Labor — before it actually decided to put some money up for the hospital. Under this government, in our first budget last year we provided an extra \$47 million, which brought the investment up to \$447.5 million.

Let us move on to Burwood. You would think the member for Burwood would actually stand up for the people of Burwood. But no; I looked for Burwood in the 2008 budget but all I saw was EastLink, Burwood Highway and Mountain Highway. I did not see the Burwood electorate. I looked and I looked and I looked, and I just did not see it.

I continued on and I looked for Chadstone. Do you think you would see Chadstone? Chadstone is one of the areas of need in my electorate; you would think that it would get something in the budget. I looked and I looked and I looked through the 2008 budget, Labor's ninth budget in 11 long, dark, miserable years, and do you think I could find Chadstone in the budget? No, no Chadstone — sorry, Chadstone missed out.

I looked for Glen Iris. I looked, and I looked hard. I spent quite a bit of time looking for Glen Iris in Labor's 2008 budget, its ninth budget in 11 long, dark, miserable years. Do you think I could find Glen Iris in the budget? We have been through a number of suburbs in my electorate and I am looking for Glen Iris. I am looking hard, and do you think I see it? No, no Glen Iris in the 2008 budget at all.

I looked through the budget for Wattle Park. Wattle Park Primary School is a school in need in my electorate, a school that has not had any decent work done for a number of years. I looked and I looked and I looked, and I kept looking. Do you think I could find any money for Wattle Park Primary School? If you said no, you would be right. There was no money for Wattle Park Primary School in the 2008 Labor budget.

The Baillieu government is committed to actually doing something — —

Ms Hennessy — Acting Speaker, the member for Burwood has incited me to draw your attention to the state of the house.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Victoria) — Order! As there have already been a number of quorums called today, I intend to use my discretion in accordance with previous rulings and not to ring the bells.

Mr WATT — I understand the member for Altona is ashamed of the fact that my electorate, the electorate of Burwood, one of the electorates that changed hands at the last election, completely missed out in Labor's 2008 budget, the ninth budget in 11 long, dark, miserable years of hard Labor. I understand that she is embarrassed by that, but I have to get back to it. Wattle Park Primary School completely missed out in Labor's ninth budget, the 2008 budget. It completely missed out.

Ms Hennessy interjected.

Mr WATT — Where are they? I can tell you that later this year — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Victoria) — Order! There is too much noise in the chamber and too much chatter backwards and forwards across the table.

Mr WATT — Some people yell out, but what I say is that I am proud of the fact that money has been allocated. If members look at last year's budget, they will see that Wattle Park Primary School got money. Wattle Park primary is being built and the new facilities will be opened very soon. When those opposite ask, 'Where is it?', it is there. They should go look at it. We are building these things. We are getting on with the job, unlike Labor in 2008 when it did not provide for the electorate. It is no wonder Labor was kicked out of government in 2010, because it did not provide for the electorate.

Those opposite talk about infrastructure, but we should look at what happened: Chadstone, nothing; Glen Iris, nothing; Ashburton, nothing; Ashburton police station, decimated; Ashwood College, \$10.5 million this year thanks very much to the Treasurer and the Minister for Education. Ashburton Primary School is going ahead this year. I am astounded that members could ask, 'Where is it?', because if they look in the budgets for the last two years, they will see what should be done in budgets. We are providing for electorates, we are providing for Burwood, we are providing for the people of Victoria — and I have not yet got on to anything except Burwood.

Let us move along. Let us talk about the 2008 budget, Labor's ninth miserable budget in 11 long, dark, miserable years. Some members have mentioned the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre — \$175 million, very commendable. But one would think that they would have thought about the fit-out. Hospitals are not concrete shells. This government, the Baillieu coalition government, has had to stump up

\$45 million to fix the mess left by the previous government over 11 long, dark, miserable years. If we look at the desal plant, we see \$117 million for a desal plant. I wish it were only going to cost \$117 million. It will cost nearly \$2 million a day for 27 years, which is money down the drain. It is understandable that the people of Victoria booted Labor out. I could go on, but I know I only have a short period of time left.

I would like to quickly talk about one other act that is being repealed, the Melbourne and Olympic Parks (Amendment) Act 1995. It is interesting that the previous Labor government, over 11 long, dark, miserable years, ripped the heart out of the Olympic Park precinct. Melbourne and Olympic parks without Olympic Park is not Melbourne and Olympic parks. It is Collingwood park, thanks to the former government and former Premier Brumby, a Collingwood supporter. They handed Olympic Park, the heart of athletics in this state, to a football club of all things. I commend this bill to the house.

Mr LANGUILLER (Derrimut) — I rise to speak in the debate on the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012. This bill repeals a number of acts which have become redundant. That is the principal purpose of the bill. I will name but a few of those acts: the Australian Alliance Assurance Company's Act 1867, the Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Functions) Act 1974, the Aboriginal Land (Manatunga Land) Act 1992, the Professional Boxing and Martial Arts Act 1996, and of course the Appropriation (2008/2009) Act 2008 brought in under the Labor government.

I will say one thing, Acting Speaker. There is one thing that I remember and Victorians know well, and we can only encourage members of the government to read the newspapers: we created jobs, we invested in teachers, we invested in more nurses, we invested in infrastructure, and year in, year out in our budgets we had a very strong commitment to major projects.

We remember what we did in government, and in 2014 Victorians will remember what Labor did in government. They will also remember that there is another piece of legislation which has been repealed. I refer of course to the Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 1997, which amended the Accident Compensation Act 1985. Working men and working women remember when Labor introduced the first ever and most comprehensive workers compensation system in the history of the state because we introduced, firstly, the very important component of prevention. We said that a good system is one which commits itself to preventing injuries in the workplace in the first place. The second important

component of the Accident Compensation Act related to fair and reasonable compensation. Last but not least, for the first time in this state's history we talked about and legislated for occupational rehabilitation; in other words, the right to return to work, which is fundamentally what every working man and every working woman wanted at the time.

But of course one cannot forget one of the acts that has been repealed, and that is the Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 1997. I refer to two sections of that act which men and women in the state will not forget. They are section 33, 'Compensation for maims', and section 34, 'Compensation for pain and suffering'. It is interesting to go back into history and note that on Wednesday, 12 November 1997, then Treasurer Stockdale introduced the Accident Compensation (Miscellaneous Amendment) Bill, which removed the right of workers to make a claim for pain and suffering under common law. I quote from the then Treasurer's second-reading speech:

This bill will improve the operations of the WorkCover scheme in a number of fundamental respects.

First, the right to recover any damages in a common-law action will be eliminated for all work-related injuries arising after the date of commencement.

Under the heading 'Common law' the then Treasurer went on to say:

A worker injured on or after commencement will not be entitled to recover damages of any kind in a common-law action.

Let us be absolutely clear that whilst the Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012 principally and simply removes acts of Parliament that are redundant, working men and working women in Victoria have not forgotten that it was the Kennett Liberal government that removed the right of workers to sue employers who were negligent and responsible for the injuries that some workers were sustaining in the course of their employment. It was the Bracks and Brumby Labor governments that reinstated the rights of injured workers in the course of their employment to sue an employer when the employer had proved to be negligent and proved not to have undertaken the required health and safety measures that would have led to the prevention of an injury to a worker in the workplace.

The Statute Law Repeals Bill 2012, if anything, is a reminder that there were two appropriation bills under the Labor government that created jobs for nurses, that created jobs for health workers, that created employment and that focused on creating and growing the economy right through the state. Last but not

least — and I conclude with these remarks — we will not forget that it was a Liberal government that removed the rights of workers to sue under common law for pain and suffering.

Business interrupted pursuant to sessional orders.

ADJOURNMENT

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

Skye Mineral Sands: quarry operations

Mr PERERA (Cranbourne) — I raise a matter for the Minister for Energy and Resources. The action I seek is that the minister fully investigate the operations of the Skye quarry at 500 Ballarto Road, Skye.

I have met with some very anxious residents from the Skye area and its surrounds in relation to the operation of the Skye quarry. It is a must that the operator of the quarry duly comply with extractive industry licence no. 1241. It is the understanding of the residents that this is simply not being complied with by the operator. The residents believe that the service road running along the western boundary of the quarry should not be used as a haulage road. It is my understanding that the operator is allowing loaded trucks to travel along this service road. Residents are seeking that a guarantee be duly given by the operator that the quarry's entrance, opposite 505 Ballarto Road, Skye, will not be reopened for the use of heavy vehicles. It is my understanding that unfortunately there was a near fatality caused because of a heavy vehicle turning into the entrance.

The other concerns that were raised were as follows. The area on the east side of Ballarto Road — that is, the visual buffer side — should again be reinstated with trees by the operator. A fence should be erected between the transfer station and the quarry, and subsequently quarry trucks should not go through to the transfer station. The current intersection of Harold Road and Ballarto Road is well below the normal standard of intersections in general, and Ballarto Road is a state-managed road. As the quarry operator allows heavy trucks to use this intersection, it must be upgraded as per the operator's extractive licence.

The quarry operator, under its current work authority, should extract the site at 45 degrees; however, it is my understanding that this is simply not happening. The allowable depth for extracting is 14 metres below the natural surface. It is my understanding that it is now 30 metres. It is also my understanding that the Abbey

Group, which has been contracted by the operator, has put up a construction site sign along Ballarto Road. It is my understanding that there is no construction going on at the site, and the residents would like this sign to be taken down as soon as possible.

The south side of Valley Road, where there is a 200-metre reserve, is constantly being flooded by the operator, and it is alleged that the trees there are now dying. The operator must comply with the current work authority in relation to natural vegetation on the site.

Residents are also concerned that the amount of area that is open for extraction is more than what the operator's authority allows for. The residents believe that — —

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

Gembrook electorate: community projects

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — My adjournment matter tonight is for the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional and Rural Development, the Honourable Peter Ryan. I call on the minister to consider funding for three potential community projects that would greatly benefit three distinctly different regions in the Gembrook electorate.

The Cardinia Shire Council is seeking state government support to develop the Bailey Road service centre in Cockatoo. The council needs funding to complete the fit-out and transform a former commercial building into a true community hub. Cockatoo is a small town with many challenges, but it is a resilient community. It was one of the communities that faced Ash Wednesday back in 1983; the town was devastated and the fires killed six locals. When the fires raged through the town, up to 300 people gathered and sheltered from the fires in the old kindergarten, which had been built in 1982. At that time Cockatoo's community members banded together to ensure that those people survived the fires, camping out to defend the building 24/7.

The community has stood up for the old kindergarten to ensure that an Ash Wednesday memorial is erected at the site. At one stage the council began the process of knocking the building down, before a protest at the site ensured that the council listened. The building will now be preserved for the future as an Ash Wednesday memorial. Despite this strong community spirit, the town lacks a multipurpose space that can provide the varied range of services, programs and events required to meet the needs of this unique community.

Another funding opportunity is the Deep Creek Reserve master plan. While this reserve in Pakenham East falls just outside my electorate — it is in the electorate of Bass — this project would benefit several communities in the outer south-eastern growth corridor. Funding would allow the Cardinia Shire Council to consult with locals to design a community sustainability and ecology centre and recreational outdoor facilities that meet the needs of this growing area. As we know, it is one of the fastest growing areas in Victoria, and we need to ensure that we build for the future. The plan would consider the feasibility of the reserve, providing a range of general recreation and sustainability-focused community activities that are not currently available to residents.

To the north-west of my electorate is Belgrave, another strong community with yet another completely different set of needs. Belgrave is another town in need of a community facility — one that it can call its own. The Yarra Ranges Shire Council is seeking funding to engage with the community and determine an appropriate site for a proposed multipurpose building. Belgrave has its library and the Tin Shed — a drop-in centre that supports the homeless and underprivileged — as well as its youth services building and a maternal and child health centre. But Belgrave needs a larger, more flexible space with good access so that residents can gather in a central place and enjoy a wide variety of services and programs. I ask the minister to investigate each of these projects.

Williamstown High School: integration aide funding

Mr NOONAN (Williamstown) — I wish to raise a matter for the Minister for Education. The action I seek from the minister is for him to urgently intervene and reinstate integration aide funding for local autistic student Luke Schroder.

The minister may be familiar with this matter, as I wrote to him on 24 February 2012 after Luke's mother, Raelene MacDonald, visited my office to discuss her son's desperate plight. As I explained in my email to the minister, Luke commenced his year 9 studies earlier this year with the assistance of an integration aide for four days of the week. The aide assistance was funded in equal portions by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the school. Midway through term 1 the school advised Luke and his family that it no longer had the surplus funds available to top up his aide funding. News of this funding cut triggered a wave of activity by Raelene MacDonald. She offered to pay the school whatever funds it needed in order to reinstate the loss of funding. She even indicated that she

would redraw on her mortgage to assist the school with the shortfall. Raelene simply wants what we all want for our own kids, and that is a fair go.

When I spoke with staff at Williamstown High School it became abundantly clear to me that Luke deserved and needed to maintain his current level of support. This was reaffirmed by the school's principal, Lisa Sperling, who was quoted in the *Maribyrnong Weekly* newspaper of 14 March 2012 as saying:

I really would like that we did have more support for Luke.

... What he does need is more one-on-one support in the classroom and we don't get funding for that.

Williamstown High School has a wonderful reputation in our local community, and Lisa Sperling is someone I have a great deal of respect for. I know the school is finding this situation very difficult to deal with, as it prides itself on prioritising the needs of its students above all else. Whilst the school has not been explicit about the reasons for Luke's funding cut, it is very safe to assume that the \$40 000 it lost in VCAL (Victorian certificate of applied learning) coordination funding at the end of last year is taking a toll on its budget. This annual cut to VCAL funding is being felt right across the board, and there is little doubt that Luke has become a victim of this callous decision by the Baillieu government.

Upon the recommendation of the department Luke has been subjected to a bureaucratic process of reassessment, and he now anxiously waits to hear of his fate. Sadly, the system is failing Luke. There is no other way to explain to Luke and his family why he qualified for support across four days in term 1 but just two days in term 2. This is just a straight injustice. It is clear that Luke's fate and future now rest firmly in the hands of the minister, and I call on him to intervene personally in this matter and provide Luke, Raelene, their family and the school community the support they need for his integration aide to be reinstated to the term 1 levels.

Lindenow: government support

Mr BULL (Gippsland East) — I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Regional and Rural Development. The action I seek is for government investment in the Lindenow region to help to create jobs and support the local sporting fraternity. As many members will know, Lindenow is one of the state's prime vegetable-producing areas on the Mitchell River flats. The horticulture industry is a major employer in the region and one of the mainstays of the local economy. That industry services local, state, national and international markets. Lindenow's

vegetable industry produces high-quality produce and is highly regarded throughout the food sector. However, the industry has the potential to grow, and it certainly has not realised its maximum benefit. Government support will enable the industry to take another step towards achieving its full potential. This warrants strong consideration from the government of the day.

While the horticulture industry is the backbone of the local economy, the Lindenow Recreation Reserve is the backbone of the social fabric of the township, with very active and successful bowls, cricket and football clubs in the one precinct in what is a small country town. The recreation reserve is also very close to Lindenow Primary School and is utilised by the school for various sporting activities. Lindenow Football Club has a proud football tradition. It is the reigning East Gippsland Football League premiers team, and under the leadership of its president, David Dunkley, it has started the 2012 season very well, remaining undefeated.

For some time the club has sought government support for irrigation of the playing surface of the recreation reserve. Such a project would ensure that the reserve's three sports fields remain in an appropriate, safe and usable condition, particularly during the drier and warmer summer months. Over recent years the main oval has been extremely hard and unsafe, including during winter. I have played football on the oval myself, and I can vouch for its hardness. Sports such as football are vital to regional communities, as they provide very important recreational and, more importantly, social benefits to these communities.

The action I seek is for the government to strongly consider investment in the Lindenow community both for job opportunities and to support the local sporting fraternity.

Roads: Yan Yean electorate

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) — I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Roads. The action I seek is for him to visit the Yan Yean electorate to explain to the people of the most populous and fast-growing electorate in the state why for the second year running there are no funds allocated in the state budget for road upgrades, nothing for the much-needed duplication of Epping Road, nothing for the much-needed improvement and duplication of Yan Yean Road, nothing for the duplication of Findon Road, no traffic lights for the intersection of Epping and Findon roads, nothing for the upgrade of Bridge Inn Road, nothing for the upgrade of McDonalds Road and nothing for any other road in the area.

The Cooper Street duplication, which was fully funded in June 2010 as I announced at the time, has been held up for more than a year by this government. I have no doubt that the minister will gleefully come out to open and claim as his own the current duplication of Plenty Road that was fully funded by the Labor government. I have no doubt that the minister will come in again and say that I had 11 years or 9 years to act — however long he would like to choose; whether it was the term of the last government or the time that I have been in this place — but I am proud to say that during the time that Labor held office, in my electorate more than \$200 million was spent on roads. That was an average of \$20 million per year, and that was before the big growth spurt. The big growth spurt has happened in recent years. We were preparing for it, and we have now seen this road funding completely halted in the north.

It is widely known throughout the bureaucracy, through all government departments, that this government is completely deaf to the need for funding of infrastructure, roads and public transport in Melbourne's north and west. The bureaucrats are under direction that they are only to put forward funding for projects in the south-east and east of Melbourne and the occasional project in regional Victoria. It is not good enough. I will not stand for it. The people of the north will not stand for being neglected and left out in this way.

If the minister bothers to come into the house again and give the sort of response that he has given to me on the four or five occasions since he has been the Minister for Roads when I have raised the deeply serious matters of road safety and road conditions and the issue of congestion, I will repeat to him that communities in Epping North, Doreen, Mernda — fast-growing and fantastic communities — need infrastructure, public transport and roads to support their development.

I know the minister was perfectly happy to come out on Sunday a week ago and claim credit for the South Morang rail extension, which was fully funded by the former government, but he has not come out to Greensborough to explain why he has cut 521 bus services in that area. He needs to come out and explain why —

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

Mount Eliza: farmers market

Mr MORRIS (Mornington) — I am pleased to rise this evening to raise a matter for the Minister for

Regional and Rural Development, who is the Deputy Premier. It is a matter relating to an excellent local institution in my electorate, the Mount Eliza farmers market. I am sure the minister is aware of the success of the market, and the action I am seeking from him is that he provide support to allow the market to move up to the next level.

The Mount Eliza farmers market was launched in 2010. It was an incredible success right from the very first week it. It has rapidly become a spectacular success and a great local institution. Of course the Mount Eliza Village geography lends itself to creating a great atmosphere, but certainly the organisers have been very skilful in the way they have established the market at the site they have chosen and in the way they operate the market. They have created a great feel in that area.

The market is also a great outlet for Mornington Peninsula produce. While we have a great variety of produce right across the peninsula, there are not many places you can go where it is available in one space — not all of it, but a good representation of it. It is a great showcase of the Mornington Peninsula produce as well as the produce of other producers from surrounding areas. The market is an accredited market, and that is important. When people go to a market they need to know they are buying the real thing. Products from an accredited market are grown or made by accredited stallholders, and 90 per cent of stallholders must be accredited stallholders for the market to be an accredited market. Mount Eliza is an accredited market.

The market is an initiative of the Mount Eliza Chamber of Commerce, and I congratulate Mel Wigg and the great team she has built up, who organise the market on a monthly basis. They developed it from scratch, and they do a great job. It is a real community effort. Both the Rotary Club of Mount Eliza and the Mount Eliza Lions Club alternate running the market. In the interest of full disclosure I should indicate that my wife, Linda, is currently the president of the Rotary Club of Mount Eliza for only another seven weeks — thank goodness. That means I have the joy of an occasional very early morning start on cold mornings to set up the bollards and so on, but it also means that not only does the community benefit from access to great produce, it benefits directly from the gate proceeds going back into the community as well, and that is an important thing. I seek the support of the minister in this action.

Charles La Trobe College: Heidelberg West campus fire damage

Mr CARBINES (Ivanhoe) — The matter I raise is for the attention of the Minister for Education, and the

action I seek is for the minister to provide \$800 000 to rebuild classrooms and student toilets at the Olympic Village P-4 campus of Charles La Trobe College in Heidelberg West, which was destroyed by a fire six weeks ago. In relation to these matters, the history of this issue is pretty straightforward. There was a massive fire on 14 March that destroyed half the school. Music, art and cooking classrooms were destroyed. Student toilets were also destroyed and are unable to be used.

Four thousand dollars was raised by the Heidelberg West community during a sausage sizzle that was hosted by me and the federal member for Jagajaga, Jenny Macklin, at the mall in Heidelberg West. That is \$4000 more than the Baillieu government has determined to contribute to rebuilding a burnt down school in Heidelberg West, one of the most vulnerable communities in Victoria. Almost all the students in this community receive the education maintenance allowance. This government has decided to make sure that those families have now had that allowance slashed in half.

There is a lack of commitment being made by this government to act in relation to a burnt down school where the insurance money has not been made available to rebuild that school and where no action has been taken to fix any of the facilities. Now we have students as young as four, five or six having to use the staff toilets at the Olympic Village campus because they cannot access or use student facilities. There are three cubicles for staff toilets that have to be used by 100 students aged between 5 and 10 because this government refuses to rebuild or even provide temporary amenities at the Olympic Village campus.

It is quite staggering that I have had no response from the minister, having raised this previously as an adjournment matter. The minister chose to come out to visit Olympic Village primary school when he opened the stage 1 works funded by the previous Labor government at Charles La Trobe College, and he did not make a commitment when he came in here to go and visit the school until some five weeks after the fire, more than anything I suspect to make sure there was not going to be any bad press while he was out there cutting ribbons and cutting more funding to education projects. Then of course when I spoke to the principal of the school I learnt that there had been no commitment made. The principal said that \$800 000 was required for the works and that no comment or commitments had been made. Today we have seen another budget in which not even fire replacement money to rebuild the burnt down school facilities has been provided.

Today the principal of Olympic Village primary school said, 'We still have a half burnt down building here, and we really hoped we would get something in the budget'. I was at the school's working bee on the weekend with 100 other parents as they were doing their very best to make the school the best it can be for the local community, but this government continues to dismiss or ignore the most vulnerable people in our community — —

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

Occupational health and safety: Nadrasca

Ms RYALL (Mitcham) — I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Assistant Treasurer. My request is that the minister provide information to Nadrasca in the electorate of Mitcham regarding the implications of the national OHS (occupational health and safety) scheme and Victoria's position in relation to that scheme.

Nadrasca has been operating since 1967. It exists to provide services to people with a disability. Nadrasca provides a range of services and employment for over 350 people with a disability and employs approximately 150 permanent, part-time and casual staff across the service to assist its clients. Its services include a disability employment service, day programs and activities for people with significant disabilities, and accommodation services. Nadrasca is a not-for-profit service and has approximately 100 programs. We know for organisations such as Nadrasca funds that are tight and that costs and overheads above their expected expenditure make things all the harder.

Ms Green interjected.

Ms RYALL — It is interesting that the member for Yan Yean raises the NDIS (national disability insurance scheme), because we in the government have actually been great supporters of the NDIS. I am sure that organisations such as Nadrasca would much prefer to be spending the funds they have on their services rather than on additional compliance costs.

The findings from the PricewaterhouseCoopers report prepared for the government on OHS harmonisation laws as put forward by the Gillard government — the proposal — are that Victorian businesses will face costs of more than \$3.4 billion over the next five years. Whilst harmonisation laws might be a good idea, they can actually draw leaders back to the lowest common denominator and therefore cause disadvantage. That is

the case with Victoria. Victoria is a leader; it is identified as a leading state in OHS.

I am concerned that organisations such as Nadrasca and other not-for-profit organisations, which perform an outstanding service to our community and to our disabled people, will incur increased costs of compliance over and above those that are in place at present.

I have visited Nadrasca, and the organisation has a wonderful, strong management systems focus — a great commitment to and culture of management systems. The cost of compliance should actually be reducing for it rather than increasing. Just to analyse the gaps across Nadrasca's current 100 programs comes at enormous cost. Those are not gaps which indicate that the organisation has anything wrong with it; they are gaps that raise a question of what the organisation has got in place and whether there are any discrepancies with the new laws, so that will create additional costs.

It is for this reason that I would like the Assistant Treasurer to provide information to Nadrasca on the status of the Gillard government's OHS proposals and their implications for Victoria and information on the Baillieu government's position on these laws.

Western suburbs: jobs

Ms HUTCHINS (Keilor) — The matter I raise is for the attention of the Premier. The action I seek is for the Premier to develop a jobs plan to ensure job security and promotion of job creation in Victoria's fastest growing region, the outer western suburbs of Melbourne. Without a jobs plan for the west, thousands of workers and their families living in the western suburbs will continue to live under the black cloud of job insecurity and an insecure future.

The Baillieu government cannot continue to ignore the jobs crisis facing our state. Last May the Treasurer told Parliament that between 50 000 and 55 000 jobs would be created in Victoria. We are still looking for them. The state posted a 5.8 per cent unemployment rate in March, the highest in mainland Australia, and under the Baillieu government our state has been labelled by an *Age* headline as the 'big loser in the great jobs drain'. Yet the Baillieu government has walked away from millions of dollars in investment and thousands of potential jobs through its shameful sustainability policies and lack of commitment in today's budget. On top of this there are the cuts of 4200 jobs from the public sector, inclusive of the 600 jobs that have been earmarked to go in today's budget.

Compounding this is the news of over 1000 jobs to go at the Qantas maintenance base operations at Tullamarine in Melbourne's western suburbs. The families that will be hardest hit are in the surrounding suburbs that the member for Yuroke and I represent. This is going to have a devastating effect on many families. On top of this our region has already suffered, with the hundreds of jobs lost at Toyota Altona, the cuts to the public service and the fact that the government is not currently investing in any long-term infrastructure projects in the western suburbs. A focus on employment generation in Melbourne's outer west would benefit the region's economy and flow through to a better life for families. Melton, Wyndham, Brimbank and Hobsons Bay councils need the government's support to secure jobs and grow job opportunities.

We need action. We need investment. We do not need a Premier who governs for only half the state, rules on the basis of postcodes and presides over a budget that commits to only half of the state and does not commit to working families. I ask the Premier to ensure that the future of Melbourne Airport is secure and that the jobs there have a future through real discussion, through making real investment, through being an active part of our community, through undertaking a plan for job creation and maintaining current job security for those in the workforce.

Carbon tax: Caulfield electorate

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — I rise tonight to speak in the adjournment debate, and the matter I wish to raise is for the attention of the Minister for Energy and Resources. The action I seek is for the minister to come to my electorate to meet with small business owners, residents and vital service providers to discuss the impact of Labor's carbon tax. In 60 days the Gillard government's carbon tax comes into effect. This will certainly devastate businesses across Victoria. This is because the Prime Minister has sought to use her own state's greatest economic strength against us — that is, our access to cheap energy through brown coal. Remember that this is a carbon tax the Prime Minister promised never to introduce.

Access to health services is vital for all Victorians. I am proud to be a member of a government that is investing in our hospitals, and I am shocked at what Labor plans to do to them. The Gillard government's carbon tax will slug Victoria's hospitals with a power bill increase of about \$13.6 million a year. This will impact on the services at hospitals including, in my electorate, Alfred Health, Bethlehem hospital and the Masada and Caulfield hospitals.

Labor will also hit Victorian schools with a multimillion-dollar carbon tax bill totalling \$6 million, \$4.2 million of which will be to government schools. The Gillard government is fleecing Victoria's school students to appease the Greens. Schools like Glen Eira College, Caulfield Grammar School, Shelford Girls Grammar and St Kilda Primary School will all have their costs go up thanks to Labor.

The Municipal Association of Victoria has conducted a carbon pricing survey that shows the estimated impact on council rates to be rises of up to 3.3 per cent. This will slug the ratepayers of the cities of Port Phillip and Glen Eira in my electorate, who will already be being hit by the carbon tax.

The small business sector is the biggest loser out of the carbon tax. With electricity charges going up, small businesses will be hit with rising costs within their businesses and from their suppliers. Near my office is a cafe called Kinch Fine Food. The owner, Shane, tells me that his electricity bill is \$1700 a month. If Labor's carbon tax increases his bills by 10 per cent, that is 53 more lattes he will need to sell in order to pay Julia Gillard. That is not taking into account the increase in costs of goods from suppliers.

Regardless of their political persuasion, every member of Parliament should put their state first. It is shameful that members of the opposition come into this place and defend the carbon tax that they know in their hearts is a merciless attack on the state which they seek to govern. We have heard from the opposition. We have given opposition members every opportunity to come clean against the carbon tax; they keep on talking about jobs, but not once have they come out and asked the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, to repeal the carbon tax. I invite members of the opposition to join me to hear from members of a forum in my electorate and to come clean on the carbon tax.

Responses

Mr RYAN (Minister for Regional and Rural Development) — The member for Mornington raised with me an issue in relation to the Mount Eliza farmers market. The matter the member referred to is the prospect of expanding the market. To undertake the task, additional funding is necessary. The project is the Mount Eliza farmers market expansion project. It will increase the market's viability and enable it to cater for growing demand on the part of local consumers, and it will create flow-on economic benefits to stallholders and local businesses. The project will include market research, the introduction of new market-day activities, recruiting and training of stallholders, market

promotion, improvements to site infrastructure and business improvements.

I regard farmers markets as being extremely important in the wide variety of communities throughout Victoria where they occur. The government has reflected that degree of importance through the establishment of the \$2 million farmers markets support program. I am pleased to be able to tell the member that from that program the government will make available \$20 000 in funding to the Mount Eliza farmers market. I have had the opportunity of conversing with the member in relation to this important initiative in his electorate, and I am therefore delighted to say that \$20 000 will be available through that program to assist the work being undertaken by the community in the further development of the Mount Eliza farmers market.

The member for Gembrook raised with me three issues of great significance within his electorate. The first of those is an initiative of the Cardinia shire, the Bailey Road service centre development at Cockatoo. The member told the house about the history of this particular location, particularly going back to 1983, when bushfires came through and six lives were tragically lost. I can tell the member that I have been to this location in another context altogether to inspect the facility myself, so I am aware of how important it is to the local community, particularly having regard to the memory of those six people who died in the events of that tragic 1983 day, a matter of which I am sure all members of this house are extremely respectful.

The Cardinia shire wants to undertake some improvements in concert with the community. It is intended that the government will provide funding for the location's development relating to the fitting out and undertaking of associated works involving former commercial buildings in Bailey Road. The intention is that the finished centre will provide a range of flexible multipurpose community spaces to cater for a range of services, events and programs that meet the needs of the small but disadvantaged local communities. I recognise the significance of this project to the local community, and I am pleased to be able to tell the member that the government will make available \$50 000 by way of contribution to this fine initiative, with the remainder of the \$275 000 project to be funded by the Cardinia shire.

The second matter the member raised with me is also pertinent to the Cardinia shire. It concerns the Deep Creek Reserve master plan. As we in the house all know, the development of master plans for the use of natural facilities is a matter of ongoing interest and concern to many of our communities, and this is

another instance where that has occurred. This is a \$61 000 project. The reserve itself is a significant public space that will service suburbs in the Cardinia shire and other growth area suburbs. The site contains wetlands, flora and fauna habitats and natural watercourses. The intention is to develop a plan which will consider the feasibility of the reserve providing a range of general recreation and sustainability-focused community activities that are not currently available in Cardinia. I am pleased to tell the member that the government will contribute \$30 000 towards this fine initiative.

The third matter raised by the member was with regard to the Belgrave multipurpose facility and the project that will finalise the site location for the proposed multipurpose facility. It will be an integrated community and services hub to be located in the centre of Belgrave within close proximity to the train station and the bus terminal. I am pleased to tell the member that the government will contribute \$30 000 towards the engagement of an external consultant to conduct site assessments on council-owned land and to prepare concept design plans and reporting documentation. I would hope that these three worthy initiatives will be welcomed by the residents of the electorate so ably represented by the member for Gembrook.

The other matters raised with me were by the member for Gippsland East. He has referred to two issues. The two projects are located at Lindenow, which is a beautiful area within the electorate of Gippsland East and an area that I know well. Both of these, ironically enough, relate to the provision of additional water supplies around the area. Some might think that is an irony because there have been many instances at Lindenow when the river has been in flood and members of that community wished they had less water rather than more water. Be that as it may, the flood plain itself is a fine area for the growth of horticultural products.

It is in that context that the member seeks assistance for Bulmer Farm Fresh Vegetables. This enterprise, which is well known in the local region, provides beautiful horticulture products to a number of outlets. The company wishes to undertake the processing of its product on its own premises as well as continuing in the business that it has historically pursued. The project will provide 10 new jobs, with the potential for more as the demand for production increases. I am pleased to say that the government will contribute \$40 000 from the Putting Locals First program in the Regional Growth Fund to assist this worthy project.

The other matter the member raised with me was in relation to the Lindenow recreation reserve. What is required is the provision of some irrigation infrastructure that will enable a continual water supply to three facilities at the community complex. They include the recreation reserve, the adjoining oval and the Lindenow Primary School grounds. As we are all well aware, the availability of these forms of playing areas is of vital importance to our small towns throughout rural and regional Victoria. Part of the need for making them available is that the surfaces in the respective locations are capable of supporting the many people who enjoy participating in different activities at those facilities. I am pleased to say that the government will contribute \$50 000 to the Lindenow recreation reserve project. The total of the funding is some \$95 000. I am again pleased to say that the \$50 000 will be contributed from the Regional Growth Fund.

These are examples of very worthy projects, and I thank each of the three members for raising the matters with me this evening. It is wonderful that the government is able to, in each instance, make the contributions to which I have referred.

Mr MULDER (Minister for Roads) — The member for Yan Yean raised with me an issue in relation to a series of road projects in her electorate that require funding. I find it quite extraordinary that after 11 years of Labor government we have a member who has so many road projects that were not funded under that Labor government. Normally a member would come in with a particular road project or maybe two, but it appears that the Labor government left Epping Road, Yan Yean Road, the Findon Road traffic lights and McDonalds Road — a whole host of projects — unfunded. It appears to me also that the member expects that all that will just be fixed up all of a sudden in the first 18 months of a new government. That is on top of the mess that was left by the former Labor government for us to clean up.

I was at Yan Yean for the opening of the South Morang railway station. It is interesting to note the different approach and the different outcomes of different governments. This particular project, taken over by the incoming Baillieu government, was delivered on budget and ahead of time. It was delivered on budget and ahead of time by the new government.

Ms Green — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, the minister is misleading the house. The Hurstbridge — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! That is not a point of order.

Ms Green — As part of — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I ask the house to come to order while I listen.

Ms Green — I would like to make my point of order, and then I will accept your ruling, Deputy Speaker. There was \$90 million as part of the South — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms Green — The minister has made a statement that the South Morang rail project has been delivered on time and ahead of budget — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I am sorry; that is not a point of order, and the member for Yan Yean very well knows it.

Mr MULDER — On top of that, we know that in that electorate the people of Mernda were initially expecting to get a railway extension, only to find that the former government replaced that with a busway. I met with the people in the community out there, and I said that we would not go down that pathway and that we will work with the people of Mernda in relation to a rail extension. We will do the right thing.

The member for Yan Yean raised a very important issue. I think it goes back to our handling of South Morang, a project delivered on budget and ahead of time. The member raised the issue of Cooper Street, a road project that is attached to the Melbourne Markets relocation. She raised the issue of why the Cooper Street road project had not been delivered and why it was delayed.

Ms Green interjected.

Mr MULDER — It is all in here in the Auditor-General's report entitled *Melbourne Markets Redevelopment*. It gives the reason Cooper Street did not proceed in the timely manner that it should have. It is interesting to read what the Auditor-General had to say about the Labor government's handling of that project, which delayed the Cooper Street road project. We had to put it on hold until this issue had been sorted out, but it is quite clear that the problem sat fairly and squarely with the former Labor government. To see what went wrong with the Melbourne Markets project that caused the delay to Cooper Street, members should look at the Auditor-General's report.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I remind the member for Yan Yean that taking a point of order is not an excuse for a debate.

Ms Green — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, the action that I sought from the minister was for him to come and visit the Yan Yean electorate and explain why — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order!

Ms Green — When the minister started his response he said that I had asked for action on a range of road projects. The action that I clearly sought was for him to come to the electorate and explain firsthand to the community why for the second year in a row there is no road funding for the Yan Yean electorate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I have heard sufficient on the point of order. The member for Yan Yean did ask the minister to visit. I believe that the minister is responding in relation to the roads the member mentioned and her request.

Mr MULDER — I think it would be helpful to members of the community of Yan Yean if the *Hansard* record in relation to the issue of Cooper Street were forwarded to them, because it gives a very clear indication as to why those types of projects were delayed. The Auditor-General said:

... poor project implementation has adversely affected the project.

Poor stakeholder management has:

significantly delayed the relocation of the market —

and in this case the carrying out of the implementation of that road project on Cooper Street —

...

resulted in significant cost increases —

to the project —

...

had an adverse impact on tenant investment in this industry.

...

Failure to update governance arrangements and project management plans and to produce detailed project financials following these changes contributed to poor outcomes.

Significant shortcomings in the procurement of the trading floor mean that the process was not demonstrably fair and the

evaluation process did not assure that the price to be paid to the successful tenderer represented the best value for money.

Members can understand now why Cooper Street has been delayed. It has been delayed because of the utter incompetence of the former government, which could not even run a fish market. It could not deliver that project or other projects because it could not handle money. If members consider the cost blow-out on this particular project, they will realise that the price doubled from an original cost of around \$300 million. Consider roads like Epping Road, Yan Yean Road, Findon Road and McDonalds Road. How many of those road projects could have been paid for if we had not had to put up with this sort of mismanagement from the Labor government? That is the reason we are in the situation we are in now and the reason these projects have been delayed.

Mr DIXON (Minister for Education) — The member for Williamstown raised an issue with me regarding funding for a program for a student with a disability, Luke Schroder. He said the contribution from the department for funding of that program had halved between term 1 and term 2 and that a reassessment was being done. It is unusual for funding to change midstream, or mid-term in this case. Usually there might be changes to levels of funding when students go from primary school to secondary school, but, as I said, I am not aware of a midstream funding change. I will follow that up and find out why that is happening. I will find out where the reassessment is at and follow it up with the member.

The member for Ivanhoe raised with me the issue of the recent fire at the Olympic Village primary school campus of Charles La Trobe P-12 College. I need to make a couple of points of clarification. Half the school was not destroyed. There was a fire at the school and a number of rooms were destroyed, but it was certainly not half the school. The parts that were razed have been demolished, and some other areas have been closed up because there was smoke and water damage and works need to be done. Also, no toilets were destroyed. The toilet block is still standing and is quite okay, as is the kitchen, which is attached to the block.

Mr Carbines interjected.

Mr DIXON — It is one thing to say they are destroyed, but now the member is saying the students cannot get to them. They are two quite different things. The reason the toilets are closed is because that block is isolated from the rest of the school, and for the safety of the students the school made the decision that the students are not to access those toilets. I support that

decision. I think we have to get the correct facts before we make some of these assertions.

The member for Ivanhoe made another factual error — that is, that students who receive the EMA (education maintenance allowance) will be losing funding. Because the school goes only to grade 4 at the Olympic Village primary school campus, every single student in grade 1 to grade 4 who receives the EMA — and I imagine it would be most of them — will actually receive an increase in funding from \$117 to \$150. From next year prep students will have an increase in funding from \$117.15 to \$200. That is a big increase for those students. It would not surprise me, and I would imagine it is so, that Olympic Village primary school would be one of the 200 most needy schools in Victoria, although I cannot guarantee it because I have not recently checked the list. It would therefore get a net increase in its funding — in other words, it will receive extra equity funding. We are looking after our needy students as well as our needy schools.

With regard to the fire, when I was opening the senior campus of Charles La Trobe College I went out to inspect the Olympic Village site because I was getting conflicting information regarding the outcome of the fire. The department has given me three options in relation to the situation, and I have asked for a fourth option to be considered. I expect that advice to come back to me pretty soon. In the meantime I was assured by the principal that the school is coping. I understand the circumstances of the school, and I also understand how it serves the community. The school will receive funding, and I am working towards a speedy conclusion so that the school has certainty in relation to what amount of funding it will receive in order to have it up and running as before.

Mr O'BRIEN (Minister for Energy and Resources) — I will respond to the member for Cranbourne first, and I thank him for raising with me the matter concerning the operations of the Skye quarry. I understand that residents who live close by have issues with the operation of the quarry and are concerned about trucks using the service roads and whether there is compliance with the licences that apply to that site.

Victoria's quarry industry is very important to our building and construction industry. The fact that we have so many quarries relatively close to metropolitan areas where construction takes place is a significant competitive advantage for this state. In New South Wales there are now no quarries within 100 kilometres of Sydney, so the cost involved in removing the extracted material from the quarries and transporting it

to where construction is taking place is a very significant impost.

As a state it is very important that we maintain the quarries that operate in areas close to construction zones. While this will inevitably lead, from time to time, to some tensions between quarry operators and local residents, it is important that we get the balance right, because sanitising all our quarrying areas that are close to metropolitan areas would lead to significantly increased construction costs. That is not something we can afford as a state. It is about a competitive advantage for Victoria, and we cannot afford to lose that.

In relation to the specifics of this issue, it is important that every quarry operator comply with the terms of its licences. Licence terms are not negotiable. They are put in place to protect the environment and the amenity of the local community, and my department will ensure that those licence conditions are complied with. While I cannot give any answer tonight in terms of the specific concerns that have been raised by the member for Cranbourne, I can say to him that I will instruct my department to thoroughly investigate those concerns and report any findings in relation to breaches of licence conditions. I will communicate that information to the member for Cranbourne so that he can let his constituents know the findings of my department, as the regulator of these matters. I thank the member for Cranbourne for raising this matter with me.

I also thank the member for Caulfield for raising with me the concerns of his constituents regarding the federal Gillard government's carbon tax. I will accept his invitation to attend a carbon tax forum in the Caulfield electorate because I understand that there are many families and businesses, particularly small businesses, that are extremely concerned about the upcoming impost of the federal Gillard government's carbon tax on 1 July this year. It may well be that while I am there with the member for Caulfield other elected members of Parliament might also wish to be there. I am sure there are some upper house members, such as Mr Lenders, the former Treasurer and member for Southern Metropolitan Region in the Council, who would attend. Mr Lenders is now the shadow minister for resources and some other things, and maybe he would like to attend, hear the views of his constituents and see whether they will be praising and thanking him for standing up there and hugging the carbon tax with Julia Gillard.

We have seen from the debate we have had in this house today that those opposite love the carbon tax. They want to hug the carbon tax. They think it is terrific for the people of Victoria. They ignore the fact that

modelling undertaken by Deloitte Access Economics shows that there will be 35 000 fewer Victorians in jobs over the next three years because of the carbon tax. They ignore the fact that the state budget will be over \$600 million worse off because of the carbon tax. They ignore the impacts on hospitals and schools, and they ignore the fact that they are supporting a carbon tax that exempts petrol but makes public transport more expensive. The member for Williamstown supports a so-called environmental tax which makes public transport more expensive but cars cheaper to run. Gee! Isn't that bright!

This is a shocking tax, and it will be a shocking impost on Victoria. I made the point earlier that if you were trying to design a tax to specifically single out, punish and penalise Victorian families and Victorian businesses, it would look like federal Labor's carbon tax — and those opposite support it. To a man and to a woman they support federal Labor's carbon tax, and they will be responsible for the economic consequences that carbon tax will render when it hits this state.

On the federal government's own modelling Victoria will get hit first and hardest, not just in the first year but for the next 25 years. Until 2038 Victoria's gross state product will be hit harder than any other state, and members opposite support that. Under the federal government's own modelling 8 million Australian families, and presumably 2 million Victorian families, will not be adequately compensated for the impost of the carbon tax, and members opposite support that — they all support it. This is a dreadful economic impost on the people of this state.

I will be delighted to join my friend and colleague the member for Caulfield out there in his lovely electorate. I am very happy to go to Kinch Fine Food. Maybe I can help buy one of those 53 lattes and at least on one day try to remedy some of the additional costs to these small businesses of this federal Labor carbon tax, which the members of the Victorian Labor Party support. Shoulder to shoulder, comrade to comrade, man and woman, to a person they support it. This side of the Parliament does not support it. We support Victorian families, we support businesses, we support jobs and we support affordable power. We will not support the federal Labor government's carbon tax, which it does not even have a mandate for, because it is a bad policy based on a lie.

Mr R. SMITH (Minister for Environment and Climate Change) — It is worth noting once again the number of ministers who have come in here to respond to adjournment matters raised by various members of the Parliament. It is a far cry indeed from the state of

affairs that we saw under the previous government in the last term.

Having said that, the member for Keilor raised a matter for the Premier, and I will ensure that that is passed on.

The member for Mitcham raised an issue for the Assistant Treasurer regarding providing information to Nardasca about the implications of the Gillard government's proposed occupational health and safety laws. I will ensure that that is passed on to the Assistant Treasurer.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The house stands adjourned until tomorrow.

House adjourned 10.58 p.m.