

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION**

Thursday, 29 May 2014

(Extract from book 7)

Internet: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable ALEX CHERNOV, AC, QC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

The ministry

(from 17 March 2014)

Premier, Minister for Regional Cities and Minister for Racing	The Hon. D. V. Napthine, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, and Minister for Regional and Rural Development	The Hon. P. J. Ryan, MP
Treasurer	The Hon. M. A. O'Brien, MP
Minister for Innovation, Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Minister for Employment and Trade	The Hon. Louise Asher, MP
Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.	The Hon. T. O. Bull, MP
Attorney-General, Minister for Finance and Minister for Industrial Relations.	The Hon. R. W. Clark, MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Ageing	The Hon. D. M. Davis, MLC
Minister for Education	The Hon. M. F. Dixon, MP
Minister for Sport and Recreation, and Minister for Veterans' Affairs	The Hon. D. K. Drum, MLC
Minister for Planning, and Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship	The Hon. M. J. Guy, MLC
Minister for Ports, Minister for Major Projects and Minister for Manufacturing	The Hon. D. J. Hodgett, MP
Minister for Housing, and Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development	The Hon. W. A. Lovell, MLC
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Roads	The Hon. T. W. Mulder, MP
Minister for Energy and Resources, and Minister for Small Business.	The Hon. R. J. Northe, MP
Minister for Liquor and Gaming Regulation, Minister for Corrections and Minister for Crime Prevention	The Hon. E. J. O'Donohue, MLC
Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Technology and Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry	The Hon. G. K. Rich-Phillips, MLC
Minister for Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Youth Affairs.	The Hon. R. Smith, MP
Minister for the Arts, Minister for Women's Affairs and Minister for Consumer Affairs	The Hon. H. Victoria, MP
Minister for Higher Education and Skills	The Hon. N. Wakeling, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, and Minister for Water.	The Hon. P. L. Walsh, MP
Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and Minister for Bushfire Response	The Hon. K. A. Wells, MP
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Community Services, and Minister for Disability Services and Reform	The Hon. M. L. N. Wooldridge, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Mrs I. Peulich, MLC

Legislative Assembly committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Barker, Mr Clark, Ms Green, Mr Hodgett, Mr Morris, Mr Nardella, Mr O'Brien, Mr Pandazopoulos and Mr Walsh.

Standing Orders Committee — The Speaker, Ms Allan, Ms Asher, Ms Barker, Mr Hodgett, Ms Kairouz, Mr O'Brien and Mrs Powell.

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Kanis, Mr McIntosh and Ms Neville.
(*Council*): Mr D. R. J. O'Brien and Mr Ronalds.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Ms Asher, Mr Clark, Ms Hennessy, Mr Merlino, Mr O'Brien and Mr Walsh. (*Council*): Mr D. Davis, Mr Drum, Mr Lenders, Ms Lovell and Ms Pennicuik.

Economic Development, Infrastructure and Outer Suburban/Interface Services Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Burgess and Mr McGuire. (*Council*): Mrs Millar and Mr Ronalds.

Education and Training Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Brooks and Mr Crisp. (*Council*): Mr Elasmarr and Mrs Kronberg.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Delahunty. (*Council*): Mr Finn, Mrs Peulich, Mr Somyurek and Mr Tarlamis.

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

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr Madden, Mrs Powell and Ms Ryall. (*Council*): Mrs Coote.

House Committee — (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Ms Beattie, Mr Blackwood, Mr Burgess, Ms Campbell, Ms Thomson and Mr Weller. (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr D. R. J. O'Brien and Mrs Peulich.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Kanis, Mr Kotsiras, Mr McIntosh and Mr Weller. (*Council*): Mr Viney.

Law Reform, Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Carroll, Mr McCurdy and Mr Southwick. (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Mr Scheffer.

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

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

Rural and Regional Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Howard, Mr Katos, Mr Trezise and Mr Weller. (*Council*): Mr D. R. J. O'Brien.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Barker, Ms Campbell, Mr Gidley, Mr Nardella, Dr Sykes and Mr Watt. (*Council*): Mr Dalla-Riva.

Heads of parliamentary departments

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

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

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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

Speaker:

The Hon. CHRISTINE. FYFFE (from 4 February 2014)

The Hon. K. M. SMITH (to 4 February 2014)

Deputy Speaker:

Mr P. WELLER (from 4 February 2014)

Mrs C. A. FYFFE (to 4 February 2014)

Acting Speakers:

Mr Angus, Ms Beattie, Mr Blackwood, Mr Burgess, Ms Campbell, Mr Languiller, Mr McCurdy, Mr McGuire, Mr McIntosh, Ms McLeish, Mr Morris, Mr Nardella, Mr Northe, Mr Pandazopoulos, Ms Ryall, Dr Sykes and Mr Thompson. (to 2 April 2014)

Mr Angus, Mr Blackwood, Mr Burgess, Mr Crisp, Mr McCurdy, Mr McIntosh, Ms McLeish, Mr Morris, Ms Ryall, Dr Sykes and Mr Thompson. (from 3 April 2014)

Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Premier:

The Hon. D. V. NAPHTHINE (from 6 March 2013)

The Hon. E. N. BAILLIEU (to 6 March 2013)

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party:

The Hon. LOUISE ASHER

Leader of The Nationals and Deputy Premier:

The Hon. P. J. RYAN

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

The Hon. P. L. WALSH

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

The Hon. D. M. ANDREWS

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

The Hon. J. A. MERLINO

Member	District	Party	Member	District	Party
Allan, Ms Jacinta Marie	Bendigo East	ALP	Languiller, Mr Telmo Ramon	Derrimut	ALP
Andrews, Mr Daniel Michael	Mulgrave	ALP	Lim, Mr Muy Hong	Clayton	ALP
Angus, Mr Neil Andrew Warwick	Forest Hill	LP	McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan	Murray Valley	Nats
Asher, Ms Louise	Brighton	LP	McGuire, Mr Frank ⁶	Broadmeadows	ALP
Baillieu, Mr Edward Norman	Hawthorn	LP	McIntosh, Mr Andrew John	Kew	LP
Barker, Ms Ann Patricia	Oakleigh	ALP	McLeish, Ms Lucinda Gaye	Seymour	LP
Battin, Mr Bradley William	Gembrook	LP	Madden, Mr Justin Mark	Essendon	ALP
Bauer, Mrs Donna Jane	Carrum	LP	Merlino, Mr James Anthony	Monbulk	ALP
Beattie, Ms Elizabeth Jean	Yuroke	ALP	Miller, Ms Elizabeth Eileen	Bentleigh	LP
Blackwood, Mr Gary John	Narracan	LP	Morris, Mr David Charles	Mornington	LP
Brooks, Mr Colin William	Bundoora	ALP	Mulder, Mr Terence Wynn	Polwarth	LP
Brumby, Mr John Mansfield ¹	Broadmeadows	ALP	Naphtine, Dr Denis Vincent	South-West Coast	LP
Bull, Mr Timothy Owen	Gippsland East	Nats	Nardella, Mr Donato Antonio	Melton	ALP
Burgess, Mr Neale Ronald	Hastings	LP	Neville, Ms Lisa Mary	Bellarine	ALP
Campbell, Ms Christine Mary	Pascoe Vale	ALP	Newton-Brown, Mr Clement Arundel	Prahran	LP
Carbines, Mr Anthony Richard	Ivanhoe	ALP	Noonan, Mr Wade Mathew	Williamstown	ALP
Carroll, Mr Benjamin Alan ²	Niddrie	ALP	Northe, Mr Russell John	Morwell	Nats
Clark, Mr Robert William	Box Hill	LP	O'Brien, Mr Michael Anthony	Malvern	LP
Crisp, Mr Peter Laurence	Mildura	Nats	Pakula, Mr Martin Philip ⁷	Lyndhurst	ALP
D'Ambrosio, Ms Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Pallas, Mr Timothy Hugh	Tarneit	ALP
Delahunty, Mr Hugh Francis	Lowan	Nats	Pandazopoulos, Mr John	Dandenong	ALP
Dixon, Mr Martin Francis	Nepean	LP	Perera, Mr Jude	Cranbourne	ALP
Donnellan, Mr Luke Anthony	Narre Warren North	ALP	Pike, Ms Bronwyn Jane ⁸	Melbourne	ALP
Duncan, Ms Joanne Therese	Macedon	ALP	Powell, Mrs Elizabeth Jeanette	Shepparton	Nats
Edwards, Ms Janice Maree	Bendigo West	ALP	Richardson, Ms Fiona Catherine Alison	Northcote	ALP
Eren, Mr John Hamdi	Lara	ALP	Ryall, Ms Deanne Sharon	Mitcham	LP
Foley, Mr Martin Peter	Albert Park	ALP	Ryan, Mr Peter Julian	Gippsland South	Nats
Fyffe, Mrs Christine Ann	Evelyn	LP	Scott, Mr Robin David	Preston	ALP
Garrett, Ms Jane Furneaux	Brunswick	ALP	Shaw, Mr Geoffrey Page ⁹	Frankston	Ind
Gidley, Mr Michael Xavier Charles	Mount Waverley	LP	Smith, Mr Kenneth Maurice	Bass	LP
Graley, Ms Judith Ann	Narre Warren South	ALP	Smith, Mr Ryan	Warrandyte	LP
Green, Ms Danielle Louise	Yan Yean	ALP	Southwick, Mr David James	Caulfield	LP
Halfpenny, Ms Bronwyn	Thomastown	ALP	Sykes, Dr William Everett	Benalla	Nats
Helper, Mr Jochen	Ripon	ALP	Thompson, Mr Murray Hamilton Ross	Sandringham	LP
Hennessy, Ms Jill	Altona	ALP	Thomson, Ms Marsha Rose	Footscray	ALP
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph	Eltham	ALP	Tilley, Mr William John	Benambra	LP
Hodgett, Mr David John	Kilsyth	LP	Trezise, Mr Ian Douglas	Geelong	ALP
Holding, Mr Timothy James ³	Lyndhurst	ALP	Victoria, Ms Heidi	Bayswater	LP
Howard, Mr Geoffrey Kemp	Ballarat East	ALP	Wakeling, Mr Nicholas	Ferntree Gully	LP
Hulls, Mr Rob Justin ⁴	Niddrie	ALP	Walsh, Mr Peter Lindsay	Swan Hill	Nats
Hutchins, Ms Natalie Maree Sykes	Keilor	ALP	Watt, Mr Graham Travis	Burwood	LP
Kairouz, Ms Marlene	Kororoit	ALP	Weller, Mr Paul	Rodney	Nats
Kanis, Ms Jennifer ⁵	Melbourne	ALP	Wells, Mr Kimberley Arthur	Scoresby	LP
Katos, Mr Andrew	South Barwon	LP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Doncaster	LP
Knight, Ms Sharon Patricia	Ballarat West	ALP	Wreford, Ms Lorraine Joan	Mordialloc	LP
Kotsiras, Mr Nicholas	Bulleen	LP	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP

¹ Resigned 21 December 2010

² Elected 24 March 2012

³ Resigned 18 February 2013

⁴ Resigned 27 January 2012

⁵ Elected 21 July 2012

⁶ Elected 19 February 2011

⁷ Elected 27 April 2013

⁸ Resigned 7 May 2012

⁹ LP until 6 March 2013

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Thursday, 29 May 2014

The SPEAKER (Hon. Christine Fyffe) took the chair at 9.32 a.m. and read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Notices of motion

The SPEAKER — Order! Notices of motion 9 to 21 will be removed from the notice paper unless members wishing their notice to remain advise the Clerk in writing before 2.00 p.m. today.

PETITIONS

Following petitions presented to house:

Phillip Island municipality

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of the undersigned residents of Victoria draws to the attention of the house the desire of the ratepayers and residents of Phillip Island to re-establish its own shire.

Prayer

Your petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria address this matter as an urgent priority by way of commencing the process for Phillip Island to de-amalgamate from the Bass Coast shire and for Phillip Island to establish its own municipality.

By Mr K. SMITH (Bass) (8389 signatures).

Brunswick terminal station

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

This petition of the people of Victoria calls on the Premier to immediately convene an independent review of the proposed development of a new 66kV facility at the Brunswick terminal station. All works should be halted at the site until such a review has been held and its findings made public.

The petitioners note:

proposed development twice rejected by Moreland City Council as a part of the local planning process; actions of Victorian planning minister in rezoning the site in February 2012 rode roughshod over that process;

three local government authorities — Moreland, Yarra and Darebin — calling for thorough independent review of the merits of this project;

dozens of requests by concerned residents, local council representatives and other community groups to meet with the planning minister, the current and former Premier, and other ministers ignored or refused;

demand for electricity dropped significantly since project first proposed in 2008; questionable whether this infrastructure any longer required;

answers not forthcoming from state government about significant unresolved questions concerning the health and safety of the redeveloped facility, and appropriate safety standard for such an industrial facility in a purely residential and environmentally sensitive area;

multiple planning regulation breaches and irregularities by the power company in charge of the development.

By Ms GARRETT (Brunswick) (165 signatures).

Monash Medical Centre helipad

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

This petition of certain citizens of the state of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Assembly of the undersigned concerned residents and users of Fregon Reserve in Clayton who oppose the relocation of the Monash Medical Centre helicopter landings to Fregon Reserve for three years, request the Minister for Health, David Davis, as the responsible minister to fund and instruct Southern Health, Monash Health and Air Ambulance Victoria to build a temporary helipad in the hospital grounds or find a location for its helipad away from houses, families with children and community recreational activities. Residents around the park should be compensated by the Victorian government for any destruction to their properties, for the invasion of their peace and users of the park for loss of amenity should helicopters land at Fregon Reserve.

By Mr LIM (Clayton) (905 signatures).

Bus route 451

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of certain citizens of the state of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Assembly the proposal by Public Transport Victoria to change bus route 451.

The petitioners note the importance of bus route 451 in servicing the needs of the community and express their deep concerns at plans to remove bus route 451, which will significantly reduce local bus services.

The petitioners therefore request that the Minister for Transport, the Honourable Terry Mulder, intervenes to reject the proposal to discontinue route 451.

By Ms KAIROUZ (Kororoit) (360 signatures).

Health practitioner abortion referral

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of the undersigned registered medical practitioners and registered nurses of Victoria draws to the attention of the house our serious concern that Dr Mark Hobart is being subjected to an investigation by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) because he chose not to refer a patient for an abortion. We believe that a health practitioner is never obliged to refer in relation to an intervention that the practitioner believes is medically unnecessary or ethically unacceptable.

We affirm the position statements of the Australian Medical Association, the Australian Nursing Federation, and the Australian Medical Council's code of conduct with respect to conscientious objection. We endorse AMA Victoria's support for legislative reform to 'remove the requirement that a doctor with a conscientious objection must refer a patient seeking advice or treatment in relation to abortion to a doctor who they know does not have a similar objection'.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria amends clause 8 of the Victorian Abortion Law Reform Act (2008), as soon as possible, to remove any requirement that conscientious objectors (to abortion) must provide a referral.

By Ms CAMPBELL (Pascoe Vale) (49 signatures).

Tabled.

Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Bass be considered next day on motion of Mr K. SMITH (Bass).

Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Brunswick be considered next day on motion of Ms GARRETT (Brunswick).

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

Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Kororoit be considered next day on motion of Ms KAIROUZ (Kororoit).

Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Pascoe Vale be considered next day on motion of Ms CAMPBELL (Pascoe Vale).

PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE

Inquiry in relation to recommendation 2 of Ombudsman's report *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 — Investigation into Allegations against Mr Geoff Shaw MP*

Mr WALSH (Minister for Agriculture and Food Security) presented report, together with appendices, extract from proceedings and a minority report.

Tabled.

Ordered to be printed.

DOCUMENTS

Tabled by Clerk:

Auditor-General:

Access to Services for Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers — Ordered to be printed

Accessibility of Mainstream Services for Aboriginal Victorians — Ordered to be printed

Professional Standards Act 2003:

Law Society of Western Australia Scheme under s 14 (*Gazette S134, 24 April 2014*)

Victorian Bar Professional Standards Scheme under s 14 (*Gazette S134, 24 April 2014*)

Western Australia Bar Association Scheme under s 14 (*Gazette S134, 24 April 2014*)

Statutory Rules under the following Acts:

Building Act 1993 — SR 37

Electricity Safety Act 1998 — SR 36

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — SR 38

Survey Co-ordination Act 1958 — SR 39

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — Documents under s 15 in relation to Statutory Rules 36, 37, 38.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Standing orders

Ms ASHER (Minister for Innovation) — By leave, I move:

That so much of standing orders be suspended so as to allow the member for Carrum's speech to be incorporated into *Hansard* during the debate on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014 today.

In moving this motion, I thank the opposition for its generosity in allowing this incorporation.

Motion agreed to.

Adjournment

Ms ASHER (Minister for Innovation) — I move:

That the house, at its rising, adjourns until Tuesday, 10 June 2014.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBERS STATEMENTS

Consumer Affairs Victoria

Mr SCOTT (Preston) — I raise for the attention of the house a matter relating to builders warranty insurance, and I note that the Minister for Consumer Affairs is at the table. I have had a matter raised with my office on behalf of Mr Alexander Furman. In September 2010 Mr Furman and his business partners engaged a builder called FNP Pty Ltd to construct six units in Orrong Road, Caulfield North, at the cost of \$1.4 million. Defects were found in the construction of the properties, and the owners sought advice from Consumer Affairs Victoria as to the proper course of action. They were advised to pay FNP Pty Ltd to remedy the defects.

My time is limited so I will not take the house through the whole sorry tale, but I will provide further information. The gist of the matter is that the consumer has come to my office with the belief that the advice from Consumer Affairs Victoria has had a detrimental impact on his standing in this matter. I understand that consumers involved in matters relating to builders warranty insurance do not have recourse to court action or Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal or other proceedings.

I am not asking for assistance on behalf of the consumer in relation to those matters, but I am seeking — and I note the minister's attention — that the minister investigate the actions of Consumer Affairs Victoria. I will provide further information to the minister and furnish her with further particulars of this matter, many of which it would be inappropriate to publicly air in the house. It is important that the matter be examined, and I am sure the house is interested in the actions of Consumer Affairs Victoria in such complex and important matters.

ME/CFS Australia (Victoria)

Ms VICTORIA (Minister for the Arts) — Today I want to send heartfelt congratulations to Amanda Kelly and her wonderful team at ME/CFS Australia (Victoria) for their extraordinary vintage high tea held on Mother's Day. Charlie and I learnt a lot about this debilitating disease of myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome and the difficulties sufferers often face. Thank you for opening our eyes, and best wishes in the ongoing search for a cure.

Timeline Mural

Ms VICTORIA — The coalition government knows that one of the best preventive measures against graffiti is to professionally decorate a frequently tagged area. Funded through the community crime prevention program, Glen Park Community Centre employed the expertise of their art teacher and local community to create a truly fabulous work, which depicts the history of the centre and its people. The *Timeline Mural* was designed by Alan Close and created by artists Patrick Lorenzo, Marcia Wright, Rhonda Greenfield, Margaret Waters and Jean Close. I want to acknowledge the hard work of all involved, including Maroondah City Council and Heidi Butler and her team, for their dedication to making our area even more friendly and beautiful.

Birch Street Preschool

Ms VICTORIA — Through a grant of over \$600 000 from the state coalition government and a \$300 000 input from the ratepayers of the city of Knox, a wonderful new facility has been born. Last week I had the great pleasure of officially opening the Birch Street Preschool with the mayor, Cr Darren Pearce. It was a great occasion, with lots of children playing happily in the modern surroundings and the choir from Bayswater Primary School, where the centre is co-located, entertaining us with some uplifting songs. To principal Ian Michelson and all those who had this grand vision, I say congratulations. May many generations of children from Bayswater receive a solid foundation to their lifelong journey of learning.

Transport accident compensation

Mr DONNELLAN (Narre Warren North) — I want to note the fine work that the *Age* has undertaken this week, specifically that of Craig Butt in his articles on serious injury. One particular article caught my attention. It was headed 'For one family there's no end to trauma' and was published on 26 May. It talks about the amazing efforts of a mother, Chris Latimer, the work she has undertaken and the incredible strength and courage she has shown in dealing with serious injuries related to road trauma that she has faced.

What the article probably did not draw enough attention to was the mean-spirited and nasty amendments that this state government made last year to the Transport Accident Act 1986, which have made it nearly impossible for parents and loved ones not directly involved in a transport accident to seek compensation for the debilitating impact of losing a loved one to road trauma. The changes were simply unnecessary. There

were estimated savings of about \$20 million in total. At the time there were no specifics that the government could provide; there was just a rough estimate that \$20 million a year may be saved. Of course we always want to save money, but we would not want to do it at the expense of the long-term suffering of others and the enormous medical impacts that road trauma has on society anyway when we have people who are not able to grieve and seek compensation for being impacted by serious injury. The impact of road trauma can be just as substantial financially in medical terms.

Port of Hastings development

Mr HODGETT (Minister for Ports) — I am pleased to rise today to announce another major landmark in the coalition government's expansion of the port of Hastings. Victoria is the freight and logistics capital of Australia and the coalition government has a clear vision to ensure this continues far into the future. As part of that, today I am pleased to announce that the port of Hastings expansion has been declared under the Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009. This paves the way for the planning approvals process to commence on the development of Hastings as Victoria's second international container port.

It also sends a clear message to the people of Hastings that the coalition is committed to the expansion, which will create thousands of Victorian jobs and provide the local community with certainty on the assessment and approval process for the development of the port and ensure their feedback will be a critical part of it. The coalition government is getting on with the job of expanding Hastings for growing trade forecasts and has a clear plan to ensure the continued prosperity of Victoria's economy.

Unfortunately the Labor opposition does not. It cannot make up its mind, going from the former Minister for Ports, the member for Tarneit, saying that Hastings is the only destination for Victoria's next port to the shadow Minister for Ports, the member for Keilor, categorically saying that Labor will not build a port at Hastings. The opposition is committed to a Bay West option, which will require five times as much dredging as the channel deepening project and will require the heads to be blown up just to let the ships in. This may not make much sense to you or me, but it is perfectly logical to the member for Tarneit, who said on ABC radio that you do not build ports for ships. Luckily for Victoria's economy the coalition is in government, otherwise under a Labor government I might have ended up with a port in my electorate of Kilsyth.

Vesak Day

Ms THOMSON (Footscray) — On 18 May I attended Vesak Day at the Quang Minh Temple to celebrate the birth, life and death of Buddha. This is an important community within the western suburbs, which not only supports those people of Buddhist faith but also offers a great deal to the broader community and takes great care of the natural environment. I would like to congratulate the Venerable Thich Phuoc Tan, the management committee of the Quang Minh Temple and all those associated with it on their dedication and contribution to their community and the wider community in the inner west.

Australia India Society of Victoria family violence forum

Ms THOMSON — Last Sunday I attended a function on domestic violence in the Indian community, which was organised by the Australia India Society of Victoria. It was a well-attended event, which was held at the Indian consulate. I was joined by the member for Yan Yean, who is the shadow minister for prevention of family violence. This is a very important event for the Indian community as it tries to grapple with the issue of domestic violence. I would like to congratulate the Australia India Society of Victoria for organising the function, and in particular Monica Raizada, who put together the panel of people who spoke on the day. Judging from the reception of those who attended it is clear they want to do more to rid their community of family violence. Attendees welcomed the sessions that were held. Congratulations to all of them.

Fairpark Reserve, Ferntree Gully, lighting

Mr WAKELING (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I was pleased to recently visit Fairpark Reserve in Ferntree Gully to see the official turning on of the new floodlights. This was made possible with a \$100 000 grant from the coalition government. The grant will help support the Eastern Lions Football Club, Fairpark Netball Club and the Johnson Park Cricket Club by improving their training facilities and the opportunity for night games.

City of Knox learner driver program

Mr WAKELING — I was pleased to recently launch the L2P program in Knox. I would like to congratulate the hard work of Knox City Council, UnitingCare Harrison in Wantirna South and VicRoads that they have collectively put in to achieve this much-needed program, which will provide young

people in Knox with the opportunity to obtain their licence.

Pen and Paint exhibition

Mr WAKELING — I was honoured to recently open the Pen and Paint exhibition at The Hut Gallery in Ferntree Gully. It was great to see that so many talented people reside in Knox, and I commend them on their fabulous art. I thank the committee of The Hut Gallery and Ferntree Gully Arts Society for their continuing work to ensure our local artists have the opportunity to display their important works.

Fairhills High School

Mr WAKELING — I would like to congratulate all the students who participated at the 2014 Fairhills High School presentation ball. Also in attendance was the Minister for the Arts and the federal member for Aston. I would like to congratulate all the year 11 students who took part in that important event.

Wantirna South Junior Football Club

Mr WAKELING — I recently had the great pleasure of visiting the Wantirna South Junior Football Club and am honoured to have been appointed their club patron. I look forward to participating in many events this year.

Ballarat ambulance services

Mr HOWARD (Ballarat East) — Premier Napthine is deluding himself if he believes that we do not have an ambulance crisis in this state. I know of three new stories reported in the Ballarat *Courier* last month alone. The first is headed 'Firefighter called upon to drive ambulance to hospital' and it describes an incident that took place on Saturday, 10 May, when an ambulance crew tended to a patient in Black Hill. When they needed backup support there were no other mobile intensive care ambulance crews available, so the Country Fire Authority had to be called. The two paramedics both travelled in the back of the ambulance attending to the patient while the firefighter was called upon to drive the ambulance to Ballarat Base Hospital.

Then the following week, on 19 May, the headline was, 'Ambulances queue to unload patients', and this article describes delays at Ballarat Health Services emergency department that left five ambulances waiting for between 1 and 2 hours to unload patients. These long delays for ambulance crews are becoming regular. They leave our towns uncovered, and it potentially puts lives at risks.

Again, yesterday an elderly woman was left lying on a footpath for more than 1 hour while she waited for an ambulance. This was not in a remote location, but outside the UnitingCare Furniture Shop in Albert Street, in the Ballarat CBD, and it was at 12.40 p.m. The ambulance had to come from Beaufort because Ballarat units were unavailable. These experiences are not good enough and — —

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

La Fiera

Mr McCURDY (Murray Valley) — Well done to everybody involved in the La Fiera Italian festival in Myrtleford — five days of fun, the Italian way. Now in its sixth year, this festival is a celebration of Myrtleford's Italian heritage. I was extremely pleased to attend the launch party last week with the member for Benalla. As the candidate for the new electorate of Ovens Valley, I am getting to know the constituents of Myrtleford, who have been extremely welcoming and hospitable.

Appin Park Primary School

Mr McCURDY — A big thanks to all the great students and teachers at Appin Park Primary School in Wangaratta. Last week I got on my bike and joined them for their annual bike hike. We travelled out to Glenrowan, saw heaps of kangaroos and pushed ourselves up the big hill. The rain settled in a bit early, but we persevered. Parents did a wonderful job, providing refreshments along the way and ensuring that everyone had a safe and enjoyable bike ride. Some of our best learning is not necessarily done in the classroom.

Boosey Creek Cheese

Mr McCURDY — Congratulations to Boosey Creek Cheese and proprietors Ken and Margi Cameron, who have enjoyed success recently. Their Warby Red won a gold medal in the Victorian and Australian 2014 Dairy Industry Association of Australia product awards. It is a terrific family business making the most of a good year.

Harley McCarthy

Mr McCURDY — Congratulations to Harley McCarthy from Yarrawonga College P-12 on being awarded a 2014 Pierre de Coubertin Award. The awards are presented to students for their achievement in school sport and for representing the values of the Olympic movement. These awards are named after the

founder of the modern Olympics, and the awards recognise students who represent the values and spirit of the Olympics: sportsmanship, teamwork, fair play and initiative.

National Emergency Medal

Mr McCURDY — I acknowledge more than 50 local Country Fire Authority (CFA) members who were recently awarded the National Emergency Medal for their extraordinary service during the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires. The CFA members were involved in some of the worst of the Black Saturday fires. Members from CFA district 23, Hume region, provided sustained service and support to protect communities — —

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

Ocean Grove Surf Life Saving Club

Ms NEVILLE (Bellarine) — It was great to join with members, families and friends of the Ocean Grove Surf Life Saving Club for their annual presentation night. It was an important occasion and an opportunity to honour the work and service of all club members. Club championship awards for 2013–14 went to winners in all the club sections, including the open female club champion award to Kira Kinsey and the open male club champion award to Blake Sweeney, both of whom won for a second year running. The Rookie of the Year award, presented to a new member who shows commitment and dedication, was awarded to Lachlan Gawley-Price.

The Ray Johnson Memorial Nipper of the Year award went to Shae Straw-McMahon for making a significant contribution across all areas of club life. Ray was a former president and life member, instrumental in the development of the Nipper program, which now has about 300 members, one of the biggest in Victoria. The Patrol Service Award for the member who did the most volunteer hours went to Wes Prosser, who did about 90 hours. The Barry Renton Memorial Best Competitor award went to Lucy Conquit, and the most prestigious award, the John Bishop Memorial Best Clubman Award, was awarded this year to Steve Peatling.

The club makes a significant contribution to the local community, and we rely on their bravery and commitment to enable us to enjoy our beautiful beach. It was a great event enjoyed by all. Congratulations to all those involved, particularly Chris Paterson, the club president, Tamsin Selway, Fran Rowlands, John Fitzgerald and Kylie Taylor, as well as to the sponsor,

Alan Barber of the *Ocean Grove Voice*. Special congratulations to all the 2014 award winners, especially all the young people, who showed such great enthusiasm.

David Thomas

Mr McINTOSH (Kew) — My friend David Thomas was an intelligent, kind, gentle, well read and urbane man who touched the lives of all he met. Born in 1945 in New South Wales, he excelled at school and university, meeting his wife, Trang, in his second year of university and marrying her in 1969. They were married for just over 45 years and had two daughters. David was devoted to all three.

He was essentially an economist, and a very good economist, but ultimately he graduated with a PhD in jurisprudence from the University of Melbourne. Trang and David were intrepid travellers, once taking six months off to visit 48 countries, including exotic locations such as Iran, Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. David was appointed head of economics and law at Swinburne University in 1989, taking leave to work in the office of then Leader of the Opposition, Jeff Kennett, shortly before the 1992 election. He was appointed by the Kennett government as one of the three commissioners who ran the City of Boroondara for three years, but he always returned to academia.

Always great company, David provided wise counsel and sage advice. In 2010 David was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis, the disease which ultimately took his life a few days ago. Thank you, David, for all you have done to make our community a better one. Vale, David Thomas.

Yan Yean electorate crime rates

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) — I rise to raise with concern the issue that crime has again risen across the three local government areas that comprise the Yan Yean electorate. In Nillumbik crime is up by 11.8 per cent, and freedom of information figures obtained by the opposition reveal there are now 12 fewer police in Nillumbik than when this government came to office and we left office. In the shire of Mitchell crime is up by 16.1 per cent, with 15 fewer police, and I would like to refer in particular to the municipality of Whittlesea. Crime in this growing municipality is up 11.4 per cent, with 7 fewer police, and family violence in particular is up by 5.8 per cent.

I want to commend the work of Tom Joseph and the Mernda Needs a Police Station Facebook page. This postcode now has 33 000 people, which is around the

population of Warrnambool or Shepparton, but still does not have its own police station. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services will not even meet with this group and will not even visit. He has not even set foot in the area. It beggars belief that a community this large should be left alone, when this growth has happened under this government's watch and no plans have been made for this police station. I am glad the shadow minister for police has walked in, because he has bothered to meet with this local community and understands the concerns. This minister needs to act and needs to protect — —

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

Robert Cochrane Kindergarten

Mr BAILLIEU (Hawthorn) — The delightful Robert Cochrane Kindergarten in Minona Street, Hawthorn, has been operating for more than 100 years. In that time it has served the needs of thousands of local families. In the past couple of years the kindergarten has faced and overcome significant challenges — securing its future on the site as a kindergarten, becoming the first stand-alone heritage-listed kindergarten in Victoria and inspiring the local community.

I pay tribute to the hundreds of passionate parents who have led or served on the committee over the years, and in particular to 2014 president Sophie Fraser-Smith and especially her immediate predecessors Anne Reeves, Sandra Buckley and Toni Gross, as well as Cameron Syme, who led the heritage application.

Hawthorn Amateur Football Club

Mr BAILLIEU — Hawthorn Amateur Football Club has operated for many years at the beautiful Rathmines Reserve. It is very much a part of the Hawthorn and Camberwell communities. I have been very pleased this year to accept the position of no. 1 ticket-holder, and I enjoyed watching the recent success against Point Cook. The club has faced some daunting issues in recent years, including dealing with the tragic consequences of mental health problems amongst players. The club has dealt intelligently with these matters and continues to demonstrate the true benefits of a community club. I may be a passionate Geelong supporter, but for the ammos I am more than happy to say, 'Go Hawthorn!'

Camberwell High School

Mr BAILLIEU — Camberwell High School remains one of Victoria's most successful secondary schools. In recent years the school has drawn on its own resources to expand facilities, which have been very well received. However, in the course of their construction these additions have revealed some significant historic shortcomings with power supply and water supply to the site and key services. I urge the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to work with Camberwell High School to assist in effectively resolving these unusual problems.

Education funding

Mr BROOKS (Bundoora) — School communities right across Victoria are rightly very angry with the Abbott-Napthine coalition against Gonski Better Schools funding. This was vital funding to improve equity in our education system and lift the performance and wellbeing of our students.

While both Premier Denis Napthine and Prime Minister Tony Abbott pretended they supported the Gonski reforms and the Better Schools funding proposed by Labor, Victorian families are now realising they were hoodwinked by the Liberals and The Nationals both here in Victoria and in Canberra.

The bulk of important federal funding under the national education reform agreement was supposed to be delivered in the last two years of the six-year deal. Those two years have now been axed by Tony Abbott without a whimper from the Premier or his education minister.

The trickle of federal funds that have come to Victoria appear to have been eaten up by system growth and other regular cost increases, as opposed to being directed to improving student outcomes. We know that the Napthine government has walked away from Gonski after the Minister for Education's failure at the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearing to identify any Gonski Better Schools funding in this year's state budget. We now know that Abbott and Napthine, and the Liberals here and in Canberra, have conspired to mislead and deceive the Victorian people about Gonski funding.

The Premier's office has refused to release correspondence between himself and the Prime Minister on this important funding agreement, choosing to keep secret five documents that were identified in a freedom of information request I lodged. I call on the Premier to release this correspondence. The only reason

for him to keep it secret is to protect his conspiracy with the Prime Minister.

Leading from Within

Mrs POWELL (Shepparton) — On Wednesday, 21 May, my husband and I attended a fundraiser in Shepparton for a very worthwhile program called Leading from Within. It was a very successful night with about 370 guests listening intently to the guest speaker, former Premier Jeff Kennett, who spoke about mental illness and its effects on the person, the family and the community. He praised the work of Jenny and Patrick O'Connell, who established the program after a number of tragic suicides in the Shepparton area. Leading from Within supports mentors and gives people in need the tools to cope. We heard from two wonderful women who had been helped by Jenny and Patrick through the program and who had turned their lives around.

Dookie robotic dairy

Mrs POWELL — On Friday, 23 May, I officially opened the new high-tech robotic dairy at Dookie. I was joined by the member for Benalla, the federal member for Murray, the mayor of Greater Shepparton City Council, The Nationals candidate for the Shepparton electorate, Greg Barr, Professor Ken Hinchcliff of the University of Melbourne, Ros Gall, the director of Dookie campus, and many students and staff. The Victorian coalition government provided \$2.5 million towards the \$5 million project in partnership with the University of Melbourne. The robotic dairy milking shed and feeding systems will enable 180 cows to self-milk two to three times a day, providing an average of 2000 litres of milk a day from each of the three stalls. The Victorian government is proud to be partnering with the University of Melbourne to provide the vital research needed to underpin and support agriculture in northern Victoria at the Dookie campus. This state-of-the-art robotic dairy with its use of environmentally sustainable practices such as the reuse of waste water and the installation of solar panels on the roof of the dairy to reduce electricity usage will help lead the way in innovation in dairying.

Werribee Mercy Hospital

Mr PALLAS (Tarneit) — Werribee Mercy Hospital has suffered a disgraceful snub by the Napthine government in this year's budget. Outer western suburban residents have been left to languish on elective surgery waiting lists at Werribee Mercy after its request for an \$85 million upgrade was ignored by the state government. The hospital's rejected business

case sought funding for vitally needed operating theatres, an inpatient unit, a central sterile supply department and eight critical care unit beds. The CEO of Werribee Mercy Hospital, Stephen Cornelissen, expressed grave concern after the failure to provide funding to improve services. He said:

We believe that without an expansion in services, the local community and the hospital will face significant challenges moving forward.

These challenges are quite profound. Werribee Mercy Hospital has the second worst on-bypass record in the outer metropolitan area. It is also the worst performer in the outer metropolitan area for emergency department lengths of stay, which is often due to waiting for transfers to other health centres. More concerning for residents of Melbourne's outer western suburbs, approximately 60 per cent of Wyndham residents have to leave the area for medical treatment. We need a vital upgrade and improved medical facilities for this community.

Baxter Country Fire Authority brigade

Mr BURGESS (Hastings) — I was pleased to attend a dinner to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the inauguration of the Baxter volunteer fire brigade. The Baxter brigade has been serving the township of Baxter, together with the areas of Frankston, South Frankston, Langwarrin and Langwarrin South, since 1944. It also provides support to the surrounding brigades of Frankston, Mount Eliza, Moorooduc, Somerville, Pearcedale and Langwarrin. On behalf of Baxter and surrounding townships I offer my sincere congratulations and thanks to Captain Angus Mair and his team for all they do to keep our community safe.

Anzac Day

Mr BURGESS — It was a great honour to be invited to attend and lay wreaths at Anzac Day services in Pearcedale and Crib Point. It was wonderful to see record crowds ranging in age from the young to the elderly attending the dawn service in Pearcedale and the mid-morning service in Crib Point to pay tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

Crib Point Primary School

Mr BURGESS — On 13 May the member for Hawthorn and I visited the Crib Point Primary School to hear of its plans to build a memorial path at the school to remember six former students who fought in the First World War. Local resident and keen historian Toni Munday exhibited an excellent artist's impression

of the path and provided an overview of plans for its creation. The school is a successful recipient of an Anzac centenary local grant, and its latest project will complement the remembrance garden that was unveiled at the end of last year.

Crib Point Community House

Mr BURGESS — On 21 May I attended a luncheon to celebrate the wonderful volunteers of the Crib Point Community House. It was a great pleasure to attend this function to celebrate the important work of these and all volunteers, and to acknowledge their outstanding contribution to their organisation and the local community. Among the very worthy award recipients on the day was an icon of Crib Point, Rosemary Evans. Rosemary has led many battles in the defence of the precious character of Crib Point, including against the Brumby government's bitumen plant, the unnecessary removal of native vegetation and the excessive development of units in the area.

Local government rates

Ms RICHARDSON (Northcote) — Over the past month cost of living pressures have featured as a key concern for residents visiting my mobile offices across the electorate. After expressing their open hostility to both the state and federal Liberal governments, they make it plain they do not mind paying more if their services improve as a result. That is why Labor's plan to cap local government rate rises to CPI increases has been so warmly received. If more must be paid, there should be an independent umpire to assess that rise and act accordingly. This will give councils room to move. Outside of that independent mechanism Labor is saying to councils, 'Enough is enough'. We saw the Minister for Local Government yesterday try to defend his opposition to this plan while standing alongside some councillors and representatives of the Municipal Association of Victoria — the poor chap!

But there is another strong voice in opposition marching shoulder to shoulder with the Liberals, willing to do nothing while ratepayers are slugged, and that is the Greens. They have slammed the policy, and why would any of us be surprised? Their strongest support comes from the wealthiest parts of Melbourne. They are happy to slug the rest of us because their capacity to pay is not in question. That is why the Greens are increasingly known as the new Liberals. The call should be 'Vote Green, but only if you can afford to do so'.

The Greens are led by people who would not be happy in heaven, and they are determined to make sure the

rest of us are damn miserable as well. They are just as bad as the Liberals because they claim to be all for one and one for all while pulling up the ladder behind them. They say they are all for the poorest in society and even the environment while voting against measures to address these concerns because it simply does not suit their political strategy to do so. There will be no wins for Labor on their watch, and it is all at the expense of working people.

Oscar W's Wharfside

Mr WELLER (Rodney) — I rise today to pay tribute to one of Echuca's most iconic tourism drawcards, Oscar W's Wharfside restaurant, which will be closing its doors at the end of July. Oscar W's is one of regional Victoria's most acclaimed dining destinations and boasts a prestigious chef's hat in the most recent edition of *The Age Good Food Guide*.

News of the restaurant's closure has come as a great shock to many in our community and those from further afield who are now trying to reconcile the idea of Echuca-Moama without one of its most famous attractions. The owners of Oscar W's Wharfside, Dean and Renee Oberin, are a prominent Echuca-Moama family and true pioneers of the tourism and hospitality industry in our region. I take this opportunity to acknowledge, thank and praise them wholeheartedly for their vision, their passion and their contribution to this space over many, many years.

The decision to end the restaurant's lease from 31 July was announced in a joint statement from Campaspe Shire Council and Oscar W's last week. The nature of the discussions between the council and the Oberins remains confidential, but I will say it is an enormous disappointment that an agreement could not be reached between the parties to enable this wonderful establishment to remain. Oscar W's is a name synonymous with Echuca, and its owners are passionate custodians of this jewel in our crown. Without question, Echuca-Moama and the surrounding region will be the poorer for the loss of this establishment.

Heathcote District Football League

Mr WELLER — I pay tribute to Heathcote District Football League, which defeated the Horsham and District Football League in the interleague match over the weekend. I pay tribute to Kahl Oliver from the Lockington Bamawn United Football Club, who kicked seven goals.

Western Ring Road noise walls

Ms CAMPBELL (Pascoe Vale) — Last night in Parliament I outlined to the Premier the urgent need for funding for quality noise walls in Glenroy and Gowanbrae and asked him to meet with me in the coming weeks to ensure funding is provided quickly. Today I will put on the record some of the correspondence sent to the Minister for Roads, who has ignored the pleas of families for the installation of noise walls.

In September 2012 I passed on correspondence from residents in Bindi Street, McDonald Place, Moonee Boulevard in Glenroy behalf of Mr Maxwell and Ms Tohme, who have been disrupted constantly by noise and suffer from sleep deprivation; from residents in John Street, where windows are kept shut, even in summer; and from residents in Oak Court, Gowanbrae, who experience incessant noise during the night. Mr Finlay of Moonee Boulevard wrote about the sleep deprivation his family suffers. Similarly, the Gallo family in Moonee Boulevard also suffer from sleep deprivation, disturbances and hypertension; Mr Wake of Moonee Boulevard wrote about sleep deprivation and interruption to his concentration while studying; and Mr Hewat of Valley Crescent, Glenroy, also wrote of sleep deprivation. There are too many cases and we need — —

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

Field of Women

Mr ANGUS (Forest Hill) — I recently had the pleasure of attending the Breast Cancer Network Australia Field of Women event at the MCG. It was a spectacular and memorable event, and I was glad to be able to participate, together with my wife, many parliamentary colleagues and thousands of other people to highlight this very important community issue.

Jake Brimmer

Mr ANGUS — Last Sunday I had the pleasure of attending at the Nunawading City Football Club in my electorate of Forest Hill to witness the farewell match for Jake Brimmer. Jake has recently signed a three-year youth contract to play for English Premier League club Liverpool. I congratulate Jake on this great achievement and wish him and his family well for their move to England as Jake pursues this amazing opportunity. I also congratulate the club on not only facilitating Jake's career but also training and assisting hundreds of other keen soccer players. I thank all the

coaches and volunteers at the club for their important contribution to the community.

Crossway LifeCare

Mr ANGUS — I recently had the great pleasure of attending the inaugural Crossway LifeCare celebration night. It was a fantastic night during which I had the privilege of presenting awards to various category recipients. Hearing the stories of the recipients was inspirational. I congratulate the staff and volunteers who make up the LifeCare team led by Toby Baxter for this great event and for the important ongoing work they do for residents in the local community in my electorate of Forest Hill. I wish all those involved in this work well with their future endeavours, and I thank them for their hard work to date.

Nunawading Swimming Club

Mr ANGUS — Last Saturday evening I had the great pleasure to once again attend the Nunawading Swimming Club's annual presentation night. As always it was a great night to celebrate the past year of the club and also an opportunity for recognition and awards to be given to various individuals for their outstanding performances and contributions to the club during the previous year both in and out of the pool. I congratulate all the award winners, club swimmers, staff members and volunteers for their efforts during the last year.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2014

Statement of compatibility

Ms VICTORIA (Minister for Consumer Affairs) 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 Consumer Affairs Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 (the bill).

In my opinion, the bill, 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 bill amends the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 (ACLFT act) to improve the operation of provisions relating to debt collection, compliance and enforcement provisions and generally improve the operation of that act.

The bill also makes miscellaneous amendments to other acts.

Human rights issues***Certain persons prohibited from engaging in debt collection — the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law***

Clause 10 amends section 47 of the ACLFT act to include a new exception to the offence of engaging in debt collection as a prohibited person. The new section 47(3) deals with where a body corporate is directed or controlled by a prohibited person, and provides that a body corporate is not guilty of an offence under section 47(2) if certain matters are made out. Any provision that places an onus of proof on a person accused of a criminal offence may engage the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law pursuant to section 25(1) of the charter act. While this right does not apply to a body corporate, section 195 of the ACLFT act provides that proceedings may also be taken against an officer of a body corporate who has knowingly authorised or permitted the contravention.

In my view, this exception, read in conjunction with section 72 of the Criminal Procedure Act 2009, imposes an evidential burden on an accused with respect to the matters set out in new section 47(3). This exception does not relate to an essential element of the offence, but rather allows an officer of a body corporate to escape liability in a particular circumstance. An officer can rely on the exception by pointing to evidence that shows that the officer was unaware that the body corporate was directed or controlled by a prohibited person under section 47(1)(a), and had taken reasonable precautions and exercised due diligence in relation to appointing that person as director or giving that person management or effective control of the body corporate. These are matters in relation to which an accused person will have direct knowledge and will be able to produce evidence. Accordingly, the exception in new section 47(3) does not limit the right to be presumed innocent in the charter act.

Search and seizure provisions — the right to privacy and the right to property

There are several clauses in the bill that amend provisions of the ACLFT act relating to powers of search and seizure, including the retention and return of seized documents and the issuing of embargo notices that restrict the way in which property can be dealt with. The amendments are generally technical in nature. However, there are several clauses that may increase the scope of existing search and seizure powers in the ACLFT act. This is relevant to the right to privacy and the right to property protected under sections 13 and 20 of the charter act.

Clause 15 of the bill will amend section 149(1) of the ACLFT act to provide that an inspector may enter and search premises if an inspector believes on reasonable grounds that a person may have contravened the act or the regulations. This amendment will potentially increase the number of searches carried out under this provision, as an inspector will no longer need to have reasonable grounds to conclude that a person has contravened the act or the regulations, but instead will only need to believe on reasonable grounds that a person may have done so. Clause 15 is therefore relevant to the right to privacy in section 13 of the charter act.

For the reasons outlined in the statement of compatibility for the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Bill 2011, searches carried out under section 149 of the ACLFT act are neither unlawful nor arbitrary. The amendment will address

the fact that it is difficult for inspectors currently to form a belief that a person has contravened the act or regulations, and it is also not necessarily appropriate for inspectors to do so. Instead, forming a belief that a person may have contravened the act or regulations provides inspectors with a reasonable basis for conducting searches in this regulatory context, and therefore will ensure that such searches will not be arbitrary. Accordingly, clause 15 does not limit the right to privacy.

Clause 17 will amend section 155(1) of the ACLFT act to allow another person to enter and search premises with an inspector. This may increase any interference with a person's privacy occasioned by section 155. Section 155 was also discussed in the statement of compatibility for the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Bill 2011. Searches are conducted under this section to monitor compliance with the act and regulations. It may be necessary to obtain assistance from technical experts to ensure such searches are effectively carried out. Consequently, clause 17 does not arbitrarily or unlawfully limit the right to privacy.

Clause 19 of the bill increases the circumstances in which 'embargo notices' can be issued to cover goods found during an emergency entry under section 153 of the ACLFT act which are dangerous if used or which are being supplied in contravention of an interim or permanent ban. As an embargo notice will restrict the way that a person can deal with his or her property, the issuing of an embargo notice may constitute a temporary deprivation of property. However, as such notices will only be issued during a search under section 153 and in accordance with the provisions in the ACLFT act, will be clearly worded and are directed at the proper purpose of ensuring compliance with the ACLFT act and regulations, and will expire within 72 hours after the notice is given, in my view clause 19 of the bill does not limit the right to property in section 20 of the charter act.

Clause 21 extends the power of an inspector to retain possession of documents or things seized under the ACLFT act by requiring an inspector to only return a document or thing if satisfied of certain matters under new section 167(2). I am satisfied that these matters are clearly set out and relate to whether the continued seizure of the item is necessary or justified for the purposes of the ACLFT act. I also note that new section 167A provides that a person can make an application to the Magistrates Court for an order that the document or thing be returned if the document or thing is not required for the purpose for which it was seized or that the continued retention of the document or thing is not necessary to prevent the document or thing being used in a way that justifies its seizure under the ACLFT act. Accordingly, I consider that new clause 21 does not limit the right to property under section 20 of the charter act.

The Hon. Heidi Victoria, MP
Minister for Consumer Affairs

Second reading

Ms VICTORIA (Minister for Consumer Affairs) —
I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Speech as follows incorporated into *Hansard* in accordance with resolution of house:

The bill further demonstrates the government's ongoing commitment to improving the consumer protection

framework in Victoria and our commitment to cut red tape for Victorian businesses. The bill will implement the outcomes of a red tape reduction review of the Motor Car Traders Act 1986 and will also amend several acts within the consumer affairs portfolio to clarify and improve their operation, to remove redundant provisions and to correct minor technical errors.

Part 2 of the bill will amend the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. It will insert a new positive obligation on the secretary of an incorporated association to notify the registrar of incorporated associations within 14 days if they change their address. As the secretary of an incorporated association is the key point of contact between the association and the registrar, it is vital that the registrar is able to maintain an up-to-date record of the contact details of all association secretaries.

The bill will also protect the rights of members of incorporated associations by prohibiting the committee of an incorporated association from initiating retaliatory disciplinary action against a member that has already commenced a grievance process where both the grievance and dispute relate to the same issue. This is consistent with the current prohibition on initiating a grievance action where disciplinary proceedings have already commenced in respect of the same issue.

The act requires that an incorporated association with annual revenue of between \$250 000 and \$1 million have its annual financial statements reviewed by an independent accountant. However, some incorporated associations that are subject to this requirement also provide in their rules that their annual financial statements must be formally audited. The bill will clarify that, where this occurs, it will not be necessary for the incorporated association to also have its financial statements reviewed. Both a review and an audit of financial statements are conducted in accordance with the standards issued by the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, and an audit provides a higher level of assurance than a review.

The bill will also make other minor technical amendments to the Associations Incorporation Reform Act.

Part 3 of the bill will amend the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012.

The bill will make a number of technical and clarifying amendments to parts 6.2 and 6.4 relating to the powers of the director of Consumer Affairs Victoria and the powers of inspectors under the act. These amendments will better enable the director to enforce the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act, and the Australian Consumer Law.

The bill will also clarify and improve the operation of the debt collection provisions in part 4.1 of the act.

Specifically, the bill will enhance consumer protection by prohibiting a body corporate that has been found to have engaged in the use of physical force, harassment or coercion in contravention of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001 of the commonwealth, or a similar provision of other state and territory legislation, from engaging in debt collection. Similarly, the bill also prohibits a body corporate that has previously had its licence or registration cancelled or suspended under the Private Security Act 2004 from engaging in debt collection.

These amendments align the circumstances in which a body corporate is prohibited from engaging in debt collection with the circumstances in which a natural person is prohibited from engaging in debt collection.

The bill will also provide that a body corporate that employs a prohibited person as a debt collector will not have committed an offence if a court is satisfied that, when employing the person, it was not aware that the person was a prohibited person and the body corporate acted in good faith and exercised due diligence when appointing or employing that person. If a body corporate subsequently becomes aware that it has employed a prohibited person, it will be prohibited from engaging in debt collection until they remove that person.

The bill will also clarify that a creditor is permitted to contact a debtor for the purpose of complying with section 88 of the National Credit Code before commencing legal action under the code.

Part 4 of the bill amends the Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995 to remove references to redundant provisions.

Part 5 of the bill amends the Estate Agents Act 1980 to improve the operation of certain provisions.

Specifically, the bill will amend section 6(2)(a) to streamline the process for filling casual vacancies on the Estate Agents Council.

The bill will also amend section 55(4)(a)(ii) to require estate agents or their representatives to act 'honestly and reasonably' in relation to transactions where they are buying a property or business that they have been engaged to sell. This will replace a former requirement that they act 'fairly and honestly'. The standard of 'honestly and reasonably' is a clearer standard that has been subject to consideration by courts in Victoria.

Inspection powers and enforcement powers in the Fire Services Levy Monitor Act 2012 are modelled on equivalent provisions in the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act. Part 6 of the bill will amend the Fire Services Levy Monitor Act to bring enforcement powers in that act into line with the amendments to the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act to be effected by this bill.

Part 7 of the bill will amend the Funerals Act 2006 to repeal provisions that establish the Funeral Industry Ministerial Advisory Council. The council is no longer in operation and has been replaced by regular industry round tables sponsored by Consumer Affairs Victoria. As a consequence, these provisions are redundant.

Part 8 of the bill will make a number of amendments to the Motor Car Traders Act 1986 that will reduce the regulatory burden for motor car traders and enhance protections for purchasers. These amendments have been developed through extensive consultation with both industry and consumer stakeholders as part of a red tape reduction review of the act led by Consumer Affairs Victoria.

Notably, the bill will streamline the process for cooling off in relation to vehicle sales. At present, motor car traders require all purchasers who wish to accept delivery of a vehicle within the cooling-off period to waive their cooling-off rights. This process is confusing for many consumers and imposes an unnecessary burden on traders.

In order to make the cooling-off process less burdensome for traders and easier for consumers to understand, the bill will remove the ability for a purchaser to waive their cooling-off rights, and instead, will provide that if a purchaser accepts delivery of a vehicle within the three-day cooling-off period, their right to cool off is extinguished.

The bill will also abolish the requirement for traders to provide purchasers with a separate form containing information about their cooling-off rights. Instead, the bill will expand the regulation-making power in the Motor Car Traders Act to enable regulations to be made that will require specific information about a purchaser's cooling-off rights to be included in the contract of sale for a motor vehicle.

This will ensure that purchasers are provided with a clear and easy to understand statement of their cooling-off rights, and will reduce the compliance burden imposed on motor car traders.

The bill will cut red tape for motor car traders by modernising the record-keeping requirements. The bill will abolish the superfluous requirement that motor car traders retain copies of all documents provided to the director of Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Business Licensing Authority or the Motor Car Traders Claims Committee. The bill will also reduce the length of time motor car traders are required to retain other documents from seven years to six years. This will bring the record-keeping requirements into line with the limitation period for an action for damages under the Australian Consumer Law.

The bill will remove the right for a prospective purchaser to access the name and address of the former owner of a vehicle offered for sale by a motor car trader. This current right imposes a significant burden on motor car traders. It also creates privacy issues as many sellers object to having their name and address disclosed to anyone who requests it. In addition, stakeholder feedback has indicated that the information that can be obtained from a former owner is of limited value to prospective purchasers.

Lastly, the bill will amend the definition of customer service capacity in section 35A to clarify that only staff involved in the actual buying, selling or exchanging of vehicles are required to provide a motor car trader with a current police check and prescribed form before commencing employment. This will include, for example, staff that accompany customers on test drives or staff involved in negotiating the terms of the sale with a customer. This amendment will correct a misinterpretation of the current requirement that has resulted in low-risk employees such as receptionists and other clerical staff being required to provide a police check.

Part 9 of the bill will amend the Retirement Villages Act 1986 to remove references to redundant requirements.

Part 10 of the bill will amend the Sex Work Act 1994 to remove the current prohibition on sex work service providers from advertising to employ administrative, security or other support staff for their businesses. The prohibition on advertising for persons to engage in actual sex work however will remain. This amendment accords with the recommendation of the Sex Work Ministerial Advisory Committee.

The bill will also make other minor technical amendments to the Sex Work Act.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr NOONAN (Williamstown).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 12 June.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (BRIMBANK CITY COUNCIL) AMENDMENT BILL 2014

Statement of compatibility

Mr BULL (Minister for Local Government) 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, (the 'charter act'), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Local Government (Brimbank City Council) Amendment Bill 2014 (the bill).

In my opinion, the bill, as introduced to the Legislative Assembly, is compatible with human rights as set out in the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview

The purpose of the bill is to amend the next election date for Brimbank City Council, extending the period of administration of the panel of administrators for Brimbank City Council (the panel) from the fourth Saturday in March 2015 to the general elections of councillors for all councils scheduled on the fourth Saturday in October 2016.

Human rights issues

Human rights protected by the charter act that are relevant to the bill

Section 18 of the charter act establishes a right for an individual to, without discrimination, participate in the conduct of public affairs, to vote and be elected at state and municipal elections, and to have access to the Victorian public service and public office.

This right is relevant to the bill as clause 5 of the bill has the effect of postponing the return of the elected representation for Brimbank City Council for a further 19 months.

Are the relevant charter act rights actually limited by the bill?

The right to participate in public life is limited by the bill as during the period of administration the right of voters to participate in the Brimbank City Council elections is suspended, as are the rights of candidates to stand for election and to occupy public office.

Is any limit on relevant rights by the bill reasonable and justified under section 7(2)?

(a) the nature of the right being limited

The right to participate in public affairs is a broad concept, which embraces the exercise of governmental power by all

arms of government at all levels. The right to be elected ensures that eligible voters have a free choice of candidates in an election, and as with the right to vote, the right to occupy public office is not conferred on all Victorians; it is limited to eligible persons where the criteria and processes for appointment, promotion, suspension and dismissal are objective, reasonable and non-discriminatory.

(b) the importance of the purpose of the limitation

The limitation was originally necessitated after the Brimbank City Council was dismissed in 2009, following findings of profound failures of governance. Removal of an elected council is a last resort, and only undertaken on exceptional circumstances where the government has a responsibility to protect a community from misgovernance by their local representatives.

Given the serious deficiencies in governance that led to the council's dismissal and the complexity and size of the municipality, an extended period of good government is required to fully restore community confidence and to end the links with inappropriate sectional interests and factional conflict.

The purpose of the bill is to enable the panel to complete the process of reviewing all aspects of council activity and programs, to ensure the adverse impacts of former poor policy and practices are fully addressed and appropriate safeguards are put in place, before returning to elected representation.

Extending the period of administration will also ensure the completion of a number of key strategic projects that will reach critical stages in 2015. The successful management of these projects and the development and maintenance of strong partnerships is central to the realisation of improved governance of Brimbank City Council and the reformation of the dysfunctional culture of local government in Brimbank. The bill will enable these projects to continue seamlessly and be brought to conclusion without the risk of short-term political interference caused by the transition to a new council serving a 19-month term.

(c) the nature and extent of the limitation

Clause 5 of the bill will have the effect of continuing to suspend the right to participate in public life until the fourth Saturday in October 2016, at which time a general election for Brimbank City Council will be held.

This clause will only limit the right to participate in public life for a confined period of time, after which the council will return to elected representation and the right to participate in public life will resume.

(d) the relationship between the limitation and its purpose

There is a direct relationship between the limitation and the purpose of ensuring that elected councillors properly undertake the duties of their office.

(e) any less restrictive means reasonably available to achieve its purpose

The bill may provide for a shorter extension of the period of administration for Brimbank City Council.

However, Brimbank City Council would still be required to participate in the general elections of councillors for all councils on the fourth Saturday in October 2016 and the potential risk of a short-term elected council destabilising the viability of the strategies and reforms implemented by the panel to address the serious deficiencies identified at Brimbank City Council would remain. Further, the financial impact of two elections within a short time frame will cause the community, in funding the two elections, and potential candidates, in funding two election campaigns, to incur considerable costs.

(f) any other relevant factors

There are no other relevant factors.

Conclusion

I consider that the bill is compatible with the charter act because, although it does limit one human right, the limitation is reasonable and proportionate. The limitation strikes the correct balance by providing for embedded good governance and restored community confidence, as a precondition for effective local democracy.

Tim Bull, MP
Minister for Local Government

Second reading

Mr BULL (Minister for Local Government) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Speech as follows incorporated into *Hansard* in accordance with resolution of house:

The Local Government (Brimbank City Council) Amendment Bill 2014 will amend the Local Government (Brimbank City Council) Act 2009.

The purpose of the bill is to extend the period of administration at Brimbank City Council, in order to complete the restoration of good governance to the Brimbank municipality.

In 2009, the Brimbank City Council was dismissed due to a profound failure of the council to govern in the interests of the Brimbank community. This was due in part to a culture of external influences and factional conflicts between councillors.

A panel of three administrators was appointed to constitute the council and perform all the functions, powers and duties of the council.

The panel of administrators has made much progress in the last four years to rebuild good governance processes and structures within the council. The panel has also started to restore a seriously damaged relationship between the council and the local community. I take this opportunity to thank all members of the panel for their work in this regard.

In November 2013, the previous Minister for Local Government began the process of reviewing the panel's progress to date and its forward program, in order to assess

the council's readiness to return to elected representation in March 2015.

Representatives of the community have made submissions to the government requesting the election be delayed until October 2016 to save ratepayers and the council the substantial expense of holding two elections within 19 months.

On the basis of all the available information, the government has concluded that it would be in the best interests of the community for the period of administration to continue for a further 19 months until the statewide local government general elections scheduled in October 2016.

It is clear to the government that due to the complexity and size of the municipality, a council elected to serve a 19-month term would create unacceptable risks and set back the impressive reform program now under way at Brimbank.

The bill provides for a continuation of the period of administration, until the return of a democratically elected council in October 2016. This prevents a situation in which two elections are held in Brimbank within 19 months. Holding two elections will cause both the community, in funding them, and potential candidates, who will need to fund two campaigns, to incur considerable costs. The bill also will enable the first council in the return to elected representation to serve a full term in office.

This relatively short extension will give the people of Brimbank the best chance of having a council which delivers effective and stable government in the long term.

I commend this bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr NOONAN (Williamstown).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 12 June.

APPROPRIATION (2014–2015) BILL 2014

Second reading

Debate resumed from 28 May; motion of Mr O'BRIEN (Treasurer).

Mr WELLER (Rodney) — Continuing on from last evening, there is the police station and the Echuca Specialist School. The Echuca South Primary School and the Echuca West Primary School amalgamation has received funding to do the planning. Another good outcome is for Kyabram P–12 College, which has received money to do its planning for phases 3 to 6. Another good outcome is in the area of community houses. They will receive up to 20 coordination hours, which will be helpful for the community houses of Lockington, Crossenvale and Rochester. They will all benefit from that.

I am always reading the newspapers, and on the Wednesday after the budget there was some

commentary in the *Weekly Times*, which carried the headline 'Budget bonanza'. The article goes through a long list of things that are available to country Victoria — the budget bonanza for country Victoria. One of the things in particular that I think is good is the installation of wi-fi and the removal of mobile phone black spots. As anyone who travels around country Victoria, as I do, knows, there are many spots where we do not have the phone service we need. The state government has recognised that and is contributing to fixing those black spots so that people can do business in country areas as well as they can in the metropolitan area.

Another paper I read regularly is *Stock & Land*. The editorial of 8 May states:

After years of sitting on the sidelines come state budget time, agriculture appears to have more of a presence this year.

The sale of Rural Finance, the lease of the port of Melbourne and the rail infrastructure upgrades from Mildura to Geelong are all genuine big ticket items.

So far the ag sector appears cautiously optimistic about the Napthine government's big calls.

The sale of the government lender Rural Finance was scrutinised closely, but the Victorian Farmers Federation has expressed its pleasure at the Bendigo Bank, a smaller bank with close ties to rural Victoria, has won the right to acquire the Rural Finance business.

And it is delighted at the move to spend some the profits of the sale of Rural Finance to fund upgrades, including the long-awaited standardisation of tracks that will drive significant supply chain efficiencies in the state's north-west.

It further states:

It is interesting to see agriculture as such a mainstream item in the budget and it is good to see the government thinking deeply about the impact of its policies on the agricultural sector.

At present it seems it is committed to walking the walk in regards to reinvesting the money from the sale of these critical ag resources such as Rural Finance and the port lease back into rural areas. If it delivers, it will have to be regarded as a big tick for the Napthine administration.

On the same page an article by the president of the Victorian Farmers Federation, Peter Tuohey, states:

The Victorian Farmers Federation welcomes the state government's decision to pump \$220 million of its infrastructure program into upgrading and standardising the state's north-west rail freight lines.

It's a welcome relief to see \$362 million committed to duplication the Princes Highway between Winchelsea and Colac, plus \$42 million allocated to building more overtaking lanes on the highway in East Gippsland.

Both investments will boost our ability to more efficiently get food and fibre from local to export markets.

What a recommendation for the budget. *Stock & Land* is not always our biggest fan, but it is out there saying this budget is delivering.

The member for Lara had a few words to say in the chamber last night. He criticised the Napthine government for not delivering. We went to the 2010 election and committed \$1 million per year for the 40 rural shires to help with roads and bridges, and that has been delivered. We also went to the election with a commitment that we would change the fire services levy — Labor would not do it during its 11 years in office. It sat on its hands, and it would not do it. We actually delivered it, and not only that — this year we are dropping the rates. We have successfully changed from one system to the other, and now we are dropping the rates even further. In 2010 we went to the election with a commitment to build the Echuca hospital. I am quite proud to say that on 1 July we will open the first stage of the new Echuca hospital. A great outcome, and another commitment delivered.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr WELLER — I know it is wrong to respond to interjections, but over time there has been commentary in my local newspapers about the Echuca–Moama bridge. Budget day, quite rightly, is not the only day we make announcements. What you have to read into this budget is that there is a \$1.3 billion surplus and there are good amounts of money in our programs for us to be able to identify where that money should be spent. This budget has the ability to deliver the Echuca–Moama bridge because we are back to a government that has a sound financial basis. The previous government had inquiries and studies and messed around for 11 years because it did not want to build the bridge. We are in the process of getting there.

Mr Nardella interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Melton is out of his place and disorderly.

Mr WELLER — We are as close as we have ever been. I say to the member for Melton: watch this space. Not only will we be making announcements about this but there is a good chance we will be making announcements about early works.

The member for Lara also spoke about cuts to TAFEs. I do not know how he came to the conclusion that this government has cut funding to TAFEs. When we look at what has been spent on vocational training we see

that in the last budget delivered by Labor it allocated \$850 million for vocational training, increasing to \$950 million in its forward projections. We have kept it at \$1.2 billion. In my book that is \$250 million more for vocational training. We are spending a billion dollars more on vocational training than proposed by the opposition when it was in government. On top of that, we have a fund of \$200 million to help TAFE institutions readjust to doing business in the system introduced by Labor in 2008. Where Labor had nothing there to help them adjust, we have brought in a fund to help them adjust. Up my way we would call it a furphy to say that we have reduced funding to vocational training.

The member for Lara was rattling off some plan that Labor has to increase jobs. Opposition members say we have no plan, but \$27 billion worth of investment in infrastructure is a plan for jobs. I know the opposition is opposed to those jobs, but we are keen to deliver this \$27 billion infrastructure plan and deliver the jobs that come with it. The paper referred to by the member for Lara spoke about purchasing locally made vehicles. The current criterion for government authorities is that if suitable vehicles are made in Australia, they should purchase them. As the member for Thomastown pointed out quite rightly in her contribution last night, after 2017 there will not be any locally made cars. What is the member for Lara thinking? I do not know, and I am not going to go there.

The shadow Treasurer made some comments about the budget. When I was a young kid there was a program on television called *The Six Million Dollar Man*. The member for Tarneit is the One Billion Dollar Bungle Man. He cannot read. How can the people of Victoria seriously think of putting him in charge of Treasury when he cannot even get within a billion dollars? One of his colleagues, the member for Bendigo East, came into this place on 8 May to make her contribution on the budget papers. She said:

A further sign of disrespect is the hoax that is being perpetrated on the state about a \$1 billion growth fund. The budget papers do not reveal one cent of the forward allocation for this \$1 billion growth fund.

In budget paper 3 the Regional Growth Fund is not a new initiative this year. It does not have a specific line item in the budget because it is an existing program. It is therefore included in the Department of State Development, Business and Innovation existing appropriation and output costs. This is the same for any ongoing program, whether it is for that department or Health, Education et cetera. Therefore a funding allocation of \$500 million for the second stage of the Regional Growth Fund from 2014–15 to 2017–18 is

included under note 12 ‘Expenses by government purpose and by department’ at page 31 of this year’s budget paper 5. One would have thought that a former minister would know how to read a budget. Obviously we give too much credit to people in such situations.

Even the Crouching Tiger, the member for Lyndhurst, with aspirations of being a future leader, got sucked in, you might say. In a Public Accounts and Estimates Committee (PAEC) budget estimates hearing he asked a question of the Minister for Regional and Rural Development, asking where it was. In the PAEC process the minister was able to point out where it was. I would have thought the member for Lyndhurst was a smarter fellow than that. I thought he was someone who could do his research.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr WELLER — I should not respond to interjections; that is wrong.

The SPEAKER — Order! Absolutely.

Mr WELLER — Perhaps before he goes into a PAEC hearing in future the member for Lyndhurst needs to do his own research and not rely on the research of the member for Bendigo East. The member for Bendigo East set him up.

It is not just about what happens on budget day; it is about what happens throughout the year. What members have to understand is the mess that this government inherited when it came in here. Now it is delivering record investments in infrastructure, and it is recording a surplus of over \$1 billion, growing out to over \$3 billion over the next four years, which allows it to invest in infrastructure.

I hear some commentary about ambulances. What can be said is that there are now 340 extra employees at Ambulance Victoria. Members have to understand that the government has put in record amounts of funding. We have put a record amount of funding into hospitals. I rest my case with the Echuca hospital, which is a prime example of what we have committed to do. We have also put a record amount into education. We inherited — we have done the audit — a \$430 million backlog in maintenance in education. We are delivering on that, and tranches of extra maintenance are being carried out at our schools. Last year the Minister for Education announced \$80 million, I think, for the first tranche of extra maintenance because of the backlog, which maintenance is being done.

Opposition members come in here and say what a terrible state the schools are in. That reflects the neglect

of those schools for 11 long, dark years. It is the same with roads in rural and regional areas — there was no maintenance for 11 years. The drought covered it up, but then the wet years came. I am proud to be part of a government that has had money to address the maintenance backlog.

Ms KANIS (Melbourne) — I rise to contribute to the debate on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014. This morning, as on most parliamentary mornings, I took the train to Parliament. Unfortunately my experience was less than satisfactory, and that experience is not rare. I got to the station in plenty of time for what should be a 15-minute trip to Parliament. The train was cancelled. Then an express train that was empty bar a couple of passengers went through and did not stop at my station. Finally, about 25 minutes after I got to the station, a train did stop at Newmarket station. However, because of the delays it was so full that I could not get on it. I finally did get on a train this morning, but it was some 25 to 30 minutes after I arrived at the station. Fortunately I got to Parliament just in time for the prayer. However, the people at the Kensington station, which is the next station along the line, did not have such a good time. They could not get on the next train that came along either. Unfortunately that is not an uncommon experience on the Craigieburn line in the mornings.

I was informed by one of my constituents that the Upfield line is a bit more reliable and it was suggested that maybe I could walk down the road to Flemington Bridge station and catch a train from there. But the reliability of the Upfield line should also be questioned because not last night but the night before a train that was supposed to go along the Upfield line to the Macaulay and Flemington Bridge stations took the wrong track, stranding hundreds of passengers at Kensington station at night in the cold. The reliability of services on the Upfield line is not really something we can rely on.

The people in my electorate are blessed with having lots of transport options — we have trains, we have trams and we have buses. But what we find in the inner city is that those options are very often not available to us because of overcrowding by the time the trams, trains and buses get to the inner city. What had previously had bipartisan support, the Melbourne Metro rail project, would have alleviated a lot of these issues. The Melbourne Metro rail project was the no. 1 infrastructure project for not just Victoria but all Australia. I really thought we had achieved some sensible planning when there was bipartisan support for that project. It was a project that was ready to proceed three and a half years ago, but what we have seen from

this government is three and a half years of stalling on it with the government saying that more planning was needed.

We have seen that that stalling was not because any more planning was needed but because government members wanted to do something different. They did not want to build a rail line that would serve hospitals, the university, the residents and the city. They did not want to build a rail line that would link the west to the university, the hospitals and the south-east of Melbourne and that would link the south-east of Melbourne to the university and the hospitals. Instead they seem to have privileged a project that has come out of nowhere and that will see the west linked to the casino. I do not really think that is a project that shows much foresight or much real understanding of what Melbourne needs.

I am not the only one who thinks this is the wrong decision. A press release on 7 May issued by the Royal Melbourne Hospital says:

... Dr Goodier —

the hospital's chief executive —

expressed his disappointment over the scrapping of the Melbourne Metro rail project, which would have included a station at Parkville, servicing the Royal Melbourne Hospital, as well as the rest of the medical and research precinct.

'The Royal Melbourne Hospital cares for more than 250 000 Victorians every year', Dr Goodier said.

'With parking already at capacity in the Parkville precinct and the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre opening in 2016 it is vital we have strong public transport links for our patients and staff.

The City of Melbourne just this week reaffirmed its unanimous support for the Melbourne Metro rail link and its disappointment in the new project that has been announced. On Tuesday night the council passed a motion — carried unanimously by the Lord Mayor, Robert Doyle, the deputy lord mayor, Susan Riley, and councillors Foster, Leppert, Louey, Mayne, Oke, Ong, Pinder-Mortimer, Watts and Wood — which says in part:

1. That council:

- 1.1 Reaffirms its strong support for the Melbourne Metro rail project as originally envisaged, and as supported in council's municipal strategic statement, council plan, transport strategy and the city north and Arden-Macaulay structure plans.

A real opportunity to improve transport in Melbourne has been lost. The abandonment of Melbourne Metro is significant. This government has been prepared to sit

idly by for the last three and a half years to stall the project while going full steam ahead with and pursuing the east–west link with haste and abandon.

I think about my train trip this morning. I could drive to work, but I choose not to drive to Parliament because of the congestion on the roads in the inner city. According to the Linking Melbourne Authority's own data, the east–west link, which has been touted as a congestion-busting project, will increase congestion on roads in my electorate. We will see greater traffic on Racecourse Road, Macaulay Road and Flemington Road, and there will be no congestion busting at all.

This week in the Senate estimates hearings it was revealed that Infrastructure Australia's analysis of the project assigns part 1 and part 2 a 0.5 cost-benefit ratio. That is 50 cents of benefit for every \$1 spent. I cannot see how that is in any way of benefit to anyone. I think it shows that either part 1 of this project is a dud or part 2 of this project is a dud or that both are duds. What a waste of taxpayer money we have in that. This is taxpayer money that could have been spent on something much more productive.

This budget fails education and fails our children. From preschool children to those in schools or in further education and training — none are supported by this government. The evidence is in on the benefits of early childhood education, benefits it has not only for the child's early development but for the rest of the person's life and education. This budget makes it clear that funding for the universal 15 hours access is at risk. What an incredibly short-sighted budget this is.

Similarly short-sighted is the reduced funding for TAFE, which is the very resource needed to ensure that Victorians are equipped with the skills they need for the jobs of the future. Under this government we have seen the dismantling of the manufacturing sector, and we now see the closure of a significant call centre. Victorians must be wondering what jobs are left for them to do. Manufacturing is gone, and services are going.

If cuts to kinder and TAFE are not enough, this budget has seen the Napthine government fail to commit funding to the Gonski reforms for a fairer school system. Last year the Premier was boasting he had secured a great deal for Victoria in relation to the schools funding. Now we are hearing no such boasts, because we are seeing that no great deal was secured and that Victorian children will suffer in the future.

My electorate has some excellent and highly regarded primary and secondary schools, but once again the

budget does nothing to provide for the future of education in Melbourne. Melbourne has a growing population, evidenced by the recent electorate redistribution, which saw the geographic area of the electorate contract. That increasing population is centred in the CBD and Docklands, yet this government has failed to release a report commissioned in 2010 by the previous member for Melbourne and former Minister for Education, Bronwyn Pike, into the need for schools of the future. We can only presume government members have refused to release this report because it shows that another school is needed.

School enrolment data at both Carlton Gardens Primary School and North Melbourne Primary School support the need for a school in the Docklands area. North Melbourne Primary School is projected to have an enrolment of over 1000 students, which is an unsustainable number for its site. Carlton Gardens Primary School has new portables this year, which have reduced the playground to the size of a handkerchief, yet this government will not commit to a school in Docklands to relieve that pressure. The government has land available in Docklands to build the school, yet it is sitting on its hands, and families in Docklands have to travel great distances to take their children to primary school. Indeed, we are now seeing some families having to move away from their preferred area of living.

I was in the unfortunate position a couple of weeks ago of having to call an ambulance to take my son, who is two and a half years old, to hospital. He had croup. Members who have had experience of croup will know it is a life-threatening but very curable virus. We were fortunate in that the ambulance did arrive on time for us and we were able to take our son to hospital where he received the treatment he needed so he did not suffocate. But that experience really brought home to me the great stresses that must be felt by people who call an ambulance and have to wait for extended periods of time. Our wait was very short, but during that time there was great anxiety for my husband and me as to whether our son would get to hospital on time. What we have seen with this government is a failure to address the real crisis in the ambulance service in Victoria. I note that there were some pretty awful stories just this week in relation to a woman who was left to suffer because of a delay in ambulance time.

There is not much time left for my contribution, but I want to touch on a couple of other disappointing areas in this budget. One is the housing budget, or the lack of investment in housing. Housing is one of the great stresses for people in Melbourne. A lot of people are in unsuitable housing, with families of seven or eight in

two-bedroom flats in North Melbourne, Kensington and Flemington. We also have situations where families cannot find homes and children have to stay with their parents in hotels, which are really not suitable accommodation. I think for this government to have a budget which sees a reduction rather than an increase in public housing is a real disgrace. It will leave terrible legacy issues for Victoria.

We also see in this budget a reduction of about 25 per cent in the environmental budget. That will mean a reduction in environmental projects and a reduction in the ability of Victorians to change their energy uses. Manufacturing businesses will have difficulty adapting to new ways of using energy, and we will see Victoria lagging behind the rest of the world in relation to its ability to have a sustainable future. I also refer to the terrible jobs figures in this budget and the impact that will have on a number of members of my community who are struggling to find sustainable work.

Mr NEWTON-BROWN (Pahran) — I rise to speak in favour of the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014 and the Napthine government's 2014–15 budget. I note that the architect of this budget, the Treasurer, is in the chamber, and fair enough — why should he not be here basking in the accolades today! Even the opposition begrudgingly supports some of the great things that this budget will do for the state.

Before I commence with the fantastic initiatives of the 2014–15 budget, I will first set the scene as to what it was like — what drab and uninspiring places Victoria and the Prahran electorate were — under the previous government. For 11 years the people of Prahran were neglected. Instead of serious reform and serious attention, what they got was window-dressing from a disinterested government. The former member for Prahran's personal ambition as cabinet secretary — and as members are aware, the cabinet secretary has the important job of taking the notes in cabinet and organising the muffins for cabinet members — took precedence over his primary concern, which should have been his constituents in Prahran. Sadly, he neglected his local responsibilities, and the people of Prahran will never forget that. As members of this house, no matter what role we may be given to perform in addition to our local responsibilities, it is very important that we never forget that the primary responsibility is to our electorate. Even the Premier finds time to spend with his local constituency.

In Prahran the only change we saw in public transport in 11 years was a lick of paint on the seats at the local stations. There was a spiralling decline in transport services as maintenance was neglected. From

recollection the Leader of the Opposition's post-mortem on the election loss in relation to the public transport system was 'We just couldn't keep up'. Indeed that is right: Labor did not keep up and the electorate passed judgement on its lack of action.

The opposition was happy to trumpet that it cared about public education, but it ignored the shifting demographics and the growing demand for the establishment of a secondary school in my area. It ignored public safety issues. It ignored public housing tenants. It pretended to cosy up to public housing tenants with window-dressing by providing new automatic doors for those terrible towers and a bit of brightly coloured paint in the common rooms. It told them that the Libs do not care and conned them into thinking there was something better just around the corner. There was not anything better around the corner and there still is not anything better around the corner under what Labor is proposing. The Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Minister for Housing, the member for Richmond, have confirmed that Labor will not consider any plan which would involve demolishing those terrible towers in the housing estates in Prahran and indeed in other areas around Melbourne.

The gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex (GLBTI) community was ignored for those 11 years. Not once did any Labor Premier turn up to Midsumma, the biggest event in the calendar of GLBTI events. Not once did a Premier turn up. Not once was there any move to answer the call to expunge the gay sex convictions of those who were convicted prior to decriminalisation.

Mr Noonan interjected.

Mr NEWTON-BROWN — The member on the other side is suggesting that it is the opposition's policy. It is its policy from opposition. Certainly all the good ideas and brave moves come from oppositions, but it is in government that the Liberal-Nationals coalition has acted decisively to take moves such as expunging those convictions, something which could have been done during the course of the previous 11 years. It is incredible the changes of heart that come about in Labor in opposition — it has no guts to make those big calls while in government, but suddenly it becomes brave when it is in opposition on the other side of this chamber.

This budget is probably most significant for Prahran in the area of education. There have been a number of initiatives in education in Prahran over recent years. Swinburne TAFE was left to wither by the previous government. Indeed Swinburne pulled out of the site. I

led a campaign to reserve that site for educational purposes, and about 18 months ago the minister did reserve it for educational purposes. This campaign was not supported by the Labor opposition.

The Melbourne Polytechnic and the Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) have now come onto the site. They started in January, and they had their first intake of students. You would think the opposition would offer some support to NMIT, but instead the member for Monbulk and others from the opposition do nothing but criticise NMIT and the Melbourne Polytechnic and the great work they are doing in providing TAFE education in Prahran.

Similarly with the gifted school, something which Jeremy Ludowyke, the principal of Melbourne High School, has been working on for many years. He even raised the funds to build the school, through the Melbourne High School Foundation, and he has support from his neighbours. He has a proposal to establish a gifted school, which the Minister for Planning has granted approval for. Again, not a peep of support from the Labor opposition. You would think the Labor Party would support such an initiative.

A secondary school in my area is something for which I secured funding in previous budgets for a feasibility study, which has been completed. In this budget, I am very pleased to confirm, \$20 million has been allocated to actually build that school. The community is very excited about this. Of all the things that I talk about in my electorate, this is the one thing that people most come to me about. The community is certainly very excited about the opportunities that this is going to give local kids. Again, there has not been one peep of support for this school from the opposition.

Mr Brooks interjected.

Mr NEWTON-BROWN — The member on the other side is heckling me, asking, 'Where are you going to build it? Where is it going?'

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member for Prahran knows it is wrong to respond to interjections, and the member for Bundoora should desist from interjecting.

Mr NEWTON-BROWN — I can tell the member for Bundoora that a task force has been created and the school will be built — a site will be chosen — and I hope that at some stage members of the Labor opposition will reverse their opposition to the establishment of this new school.

The protective services officers (PSOs) are another great initiative of the Liberal-Nationals coalition government. We have PSOs on most of my local stations now. A few more will come in coming months. Again, that is a policy which is greatly supported by the community but one which has had scant support from the opposition.

On rail generally, who can forget about the tsunami that swept along the Frankston line in the last election and cut a swathe through the bayside seats? This was because the Labor Party had neglected transport, and particularly the Frankston line. As the Leader of the Opposition said, they just could not keep up. Punctuality was down around 60 per cent, and that was because of a lack of investment in infrastructure, signalling and maintenance. In just three short years the current Minister for Public Transport has managed to get this reliability up to around 90 per cent — an incredible improvement. Mind you, it did take \$100 million, but the improvements have been shown.

Now there are plans for many, many more improvements on other lines, the flagship public transport policy being the new Melbourne rail link. Members of the opposition have been pushing the Melbourne Metro rail tunnel. The proposed location for the Melbourne Metro rail tunnel could only be described as a bit of a dud, certainly for my electorate.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr NEWTON-BROWN — Indeed, a dud tunnel and a dud route for the line that runs through that tunnel, because the line does not have a stop in South Yarra. It has one in the Domain, and in the Domain, as everybody will be aware, we have the gardens, we have the Shrine of Remembrance, we have Melbourne Grammar School and we have very few residents actually living in that area. Certainly the Melbourne rail link plan is to have a station there, and indeed it will service the residents in that St Kilda Road precinct.

The primary concern that I had was that most of my constituents in South Yarra — the highest density of them — actually live around the South Yarra rail station. Under the Labor plan, the Melbourne Metro rail tunnel, there is not a station at South Yarra. It is incredible that in probably the densest area of population outside the CBD Labor chose not to have a station at that location. So if you are a South Yarra resident the choice is pretty clear. If you vote for the Liberal-Nationals coalition, you will end up with another line coming through South Yarra and you will end up being able to get on a train and go directly to Melbourne Airport, because with the Liberal-Nationals

coalition alignment of the Melbourne rail link we will be able to actually afford to put in that rail link to the airport, which has been so sought after for so many years. The choice is very clear.

The Melbourne rail link will move many more people; it will move up to 35 000 more people per hour. We will be untangling the lines to improve the reliability so that if there is a problem on one line, it will not impact on other lines. From South Yarra you will have the option of three different lines, including the one that goes to the airport through the new tunnel. From South Yarra the line will go through Domain, as I have already mentioned, and then it will go through to a new stop at Fishermans Bend. This is what it is all about — —

Mr Noonan interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member for Williamstown will desist or he will leave.

Mr NEWTON-BROWN — The member for Williamstown seems to suggest that he does not support a station at Fishermans Bend — one of the biggest urban renewal precincts for the coming decades. None of the opposition members will support this station — —

Mr Merlino interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! If the member for Monbulk wants to be in the chamber to deliver his speech, he had better desist.

Mr NEWTON-BROWN — We have the biggest urban renewal project in the history of the state, and the Liberal government is kick-starting this development by putting heavy rail at a station right in the middle of the precinct, which is going to serve this state well. Indeed the member for Williamstown in years to come may reflect on his comments today and realise that perhaps he was just wrong.

As far as planning goes, there is going to be the biggest shake-up in the history of the state. The new neighbourhood residential zone is going to provide for the protection of heritage areas that the community has been calling for for so many years. Those heritage areas are common in the inner city but have been destroyed by previous government policies which encouraged towers to be built in those precincts. Indeed I spent a number of years restoring my house, which is about 130 years old, only to have a four-storey tower go up next to it. The new neighbourhood zones will protect those areas we love in the inner city, particularly in my seat of Prahran. All the little workers cottages in

heritage areas will be protected so that you will know that, if you buy into that area, you will be protected from the towers that were once at risk of going up under the previous government.

In conclusion, the choice is very clear for November this year. If you want a new secondary school, a new gifted school or a vibrant TAFE in Prahran, then vote for the Napthine government. If you want improved public transport services, dedicated lines for each track and a train line to the airport, then vote for the Napthine government. If you want to be able to start your holiday getting on at the station at South Yarra and ending up at the airport and getting straight onto a plane, then vote for the Napthine government. If you live in South Yarra and you want a rail tunnel that has a stop in South Yarra, where you live, then a vote for the Napthine government will deliver that.

If you want to feel safe on the streets and live in a community where those who deserve to be incarcerated are incarcerated because there are enough prison beds, then a Napthine government will provide that. If you want to feel safe when you get off a train because a PSO is there who will walk you to your car if you are feeling a little bit nervous, then a Napthine government will deliver this. If you want a planning system that protects our most precious areas and protects us from wall-to-wall apartment towers, then a vote for the Napthine government will deliver this. This is a magnificent budget for Prahran; it is a magnificent budget for Victoria. I commend it to the house.

Mr MERLINO (Monbulk) — I rise to speak on the 2014–15 Victorian budget. This is a budget from the Victorian Liberal-Nationals coalition, in partnership with its mates in Canberra, that destroys the national agreement on schools and cuts billions of dollars of additional support for our students, teachers, parents and families right across Victoria. I have spoken a number of times on the Better Schools national agreement, better known as the Gonski reform. This is the most significant national reform in over four decades. It addresses the critical issue facing education in Victoria and right across the nation — that is, the link between disadvantage and poor educational outcomes, particularly when there is a concentration of disadvantage.

The solution is base-level sector-blind funding for students and additional loadings for disadvantage. It is a needs-based model, something which states and territories right across the country signed up for. This was a massive and historic agreement, with \$12.2 billion of additional funding for Victorian schools, with \$5.4 billion coming from the state

government and \$6.8 billion coming from the federal government. This was not about ‘Let’s have a needs-based model using federal dollars and we’ll do whatever the hell we like with the state dollars’; this was both jurisdictions putting in additional money and providing additional support for a needs-based funding model for our schools.

This national agreement on schools is dead courtesy of Tony Abbott in Canberra and his mate sitting in the Premier’s chair in Victoria.

Mr Northe — That is wrong.

Mr MERLINO — It is not wrong at all, and I will take you through the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee transcript. It is very instructive and quite appropriate in this debate to go to the transcript. The member for Forest Hill was there, and he heard it. The Minister for Education appeared on the day of the federal budget. The reason for that is he knew what was coming on Tuesday night. The Minister for Education did not want to face the committee after \$80 billion was ripped out of education and health in the evening following the committee hearing.

For more than an hour the Minister for Education was grilled by the Labor members of that committee on a national agreement. He was greeted with sycophantic questions from the Liberal and Nationals members on that committee, but he received a grilling from the Labor Party members. Despite question after question the minister could not identify one single dollar or one specific program related to the Gonski national agreement — nothing; zilch. He could not, because it is non-existent. This Liberal government killed off this reform, and it is as guilty as the Abbott government.

Let us now go through a transcript of a Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearing, which can only be described as an embarrassing performance by the Minister for Education. Mr Pakula asked the minister:

I was wondering if you could for the committee’s benefit outline the year-by-year funding increases ... point out to the committee where those year-on-year increases can be found in the budget papers.

It is a pretty simple question regarding the year-on-year increases as per the national agreement that the Premier signed up to. In his response the minister referred to the \$1.6 billion of initiatives in this year’s budget towards that six-year goal. Let us have a look at that \$1.6 billion of initiatives, which appear on page 8 of budget paper 3. We have references to school capital programs, we have references to funding for school maintenance and we have references to funding for the normal,

everyday expected enrolment growth in our schools and in programs such as disability. If you go back to the agreement that was signed up to, which was trumpeted by those opposite, you see it was a needs-based funding model.

The funds that the minister referred to are in no way represented in or in any way linked to the national agreement. The deputy chair of the committee, the member for Lyndhurst, was on to that immediately, and he said:

... it sounds to me like you are just talking about regular department of education spending and badging it as Gonski. If you could show us where the additional funds are in the budget papers, I would appreciate it.

Then what do we have? We have this extraordinary response:

In Victoria there is no such thing as Gonski money.

That was said by the Minister for Education. He said, 'In Victoria there is no such thing as Gonski money'. It was a historic, massive \$12.2 billion agreement, and a vow was made when the agreement was signed. We had a joint press release from the Premier and the minister at the time saying:

... the agreement supports accountability for the use of public funds within Victorian schools through a focus on performance and transparency.

There is no transparency. There is no Gonski money. The only response to question after question to the minister was that it is all in one 'bucket'. It does not matter, according to the Minister for Education, that those buckets he was referring to have no relation at all to a needs-based funding model, which is what the Gonski agreement was. They have nothing at all to do with it.

Let us keep going through the transcript. The member for Preston said to the minister — —

Ms McLeish — Why don't you just incorporate it?

Mr MERLINO — Well, I think for the benefit of the members opposite, who should have a read of this transcript — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member for Seymour is warned, and the shadow minister knows it is wrong to respond to interjections.

Mr MERLINO — Let us keep going. The member for Preston asked:

Can you provide a breakdown year by year ... can you give us a year-by-year breakdown of the \$5.4 billion?

The minister responded by saying there is no year-by-year breakdown. The federal government in its Senate select hearing into the implementation of the national agreement can provide a year-by-year breakdown of the next four years and stipulate how much is going to government schools, how much is going to Catholic schools and how much is going to independent schools in Victoria. If it is good enough for the federal government to provide a year-by-year breakdown, why on earth is it not possible for the state government to provide a year-by-year breakdown of the \$5.4 billion that it has signed up for?

The member for Preston went on to ask:

... can you just give us a year-by-year figure for the amount that will be the total figure for each year? I would presume that that is something you can provide to the committee, since you actually know the total figure and you know what agreement you signed up to ... To narrow that down: in 2013–14, 2014–15, 2015–16, 2016–17 et cetera, what is the state giving?

The response from the minister was:

It is not Gonski money and it is not state money ... It is one funding agreement. The money from the funding agreement is one funding pool. We do not see them as two separate programs.

Mr Angus — That is quite right too.

Mr MERLINO — So, is it okay, member for Forest Hill — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member for Monbulk knows that it is disorderly to respond to interjections, and I ask the member for Forest Hill to desist from interjecting.

Mr MERLINO — There is no transparency. This embarrassing education minister cannot even answer the simple question: what is the year-on-year funding increase as per the agreement that the government signed up to? Despite the fact that the Abbott government is ripping out \$5.9 billion and throwing it out the window regarding the last two years of the national agreement, the Victorian government should at least be able to say for certain what is being provided in years 1, 2, 3 and 4. This embarrassing education minister in Victoria cannot even do that.

The transcript goes on. I will read a question asked by the member for Brunswick:

I put my question: can you exactly outline to this committee what the additional money is being spent on?

We go back to the national agreement, which is a needs-based funding model. The response from the minister was:

It is not going into specific projects.

Can you believe that, Deputy Speaker? This is the most significant education agreement that this state has signed up to in the last 40 years and the minister cannot identify one dollar or any specific programs. Then he actually said, 'It is not going into specific projects'! The member for Brunswick said:

By way of a supplementary, can you rule out funding any 'business as usual' — for example, the teachers EBA, growth in the system and growth in the current program for students with a disability — out of this supposed additional money?

There was more garbled talk of one bucket, and there was no straight answer. If you go back to budget paper 3 and the references to new initiatives and resourcing schools to raise performance, maybe there is some sort of link to the Gonski funding, but it was not identified by the minister. Even in that case it is a fraction of what this government signed up to, so the member for Lyndhurst asked:

... can you show us where there is any extra money that is not specifically excluded by the terms of the Gonski agreement or not within your portfolio?

...

But you cannot count student enrolment growth or capital.

The response from Minister Dixon was:

... we do not differentiate whether it is existing resources or Gonski money ...

This is a fudge. The government is pretending it has signed up to the Gonski model and is supporting a needs-based funding model, but it is a complete fudge. In partnership with the federal government the Liberals are walking away from this national agreement, and do you know who is going to suffer, Deputy Speaker? It will be students and schools in your community and students and schools in every community that members of this Parliament represent. That is who is going to suffer.

I know I only have a couple of minutes left, but there was an interesting discussion on the education maintenance allowance (EMA). It is an interesting comparison, so whilst there is vagueness about the Gonski national agreement — there is a minister completely unable to point to any Gonski dollars or any specific program — in black and white on page 103 of budget paper 3 there is reference to the education maintenance allowance. It says:

The lower 2014–15 target reflects the cessation of the education maintenance allowance program from 1 January 2015.

The government is quite happy to put in black and white what it is taking out. At the time of the national agreement, when the government signed up to Gonski, it said, 'We're going to have to make some tough decisions, and we're going to have to cut the education maintenance allowance'. This is an allowance to schools — it was once an allowance; it is not anymore. It was an allowance to parents to pay for the very basics for their kids — books, excursions, camps, computers. These are the very basics for their kids at school. This government cut it.

In the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee transcript the minister bragged about how 70 per cent of parents who received the EMA passed that funding on to the schools, so in one breath — in one answer — he was bragging about the EMA but in the next breath he absolutely confirmed that this heartless government has cut it. The government has cut it, but there is nothing to replace it. In yesterday's *Herald Sun*, under the heading 'School expense inquiry', there is confirmation:

The Auditor-General is set to probe the impact of school costs on Victorian families.

The move comes as charities report record demand from battling mums and dads.

... The Victorian Auditor-General's Office yesterday confirmed the audit would go ahead ...

The Auditor-General will look at the cost of books, stationery, laptops, camps and excursions. He will look at what this heartless government has taken out.

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

Ms MILLER (Bentleigh) — I am delighted to speak on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014 and put on the record my congratulations to the Treasurer, who is the architect and mastermind of this budget, and to his team for handing down a responsible budget that will put Victoria back on track to create jobs, grow the economy and build a better Victoria.

When the coalition government was elected in 2010 the state of Victoria was in a mess. We had a neglected education system with a backlog of maintenance work to be done. We had hospitals in desperate need of upgrades. We had violence on our streets, and we had a poorly performing transport system, particularly on the Frankston line, where reliability of services in percentage terms was operating in the low 60s. We had huge demands on our mental health services in both the

child and adult sectors. Labor increased expenditure year on year so that it was greater than the revenue received, which weakened our finances and put Victoria in structural deficit.

We inherited a bungled myki system and had to fix the mess. We inherited a structural deficit where Victorians are required to contribute \$1.8 million a day for the next 27 years to pay for the bungled desalination plant, which has not been used since it was built. Imagine what we could have built with that money. In six days we could have funded the entire upgrade to McKinnon Secondary College. We have the north–south pipeline, which cost hundreds of millions of dollars and lies full of dust. The list of bungled major projects and waste of money goes on and on. Clearly Labor cannot manage money or major projects for the state of Victoria.

The former Premier, the member for Hawthorn, and the former Treasurer, the member for Scoresby, had to make some tough decisions to rein in debt in previous budgets since the 2010 election. Today Premier Napthine and the Treasurer, the member for Malvern, have also had to make hard decisions to manage expenditure and project a surplus into the forward estimates; that is exactly what they have done with this budget. The Napthine coalition government has delivered an economically sound budget that is building a better Bentleigh, building a better Victoria and planning for the future.

The state of Victoria has been disciplined in its financial management since the coalition came to office, which has enabled us to maintain a AAA credit rating. It is the only state in the country to hold this rating. We have reined in the waste and mismanagement of the former Labor government and will deliver a surplus of \$1.2 billion in the next financial year, working towards a surplus of \$3.3 billion in 2017–18. We are working towards strong economic growth and strong surpluses, investing in job-creating infrastructure projects and investing in training and education to create jobs, increase productivity and grow the economy. Bentleigh residents and all Victorians will benefit from a strong economy, as it affects every part of life.

We know that Labor cannot manage money, and this is reflected in an article in the *Australian* of 27 May which begins:

Victorian Labor has made a \$1 billion blunder in its analysis of the 2013–14 Victorian budget ...

It goes on to say:

Shadow Treasurer Tim Pallas last night released a statement claiming the Victorian budget surplus of \$935 million would in fact have been a deficit of \$65 million when factoring in the commonwealth's \$1 billion payment for the \$20 billion east–west link road and tunnel project.

However, the government said today that \$1 billion was never included in the 2013–14 surplus, a fact that is supported in the budget's statement of finances.

The shadow Treasurer, the member for Tarneit, obviously does not understand the budget papers. It is also worth noting that Labor had a \$19 billion black hole in its transport plan, which also proves that Labor cannot manage money. It cannot be trusted and is not worthy of running Victoria's finances.

Only the Napthine government will deliver for education in the Bentleigh electorate. The Napthine government is investing a record amount in education by investing \$2.8 billion over five years in our schools. This contributes to the Napthine government's commitment to provide an additional \$5.4 billion over four years.

Coatesville Primary School was surprised to receive much-needed funding of up to \$7.8 million to rebuild the school. During 2010 and 2011 I told the principal and school council members that I considered this school a priority for the Bentleigh electorate, and I committed to work hard to secure its funding. In 2011 I had school signage installed on Centre Road, Bentleigh, where previously there had been none. In 2012 I secured funding of \$250 000 for preconstruction planning and drawings — the only bayside school to receive such funding. In 2013 I delivered the full funding required to redevelop the school. After 11 years of Labor neglect, on 19 March 2014 Premier Napthine and I announced the funding while touring the school. The Napthine coalition government has honoured its election commitment and delivered the funding to this wonderful primary school within our first term in office. The future for school students there looks bright, as they will now be able to learn in state-of-the-art spaces.

Valkstone Primary School was surprised to receive much-needed funding of \$3.5 million to redevelop the school. Again, this school had been neglected by the Labor government for 11 years. The Napthine coalition government has delivered full funding for this wonderful school community within three years of being in office. I have met with the principal and school council many times since being elected to discuss the school's vision, and I worked hard to secure its funding, which I was proud to announce at the school assembly on 12 May.

I was delighted to join the member for Brighton, who is in the chamber at the moment, and the Minister for Education, to officially open the da Vinci centre at Brighton Secondary College on 18 March 2014. Furthermore, Premier Napthine, the member for Brighton and I announced \$8 million funding to build the final stage of Brighton Secondary College, following the previous commitment of \$5 million to build the da Vinci centre. Bentleigh students are thrilled to know that their school is finally getting the upgrade it has deserved and desperately needed after 11 years of Labor neglect. Everywhere I go in my community parents and students thank me for delivering much-needed funding to their schools. They realise that if they want something done, Miller makes it happen in Bentleigh.

The 2014–15 budget delivers an additional \$1.4 billion over four years to support Victorian hospitals, providing quality services to meet the demands of a growing population. The Napthine government has funded Monash Children's hospital in Clayton, which is a \$250 million project accommodating 230 beds that will service residents of Ormond, McKinnon, Bentleigh, Bentleigh East, Moorabbin, Hampton East and Brighton East, all of which are part of the Bentleigh electorate. This new facility, which is due for completion in 2016, will take pressure off the Royal Children's Hospital. My background in health care allows me to understand how beneficial these improvements are to the health sector, and I know that all Bentleigh electorate residents will benefit from these Napthine government improvements.

The Napthine coalition government continues to invest in transformational rail projects across Victoria. A large part of this program will be the removal of level crossings at North Road, Ormond; Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena; Koornang Road, Carnegie; and at Clayton and Centre roads, Clayton. Those works are all fully funded under a \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion project as part of the Cranbourne-Pakenham rail improvement project. These level crossings have long been overdue to be removed. I am pleased to be taking the lead on these projects to deliver improvements to the area.

The Napthine coalition government has committed to removing 40 level crossings and easing the cost of living pressures on Bentleigh electorate residents by reducing the price of zone 1 and zone 2 fares by charging only a zone 1 fare. This will save daily commuters up to \$1200 a year on their trips to and from the city. This is great news for families and students. The Napthine coalition government recently announced the building of a \$21 million train station at Southland, a project that had been talked about for over a decade

by the Labor government. This much-needed railway station will be of enormous benefit to members of the bayside community.

The government is investing up to \$27 billion in infrastructure that will create jobs, boost productivity and improve livability for all Victorians. The regional rail link was a major project that was financially bungled by the Labor government. The coalition has had to get that back on track. The east–west link is a project that is opposed by Labor, including the western link section, showing the lack of regard opposition members have for these much-needed improvements to Melbourne's infrastructure. Labor has also opposed the port of Hastings project, the Melbourne rail project, the airport rail link and the CityLink-Tullamarine Freeway upgrade. Labor refuses to invest in the infrastructure that will address Victoria's needs.

Frankston rail line commuters will be the beneficiaries of this new rail project, as the Frankston line will have its own designated line, which will result in a reduction in interruptions from neighbouring lines. In fact only under a coalition government will you be able to catch a train to the airport. The Melbourne rail link will deliver a new rail tunnel system, with twin tunnels from Southern Cross to South Yarra stations, new underground stations at Fishermans Bend, or Montague, and Domain, new underground platforms at Southern Cross and South Yarra stations and a rail link direct to Melbourne Airport. Bentleigh commuters who travel to Melbourne Airport will begin enjoying their holiday the moment they get on the train because of the ease of taking a journey from their local station on the Frankston line straight to the airport if they so choose.

The coalition government has committed \$8 million to redevelop Moorabbin Reserve by improving community facilities and creating greater public access to improve the park and its surroundings. The Napthine coalition government is partnering with numerous stakeholders to deliver a project that has been planned for a decade. This redevelopment will provide sporting and recreational improvements that will see the reserve transformed into a community hub for active and passive recreation in the area.

The government is delivering strong benefits for older Victorians, including a \$50 concession on the cost of the fire services property levy for property owners who receive a rates concession. The coalition will also provide \$2 million to enable senior Victorians to access support, information, tools and programs to help them get better value from utility providers. Funding will deliver personal monitoring devices for an extra 1000 Victorians through Personal Alert Victoria, taking

the number of people covered by the scheme to 27 250. There will be a \$140 million boost over four years that will help older Victorians live at home through home and community care services, a program jointly funded by the Victorian and commonwealth governments, as well as funding from local government. These announcements will benefit many seniors who reside in the Bentleigh electorate.

The Victorian coalition government continues to invest in multicultural affairs and citizenship with \$26 million allocated in the 2014–15 state budget. The budget provides \$1.5 million over two years to increase funding for peak multicultural organisations across Victoria to improve services to culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians. It also includes an additional \$360 000 over two years for the Victorian Multicultural Commission to increase assistance for community strengthening initiatives that build the capacity of multicultural communities in Victoria. Bentleigh is a multicultural, diverse community, and these announcements will benefit a range of groups.

More than 200 000 young Victorians will be supported to get involved in their communities as a result of the 2013–14 Victorian state budget. Two million dollars over four years will be provided for a new business mentoring and training program for young people, and there will be additional investment in youth social enterprises and programs that provide opportunities for mentoring and volunteering. The Youth Central government website remains a strong central source for young people in Bentleigh to access useful information on a range of lifestyle topics.

The Victorian coalition government is investing an additional \$204 million over four years to increase support for people with a disability. This includes \$14 million to close the outmoded Oakleigh Centre for Intellectually Disabled Citizens and relocate its residents to better community-based accommodation. There is \$25 million in the budget to establish the headquarters of the National Disability Insurance Agency in Geelong, which will put Victoria in a leadership role as we transition to the national disability insurance scheme. There is \$121 million of investment to provide 658 individualised support packages throughout Victoria, and this is a tremendous outcome for Bentleigh residents who seek such disability services.

Small businesses in Bentleigh will benefit from access to seminars, workshops and mentoring programs. They will have enhanced access to business information, tools and assistance as required. Payroll tax has also been reduced from 4.9 per cent to 4.85 per cent, which

is great for small businesses in Bentleigh and local jobs in Victoria. It will save Victorian employers \$235 million over four years.

A number of initiatives have been announced by the Napthine government that will assist families and ease cost of living pressures, and families in the Bentleigh electorate will benefit from these. The Napthine government delivered a 17.5 per cent winter energy concession, which has been extended to apply for the whole year. This initiative saved eligible Victorians \$30 million last summer alone. Stamp duty on life insurance policies has been abolished, saving consumers \$4 million annually. Families will pay less on their water bills under the Fairer Water Bills initiative, and from 1 July households will receive a cash-back annual payment of \$100 for the next four years.

Students and working mums and dads in the Bentleigh electorate who use public transport will benefit from reduced fares, as they will now only be paying for a zone 1 fare instead of a zones 1 and 2 fare. This will be a saving for daily commuters into the city of up to \$1200 a year, which is great news for families and students in Bentleigh.

This budget provides a vision for Victorians in health, education, transport, law and order, community services, infrastructure and jobs. With responsible economic management it means we can deliver record infrastructure projects that will create jobs, boost productivity and deliver quality services that were long overdue. I am proud to be part of the Napthine coalition government, which is delivering for all Victorians and delivering for the Bentleigh community. Labor neglected Victorians for 11 years. I am building a better Bentleigh and planning for its future. This is a terrific budget, and I am pleased to support it.

Mr LANGUILLER (Derrimut) — I rise today to speak on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014. The bill provides appropriation authority for payment from the Consolidated Fund for the ordinary annual services of the government in the 2014–15 financial year.

The first general comment I make is that there is certainly not much that is important for us in the western suburbs in this budget. In that sense this budget is consistent with the previous budgets, which did not deliver to the western suburbs. What we do know is that, notwithstanding the claims made by the Premier and his cabinet, the hospitals are in crisis. If one went to the hospitals in the western suburbs and to Western Health one would have to be confident of being able to

make the claim that they are in crisis, and indeed that is the case.

We also know that this budget and the previous budget trashed TAFE education. TAFE education is particularly important in those areas where there is disadvantage. We on the Labor side make no apologies for standing up for TAFE and vocational education and training (VET), particularly for those young men and young women who are looking to TAFE colleges to provide the education they require to get employment and improve their quality of life.

We also know that the Premier has ripped the heart out of Melbourne's most important transport project. The government had an opportunity to build a world-class public transport system, and it simply blew it. It wasted this opportunity. Those of us in the west fully understand that public transport is absolutely critical to the families that live in the western suburbs. It is critical to their employment, it is critical to their education and it is critical to their social and cultural lives. Public transport is a fundamental ingredient for social and cultural inclusion in our community, and it has gone by the wayside. We know that the Premier destroyed that transport plan. Public transport improvements ought to be approached in a serious way, certainly in a city like Melbourne, but this opportunity has been wasted.

We all know, and I submit respectfully that the Acting Speaker would particularly know, that regional Victoria makes up 25 per cent of the population and yet it received only 4 per cent of the infrastructure funds to fix its crumbling roads and poor public transport. It is a fact; it is in the budget. It is something that government members, particularly those from regional Victoria, have not stood up to defend.

Let me bring up another matter, Acting Speaker: the unemployment rate was projected to increase to 6.25 per cent in 2013–14. It is currently at 6.4 per cent. It is estimated to continue to languish at 5.5 per cent. When Labor left office unemployment was at 4.7 per cent. I encourage members to look at the Australian Bureau of Statistics data in relation to this important matter. It indeed matters to those living in the western suburbs — not exclusively, but it is particularly important to the western suburbs.

We also know in this budget that the Premier is spending \$447 million to build a new prison but is spending \$222 million on hospital beds. Something is not quite right when a government, a community, a country, spends more on investing in building prisons than on hospitals, schools and every other form of

education institution that is required to build a good community.

What is transparent in the budget is that the government has also failed in relation to the number of patients who are supposed to be treated in emergency departments within a prescribed time. Data shows that 74 per cent of patients are treated within the prescribed time, when it should be 80 per cent. The 4-hour treatment target in emergency departments has also failed; it is at 68 per cent when it should be at 75 per cent.

It would be remiss of me not to talk about the ambulance system. The target time for ambulance transfers is within 40 minutes, and the reality is that 84 per cent of transfers occur during that time when it should be 90 per cent. The government has failed in ambulance response times statewide, which stands at 73.4 per cent when it should be 85 per cent.

Another matter of significance is education. Many of us believe that education is an enabler and a mechanism for members of our community from all backgrounds, irrespective of wealth, postcode or the power they may or may not have within themselves or their families, to improve their lives. It is fundamental. Members on this side have consistently articulated that the government has failed on the Gonski agreement, as has the Prime Minister. What a failure, and what an absolute disaster.

The Premier was supposed to fund an increase of \$5.4 billion over six years under the Gonski agreement. The budget includes only \$563 million to go towards that. This government is progressively and seriously walking away from Gonski. We make no apology for speaking about the significance of the reforms, which are based on needs-based funding. We believe that a 21st-century developed nation should be able to commit itself to needs-based funding. There ought to be a transparent method to determine funding based on aspirational education outcomes, and we make no apologies for supporting that. We believe that the differences in educational outcomes must not be the result of wealth, income, power or possessions. We make no apologies for unequivocally supporting a fairer funding framework, and that is exactly what Gonski is meant to deliver, and it is exactly what we call on the government, and indeed on the Prime Minister, to deliver — but they are walking away very quickly.

Let me focus for a few minutes on something that is very dear to the hearts of those in the western suburbs — to me as one of the members, but also to every one of my Labor colleagues — and that is TAFE colleges and VET funding in the western suburbs. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been ripped out of

the TAFE sector. Let me tell members something about the western suburbs. They are made up of the local government areas of Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Melton, Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley and Wyndham. Melbourne's western region has the youngest population in Victoria, with an average age of 34 years. Less than 50 per cent of the population has completed high school and less than 10 per cent has completed a bachelor degree. The unemployment rate in Melbourne's west sits at 7.1 per cent, which is substantially higher than the metropolitan Melbourne rate of 5.2 per cent.

There are high levels of cultural and linguistic diversity present in Melbourne's western suburbs, with over half of the resident population speaking a language other than English at home. The unemployment rate of persons from non-English-speaking backgrounds in Melbourne's west sits at 10.6 per cent. In my new role dealing with multicultural affairs I come across this confronting data day in and day out. That is why Gonski was and remains very important to everyone in this country but certainly to those who come from, in this case, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Promoting access to employment for CALD communities is a very strategic priority for us. Melbourne's west has a deficit in the number of tertiary education providers. Victoria University, the dual-service provider in both the TAFE and university sectors, is the largest education provider in Melbourne's west, followed by the Kangan Institute in Broadmeadows and the Gordon Institute of TAFE in Geelong. TAFEs are particularly important to Melbourne's west as they provide tailored training for the workforce, often targeting skills gaps or deficits in basic education.

What this government has done in taking away funding in the order of millions of dollars that was meant to be allocated to TAFE providers is wrong economically and certainly culturally and morally. The hundreds of millions of dollars that have been taken out of TAFEs to meet the community obligations of public institutions would primarily have been used to promote social inclusion and to provide support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a consequence of these cuts Victoria University has unfortunately had to announce time and again the retrenchment of a number of very important full-time workers in youth and education support. This is particularly concerning given that the holistic student support offered by the TAFE is crucial to support students who experience social disadvantage.

Let me refer to one important area that I submit to the government it should reconsider because economically, commercially, industrially and in terms of the skills that are required and the employment that could be generated it simply got it wrong. Let me talk about VET for a minute. VET subsidy allocations fail to reflect the employment situation in Melbourne's west. For example, the professional and scientific sectors constitute over 20 per cent of the employment share in Melbourne's west, and this is projected to increase in the coming decades. These sectors received band D and band E subsidy classifications. There is already a shortage of employees within these sectors, and failure to provide adequate support for training will have severe consequences for the economy of Melbourne's western suburbs.

Victoria University, the primary provider of higher education in Melbourne's west, has been substantially impacted by the cuts to VET program subsidies. The funding cuts constitute over 25 per cent of the total revenue of Victoria University's TAFE. Consequently Victoria University has been forced to retrench a significant amount of its workforce. As Victoria University is a major employer in Melbourne's west, this has run-on effects for the west's economy.

To cut across the board equally and on the same basis all across the state is a fundamentally flawed system. The government should have looked into the employment industry needs of each region. If it looks at that, the data will show it that in the western suburbs the cuts to VET and TAFE do not correspond to the needs of the very industries that are saying they need these young men and women to be upskilled in order to be taken into their workforces. I suggest when a good, responsible government acts in a proper way it bases its policies and decisions on evidence, and the evidence would show the government that the very needs the employers and the industries in that region are claiming to have, and the skills that are required, are the ones that this government consistently, not just in this budget but in previous budgets, has unfortunately slashed.

I very strongly recommend the government revisits its funding policy and recognises, if not morally and ethically then at least economically, that it makes no sense to have undertaken these measures. The west deserves better. The west is a major contributor to the wealth of this state, and the kids, men and women of the west certainly deserve better from this government.

Mr McCURDY (Murray Valley) — I am delighted to rise and respond to the budget on behalf of the fine residents of the Murray Valley and highlight the ongoing support to our communities. Supporting our

communities is not about delivering on just one day in May; it is about delivering all year round. That is what the government does for regional Victoria, and we in regional Victoria are very proud to get this representation. The budget has delivered for all people in the Murray Valley, for all regions and also for metropolitan Victoria. We should commend the Treasurer, the Premier and the Deputy Premier for their courage and determination to make sure that we can deliver this outstanding \$1.3 billion surplus. Our track record shows that we will deliver.

Murray Valley is a region that has one-third of its employment in the agricultural sector, as many members know, including farming, processing, value-adding, transporting of produce — the whole paddock to plate. Therefore it is extremely important that we work hard to ensure that agriculture is free of red tape to allow people to do business and, most importantly, that we understand it takes a whole region to take our produce to the international market.

There is no better example than SPC and its partnership with the coalition government — the \$22 million we leveraged, with \$78 million from Coca-Cola Amatil, for an outstanding result for our region. We not only saved a factory but enhanced a major part of our community, protecting 500 jobs and saving a further 2700 jobs reliant on SPC throughout the region. SPC is not even in my electorate, but people within my electorate of Murray Valley — Cobram, Invergordon, Drumanure, Katunga — all rely on SPC to process their fruit and get their produce to market. This flow-on effect is very important, even down to the transport industry for organisations like Brian Hicks Transport, a wonderful transport operator that gets all that produce to SPC, to Melbourne and to the ports.

The coalition is building a better Victoria, and we all know it — even the opposition knows it. We can do this because we do not take our instructions from the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union or any other trade movement. We deliver for all Victorians. We do not need the standover merchants to tell us what to do; we make decisions based on community best interest. I give the example of Yarrowonga College P-12, an outstanding school. Carolyn O'Dwyer, principal Kim Stewart and the team at Yarrowonga are outstanding. On many occasions we got together and lobbied the Minister for Education, the Deputy Premier and anyone else who would listen. What an outstanding outcome we got — \$7.616 million for the next stage of this fine high school. The whole community was jumping for joy.

Honourable members interjecting.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Dr Sykes) — Order! I ask the members for Hastings and Narre Warren North to extend courtesy to the member for Murray Valley, who is addressing the house.

Mr McCURDY — Wangaratta High School was in a similar vein. We worked together to understand the school's needs, and we delivered a further \$4.75 million to continue the further development of that fine school. School president Fiona McPhee and principal Heather Sarau were also thrilled with this news. Although I began this contribution on the lifeblood of our community in terms of jobs and agriculture, it is important to know that this government has not forgotten to support our children and youth in balancing the needs of our community. For example, the Advance program has now been rolled out in Bright and Myrtleford, so those secondary colleges get the benefits as well.

This budget allows Victorians to invest in all of our communities, and imagine how much better off we would be if we were not paying \$1.8 million per day for a desalination plant that will sit idle for the next 27 years. Victoria is on the cusp of repairing the damage done by Labor and is delivering real infrastructure and projects that will benefit all Victorians. Our AAA credit rating, which Victoria stands alone in having, allows Victoria in the forward estimates to make these magnificent improvements.

The east-west tunnel, the airport link and the widening of CityLink — all these projects — help us in regional Victoria to access the markets to get the \$9.4 billion worth of food and fibre we produce to the global community. Road and rail infrastructure projects and the upgrading of our port facilities are improvements that allow us all to do business more efficiently. We must be able to compete in a global market because we are competing against cheap labour and subsidised dumped food, particularly in the growing Asian market. Our Food to Asia projects give us improved access to those Asian markets, new markets for premium products and the right workforce-product mix for Asia, and of course better targeted research and development.

The investment of \$35.4 million over four years, plus \$6 million thereafter, will deliver for our local communities. My community understands how important this infrastructure is in Victoria, because this massive \$27 billion investment is creating over 26 000 jobs. While Labor members carp and whine about a jobs plan and a transport plan for Victoria, we are delivering on both. After 11 long, dark years of Labor, Victoria is now shining like a beacon when other economies around Australia are struggling. We

are the benchmark, we are the leader in growth and development for all Victorians.

Let me put this into perspective. We have developed a plan, we have reeled in the out-of-control spending and we are accountable. The flow-on effects that I spoke about earlier in my contribution are about not just small businesses but also large businesses. Just last week Murray Goulburn Co-operative, the largest cooperative in Australia, announced a \$91 million investment at its Cobram plant alone and a total of \$127 million across the state. We are talking about Australia's largest dairy food company. It manufactures 3.2 billion litres, or one-third, of Australia's milk, with sales in excess of \$2.4 billion each year and 2000 employees. It is no coincidence at all that while the Victorian government handed down a budget demonstrating its AAA financial management, record investment in infrastructure and forward estimates surpluses, companies like Murray Goulburn have been investing heavily in regional Victoria. Labor can only dream of this level of confidence. Confidence in the bush is growing. Business is rolling up its sleeves and getting behind this coalition government. Our role is to create the right environment so that business can do business, and in our first term of government we have responsibly done so.

An enormous part of the growth in confidence in the Murray Valley electorate is the \$1 billion Regional Growth Fund. That is right, \$1 billion — \$500 million in the first term and a further \$500 million in the next term. The member for Bendigo East, who starved regional Victoria for opportunities with her cruel and callous rule, now questions whether the fund will even deliver the other \$500 million. She called it a 'hoax' and could not find money in the budget papers. Who said Labor cannot manage money? Let me add reading budget papers and counting to the list of inabilities. I can tell the house that when infrastructure is built on time and on budget it is amazing how far we can stretch a billion dollars. We have leveraged the \$400 million spent to date to achieve \$1.6 billion. Labor uses reverse leverage.

Mr Angus interjected.

Mr McCURDY — I hear the member for Forest Hill ask, 'What is reverse leverage?'. That is when you take a \$3 billion asset, like poker machines, and sell it for only \$1 billion. That is the sort of leverage the opposition talks about. We talk about leveraging up, Labor talks about leveraging down. Only Labor does this well. The Regional Growth Fund has committed over \$4.3 billion in the Moira Shire Council alone and turned that into \$10 billion worth of projects. The

Indigo Shire Council benefited from nearly \$3 million and leveraged that to nearly \$6.7 million. The Rural City of Wangaratta turned \$6.4 million of Regional Growth Fund money into \$12 million worth of projects. The Alpine Shire Council — how could I forget the Alpine Shire Council — turned \$11 million from the Regional Growth Fund into \$32 million. It is very important to understand that Victoria is in a partnership with Melbourne; we need each other. We provide the food and fibre and the tourism destinations to Melbourne and in return we get a vibrant, well-resourced city with infrastructure and facilities that we are all very proud of and use.

As the Rural City of Wangaratta gets back to full strength and services the regions around Rutherglen, Springhurst, Myrtleford and Bright we are becoming excited about what lies before us. Yarrawonga, Cobram and Numurkah continue to receive state government support that has allowed us, for example, to reinstate the Numurkah hospital, which is travelling along very nicely. There is funding for a new water treatment plant that will deliver major benefits to the Numurkah region and a significant spend on traffic control and streetscape works for the township of Cobram. We are investing in our smaller communities like Katamatite and Gapsted, and the future looks bright in Greta and Tungamah. Confidence has a profound effect on people; it allows people to rise to levels that we think are not possible. In the Murray Valley electorate fruit growers, dairy farmers, tourism operators and families wanting the best education for their children have that confidence.

Looking at this budget from a broader perspective, the fire services property levy has been well received within the regions of Victoria. The former scheme was an unfair tax on a tax, ensuring that only those who paid insurance on their property would pay a levy. The new fire services property levy is a much fairer way to collect funds for our fire services. We changed and improved the system, and we are very proud to pass on more savings to our communities, where it was well received.

Apart from the two schools that we delivered on in the Murray Valley electorate, we have funded regional police stations and hospitals, and there is a further \$1 million for each rural council to invest in country roads and bridges over the four years. We will continue to provide that, and our councils are pleased. Roads are our lifeblood. In regional Victoria we do not have the trams or electric trains that help people to commute locally. We rely on good country roads. The coalition's investment in this area has been simply outstanding. The Rural City of Wangaratta and the Moira, Indigo

and Alpine shires are very grateful for this investment. It is as much an investment in our safety as it is in our infrastructure.

Sadly Labor's plan to support local councils is to cap their rates. This is typical and is an election thought bubble. It will not solve the problem; it will just make the job more difficult for councils. Like all tiers of government, councils face challenges in delivering the services that people expect, but capping rates will only make the squeeze more uncomfortable for local governments and those in our communities who rely on the many and varied services they provide. The answer is to work with the councils to help them become more efficient and to assist them to remain viable. Labor's election propaganda is simply a cheap shot at local government and will not solve the problems we face. There is no doubt that our communities are looking for rate reductions, and we have to work with them and not put barriers in their way.

We have made a historic investment to tackle the use in our communities of the methamphetamine drug commonly known as ice. We have invested \$34 million over four years to address the harms of ice and other drugs. We know that ice usage in our communities is creating a whole new set of issues, unlike the ones we have been used to with other drugs. The coalition government has identified early that it needs to invest further in fighting this insidious drug but at the same time not do so at the expense of its funding for alcohol treatment services in our community, because alcohol use is still a major concern.

We have also invested in our leadership in our communities. Only last week — you were with me as well, Acting Speaker — I was very pleased to welcome the graduates of the Alpine Valleys Community Leadership Program to Wangaratta, a further testament to regional Victoria and to promoting leadership within our communities so that they become stronger. The coalition understands rural and regional communities, and Kim Scanlon from the leadership program and her team continue to develop leadership skills from which our communities are already reaping the rewards.

I will touch on the Regional Victoria Living Expo. The expo, which we have committed to, continues to deliver dividends to our community. Nino and Deb from Nino's cafe in Yarrowonga are classic examples. They came out of Melbourne; they were looking for opportunities in regional Victoria. They came to the regional living expo, and now they run a very successful, outstanding business at Belmore Street, Yarrowonga. That is a fine example of the benefits of doing business in the regions.

This budget delivers for all Victorians. It shows people from Mildura to Geelong that we will standardise the rail, which so many people have promised but never delivered. In fact former Premier John Brumby vowed and declared that he would standardise the line when he needed the Independents' vote, but after 11 long dark years of Labor not even 1 kilometre of the track was laid.

We have given people in agriculture all over Victoria the confidence that will help them do business. From those asking for wild dog control in the high country — which you are right across, Acting Speaker, as the member for Benalla, as is the Minister for Local Government, an issue which is very close to the heart of people up in the high country as many experience stock losses from wild dogs — to proactive farmers who want to grow poppies and link into an extremely lucrative cash-flow chain in the international community, we are giving people opportunities. We are protecting businesses on one hand and helping them on another.

The upgrading of Country Fire Authority stations and the delivery of better equipment that our volunteers need is further evidence of our commitment to our local communities.

The budget is an outstanding leap forward for Victoria, unlike what occurred with the desal economics of a tired Labor team whose members are this week still making billion-dollar bumbles in opposition, simply because they do not understand the budget. We know they cannot manage money, and I think even they know they cannot manage money. The people of the Murray Valley and those further up into the King Valley and the Ovens Valley have the confidence to do more business. The tourism industry will benefit from our investment in roads, in red tape reduction and in the promotion of our glorious region. I commend this budget as an outstanding act of leadership made so that we can build on our three and a half years so far and deliver even further to all Victorians. Instead of having desalination plants and ridiculous pipelines that would deprive our regions of resources, we have the building blocks to endorse Victoria's financially and economically sound position into the future. I commend this bill to the house.

Mr WYNNE (Richmond) — It is a good opportunity to rise and make a contribution on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014. I will make only two passing comments on the contribution of the previous speaker. One is that the pray-for-rain policy of The Nationals is always a sound public policy position! Secondly, The Nationals actually acknowledged that

the \$1 billion Regional Development Fund — predicated of course on them winning government again on 29 November — is not \$1 billion but is in fact \$500 million in this term of government. I acknowledge that the member for Murray Valley clarified that point in his contribution. Sadly his leader fails to do that every time he gets up here and crows about this ‘\$1 billion’ Regional Development Fund.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr WYNNE — You have to win on 29 November.

Dr Sykes interjected.

Mr WYNNE — It is always good to have a contribution from the member for Benalla as he is exiting the Parliament.

I refer to the appropriation bill and the seat of Richmond. It will not take me long to make my contribution about what is provided for the electorate of Richmond. The reason is: there is nothing — not one dollar. There is not one dollar in this budget for the seat of Richmond. The only money, as best I can ascertain, in the budget is a rollover of \$2 million, which is from an underspend on the fantastic move of Circus Oz back to its historic home at the Johnston Street building in Collingwood. It is a wonderful new facility for one of our iconic companies. I want to particularly acknowledge the work of former Premier Ted Baillieu, the member for Hawthorn, who made this one of his projects. I acknowledge the work he has done. It was a policy commitment of the previous government, and I am delighted not only that Circus Oz is back in its historic home in Collingwood but also that the building was opened, only recently.

The only sour point about that is I would have hoped there would be a little bit of bipartisanship on the part of this government when it came to the opening of the Circus Oz building. It was a project that I had championed for a number of years. Sadly, in spite of the fact that Circus Oz twice requested that I be invited to the opening of the building, due to the intervention of the minister’s office the opportunity for me to be at that opening — an important opening — was refused. That says volumes about the Minister for the Arts and her office in that respect. It left a very sour taste not only in my mouth but in the mouths of the very decent people at Circus Oz, who thought there should have been a level of bipartisanship with the opening of that important facility.

I note that the new Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Local Government is here. In relation to the appropriations vis-a-vis Aboriginal affairs, there are

some important issues that have to be confronted in that area. I acknowledge that in this house we have always had a bipartisan position when it comes to seeking to close the gap in outcomes and when it comes to some of the great challenges that still exist for our Aboriginal community. We have had tabled the report on the outcomes for Aboriginal people across Victoria, and there are many disturbing and challenging elements of that, which we prosecuted at a Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearing. The minister very appropriately acknowledged that much more work needs to be done in that space, particularly around low-birth-weight children, pregnant women smoking, some of the educational outcomes — which have improved, I must say, but there is still a lot more work to be done there — and also the justice system, where the outcomes are frankly going backwards. The overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system in all of its forms remains a significant challenge for this Parliament — not for one side or the other, but for this Parliament — and for the common good. I acknowledge that.

In relation to local government there are two stand-out issues. The first is that Labor entered into a process in a bipartisan way with the Minister for Local Government and indeed with you, Acting Speaker, as the member for Mornington, when you chaired a committee to develop a new proposition in relation to public libraries. It was a good piece of work which was done in a bipartisan way, and I acknowledge your contribution, Acting Speaker. But frankly that great piece of work, which included some terrific proposals for a new and invigorated space for public libraries in Victoria and was a very sound report, received zero funding — not a dollar — in the budget. That is a real indictment — not of you, Acting Speaker, but of the government. When so many expectations were raised and such a unanimous position was brought forward — under the joint leadership of you, Acting Speaker, and my colleague the member for Macedon — that this was not taken up by the government was a real opportunity lost. I hope we have the opportunity to come back and look at that important piece of work going forward.

The cuts to the federal financial assistance grants to local government are a severe blow. The Abbott government has frozen financial assistance grants to local government for the out years — for the next three years. That is a direct cut to the bottom line of local government of \$134 million through the out years of the budget. That directly affects the bottom line of local governments and particularly that of small rural local governments, which are very dependent on their financial assistance grants to maintain their financial sustainability. We will be watching carefully the

outcome of the Auditor-General's work and the flow-on effects of these cuts on the provision of local government services in rural communities as we go forward.

I turn now to a number of really very vicious cuts that have been made by this government and indeed by the federal government. Today's *Age* tells us about the shocking cuts to adventure playgrounds — \$2.7 million is being cut from the five adventure playgrounds on our public housing estates. These are one of the enduring legacies of the Whitlam government, under which five adventure playgrounds were established on our public housing estates. Why? Because these young kids living in high-rise towers had nowhere to play. It was a beautiful development and a beautiful proposition of the Whitlam government which has endured for decades and which enabled kids to play creatively under supervision and have the opportunity to exercise imagination, to build cubby houses, to swing on a flying fox and to just have fun.

Ms Knight — And a bit of respite.

Mr WYNNE — And a bit of respite, as my colleague says. Where do those children play now, given this cruel, vicious, harsh cut?

Ms Graley — It's shameful.

Mr WYNNE — This is shameful. We will fight it, and we will continue to fight it. We will always advocate for vulnerable kids living in those high-rise towers. This is a vicious and unnecessary cut.

Speaking of those sorts of cuts, Acting Speaker, the contracting out of mental health services by the Minister for Mental Health has been an appalling cut to baseline services of organisations working on the ground with the most vulnerable people in our community. I refer members to St Mary's House of Welcome in Fitzroy. Many members on the other side of the house have been to St Mary's and served food at a number of its events, but they have not had the insight to understand that a cut of four mental health staff from that service is going to decimate the service.

Now that the sorts of mental health services needed on site at places such as St Mary's House of Welcome by people who are living absolutely on the margins of our community — homeless people, vulnerable people, people who are eating out of rubbish bins, people who are living in our parks, people who have nowhere stable to stay, people with profound mental health issues — are going to be ripped away from them, where are these people going to go? How are they going to sustain themselves going forward? The answer is that they will

not be able to do so. These people have been devastated by this contracting out, and it will have a huge impact on St Mary's House of Welcome.

Also affected are the iconic Common Ground project of HomeGround Services which we put together down in Elizabeth Street — the supported housing model — and McAuley House, formerly known as Regina Coeli, a service on Flemington Road, North Melbourne, for vulnerable, homeless women. These are the front-line services supporting the most vulnerable in our community, and through the contracting-out arrangements this government is ripping away those fundamental mental health supports.

I turn also to the performance of the Minister for Housing. She has now had the opportunity of four budgets with which to do something for public housing, but she has been a risible failure. Over four budgets there has not been one extra dollar — not one extra dollar with which to build new public housing. That is her legacy. It is even worse than that. For the first time in living memory a Victorian government will go to an election with a net loss of public housing. This will be happening for the first time in decades, and that is a legacy of this minister, and it is a shameful legacy. There is no new money for stock — —

Ms Knight — How many people are on the waiting list?

Mr WYNNE — My colleague asks how many people there are on the waiting list. There are 35 000 people on the public housing waiting list, including 10 000 in the most urgent need, and this government has done nothing to address that. The shameful aspect of that is that the minister put out a press release about public housing covering the first quarter of this year. It crowed about the fact that in the March quarter there were 35 000 people on the statewide public housing waiting list. She snuck it out, can I say, at about 5.30 p.m. just before, I think, a long weekend. What the minister did not mention in this release at all was that the housing waiting list for that quarter had blown out by 1111 people. Somehow she neglected in that press release to say, 'In fact the waiting list has blown out and increased by a further 3 per cent'.

What does this mean? Let me put the human face on this for members. The legacy of this minister is that we have women and children sleeping in their cars. We have only just recently had a woman housed who had been on the public housing waiting list, in urgent need, for more than a year. She was sleeping in her car with her three kids. People may have seen some commentary

on that on the Channel 7 news. This woman had been escaping domestic violence. When you talk to this woman, she would ask you to imagine the indignity of trying to hold her family together and to keep her three kids, who are under 10 years of age, at school as she and her kids couch-surfed from house to house, trying to get some form of accommodation for themselves. Imagine the indignity of trying to put together a bit of lunch for your children — to make their play lunch and their lunch to send with them to school — out the front of a Coles supermarket in the car so they could go to school that day and have at least some level of normality in their lives. That is how people are living. That is how this woman had to live, week by week and month by month. She lived in a car park in Coburg. Why? Because she would in that way get access to public facilities: showers and so forth. That was her life. That was the way she lived her life as a victim of domestic violence.

I absolutely commend the Leader of the Opposition on the extraordinary leadership he has shown in the domestic violence area. His speech at our state conference was the finest speech I have heard in more than 20 years in public life. It was a beautiful speech. It held that whole audience enthralled. The leadership he has shown in saying domestic violence is a first-order issue for government is extraordinary.

I have to confess I had not fully understood the scope of this, but in just the last year 27 women and children were killed in this state as an outcome of domestic violence. That is an extraordinary, shameful figure that we as a Parliament have to address. We simply have no option but to address this. When we go home on a chilly night tonight, we should think about the people sleeping rough in Fitzroy Gardens. There are women sleeping out there around that substation. Spare a thought for those people who are doing it tough tonight, because that is a legacy of this government.

Ms RYALL (Mitcham) — It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014. At the outset it is important to establish context in relation to this budget and how the Victorian coalition government has been able to deliver a budget that is economically responsible and provides record services funding, cost of living savings and a reduction in payroll tax for business. When the coalition was elected to government and the bonnet was lifted on the state's finances, it became apparent very quickly that the Labor government had Victoria living beyond its means. Expenditure grew at an average of 8 per cent per annum over the life of the former government. As only Labor knows how, it was the federal Labor government blowing the country's finances that kept

the Brumby government in the black. Indeed, it was a structural deficit that was inherited, as the state Labor government was spending more than revenue growth.

The global uncertainty and the impact on the GST and stamp duty meant that Victoria had to swallow a \$6 billion write-down in those first couple of years. The cupboard was bare in Canberra, thanks to federal Labor, and the tap that had rescued the state Labor government had been turned off. Anyone who has a scintilla of financial nous knows you cannot live beyond your means, and when expenditure is climbing at an average of 8 per cent per annum for 11 years and tough financial times hit, maintaining the status quo on that expenditure is simply not sustainable.

On top of what we had done and were doing, federal Labor — at a time of a high Australian dollar — was hiking up the cost of doing business in Victoria with its carbon tax. That was pushing many businesses, including some of our state's more traditional types of manufacturing, to find it extraordinarily difficult to compete and indeed to question their own viability. That is something Labor must take responsibility for, rather than trying to sheet home the blame to everybody else. In Victoria we did not see and have not seen Labor standing up to federal Labor and putting Victoria first. We have heard absolute silence while federal Labor's decisions and its carbon tax impacted business and manufacturing in this state. Indeed, we still see with federal Labor a refusal to accept the mandate of the Australian people on the carbon tax — and, just as expected, the Labor opposition in Victoria stays silent.

The silence of those opposite on the very things that hit business where it hurts in Victoria means that the outrage we see from them in relation to jobs must be seen as purely confected, because opposition members never stood up for business when their Labor mates pushed companies too far. With the federal and state Labor leaders having no real private sector or business experience between them, they are unable to understand the impact of their policies on business, on jobs and on the Victorian economy. We saw hospitals, schools and community services all having to cough up to pay massively increased energy bills. We saw federal Labor cut back hospital funding in an effort to claw back funds, and still the Leader of the Opposition sat here and stayed silent. It has always been — and still is — Labor first, Victoria second.

While the Labor opposition refuses to admit it and refuses to explain how it would have dealt with the massive revenue write-downs had it retained government, the Victorian coalition has had to deal with the reality of federal Labor damaging the

Australian economy and state Labor having blown billions and mismanaged its way through government. It is imprinted on the minds of Victorians. Here is a snapshot of the overspending, the project blow-outs and the sheer incompetence: desal, myki, north–south pipeline, ICT, pokies licence auctions, smart meters, and the list goes on.

One thing we know for sure is that Labor has never had to come in and rescue an economy, because it is always Labor that brings the economy down. The Brumby government, whose leadership team included the Leader of the Opposition and many of the shadow ministers in this chamber, was no different from the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd governments — two peas in a pod. The opposition pretends nothing has changed between Labor losing government and today, and that is simply fallacious. The fact is Labor never expected to lose office. It never expected to have to account for its gross mismanagement of the state's finances, and it never thought the global and national circumstances affecting our economy without the largesse from the federal government would need to be faced. For the majority of the Labor opposition who made up the former government's leadership, it was like the song *Let the Good Times Roll*. Remember the verse:

Don't sit there mumbling, talking trash
If you wanna have a ball you've got to spend some cash ...

That is what Labor did, and it is still mumbling and still talking.

I want to touch on that mumbling and talking trash because, when Labor members talk about how great Labor was and how great it is, when they talk about jobs growth and surpluses under Labor and when they talk about what Labor spent on everything, everyone needs to remember that after 2007 Labor was completely propped up and funded by the Australian taxpayer through the massive rivers of gold — the stimulus payments — and nothing was left federally in the cupboard for future economic shocks. Those jobs and surpluses were the gift of Kevin Rudd on behalf of the Australian taxpayer, and the money ran out, the GST receipts plummeted and the state's revenue experienced a massive drop.

Labor opposition members cannot say how they would have maintained jobs growth, how they would have delivered surpluses and how they would have maintained the AAA credit rating, because they simply do not know. Labor members reminisce about the good old days when they were flush with cash, and they criticise and have criticised every effort to turn this state around. Labor members have voted against every

economic measure to deal with the structural deficit and the revenue write-downs, and in three and a half years they have never said what they would do. Indeed in three and a half years I have never seen the media call them out on it either.

It is never Labor governments that have to bail an economy out of the mess they make of it. We have seen that in the Australian states and federally. There are reasons for this. Labor members cannot manage money and cannot manage an economy. The very reason that they do not understand how or what to do is because the majority of them have never run anything outside a union or a politician's office. We see a group of people trying to run a state who have only ever had one year's experience many times over.

When we look at the members of the Victorian coalition, we see a group of people with an enormous breadth of knowledge, skills, management and experience in a number of areas. I highlight, business, farming, accounting, human services, law, policing, education, human resources, industrial relations, health, agriculture, architecture, aviation, sports and politics among other areas. It is this breadth that has provided us with the ability and experience to navigate our state's economy through tough financial times, to get the spending under control, to stop us living beyond our means and to provide the big picture, the vision and the road map for Victoria that the state needs. We are building a better Victoria.

With the coalition we see a group of people with many years experience. Unlike those opposite, who have had one year's experience many times over, we have many people with many years experience. Because of that experience the government has been able to put the state's finances back on a sustainable footing and to deal with the mismanaged projects of previous years, including the regional rail link, myki and smart meters, and to try to recoup some costs for consumers on their increased water rates as a result of the desalination plant. That is why the Victorian coalition has taken thousands of businesspeople on over 70 overseas trade missions to boost exports, to boost growth, to boost investment in Victoria and to create jobs. That is why this government is boosting productivity through dealing with road congestion, expanding our ports capacity, funding measures in the food and fibre sector, tackling red tape and providing grants to business.

It is why the government is able to support business and people through economic transition with grants programs and through the development of new technologies. It is why the government can assist workers to transition from some of those traditional

modes of manufacturing into other fields of employment. It is why the Napthine government is able to build job-creating infrastructure. Thousands and thousands of jobs stand to be created for Victorians across the state, including in my local community, because of the \$27 billion in infrastructure projects that this state needs and wants.

The Napthine government is having to address what the Leader of the Opposition openly admitted about the former Labor government and what everybody else knew — that it failed to keep up with an increasing and ageing population. That is why this government has provided huge increases in funding for services way above the former government's funding. That is why this government has been able to budget for \$27 billion in infrastructure, including for public transport, roads, hospitals, schools and fire, ambulance and police stations. It is through these measures that this government is able to create jobs.

The Melbourne rail link will transform and untangle our rail network, with 30 extra peak hour services and by moving 35 000 additional people. The airport rail link — how exciting is that! — is something that people have been calling out for for a very long time. On the east–west link, my electorate is in the east.

Mr Angus — And my electorate.

Ms RYALL — As is the electorate of Forest Hill. Getting to the airport, to the west and into the city has always been difficult for people who live out in the east and use the Eastern Freeway and EastLink. The east–west link is going to make a huge difference to the lives of the people in my community who need to use those roads, who need to get to the airport, who need to get to the western suburbs — and indeed those who are going for a holiday in Ballarat, Geelong or beyond — to be able to get to where they are going in a decent amount of time and to get home in a decent amount of time as well. There is the CityLink-Tullamarine widening. There is the further blitz on level crossings. We have already seen the one at Mitcham and Rooks roads. The one in Blackburn is obviously in this budget. That is fantastic news for people who are stuck behind those boom gates for minutes and minutes on end during every peak hour.

On the cost of living reductions, there is \$100 off future water bills. There is cheaper public transport. Those stations in my electorate and my community — Nunawading, Mitcham, Ringwood and Ringwood East — not only have protective services officers on them now but are all in zone 2. That means that anyone travelling from zone 2 to zone 1 will get a cost

reduction; they will be travelling at the price of only a zone 1 fare. People coming into the city will have free tram rides in the city and Docklands. In addition under the heading of cost of living reductions there is a reduction in the fire services levy and the abolition of stamp duty on life insurance.

On schools and education, in my community there is \$1.294 million in this budget for Mullauna College. There is a \$12.2 million commitment for Ringwood Secondary College, with \$2.2 million of that in this budget. There is \$4.3 million for Eastwood Primary School for the completion of stage 2 of a very run-down school. For Ringwood railway station there is \$33.6 million of the \$66 million total for the station and interchange. That money has been allocated in this budget, and we will see progress on that soon. Like the new premium station at Mitcham, it will be fantastic for the people of Ringwood to have that work done.

Looking at health and hospitals, there is a record \$14.9 billion in total health spending. Box Hill Hospital is heading towards completion of its redevelopment. There will be 221 additional beds and a brand-new emergency department nearly double the size of the current one, which will be a fantastic outcome. In addition, the Maroondah Hospital is heading towards the completion of its expansion program.

For making communities safer, already there are more than 1500 extra police on the beat. There is increased prison capacity to get the unwanted criminals off the streets and to where they belong and enable our communities to be safer. In addition to that, there has been increased investment in a range of services.

I must say that I am very proud of this budget. I commend the Treasurer on a great budget and the Napthine government on delivering what Victoria needs.

Ms GARRETT (Brunswick) — I must say that I am staggered that the member for Mitcham decided to spend about half of her speech criticising members of the Labor opposition about our relationship with the federal Labor Party, because that opens a very, very large door onto her government's relationship with the government's best friends in Canberra. Government members sat silent and timid while we lost an entire industry in Victoria. Government members were shamed into acting for workers at SPC Ardmona when their federal best friends did absolutely nothing for weeks. Yesterday 300 jobs were going at Qantas, and the government's bloke could not even pick up the phone to Joyce. Government members have a shameful

record on standing up for Victoria against their best friends in Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey.

That leads us most spectacularly, most dramatically and most significantly to what has been widely regarded as the worst federal budget this country has seen. The viciousness of the cuts, the disregarding of the most poor and vulnerable in our community and the ideological witch-hunt against middle and lower income Australia has taken everybody by the most awful and horrific surprise. There was no discussion of this prior to the election; in fact it was quite the opposite. The Premier's best friend, Tony Abbott, said, 'It'll all be business as usual. Nothing will change. Don't believe the scaremongering'. My goodness me! It was worse than even we thought it was going to be, with \$80 billion ripped out of health and education and a co-payment put on Medicare for everybody, including the most poor and vulnerable, and now the government's mates upstairs want to increase that from \$7 to \$10.

I want to tell members of this chamber just one story about what that co-payment means to people on low and fixed incomes. There is a bulk-billing clinic on the corner of Sydney Road and Brunswick Road, Brunswick, called Better Health. It is always full of people needing medical attention — old people, sick people and young children. The day after this budget the Leader of the Opposition and I were visiting that clinic and coming out of it we saw an 89-year-old pensioner who visits it so she can be bulk-billed. The co-payment means that she has to choose between going to the doctor and having a meal. It is a complete and utter disgrace that that happens in this country. The government's best mates did it with no warning; it was dumped on everybody in the middle of the night and turned everybody's lives upside down.

What is the impact of something like that on pensioners and on people with little kids who need to be immunised? If it is a choice between the doctor and food, you have to choose food. The flow-on impact, to say nothing of the human rights impact, will mean an increase in chronic disease and people ending up at the other end of the chain because they have not sought medical care when they needed it. What does it mean for the hundreds of thousands of diabetics in this country? It is an absolute disgrace, and we have not heard a peep about it from those opposite. I take that back: we have heard a very large peep from those opposite, from upstairs, that it should be increased.

I stand here not just on behalf of the people of Brunswick but of everybody I have spoken to around Victoria. There has been horror and outrage expressed

by the community against this budget and the silence of the Napthine government. We had Nappers and Tone running around with blue washes all over them. They were like best friends holding hands. They could not get enough photos taken. We heard, 'You will be the best Prime Minister ever'. You have gone slightly quiet on that, but my goodness, you need to be making a much better noise standing up for Victoria than you are now. You are ripping the heart out of things that Australians and Victorians hold very dear, and you will be held to account for it.

That brings me to education. The ripping apart of education that the federal and state Liberals have done is quite extraordinary. It is almost like the Acting Speaker and I are back at the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearings. We spent two weeks together in a room. We traversed many issues during that time, not the least of which was the questioning of the Minister for Education regarding just where the Gonski money had gone. We all recall when the deal was done with the federal Labor government. Oh my goodness, the fanfare and the press releases. We had huge conferences. There were joint media releases from across the country. This was huge. We were transforming education. You and your mates have transformed education all right — by kicking the most vulnerable and weak in our community — —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Morris) — Order! I have allowed a bit of latitude to the member for Brunswick. She needs to address her comments through the Chair and refer to other members of the house by their appropriate titles.

Ms GARRETT — Through you, Chair, the Liberals and Nationals opposite and their Liberal and Nationals friends in Canberra have decimated and are decimating the fundamental tenets of our society, including universal health care, access to good public education, an appropriate safety net for people who need it, looking after the disabled, the weak and the vulnerable in our community, and literally shredding the concept of a fair and just society and a fair go for all.

When we asked the minister where the Gonski money was in the state budget, which was obviously released just a few days before the federal bombshell that most horrifically caught everybody by surprise, the minister obfuscated; he made things up. Apparently it was all one big sloshy bucket. There was no separate Gonski money. The minister was quizzed repeatedly. The member for Lyndhurst asked:

If you could just show us where the additional funds are in the budget paper, I would appreciate it, Minister.

The minister replied:

In Victoria there is no such thing as Gonski money. It is the money that the state government puts into education and it is the money that the federal government puts into education. It is all one big bucket.

We had a lot of references to buckets. The member for Preston then grilled the minister:

Minister, I note your answers to the last two questions. I would just like to interrogate a bit further some of the detail related to the Gonski agreement, as it is called. Can you provide a breakdown year by year?

The minister answered:

As I said, the school agreement that we signed ... is not itemised; it is one big bucket.

Then I asked:

Look, I've never met a government that is purporting to deliver such a huge transformative project, but apparently it is all in one big sloshy bucket and nothing can be pointed to in terms of specific output.

The minister replied:

I would like to say to the committee, we do not have two buckets of money, Gonski and non-Gonski because there is no Gonski, and we know that.

Then we come to what this budget has done to education. It is not just about the missing Gonski billions; we have further hacks into TAFE. This comes on the back of a program of attack from the Baillieu and Napthine governments which saw a huge amount of money ripped from our TAFE system and the slashing of our Victorian certificate of applied learning programs, which are so critical to keeping young people in mainstream education and giving them a chance.

On top of that, think about what their federal friends put on top of that, including no access to social security for six months. We are really going down the path of creating a class society in the most heinous of ways. All the outcomes from this government about the participation rates of 15-year-olds to 24-year-olds in training and education are showing real strain. This impacts on real people's lives. It thwarts young people's capacity to make something of themselves, and it is really shameful.

Then we get to health. On top of the federal government absolutely ripping the guts out of our public hospital system with its massive cuts, we know that this government's performance on ambulances and the health system has been woeful. For the third year in a row, code 1 ambulance response times will not meet the 15-minute response time target. It is really

distressing. More than a quarter of urgent code 1 responses have not arrived on time. You are on your own. The amount of money this government is choosing to spend on prison beds rather than hospital beds is again something that the community feels very strongly about.

I was remiss not to point something out during my contribution on education but I was passionately upset about the federal government and Gonski and what it means for our kids' future. In my electorate of Brunswick I have been calling for this government to fund the urgent upgrade and modernisation of Brunswick Secondary College, an amazing school which is hugely multicultural. People from all over the world attend it, with all the benefits that brings. It is a remarkable place. Once again this government has failed to look after that vital education institute in the electorate of Brunswick. Its members do not care about education.

Then we get to the shambolic and botched transport approach and the dumping of the Melbourne Metro project, which another one of the government's dear friends, the Lord Mayor, described as a 100-year catastrophe. It has been widely condemned as a hasty thought bubble from those opposite, who chose to throw away years of hard work that had been put into creating a world-class transport system for Melbourne. This 100-year catastrophe appears to have been done on a whim. I think it is important to quote ministers directly.

We asked the Minister for Public Transport about the Melbourne rail scheme and what sort of work had been done regarding business cases and geotechnical work that had been done along the new proposed route between Domain and Southern Cross, via the wonderful station of Montague, which really has become a legend for all time — the old Fishermans Bend which is nowhere near Fishermans Bend! We also asked Minister Mulder what will be made public. He said:

As I indicated, we have a preliminary, comprehensive business case that has been provided ...

A preliminary, comprehensive business case! This is on top of the interim business cases. I think the Victorian community is getting very strongly the impression that in fact this government does not have comprehensive business cases for these thought bubbles. Also a lot of Victorians will actually be cut out of the city loop as a result of this proposal. The government should hang its head in shame, as it should regarding the east-west link — an \$8 billion black hole that the community

simply does not want. It is an extraordinarily expensive exercise — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms GARRETT — I understand why those opposite are upset, I really do. I would be really upset too about the kind of leadership that is being shown, not just by those in the house; certainly I would be most ashamed of what their federal colleagues have done.

The final point I would like to touch upon, which my good friend the member for Richmond made a strong point about, is the shameful performance of this government in public housing. It is shameful. As a former mayor of the City of Yarra, in which there is a significant amount of public housing, I know the importance of having people housed close to the city, with access to services and decent schools. They used to be decent schools, but I am not sure how these things will look post Abbott.

Making sure that people have those things, particularly people escaping from family violence, is vital. We should be providing them with a safe roof over their heads, which allows people to break poverty cycles and make something of a life for themselves and their children. This government has simply failed to invest properly in public housing. It is not only that it has failed to invest; it is flogging off public housing land at a rate of knots. The government has a very clear program. We know the site in Richmond that has been identified for flogging off could have made a very big difference in the public housing stock and capacity. This is a shameful budget, it comes on top of a shameful federal budget, and we will be holding the government to account.

Mr McINTOSH (Kew) — It is a great thrill to be able to support the Treasurer's budget in this contribution on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014. I have to say I could not disagree more with the member for Brunswick and indeed members of the Labor Party who are critical of this budget. It represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, in my view. We have done some significant work on budgetary proposals over the last four years in order to bring the budget very much back into line and to provide opportunity for the future. Indeed building upon the \$1.3 billion surplus, which is guaranteed in this budget, is part and parcel of that hard work — that effort of the government — to bring our budgetary arrangements back into control after 11 dark years of Labor.

Most importantly, and while the Labor Party sees this as something that is not worth talking about, the

principal fact is that there is going to be next financial year a \$1.3 billion surplus. In the words of Paul Keating, this gives us an opportunity to 'bring home the bacon' and really invest for Victoria's future. The most important thing is of course that Victoria is the only state or territory that is forecasting surpluses over the next four years. Again, this is because of appropriate and frugal management of our budget over the last four years. In the words of Paul Keating, it is indeed 'bringing home the bacon', as I said.

What we actually inherited from the former Labor government was an unsustainable path, where spending was outstripping revenue year on year. Over the previous forward estimates spending was growing at 8 per cent while revenue was just growing at a little over 7 per cent per year. Of course that was an unsustainable position and had to be brought under control. If we had have kept on the path we inherited from the former Labor government, we would be facing a deficit in the order of \$30 billion — all of which is completely unsustainable. Our budget was relying heavily on commonwealth payments to boost revenue and operate in surplus. While we are still dependent on commonwealth grants, the most important thing about it is that we have now got our budget onto a sustainable footing for the future of this state and certainly for the next four years. This means that we can start investing in crucial infrastructure, not by way of debt but by way of revenue.

Honourable members interjecting.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Morris) — Order! If the member for Essendon and the member for Williamstown could turn down the volume a bit, I would appreciate it. I am having trouble hearing the member for Kew.

Mr McINTOSH — I am speaking softly, so please listen. Acting Speaker, thank you very much for the protection from the rabble on the other side; I am very grateful.

Our promises coming into government were that we were going to fix the problems left by Labor and build the future. The Liberals-Nationals coalition has promised to be responsible as well as undertaking a process of ensuring that we have the capacity to care for those that are less fortunate than ourselves. The truth is of course if you do not govern responsibly, you will not have enough money for schools, hospitals or welfare for the neediest. That important knowledge is the basis of our prudent budgetary restraint.

We inherited a number of major projects which were a significant drain on the public purse. You only have to mention something like the desalination plant. All of those projects cost billions of dollars, and the desalination plant will cost us nearly \$2 million a day for it to sit idle down in southern Victoria. Critically, this is just one example. The disaster with myki is another example of imprudent investment that we have had to rein back in and bring under control in these circumstances. Labor's typical inaction was followed by a frenzy of ill-considered action that has led to unprecedented water bills for all Victorians, all of which is an indication of why we should not in any way support Labor government proposals.

Another great monolith is the north–south pipeline. It was built out of a sense of urgency and out of thin air with a cost to this state of an enormous amount of money, and again it sits idle in a circumstance where it is almost inconceivable that we would be taking water from the north of the state to the wettest southern part of the state. Again, all of this was a demonstration of the Labor Party's inability when in government to properly manage money.

Most importantly, the crucial aspect of this budget is it sustains significant jobs growth. Since coming into office this government has created more than 60 000 new jobs. Jobs may go in some locations because of industries moving offshore, people going out of business or, in relation to things like call centres, opportunities for them to move to another jurisdiction, but despite all of that we have had significant jobs growth. When you look at the totality, you see that while some may go there is certainly a significantly greater number of opportunities, and we have created 60 000 new jobs in the state of Victoria. That should be the major test of a government that seems to be doing a great job in this regard.

The budget delivers a \$1.3 billion surplus this year, which will rise to over \$3.3 billion in 2017–18. Again it is because of financial prudence that we have got those surpluses. Obviously this increases the ability to pay down debt and reduce the interest payments on our loans in Victoria. It has got to be remembered that these significant steps in relation to bringing the budget under control have been in a situation where there have been significant challenges as a result of the times in which we live. We are building for the future, which we have promised, and will be fixing the problems left by Labor, the least of which is the budget deficit.

The centrepiece of the budget's investment are the transformational rail projects across Victoria. Despite what the Labor Party says, the Melbourne rail link will

be a significant project that will deliver not only significant benefits in employment during the construction stage but also ongoing benefits for all Victorians. The Melbourne Metro rail tunnel and new underground stations and platforms at places like Southern Cross and South Yarra will also provide additional benefits in relation to public transport. Most important is the long-debated, long-discussed rail link to Melbourne Airport. After 11 years of debate under Labor, a rail link to Melbourne Airport is now going to come to fruition. It is something people have been crying out for year after year. That rail link is necessary because, if anyone is going to Tullamarine airport early in the morning to catch a flight up to Sydney or anywhere else, the build-up of traffic is extraordinary. It is desperately needed, and it has taken this government to give us the opportunity to build that airport link, because of its appropriate financial management of the budget.

Then there is the Cranbourne-Pakenham rail corridor, which will improve rail services for 1 in every 10 Melburnians. One in 10 will get the benefit of the Cranbourne rail corridor, and there is funding to remove up to 40 level crossings. That is also an indictment upon the former government. Of course the first of those is out at St Albans, which the local people greeted with a degree of alacrity that had been lacking under the Labor government. It is in Labor's heartland but was completely ignored, and that rail crossing is the most dangerous in the whole of Victoria. It will now be removed as a result of prudent budgetary constraints. Labor's alternative proposal will cost billions of dollars and no doubt will be unfunded, ill conceived and ill thought out, like its other major projects — like the desalination plant, the north–south pipeline and many others. There will be upgrades to the Cranbourne and Pakenham train lines, including the purchase of 25 new trains.

When the government came to office it also pledged to fix Labor's mess and to ease the cost of living on Victorians, so we see the government delivering on its commitment to provide free tram travel in Melbourne's CBD and Docklands. We all look forward to that. What is more, it is reducing the cost of public transport, enabling commuters in zones 1 and 2 to pay the price of just a zone 1 fare. This will save an average family approximately \$1000 each year. That is a significant benefit to reduce costs.

Mr Madden — Rubbish!

Mr McINTOSH — The member for Essendon says it is rubbish. Let us quote the member for Essendon and hang that around his neck. He is saying that saving an

average family \$1200 is rubbish. Is that the Labor Party policy? You are rubbish!

Mr Madden interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Morris) — Order! As former ministers, both members should know better.

Mr McINTOSH — As I said, these are significant benefits for the people of Victoria. I could go on and on, but I am well aware other members in the house wish to make a contribution on this bill. I commend the budget to the house.

Sitting suspended 12.59 p.m. until 2.03 p.m.

Business interrupted under standing orders.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Member for Frankston

Mr ANDREWS (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Premier, and I ask: does the Premier's chaotic, dysfunctional minority government retain the full confidence of the member for Frankston?

Dr NAPTHINE (Premier) — I thank the honourable member for his question. The member for Frankston has spoken on the budget this week and has endorsed the budget of this government. He has endorsed the good economic management of this side of the house and the fact that we are delivering strong economic management.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask members to cease interjecting in that manner. It makes it impossible to hear what the person on their feet is saying. We also have members of the public in the gallery who have taken the time and the trouble to come in and hear the debate.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Monbulk! The member for Geelong! When the Chair is speaking, members will remain silent.

Dr NAPTHINE — The member for Frankston in his contribution on the budget has endorsed the budget of this government. He has endorsed good economic management that has delivered a AAA budget. He has said in this house today that he supports the budget because he supports a AAA-rated economy and a budget with a surplus this year and each and every year of the forward estimates. It is a budget that delivers

record funding for health, record funding for school education, record funding for law and order, record funding for community services and record funding for those with special needs — those who need assistance through concessions, those with special needs in terms of having a disability, those who need special assistance for their children with a disability in our schools, whether they be in specialist schools or in the rest of the school system.

Mr Andrews — On a point of order, Speaker, the question had no preamble. It was very narrow and simply sought a pretty simple answer from the Premier. Does he have the member for Frankston's confidence or not? If he does not, he should sit down.

The SPEAKER — Order! Taking a point of order is not an opportunity to repeat the question or to debate.

Ms Asher — On the point of order, Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition asked a question relating to support and confidence. Integral to confidence is the issue of the budget, and the Premier is dealing with this issue. It is a direct response to the question that was asked.

Mr Merlino — On the point of order, Speaker, the member for Frankston is not here. Perhaps the Premier knows why — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Monbulk will sit down. That is not a point of order. If points of order were taken in the correct form, I would not need to use the dump button.

Dr NAPTHINE — Speaker, as you would be aware, critical and fundamental to confidence on the floor of the house in any Westminster system is support for the budget. That is absolutely fundamental to the support of the government on the floor of the house. The member for Frankston has indicated this week his support for the budget of this government. That is absolutely fundamental to the confidence he has in this government to deliver good economic outcomes, to deliver the infrastructure people need and to deliver the services people need.

The 26 000 new jobs for Victorians delivered through the east–west link, through the Cranbourne-Pakenham rail corridor upgrade, through the upgrade of the Frankston rail line — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The members for Eltham and Clayton will cease interjecting. They will not be warned again.

Dr NAPTHINE — Through the absolutely game-changing Melbourne rail link and airport rail link projects, through the delivery for the western suburbs and western Victoria of the western section of the east–west link — that vital second crossing that everybody in the western suburbs supports except the Labor Party, which is walking away from the western suburbs — —

Mr Andrews — On a point of order, Speaker, if the Premier cannot say yes and will not say yes, then he should just sit down. Does he have the member for Frankston’s confidence or not? It is a simple question.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat.

Dr NAPTHINE — Perhaps for the opposition I will reiterate that fundamental to any Westminster system of parliamentary democracy is support for the budget. That indicates support for and confidence in the government. The member for Frankston has indicated this week that he supports the budget because this is a good budget that delivers great outcomes for the people of Victoria.

Government economic management

Ms MILLER (Bentleigh) — My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise of any recent economic indicators which demonstrate the strength of the Victorian economy?

Dr NAPTHINE (Premier) — I thank the honourable member for Bentleigh for her question and for her interest in the economy of Victoria and the opportunities and jobs in the Victorian economy. Members would be aware of the ongoing challenging environment for the Victorian economy and Victorian businesses with the continuing high Australian dollar and the increasingly competitive local and world markets, but Victorian businesses benefit from the strong financial management being delivered by the coalition government, from a strong budgetary position with a AAA-rated economy and budget surpluses and from a massive pipeline of job-creating infrastructure investment projects that will help boost the economy of this state.

Recently there have been a number of other important economic results which again demonstrate the strength and diversity of the Victorian economy and the positive opportunities for Victorian businesses and Victorian jobs. Indeed in the first three months of 2014 Victorian exports were up 16 per cent on the previous year. That was very much driven by the dairy industry, the meat

industry and the grain industry — our clean, green agricultural products. It has also been driven by the work of this government with its significant trade mission program into the growing markets of India, China, South-East Asia, the Middle East and Turkey. Those trade missions have delivered over \$4.4 billion worth of new exports, and this is contributing to export growth from Victoria, which is driving our economy and opening new markets and job opportunities in our great state.

The 2013 figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that the figure for export of goods from Victoria was up 7 per cent and the figure for export of services was up 7.3 per cent. Indeed it was a record high figure for the export of services. There was also growth in tourism, which grew by 7.9 per cent — a massive growth in tourism, which is putting dollars into local businesses and jobs into local communities. In April this year Melbourne Airport recorded a 14 per cent increase in international passengers compared to April last year, again highlighting the continued growth in tourism through the great leadership of the Minister for Tourism and Major Events and her campaigns to bring tourists to Victoria.

I would also like to advise the house that for March 2014 building approvals were up 26 per cent compared to March last year, and construction activity in the state increased by 4.4 per cent in March 2014 compared to a national average of only 0.3 per cent, and this will be further boosted by our pipeline of projects: the east–west link, the Melbourne rail link, the airport rail link, the Cranbourne-Pakenham line, the widening of the Tullamarine Freeway and of course the \$4.7 billion worth of health infrastructure projects.

The Westpac consumer sentiment index for May shows that consumer confidence in Victoria was up 2.7 per cent, where the national average was down 6.8 per cent. Retail sales from March 2013 to March 2014 increased by 6.2 per cent in Victoria above the national average. That is why Emporium Melbourne has been developed, creating 1000 jobs; Coles is investing in 14 new stores, creating 3500 new jobs; Woolworths is investing in new stores, creating 1800 jobs; and Eastland is expanding, creating 1700 jobs. While there are challenges for our businesses and our economy, Victoria has continued to grow and develop, creating new jobs and new opportunities across the state.

Member for Frankston

Mr ANDREWS (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the case of a public servant who used a taxpayer-funded car

to travel to and from work. They were sacked. I refer to the case of a public servant who used a taxpayer-funded car for private, unauthorised purposes. They resigned. I ask: can the Premier explain why public servants have paid the price for roting their taxpayer-funded cars but his senior ministers have let the member for Frankston off with nothing more than a slap on the wrist?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the house to come to order. The member for Geelong will cease interjecting.

Ms Asher — On a point of order, Speaker, the guidelines for questions — —

Mr Trezise interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! Points of order will be heard in silence. The member for Geelong is warned.

Mr Trezise interjected.

Questions interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Geelong

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Geelong will leave the chamber for an hour.

Honourable member for Geelong withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Member for Frankston

Questions resumed.

Ms Asher — The purpose of questions without notice, as outlined on page 154 of *Rulings From the Chair*, is that the matter must relate to government administration or policy. The question refers to a report tabled today by the Legislative Assembly Privileges Committee, which is a report to this house. I am assuming the Leader of the Opposition's question relates to recommendation 1. The report is not a matter of government business; it is a matter of business for the house, and I believe the question is out of order.

Mr Andrews — On the point of order, Speaker, the question should stand. The clear majority of members on this committee are ministers in this government, and this Premier cannot escape the fact that his ministers

have protected his majority in this shambolic government in order to — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to resume his seat. I have difficulty with the Leader of the Opposition's question. I do not believe it relates to government administration. The standing orders of this house are decided by the members of the house; the Speaker applies the standing orders with advice. I do not believe the question is acceptable. I will not accept the question.

Mr Andrews — On a further point of order, Speaker, beyond the ruling you have just made and for my clarification in relation to other questions today, is it your ruling that this Premier is not accountable for the conduct of sworn ministers and members of his government — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to resume his seat.

Ms Asher — On the point of order, Speaker, a point of order is not an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to ask you a question, which is what he just did. I ask that you rule his point of order out of order.

Mr Andrews interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! Before I call the member for Monbulk, I say that the Leader of the Opposition must respect the authority of the Chair; otherwise I will have to ask him to leave the chamber.

Mr Merlino — On the point of order, Speaker, the question should stand. This is very much about government business — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I have ruled that the question should not stand. I am not taking any more discussion. The question is not standing. I ask the member for Monbulk to resume his seat.

Regional Growth Fund

Ms McLEISH (Seymour) — My question is to the Minister for Regional and Rural Development. How are the coalition government's strategic regional investment programs building a better Victoria by creating more jobs across regional and rural communities, and is the minister aware of any alternative policies?

Mr RYAN (Minister for Regional and Rural Development) — I am very pleased to answer this question, which is of course in relation to government business. I thank the member for the question. As a

government we are committed to the regions of Victoria. We are committed to those regions because, as all members of the house know, including the member for Monbulk, when the regions are doing well, all of Victoria is doing well.

Through our strategic regional investment programs, and in particular our \$1 billion Regional Growth Fund, which is a \$1 billion fund, I am pleased to confirm — it is not a hoax; it is in fact a \$1 billion fund — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The level of interjection is far too high. I ask the house once again to come to order.

Mr RYAN — Since it was established in 2011, through this \$1 billion fund we have allocated some \$400 million. It has delivered something in the order of 1450 projects that are either in the making or have been completed, and it has resulted in total leveraged investments of about \$1.6 billion. As at 30 April, just through the economic infrastructure program of that fund, \$165 million has been invested in 83 different strategic economic projects. They have yielded over \$1 billion worth of leveraged investments and, very importantly, these investments are creating more than 5000 direct full-time jobs, over 10 800 indirect jobs and around 3800 jobs during construction, and they will support the retention of some 8000 jobs. The fund is a great success for the regions of Victoria.

One of the important elements of the fund is the Energy for the Regions program. What we have been able to do so far is announce eight agreements with natural gas companies for the delivery of projects, including the augmentation of Mildura's gas supply and the provision of natural gas to Huntly in the lovely electorate of Bendigo East, to Avoca in the electorate of Ripon, to Bannockburn, Whittlesea, Koo Wee Rup, Wandong and Heathcote Junction and, only just last week, to Warburton, where I was accompanied by the members for Gembrook and Seymour, who are long-time campaigners for the delivery of natural gas to that town. It is just another of the towns to which the Labor government promised to deliver natural gas but never did.

The other important element of our program is that we are now engaged in running an \$85 million request for tender to supply natural gas to the remaining priority towns and to the towns along the Murray River. This will be done through the use of compressed natural gas or liquefied natural gas. Just this week I announced that we have the tenderers down to a field of two — those

who now remain in the process — and we have detailed negotiations going on through Regional Development Victoria so that we will be able to award this tender.

I want to assure all of those across rural and regional Victoria who have been so anxiously awaiting the provision of natural gas and to whom we made the commitment that we would deliver it, that we have provided the gas to Mildura — 50 per cent augmentation — and we have provided the gas to or signed the contracts for another seven of the priority towns. The remaining priority towns, seven in number, plus the towns along the Murray, are in the request-for-tender process. We look forward to the successful completion of this particularly important program.

Member vehicle use

Mr ANDREWS (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the Members of Parliament (Register of Interests) Act 2013, for which he is responsible and which contains provisions for both members of Parliament and for ministers. I ask: if a minister in the Premier's government had given the keys to their taxpayer-funded car to employees of their private business, used their taxpayer-funded car for their own profit or instructed their employees on how to avoid getting caught doing just that, would such a minister not be liable for instant dismissal instead of simply a slap on the wrist?

Ms Asher — On a point of order, Speaker, I put it to you that this question should be ruled out of order because it is hypothetical, and indeed on page 154 of *Rulings from the Chair*, December 2013, paragraph (3) of the guidelines inter alia specifically reads:

Questions should not seek ... a solution to a hypothetical proposition ...

That is exactly what the Leader of the Opposition has done. He has sought a solution to a hypothetical proposition with his question being peppered with the word 'if' — if X, if Y and if Z. Therefore I put it to you that this question is out of order.

The SPEAKER — Order! I have heard sufficient on the point of order. If the Leader of the Opposition is going to raise a point of order, I will listen to him.

Mr Andrews — On the point of order, Speaker, the question ought to stand because there is nothing hypothetical about the roting of the member for Frankston.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition knows that is not the way to take a point of order. I rule the question out of order; it is hypothetical.

Ms Allan — On a point of order, Speaker, on previous occasions there has been an opportunity for the opposition to reword its question. However, notwithstanding that, *Rulings from the Chair*, December 2013, at page 156, clearly says:

Members' interests are within the Premier's responsibility.

This question contained a number of elements that go to the heart of government administration, areas that the Premier is responsible for. It is disappointing that we have not been given the opportunity to reword our question so that we can have these issues ventilated in this place. We think these are very serious issues which deserve to be questioned. We have structured questions absolutely in line with government administration, and we ask you — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms Allan — Do you want to go back and have another go, do you?

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Bendigo East knows not to respond to interjections.

Ms Allan — We ask you, Speaker, to reconsider your ruling and to perhaps provide the Leader of the Opposition with an opportunity to rework the question so that it can be asked. This matter goes to serious and significant issues upon which the confidence of this government is based — that is, the confidence of the member for Frankston and his behaviour, and the actions of ministers in this government.

Ms Asher — On the point of order, Speaker, the basis of the question being ruled out of order is of course that the question was hypothetical. It is not just because the words 'register of interests' were thrown into it. The question of itself was hypothetical. I also put it to you that when members are allowed to rephrase the question, it is when they are in a grey area. This is not a grey area. The question is absolutely and utterly out of order because it was hypothetical, and the opposition should not have a chance to rephrase it.

The SPEAKER — Order! I have heard sufficient on the point of order. I had ruled the question out. I do not uphold the point of order.

National Reconciliation Week

Mr CRISP (Mildura) — My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. What action is the

Victorian coalition government taking to build a stronger community by promoting reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians?

Mr BULL (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs) — I thank the member for Mildura for his question and for his interest in National Reconciliation Week. The Victorian coalition government is very strongly committed to promoting reconciliation and closing the gap in outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians. National Reconciliation Week commenced on Tuesday of this week and runs until next Tuesday, 3 June. I am pleased to speak on and recognise this very important week in the Parliament, which has always had very strong bipartisan support.

National Reconciliation Week is framed by two very significant dates in the Aboriginal community: Tuesday, 27 May, obviously fell this week and is the anniversary of the successful 1967 referendum, at which Australians voted to give the commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and recognise them in the census. Next Tuesday, 3 June, is the anniversary of the now-famous 1992 High Court Mabo decision. The theme for National Reconciliation Week this week is 'Let's walk the talk!', which encourages Australians to take action and to contribute to a reconciled Australia. I encourage all members of this chamber, and indeed the wider community, to support local National Reconciliation Week activities and reflect on the shared contribution Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people make together in building a stronger community in Victoria.

Among the many activities this week, on Saturday morning I will be very pleased to join with the Governor of Victoria, His Excellency the Honourable Alex Chernov, AC, QC; the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Honourable Damian Drum; and the shadow minister for Aboriginal affairs and Closing the Gap, the honourable member for Richmond, to attend the annual Victorian Indigenous remembrance service at the Shrine of Remembrance.

This very important ceremony enables us to recognise the contribution and sacrifice of Aboriginal servicemen and servicewomen in many theatres of military engagement over the years. Although no specific data was kept, records that are available tell us that over 1000 Aboriginal men and women served in World War I and over 4000 served in World War II. A significant number of servicemen and servicewomen made a very significant contribution.

On Saturday afternoon I will join the Premier and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, along with Mr Jennings, a member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region in the other place, who will be representing the opposition, to take part in the Long Walk to the Dreamtime at the G match — the annual match between Richmond and Essendon. This year is the 10th anniversary of the Long Walk, which as we know was initiated by Essendon champion Michael Long. He walked from his home in Melbourne to Parliament House in Canberra to meet with the then Prime Minister, John Howard, to raise Aboriginal issues and give the issues relating to Aboriginal Australians a greater focus on the national agenda. The Essendon and Richmond footy clubs will follow the Long Walk to the Dreamtime at the G match by doing battle on the oval. It is now a very significant part of the AFL calendar. I certainly commend the AFL on its role in supporting Aboriginal achievements and promoting reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

This government is a strong supporter of National Reconciliation Week. The coalition restored funding of \$200 000 per year to Reconciliation Victoria as an election commitment when it came to office. This funding helps Reconciliation Victoria do its very important work in bringing all Victorians together in harmony and mutual understanding. Again I encourage all members to engage very positively in National Reconciliation Week in their local communities.

Member for Frankston

Mr ANDREWS (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is again to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the Privileges Committee report into the rotting of the member for Frankston, whose support props up this chaotic minority government, and I ask: why did senior government ministers, including the Attorney-General, completely disregard independent legal advice that established that the member for Frankston was guilty of a contempt of this Parliament? Why did ministers, including the Attorney-General, ignore that advice?

Ms Asher — On a point of order, Speaker, questions must relate to government business. The affairs and the deliberations of the Privileges Committee are not a matter of government business, and I ask that you rule the question out of order.

The SPEAKER — Order! I will allow the Leader of the Opposition to speak on the point of order providing he stays within the parameters of a point of order.

Mr Andrews — On the point of order, Speaker, the Premier as the leader of the government is accountable for the conduct of members of the government. The Attorney-General — last time I checked — is a member of the government. Therefore the conduct of the Attorney-General is a matter of government administration for which the Premier is accountable, and on that basis the question should stand.

Mr Ryan — On the point of order, Speaker, in effect the committee is appointed by the Parliament and the members of that committee are answerable to the Parliament. Just as the committee system at large operates on the basis of being committees of the Parliament, that is exactly what this committee has done by way of discharging its responsibilities. Accordingly the point of order should be upheld and the question should be on the basis that only matters directed to the administration of the government should properly be regarded as being in order.

Mr Merlino — On the point of order, Speaker, what a ridiculous submission from the Deputy Premier. It just happened that the five government — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I am disappointed once again by the member for Monbulk. He has abused the taking of a point of order in order to attack another member. I uphold the point of order. The report is a matter for the Parliament. It is not government business. The question from the Leader of the Opposition is ruled out of order.

Ms Allan — On a further point of order, Speaker, the question that has been asked by the Leader of the Opposition that you have subsequently ruled out should remain in order, particularly — —

The SPEAKER — Order! No, I have ruled that it is out of order. I will not allow any more debate. I have ruled the question out of order.

Ms Allan — On a further point of order, Speaker, I put it to you that the Premier is responsible for the Parliamentary Committees Act 2003.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms Allan — We have already heard your failed attempt.

Speaker, the Premier is responsible, under the general order, for the Parliamentary Committees Act 2003. The question that has been asked, which you have subsequently ruled out, did go to issues referring to a committee of this Parliament. You made reference to that in your ruling, and I put it to you that questions that

contain references to parliamentary committees are entirely within the responsibility of the Premier, given that he is responsible for the very act that establishes these committees of this Parliament.

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

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr Nardella interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Melton!

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition knows very well that when the Chair is on her feet he must be silent.

Mr Andrews — On a point of order, Speaker, I thought that you were rising to your feet to perhaps ask the member for Kew to reflect on that gesture —

The SPEAKER — Order! No, I was rising to my feet to call for silence.

Mr Andrews — which is deeply offensive to anyone in the community who suffers a mental illness.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr Andrews — What's funny about that? He ought to withdraw that or apologise for it.

The SPEAKER — Order! I was on my feet to quieten the house. I have no idea what gesture is being referred to.

Mr Andrews interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! No, please do not.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The gentleman in the front row in the gallery is not allowed to take photographs. I ask the attendants to check that the photograph has been deleted.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask members to allow the Chair to have silence so she can think and speak. Did the member for Kew make a gesture that was offensive, and if he did, would he withdraw?

Mr McIntosh — If I have made a gesture, I withdraw that gesture.

Public transport initiatives

Mr McINTOSH (Kew) — My question is to the Minister for Public Transport. What action is the Victorian coalition government taking to improve Melbourne's trams and trains for the benefit of commuters, and are there any threats to this?

Mr MULDER (Minister for Public Transport) — I thank the member for Kew for his question and for his strong interest in public transport. As the member for Kew and other members would be aware, the government allocated \$6.5 million in 2011 to plan for the Melbourne Airport rail link. On 13 April the Premier announced that the coalition will build the airport rail link from Southern Cross station right out to Melbourne Airport. Like any good airport service, we will make sure that it has 10-minute frequencies so that that airport rail link gets strong support and strong patronage.

As we know, the airport at the moment is catering for around 30 million passengers per year. Of course those passenger movements are expected to double by mid-2030. This project used to have bipartisan support. As we know, back in 1999 the Labor Party, then in opposition, committed to it. The Labor government knocked it on the head. The coalition government committed to it, and any future Labor government will knock it on the head. The great threat to this project, of course, would be a future Labor government.

On the Melbourne rail link, the coalition is also proceeding with the \$8 billion to \$11 billion Melbourne rail link, with new stations at Domain and Montague, twin tunnels, new platforms at South Yarra and Southern Cross stations and an expected 3700 jobs.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr MULDER — Once again there is a major threat to this particular project, and that major threat of course sits very clearly with any future Labor government. It would not support this project that also includes the element of an airport rail link. There are also the public transport upgrades as part of the east-west link — \$108 million to improve the Doncaster buses, north-south tram routes —

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Eltham

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Eltham was warned. I ask him to leave the chamber for half an hour.

Honourable member for Eltham withdrew from chamber.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! Members in the public gallery cannot hear what is being said. If the member for Albert Park continues to interject, I will assist him to leave the chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Public transport initiatives

Questions resumed.

Mr MULDER (Minister for Public Transport) — There is also the renewal of Alexandra Parade, with the benefit to the 80 000 tram and 20 000 bus passengers who travel along Alexandra Parade, Victoria Parade and Brunswick Road each day. This project is going to deliver 3200 jobs, but once again unfortunately it is also under threat from any future Labor government.

I would like to turn my attention now to trams. This week I was out at the Preston tram depot, a \$190 million project being delivered by the coalition government. A \$102 million second stage is being delivered by Coleman Rail to help design the Preston workshop upgrade. Public Transport Victoria and Coleman Rail have worked very closely with Heritage Victoria to make sure that we can maintain and keep the great heritage features of that fantastic project out there. It will bring together East Preston and the Preston depot in terms of providing facilities for the new E-class trams.

I was fortunate enough to be able to jump on board one of those lovely E-class trams via a simulator. An incredible \$1.7 million is being invested in the project by the coalition government to ensure that drivers can be trained and trained properly. Of course the depot used to house the facilities for the old W-class trams, a great piece of history around Melbourne.

We also know there is opposition to the old W-class trams running out there on the network. We provided \$8 million in 2011 to refurbish the W-class trams and help the people at Bendigo who carry out that work.

But unfortunately on 21 January 2010 a formerly well-known public identity was reported as saying at the time:

Time is up for Melbourne's iconic W-class trams, public transport minister Martin Pakula has confirmed.

Time is up — he is going to get rid of the W-class trams! As he said, and I think everyone will understand this:

I don't think anything is forever.

He must have been a fortune teller at the time, because 10 months later the former public transport minister and his government got thrown out of office. We will keep the W-class trams going, we will work with the tram works, we will work with Yarra Trams and we will support public transport.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I know the member for Lyndhurst is in a difficult seat for someone who is so passionate and his voice is continually heard, but he makes it very difficult for me to concentrate.

Member for Frankston

Mr ANDREWS (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Premier. Is it not a fact that the member for Frankston has sacked a Premier and sacked a Speaker and now this Premier will do anything and cover up anything, including the orchestration of this whitewash Privileges Committee report, to ensure that the member for Frankston does not sack him?

Ms Asher — On a point of order, Speaker, I put it to you that this question does not relate to government business and also contains a highly offensive — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! Points of order will be heard in silence. Every member has the right to raise a point of order and will be treated with respect.

Ms Asher — The question does not relate to government business and also contains a highly offensive allegation that the Premier has somehow influenced the Privileges Committee's deliberations, which is incorrect. I urge you to rule that question out of order.

The SPEAKER — Order! I have heard sufficient on the point of order.

Mr Andrews — On the point of order, Speaker — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Yan Yean

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Yan Yean will leave the chamber for 1½ hours. The member knows very well that when someone is on their feet and is taking a point of order she should be silent.

Honourable member for Yan Yean withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Member for Frankston

Questions resumed.

Mr Andrews — On the point of order, Speaker, nothing can be more directly relevant to the administration of the government than the support of the member for Frankston, who props up this government. This question is absolutely in order and is essential, fundamental and critical to the survival of this government, a minority government, kept in place only because of the support of the member for Frankston — —

The SPEAKER — Order! Once again, the Leader of the Opposition is using — —

Mr Andrews — Nothing could be more central — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to sit down. Once again, the Leader of the Opposition is using a point of order to make a point in debate. The question did not relate to government business. As the Leader of the Opposition — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I rule the question out.

Mr Merlino — On a point of order, Speaker — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I say to the member for Monbulk that I have ruled on the question. I will take a point of order, but not on the question that I have just ruled out.

Mr Merlino — On a further point of order in relation to this entire question time, a protection racket for the member for Frankston — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I will not listen to the point of order of the member for Monbulk if he continues in that vein.

Mr Merlino — Speaker, this is a farce, not to be able to ask questions that go to the heart of — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Monbulk will sit down.

Ms Asher — On a point of order, Speaker — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the manager of government business to pause. This is absolutely chaotic. Is this a point of order but not on my ruling?

Ms Asher — It is not on your ruling, Speaker. My point of order relates to the fact that question 1 asked today by the opposition was ruled in order because it was phrased correctly. I suggest that in order to help opposition members draft their questions according to standing — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The manager of government business will resume her seat. That is not a point of order.

Mr Nardella — On a point of order, Speaker, in a Westminster democratic system of Parliament it is imperative that the government be questioned and be allowed to be questioned in terms of its survival and in terms of the things it is doing and in terms of the responsibility that this house has relating to openness and accountability. I put it to you, Speaker, that question time today has not allowed the opposition to do this. It has not allowed the opposition to question the government and the Premier regarding the administration of this government within this state.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Melton!

Mr Nardella — I put it to you, Speaker — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Melton!

Mr Nardella — I have a right, Speaker, to put a point of order to you — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I am trying to ask the member for Melton to narrow down what his point of order actually is.

Mr Nardella — I put it to you, Speaker, that these questions are absolutely in order, and especially the last question, which pertained to the survival of this Premier and this administration within this house and to the

executive government of this state. That is what I am putting to you, Speaker, and you should rule that way.

The SPEAKER — Order! I have already ruled on the points of order.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms Allan — On a different point of order, Speaker — and perhaps you could counsel the backbench of the government to stop behaving like farmyard animals — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Bendigo East!

Ms Allan — Under standing order 53, subsection 1, questions may be asked on matters relating to public affairs. As was helpfully pointed out by the Leader of the House, the first question asked by the Leader of the Opposition was ruled in order and indeed went to the foundation upon which this government is established, which I would have thought is a significant, indeed pre-eminent, matter of public affairs. Each and every question that has been asked today by the opposition has gone to that fundamental point upon which the foundation of this government is based — that is, the issue — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I am going to ask the member for Bendigo East to come to the point of order and narrow it down. I am finding it difficult to see where the point of order is going other than challenging the decisions I have made.

Ms Allan — It is very clear that the questions that have been raised today by the Leader of the Opposition go to that very central question that this government is more intent on focusing on protecting the member for Frankston in order to protect its chaotic and shambolic minority government — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Bendigo East will resume her seat.

Infrastructure delivery

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — My question is to the Treasurer. How is the Victorian coalition government's unsolicited proposal process building a better Victoria through delivering critical infrastructure upgrades, and are there any alternative proposals?

Mr Pakula interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Lyndhurst! I have tried to be understanding. I ask the member to cease interjecting.

Mr Foley interjected.

Questions interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Albert Park

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Albert Park will leave the chamber under standing order 124 for half an hour.

Honourable member for Albert Park withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Infrastructure delivery

Questions resumed.

Mr O'BRIEN (Treasurer) — I thank the member for Caulfield for his question. I note in passing that of 30 questions this week there has been not one from the other side about the Victorian budget.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms Allan — I rise on a point of order, Speaker. You have ruled on a number of questions today — we think unfairly, but we will put that to one side — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I consider that to be a reflection on the Chair, and I ask the member for Bendigo East to be careful.

Ms Allan — Speaker, you have ruled on a number of occasions on what is and what is not government business.

Mr O'BRIEN interjected.

Ms Allan — You are not even prepared to answer a question, mate. I'm not going to take advice from you. You're too scared to even answer a question.

The SPEAKER — Order! That is most unparliamentary of the member for Bendigo East. I ask her to ignore interjections. I ask government members to cease interjecting.

Ms Allan — Speaker, the Treasurer clearly led with — —

The SPEAKER — I could not hear because of the noise, so I am relying on — —

Ms Allan — The Treasurer clearly led — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The attitude of the member for Bendigo East toward the Speaker is causing concern. I am explaining to her that I could not hear what the Treasurer said. I cannot rule on something I did not hear.

Ms Allan — We ask, Speaker, that if the Treasurer strays from government business during the course of the remaining 3 minutes and 43 seconds he has left, he be drawn back to answering within the confines of government business.

Ms Asher — On the point of order, Speaker, points of order are not hypothetical, about what someone may do in the future. The Treasurer had only commenced — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the Leader of the House to resume her seat. I am ruling. I ask the Treasurer to answer the question.

Mr Andrews — On a further point of order, Speaker, throughout this question time a very narrow interpretation of what is the business of government has been applied, as is your right as the occupant of the chair. The Treasurer very clearly — all opposition members heard it; many in the government heard it, I think — decided that it was within the realms of the standing orders for him to reflect on questions that were not asked of him. So if the Leader of the House wants to talk about hypotheticals, nothing the Treasurer has said so far — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I have heard sufficient. I will rule on the point of order. The Treasurer will answer the question that was asked.

Mr O'BRIEN — Can I say that there is nothing hypothetical about our budget. There is nothing hypothetical about \$27 billion worth of economy-growing, job-creating, congestion-busting infrastructure. One of the key projects that we are delivering is the \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion upgrade of the Cranbourne-Pakenham rail corridor. This is the busiest line on the metropolitan rail network.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! We have 3 minutes and 17 seconds of question time left. I ask members — —

Mr Merlino interjected.

Questions interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Monbulk

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

Honourable member for Monbulk withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Infrastructure delivery

Questions resumed.

Mr O'BRIEN (Treasurer) — This is a critical upgrade to ensure that the 1 million people in Melbourne's south-east can have a decent train network. Of course the former government was advised — was warned — by its department that this was a critical upgrade, and for 11 years it did nothing. This government and this Premier are acting. The former government was more interested in spending money on the Wonthaggi white elephant than it was in investing in transport infrastructure.

Mr Nardella — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is straying from the question of government business. He was not asked about the previous government or the Labor Party. I ask you to bring him back to answering the question on government business, not on what happened years and years and years ago.

The SPEAKER — Order! As the honourable member knows, I cannot direct a minister in what he says in his answer. I do bring the Treasurer back to answering the question.

Mr O'BRIEN — This government will not neglect Melbourne's south-east. That is why this upgrade will deliver a 30 per cent increase in rail capacity at peak times, with 25 new high-capacity trains, four level crossing removals with a further five in the pipeline, high-capacity signalling and new train stations in Clayton, in Murrumbeena and in Oakleigh. Of course this will create thousands and thousands of jobs.

It has been widely welcomed, and even the Public Transport Users Association had this to say:

The Napthine government's announcement of \$2 billion of rail infrastructure upgrades and new trains for the Dandenong, Pakenham and Cranbourne corridors has won the strong backing of the Public Transport Users Association, who have labelled it 'a template for fixing the rail network across Melbourne'.

But every project has its critics, and in the *Age* of 2 May the member for Tarneit said:

They are planning to spend billions of taxpayer dollars under a veil of secrecy ...

Ms Allan — On a point of order, Speaker, the Treasurer is offending against standing order 58, and we ask you to bring him back to answering the question.

Ms Asher — On the point of order, Speaker, the Treasurer was asked to say whether there were any alternative policies, and he is canvassing precisely the question that he was asked.

Mr Andrews interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition knows that points of order are taken and listened to in silence. I bring the Treasurer back to answering the question.

Mr O'BRIEN — I want to address this claim that there is a veil of secrecy over this proposal, which is the allegation that was made. The problem is that the work packages for this project, such as building the new trains, the construction of the level crossing removals and the power upgrades, have all been put out to public competitive tender. This is how we ensure that we get value for money. In fact it was so secret that on 5 April the *Australian* newspaper had an advertisement for the tender. It was hidden away in the newspaper under the section 'Tenders'. That is how secret it was.

It does appear that in addition to not reading budget papers the member for Tarneit does not read newspapers either.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms Allan — On a point of order, Speaker, hurling abuse at members of the opposition is not within the confines of standing order 58, which is what the Treasurer is currently engaging in, and we ask you to bring him back to answering the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER — Order! I bring the Treasurer back to answering the question.

Mr O'BRIEN — This is a very important project — going through competitive tenders which will deliver value for money for Victorians and will create tens of thousands of new jobs, along with all of our other transport projects. It is going to increase the capacity on the Pakenham-Cranbourne line by 30 per cent. This government has the plans, and it has the

funding to deliver these projects. The only threat to them is lazy Labor opposition members who do not read budget papers and do not even read newspapers.

APPROPRIATION (2014–2015) BILL 2014

Second reading

Debate resumed.

Mr MADDEN (Essendon) — No doubt members of the Liberal-Nationals coalition believe that this is a major, major budget. This can be considered a major, major budget only in the sense of what is in the following quote from Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*. Like this budget:

Major Major had been born too late and too mediocre. Some men are born mediocre, some men achieve mediocrity, and some men have mediocrity thrust upon them. With Major Major it had been all three. Even among men lacking all distinction he inevitably stood out as a man lacking more distinction than all the rest, and people who met him were always impressed by how unimpressive he was.

It could also be said about not only this budget but this government's Treasurer, its Premier and the rest of the state cabinet that even among men lacking all distinction inevitably they stand out as lacking more distinction than all the rest.

This is a budget which of course is too late and too mediocre in all senses. The government not only released the budget but at the same time released *Plan Melbourne*. They have to be read together because together the two documents purport to deliver something that neither delivers alone. The budget document is not a planning document, and the planning document tells us it is not a budget document. Unfortunately, they do not coexist in any harmonious way at all.

What we have seen over the past three and a half years is a government — and these are not necessarily my words but the words of the media — that has gone from inactive to hyperactive, from catatonic to chaotic and from no performance to blind panic and a government that prefers to support punters rather than patients.

One of the cornerstones of not only this budget but the government's planning document is its hallmark project of Fishermans Bend. Anybody who knows Melbourne well enough knows a lot about Fishermans Bend, but obviously members of this government do not know enough and nor have they ever sought to find out enough about Fishermans Bend. I will tell members why Fishermans Bend has for so long been the industrial precinct that it has been. It has been the

industrial precinct because it sits on Coode Island silt. Coode Island silt is basically sludge. There is little if any bedrock below that Coode Island silt to build any substantial foundation on. That is why much of the industrial base of Melbourne sits there, on a waffle slab that basically can sit and float on that sludge. As soon as you start to try to put pylons into it, those pylons disappear at a rate of knots.

I remind members of what happened when they built Crown Casino, which borders on that sludge.

Mr Wynne — And the Arts Centre.

Mr MADDEN — And the Arts Centre, when it was being built down there. There is bedrock at some point, so when they started to put pylons into that sludge they just kept hammering the pylons in until they reached some bedrock. In many instances, at the edge of Fishermans Bend, those pylons disappeared. So what did they do? They moved 3 metres across to one side and started again.

The point is that anybody who knows anything about building and construction in Melbourne knows that Coode Island silt is Coode Island sludge. If you know the geography of Melbourne well enough, you would know why it is called Coode Island — because that sludge sits immediately opposite Coode Island. The premise is that this government wants to build one of the biggest urban redevelopment projects some hundred metres from the Coode Island containment facility. And it wonders why nobody is that interested in it. I will tell you who is interested in it: the property developers down there who will get the uplift from the rezoning. But that is why nobody has started the project yet. No-one has started the project yet because they do not want to invest in it, particularly those Asian investors that this government has been so keen to drag across the ocean to invest in this state. Those investors are not silly. They are not going to invest in Coode Island silt; they are not going to invest in Fishermans Bend. But what did this government do? It thought, 'I know how to convince them. What we'll do is we'll build a station at Fishermans Bend'. But of course we discovered that the station is not at Fishermans Bend.

Mr Wynne — Where is it?

Mr MADDEN — Apparently the Premier is still not sure where it is; he is still looking for it. I remind those on the other side that it is not in Fishermans Bend. That says a lot about this government. It does not know where Montague station is going to be. When announcing the western section of the east–west link the Premier did not know where the exit ramps were

going to be. This is a Premier who does not understand the detail; worse, he does not understand the fundamentals of some of the most substantial projects he tries to trade on. Fortunately overseas investors can see through this. They are not keen to invest in any of these projects.

What is extraordinary is that you have a planning document that should have informed the budget, but of course the planning document was released after the budget. What is extraordinary about the planning document that the government tried to trade on until it realised it had a lot of holes in it is that of the five people on the ministerial advisory panel — the reference group — four of them, including the chair, resigned. These are not individuals who are not committed to planning, and good planning at that; these are professionals. They are experts who have dedicated their entire lives to good and proper planning.

These experts were not going to put up with this document or this government and its ad hoc planning process for major infrastructure projects. They worked out that this document was a justification and not a rationale for the outrageous infrastructure projects that this government purports to want to deliver.

What is even more extraordinary to see when you examine the infrastructure investment document is that the catalyst for one of the other cornerstone projects that will deliver the station to Montague, which will no doubt be the catalyst for drawing those Asian investors to build this urban renewal project that nobody particularly has confidence in, is the Melbourne rail link, which will also link to the airport. If you look at page 6 of this document, under the heading 'Melbourne rail link' you will see a chart that indicates a series of projects and when they will be completed. What I love about the document — I have never seen this before and I suspect we will never see it again in any budget document — is that if you look at it in detail you see there is a time line that has no completion date. It continues to run to the edge of the page and then fades away. I do not know if that means there should be another fold-out page; I am not sure if it means the project fades away or the Premier fades away. I half suspect it is that.

If you refer to Planning Melbourne, you will see three criteria for some of the projects it is recommending — the immediate term, the medium term and the long term. Planning Melbourne puts a time frame on each of those criteria. This project is not going to be delivered in the short term, the medium term or the long term. In Plan Melbourne the long-term time frame is between 2025 and 2050. According to the document this project

will be delivered in some sort of faded out way beyond 2026, but it does not have a completion date.

This project is the cornerstone of the government's budget; it absorbs an enormous amount of money in future years. Despite it being a project that the government is dedicated to and the cornerstone and panacea for all our ills in Victoria at this time, it will not be delivered in the short or medium term, and we cannot even be guaranteed that it will be delivered in the long term, beyond 2025 or 2026, or indeed in our lifetimes.

I suspect that most of the cabinet ministers who made this decision will not ever see this project realised; I suspect it will not be built in their lifetimes. How can a government spend so much and deliver so little not only in this term of government or potentially consecutive terms of government but in its members' own lifetimes? It is interesting to read in great detail *Plan Melbourne*, which is apparently a document which justifies so many of the projects this government says are fundamental, and look at the vision behind what the government has done with its budget.

Melbourne Metro rail tunnel was going to go through the Arden precinct and Parkville. It is highlighted in *Plan Melbourne* that the Parkville precinct will be part of one of the employment hubs. It was expected in 2010–11 that health would be the largest single employer industry, with over 330 000 jobs. Parkville is also highlighted as one of the key national employment clusters within the *Plan Melbourne* document. It is expected that throughout that region the number of employees will increase from 300 000 to 350 000; there will be an increase of at least 50 000 employees in that precinct alone. This is where employment opportunities exist. This is where the new age economy exists — in knowledge, health and education and in overseas students taking up study in this precinct. It is the knowledge-based economy.

However, this is not a priority for this government because it does not want to put the transport hub through there; it wants to put it in Fishermans Bend.

Mr Nardella — Montague.

Mr MADDEN — Montague, apparently, which is not Fishermans Bend; it is almost Port Melbourne. In the series of documents we have before us the government has signalled that it is not interested in the new economy. It is interested in taking away the industry in that centre, or the old economy. We have already seen industries move out because of the uplift from the rezoning. The government then wants to

encourage people into a precinct despite it being questionable as to whether it can actually deliver the projects. In the meantime it does not support the new economy.

Funnily enough, in the same week this government announced Montague station, one of the major land-holders — a well-known property developer and I believe a key donor to the Liberal Party — happened to sell a major project site in Fishermans Bend. He completed the deal that week. They are not my words; it was in the centre of the *Age*, in the property section, in very fine print. If people are interested in this, and they should be, I suggest they look it up — look in some detail as to who the developer was, the timing of it and the announcement of Montague station — for what it is worth.

The great disappointment with this budget and Plan Melbourne is the fact that they do not align in the way they should. It is extraordinary that this government is prepared to put its cornerstone project out till 2026, and when you go through *Plan Melbourne* — and I could speak for a lot longer on this, but I will not — it is extraordinary to see that it takes almost half the document to get to public transport.

I recommend members have a look at page 53, where they will see a map of the Parkville employment cluster that I have mentioned. And there is this sort of dotted, sausage-shaped design; it is a potential rail project. I do not know where that potential rail project is going to go or where it will come from, but it is there. One thing I do know is that that potential rail project that links that centre to somewhere else in Melbourne is not going to happen before 2026, and I suspect the keystone, the airport link, is not going to happen either.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Ryall) — Order!
The member's time has expired.

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — It gives me great pleasure to rise to support the budget this year and to speak on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014. First of all, I put on the record my support for our local member for Carrum, who I was with on the weekend. We were discussing the budget and the implications of the budget for her electorate. I pass on our best to her for what she is going through.

Honourable members — Hear, hear!

Mr BATTIN — I thank those opposite very much for their support. She is an amazing person and an amazing member of Parliament, and we know she will be an amazing member of Parliament in the future. We look forward to having her back.

In relation to the budget I will start off talking about the state of Victoria's finances. Obviously we could go back over the history and look at what we inherited — —

Mr Burgess interjected.

Mr BATTIN — Exactly, as the member for Hastings said, that was years and years ago.

Mr Nardella — That's what I said!

Mr BATTIN — And as the member for Melton said. The member for Melton may also remember that years and years ago we had over 8 per cent growth in spending in our state. At the same time, revenue was only increasing by just over 7 per cent. It does not take anyone in accounting or a fully qualified mathematician to work out that eventually that will overtake you and you will end up with a structural deficit in the state. The former government did not do anything about it; it did not address it. It was happy to continue going along that line.

Since coming to government, the Treasurer has made sure we have put in place a strong, sustainable plan for the future. That plan has seen the rate of expenditure in our state sit at about 3 per cent, and that is exactly where it should be, with the rate of spending growing by about 3 per cent. It ensures that we protect our coveted AAA rating. That AAA rating is worth millions of dollars in interest, which is millions of dollars that we can put back into schools — our education minister is at the table — into TAFEs and into health. It is money that the taxpayer would prefer to see go into infrastructure rather than into paying off debt. It is very similar to a house. If you have a house loan and you have an investment property, you pay off your own house loan as fast as you can and you reduce bad debt, and that is what this government is about. We are making sure we reduce that bad debt.

We are also looking at how we can assist families with the cost of living. I think it is very important we assist families with the cost of living in today's world. One of the things we have come up with is something that I think we can be very proud of on this side of the house, and that is a reduction in water bills. We are reducing water bills across Melbourne by \$100. When you think about it at first, \$100 does not sound like a lot, but considering the pressure that is on Melbourne's water system and the pressure on the cost of water, because of a desalination plant that was put in place and is costing \$1.8 million a day, it is significant. The Treasurer and the Premier are making sure they can work with the contractors and the people operating the desalination

plant and are putting in place a plan so we can not only sustain our consumption into the future but also reduce water rates for constituents across greater Melbourne. I think that is absolutely fantastic.

There is also the fire services levy. We do not even need to go on about the fire services levy. It was done in the last budget, but it was one of the biggest changes we have seen. It was a recommendation from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. It has been around for a long time; it is not a new thing. It took this government to make it a property-based fire services levy. Now, not only do we have a fairer system with our fire services levy, but this year we will also see a reduction across all rates. Whether you are on a farm, in a metropolitan area or in a Country Fire Authority area, you will see a reduction in the rate of the fire services levy. Again we are improving it and making it a fairer system for all Victorians, because all Victorians will benefit from it with our Country Fire Authority and Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

One of the best reductions we have seen and best cost of living measures, particularly for the Gembrook electorate, is the reduction in the public transport fares for those travelling from zone 2 into zone 1. They will have their ticket price capped at the zone 1 rate. For someone who travels five days a week and buys a daily ticket, that alone could see them save up to \$1200 per year. Or, if you are travelling in and are using a yearly myki card, that would save you over \$780 per annum; \$780 would go a long way in anyone's budget. I think that is absolutely fantastic. If you put the water saving together with the potential transport saving, there is a \$1200-plus saving in one household, if you have one person catching a train and using water in the house.

One of the big savings we have made, which we started implementing in our first budget and are continuing with a further reduction in September, is in relation to stamp duty on new houses. Obviously I represent a growth corridor, including Pakenham and Officer, and Officer is about to see some massive developments that will support some of the fantastic schools I will talk about in a second. We have great new houses going up there. We want to see more houses go up at the moment; that supports jobs industry and construction. We are seeing a genuine saving in stamp duty. I know for a fact that the first home buyers down there have appreciated it. Eventually that 40 per cent saving will go up to a 50 per cent saving on stamp duty through the area.

Officer is one of the fastest growing towns. We have many moving into the Timbertop and Potters Grove estates, and we are going to have some fantastic

facilities there. The Cardinia council will be relocated to its new facilities, which will be in Officer. Importantly, we wanted to make sure that for the first time we had education facilities in place before the town was developed. In 2010 we were proud when the then shadow Minister for Education, now the Minister for Education, came out to Officer and announced that we were going to build the Officer Secondary College. The proudest thing is when you look in the budget papers and see the 'Completed' column.

When you look at those projects that have been completed, you see the Officer Specialist School. Officer Specialist School will hold 272 students with special needs. It is one of the leading state-of-the-art special schools in not just Victoria and Australia but I would say probably in the world. The facilities there are unbelievable. Sue, who is the principal, has done such an amazing job. The school has 70 students at the moment, and the number is increasing nearly daily. It has a fantastic basketball stadium. As you go through the buildings, you see that each room has been designed so that it does not need a number because all the rooms have a different shape. The design takes into consideration students with special needs who cannot always identify rooms with a numbering or lettering system. You know that if you are in the middle school, you are in the triangle school, and that if you are in the senior part of the school, you are in the circle school. It makes it easier for students to identify which facilities they can use and where they can go around the school. From speaking with parents it was clear this was a much-needed piece of infrastructure that only the coalition would deliver — and the coalition did deliver down there.

To add to that, in our last budget we included stage 1 funding for Officer Secondary College. Just prior to the budget coming out we again had the Minister for Education down there to announce that the government will complete the school, and so stage 2 funding came through in this budget. Stage 2 ensures that we will have a replica of the original wing, and that is being built at the moment. The school will open next year, and construction will still be ongoing. We will also have a basketball stadium.

The standard basketball stadium that was going to be put in was not considered ideal or adequate for what we wanted in a growth area, so we worked with the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Sport and Recreation and the local council to secure funding from those areas. We have two levels of government working together to deliver a basketball stadium with three courts, three netball courts that can be used at full competition level, a viewing area and an art space. It

will be available not only to Officer Secondary College but also to the community, and more importantly it will be available to Officer Specialist School.

Officer Specialist School will have state-of-the-art facilities not available in any other special school in the world. The school will give students with special needs opportunities for getting out and keeping active in sports and art in their own area when they need to. Officer Secondary College is currently going through the process of appointing a principal. It is very important that whoever is appointed to that position can work closely with the special school so that we can have state-of-the-art education across the state. When talking about education, it is only the coalition that has thought this far ahead in a growth area to make sure that as people move into the area they have will the schools available to them.

In relation to some of the things we have delivered, I will next talk about the police. We talk about crime statistics but we are also going to hear about the police. We have 1500 extra police officers already on the beat across Victoria. We have protective services officers (PSOs) at our railway stations at Berwick and Pakenham, and people I have spoken to on the trains love the PSOs. They are absolutely fantastic. It is not all about crime prevention when people are getting off the train, but about perception. When people are getting off a train at 10 or 11 at night and there is someone at the station who can assist them if they need it and even walk them out to their car, they know they are safe. They know who is at the station because the PSOs are patrolling and making sure everybody in the community around about is safe. That is something we are very proud to have delivered, and I know we will see an increase in the number of PSOs.

Another section that came into the completion column of this year's budget was the Emerald police station, which is a new state-of-the-art police station. It was not established just to handle the crime side of things, and we are also looking at its future potential in relation to fires in the Dandenong Ranges and having police up on the mountain. The police there have the correct facilities — control centres, et cetera — so they can run a full operation out of Emerald police station rather than the station they used to be in.

The next part of the budget I will talk about is public transport, which is extremely good for my area. The \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion upgrade to the Pakenham-Cranbourne lines is something the community has been waiting for over many years. It is the busiest railway line in Victoria, and it needs an upgrade. The upgrade includes 25 new next-generation

trains, which is absolutely fantastic, and next-generation signalling so that trains can travel closer together. We will be able to increase capacity along the Pakenham line by 30 per cent, so the Pakenham-Cranbourne line will see an extra 4500 passengers being able to catch the train each and every hour during peak periods. That is something the community out there has been calling for.

With the upgrade to the line out there, there is also a new siding yard to be built at Pakenham East. During the construction phase of the whole project, over 3000 jobs will be created. However, more important to my local community is the new siding yard where maintenance on the new next-generation trains can be carried out. We will have 100 local jobs in Pakenham, and that is an obvious advantage to our local community. It will support the local shops and shopping centres. It will take people off the road, because they will not have to travel outside Cardinia shire to work; they can stay within the shire to work locally. That is something the community and the council have asked for. They have been very keen on it for a long time.

To support the Pakenham upgrade you also have the Melbourne rail link. The Melbourne rail link will increase capacity across the network by nearly 35 per cent. Again that is something the whole network has been crying out for. You will have the Fishermans Bend, or Montague, station going around to Southern Cross and the airport link all in one. Given the way it is being done and the competitive tendering process, this will achieve the best prices and make sure that we can deliver the best outcome. This includes the airport rail link, which we have heard about for so many years and which everybody talks about. The major capital cities have an airport rail link. Melbourne will be in that group now and have an airport rail link.

With the connections from the Pakenham-Cranbourne line you will be able to go into Flinders Street or around to Southern Cross. Whilst those opposite, particularly the member for Narre Warren North with his pretty little DL card, want to go out there and talk about the lack of opportunities to go into the city, they are ignoring the fact that Flinders Street and Southern Cross stations are part of the city. Should you want to go through the city loop, you will be able to change at South Yarra, hop onto a different train and go straight through. The increase in trains means you will not be waiting very long at all. You will find this is the situation when you go to any major capital city.

When I talk to groups about the best railway lines in the world they all talk about New York, Japan or the

tunnels in London. Each and every one of those systems has dedicated lines. The system we are bringing into Victoria will have dedicated railway lines for each individual track, so it will be the Sunbury-Airport and Pakenham-Cranbourne lines — that is, dedicated lines. If there is a fault on the Pakenham-Cranbourne line, it will not affect Frankston; if there is a fault on the Frankston line, it will not affect Glen Waverley. That is how the best systems around the world work.

In most of those places you cannot get across the capital city without changing trains. If you want to get from one place to another you have to change trains, including in London. If you were travelling from Luton across to Piccadilly, you would have to change trains. At one station you have to walk 540 metres between platforms, but that is a sacrifice those in London are willing to make to ensure that the train system can run continuously. In London there are 10-minute train timeslots, which we are targeting here with 10-minute trains out to the airport. I think that is something that Victorians are desperate for.

The final aspect of this issue is road infrastructure. We have some magnificent road infrastructure. The coalition government has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in rural and regional roads, and I note that the road upgrades through the Gembrook electorate have been absolutely fantastic and are appreciated by the community. The Clyde Road duplication, which I know those opposite are saying they want to rip up, is a \$56 million road that has just been constructed and has been open for less than 12 months, yet those opposite have decided they want to rip it up. To give you an example of how good its construction was, I hold in my hand a pen that was made from one of the trees taken down to build it. The government worked with the community to make sure that even the trees from that particular project were recycled. Those on the other side are dying to get in there, get their hands on the road, rip it up and destroy our local businesses in Berwick, whose owners have already come out publicly and said, 'If you touch the road again, you are going to ruin our businesses'.

We have also got the east–west link, which will be a massive benefit to the south-east, particularly to the Gembrook electorate in improving productivity. We have many businesses that involve travel across the city or to the airport — freight companies as well — and the east–west link will improve their productivity and make sure that we can keep Victoria moving.

Finally, there are jobs. All of these things relate to jobs. Whilst those on the other side talk about a jobs plan,

coalition members do not talk about a jobs plan; we talk about \$27 billion in infrastructure funding creating jobs across Victoria in the next four years.

Ms HUTCHINS (Keilor) — I rise to speak on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014. Our hospitals are in crisis, our TAFES are in pieces, kids cannot get or afford a decent education, our schools are falling apart and our ambulances are taking too long to get to people's homes when they are in times of need. Yet all this government has done is to put money into big flawed projects without proper business plans, without proper consultation and without accountability and openness in its proposals — not only in its time frames but in the genuine costs of some of these projects and whether or not they will in fact be delivered. They are big promises being made this side of an election, but I am not sure that many people from my electorate will be fooled into thinking that many of the big-ticket items and infrastructure projects that have been flagged in this budget will ever see the light of day.

I will focus particularly on the proposals around the Melbourne rail link. Let us start with the revised hotchpotch plan that the government has released in this budget. It had a once-in-a-million-year chance to get a world-class public transport system in place by investing in key infrastructure. Instead it has blown it. Instead of doubling the size of the city loop, it has disconnected it from the southern suburbs. Under this plan public transport will be paralysed for years. Unfortunately in the plan the government has put forward four stations that were proposed in previous planning have been chopped out of the equation. These include a proposed station at Melbourne University and the hospital precinct around it, which 150 000 people live in, work in and travel in and out of every day, including students, patients and parents visiting their sick children at the new Royal Children's Hospital.

It is certainly not a budget for public transport users and it is not a budget with a long-term view of what is best for Melbourne. In addition to this, we have seen further slashing and cutting of some of the most important roads that support our freight network and support our outer suburbs. In particular in my area we have seen \$550 million ripped out of the further upgrading of the M80 Western Ring Road — the section between Sunshine Avenue and Laverton. At the behest of this government that has been ripped out by the federal government and refunnelled into the eastern side of the flawed east–west tunnel link that the government announced in recent months.

There is no new money to extend local bus networks, no commitment to fund the Melton Highway level

crossing and no funding to duplicate the very dangerous length of road that runs from Hillside in the western suburbs through to Melton, which is a single-lane, poorly lit road with a gravel siding and which has unfortunately seen far too many deaths on it and far too many serious accidents and near misses. Again this highway has been ignored in this budget.

There are no funds to improve car parks at local train stations. We have an almost daily crisis situation for commuters in my electorate around the station of Watergardens, where commuters are constantly parked in and cannot get their cars out at the end of the day. Lo and behold, in the lobbying in the lead-up to this budget many residents put forward the proposal of having this car park restructured — having it sealed and gated properly so that it would become a functioning car park for commuters. The response I got from the Minister for Roads was a big fat zero in the budget. The lobbying commuters also received correspondence only last week from the Minister for Public Transport advising that the shopping centre that owns the car park will no longer be extending its lease. This means the car park will be closed and we will have hundreds of commuters without anywhere to park, let alone an improved car park.

There will be no improvements or connections to the local train stations with local buses, and there are no funds in this budget to deal with the transport needs of the outer west, where our population is growing rapidly, particularly within the confines of the city of Melton. In addition, this budget has gone a long way in hurting residents and affecting their cost of living, and with the \$25 increase in car registration fees there will be many people in my electorate who will struggle. We have seen almost \$4.1 billion collected in vehicle registration fees, which is \$797 million more than when this government came to office.

There is also a massive increase in the amount of revenue the government will reap from fines — again, an increase of \$225 million — but we are not seeing that put back into improving local roads, local bus networks or local car parks around train stations. Of course this will be further compounded by the federal Liberal government's decisions. About 80 per cent of commuters in my area who travel to and from work will end up using their cars, and they are going to face huge hikes in the cost of petrol with the increase in the fuel excise.

Moving on, of course there is not much in this budget that puts in place opportunities for permanent employment or investment in long-term sustainable industries, and in fact since this government came to

power we have seen 51 000 more Victorians unemployed. The budget papers show that the unemployment rate is projected to increase. We have already seen that happen in the last three years, but it is projected to further increase to 6.25 per cent. We can rattle on about percentages and numbers of unemployed, but the truth is there are real families behind every single one of these jobs.

My electorate has been very hard hit with the demise of the car manufacturing industry and with the many thousands of jobs that have been outsourced from the finance sector and from call centres and have left Victoria for other states or have been offshored and gone overseas. It is a real disappointment that there are no solutions in this budget around how we can work as a state to try to secure these jobs and create real jobs. As recently as yesterday we saw that 200 to 300 jobs in the Qantas call centre are being outsourced from Victoria to Tasmania.

I was surprised to see in today's *Australian* comments by the Victorian Minister for Planning claiming that the federal Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Warren Truss, assisted in taking those hundreds of jobs out of Victoria to be relocated to Tasmania, but, like the Premier, the minister has done nothing but crow from the sidelines. The government has done nothing to secure those jobs or get to the table in time to save them. It has done nothing over the last two years to save any of the thousands of Victorian jobs that have been shipped overseas or to other states.

One area that has had a real impact on many of the residents in my electorate is the closure of Qantas maintenance base operations at Tullamarine airport. Many residents in my electorate were involved in aeroplane maintenance. Now those people are facing dubious employment security. They are either unemployed or doing bits and pieces of insecure work. It is not good enough. This government should have used this budget to look at investing in industries to keep permanent jobs in this state and to continue to grow this state. Our state export plan should not be focused on the export of jobs; it should be about growing our industries.

Certainly Labor members always stand up for the people of this state and their jobs, unlike this government. We do not just bleat from the sidelines when jobs are going offshore or when the federal government is doing its best to cut back the federal public sector and to cut thousands more jobs out of the state. It is clear that this government is weak and ineffective when it comes to taking up the fight with the Liberal Party in Canberra and making sure that not only

are jobs secured in Victoria but also that we get our fair share of funding. This is certainly not a budget for working families in my electorate or for the retired community, who deserve to be supported more than they have been by this state government.

I turn now to the young people in my electorate who are suffering at the hands of the cutbacks to TAFE. In particular I acknowledge those who missed out earlier this year on the transition from TAFE to university. Victoria University has indicated to me that prior to the cuts to TAFE funding it transferred almost 1000 students across all campuses from TAFE to university within Victoria University. Those numbers are predicted to drop from 1000 to as low as 300 because of the damage that has been done to the TAFE system by this government, because of the cuts that have happened to TAFE and because of the demise of its authority, leaving many campuses facing closure and being forced to consolidate, cut courses and put up their fees. With youth unemployment skyrocketing, particularly in the west, and jobs leaving our state every day, you would think that the TAFE system would be more important than ever.

It is certainly not a budget for pathways to employment, and it is not a budget for young people. In particular the lack of spending on education in this budget is a major concern. Melbourne's western growth corridor, where I live and which I represent, has grown at a rate of knots, and we are looking to further expand our suburbs with an additional 12 000 new homes to be built in the next five to six years. Yet there is still not a single piece of land that has been purchased, not only in this budget but in previous budgets, for a single new primary or secondary school, which are desperately needed.

In Caroline Springs there are three primary schools that feed into the one secondary school — a years 10, 11 and 12 senior campus. That campus has closed its books and cut off taking kids from those three schools. It can only accommodate numbers from two of those three schools. That leaves the third school, Springside K–9 College, which falls in my electorate. It has had to turn away students on a regular basis and has not been able to lead its existing students into the senior school for year 10.

There are no commitments to new schools in this budget in my area and no funding for Gonski education reforms, despite the \$5.4 billion promised to Victoria over the next six years. The Premier has only spent an average of \$278 million a year on school capital works. When we were in government that figure was up at \$467 million a year. You can see over the last three years just how many of the schools have deteriorated.

On top of all of this we have seen cuts by the state and federal governments which threaten the hours that four-year-olds can attend kinder. The hours look set to drop from 15 to 10 per week, which will have a huge effect on all families in my area that have little children. This is not a budget for education, and it is not a budget for Victorian children.

In terms of health, this government is spending more on prison beds than it is on hospital beds. You only have to look at the budget to see that in black and white. We are seeing longer response times for ambulances, and obviously we will see increases in costs for those who need to attend a doctor, get blood tests or get an X-ray. The Victorian ambulance crisis is getting worse. This is a budget for the rich. It is a budget that ignores education and health, it attacks working families and it increases the cost of living. It will leave the disadvantaged with less access to education and health care and without the opportunity to retrain for jobs.

Ms ASHER (Minister for Innovation) — In accordance with the order of the house, I provide a copy of the member for Carrum's speech on the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014 for incorporation into *Hansard*.

Speech as follows incorporated into *Hansard* in accordance with resolution of house:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my parliamentary colleagues for allowing me the opportunity to speak on the budget for 2014 and the fantastic gains for the Carrum electorate. I appreciate the support and well wishes I have received during my recent treatment.

I love being the member for Carrum and being able to deliver for local groups, schools and families in my electorate. And delivering is what this budget is all about.

The Treasurer, Premier and the coalition team are to be commended for providing another strong budget while managing a vibrant Victorian economy.

Throughout my travels around the electorate and meeting with local residents the response to this budget has been positive and the Premier and his team are to be commended.

The issues and needs of the Carrum electorate are as diverse as its geography; the electorate is divided into three clear zones. On the western border we have beautiful Port Phillip Bay, its beaches and the seaside suburbs of Bonbeach, Carrum, Seaford and Kananook.

Defining this area is the busy Nepean Highway and Frankston railway line, both providing vital links for motorists and commuters to Melbourne and beyond.

And on the other side of the tracks are the Patterson River and Patterson Lakes housing estate and the southern end of the Ramsar-listed Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands. Housing estates, sporting ovals, five primary schools and one secondary school are located in this area.

So already, we have issues in regard to water, beaches, environment, public transport, sporting facilities, roads, housing and education.

In the middle of this electorate, divided by the Frankston Freeway, EastLink and Frankston-Dandenong Road are three more schools, Seaford housing estates, Belvedere Reserve (also home to the St Kilda Football Club), industrial estates, small land-holdings, retirement villages, and Melbourne Water's eastern treatment plant.

Adding to the list above, we have now included industrial, manufacturing and aged care issues.

The third section, bordered by Frankston-Dandenong Road and Western Port Highway, includes the suburb of Bangholme, the heavily populated Carrum Downs, Skye and the industrial areas of Dandenong South, divided by the beautiful Sandhurst estate. There are another four primary schools, Flinders Christian College and Carrum Downs Secondary College. Housing, access to public transport, and employment are big issues in these areas.

This year's budget continues to establish the legacy of the Premier as the infrastructure Premier. The allocation of funding for key infrastructure projects in the budget will not only provide enormous benefits to Victoria but will also provide significant local improvements. In this year's budget I am proud to have been able to deliver an \$8.2 million project to fix the notorious Wedge Road-Frankston-Dandenong Road intersection.

The Wedge Road intersection is in the newest part of the Carrum electorate and I would like to thank the Premier for being so proactive and committed to improving this intersection.

On a typical weekday more than 19 500 vehicles a day on Dandenong-Frankston Road cross its intersection with Wedge Road and Boundary Road in northbound and southbound directions. More than 2700 of these are heavy vehicles and trucks.

The five-year period ending December 2013 saw 17 casualty crashes — seven of which were serious.

Clearly this has been a major issue in this area and the new traffic signals and additional turning lanes at Wedge Road will go a long way to addressing these problems.

The feedback that I have received regarding the Wedge Road announcement has been tremendous. Local residents and commuters have been waiting for too long to have this intersection improved and I am proud that together with the Premier, we have been able to deliver for the people of Carrum Downs and the broader Carrum electorate.

Motorists will also welcome the news that completion of the Mordialloc bypass is a step closer following an announcement that \$10.6 million will be spent on preparing a business case and statutory approvals for the project.

Combined with the Dingley bypass, this road will drastically reduce congestion and improve safety on local roads, as well as improving travel times and freight connections. Construction on the Dingley bypass will commence later this year and be completed in 2016.

Schools were also among the big winners in this year's announcements, with Bonbeach Primary School getting \$340 000 and Kananook Primary School, \$300 000 for refurbishment projects. Another \$1 million has been given to Patterson River Secondary College for a major redevelopment.

Kananook Primary School principal Rob Kinniburgh said the infrastructure grant was fantastic news for his school, and would be used for urgent maintenance works including painting, plumbing, paving, roofing, guttering and window repairs.

These latest grants follow an announcement last month that \$540 000 would be provided for an upgrade of Belvedere Park Primary School, and earlier commitments of \$875 000 to Seaford and Seaford North primary schools and \$2 million to Aspendale Primary School for their projects; and \$100 000 has also been invested in both Yarrabah and Nepean schools.

It has brought me tremendous pleasure to visit these schools during the construction works and see how excited staff and students were about their new facilities, aimed at providing the best environment possible for children to learn and thrive.

All schools in the Carrum electorate which have so far benefited from the coalition government's commitment to providing first-class educational facilities are grateful for the improvements. I will continue to work hard for all schools in the electorate for all to share in future allocations.

Public transport users on the Frankston line will be pleased with the announcements in this year's budget. Commuters are set to benefit with zone 1 and 2 travel for the price of a zone 1 fare; saving daily commuters into the city around \$1200 a year.

This announcement is on top of the government's \$115 million investment in the Frankston line as part of the bayside railway project. This project is well under way into being delivered and is providing track, signalling, power and maintenance facility upgrades to support the introduction of X'trapolis trains.

The Frankston line is one of the busiest on the network, with around 60 000 passengers each weekday and as part of the project, improvements to stations in the Carrum electorate have so far included tactile markers, station painting and safety zones.

Still to come this year are new network rainbow boards, which will help to inform people of train times and timetables, new passenger information displays, improved signage and extra CCTV coverage at all four stations — Bonbeach, Carrum, Seaford and Kananook.

I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight the success of the protective services officers (PSOs) now located at many railway stations across the Carrum electorate. Improving the safety in and around railway stations has been one of the great results from the rollout of PSOs at railway stations.

As of today, there are 727 PSOs deployed to 118 stations under the \$212 million rollout. Figures show that this initiative has already gone a long way to reducing crime and antisocial behaviour on stations and trains, and commuters are telling me that they are feeling safer and more protected when commuting by train.

These new funding initiatives build upon those already announced and being delivered by the coalition government in our first three budgets, which include:

- a) \$81 million redevelopment of Frankston Hospital's emergency department;
- b) \$18 million upgrade of the Patterson Lakes tidal gates;
- c) \$500 000 investment in improved facilities at Carrum Lifesaving Club; and
- d) \$430 000 investment in recreational boat launching facilities at Patterson River.

The Victorian coalition government has committed a record \$27 billion for significant infrastructure to build a better Victoria, delivering growth, jobs and opportunity across the state.

The Carrum electorate is better for it too. I am particularly proud that this budget quickly recognises that the new areas of the Carrum electorate including Carrum Downs, Skye, Sandhurst, Bangholme, Lyndhurst and Dandenong South have their own particular needs and issues. The Napthine government is providing for these growing areas and ensuring that our communities are provided for in this year's budget.

The Carrum electorate is broad ranging and diverse in industry, housing, education, environment and employment. I am pleased that this budget has been able to deliver on all aspects for the Carrum electorate.

This is an electorate that has its challenges, but delivers in spades. It's a great place to live and work, and I am committed to continue delivering for the people of Carrum.

Mr ANGUS (Forest Hill) — I am delighted to rise today to speak in support of the Appropriation (2014–2015) Bill 2014 and the Victorian state budget. I start my contribution by congratulating the Premier, the Treasurer and his team, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Finance and the Assistant Treasurer, as well as the former Premier and former Treasurer, the members for Hawthorn and Scoresby respectively, who laid so much of the groundwork for yet another responsible budget.

Having had the privilege of sitting through two weeks of public hearings on the budget as a member of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee, I take this opportunity to congratulate all the ministers and the Presiding Officers and their teams who presented to the committee. It was great to hear from ministers who are on top of their portfolio roles and presented in such a professional manner. This stands in stark contrast to the shadow ministers, but I will make further comment on that later in my contribution.

I will divide my contribution into three parts: firstly, looking at the overview; secondly, looking at some of the key highlights; and, finally, looking at the great

outcomes for the residents of Forest Hill. The budget documents are entitled *Building a Better Victoria*, and I think this is an excellent title, one that epitomises what this government is seeking to achieve with the finances of this great state. This is a strong, financially responsible budget that continues to steer Victoria through the challenging international economy as well as through the challenging national financial position left by the hopelessly incompetent federal Labor government, which again showed us what we all know: whether federal or state, Labor simply cannot manage money and does not understand how to run things.

This is a budget that creates jobs, strengthens the economy and builds the infrastructure the state needs. The economy is expected to grow by 2.5 per cent in 2014–15 rising to 2.75 per cent in 2015–16. Once again as a result of the Victorian coalition's responsible financial management the ratings agencies have given Victoria a AAA credit rating with a stable outlook. In all the challenging economic circumstances this is an outstanding result. On 6 May Standard & Poor's said:

In our view, the Victorian government's budgetary performance is benefiting from several years of strong fiscal discipline, as evidenced by expenditure increasing less than revenue growth. As a consequence of this fiscal discipline, the Victorian government has introduced some modest revenue and expenditure measures without significantly affecting either its budgetary performance or debt burden.

Budget paper 5, page 5, shows that the budget provides for a surplus of \$1326.7 million, with the forward estimates showing the expected surpluses increasing significantly to \$3030 million in 2015–16.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

ADJOURNMENT

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McIntosh) — Order! The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

Sunbury higher education

Ms DUNCAN (Macedon) — The matter I raise is for the attention of the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, and it is again on the issue of the former Victoria University site at Jacksons Hill in Sunbury. Members may be aware of the Victoria University site, which closed late in 2009. While this was a huge blow to Sunbury and the surrounding areas, ultimately this was a decision of Victoria University, and despite our best efforts it would not change its mind.

In light of that, our overwhelming consideration was, and has been since then, the future use of the site. In government we committed to ensuring that the site could continue to be used for educational purposes. This enormous and significant site in the heart of Sunbury has for many years been used by a number of community groups, including community radio station 3NRG and the fabulous Boilerhouse Theatre, even while the site was still being used by Victoria University. Other than those limited community uses the site has essentially been vacant since the university left.

Since 2011 I have been raising the future use of this site in this place and in writing directly to the minister. I raised the matter in the adjournment debate of 8 February 2011, and the response was that the government continues to work with Victoria University to ensure that the future of tertiary education provision in the Macedon region meets the needs of the community. I wrote again to the minister on 23 May 2011. The response was that the government reaffirmed the Victorian government's commitment to the provision of education and training in regional and outer metro areas, that it had met with Victoria University's vice-chancellor in relation to the proposed sale of the Sunbury campus and that it was keen to resolve the matter as soon as possible.

In July 2011 I wrote another letter to the minister, and the response was that the minister could confirm that until more fulsome consideration of the educational needs of the region was completed the Sunbury campus would not be sold. Again, following a letter in October 2011, the response confirmed that the Sunbury campus would not be sold and that the government would consult with the wider community. In an adjournment debate in February 2012 I raised the matter again. The minister said the government hoped to be in a position to engage in public consultation in the following months.

Fast forward to just a week or so ago, and the poor old Liberal candidate for Sunbury was so proud of government funding of \$60 000, which was applied for by the council, which she believes is a great step forward towards integrating this site. I am not sure what 'integrating' means in this context. Given the candidate lives in Romsey I would not expect her to be aware of the history of representation around the site. I suspect \$60 000 would barely pay for the spouting to be cleaned out. While I am pleased that this council application for funding has been successful, it is no substitute for the proper community consultation and the proper planning that was promised by and has

continued to be promised by this government, with no movement for the last four years.

Law and order initiatives

Mr ANGUS (Forest Hill) — I raise a matter of importance for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. The action I seek is for the minister to visit the electorate of Forest Hill to meet with and address the residents in the electorate and to provide them with an update of the work being done by the Victorian coalition government to support and assist residents in the eastern suburbs in the areas of law and order.

The coalition went to the 2010 election with a very clear plan to address the serious issues of law and order that had arisen after 11 years of Labor rule in Victoria. I can clearly remember many times whilst campaigning during 2010 residents contacting me to express their concerns regarding law and order issues. Under Labor basic policing had been neglected and the Labor government had failed to act to protect Victorians. I was delighted to be able to go to the 2010 election promising that, if elected, the coalition government would build a police station in Forest Hill. The funding for the police station was contained in the coalition's first budget, in 2011–12. The construction of the new police station is progressing well, and I am looking forward to it being operational in due course.

Part of the coalition's 2010 strong law and order plan was to recruit an additional 1700 police officers and 940 protective services officers (PSOs). The recruitment of the PSOs was to regain control of the railway stations, which the Labor government had allowed in many cases to become places of great risk, with some being basically off limits for law-abiding citizens after dark.

What great news it is for the community that the delivery of this election commitment is progressing so well. In recent days the minister has announced that an additional 1500 police officers have been recruited and by next week there will be 751 protective services officers patrolling 118 railway stations across the network. This is great news for all law-abiding Victorians, especially those who, like many of my residents, regularly use the public transport network.

The residents of Forest Hill electorate would benefit from hearing from the Minister for Police and Emergency Services about some of the initiatives the coalition government is undertaking to continue protecting the broader community and families in Victoria. I welcome the opportunity to meet with the

Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and I look forward to his visit and the chance for him to meet with residents of the electorate of Forest Hill and address various issues of importance with them.

Northcote electorate housing

Ms RICHARDSON (Northcote) — The matter I raise is for the attention of the Minister for Housing. It concerns the lack of affordable housing in my electorate and the urgent need for additional public and social housing. Rental prices and the cost of living pressures associated with houses have skyrocketed in my electorate, particularly in suburbs around Alphington, Fairfield and Northcote. Thornbury, too, is experiencing incredible increases in rent and in the cost of homes. The housing pressure is quite monumental, and the stress this is putting on families is really taking them to breaking point.

I understand that there are currently over 35 000 people on the waiting list for housing and many of those are in my community. Around 10 000 of them are categorised as being in urgent need of public housing. Next to the concern about local councils, housing is the no. 1 issue that comes through my electorate office door. I understand too that, for the first time in decades, we are actually seeing a net decrease in the number of public and social houses in this state. There is a very obvious and clear reason for this. Successive Liberal budgets have unfortunately failed to invest in public housing and social housing, and this is having a direct impact on my community.

The other concern my constituents have is that the Minister for Housing seems intent to flog off housing she deems to be surplus to requirements. I am not sure how land and housing considered surplus to requirements can be flogged off, given the pressure that exists on the waiting list; as I say, it is over 35 000 people. Clearly the minister needs to prioritise housing and prioritise the retention of that land. The land that is going to be flogged off, I understand, is in Richmond. Clearly that land could be used immediately to invest in public housing if the minister was prepared to address the crisis that is facing constituencies in the inner city and particularly in my electorate. If the minister came and met with me at my office or spent some time in any of the electorate offices across the inner city she would well and truly understand the pressure that families are facing. She would then know that their no. 1 concern is the lack of public and social housing in the inner city and right across Victoria. I look forward to the minister at last taking action on this critically important issue.

Etz Chayim Progressive Synagogue

Ms MILLER (Bentleigh) — I direct my request to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, the Honourable Matthew Guy, to visit the Bentleigh electorate to accompany Israel's Ambassador to Australia, Mr Shmuel Ben-Shmuel, on a visit to the Etz Chayim Progressive Synagogue and to meet Rabbi Allison Conyer and the Jewish community. The Etz Chayim community has existed under various names over the last six decades and has grown every year since opening in Bentleigh in 1965. The Bentleigh electorate has a growing Jewish community, and the Etz Chayim Progressive Synagogue plays a large part in the lives of those locals.

Etz Chayim Progressive Synagogue recently celebrated the induction of Rabbi Allison Conyer with the community on Sunday night at the 9th Caulfield Scout Group hall in Murrumbena. The celebration was well attended by locals, and a number of community leaders were also present. Rabbi Allison Conyer is new to the Etz Chayim Progressive Synagogue and is committed to working within the Jewish community, living according to Jewish values and engaging and connecting with people and their Jewish heritage. Etz Chayim Progressive Synagogue is a small community which offers engaging religious education and social programs for the area. It has a small but enthusiastic professional staff and team of volunteers who are committed to serving the Etz Chayim community to the very best of their abilities.

The Beit Sefer Chayim learning centre at the synagogue specialises in Jewish learning that is innovative and dynamic within a safe and nurturing environment and welcomes students of all ages, from young families and playgroups to high school. Etz Chayim also offers a number of auxiliary groups as well as committees for members to join, including Bikkur Cholim — which means 'visiting the ill' — the Etz Chayim community choir, the education committee, the finance committee, L'Chayim catering committee and the network group, which is a monthly educational and social opportunity for seniors. The action I seek is for the minister to come to the Bentleigh electorate to visit Etz Chayim Progressive Synagogue with Israel's Ambassador to Australia, Mr Shmuel Ben-Shmuel, and meet with the new rabbi, Allison Conyer, and the Jewish community.

Renewable energy target

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Mill Park) — I raise a matter with the Premier. The action I seek is that he publicly commit to and fight for the continuation of the renewable energy target. More than a dozen wind farm

projects have been put on hold in Victoria while the renewable energy target is in doubt under the review that is being imposed by Prime Minister Tony Abbott and his federal government. These are projects that were approved by the Labor government in Victoria. What that means is that around 6400 jobs are at risk in Victoria, including more than 700 in the Premier's own electorate. This is a great travesty because the reality is the renewable energy target has been a fundamentally vital instrument that has promoted thousands of jobs in Victoria and attracted millions of dollars of investment in regional Victoria.

We need a government and we need a Premier on the side of these workers and their jobs. Only this morning New South Wales Premier Mike Baird come out and publicly backed the continuation of the renewable energy target. He joins a queue of other premiers who know what leadership is about in terms of fighting for jobs for their communities. Will Hodgman, the newly elected Premier of Tasmania, came out during his election campaign and publicly committed to fighting for the maintenance of the renewable energy target. Those premiers and the Premier of South Australia, Jay Weatherill, know that without the renewable energy target thousands of jobs in their states and millions of dollars of investment opportunity will simply not occur. Yet Victoria's Premier is idly standing by, despite direct appeals from workers at the Keppel Prince factory, who have personally written to him, pleading with him to stand up and publicly fight for continuation of the renewable energy target. Why have they done that? They have done that because without that target their jobs will disappear.

I implore the Premier to do the right thing and come out to publicly state his support for the renewable energy target. He should take the fight up to the Prime Minister in Canberra to back the renewable energy target, back the thousands of jobs that are now at risk because of this government's inaction and back the millions of dollars of investment that regional Victoria desperately needs.

Edithvale and Parkdale family and children's centres

Ms WREFORD (Mordialloc) — I raise a matter for the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development. The action I seek is for the minister to visit the Mordialloc electorate to see the progress of the Edithvale and Parkdale family and children's centres. As I have said a few times previously in the house, large parts of the Mordialloc electorate are undergoing renewal. Elderly couples on large bayside suburban blocks are moving out and young couples are moving

in, often into townhouses or multi-unit developments. This is partly due to the open-slather approach Labor took to development and the fact that Melbourne's population growth somehow caught Labor off guard. Just as Labor could not manage money, it also could not manage growth. One of the reasons this government is seen as an infrastructure government is that Labor simply ignored infrastructure. While Labor was building a desalination plant at the obscene cost of \$1.8 million a day for 27 years, roads, railways, children's services and the like were not appropriately funded.

The growth in my electorate also caught Kingston City Council off guard. In 2010–11 there was a crisis with a shortage of places in children services. Thankfully by then we had a coalition government, and the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development listened to the local members and was right onto it. The crisis was resolved reasonably quickly, and forward planning was undertaken. The upshot for Kingston City Council was that the member for Carrum and I worked with the minister, and among a range of solutions was the development of two family and children's centres, one in Edithvale and one in Parkdale, each receiving \$1.5 million from the government and very significant funding from Kingston City Council. Both centres will provide long day care services, kindergarten programs, maternal and child health services, community-based programs and flexible space for playgroups, parent groups and other activities. They will be state-of-the-art centres.

The Edithvale centre includes two 27-place long day care rooms and two kindergarten rooms, one with 22 places and the other with 33 places. The Parkdale centre, co-located at Parkdale Secondary College, includes three 27-place long day care rooms and two 22-place kindergarten rooms. Being co-located with a secondary college will bring some unique educational opportunities that will be positives for both the college and centre. In October last year the sods were turned. It is an ideal time for the minister to come and take a look at the fantastic progress being made on these centres, which will make such a large difference to the lives of many young families. The centres are positive reminders of how this infrastructure government is fixing the problems Labor left behind and building infrastructure for the whole community. I hope the minister can join me, and I look forward to a positive response.

Betrayal of Trust

Mr McGUIRE (Broadmeadows) — My adjournment matter is for the Premier. The action I seek

is that he immediately honour his promise to implement all of the recommendations of the *Betrayal of Trust* report. Survivors who were criminally abused physically, emotionally and sexually as innocent children and who had the fortitude to testify as adults to the Victorian parliamentary inquiry that produced the landmark report are dismayed that the Victorian government has not enacted key recommendations it has declared it supports. The government has cited the ongoing Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse as a reason for the delay. I reject that proposition.

The Victorian parliamentary inquiry was acclaimed for its leadership in dealing with these issues in a bipartisan way in the public interest. Such leadership should not now be lost. The report's recommendations deliver reforms that will make our children safer. As a community we outsource services to institutions, and as a community we are entitled to expect that they meet basic standards of accountability, quality and safety. The *Betrayal of Trust* reforms will make our schools, hospitals and other institutions safer for children. Such reforms are vital and urgent.

Crucial reforms not yet enacted include recommendation 26.1, requiring non-government organisations to be incorporated and adequately insured where the government funds them or provides them with tax exemptions or other entitlements. Another crucial reform that should have been enacted by now in Victoria is recommendation 26.3, to remove inappropriate time limits and impediments with respect to access to justice for victims of criminal child abuse. Recommendation 27.1 concerns specifying in law that no time limits apply to applications for assistance by victims of criminal child abuse in organisational settings, and recommendation 28.1 is about establishing a redress system for victims as a matter of urgency.

Another reason why Victoria has to take leadership on these matters is that we do not know how long the federal royal commission will take to deliver its report. It could be years. Many victims are elderly and have been waiting for decades for justice. The inquiry found the average length of time before victims could even talk about the crimes against them was more than 20 years. As deputy chair of the inquiry, I have been repeatedly approached by survivors and advocacy groups who are increasingly concerned by the delays. They are worried that critical reforms will be lost with the passage of time.

They are also deeply concerned about the federal government's decision to axe the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission, which was shining a

light on poor practices by demanding transparency in the charitable sector. Removing such a national watchdog beggars belief when the *Betrayal of Trust* report revealed cover-ups that killed and the failure of self-examination within some of our most trusted institutions. Survivors have also raised concerns that the federal government has transferred millions of dollars from the federal royal commission into criminal child sex abuse and that the CEO of the federal royal commission has resigned. These are all issues of leadership and values. We want to keep dealing with this report in a bipartisan way. It is time for the Premier to take action now on behalf of all Victorians to keep them safe and to protect our children.

Howmans Gap Alpine Centre

Dr SYKES (Benalla) — My issue is for the Minister for Sport and Recreation, and my request of him is to visit Howmans Gap in beautiful north-eastern Victoria to inspect the Sport and Recreation Victoria camp up there. The camp is leased by YMCA and used by a group known as Disabled Winter Sport Australia to run a program for people with disability.

I visited the camp a couple of years ago with the then Minister for Sport and Recreation, the member for Lowan. We were most impressed with the program that was shown to us, the people who were working there and their passion and achievements in somewhat basic facilities. Disabled Winter Sport Australia is seeking support to upgrade the camp's facilities so that they are more accessible for people with disability.

As you know, Acting Speaker, it is an important commitment of this government to ensure that people of all abilities can enjoy sport and recreation activities throughout Victoria, and that includes winter sports. It is interesting that locally we have ladies such as Robyn Smith who do a heck of a lot working with people with disability to ensure their participation in sports at all levels. Snow sports are a part of this project at Howmans Gap, which is near Falls Creek. It is appropriate that we encourage people with disability because we already have an agenda to encourage people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to enjoy participation in the snow and snow sports, and it is absolutely logical that we continue that philosophy to encourage people with all abilities as well as those with disabilities.

The alpine resorts are a very important part of my electorate, as you know, Acting Speaker. We will be having the snow season opening on the Queen's Birthday weekend, and the Minister for Environment and Climate Change is coming up to open the season at

Falls Creek. My colleague the Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment, the member for Gembrook, is going to open the season at Mount Hotham, and I think he has invited his friend the member for Forest Hill to go up and join him. I will be joining the member for Seymour in opening the season at Mount Buller.

We have great assets in our area. We have facilities that should be enjoyed by everyone. People who have full use of their physical abilities can enjoy them now. It is critical that we extend the ability to enjoy them to people with disability. That is why the camp at Howmans Gap is so important and why we should get the Minister for Sport and Recreation to come up to have a look and show his support for the fantastic work the people do there.

Family violence

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — My matter is for the Minister for Community Services. The action I seek is that the minister visit my electorate of Caulfield and the cities of Glen Eira and Port Phillip to look at an important issue that affects many Victorians — that is, domestic or family violence. There are some 60 000 reports of family violence annually in this state. That is up significantly from previous years because we not only have more police on the beat now but have worked significantly to change the culture so women will come forward and report this crime.

Despite the scare tactics from the opposition regarding front-line police, the fact is we have seen the largest ever number of police recruited in this state, and we are training them specifically to deal with issues like family violence. As at 29 April there were 30 family violence teams across the state, as well as family violence court liaison officers at every 24-hour police station. The government has introduced new laws, and police powers to deal with incidents of family violence have been enhanced to target perpetrators, who may be excluded for up to 120 hours from a residence where family violence has occurred.

There are a number of great organisations in my electorate. At the National Council of Women of Victoria, Jennie Russell, Malvina Malinek and Sheila Byard have initiated a great campaign, Respect for Women. At the National Council of Jewish Women of Australia (Vic), Vivien Brass, Michelle Hayward and Annette Sweet are doing a significant amount of work in this area. At the Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence, Sheiny New and Debbie Wiener have been working to create awareness and support programs, particularly for the orthodox community. Impact for Women, under Kathy Kaplan, has been running a

number of fundraising initiatives to support women who are on their own and need support as well as a number of support and education campaigns.

Community Information Glen Eira, under Tallilah May, does a terrific job in providing information for women who are seeking help and advice. The Inner South Community Health Service and the St Kilda domestic violence outreach service are also doing some great work here.

To have the minister come out would mean he could meet with a number of these organisations. It is an important issue for the members for Bentleigh and Prahran, and the new candidate for Albert Park would also be very interested in this. The minister could talk about the crucial issue of family violence and, importantly, creating awareness. As we all know, it all starts with education and awareness. All of us on both sides of the house need to face and address this issue.

It would be a pleasure to show the minister around so he can meet with these organisations on the ground, and residents in my area could be provided with the opportunity to meet and discuss their issues with him, looking to a way forward and to supporting this important issue to ensure that fewer women in our community are assaulted.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McIntosh) — Order! I call the member for Mildura.

Ms Green — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, I have the call.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McIntosh) — Order! There was apparently a swap with the member for Frankston. He was to speak in today's adjournment debate, but he spoke last night. That was an opposition thing. I have been given a list provided by both whips, both the coalition whip and the Labor Party whip.

Ms Green — No, the whip disagrees.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McIntosh) — The list indicates that only four members from the Labor Party would be called tonight.

Ms Green — That is not my information. I have the call. I dissent from the Chair.

Mr Foley — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, this is not an issue that should cause particular grief to the house. Throughout this Parliament and indeed many parliaments there has been a long tradition of mutual cooperation on the adjournment arrangements so as to ensure the smooth operation of the Parliament, particularly at the end of the week. The understanding

that we on this side of the house have, reflecting that long history, is that the member for Frankston did indeed swap his adjournment matter to last evening. It is not for me to out the manager of government business, but from my understanding that adjournment matter was taken off the government's pile. Should that be the correct understanding between the whips, then it logically follows that this side of the house gets its five adjournment matters this evening. That is what we have been advised.

I have a roster of those arrangements, which I dare say has been provided to you, Acting Speaker, which clearly states who those five members are. Can I suggest, Acting Speaker, without any disrespect to the Chair, that it would be surprising if the Chair had not consulted that document, which may have avoided the call not being given to this side of the house and two calls being given to that side of the house.

With the greatest of respect to you, Chair, and to the manager of government business, yet again we have an example of the member for Frankston calling the shots on this dysfunctional, chaotic, hopeless government — to the point where we have, in the last segment of the day, a rort to try to cover up the arrangement that he speak last night before the Privileges Committee report was tabled this morning. You can understand the frustrations on this side of the house when we are dished up rort after rort from that side of the house. Acting Speaker, we ask that you take a few minutes to perhaps consult with the whips and then give the honourable member for Yan Yean the call in this matter.

Ms Asher — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, I have to say that I am not privy to discussions that have gone on between the whips. My understanding of what has gone on is that there was an alteration to the schedule for adjournment debates. I know that when the member for Frankston has an adjournment debate matter, he takes one of the opposition spots. I believe that is correct. Obviously the government ends up with more adjournment matters than it would normally have if the member for Frankston did not have an adjournment debate matter. That is my understanding from my whip — he is not in the chamber, and I do not have one of those BlackBerrys, so I cannot communicate with him. But what I could do, to give the opposition some comfort, is to suggest we proceed with the person you have called. If this is wrong, then I will make the adjustment on the next sitting night. I believe it is correct, but if it is wrong, I will make the adjustment on the next sitting night.

Ms Green — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, this raises a clear practice of this house. I do thank the Leader of the House for the offer she has made; however, this is a time-sensitive matter for my community. It concerns a community with an exploding population, and every such issue is time critical. I do not think my community should have to wait because the Government Whip has chosen to go home. The whip gets additional pay to stay to the end of the Parliament's sitting day. The Opposition Whip will be here until the end of that time, and she is not aware of there having been any arrangement other than the normal arrangement on a Thursday. The call list on this side of the house lists the member for Yan Yean.

It is just an outrage if the member for Frankston, even when he is not here, gets to call the shots on the way this Parliament runs as well as on the way this government runs. We are not even allowed to ask questions, and the most populous electorate in the state is not being allowed to have its issues raised —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McIntosh) — Order! The member for Yan Yean should confine her remarks to the matter that is currently before the chair.

Ms Asher — Further on the point of order, Acting Speaker, this is just ridiculous. In the interests of bringing temperatures down, can I make the offer again but with a slightly different nuance?

Mr Foley interjected.

Ms Asher — Hang on, do not anticipate what I am going to say. In the interests of letting the Parliament get up for the week, and given my whip is not in the room, I am prepared to allow the member for Yan Yean to have the call on the proviso that, if this is wrong, next sitting week the speakers will be adjusted. I would like an indication about that from the Opposition Whip — that the member for Yan Yean can have the call, rather than members going on and on —

Ms Kairouz interjected.

Ms Asher — I thank the Opposition Whip, who has indicated she is happy to have the call adjusted if it is apparent during the next sitting week that the government has in fact been cut short by one member.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McIntosh) — Order! I call the member for Yan Yean.

Yan Yean electorate schools

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) — The matter I raise is for the Minister for Education, and the action I seek is for

him to explain to the Mernda community why his budget has prioritised the building of a school at Mill Park Lakes east, a school no-one — and particularly no-one in the community or in the council — has ever asked for, over a much-needed P–12 school proposed for Mernda in Breadalbane Avenue. In 2009 the then Labor government purchased land in Breadalbane Avenue in anticipation of the population growth. Citing the Whittlesea City Council's latest population statistics, I note the population of Mernda and Doreen at the 2011 census was 19 500, it is currently 33 000, it is forecast to reach almost 40 000 by 2016 and it will be almost 50 000 by 2021. It beggars belief that a school in an area that is not having population growth should be prioritised over one where the land has been bought and where an early years centre is being constructed and where there is a bus stop out the front of the site.

This community has had to fight tooth and nail for everything it has got. There was a purchase allocation for the land for the Doreen secondary college in the 2010 Labor budget, but that was stopped when this government came to office. The community has had to fight tooth and nail to finally have students taken at Hazel Glen College next year. However, students in Mernda have absolutely no way of getting there aside from their parents driving them. There are no footpaths, there are no bicycle paths, there is no public bus and there is a river in between these two communities. Had the government prioritised this issue, that would have made a difference. There are also students south of Bridge Inn Road in Doreen who cannot get to this school.

It is therefore absolutely pivotal that the minister come out and explain to this community why he has prioritised Mill Park Lakes east over Mernda P–12. He needs to explain this to the community. He needs to explain why he dropped Labor's plan to build or upgrade every school in this state by 2016. Those opposite junked that plan, and now all of a sudden they are in a blind panic. They have none of the bureaucrats who understood the growth. They have not had people who could consult with the community and with the council and who understand the growth patterns, how young this population is and how necessary this is. The Minister for Planning has been on the record saying it is a no-brainer that communities with populations the size of Shepparton's will need services in 15 years time. They need them now.

Responses

Mr WELLS (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) — The member for Forest Hill has asked me to visit the seat of Forest Hill to explain to his

constituency issues of law and order. We came to government on a strong and tough law and order platform, and at this point we have a \$2.43 billion police budget, which is the most Victoria Police has ever received in one financial year. We also committed to 1700 extra police — and it is pleasing to note we have 1525 additional police out there on the front line — and to 940 protective services officers, of which 751 are already on the rail network. I will therefore be happy to go out to Forest Hill to work with the member and talk about the task force the Chief Commissioner of Police has set up to make sure we have concentration on front-line issues of concern to all Victorians, such as family violence, ice addiction, drug distribution and manufacturing, bikies and organised crime.

I am also very keen to get an update on the Forest Hill police station. This was a \$12 million commitment made by the member when he was a Liberal candidate, which I remember very well; we had numerous discussions about this police station. We were able to turn the first sod on it a couple of months ago, so I am very keen to visit the police station site to get a view of how the construction is coming along. It will be with great pleasure that I visit the seat of Forest Hill.

Mr DIXON (Minister for Education) — I am glad the member for Yan Yean had the opportunity and the good grace to remain in the house to hear the response to her contribution. The member raised with me her disappointment that Mernda central primary school was not funded in this year's budget.

Ms Green — Explain that to the Mernda community.

Mr DIXON — I will certainly do that. We announced \$191 million in public-private partnerships (PPPs). We are building 11 schools in growth areas in the south-east, the north, the west and the Geelong region. All 11 schools are being built on land this government has purchased because it builds for growth. We work with local communities, local councils and developers to ascertain where the land is needed, where the growth is and in what order that should happen. In consultation we announced 11 sites.

In the member's area, the primary school section of Hazel Glen College is already well and truly under way, and last year we announced the first stage of funding for the secondary college. This year we announced the second stage of funding for the secondary college in the Doreen area. We are really building for growth out there in the north. Of the three PPPs that were announced in the north, we have Epping North, Mernda South and Mill Park Lakes. Obviously

the member is saying to me that the community around Mill Park Lakes should not have its school and the community at Mernda central should move in ahead of Mill Park Lakes. I do not know whether she has talked to her local community about that. I do not know whether it is her electorate or her colleague's electorate. She says we have got it all wrong.

This is a government that consults. As I said, we consult with the community, we consult with council, we consult with developers, and we sat down with those very groups. The council said to us that it wanted all those sites. Mernda South, Epping North and Mill Park Lakes were the sites that community and council consensus had as the three priorities in that area based on population growth and the needs in that area. We are delivering three brand-new schools there on top of the construction of the primary school and both stages of the secondary school at Doreen.

This government is building for the growth of the northern suburbs. Residents of those areas waited for years to have a government that is actually prepared to listen to the community, buy the land and build the schools. The proof of that action was in this year's budget and our last two budgets.

Ms ASHER (Minister for Innovation) — The member for Macedon raised a matter for the Minister for Higher Education and Skills regarding the Victoria University site in Sunbury, and I will refer that matter to him.

The member for Northcote raised an issue for the Minister for Housing regarding affordable housing in the Northcote electorate, and I will refer that matter to the minister.

The member for Bentleigh raised an issue for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship. She asked that the minister accompany the Israeli ambassador to various places throughout her electorate on his Australian visit, and I will refer that matter to the minister.

The member for Mill Park raised an issue for the Premier regarding the renewable energy target, and I will refer that matter to him.

The member for Mordialloc raised a matter for the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development and requested that the minister visit the Edithvale and Parkdale family and children's centres, and I will refer that matter to the minister.

The member for Broadmeadows raised a matter for the Premier regarding the recommendations in the *Betrayal*

of Trust report, and I will refer that matter to the Premier.

The member for Benalla raised an issue for the Minister for Sport and Recreation and requested that the minister visit Howmans Gap to look at a sport and recreation camp there with a view to a possible upgrade, and I will refer that matter to the minister.

The member for Caulfield raised an issue for the Minister for Community Services and asked her to meet with various constituents over matters relating to family violence, and I will refer that matter to the minister.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McIntosh) —
Order! The house now stands adjourned until the next sitting day.

House adjourned 4.43 p.m. until Tuesday, 10 June.

