

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

15 April to 4 May 2016

(Extract from book 6)

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

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

HANSARD¹⁵⁰



1866–2016

Following a select committee investigation, Victorian Hansard was conceived when the following amended motion was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 23 June 1865:

That in the opinion of this house, provision should be made to secure a more accurate report of the debates in Parliament, in the form of *Hansard*.

The sessional volume for the first sitting period of the Fifth Parliament, from 12 February to 10 April 1866, contains the following preface dated 11 April:

As a preface to the first volume of “Parliamentary Debates” (new series), it is not inappropriate to state that prior to the Fifth Parliament of Victoria the newspapers of the day virtually supplied the only records of the debates of the Legislature.

With the commencement of the Fifth Parliament, however, an independent report was furnished by a special staff of reporters, and issued in weekly parts.

This volume contains the complete reports of the proceedings of both Houses during the past session.

In 2016 the Hansard Unit of the Department of Parliamentary Services continues the work begun 150 years ago of providing an accurate and complete report of the proceedings of both houses of the Victorian Parliament.

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier and Minister for Education	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Employment	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
Minister for Industry, and Minister for Energy and Resources	The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, MP
Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Minister for Sport and Minister for Veterans	The Hon. J. H. Eren, MP
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries	The Hon. M. P. Foley, MP
Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation	The Hon. J. F. Garrett, MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services	The Hon. J. Hennessy, MP
Minister for Training and Skills	The Hon. S. R. Herbert, MLC
Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Industrial Relations	The Hon. N. M. Hutchins, MP
Special Minister of State	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Police and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Kairouz, MP

**OFFICE-HOLDERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

Speaker:

The Hon. TELMO LANGUILLER

Deputy Speaker:

Mr D. A. NARDELLA

Acting Speakers:

Mr Angus, Mr Blackwood, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Carbines, Mr Crisp, Mr Dixon, Ms Edwards, Ms Halfpenny,
Ms Kilkenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr McGuire, Ms McLeish, Mr Pearson, Ms Ryall, Ms Thomas,
Mr Thompson, Ms Thomson, Ms Ward and Mr Watt.

Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Premier:

The Hon. D. M. ANDREWS

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Premier:

The Hon. J. A. MERLINO

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

The Hon. M. J. GUY

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

The Hon. D. J. HODGETT

Leader of The Nationals:

The Hon. P. L. WALSH

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

Ms S. RYAN

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 A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

Member	District	Party	Member	District	Party
Allan, Ms Jacinta Marie	Bendigo East	ALP	McLeish, Ms Lucinda Gaye	Eildon	LP
Andrews, Mr Daniel Michael	Mulgrave	ALP	Merlino, Mr James Anthony	Monbulk	ALP
Angus, Mr Neil Andrew Warwick	Forest Hill	LP	Morris, Mr David Charles	Mornington	LP
Asher, Ms Louise	Brighton	LP	Mulder, Mr Terence Wynn ²	Polwarth	LP
Battin, Mr Bradley William	Gembrook	LP	Napthine, Dr Denis Vincent ³	South-West Coast	LP
Blackwood, Mr Gary John	Narracan	LP	Nardella, Mr Donato Antonio	Melton	ALP
Blandthorn, Ms Elizabeth Anne	Pascoe Vale	ALP	Neville, Ms Lisa Mary	Bellarine	ALP
Britnell, Ms Roma ¹	South-West Coast	LP	Noonan, Mr Wade Matthew	Williamstown	ALP
Brooks, Mr Colin William	Bundoora	ALP	Northe, Mr Russell John	Morwell	Nats
Bull, Mr Joshua Michael	Sunbury	ALP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ⁴	Gippsland South	Nats
Bull, Mr Timothy Owen	Gippsland East	Nats	O'Brien, Mr Michael Anthony	Malvern	LP
Burgess, Mr Neale Ronald	Hastings	LP	Pakula, Mr Martin Philip	Keysborough	ALP
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Carroll, Mr Benjamin Alan	Niddrie	ALP	Paynter, Mr Brian Francis	Bass	LP
Clark, Mr Robert William	Box Hill	LP	Pearson, Mr Daniel James	Essendon	ALP
Couzens, Ms Christine Anne	Geelong	ALP	Perera, Mr Jude	Cranbourne	ALP
Crisp, Mr Peter Laurence	Mildura	Nats	Pesutto, Mr John	Hawthorn	LP
D'Ambrosio, Ms Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Richardson, Mr Timothy Noel	Mordialloc	ALP
Dimopoulos, Mr Stephen	Oakleigh	ALP	Richardson, Ms Fiona Catherine Alison	Northcote	ALP
Dixon, Mr Martin Francis	Nepean	LP	Riordan, Mr Richard ⁵	Polwarth	LP
Donnellan, Mr Luke Anthony	Narre Warren North	ALP	Ryall, Ms Deanne Sharon	Ringwood	LP
Edbrooke, Mr Paul Andrew	Frankston	ALP	Ryan, Mr Peter Julian ⁶	Gippsland South	Nats
Edwards, Ms Janice Maree	Bendigo West	ALP	Ryan, Ms Stephanie Maureen	Euroa	Nats
Eren, Mr John Hamdi	Lara	ALP	Sandell, Ms Ellen	Melbourne	Greens
Foley, Mr Martin Peter	Albert Park	ALP	Scott, Mr Robin David	Preston	ALP
Fyffe, Mrs Christine Anne	Evelyn	LP	Sheed, Ms Suzanna	Shepparton	Ind
Garrett, Ms Jane Furneaux	Brunswick	ALP	Smith, Mr Ryan	Warrandyte	LP
Gidley, Mr Michael Xavier Charles	Mount Waverley	LP	Smith, Mr Timothy Colin	Kew	LP
Graley, Ms Judith Ann	Narre Warren South	ALP	Southwick, Mr David James	Caulfield	LP
Green, Ms Danielle Louise	Yan Yean	ALP	Spence, Ms Rosalind Louise	Yuroke	ALP
Guy, Mr Matthew Jason	Bulleen	LP	Staikos, Mr Nicholas	Bentleigh	ALP
Halfpenny, Ms Bronwyn	Thomastown	ALP	Staley, Ms Louise Eileen	Ripon	LP
Hennessy, Ms Jill	Altona	ALP	Suleyman, Ms Natalie	St Albans	ALP
Hibbins, Mr Samuel Peter	Prahran	Greens	Thomas, Ms Mary-Anne	Macedon	ALP
Hodgett, Mr David John	Croydon	LP	Thompson, Mr Murray Hamilton Ross	Sandringham	LP
Howard, Mr Geoffrey Kemp	Buninyong	ALP	Thomson, Ms Marsha Rose	Footscray	ALP
Hutchins, Ms Natalie Maree Sykes	Sydenham	ALP	Tilley, Mr William John	Benambra	LP
Kairouz, Ms Marlene	Kororoit	ALP	Victoria, Ms Heidi	Bayswater	LP
Katos, Mr Andrew	South Barwon	LP	Wakeling, Mr Nicholas	Ferntree Gully	LP
Kealy, Ms Emma Jayne	Lowan	Nats	Walsh, Mr Peter Lindsay	Murray Plains	Nats
Kilkenny, Ms Sonya	Carrum	ALP	Ward, Ms Vicki	Eltham	ALP
Knight, Ms Sharon Patricia	Wendouree	ALP	Watt, Mr Graham Travis	Burwood	LP
Languiller, Mr Telmo Ramon	Tarneit	ALP	Wells, Mr Kimberley Arthur	Rowville	LP
Lim, Mr Muy Hong	Clarinda	ALP	Williams, Ms Gabrielle	Dandenong	ALP
McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan	Ovens Valley	Nats	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP

¹Elected 31 October 2015

²Resigned 3 September 2015

³Resigned 3 September 2015

⁴Elected 14 March 2015

⁵Elected 31 October 2015

⁶Resigned 2 February 2015

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

ALP — Labor Party; Greens — The Greens;
Ind — Independent; LP — Liberal Party; Nats — The Nationals.

Legislative Assembly committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Ms D’Ambrosio, Mr Morris, Ms Neville, Ms Ryan, Ms Sandell, Mr Scott and Mr Wells.

Standing Orders Committee — The Speaker, Ms Allan, Ms Asher, Mr Brooks, Mr Clark, Mr Hibbins, Mr Hodgett, Ms Kairouz, Mr Nardella, Ms Ryan and Ms Sheed.

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Staikos and Ms Thomson.
(*Council*): Ms Bath, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O’Brien, Mr Pakula, Ms Richardson and Mr Walsh. (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Dalidakis, Ms Dunn, Mr Jennings and Ms Wooldridge.

Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Nardella and Ms Ryall.
(*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmr and Mr Melhem.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Asher, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dixon, Mr Northe and Ms Spence.
(*Council*): Ms Patten, Mr Somyurek.

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr Richardson, Mr Tilley and Ms Ward. (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Mr Young.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards, Ms Kealy, Ms McLeish and Ms Sheed. (*Council*): Mr Finn.

House Committee — (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson. (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Ms Hartland, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Hibbins, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Richardson, Ms Thomson and Mr Wells. (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Ms Symes.

Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley. (*Council*): Mr Eideh and Ms Patten.

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward. (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dimopoulos, Ms Kilkenny and Mr Pesutto. (*Council*): Ms Bath and Mr Dalla-Riva.

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ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.

15 April to 4 May 2016

Sandringham electorate**Question 6804**

Question asked by: Member for Sandringham
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 23 February 2016

REPLY:

On 14 January 2016 the Mentone Activity Centre (MAC) was rezoned to the Activity Centre Zone. The purpose of the Activity Centre Zone (ACZ) is, 'to encourage a mixture of uses and intensive development of the activity centre,' and 'to deliver a diversity of housing at higher densities to make optimum use of the facilities and services.'

The blanket application of mandatory height controls across the MAC would be inconsistent with the purpose of the zone. It would also be inconsistent with Planning Practice Note 60 which states that 'the application of discretionary height controls combined with clear design objectives is the preferred form of height and setback controls.'

The recommendations of the 2013 Panel Report were considered in making this decision, together with other sources of advice, including the advice of my Department. The decision is also consistent with all my previous decisions for all other Activity Centre Zones in the metropolitan area.

The approved heights in the Mentone Activity Centre range from 2–4 storeys. The schedule to the Activity Centre Zone encourages applicants to build within the discretionary height controls by "switching off" third party notice and appeal rights for proposals that comply with the height controls. If an applicant seeks to exceed the discretionary height controls, they face a full public notice and appeal process. The community would have input into these proposals if they arise, and Council would be required to consider this input in their decision-making.

Dandenong electorate**Question 6807**

Question asked by: Member for Dandenong
Directed to: Minister for Industry
Asked on: 23 February 2016

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Dandenong for her constituency question. She is a tireless advocate for her community, particularly in relation to creating sustainable job opportunities for Dandenong.

The Andrews Labor Government has a clear plan for driving jobs in the wind industry.

Unlike the previous Government who sought to destroy the wind industry, including their supply chain businesses, we recognise the economic benefits that are derived by investing in renewable energy.

Since coming to office, we have dismantled the previous Government's shackles on the wind industry. This includes changing their onerous wind farm planning laws. Whereby, we have reduced the exclusion zone for proposed wind turbines from within two kilometres to within one kilometre of a dwelling. Further we have streamlined the process for amending planning permits where those amendments do not increase the number of turbines or move turbines within one kilometre of a dwelling.

We are also using our own purchasing power to support the clean energy industry. The Government will source renewable energy certificates from new projects in Victoria, bringing forward around \$200 million of new investment in at least 100 megawatts of renewable energy projects. This means 1000 new jobs, including for wind energy supply chain companies.

We are also supporting clean energy jobs through our New Energy Jobs Fund. The New Energy Jobs Fund provides grants of between \$50 000 and \$1 million to Victorian-based projects that create long-term sustainable jobs, increase the uptake of renewable energy generation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and drive innovation in new energy technologies. The first round of successful applicants will be announced in due course.

I thank again the Member for Dandenong for her question. I look forward to working with her closely to grow clean energy jobs in her electorate, and across Victoria.

Sunbury electorate

Question 6834

Question asked by: Member for Sunbury
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 25 February 2016

REPLY:

From the first day of Melbourne Metro operations, an additional 39 000 passengers will be able to travel on Melbourne's rail network during each peak period.

Around 12 000 of the extra 39 000 passengers will be accommodated on the new dedicated Sunbury-Cranbourne/Pakenham line, with the remaining 27 000 capacity uplift achieved on other lines.

The new end-to-end Sunbury-Cranbourne/Pakenham line will have convenient interchange points at Melbourne Central and Flinders Street stations and will benefit from more frequent and reliable services.

Caulfield electorate

Question 6904

Question asked by: Member for Caulfield
Directed to: Minister for Energy and Resources
Asked on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

The pipeline is not due for replacement. I am also not aware of the replacement of a gas main as part of a level crossing removal.

St Albans electorate

Question 6913

Question asked by: Member for St Albans
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to investing in education and school infrastructure. This has been demonstrated through the allocation of \$730 million to school facilities in the 2015-16 State Budget. The funding represented a crucial first step in creating the Education State, and we will continue to invest in school infrastructure throughout this term of government.

I am advised that the Department of Education and Training has been working with the Furlong Park School for Deaf Children to address its need for an all-weather upgrade of playing surfaces. As such, I am delighted to confirm that \$40 000 has recently been made available to facilitate this. We believe that all students deserve the best possible environment in which to learn, and I trust that this funding will help Furlong Park achieve this.

Gippsland South electorate

Question 6962

Question asked by: Member for Gippsland South
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government continues to liaise with the Commonwealth Government, on opportunities for increased Federal funding for nationally significant transport projects across Victoria, including the duplication of strategic regional highways.

These discussions are ongoing.

Sunbury electorate

Question 6963

Question asked by: Member for Sunbury
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

Drivers who use the West Gate Bridge and the Lorimer Street off-ramp are affected by the construction of an extra lane off the Bolte Bridge and along the West Gate Freeway. Traffic travelling down the Lorimer Street ramp no longer has a dedicated lane and needs to merge with the West Gate Freeway traffic travelling from the West Gate Bridge to the Burnley Tunnel.

VicRoads encourages drivers to plan their journey, allow extra travel time and consider other modes of transport or alternative routes.

Once traffic begins to settle into new patterns, drivers travelling into the city in the morning peak should expect their trip to take up to 15 minutes longer. The evening peak period will not be affected by the construction.

Several alternative routes are available to drivers heading inbound on the West Gate Bridge or the CityLink Tullamarine Freeway. From the West Gate Bridge, drivers can take the Geelong Road exit to Footscray Road, the Williamstown Road exit to Footscray Road or the Todd Road exit to Lorimer Street. From CityLink, drivers can take the Footscray Road exit to Wurundjeri Way or the Dynon Road exit to Kings Street.

For drivers who cannot take an alternative route, a temporary ramp signal system will be used to regulate the volume of traffic merging from the Lorimer Street exit to the West Gate Freeway. This will assist in controlling the flow of traffic onto the West Gate Freeway and help drivers merge more easily.

New line markings on the freeway, concrete barriers and reduced speed limits will also be in place to keep drivers and work crews safe during construction.

VicRoads recommends that drivers move into their preferred lane early and avoid changing lanes where possible.

The latest Bluetooth technology will provide up-to-the-minute information about delays and alternative routes, so drivers are also asked to switch on their Bluetooth before heading out.

The information from the Bluetooth network will help drivers stay up-to-date and plan their journey through the VicTraffic app or via citylinktullawidening.vic.gov.au. On Twitter, drivers can follow @VicRoads or @CityLinkMelb or search for #CTWidening.

VicRoads and Transurban will continue to assess conditions to ensure that the impacts of the work can be mitigated as much as possible.

Mildura electorate

Question 6999

Question asked by: Member for Mildura
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

I am sorry to hear of the cancellation of Mrs Purkiss' elective surgery and acknowledge the distress and inconvenience that this has caused. I understand that Mrs Purkiss' surgery has been rescheduled.

I am advised that the Mildura Base Hospital had a higher than normal demand on services, including emergency department attendances and patients requiring urgent admission in February 2016. Unfortunately, this resulted in the cancellation of a small number of elective surgery procedures, including Mrs Purkiss'.

Mildura Base Hospital received \$94.4 million from the Andrews Labor Government in 2015-16, which represented an increase of \$6.5 million from the previous financial year. This funding was provided to support the hospital to meet increasing demands and to expand and improve services and care.

In recognition of the growing demands in the region, as part of the \$200 million Hospital Beds Rescue Fund, the Andrews Labor Government invested to open a four-bed Short Stay Unit at Mildura Base Hospital in 2015. This will enable the hospital to treat 1400 emergency patients each year and free up inpatient bed capacity for elective surgery patients.

In contrast, the former Coalition Government cut \$1 billion from health during its four years in office.

This government is continuing to invest in health services right across Victoria to ensure that patients can receive the care they need closer to home.

Dandenong electorate

Question 7000

Question asked by: Member for Dandenong
Directed to: Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Asked on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is dedicated to supporting our youth to stay engaged and realise their potential, and we are working closely with community leaders and organisations to promote community cohesion and resilience.

Over \$99 000 has been provided to the City of Greater Dandenong in 2015-16 to facilitate a program of place-based social cohesion initiatives, encouraging families and communities to build connections between Victorians from different backgrounds. Additionally, Melbourne Victory has been funded to work with disengaged young people across Melbourne, including within the City of Greater Dandenong.

The Victorian Government has also provided \$170 600 to the Southern Migrant Resource Centre and \$229 400 to South East Community Link for 2014-16 through the Refugee Action Program, to support the settlement needs of refugee communities in Melbourne's south.

Two new programs opened in March:

- Community Harmony Program — for projects and events that build understanding and acceptance of Victoria’s cultural and faith diversity, and develop community harmony and enhance social cohesion; and the
- Capacity Building and Participation Program — designed to build the knowledge and skills of multicultural communities across Victoria to participate in everyday life.

The new Community Resilience Grants program also opened in April, which offers funding for community and not-for-profit organisations and peak bodies. These grants will fund projects designed to build resilience to violent extremist narratives, and develop the capacity of communities and young people to develop the confidence and skills to advocate for their concerns through peaceful, democratic means.

Information about these grants is available at www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/grants.

Sunbury electorate

Question 7002

Question asked by: Member for Sunbury
Directed to: Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Asked on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is pleased to be supporting the Hume Interfaith Network, in partnership with Banksia Gardens Community Services, Hume City Council and the Australian Turkish Institute, with almost \$100 000 for initiatives which build social cohesion and community connections for young Victorians from diverse backgrounds. I congratulate the Hume Interfaith Network on the success of the One Community Many Faiths project.

Four multicultural grants programs were opened in March to support social cohesion, inclusion and participation for culturally diverse Victorians. Funding is available for:

- Capacity Building and Participation, including organisational support for small ethno-specific organisations, seniors clubs and community language schools;
- Community Harmony, for partnerships and initiatives that build social cohesion and intercultural engagement;
- Multicultural Festivals and Events; and
- Community Infrastructure and Cultural Precincts.

I encourage the Hume Interfaith Network and other multicultural groups to find out more information at www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/grants.

Broadmeadows electorate

Question 7004

Question asked by: Member for Broadmeadows
Directed to: Minister for Industry
Asked on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

I refer to the matter raised by Mr Frank McGuire MP, Member for Broadmeadows, on 22 March 2016 regarding what the Victorian Government has been doing to develop industry in Broadmeadows and I thank Mr McGuire for his question.

The Victorian Government recognises the challenges faced by communities including in Broadmeadows as a result of the wind down of passenger car manufacturing in Victoria by the three major automotive manufacturers.

Last year the government also released the Towards Future Industries: Victoria's Automotive Transition Plan. This \$46.5 million plan will help businesses, worker and communities affected by the closure of major car manufacturing to meet the challenges ahead and capitalise on emerging opportunities.

To support communities, the government established the new Local Industry Fund for Transition (LIFT) to create jobs in communities most impacted by the cessation of passenger car manufacturing and \$10.6 million has been allocated to Melbourne's north. This builds on the Melbourne's North Innovation and Investment Fund, which provided around \$24 million to support projects in the region.

To support automotive workers, new Skills and Job Centres have been established to provide a one-stop-shop to access a range of government support, including individualised career advice and subsidised training.

To encourage businesses to create more jobs, the government established the \$100 million Back To Work Scheme which provides employers with incentives of up to \$7000 to employ ex-automotive workers.

Furthermore, the government will provide \$5 million to deliver the Automotive Supply Chain Transition Program. This program provides current automotive suppliers with tailored support to diversify into new markets.

Victoria has a number of competitive advantages and they provide a strong foundation for a diverse and resilient economy. But we need to harness these strengths if we are to grow our priority sectors — the sectors that will shape the century. That is why we established the \$200 million Future Industries Fund, to fully realise growth potential in the industries of the future and the jobs that come with them.

These priority sectors are:

- Medical technology and pharmaceuticals
- New energy technology
- Food and fibre
- Transport, defence and construction technology
- International education and
- Professional services.

On 17 March this year the Victorian Government launched its Sector Strategies for each of the above sectors following extensive consultation with industry stakeholders throughout 2015.

Supporting the Future Industries Fund are three grant programs to drive investment growth in the priority sectors. These are the:

- \$5 million Manufacturing Program
- \$20 million Sector Growth Program
- \$20 million New Energy Jobs Fund.

As you can see, the Andrews Government has been actively engaging with industry to establish a suite of assistance programs and will continue to do so to ensure that the impact of the wind down of passenger car manufacturing is minimised and to create jobs for Victorians.

Mordialloc electorate**Question 7019**

Question asked by: Member for Mordialloc
Directed to: Minister for Families and Children
Asked on: 23 March 2016

REPLY:

On Thursday 17 March, 2016 I was pleased to launch the Early ABLES resources for all Victorian early childhood education and care services at The Harbour Family and Children's Centre, Gowrie Victoria, Docklands.

The ABLES tool has been available for school age children for a number of years, and now Early ABLES will support early childhood educators working with children aged between two and five.

These resources will help early childhood teachers to stay up-to-date on current thinking on the teaching of young children with disabilities, as part of their new professional development requirements as registered teachers with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

I'm pleased to advise that these resources are now available for the kindergartens in your community.

The educators at Chelsea Heights and Chelsea Kindergartens can access the Early ABLES online professional learning program and the Early ARLES assessment tool on the Department of Education and Training website.

I'd also like to thank-you for your continued advocacy on behalf of Chelsea and Chelsea Heights Kindergartens.

After your extensive efforts last year to support the capital needs of both kindergartens while solving a vexed issue of much community concern inherited from the previous government, I am pleased to report that council planning to deliver the projects for both kindergartens is well underway.

Eltham electorate**Question 7021**

Question asked by: Member for Eltham
Directed to: Minister for Sport
Asked on: 23 March 2016

REPLY:

I'd like to commend you for your commitment to advocating the importance of sport and recreation in your electorate, especially for women. Providing high quality sport and recreation infrastructure is a key aim of the government, and is integral to the health and well-being of all Victorians.

In 2015 I launched the \$100 million Community Sport Infrastructure Fund to support the upgrade and development of community sports facilities over the next four years. This includes \$10 million for the Female Friendly Facilities category. The 2017-18 funding round of the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund opened on 12 April 2016.

Shepparton electorate**Question 7022**

Question asked by: Member for Shepparton
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 23 March 2016

REPLY:

VicRoads is the responsible authority for the pavement and kerb, and Public Transport Victoria is responsible for the positioning and operation of the bus stop.

Moira Shire is responsible for the pedestrian area behind the road kerb.

VicRoads advises me that it has been in contact with the store manager of the Wunghnu General Store and is in the process of repairing the damaged pavement and remaining broken kerb lengths.

This work is scheduled to be completed in April 2016.

Pascoe Vale electorate

Question 7023

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Families and Children
Asked on: 23 March 2016

REPLY:

Investment in early years infrastructure is a priority for the Andrews Labor Government, and in the 2015-2016 State Budget we committed \$50 million, over four years, to the Children's Facilities Capital Program (CFCP). This program aims to develop flexible early childhood facilities across the state, and to ensure that every child has access to local, high-quality kindergarten and early childhood services.

Under the CFCP, minor grants are available to support services which deliver funded kindergarten programs and require small infrastructure improvements and information technology assistance. The CFCP delivered over \$2.6 million in grants last year to over 391 early education and care services across the state in support of minor improvements and updated digital hardware.

During 2016-17 there are three forms of minor infrastructure grant available, namely:

- 'Expansion Grants' of up to \$25 000, to help early childhood services meet 2016 educator-to-child ratio changes;
- 'Refurbishment Grants' of up to \$10 000, to improve the indoor and/or outdoor space used by children; and
- 'Information Technology Grants' of up to \$1500 for services to update digital hardware.

The grants process opened on 31 March 2016, and applications will close at 4pm on 16 May, 2016.

Further details regarding eligibility and assessment criteria for grant categories can be accessed on the Department of Education and Training's website. If your constituents have any queries, or would like any further information, they may contact the Children's Facilities Capital Program team on (03) 9651 3399 or by email at: childrens.capital.program@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Polwarth electorate

Question 7024

Question asked by: Member for Polwarth
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 23 March 2016

REPLY:

The level crossing on Phalps Road is indeed part of the Safer Country Crossings program which will upgrade 52 high risk crossings in country Victoria over four years.

The design for this site has been approved by the project steering committee and the crossing is listed for upgrade in the current year's program.

Early works for power supply to the site are complete and site works for this location are likely to commence in June 2016.

The upgraded crossing is planned to be commissioned late 2016.

Niddrie electorate

Question 7029

Question asked by: Member for Niddrie
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

Drivers who use the West Gate Bridge and the Lorimer Street off-ramp are affected by the construction of an extra lane off the Bolte Bridge and along the West Gate Freeway. Traffic travelling down the Lorimer Street ramp no longer has a dedicated lane and is now merging with the West Gate Freeway traffic travelling from the West Gate Bridge to the Burnley Tunnel.

This construction is affecting city-bound drivers coming from the west and north, including the Niddrie electorate.

VicRoads encourages drivers to plan their journey, allow extra travel time and consider other modes of transport or alternate routes.

Once traffic begins to settle into new patterns, drivers travelling into the city in the morning peak should expect their trip to take up to 15 minutes longer. The evening peak period will not be affected by the construction.

Several alternate routes are available to drivers heading inbound on the West Gate Bridge or the CityLink Tullamarine Freeway. From the West Gate Bridge, drivers can take the Geelong Road exit to Footscray Road, the Williamstown Road exit to Footscray Road or the Todd Road exit to Lorimer Street. From CityLink, drivers can take the Footscray Road exit to Wurundjeri Way or the Dynon Road exit to Kings Street.

For drivers who cannot take an alternate route, a temporary ramp signal system will be used to regulate the volume of traffic merging from the Lorimer Street exit to the West Gate Freeway. This will assist in controlling the flow of traffic onto the West Gate Freeway and help drivers merge more easily.

New line markings on the freeway, concrete barriers and reduced speed limits will also be in place to keep drivers and work crews safe during construction.

VicRoads recommends that drivers move into their preferred lane early and avoid changing lanes where possible.

The latest Bluetooth technology will provide up-to-the-minute information about delays and alternative routes, so drivers are also asked to switch on their Bluetooth before heading out.

The information from the Bluetooth network will help drivers stay up-to-date and plan their journey through the VicTraffic app or via citylinktullawidening.vic.gov.au. On Twitter, drivers can follow @VicRoads and @CityLinkMelb or search for #CTWidening.

Buninyong electorate

Question 7033

Question asked by: Member for Buninyong
Directed to: Treasurer
Asked on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

Proceeds from the lease of the Port of Melbourne will form part of the Government's commitment to rural and regional Victoria. Lease proceeds will go into the Victorian Transport Fund (VTF), which will support key transport infrastructure initiatives throughout Victoria. The Delivering Victorian Infrastructure (Port of Melbourne

Lease Transaction) Act 2016 requires at least 10 per cent of net transaction proceeds out of the VTF be made available to regional infrastructure projects.

A new \$200 million Agriculture Infrastructure and Jobs Fund will also be established, driving economic growth in our regions. The Fund will support Victorian farmers from paddock to port by investing in agricultural infrastructure and supply chains, reducing costs so our farmers and agribusinesses stay competitive.

Eildon electorate

Question 7077

Question asked by: Member for Eildon
Directed to: Minister for Tourism and Major Events
Asked on: 12 April 2016

REPLY:

I note the contributions of the Member for Eildon on 12 and 13 April 2016, in relation to funding for the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show. I also note and congratulate the organisers of the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show, which has many positive economic and social benefits for the community across Alexandra.

In relation to the Member for Eildon's 12 April parliamentary contribution, I encourage her or the organisers to forward my office a formal invitation with all the event details for the 2016 event, so it can be considered and responded to accordingly.

In relation to the Member for Eildon's 13th April parliamentary contribution regarding the

Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show, I wish to advise the Member of the facts and context around this event's support.

I am advised the Alexandra Truck and Ute Show received funding between 2012 and 2014 inclusive. The funding totalled \$27 000 and was allocated under the Marysville and Surrounds Bushfire Recovery Fund. I am advised this was not ongoing funding. The State Government funding program available for events such as this is the \$20 million Regional Events Fund which was unveiled on 27 April 2016. I would encourage the event organiser to look into this option. I am further advised they have submitted no request for funding.

I encourage the Member to convey this to the event organisers.