

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**Thursday, 1 September 2016**

**(Extract from book 11)**

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# HANSARD<sup>150</sup>



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**

(from 20 June 2016)

Premier . . . . .	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, and Minister for Emergency Services (from 10 June 2016) [Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation 10 June to 20 June 2016] . . . . .	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer . . . . .	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Major Projects. . . . .	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade . . . . .	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Suburban Development . . . . .	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 Health and Minister for Ambulance Services . . . . .	The Hon. J. Hennessy, MP
Minister for Training and Skills, Minister for International Education and Minister for Corrections . . . . .	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
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Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs . . . . .	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Police and Minister for Water . . . . .	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Industry and Employment, and Minister for Resources. . . . .	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
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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 G. A. Tierney, MLC

**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**

<b>Member</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Party</b>
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 <sup>2</sup>	Polwarth	LP
Battin, Mr Bradley William	Gembrook	LP	Naphine, Dr Denis Vincent <sup>3</sup>	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 <sup>1</sup>	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 <sup>4</sup>	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
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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 <sup>5</sup>	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 <sup>6</sup>	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
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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
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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
McGuire, Mr Frank	Broadmeadows	ALP			

<sup>1</sup> Elected 31 October 2015

<sup>2</sup> Resigned 3 September 2015

<sup>3</sup> Resigned 3 September 2015

<sup>4</sup> Elected 14 March 2015

<sup>5</sup> Elected 31 October 2015

<sup>6</sup> Resigned 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 Elasmarr 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 and Ms McLeish. (*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*): 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.

# CONTENTS

**THURSDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2016**

## PETITIONS

<i>Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement</i> .....	3313
<i>Miners Rest saleyards</i> .....	3313

## PORT MANAGEMENT ACT 1995

<i>Competitively neutral pricing principles order</i> .....	3313
---	------

## DOCUMENTS .....

## CRIMES AMENDMENT (CARJACKING) BILL 2016

<i>Introduction and first reading</i> .....	3313
---	------

## ROYAL ASSENT .....

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

<i>Adjournment</i> .....	3314
--------------------------	------

## MEMBERS STATEMENTS

<i>Stud Road–Burwood Highway, Wantirna South</i> .....	3319
<i>Wantirna College</i> .....	3319
<i>Battle of Long Tan commemoration</i> .....	3319, 3320
<i>Fairpark Netball Club</i> .....	3319
<i>Country Fire Authority Scoresby brigade</i> .....	3319
<i>Monica Hayes</i> .....	3319, 3324
<i>Scotts Beach, Cobram</i> .....	3319
<i>Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club</i> .....	3320
<i>Gender equality</i> .....	3320
<i>Police resources</i> .....	3320
<i>Mums Supporting Families in Need</i> .....	3321
<i>Caulfield–Dandenong line elevated rail</i> .....	3321
<i>Bentleigh Secondary College</i> .....	3321
<i>St Kilda Junction development</i> .....	3322
<i>Murrumbena Primary School</i> .....	3322
<i>Biggest Ever Blokes BBQ</i> .....	3322
<i>Sale Specialist School</i> .....	3323
<i>John ‘Jack’ Vardy</i> .....	3323
<i>Jaryd Clifford</i> .....	3323
<i>Montmorency Asylum Seekers Support Group</i> .....	3323
<i>Country Fire Authority volunteers</i> .....	3323
<i>Diggers Rest Football Club</i> .....	3324
<i>Parliamentary internship program</i> .....	3324
<i>Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement</i> .....	3324
<i>Skills First</i> .....	3324
<i>Waurin Ponds police forum</i> .....	3325
<i>Rotary Club of Kardinia</i> .....	3325
<i>Geelong Business Excellence Awards</i> .....	3325
<i>Moonee Ponds Bowling Club</i> .....	3325
<i>Essendon Hockey Club</i> .....	3325
<i>Victorian Baptist Churches of Christ and Affiliated Churches Netball Association</i> .....	3325
<i>Suharso and Nurhayati Monoarfa</i> .....	3325
<i>Yarra Junior Football League</i> .....	3326
<i>DayHab</i> .....	3326
<i>Kem Ley</i> .....	3326

## CRIMES AMENDMENT (CARJACKING AND HOME INVASION) BILL 2016

<i>Statement of compatibility</i> .....	3326
<i>Second reading</i> .....	3329

## MELBOURNE AND OLYMPIC PARKS AMENDMENT BILL 2016

<i>Second reading</i> .....	3330, 3346
-----------------------------	------------

<i>Third reading</i> .....	3382
----------------------------	------

## DISTINGUISHED VISITORS .....

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

<i>Country Fire Authority former chair</i> .....	3333
3337, 3338, 3339	
<i>Ministers statements: Doctors in Secondary Schools</i> .....	3334
<i>Police resources</i> .....	3334, 3336
<i>Ministers statements: unconventional gas</i> .....	3336
<i>Ministers statements: economy</i> .....	3339
<i>Pakenham police resources</i> .....	3339, 3341
<i>Ministers statements: level crossings</i> .....	3341
<i>United Firefighters Union Victorian secretary</i> .....	3342, 3343
<i>Ministers statements: school breakfast clubs</i> .....	3344

## SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS

<i>Member for Warrandyte</i> .....	3336
<i>Members for Kew and Frankston</i> .....	3338
<i>Members for Ripon and South-West Coast</i> .....	3339
<i>Member for Macedon</i> .....	3343
<i>Member for Morwell</i> .....	3343

## CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

<i>Brighton electorate</i> .....	3344
<i>Broadmeadows electorate</i> .....	3344
<i>Gippsland East electorate</i> .....	3345
<i>Eltham electorate</i> .....	3345
<i>South Barwon electorate</i> .....	3345
<i>Essendon electorate</i> .....	3345
<i>Eildon electorate</i> .....	3345
<i>Pascoe Vale electorate</i> .....	3346
<i>Polwarth electorate</i> .....	3346
<i>Niddrie electorate</i> .....	3346

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AMENDMENT (OFFICE OF THE VICTORIAN INFORMATION COMMISSIONER) BILL 2016

<i>Second reading</i> .....	3382
<i>Third reading</i> .....	3383

## POLICE AND JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2016

<i>Second reading</i> .....	3383
<i>Third reading</i> .....	3383

## NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORDER SCHEME BILL 2016

<i>Second reading</i> .....	3383
<i>Third reading</i> .....	3383

## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SECTOR COMMUNICATION STANDARDS) BILL 2016

<i>Second reading</i> .....	3383
<i>Third reading</i> .....	3383

## ADJOURNMENT

<i>Bayside retirement village rates</i> .....	3383
<i>Station Street, Carrum</i> .....	3383
<i>State Emergency Service Wangaratta unit</i> .....	3384
<i>Northern suburbs netball facilities</i> .....	3384
<i>Esplanade, Mount Martha</i> .....	3385
<i>Narre Warren police</i> .....	3385
<i>Wesburn Primary School</i> .....	3385

# CONTENTS

---

<i>Ascot Vale Primary School</i> .....	3386
<i>Sandringham electorate lifesaving clubs</i> .....	3386
<i>Country Fire Authority Plenty station</i> .....	3387
<i>Responses</i> .....	3387

**Thursday, 1 September 2016**

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

**PETITIONS**

**Following petitions presented to house:**

**Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement**

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of certain citizens of the state of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Assembly that Premier Daniel Andrews must not hand control of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) to the United Firefighters Union (UFU).

Volunteer firefighters have protected Victorians for more than 100 years across Victoria, and as a community we support the volunteers and send this message to Daniel Andrews and the Victorian Labor Party: keep your hands off the CFA.

**By Ms McLEISH (Eildon) (57 signatures).**

**Miners Rest saleyards**

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of residents in Victoria calls on the Legislative Assembly to note that the proposed saleyards for Miners Rest are not supported by the residents of Miners Rest.

Local residents were denied appropriate consultation by the EPA to have input into issuing of a works permit. We therefore demand that the Minister for Planning immediately order an independent review of the flawed process including the decision by the EPA to grant works approval which will see intrusive works with substantial impact on the environment and the surrounding community and that the responsible authority desists from making final approvals until this review has been made public.

**By Ms STALEY (Ripon) (852 signatures).**

**Tabled.**

**Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Eildon be considered next day on motion of Ms McLEISH (Eildon).**

**Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Ripon be considered next day on motion of Ms STALEY (Ripon).**

**PORT MANAGEMENT ACT 1995**

**Competitively neutral pricing principles order**

**Mr DONNELLAN (Minister for Ports), by leave, presented order.**

**Tabled.**

**DOCUMENTS**

**Tabled by Clerk:**

*National Parks Act 1975* — Greater Alpine National Parks Management Plan

Ombudsman — Good Practice Guide to Handling Complaints Report and Guide — Ordered to be published.

**CRIMES AMENDMENT (CARJACKING) BILL 2016**

*Introduction and first reading*

**Received from Council.**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I understand that the member for Box Hill will take charge of this bill.

**Mr CLARK (Box Hill)** — I move:

That this bill be now read a first time.

**House divided on motion:**

*Ayes, 35*

Angus, Mr	O'Brien, Mr D.
Battin, Mr	O'Brien, Mr M.
Blackwood, Mr	Paynter, Mr
Britnell, Ms	Pesutto, Mr
Bull, Mr T.	Riordan, Mr
Burgess, Mr	Ryan, Ms
Clark, Mr	Smith, Mr R.
Crisp, Mr	Smith, Mr T.
Dixon, Mr	Southwick, Mr
Fyffe, Mrs	Staley, Ms
Gidley, Mr	Thompson, Mr
Guy, Mr	Tilley, Mr
Hodgett, Mr	Victoria, Ms
Katos, Mr	Wakeling, Mr
Kealy, Ms	Walsh, Mr
McCurdy, Mr	Watt, Mr
McLeish, Ms	Wells, Mr
Northe, Mr	

*Noes, 45*

Allan, Ms	Knight, Ms
Andrews, Mr	Lim, Mr
Blandthorn, Ms	McGuire, Mr
Brooks, Mr	Merlino, Mr
Bull, Mr J.	Nardella, Mr
Carbines, Mr	Neville, Ms
Carroll, Mr	Noonan, Mr
Couzens, Ms	Pakula, Mr
D'Ambrosio, Ms	Pallas, Mr
Dimopoulos, Mr	Pearson, Mr
Donnellan, Mr	Richardson, Ms
Edbrooke, Mr	Sandell, Ms
Edwards, Ms	Scott, Mr
Eren, Mr	Sheed, Ms
Foley, Mr	Spence, Ms
Garrett, Ms	Staikos, Mr
Grale, Ms	Suleyman, Ms
Halfpenny, Ms	Thomas, Ms

Hennessy, Ms  
Hibbins, Mr  
Howard, Mr  
Kairouz, Ms  
Kilkenny, Ms

Thomson, Ms  
Ward, Ms  
Williams, Ms  
Wynne, Mr

**Motion defeated.**

## ROYAL ASSENT

**Message read advising royal assent on 31 August to Local Government Amendment Bill 2016.**

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

#### Adjournment

**Mr DONNELLAN** (Minister for Roads and Road Safety) — I move:

That the house, at its rising, adjourns until Tuesday, 13 September 2016.

**Mr CLARK** (Box Hill) — Speaker, as you would understand, the opposition objects to this house being adjourned while there remains a crucial item of business that has not yet been dealt with by this house and indeed by the Parliament, and that item of business is of course the need to hold a joint sitting to fill the vacancy in the Legislative Council.

I need hardly reiterate the points that we have made on previous occasions, but the fact of the matter is that the government is acting completely illegally in this regard. They are in flagrant breach of the Victorian constitution. They are setting an appalling example for the community of breaking the law when they are calling on others to respect and obey the law in trying to stem the crime wave that is surging across this state. It is anti-democratic. It is a complete contempt for the community of Victoria and in particular for the residents and voters in Northern Victoria Region to deprive them of the full representation to which they are entitled. It is completely disgraceful that the government should be adjourning this house for some time while this matter remains undealt with.

Yesterday when the message was received from the Legislative Council the Leader of the House, in a somewhat distorted misrepresentation of the facts, suggested that she was following a precedent in wanting some time to have an opportunity to read the motion and get her head around it before deciding what the government's position on it would be. She has now had quite a few hours to do that.

I am sure it is not beyond the capacity of the Leader of the House. It certainly should not have been beyond her

capacity in the time that has passed since yesterday to form a view on that motion, to reach the conclusion that there is absolutely no objection to it proceeding and to respond by setting a time this week for that joint sitting to take place.

Yet contrary to the very words of the Leader of the House yesterday that she had been very reasonable and just wanted to look it for at a time so she could get clear in her head what the motion was and decide how it should be properly dealt with, the government is now proposing to adjourn the house for some time. That should not be happening. There is absolutely no legitimate reason why the joint sitting should not take place this week.

There has been plenty of time to make the necessary arrangements, and indeed the necessary arrangements are minuscule in terms of the procedures that have to be put in place. Instead of adjourning the house, what we should be doing is making arrangements to respond to the message from the Legislative Council and holding a joint sitting of this place and the other place this afternoon so that Mr Luke O'Sullivan can take the place in the Legislative Council to which he is entitled.

If the government is going to adjourn the house today without dealing with that matter, it sets an appalling precedent. I referred yesterday to the precedent of what would happen if there were a vacancy in the Senate, a Labor Party senator needed to be appointed to fill the vacancy and coalition members in this house refused to agree to a joint sitting to do that. Well, a similar precedent is being set for if there is a vacancy amongst ALP members in the Legislative Council. What would the Labor Party say if for whatever reason or whatever pretext we said, 'Oh, well, the Labor Party set the precedent. We are not going to hold a joint sitting until some grievance or demand of ours has been met', and the Labor Party was left with a vacancy in the Legislative Council in future. That just reinforces the fact this is an extraordinarily undemocratic process for the government to be following. It is treating the Parliament with contempt. It is treating the democratic process with contempt. It is treating the community with contempt.

So instead of seeking to run away from the issue and to adjourn the house rather than to face up to their responsibilities to do the right thing, to recognise that they have been breaking the law and to recognise that the constitution does make it mandatory that a joint sitting be held — instead of running away from all of those things — the government should be making arrangements forthwith for the joint sitting to take place. When that joint sitting has taken place, then and

only then should this house be adjourned. Until then this house should continue to sit, and for that reason the opposition opposes the motion that has been moved.

**Ms ALLAN** (Minister for Public Transport) — This is a procedural debate about when the house rises. I am not certain that I heard in any way, shape or form that the member for Box Hill was suggesting we come back tomorrow; I do not think he was suggesting that in his contribution. It is about the motion that is before the chamber, which is a straightforward procedural one. It is a fairly straightforward one advising that members of the house will rise and come back on 13 September, which is the already well publicised and published sitting date as part of the sitting calendar.

I am sure many members have already made plans for tomorrow and next week and the following Monday, so in moving this motion we are just ensuring that members can continue to have certainty in their planning and the former program. I would speculate that there would not be too many friends for the member for Box Hill if he upset those plans, but I am sure that is not what he was suggesting.

No, what we are seeing is, once again, an attempt by those opposite to prosecute the impossible and to prosecute the double standard that they are trying to perpetrate on this Parliament. We had this fire and brimstone debate yesterday, we had it last week and I would speculate that we will probably have it again at some time over the course of today.

We have heard this passion and fire and brimstone and outrage expressed about how the people of northern Victoria have been left without their representative. Let us reflect for a moment on why the people of northern Victoria have been left without their representative. The reason the people of northern Victoria have been left without their representative in the upper house is that the former member, Damian Drum, chose to walk away from northern Victoria. He chose to walk away from that seat in Parliament. He chose to — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms ALLAN** — Speaker, I ask that you ask the member for Ovens Valley to withdraw the claim that I am a liar. I am not lying about this, and I ask that you ask him to withdraw immediately.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Ovens Valley will withdraw.

**Mr McCurdy** — I withdraw.

**Ms ALLAN** — As I was saying, a member for Northern Victoria Region in the Legislative Council, Damian Drum, walked away from this Parliament. That is an indisputable fact. He walked away from this Parliament. He walked away from the seat of Northern Victoria Region. That is a fact. The fact that he did so to pursue his own political ambitions is the reason the people of northern Victoria have been left without a representative since the end of May.

Now let us consider that. Damian Drum made his intentions known in March that he intended to abandon his seat in this Parliament. At any stage between then and the end of July The Nationals could have held their preselection for the seat. But no, The Nationals instead chose to hold the vacancy over. They did not have their preselection at the end of May when Damian Drum resigned from this place. They did not have it on any day in June, when the seat was vacant. They did not have it on any day before the end of July. The reason they did that was to keep the spot open should he fail in his election attempt to win the federal seat of Murray.

Members should not come in here preaching to us about standards and illegality and not respecting this place. The reason we are having this debate is that The Nationals have put their own ambitions and self-interest ahead of the people of northern Victoria. I live in northern Victoria, and you could argue that Damian Drum probably did not really make much of a mark anyway on the seat during his 14 years of holding that spot. You could argue that; some people who are unkind could argue that. But let us remember that that is why we are having this debate. We should have seen The Nationals preselect their candidate in June so that spot could have been filled before the federal election that was held at the start of July. But no, they chose not to, and now they are so upset that we are holding them to the same standards they are holding our colleagues to in the upper house.

We are just saying fair is fair, and we are looking to broker a way through these issues; we are really keen to broker a way through these issues. Every attempt is being rebuffed and rejected by those opposite, and so it has come to pass that we want the house, at its rising, to come back on Tuesday, 13 September.

**Mr CRISP** (Mildura) — I rise to support the issues raised by the manager of opposition business over the sitting of the house. This house has unfinished business today. In terms of that unfinished business, the sentiment expressed yesterday by the Leader of the Government was that she needed more time to consider and read the motion that had come from the upper house. She did not rule it out. She just said she needed

more time to consider it. I think those opposite have had adequate time and now we need to deal with this matter. To be consistent with what the Leader of the Government said yesterday, this house should consider this issue of a joint sitting, and it should not rise until that has been considered.

There is still time to have a joint sitting. The upper house, in their message to us yesterday, said the times they were available. One of those has passed, but 4.45 p.m. today remains as an option. As we have all said, Luke O'Sullivan is entitled to his seat in the upper house. He has been through the due process and is now being denied by the current government his seat in Parliament.

There is a precedent being set here which is dangerous, and that has been alluded to in this debate on several occasions. Firstly, this is dangerous territory that we are in. We are setting a precedent around the replacement of a senator, should that occur, and we are also setting a precedent around a Labor member, should a vacancy occur, because we are really insulting the upper house by what we are doing. Similarly, if the government continues to insult the upper house, then they can probably expect that there will be a payback at some stage and the upper house may, in the case of a Labor vacancy, choose to drag its feet in requesting a joint sitting, because that is the precedent that you are setting here, and I am sure there will be equal indignation from the other side.

**Mr Carbines** interjected.

**Mr CRISP** — To pick up that interjection, be careful what you wish for. That, I think, is holding the upper house in contempt. I can only fly a kite here. Is all this indignation perhaps about trying to abolish the upper house? It is a proposition that we have heard from others, but the disrespect with which you are treating the upper house is in fact leading the way to saying, 'We don't need you. We're not interested in the upper house. We will do away with the bicameral system in Victoria', because they are the sorts of messages that you are starting to deliver. It is certainly not what I think is in the interests of democracy in Victoria for that to occur. The upper house is a house of review. It has a valuable role to play in scrutinising what is uncomfortable for Labor. One wonders what the strategy is here, because the point has been made on many occasions, but now one starts to wonder what is really going through their minds.

I want to also talk about Damian Drum, former member of the upper house. He is not the first member to leave this place to go to another place. There are numerous

examples of that occurring before, and never have I heard of anyone being treated in such a way and being described as 'walking away'. He is now representing a seat in northern Victoria in the federal Parliament whose area covers that of only one of a handful of the seats that he formerly covered. When it comes to the preselection issue, Damian Drum discharged his duties as a shadow minister. He stayed until after the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee budget hearings and then left. That was in late May. There were only two sittings of this Parliament in June, and they were over and done with in middle to late June.

The National Party is a democratic party. We give people notice to consider preselection and we allow time for people to work out the impact on their lives. It is a large seat. A large number of representatives have a say in the selection. We gave the candidates time to travel and visit those people who had the say and then for each of those candidates to introduce themselves to the delegates, to do their lobbying and to become familiar with the whole of their future electorate. Then we conducted a preselection. Parliament did not sit through most of that. At the first opportunity for Parliament to come back in the spring session we had a candidate ready to go. He should be allowed to take his seat.

**Ms THOMAS** (Macedon) — As you know, I am the member for Macedon in northern Victoria. I want to rise to let you know the number of people who have contacted my office to protest their lack of representation by the National Party in the upper house. That would be zero — absolutely zero. Because to tell you the truth, the failure of the National Party to represent the interests of people in northern Victoria is very, very well known.

In the time that I have been in this place I have run across the former member for Northern Victoria Region, Damian Drum, once and once only in all of that time. Do you know where that was? You will take particular joy in this, Acting Speaker Pearson. It was at the Jimmy Barnes concert at Hanging Rock, and do you know why? Because there was a freebie on offer. That is the one and only time that I saw that former member for Northern Victoria Region in the seat of Macedon — a seat that I am in every single day, except when I am required to be in this place.

I might also point out that I have immediate family who live in both the seat of Euroa and the seat of Benambra. How many times do you reckon that they have seen the former member for Northern Victoria Region from the National Party? Zero. Never.

I will tell you what, I will make that point again. There was ample opportunity for the National Party to replace Damian Drum when he made the decision to pursue a career in Canberra. There was ample opportunity, but no, he also wanted to have a bet each way. And does this not tell you all you need to know about the National Party? I am going to channel the member for Melton on this one, because for them it is all about the white cars. They will never make a sacrifice in the interest of the people they purport to represent. They would never do that. They are a shambolic disgrace of a political party that purport to represent country people and yet are nowhere to be seen in regional Victoria.

But I will tell you what also, it says something about the calibre of the Liberal Party candidate if a National can beat him for election to the federal Parliament. It tells you something about the calibre of the Liberal Party in this state and how the Liberals are on the nose in country Victoria, as they absolutely deserve to be. As I said, the National Party had plenty of time to select a person through whatever processes they use. They had ample opportunity to select a person to replace Damian Drum, but no, he had to have a bet each way because that is how the National Party operate. They put self-interest first and foremost every step of the way. It is very well known, and that is why you see their numbers shrinking over there.

I join with the member for Shepparton in saying bring on the Independent members in northern Victoria, except in the Labor-held seats of course where they are very well represented. The member for Benambra is here as well. Bring on an Independent up there so that the people of Wodonga get some decent representation in this place.

**Mr Tilley** interjected.

**Ms THOMAS** — Acting Speaker, I have to tell you again that there has been no effective — —

**Ms Blandthorn** — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, I would ask that the member for Benambra withdraw the comment that he just made.

**Ms THOMAS** — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, I would like to ask that the member withdraw his insulting comment to me, calling me an idiot. The member for Benambra called me an idiot. Can you ask him to withdraw that comment?

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pearson)** — Order! The member for Benambra, to withdraw.

**Mr Tilley** — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, whatever the member for wherever she is from thought

I said, I asked her to lend me her brain because I am building an idiot. I did not call her an idiot.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pearson)** — Order! The member for Benambra has been asked to withdraw. The member for Macedon's time has expired.

**Mr D. O'BRIEN** (Gippsland South) — What a petulant, childish, insincere dummy spit we have seen and are seeing from this Labor government on this issue today and over the last couple of weeks. We have heard time and time again the government making this ridiculous conflation of two issues between the appointment of a member for the upper house in Northern Victoria Region, Mr Luke O'Sullivan, and the suspension of the Leader of the Government in the other place.

I pose this simple question to the government: what in this whole world has that got to do with the appointment of the member for Northern Victoria Region in the upper house? The answer of course is absolutely nothing. But this vindictive, bullying government will take any opportunity to exact revenge on anyone that it sees has somehow slighted it. We are seeing that time and time again. We are seeing it with the member for Brunswick at the moment. We are seeing it with the Country Fire Authority (CFA) with the CFA board and the CFA CEO. Time and time again we hear it from this government; when they have got an issue, they seek the opportunity to exact revenge.

We have just heard the Leader of the House arguing that The Nationals should have held our preselection earlier — that is a new one. They have changed tack again. I ask the Leader of the House: does that mean that if we had done that, you would have let Mr O'Sullivan into this place? Are you seriously now saying that? That is the ridiculousness of the argument. This is the classic Labor approach, and we have seen it time and time again under this government. It is the 'Hey, look over there!' approach. The government is saying, 'Hey, look over there! We don't want to talk about the issue itself, so we'll talk about something else'. They have been talking for a couple of weeks now about the suspension of the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council. It is totally unrelated to the issue of Mr O'Sullivan. Now they are saying, 'Oh, no, that's the Nats' fault. You should have held your preselection earlier'.

It is extraordinary, I have to say, the discussion about preselections. We in the National Party, and I am sure those in the Liberal Party, believe in democracy when it comes to preselection. We believe in giving people the

opportunity to consider their options in making a decision to stand for a position in Parliament. We believe in the opportunity for members of our party to listen to that person, go to a preselection vote and actually decide in a democratic manner who is going to replace a retiring member of Parliament. We do not have factional stitch-ups where we work it out beforehand in a back room somewhere here in the Parliament or in the bowels of Labor Party headquarters down at Docklands where it is worked out by a couple of factional people who is next on the list to get a job in this place. No, we actually believe in democracy. We believe in our party members having a say. Our party members actually get to decide this sort of stuff. We give them the opportunity.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr D. O'BRIEN** — I will tell you how I got in: I got in by a vote of the members of our party, who actually had a say. There was no factional stitch-up. We do not have that sort of thing in the National Party or the Liberal Party. To suggest that we should have rushed a preselection just to suit the government's agenda is absolutely ridiculous.

What a hypocritical bunch we have over there. We have seen them sitting around clearly waiting for their opportunity after the suspension of the Leader of the Government over there, a suspension that was done through due process. There were months and months of debate on this issue. The government had the opportunity to provide the documents that the upper house wanted; they chose not to provide them. They had the opportunity, and they still have the opportunity, to go through a process with an independent arbiter to decide what documents can and cannot be released to the upper house, yet the government has chosen not to do that.

But all of that, as I have said, is completely irrelevant to this matter of the importance of not adjourning today so that we have the opportunity to hold a joint sitting and have Mr O'Sullivan brought into the Parliament. Mr O'Sullivan will be an excellent representative for Northern Victoria Region in the Council. I think in the last debate even the Leader of the House said what a good bloke he is and that he would be a good representative. So I do not understand why the government continues to conflate these issues. There is one thing I will agree with, which the member for Shepparton said a week or so ago, and that is that the sort of behaviour that we are seeing from the government is exactly why politicians are viewed so poorly in our society these days.

This Labor government stands absolutely condemned for moving to adjourn the house without convening a joint sitting. It stands condemned for denying the democratic rights of the people of Northern Victoria Region. It stands condemned for base and petty politics, condemned for the damage it is doing to the reputation of this Parliament and ultimately condemned for the childish, petulant behaviour it is displaying on this matter.

### House divided on motion:

#### *Ayes, 43*

Allan, Ms	Kilkenny, Ms
Andrews, Mr	Knight, Ms
Blandthorn, Ms	Lim, Mr
Brooks, Mr	McGuire, Mr
Bull, Mr J.	Merlino, Mr
Carbines, Mr	Nardella, Mr
Carroll, Mr	Neville, Ms
Couzens, Ms	Noonan, Mr
D'Ambrosio, Ms	Pakula, Mr
Dimopoulos, Mr	Pallas, Mr
Donnellan, Mr	Pearson, Mr
Edbrooke, Mr	Richardson, Ms
Edwards, Ms	Scott, Mr
Eren, Mr	Spence, Ms
Foley, Mr	Staikos, Mr
Garrett, Ms	Suleyman, Ms
Graley, Ms	Thomas, Ms
Green, Ms	Thomson, Ms
Halfpenny, Ms	Ward, Ms
Hennessy, Ms	Williams, Ms
Howard, Mr	Wynne, Mr
Kairouz, Ms	

#### *Noes, 38*

Angus, Mr	Northe, Mr
Asher, Ms	O'Brien, Mr D.
Battin, Mr	O'Brien, Mr M.
Blackwood, Mr	Paynter, Mr
Britnell, Ms	Pesutto, Mr
Bull, Mr T.	Riordan, Mr
Burgess, Mr	Ryan, Ms
Clark, Mr	Sandell, Ms
Crisp, Mr	Sheed, Ms
Dixon, Mr	Smith, Mr R.
Fyffe, Mrs	Southwick, Mr
Gidley, Mr	Staley, Ms
Guy, Mr	Thompson, Mr
Hibbins, Mr	Tilley, Mr
Hodgett, Mr	Victoria, Ms
Katos, Mr	Wakeling, Mr
Kealy, Ms	Walsh, Mr
McCurdy, Mr	Watt, Mr
McLeish, Ms	Wells, Mr

### Motion agreed to.

## MEMBERS STATEMENTS

**Stud Road–Burwood Highway, Wantirna South**

**Mr WAKELING** (Ferntree Gully) — My constituent Dennis Taylor has raised concerns about the right-hand turn sequencing at the intersection of Stud Road and Burwood Highway in Wantirna South. He has made contact with VicRoads, and I have contacted the Minister for Roads and Roads Safety twice: on 7 June and 3 August. I am yet to receive a response from the minister, and I call on the minister to respond to my correspondence to ensure that this issue is addressed.

**Wantirna College**

**Mr WAKELING** — I would like to congratulate Sue Bell, the principal of Wantirna College, and the staff and students for their production of *Alice in Wonderland*. It was a wonderful production, and I congratulate all involved.

**Battle of Long Tan commemoration**

**Mr WAKELING** — I would like to congratulate all members of the Yarra Valley and Outer Eastern Melbourne Vietnam Veterans Association for their 50th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of Long Tan. Congratulations for all the work that is done by that great organisation, which is ably led by Aff Binnoore.

**Fairpark Netball Club**

**Mr WAKELING** — I also congratulate Monique Carnell and her committee at the Fairpark Netball Club on a great presentation night held recently to mark the celebration of the 50th anniversary celebration of that club. It is a great club, and I congratulate everybody involved with the club.

**Country Fire Authority Scoresby brigade**

**Mr WAKELING** — The member for Rowville and I were pleased to attend the Scoresby Country Fire Authority annual dinner, with members of the Rowville, Upper Ferntree Gully, Boronia and Ferntree Gully brigades. I was pleased not only to attend but also to speak at that function and present an award to one of their outstanding members. I was pleased, like the member for Rowville, to speak at that important event.

**Monica Hayes**

**Ms NEVILLE** (Minister for Police) — It is with great sadness that I pay tribute to my much-admired friend Monica Hayes, who died on Friday, 26 August. Monica was a person of the highest integrity. She was a woman of great personal commitment and courage, working for the many causes that she so passionately believed in, even in the face of her own terminal illness. Monica was born and raised in Sydney, and her career as a clinical psychologist brought her to Melbourne in the late 1970s, where in 1980 she met her lifelong partner, Geoff Fary. Monica became involved in her local community, being elected as a councillor and then mayor of Essendon City Council in 1987.

Monica and Geoff moved their family to Portarlington in 2001. Of course Monica soon became involved in local life, quickly establishing a reputation as a highly effective community advocate and leader. In those years Monica became, amongst other things, president of the Portarlington Community Association and chair of Bellarine Community Health, and she was on the Bellarine Agricultural Society committee, the Staying In Portarlington committee and Locomote. Monica championed women's involvement in local government, receiving in 2015 the Greater Geelong Women in Community Life Award. This year the Monica Hayes Community Award for Women was established in her honour. I met up with her only a few weeks ago, and she was still strongly advocating for women in local government. Monica also campaigned for advance medical care planning and end-of-life choices.

Amongst all this Monica was a very active member of the Portarlington branch of the Australian Labor Party. As a local member I was so fortunate to have her as an untiring supporter and also a trusted friend of great political experience and wisdom. My condolences to Geoff and their children, Sam and Bec.

**Scotts Beach, Cobram**

**Mr McCURDY** (Ovens Valley) — Cobram is a popular holiday destination, with its chief attraction being the Murray River. Each summer hundreds of people set up camp at Scotts Beach. There are plenty of people who have been doing it for decades. Parks Victoria is currently considering if Scotts Beach will remain open for campers or become a day visitor only area as part of a management plan review period. I strongly support camping at Scotts Beach in Cobram because Cobram relies on camping tourism and tourism is vital to its local economy. We have an asset that we all want to share, and it would be a crying shame to

cease camping at Scotts Beach. I acknowledge that not all campers are model citizens in terms of the way they handle their rubbish and waste, but on the whole campers are a great asset for our tourism.

### **Battle of Long Tan commemoration**

**Mr McCURDY** — I wish to acknowledge the Vietnam veterans throughout Victoria with the Battle of Long Tan commemorated two weeks ago. I attended a commemoration in Vung Tau, Vietnam, and met with many Vietnam veterans to demonstrate the high regard that the coalition and I have for our returned veterans. They were poorly treated upon their return to Australia, and a lack of recognition led them to feel years of anxiety. I am pleased to say that this is changing. Rod Harlor and Glenn Nolen worked tirelessly to ensure that the commemoration was a success, even though the Vietnamese government made circumstances difficult for the Australians who travelled to Long Tan. Thanks to the Australian Consul General in Ho Chi Minh City, Karen Lanyon, who ensured that a wreath was laid on behalf of the coalition.

### **Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club**

**Mr McCURDY** — Last Saturday I brushed the cobwebs off the Harley and rode with a Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club chapter from Benalla to Greta, where there was an unveiling of the wall of honour. This wall has a small picture, a brief story and a poppy for each of the 521 Australians who died in Vietnam. It was unveiled by retired Lieutenant General Ash Power and Dinah Lee. Congratulations to all involved. We adhere to the motto ‘Honour the dead, but fight like hell for the living’.

### **Gender equality**

**Ms RICHARDSON** (Minister for Women) — This week a new partnership was formed between the Andrews Labor government, four leading organisations and Our Watch, Australia’s advocate in our community for preventing violence against women. La Trobe University, Connections UnitingCare, Carlton Football Club and the North Melbourne Football Club will road-test new standards in their workplaces to promote women’s participation.

The new workplace equality and respect project that is being funded with a \$900 000 investment by our government will also challenge wider community attitudes that can set limits on a woman’s ability to reach her potential. Those same attitudes that place women second to men are also key drivers in the rate of violence against women. The standards will focus on

the promotion of women’s participation and ways to challenge attitudes and stereotypes that promote violence, as well as mechanisms to address structures that reinforce inequality. This work will form part of a toolkit that will be made available to all Victorian workplaces in May 2017. I would like to commend Our Watch and the four organisations for their leadership in this important work.

This work dovetails neatly into our efforts to develop Victoria’s first gender equality strategy. Consultations have been held right across rural and regional communities — seven in all — and we are halfway through our targeted consultations with Aboriginal women, women with a disability, young women, women from the culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, seniors and women working in small businesses and science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Next week we are talking to business leaders and women in the media, entertainment and arts industries. I would encourage all Victorians to get involved by going to the Department of Premier and Cabinet website. Our daughters should have the same opportunities as our sons.

### **Police resources**

**Mr BURGESS** (Hastings) — Last week I was approached by a very concerned citizen about Victoria’s ongoing crime epidemic. He told me that he would be applying for a firearm licence to safeguard his frightened and angry family from a potential home invasion in his local area. While I provided very clear advice about the dangers of such a path, it is critical that this house ensures this arrogant, out-of-touch and soft-on-crime government listens to the message this community is so desperately trying to make it hear.

Under the Premier total crime in Victoria is up 12 per cent, the largest single annual increase in the state’s recent history. Carjackings have increased in Victoria by a staggering 80 per cent while home invasions and gang violent crimes have also spiralled out of control. Despite these damning and very dangerous figures the Andrews Labor government is continuing to slash police numbers and close police stations or dramatically reduce their hours across the state. As if to emphasise its soft-on-crime, criminal-friendly approach to law and order the Andrews government has also removed or significantly weakened a range of criminal laws. In my electorate this government has arrogantly refused to open the Somerville police station, a facility that was campaigned for by the Somerville community for more than a decade, committed to by Liberals and Nationals at every election from 2002 to 2010 and paid for and built by a democratically elected government. This

government is a new low in every way even for Labor politics.

The above alarming facts are among the reasons behind the announcement earlier this year by the Liberal-Nationals coalition that in government, if denied in opposition, we will increase frontline police numbers, introduce new offences of carjacking and aggravated carjacking — —

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

### **Mums Supporting Families in Need**

**Ms KILKENNY (Carrum)** — Recently I attended Carrum Downs Secondary College to speak at a fundraiser organised by two wonderful young women, Tahlia Dunkley and Brianna Gourley. We were there to raise funds for and highlight the fantastic work of a local organisation, Mums Supporting Families in Need. I commend Tahlia and Brianna for taking such an interest in their community and for showing such initiative and social conscience. I was asked to speak about family violence since many of the mums seeking support are victims and survivors of family violence. I did this, and I spoke about one of the main drivers of family violence: gender inequality.

To illustrate my point I spoke about an exchange I had just had with the publisher of a local magazine in Frankston which circulates through the broader community and is available for free in cafes and train stations. The August edition of the magazine contained a cover photo of a woman. I took great offence to the photo and contacted the publisher. I wrote:

To say that I am dismayed by your choice of cover photo is an understatement.

The Andrews Labor government is working hard to end violence against women.

In circumstances where we know there is a link between gender inequality and violence against women we must all work together to help change attitudes towards women and reject gender roles and gender stereotypes, particularly those that objectify women as sexual objects. I see this photo as a step in the wrong direction.

His response was quick and caustic. He wrote:

Do you see this photo ... as ... perpetuating gender stereotypes? I'm sorry, Sonya — I see the photo as a symbol of female empowerment, of a woman who has taken the issues of self-confidence and body image into her own hands ...

Well, Geoff, I am sorry, I do not see the photo as anything but the objectification of women, and the 60 women who were with me agree with me.

### **Caulfield–Dandenong line elevated rail**

**Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield)** — The only things the Andrews Labor government is delivering are more lies, deception and a lack of transparency. There is no better example affecting many of my constituents in Caulfield than the poorly executed level crossing removals with plans to remove the Carnegie and Murrumbeena level crossings and put them not underground but instead build a sky rail in people's backyards. The announcement had no notice, no information, no plans and no consideration. When finally dragged to the table the government released draft plans that now seem different to what is happening. At no point at the election did Victorians vote for sky rail. They were conned; they were sold a lie. Labor tried to match the coalition and then tried to do it above ground.

Last night residents along the Pakenham rail corridor in Carnegie and Murrumbeena observed markings on the ground and were advised by the Level Crossing Removal Authority engineers that these were pylon locations. The February and March consultations with the community fell on deaf ears, and the community were told that the markings would be 40 metres apart. Today they learnt that they will be 25 metres apart, so there will be twice as many pylons with twice as much impact on residents. I ask the Premier to release the final plans and come clean with exactly how he plans to destroy the backyards of residents.

Another example of a lie which has devastated locals in Ormond is the North Road level crossing removal. The former coalition government fully funded the North Road level crossing removal, and now we see a value capture with 13 storeys being proposed at that level crossing. Again the residents were never told — no information, no plans and no consideration. The Premier should come clean with his plans for what he aims to do there.

### **Bentleigh Secondary College**

**Mr STAIKOS (Bentleigh)** — I recently saw Bentleigh Secondary College's *Seussical*, the musical. Congratulations to the fantastic cast: Helen Constantinou, Roxy Hellwege, Neil Shawcroft, Chelsea Karpel, Emma Wright, Lexy Dann, Jack Reed, Jess Reuben, Francis Villanueva, Joni Stamatopoulos, Joshua O'Connell, Marisia Zapantis, Jasmine Sanchez-Butt, Tia Lambas, Noah Munro, Niko Floros,

Jordyn Wallace, Abby Miles, Ce-Ce Tsan, Abby Taylor, Alyssa Kyri, Annabelle Stimpson, Ashleigh Fitzsimon, Ava Greene, Caitlin Kenna, Caledonia McDonough, Cece Rickards, Chrissy Bonikos, Christiana Malotsis, Christina Podoylan, Danae Melzer, Dylan Georgiades, Ebony Holland, Ella Robertson, Emily Foley, Emma North, Gemma Kelly, Georgia Georgiadis, Inette de Vos, Jasmine Ashby, Jason Kim, Jesse Dann, Jessie Pirret, Jimmy Fredman, Jo Karoglan, Jonny Panayiotidis, Jordan Owen, Joseph Folwell, Joshua North, Katerina Vasiliadis, Kaylah Karpel, Kristen Hoy, Lewis Pirrone, Louise Davis, Lucas Petropoulos, Maddie Quint, Maritsa Georgiadis, Mazzi-Rose Esparon, Michelle Antcliffe, Milan Cotronea, Monica Rips, Naomi Rodriguez-Ryan, Olivia Irving, Piper Harrington, Rania Pappas, Rishika Naik, Rose Spaulding, Ruby Leonard, Ruby Lowe, Samantha Kerney, Sanlee Vom-McInnes, Sarah Radlow, Shani Louka, Sharni Watts, Shinta Malotsis, Stephanie Spitzer, Teaghan Barwell, Theodora Georgiadis, Tom Edema, Tommy Thorman, Venus Woldemichael, Will Mounter and Zoe Robinson.

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

### **St Kilda Junction development**

**Mr HIBBINS** (Pahran) — The decision of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) to approve a 26-storey development at St Kilda Junction is an example of the state government's failed approach to planning. The state government rejected interim planning controls over the St Kilda Road south precinct which would have placed a preferred height of 10 storeys over the site. VCAT in its decision cited another 26-storey building at 3 St Kilda Road. Guess who approved that building in 2011? It was then Liberal Minister for Planning, who called it in and approved it despite opposition from the local council.

This is not planning through proper process with an aim to strike a balance between development and amenity. This is planning through ministerial decree which sets the precedent for years to come. The failure to act on behalf of the community or intervene on behalf of residents has given us such developments as Orrong Towers and at Forrest Hill far higher than the planning scheme allowed.

The process of Port Phillip Council putting in planning controls over the St Kilda Road south precinct has been in development for over two years. The failure of the Labor Minister for Planning to put in place interim planning controls after extensive work by council has

meant that a building over twice the size of what was proposed has been approved.

Local councils do the heavy lifting in keeping our communities livable by doing the strategic planning for development. They need to be supported by the state government, not disregarded. The state government must restore trust and integrity to the planning process by supporting local councils to develop strong local planning laws and banning political donations from property developers.

### **Murrumbeena Primary School**

**Mr DIMOPOULOS** (Oakleigh) — I would like to speak about the wonderful Care and Share program that runs at a fantastic school in my community, Murrumbeena Primary School. The Care and Share program has been running now for around nine years and is designed to provide voluntary assistance to school families who are doing it tough. I was contacted recently by Belinda Macleod-Smith, whose husband, Mark, underwent heart transplant surgery last year. When you have young children, as Belinda and Mark do, you can imagine the level of disruption to the family caused by surgery, critical care, rehabilitation, home care and of course the long-term support and medical assistance that is required.

This is where the Care and Share program stepped in. They have a team of volunteers who provide a range of services like home-cooked meals, cleaning and childminding, and no doubt the lending of a shoulder when it is needed. As Belinda said in the letter she wrote to me, 'The Care and Share program truly shone as an example of the critical role a school community can play for individual families'.

I would like to recognise specifically Amanda Daemon, who runs this program so well at Murrumbeena Primary School and of course all the staff at this great school. It is the dedication of people like Amanda, the school parents and volunteers that makes this school community such a welcoming place. Again, as Belinda said, 'It demonstrates truly important community values on so many levels'. I thank Belinda for contacting me about this program, and I wish her and Mark, Ed and Harry all the very best for the future. I wish the program much more success, and I would be happy to do anything I can to assist it in the future.

### **Biggest Ever Blokes BBQ**

**Mr D. O'BRIEN** (Gippsland South) — On Friday, 19 August, it was a pleasure to be a part of one of the biggest fundraising events ever in the Wellington shire,

the Biggest Ever Blokes BBQ. Over 400 men came together at Sale Memorial Hall for a day of camaraderie, good food, entertainment and a couple of beers. Rex Hunt and Dean Jones entertained the crowd and in the vicinity of \$100 000 was raised to go to prostate cancer research and the Central Gippsland Health Service.

I am incredibly proud of the local community for this effort, from the small committee of blokes that organised the day, of which I am proud to be a part, through to the dozens of local businesses who so generously gave prizes, cash or other forms of sponsorship to support this event. I was overwhelmed at how generous the local business community was towards this event.

### Sale Specialist School

**Mr D. O'BRIEN** — It was also fantastic last week to attend the sod-turning for the construction of the new Sale Specialist School, which is well underway after a concerted community campaign. The site and stage 1 funding were provided by the former coalition government with final funding allocated in last year's budget, for which I give credit. Despite a hiccup with a blowout in costs, construction is now continuing apace and the school community should be moving into their wonderful new facility in third term next year.

### John 'Jack' Vardy

**Mr D. O'BRIEN** — It was with great sadness that I learnt this morning of the passing of John Vardy of Maffra after a battle with cancer. Jack was an absolute champion of Gippsland: a successful local businessman, dairy farmer, former director of Murray-Goulburn, active community member and a passionate supporter of the Maffra football club. Jack was a leader of his community and had given back so much with his involvement in so many things over the years. My sincerest condolences to his wife, Julie, and the entire Vardy family. Vale Jack Vardy.

### Jaryd Clifford

**Ms WARD** (Eltham) — I am very excited to tell this place about an exceptional young man from my community who is on his way to the Paralympics in Rio. St Helena Secondary College student Jaryd Clifford will be representing Australia in the 1500 metres and the 5000 metre events. Jaryd has been diagnosed with juvenile macular degeneration, which means his vision is severely impaired. This is quite a challenge for a runner, yet it has not held Jaryd back. St Helena Secondary College is very proud of him. The

principal, Karen Terry, a woman passionate about education, told me, 'We're really proud of a young man who has shown grit and determination to overcome his obstacles and achieve his dreams of going to Rio'. This terrific school held a fundraiser to support Jaryd, raising \$2500 with a Wear Your Sporting Gear to School Day. I know that Jaryd is up to the challenge ahead of him, and I wish him all the best for what I know will be an incredible experience in Rio.

### Montmorency Asylum Seekers Support Group

**Ms WARD** — Last Friday I attended for the third year the annual Montmorency Asylum Seekers Support Group (MASSG) fundraising lunch at the lovely Bridges in Hurstbridge. MASSG is a terrific local group which has raised thousands of dollars over the last decade to support the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC). Kon Karapanagiotidis from the ASRC spoke passionately in front of 150 guests.

I also want to congratulate the Andrews government and the Minister for Training and Skills, Steve Herbert, for the recent announcement that \$15 million will be allocated to boost to 3000 those able to access the asylum seekers vocational education and training program. The ASRC will be able to refer people to TAFE providers and Learn Locals. As Kon said on 774 ABC radio this morning, these people want to be productive; they want jobs and they want to contribute. I congratulate Barbara Jackson and her team on a wonderful event that raised over \$3000 for the ASRC. They are a fantastic group of people.

### Country Fire Authority volunteers

**Mr BATTIN** (Gembrook) — The question needs to be asked: how low can one go? This week Peter Marshall gave evidence to a parliamentary committee about Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteer brigade turnouts. The CFA have not confirmed the figures he gave, and brigades deny that they are a true representation of their figures. Peter Marshall's figures are there to suit the United Firefighters Union argument, one that targets the takeover of the CFA. Volunteer stations across the state are there when we need them. They respond to fires in growth areas in the south-east and in areas of rapidly changing populations in the north. The volunteers provide surge capacity when we have major fire events like Ash Wednesday, Black Saturday and the many major bushfires we have each year.

The CFA provided a surge capacity for the Lancefield fires after a Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning fire broke containment lines and was too

big for the department to control — and we should always be thankful to them. Yesterday the member for Frankston put out a tweet, and I quote:

Thoughts are with the family. #Springst

This political point-scoring tweet that he put out to support his master Peter Marshall has attached an article about Mount Helen CFA brigade failing to attend a fire. I have to ask why the member for Frankston would use this article, printed in September 2014 — two years ago — to make a political point-scoring message, when someone died, a mother of three, at that house. What a disgrace it is from the member Frankston. It shows exactly how low Labor will go, using the death of a mother two years ago, when Mount Helen brigade, on footage, was at that fire. He wants to go out of his way to degrade volunteers in that way. That is a disgrace.

### **Diggers Rest Football Club**

**Mr J. BULL** (Sunbury) — It was fantastic to see Diggers Rest Football Club's own Jason Williams on the AFL talent search show *The Recruit* recently. Jason has already shown why he is not just an exceptional player but also an outstanding leader, both on and off the field. Unfortunately in just his second week Jason suffered a nasty injury to his thumb, which required surgery, and he could no longer compete. At the time he was playing outstanding football and was very much impressing coach Mick Malthouse. I want to take this opportunity to commend Jason on his hard work and perseverance and wish him all the best as he aims to make it into the AFL. Whilst I am speaking about local football, I congratulate Diggers Rest captain Shaun Sims on playing an outstanding 300 games for the club.

### **Parliamentary internship program**

**Mr J. BULL** — On another matter, this year I was extremely fortunate to have a parliamentary intern report prepared for me. The parliamentary internship program has been running for many years and teams a university student up with an MP, with a focus on providing a comprehensive report. I want to thank Shmuel Levin, who prepared an outstanding report headed 'The old Sunbury and the new — an examination of Sunbury's future growth, employment and social demographics'. This was a wonderful report that not only drew on a range of experiences and many viewpoints, but it will also help shape thoughts and directions for all that read it. The report provided a sound analysis of the opportunities and challenges for Sunbury now and into the future. It was very well

researched, prepared and put together. Congratulations, Shmuel, on an outstanding effort.

### **Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement**

**Mr PESUTTO** (Hawthorn) — My message today is to my friends and colleagues in the Greens political party. My message to the Greens is that they need to show whether they are really committed to equality and the removal of discrimination, and whether they are committed to these objectives above their base political interests.

The reason that the Country Fire Authority-United Firefighters Union (UFU) enterprise bargaining agreement fiasco is so controversial is that it positively discriminates against many workers, including women, the disabled, aged workers and others. It positively works against equality in the workplace, and this was confirmed by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission in its compliance review. Its findings are still relevant, and it was confirmed by the advice of Melinda Richards, SC, the government's own Crown counsel.

Why are the Greens silent and inactive on this front? It is clear. It is because they have received financial and political support from the United Firefighters Union. The UFU, as an *Age* editorial characterises, is a rogue organisation, a rogue union. It does not deserve the registration it enjoys under federal legislation. It operates as a secret society, and it operates with an undertone of violence and intimidation. It was unseemly for the federal member for Melbourne, Adam Bandt, to come to its defence recently. The Greens: are you for equality and against discrimination, or are you for putting your political interests first?

### **Monica Hayes**

**Ms COUZENS** (Geelong) — I want to acknowledge the passing of Monica Hayes, a wonderful woman committed to her community. My condolences to her partner, Geoff Fary, and their family. Vale Monica Hayes.

### **Skills First**

**Ms COUZENS** — It was a great pleasure to represent the Minister for Training and Skills to announce the new approach to training and TAFE in Victoria, Skills First, at the Skilling the Bay event in Geelong last week. Skills First, which will be introduced from January 2017, will remain a contestable system in which public training providers

and high-quality private and community providers will deliver training; however, the system will be much more managed than before. The new approach secures the future of TAFEs, such as the Gordon in Geelong, which will be at the centre of the reformed system. They will receive additional funding each year to recognise their distinct role as public training providers supporting learners of all ages and abilities, no matter where they live. The new system will be all about making sure real training leads to real jobs.

I was also very pleased to have organized a live stream for the Premier's *Jobs for Victoria* breakfast at Deakin University in Geelong. Over the past year Geelong has had strong employment growth, with almost 20 000 new jobs in the region. It is important that government, businesses, unions and the community work together to achieve change and secure social and economic wellbeing for the people of Geelong. About 60 people from business, unions and the community enjoyed breakfast while watching the Premier giving a major economic address via live streaming. The Premier outlined boosting our public infrastructure investment, helping to create the next generation of jobs — —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Thomas)** — Thank you.

### **Waurin Ponds police forum**

**Mr KATOS** (South Barwon) — Last Friday I attended a community forum convened at the Waurin Ponds library by Victoria Police to discuss the Andrews government's cuts to the counter service hours at the Waurin Ponds police station. There were many concerned community members, and the police explained that with the resources they have been allocated that they had to cut counter service hours in order to continue patrols, which is disgraceful. It was disappointing to note that the forum was not well advertised and was convened with little notice. Neither the police minister nor any member of the Andrews government attended, and they clearly hung the police out to dry, blaming them for everything. People at the forum did genuinely feel sorry for the police, but there was a lot of anger directed to the government regarding the cuts to frontline police.

### **Rotary Club of Kardinia**

**Mr KATOS** — Last week I was honoured to be able to attend and present at the Kardinia Rotary volunteer awards ceremony held at the Greater Geelong City Council chambers. I congratulate the Rotary Club of Kardinia for recognising the hard work and contributions the volunteers make in the community. I

was especially humbled to have been able to attend and give each winner their award. The awards aim to recognise some of the many volunteers in the region who have served in a wide range of community organisations, clubs and charities and in a range of areas such as arts, sport, youth work, community and emergency services. I commend president Althea Abraham and the entire Kardinia Rotary club on a successful night.

### **Geelong Business Excellence Awards**

**Mr KATOS** — I also wish to congratulate the many businesses that were nominated in the recent Geelong Business Excellence Awards which were announced on Thursday, 18 August. I congratulate the overall winner, Adroit Insurance, along with those winners from South Barwon electorate.

### **Moonee Ponds Bowling Club**

**Mr PEARSON** (Essendon) — It was a great pleasure and delight to recently attend the Moonee Ponds Bowling Club as part of its 60th anniversary celebrations and to present a life membership to Brian Rennex. Brian has been a member for 20 years and has worked tirelessly for the club, and it was a great honour to see that his contribution to his community was acknowledged as part of the festivities.

### **Essendon Hockey Club**

**Mr PEARSON** — I was delighted also to meet with David and Garry from the Essendon Hockey Club. This is a great club, located just near the Tullamarine Freeway. It has a long and proud history of serving our community. They have got some challenges before them, but I am thoroughly looking forward to working with them over the course of this parliamentary term.

### **Victorian Baptist Churches of Christ and Affiliated Churches Netball Association**

**Mr PEARSON** — It was a great honour to attend the VBCCACNAI — otherwise known as the Victorian Baptist netball association — end-of-season grand final presentation on Saturday, where I had the great honour of handing out medals for the under-11s junior tournaments. I send a big shout out to the St John's Lorikeets. It was a fantastic result for the girls, who won every match in their round robin.

### **Suharso and Nurhayati Monoarfa**

**Mr PEARSON** — I also had the great honour of meeting with Suharso Monoarfa, who was appointed by President Joko Widodo to his Presidential Advisory

Council, as well as his wife, Nurhayati, who is a member of the Indonesian House of Representatives for Jawa Barat XI. They are a fantastic power couple from Indonesia who are doing great things for their nation.

### Yarra Junior Football League

**Mr T. SMITH (Kew)** — I attended the Yarra Junior Football League under-14s grand final in Doncaster on Sunday between Kew Comets and Kew Rovers. Kew Rovers were successful, with a score of 9.12 (66) to the Kew Comets 5.9 (39). I congratulate Anthony Kift, the president of the Kew Rovers Football Club, on an outstanding victory. The game was of a particularly high quality. I was there with the federal member for Kooyong, Josh Frydenberg.

### DayHab

**Mr T. SMITH** — I also attended, on Monday night, a ward and community meeting in North Balwyn to discuss private company DayHab's decision to start a drug rehabilitation clinic in Ellsa Street, North Balwyn. There was quite a lot of community concern as residents were not informed before this centre opened. I want to put on the record my support for drug rehabilitation centres and the important work that they do, but my grave concern is that Boroondara council did not inform local residents sufficiently.

There were over 100 people at this local meeting, and they made it very clear that whilst they are not opposed to drug rehabilitation centres per se, they thought it was inappropriate entirely that Boroondara council did not inform them of what was happening in their own street. I have had correspondence from the CEO of the City of Boroondara, and again I am disappointed with their response. How the council can say that that dwelling did not require a usage permit for what was going on there is beyond me, and I will be pursuing the council on these important matters.

### Kem Ley

**Mr LIM (Clarinda)** — On 10 July this year Dr Kem Ley, a very prominent and highly respected social and political commentator, was assassinated in Phnom Penh. He came to Australia at my invitation, and he addressed many of the honourable members here in both houses. He also visited the parliaments in Canberra and also in New South Wales. He learnt a lot from observing how the local councils provide services to the local community, and he wanted all those services to be transferred to Cambodia.

His funeral procession was the longest in Cambodia, with close to 2 million people attending the procession of about 36 kilometres to his home town from the capital city, which is about 80 kilometres away. Dr Ley had come to expose how corrupt the Cambodian government had been, as Amnesty International described the country as the most corrupt of the 20 most corrupt countries in the world. He also exposed human rights violations in Cambodia.

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

## CRIMES AMENDMENT (CARJACKING AND HOME INVASION) BILL 2016

### *Statement of compatibility*

### **Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:**

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (the 'charter'), I make this Statement of Compatibility with respect to the Crimes Amendment (Carjacking and Home Invasion) Bill 2016 ('the bill').

In my opinion, the Crimes Amendment (Carjacking and Home Invasion) Bill 2016, as introduced to the Legislative Assembly, is compatible with human rights as set out in the charter. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

The main purpose of the bill is to amend the Crimes Act 1958 to create the new offences of carjacking and aggravated carjacking; and home invasion and aggravated home invasion. It will also amend the Sentencing Act 1991 to impose statutory minimum sentences of imprisonment for aggravated home invasion and aggravated carjacking and the Bail Act 1977 to include aggravated carjacking, home invasion and aggravated home invasion as show cause offences under that act.

#### **Human rights issues**

*A person charged with a criminal offence has the right to have the charge or proceeding decided by a competent, independent and impartial court or tribunal after a fair and public hearing (section 24 of the charter)*

*A person charged with a criminal offence has the right be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law (section 25 of the charter).*

#### *Home invasion offence*

Clause 3 of the bill creates the offence of home invasion. The offence is committed when a person enters a home as a trespasser in company with another, intending to steal something or to assault a person in the home or damage something; and there is a person present in the home at the time of the offence. The offence is also committed where the offender enters a home as a trespasser in company with

another, intending to steal something or to assault a person in the home or damage something and the offender is armed — if the offender is armed, the offence is proven whether or not another person is present in the home. The offence carries a maximum sentence of imprisonment of 25 years.

Home is defined broadly under the bill but it is intended to capture any building which is intended to be used for the purposes of dwelling.

Clause 3 includes an element of strict liability in the new offence of home invasion, as it is immaterial whether or not the accused knew that there was, or would be, another person present in the home. This engages s 25(1) of the charter.

The element of strict liability is justified due to the serious nature of the offence, and the exceptional traumatic effect on a person who is present during such an offence. This reflects the extra culpability of targeting a home for a burglary, and the fact that there is always a risk that a person is or will be present. It will not be necessary for the prosecution to show whether the accused was aware that someone was present, or would be present during the burglary, as the indifference shown when entering the building to commit a burglary, is sufficient to justify the strict liability element. It is an appropriate response to the impact of violent crime on victims.

The remaining elements of the offence of home invasion must still be proven by the prosecution. To the extent that it limits the right in section 25, it is a reasonable limitation.

Clause 3 also creates the new offence of aggravated home invasion. The aggravated offence is committed where a person enters the house in the company of two or more others and at that time has a weapon and knows, or is reckless as to, that a person is present in the home and at time a person is present in the house. The requirement to prove a mental element is one of the elements of this aggravated version of the offence that balances the imposition of a statutory minimum sentence that must be imposed when a person is convicted and sentenced.

If on trial of a person charged with aggravated home invasion, the jury is not satisfied they are guilty, it can acquit them and find them guilty of the offence of home invasion.

#### *Carjacking offences*

Under the bill, a person will be guilty of carjacking when they steal a vehicle and, immediately before doing so, or in order to do so, they use force on another person or engage in conduct that could reasonably be expected to arouse fear in another person that they or another person will then or there be subjected to force. ‘Vehicle’ includes a motor vehicle and a vessel. The offence carries a maximum period of imprisonment of 15 years.

A person will be guilty of aggravated carjacking when they commit a carjacking and at the time have with them a firearm, imitation firearm, offensive weapon, explosive or imitation explosive or in the course of the carjacking, they cause injury to another person. The offence carries a maximum period of imprisonment of 25 years.

The offences require the prosecution to prove a number of elements. They are a response to the very serious effects of violent crime.

Section 25(1) of the charter provides that a person charged with a criminal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in accordance with the law. The onus of proving an accused’s guilt beyond reasonable doubt lies on the prosecution.

The creation of these new offences does not displace the usual requirements that a person is considered innocent until proven guilty.

#### *Statutory minimum sentences*

*A person must not be punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way. (Section 10)*

*A person must not be deprived of his or her liberty except on grounds, and according to procedures, established by law. (Section 21)*

Clause 5 of the bill inserts new sections 10AC and 10AD into the Sentencing Act 1991 to impose a statutory minimum sentence of imprisonment for the offences of aggravated home invasion and aggravated carjacking. The provisions compel a sentencing court to impose a minimum three year non-parole period for aggravated carjacking and aggravated home invasion.

The statutory minimum sentence is only applied to the aggravated version of each offence. For each of these offences, the prosecution must prove extra elements if the statutory minimum sentence is to be imposed.

In the case of aggravated carjacking, that aggravating factors that must be proved are either that the offender was armed or that the offender caused injury to another person in the course of the carjacking.

In order to prove aggravated home invasion, the prosecution must prove that:

the offender was acting as part of a gang of three or more;

the offender had a weapon;

there were people present in the home at the time of the offence; and

the offender knew or was reckless as to whether there were people in the home.

This extra burden on the prosecution, and the extra culpability demonstrated by those who will be convicted of these aggravated forms of the offences, work to balance the statutory minimum sentence. These sentences will create a strong deterrent and are a proportionate response to the aggravated forms of these offences.

Section 11(3) of the Sentencing Act 1991, which requires a non-parole period fixed by a court to be at least six months less than the term of a sentence, will apply to both offences created by the bill.

A sentencing court may depart from the imposition of a statutory minimum sentence if it finds that special reasons pursuant to the existing section 10A exist in a particular case. The special reasons are:

the offender has, or has undertaken to, provide assistance to the police or the Crown;

the offender was aged between 18 and 20 at the time of the offence and, due to a psychosocial immaturity, has a substantially diminished ability to regulate their behaviour;

the court imposes a hospital security order, or residential treatment order; or

the offender has impaired mental functioning.

In addition, a court is also permitted to depart from imposing a statutory minimum sentence if there are 'substantial and compelling circumstances to justify doing so'. In considering such circumstances, the bill amends sections 10A(2) and 10A(3) of the Sentencing Act 1991 so that the court must have regard to the intention of Parliament that the statutory minimum sentence is the sentence that should ordinarily apply to the offence, and whether the cumulative impact of the circumstances of the case justify departure from the statutory minimum.

These amendments are an appropriate response to the level of criminality demonstrated by these new offences. They address not only the traumatic outcomes for victims of crime but are an important response to ameliorate the concerns of the community about the prevalence of violent crime and impact that it frequently has.

It is also worth noting that the High Court has consistently held that provisions imposing mandatory minimum sentences — which this bill does not do given the special reason provisions — do not constitute an inappropriate usurpation of judicial power.

In my opinion, the statutory minimum sentences introduced by the bill do not limit the protection from cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, as they do not compel the imposition of a grossly disproportionate sentence. Statutory minimum sentences are directed at serious offences that involve a high level of harm and culpability because of the trauma they cause to victims.

The bill acknowledges the possibility that individual cases might include the presence of factors which lessen the culpability of an offender such that the statutory minimum sentence should not be imposed. It does not change the operation of the special reasons exceptions and therefore protects against disproportionate sentences in individual cases by allowing a court to depart from the statutory minimum if it finds that the personal characteristics of the offender and/or the circumstances of the case justify doing so.

A court that finds a special reason exists has the full sentencing discretion available to it and may impose whatever sentence it considers appropriate.

#### *Right to a fair trial (section 24)*

Section 24 of the charter provides that a person charged with an offence has the right to have the charge decided by an independent and impartial court after a fair hearing.

Although the bill prescribes the minimum sentence for the offences of aggravated home invasion and aggravated carjacking, a sentencing court has discretion to impose any sentence within the parameters of the minimum and maximum sentences.

Furthermore, as outlined above, the bill's special reasons provisions allow the courts to take account of factors that reduce an offender's culpability to such a degree that the offender should not be subject to the statutory minimum sentence.

For these reasons, I consider that the bill does not limit section 24 of the charter.

#### *Amendments to the Bail Act 1977*

The Bail Act 1977 contains a general presumption in favour of bail, but this presumption is displaced where an alleged offender is charged with an offence that falls within the 'show cause' provisions. The bill adds to the offences for which an offender must show cause as to why bail should be granted. Clause 7 inserts new section 4(4)(bc) to provide that an accused charged with the offence of aggravated carjacking, home invasion or aggravated home invasion must be refused bail unless they can show cause that their continued detention is not justified.

The bill amends the wording of section 4(4)(c) of the Bail Act 1977 to make clear that, in addition to the show cause provisions applying to the new offence of home invasion and aggravated carjacking, a person charged with any indictable offence which was committed using firearms or weapons, must also show cause why bail should be granted.

Section 21(6) of the charter provides that a person awaiting trial must not automatically be detained in custody. Sections 25(1) and 25(2) contain the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law and minimum guarantees in criminal proceedings.

Clause 7 may limit the rights in sections 21 and 25 of the charter, as it expands the exceptions to the general presumption in favour of bail. However, any such limitation is justified for the following reasons. Firstly, as with all offences that attract the show cause exception, an accused person retains the ability to present evidence and arguments why bail should be granted. The bill does not restrict the ability of an offender to put whatever matters they consider relevant to a court that is deciding whether to release the person on bail. Secondly, the purpose of clause 7 is to protect the community and ensure that community safety is maintained. Thirdly, clause 7 only applies to the more serious offences of aggravated carjacking, home invasion and aggravated home invasion.

The bill does not specifically change how bail applies where a child is charged with an offence. A child charged with home invasion, aggravated home invasion or aggravated carjacking will have to show cause why bail should be granted.

Section 17(2) of the charter provides that children have the right to such protection as is in their best interests and needed by reason of being a child. Section 23 provides that children accused of crimes must be segregated from adults in custody, brought to trial as quickly as possible and treated in an age-appropriate manner. Section 25(3) provides that children have the right to procedures that take account of their age and the desirability of promoting their rehabilitation.

The Bail Act 1977 contains provisions that apply when the person seeking bail is a child. Section 3B requires a court to take into account a number of factors specific to children when making a determination as to bail. For example, a court must take into account that placing a child in custody should

be a last resort, the need to minimise the stigma to a child associated with incarceration, the importance of preserving family relationships, living arrangements, education and employment and that bail conditions must be appropriate and proportionate.

In addition, the court can also take into account any recommendation or information contained in a report provided by a bail support service. In all cases, bail must not be refused to a child solely on the ground that they do not have any or adequate accommodation.

For these reasons, the creation of the new offences in the bill and the addition of home invasion, aggravated home invasion and aggravated carjacking to the show cause offences in the Bail Act 1977 will not lead to children being unreasonably remanded.

The bill, in creating new offences and statutory minimum sentences, is an appropriate response to the violence and trauma associated with carjackings and home invasions. Section 17(1) of the charter acknowledges that families are the fundamental group unit of society and are entitled to be protected by society and the state. The bill, in creating new offences, statutory minimum sentences and changes to the Bail Act 1977, appropriately balances rights in order to promote and protect community safety.

The Hon. Martin Pakula, MP  
Attorney-General

### *Second reading*

**Mr PAKULA** (Attorney-General) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

### **Speech as follows incorporated into *Hansard* under standing orders:**

The Andrews Labor government is very concerned about recent serious criminal offending, which has involved breaking into people's homes and dragging people out of their cars.

There is absolutely no place for this sort of behaviour. All Victorians should be able to feel safe and secure in their own homes. All Victorians should be able to drive around without fear of being set upon by criminals.

The government is introducing offences and penalties which appropriately reflect the terrifying nature of these crimes. In doing so, the government, and the Parliament, denounce the perpetrators of such crimes in the strongest terms and send a message to the community that such activities will not be tolerated.

The bill creates the new offences of carjacking, aggravated carjacking, home invasion and aggravated home invasion. To recognise the particular seriousness of aggravated carjacking and aggravated home invasion, the bill imposes statutory minimum sentences of three years on these offences.

The bill also makes some changes to the operation of the Bail Act 1977 to ensure that those charged with aggravated carjacking, home invasion and aggravated home invasion are not entitled to the general presumption of bail and must show

cause why they should be granted bail before they may be released.

### *Carjacking*

Under the bill, a person will be guilty of carjacking when they steal a vehicle and, immediately before or at the time of doing so, and in order to do so, they use force on another person or they or another offender put another person in fear that they or anyone else will then and there be subjected to force. 'Vehicle' includes a motor vehicle and a vessel. The offence carries a maximum period of imprisonment of 15 years.

A person will be guilty of aggravated carjacking when they commit a carjacking and at the time have with them a firearm, imitation firearm, offensive weapon, explosive or imitation explosive or in the course of the carjacking, they cause injury to another person.

The definition of 'offensive weapon' includes any article made or adapted for use for causing injury, or that is intended to be used or adapted for that purpose. This will cover bats, crowbars or any other object that might be used in an aggravated carjacking.

The offence will also cover causing injury without a weapon — and so will be broader than armed robbery.

The offence carries a maximum period of imprisonment of 25 years. In order to recognise the particular seriousness of this offence there is also a statutory minimum sentence of three years. This is intended to be a serious deterrent to those who plan to use weapons and violence to take another person's vehicle.

The offence of carjacking will be able to be heard and determined summarily, similarly to the existing offence of robbery. The new offence of aggravated carjacking will be tried on indictment only, the same as armed robbery.

### *Home invasion*

The bill creates a new offence of home invasion. The offence of home invasion will be made out when a person enters a home as a trespasser in company with another, intending to steal something or to assault a person in the home or damage something; and there is a person present in the residence. The offence is also made out if the offender is armed — but if the offender is armed there is no need to prove that another person is present in the home.

The definition of home is broad enough to also cover rooming houses, caravans and hotels. It is intended to cover any building in which a person lives.

The penalty for the new offence is a maximum of 25 years imprisonment. That is the same penalty as for aggravated burglary. The offence of aggravated burglary remains on the statute books as it is. It will cover a single offender entering a residence, and cover any aggravated burglary of a commercial premises.

The bill specifically introduces an element of strict liability into the offence of home invasion, so that an offender's knowledge of the presence of another person is irrelevant. This is deliberate and is a response that properly recognises the traumatic effect on victims. If two or more individuals decide to enter a residence as a trespasser to commit a burglary and there is someone present, they should face a

serious charge. Whether they knew someone was present or whether they turned their minds to that possibility is irrelevant. Anyone who targets a residence for burglary takes the risk that a person will be inside and should face the consequences of that risk.

It is unacceptable for someone to feel unsafe in their own home. It would be even worse to actually be confronted by strangers in what should be a person's sanctuary. If a person wants to engage in these acts of criminality, they should get no credit for arguing that they did not know people would be present or they did not think other people would be present. Whether or not it is intentional, the effect on victims is the same and is rightly condemned by the introduction of this offence.

The bill also introduces the offence of aggravated home invasion. This offence has been created to capture the most serious instances of home invasions and will be committed when:

the offender was acting as part of a gang of three or more people;

the offender had a weapon;

there were people in the home; and

the offender knew or was reckless as to whether there were people in the home.

Like home invasion, this offence has a 25-year maximum penalty, but it also carries a statutory minimum sentence of three years imprisonment. As with aggravated carjacking, this is intended to deter those who think it is acceptable to form a gang, arm themselves and break into a home — not caring that there are people at home and that those people will be terrified and traumatised.

#### *Special reasons*

Although we are imposing statutory minimum sentences for the most serious offences, we do recognise that there are always unusual cases that, for a variety of reasons, will not warrant three years in jail. To allow for these cases, the bill preserves the application of the existing special reasons provisions that allow a court to consider factors that either substantially reduce the offender's moral culpability or provide a strong public policy reason for imposing a lesser sentence than the statutory minimum.

In addition, the new provisions appropriately exclude the operation of a statutory minimum sentence where an offender was 18 years of age or younger when the offence was committed.

The government is mindful that there may be, in some cases, older, more experienced criminals who are procuring younger people to effectively do their dirty work in the commission of these offences. The government is in discussions with Victoria Police about the development of an appropriate response targeted at those who induce and encourage younger people to commit serious crimes.

#### *Bail*

In general, a person arrested for an offence is entitled to bail. However, for a certain class of offences, that presumption is

displaced and a person must show cause why they should be granted bail.

The amendments to the Bail Act 1977 in this bill add the offences of home invasion, aggravated home invasion and aggravated carjacking to those offences for which a person must show cause why bail should be granted. In addition, the bill amends the existing show cause provision to clarify that a person charged with aggravated burglary and with any indictable offence where the commission of that offence involved the use of firearms or other weapons must show cause why bail should be granted.

These amendments recognise the serious nature of the new offences by requiring a person arrested for the offences to bear the burden of demonstrating that they would not pose an unacceptable risk to the community were they to be granted bail.

#### *Conclusion*

The government has examined the existing laws and concluded that these modifications are a necessary response to recent incidents of criminal offending. It is incumbent on governments to make laws which help to improve community safety.

Some may say the new offences and sentences are too harsh. The government says offenders take the risk when they decide to engage in acts of serious criminality.

The community rightly expects that such acts with their traumatic consequences for victims should be punished in a manner consistent with the harm caused. This bill delivers on that expectation.

I commend the bill to the house.

**Debate adjourned on motion of Mr CLARK (Box Hill).**

**Debate adjourned until Thursday, 15 September.**

## **MELBOURNE AND OLYMPIC PARKS AMENDMENT BILL 2016**

### *Second reading*

**Debate resumed from 17 August; motion of Mr EREN (Minister for Tourism and Major Events).**

**Mr McCURDY** (Ovens Valley) — I rise to speak on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. I want to make it clear from the outset that the opposition will not be opposing this bill. Logically we would not be opposing this bill because, as many in this chamber would know, the coalition have been tremendous supporters of Melbourne Park, and Olympic Park as well, and certainly provided the funds for stage 2 of the redevelopment of Melbourne Park. That was the \$338 million that continues to keep the Australian Open Tennis Championships in the sports

capital of the world, Melbourne. That will stay through until 2036, all things being equal.

Melbourne and Olympic Parks, as we all know, came into existence in 1995 as a product of joining the two distinct sites together — Melbourne Park and Olympic Park. As well as hosting an extensive range of events like the Australian Open, the grand slam which we all know well, it hosts national and international Rugby Union, football, Rugby League, netball and basketball. It is certainly a high-profile venue for music concerts and family shows. Melbourne and Olympic Parks is the administrative and training centre for various sporting organisations and professional clubs as well.

Obviously what comprises Melbourne Park is Rod Laver Arena, which is very important there as centre court, Hisense Arena, the National Tennis Centre and of course the 1800-square-metre function centre. There are various other activities there with Margaret Court Arena and of course the 19 outdoor Plexicushion tennis courts. As we know, this 40-hectare site is the hub of Melbourne's sporting precinct. Over the road at Olympic Park, obviously there is AAMI Park with 30 000 seats, the Westpac Centre, and the Olympic Park Oval and Gosch's Paddock for training fields.

All of these facilities are under the management or the single administration of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust. This trust was established in 1995 in accordance with the provisions of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Act 1985 and was created by the merger of the National Tennis Centre Trust and the Olympic Park Committee of Management, which was formed originally in 1909.

Melbourne and Olympic Parks operates to provide world-class facilities and of course ancillary services for the conduct of sport, entertainment and function events primarily for the people of Victoria, but we do know that we get visitors from all around the world for international events and certainly from around Australia for national and international events as well. The functions of Melbourne and Olympic Parks include the responsibility for the care, improvement, use and promotion of Melbourne Park and Olympic Park to operate them efficiently and effectively to obtain their best possible use, to provide coordinated planning of the venues and to be responsible for their proper financial management.

The Australian Open — a bit of history there — has come a long way since the first serve in Melbourne back in 1905. The tournament was initially known as the Australasian Championships and began on the grass courts at Warehouseman's Cricket Ground on St Kilda

Road. From there it was lobbed, pardon the pun, from city to city before settling at Kooyong Stadium in Melbourne in 1972. But by the mid-1980s the event had outgrown Kooyong, and the Melbourne Park tennis centre was built. Melbourne Park was officially opened in 1988, with the first tennis ball hit in January at the Australian Open.

Previously known as Flinders Park or the National Tennis Centre, Melbourne Park's primary arena, or centre court, was renamed Rod Laver Arena in 2000 in recognition of Rod Laver's remarkable tennis career. In terms of sport, tennis has brought a worldwide recognition to the venue and will continue to do so. The courts were resurfaced prior to the 2008 Australian Open, with the blue Plexicushion surface, giving Melbourne Park a fresh new look.

The National Party under Peter Ross-Edwards were very supportive of the construction of the tennis centre. In the Victorian Parliament the long run of Liberal governments came to an end in 1982 with the election of John Cain and the Labor Party. The National Party held the balance of power in the upper house, and when Labor won power in 1982, the National Party leader, Peter Ross-Edwards, gave crucial support in the upper house to building the National Tennis Centre. Peter Ross-Edwards became a trustee and was involved from the beginning of this major project. From a small beginning, Melbourne Park is now a thriving business and a showpiece of tennis worldwide.

Peter Ross-Edwards died in 2012, aged 90. In an interview in 2011 Mr Ross-Edwards told the *Age* that his proudest political achievements were keeping his party together through a critical period and also getting the tennis centre built. He was very passionate about seeing this project come to fruition, and it really is a highlight of Melbourne as a sporting capital now.

Then in January 2012 the then Minister for Major Projects, Denis Napthine, and the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Hugh Delahunty, unveiled the new design for Melbourne Park's western precinct, which included a redevelopment of Margaret Court Arena with an operable roof and increased capacity by 1500 seats to a total of 7500 seats. This became known as the stage 2 redevelopment of Melbourne Park, which included the addition of a new indoor concourse area with improved patron facilities.

Former Premier Napthine said:

This fantastic new design is focused on people and creating an active and welcoming space. The roof will provide greater shade and rain protection for the public, while the new foyer spaces are light, airy and inviting.

The coalition has always been a strong supporter of healthy Victorians, including by helping them stay active, but at the same time ensuring Victoria remains the sporting capital of the world. The Australian Open makes a vital contribution to Victoria's economy, generating around 1000 full-time equivalent jobs and \$164 million annually to the state's economy. That is why the former Victorian coalition government made this substantial investment in Melbourne Park's redevelopment.

The then Minister for Sport and Recreation, Hugh Delahunty, said the new Margaret Court Arena would further enhance Melbourne's renowned suite of sporting facilities. He said:

One of the reasons Melbourne is the sporting capital is our range of quality venues ...

A very wise man, that Mr Delahunty. He went on to say:

The whole Melbourne Park redevelopment is about boosting Melbourne's capacity for sporting and entertainment events, which will help secure major events such as the Australian Open for many years to come.

Then in January 2014 the coalition announced that Rod Laver Arena would be upgraded and access to Melbourne Park vastly improved under the \$338 million second stage of the internationally renowned sports precinct's redevelopment. Premier Napthine announced the funding and unveiled the details of the major project on the eve of the 2014 Australian Open. A press release states:

'Major events such as the Australian Open deliver more than great sporting moments — they provide a massive boost to the Victorian economy and create new jobs', Dr Napthine said.

'Year round, the Melbourne Park precinct hosts more than 2.1 million patrons across 200 events and delivers more than \$420 million in economic benefits.

'This \$338 million upgrade to Melbourne Park is critical to continue attracting global sporting, music and other cultural events such as the Australian Open.

'There is no doubt this work will keep Melbourne Park as the no. 1 grand slam venue in the world and further cement Melbourne and Victoria as the global sporting capital', Dr Napthine said.

He went on to say that the stage 2 works would include a new bridge over Batman Avenue from Birrarung Marr to Melbourne Park, leading to the new western entrance to the precinct, and that is where this legislation today comes in. He also said there would be a major refurbishment of Rod Laver Arena, including a new eastern entrance; a new 5000-seat outdoor show

court; a new media and administration centre; a new central terrace with a state-of-the-art roof; and a bigger and better garden square. He said that the Victorian coalition government would contribute \$298 million for the stage 2 redevelopment, while the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust would provide a further \$40 million. The redevelopment's second stage follows the \$366 million first stage, which included the construction of the roof over Margaret Court Arena, the new National Tennis Centre training facility, the Edwin Flack pedestrian bridge and a new eastern plaza. At the time Minister Delahunty said Melbourne Park's quality facilities were the envy of sports events across the world. He went on to say:

One of the reasons Victoria has a hard-earned reputation in international sports is due to the quality of venues statewide that support our major events calendar ....

This second stage redevelopment funding is part of the Victorian government's commitment to building and maintaining quality infrastructure, so we can stay ahead of the other states and countries competing for our major events.

The then Minister for Major Projects, the member for Croydon, said the stage 2 project, being managed by Major Projects Victoria, would provide a boost to Victoria's construction industry — and it did. This was another example of a first-class major project that Victoria needed to deliver, and the coalition did just that. Only time will tell if the current government can complete what the coalition started on time and on budget.

This current legislation, regarding the footbridge, will join Birrarung Marr to the Melbourne Park precinct and will certainly make access much easier for patrons coming out of Flinders Street station or coming out of the CBD. It will certainly make it a far smoother and more flowing 5-minute walk for people to come to Melbourne Park. Certainly one of the major beneficiaries will be the CBD, because people will be able to access the CBD for restaurants and dining before and after Melbourne Park events, whether they be concerts or the Australian Open, of course. Those who have recently travelled down Batman Avenue will see that the bridge is nearly complete, and there is a section directly above the road that needs to be built.

I met with Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust CEO, Brian Morris, recently, and he was very supportive of this title change. It certainly makes the responsibilities relating to this footbridge clear and concise. In relation to the other two footbridges that currently go from the MCG over to Melbourne Park, there really is a grey area there in terms of maintenance, whether with respect to graffiti or weather damage or whatever the case may be. There is a grey area about whose

responsibility that is, and this title change will certainly fairly put Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust in that ownership role.

Tanderrum Bridge has been chosen as the name for this bridge, and it will certainly make access from the CBD and Flinders Street station very easy. The city of Melbourne will be the beneficiary. Is it any wonder Melbourne is lauded as the sports capital? We should encourage more major events. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

**Business interrupted under sessional orders.**

### DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I would like to welcome to the gallery a delegation of prominent lawyers of the Jiangsu Bar Association from our sister state Jiangsu Province. Welcome.

*Honourable members applauded.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! This delegation is hosted by Victoria University's Sir Zelman Cowen Centre. These lawyers are participating in a program to expose them to Australian law and business culture to form and consolidate industry relations and legal networks between our two nations. On behalf of the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and all members, welcome to the Victorian Parliament.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

#### Country Fire Authority former chair

**Mr WALSH** (Murray Plains) — My question is to the Premier. Premier, you have previously said about government behavioural standards that, 'We set the standard, and be in no doubt every member of my team will meet the standard'. Having had 24 hours to read the transcript of sworn evidence given by the former Country Fire Authority (CFA) board chair, John Peberdy, about the Deputy Premier's behaviour towards him, has the Deputy Premier met your standard by threatening Mr Peberdy in a manner that he stated under oath was coercion and bullying?

**Mr ANDREWS** (Premier) — I thank the Leader of The Nationals for his question. I think you will find that he has completely mischaracterised commentary made, as is his wont. I am not sure he has read it given the way he has presented it to honourable members today. I would say that we find fault with that assertion, as is so often the case — —

**Mr Walsh** — On a point of order, Speaker, on the issue of relevance. I have here a copy of the transcript, and I am very happy to table it for the Premier's information. I seek leave to table it.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Leave is not granted. There is no point of order. The Premier will continue.

**Mr ANDREWS** — So you can scarcely rely on a word that comes from that side. I am asked about whether the Deputy Premier meets an acceptable standard. Most certainly. The Deputy Premier is doing an outstanding job in all of his portfolio responsibilities, as a fine Minister for Education and as a fine Minister for Emergency Services. He is not concerned with playing the political games that occupy those opposite but instead with making sure that we are ready this fire season to do what volunteers and career staff do best: put themselves on the line to keep our community safe. That is what is important, not these ridiculous games grounded in falsehoods.

#### *Supplementary question*

**Mr WALSH** (Murray Plains) — Premier, sworn evidence from Mr Peberdy says that the Deputy Premier threatened him and said, in Mr Peberdy's words, 'Unless you do this on a certain day, you will be sacked'. Do you endorse the Deputy Premier's behaviour revealed under oath by the then CFA chair as part of the standard that you set?

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing is warned.

**Mr ANDREWS** (Premier) — Again, the Leader of The Nationals is very creative in the way in which he puts these things forward — very creative indeed.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order!

**Mr ANDREWS** — Well, an act of this Parliament empowers this emergency services minister, and any emergency services minister, with important powers of direction. If the Leader of The Nationals had read the act, one that he has most certainly voted for when it has been amended in recent years, he would know that there is an important power of direction. We make no apology for using the power of direction available to the government to ensure that we are ready for this fire season and to ensure that this dispute does not go on any longer so that we can be focused on what is most important: keeping Victoria safe.

**Ministers statements: Doctors in Secondary Schools**

**Mr ANDREWS** (Premier) — I was just so proud to go to Mount Alexander College this morning with the Minister for Education, the member for Essendon and the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, the member for Macedon, to celebrate the fact that of the 100 schools that will soon have general practitioners — doctors — in them one day a week providing support for students, 20 schools, the first tranche, will be up and running in term 1 next year.

It is the result of enormous amounts of hard work, and it responds to, in some communities, 50 to 60 per cent of kids who need mental health care not being able to get it. It responds to, in some communities, the 25 to 30 per cent of kids, young adults, who need access to a GP and cannot get it. It is about doing the important thing of supporting our schools to provide the broadest range of welfare and support services. It is about recognising fundamentally that unhealthy kids are not good students, that kids who need GP services, particularly from a counselling or mental health point of view, have an entitlement to get those services. After all, if we cannot do that, what sort of a society are we living in?

I want to thank the minister, I want to thank the parliamentary secretary and I want to thank the member for Essendon today and the many others who have been involved in the development of this policy. Footscray, Geelong, Gippsland East, Melton, Mildura, Healesville, Swan Hill, Narre Warren — the list goes on and on. These 100 will be right throughout the state and they will be doing great work supporting young adults with the care and support that they need. Just locally, can I give a big shout out to Wellington Secondary College in my community. They started this and this is modelled on what they do. They should be very proud today.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Leader of the Opposition on a substantive question. The Leader of the Opposition will be heard in silence.

**Ms Thomas** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Macedon will come to order.

**Ms Thomas** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Macedon is warned!

**Police resources**

**Mr GUY** (Leader of the Opposition) — Today my question is to the Minister for Police. Minister, why did you intervene regarding cuts to the opening hours at Waurn Ponds police station when you have been a silent and passive bystander while the opening hours have been cut or police stations closed at places such as Endeavour Hills, Greensborough, Burwood, Ashburton, Carrum Downs, Forest Hill, Mount Waverley, Nunawading, Whitfield, Tatura, Somerville, Reservoir, Pakenham, Ballarat West, Mooroolbark, Craigieburn, Epping and Lakes Entrance?

**Ms NEVILLE** (Minister for Police) — I would take this sort of plea of community safety and concern for our community a bit more seriously from those opposite if they had actually asked me a question after the crime stats came out and other issues — the carjacking issues, all of that. There was no question at all. They have clearly — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Nepean will come to order.

**Ms NEVILLE** — They have decided they have finished misleading the community about the Country Fire Authority and will get on about misleading the community about the police as well.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Buninyong will come to order.

**Ms Staley** — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is debating the question. Could you please ask her to come back to answering it?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order at this point. The minister will continue.

**Ms NEVILLE** — So let us review. I am really happy to talk about Waurn Ponds police station. You know what? An election commitment by those opposite was a 24-hour police station back in 2010. Guess what? It was on 26 July 2012 the member for South Barwon said, 'Oh, there will be 74 police personnel there'. But then — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Government members will come to order.

**Mr R. Smith** — On a point of order, Speaker, could you please bring the minister back to answering the question? The question was why she intervened in an issue regarding the Waurm Ponds police station when she did not intervene in many, many other police stations that have had hours cut or police stations closed.

**Ms NEVILLE** — On the point of order, Speaker, I was asked about the Waurm Ponds police station. That is exactly what I am dealing with here. The history and the facts about this relatively new station are absolutely critical to being able to answer this question properly.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Minister for Police will come back to answering the question.

**Ms NEVILLE** — Let us be really clear, the only people who closed any stations at all during their time in government were those opposite. They closed the Drysdale station, the Portarlington station and the Queenscliff station. They closed — —

**Mr R. Smith** — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister immediately defied your ruling. When you asked her to come back to answering the question, she immediately began to debate the question once more. I ask you once again to renew your request that she answers the question that was asked.

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

**Ms NEVILLE** — I just want to be clear. At the end of 2010 in Geelong there were 224.32 full-time equivalent. At the end of November 2014 there were 184.16 — so less police. Since we have been in government that figure has now grown.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Government members will allow the minister to continue.

**Ms NEVILLE** — That figure has now grown, so we are up to over 192 full-time equivalent. We are growing that slowly. But on top of that currently there are 17 police custody officers (PCOs) who are based at the Geelong police station and are freeing up hundreds of hours of frontline police. So we are increasing police services in the Geelong region, and the Waurm Ponds one — —

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, on the issue of relevance, while we would be happy to debate the matters the minister is now referring to if she wants to make a ministers statement, this question was

actually about the Waurm Ponds police station in contrast to many others. I ask you to bring the minister back to answering that question.

**Ms Allan** — On the point of order, Speaker, the minister was being entirely relevant to the question. As the manager of opposition business pointed out, the question included a reference to Waurm Ponds, and the last time I checked Waurm Ponds was in Geelong, so the minister is being entirely relevant to the question that was asked.

**Mr Watt** — On the point of order, Speaker, I stand to support the member for Box Hill's point of order. The question was very specifically in regard to the minister's intervention into the counter hours at the Waurm Ponds police station and why she has not done similarly for other areas, including Ashburton, which has had a 71 per cent cut in hours, and Burwood, which the minister might say is not closed but has not actually opened its doors since February last year.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Burwood will resume his seat. The Chair does not uphold the point of order.

**Ms NEVILLE** — I think it is worth reflecting again. In Geelong in 2010 there were 224 full-time equivalent staff, in November 2014 there were 184 and in June this year there was 192, plus the PCOs, so there are more police. Let us be really clear about Waurm Ponds. I am not sure if the member for South Barwon is critical because in fact I managed to organise community consultation. Wow, isn't that terrible to ask the police to talk to the community! Do you want it fixed or not fixed? Are you standing up for your community or not? Because I am doing a better job of it than you are at the moment.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The minister will speak through the Chair.

**Ms NEVILLE** — Can I just read something from 30 October 2014: 'Waurm Ponds station will not open 24 hours despite a coalition pledge'. You let down the community of Waurm Ponds; we are not.

**Mr R. Smith** — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister during the course of her response quoted a number of figures and also said at the end that she was going to read something. I would ask that all the pieces of paper, as per the forms of this house, and all of the documents that were in her hand when she stood to respond to the question should be tabled according to the forms of this house — all of the pieces of paper, according to the forms of this house.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I heard the member for Warrandyte.

**Mr R. Smith** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Warrandyte will resume his seat.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions and statements interrupted.**

## SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

### Member for Warrandyte

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Warrandyte will withdraw himself from the house for the period of 1 hour. The member for Warrandyte will make arrangements to come to see the Chair after question time.

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

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

**Questions and statements resumed.**

### Police resources

*Supplementary question*

**Mr GUY** (Leader of the Opposition) — By way of supplementary — and I note the minister failed to mention the Endeavour Hills, Greensborough, Burwood, Ashburton, Carrum Downs, Forest Hill, Mount Waverley, Nunawading, Whitfield, Tatura, Somerville, Reservoir, Pakenham, Ballarat West, Mooroolbark, Craigieburn, Epping or Lakes Entrance police stations in her answer — on many occasions in this place the minister or her predecessors have been quick to quote section 10 of the Victoria Police Act 2013 regarding the operational independence of the Chief Commissioner of Police — —

**Ms Neville** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Minister for Police will allow the Leader of the Opposition to ask his supplementary question.

**Mr GUY** — Minister, at Waurm Ponds you actively intervened in what you have previously said was an operational decision. Why will you not now commit to intervening for the other 18 locations in the same manner that you are gloating about having done for

Waurm Ponds? Could you not care less about crime in those suburbs?

**Ms NEVILLE** (Minister for Police) — Let us be really clear: there are more police today than there were when we came into government. Let us be really clear. What I have said consistently, what the Chief Commissioner of Police has said consistently — and this is what was enforced in Waurm Ponds, Endeavour Hills, Cheltenham and Moorabbin with the issues that were raised there — is that the requirement on local police is to change no counter hours without the approval of executive command, because under section 10, which you changed, that is the way it is done, but it requires community consultation and an evidence base. So, yes. Did I ask the police to fulfil their commitment to community consultation? Absolutely, and I am very proud, because the local member was not standing up for his community.

### Ministers statements: unconventional gas

**Ms NEVILLE** (Minister for Water) — I am really pleased to rise again today to speak a little bit more about unconventional gas and our decision to have a permanent ban in place in relation to unconventional gas. What we know is that a healthy environment ensures a strong economy — it absolutely ensures a strong economy. That is why people like farmer Trevor Flint are quoted in the *Weekly Times* as saying:

I'm ... going to take a walk down the paddock and think about the last five years — it's all been worth it, more than worth it, not just for our farm, but for all Victorians.

That quote is very meaningful.

There are other quotes that are a little bit more confusing in relation to the issue of unconventional gas. On 30 August there was a comment saying that The Nationals are standing side by side with farmers and that the Premier had followed The Nationals' lead in announcing a permanent ban. I was very confused, because on the same day the Liberal Party put one out saying they think a moratorium is better because that gives an opportunity to not slam the door — —

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is now debating the issue rather than advising the house. I ask you to bring her back to compliance with sessional order 5.

**Ms Allan** — On the point of order, Speaker, and asking you to rule it out of order, the minister was clearly referring to a range of responses following a really important government announcement that was made on Tuesday that affected a number of

communities across particularly regional Victoria, and I think it is appropriate that the minister is allowed to continue to advise the house of the comments that have been made in communities and various forums and be allowed to continue her ministers statement in this way.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair will not uphold the point of order at this stage, but the Chair will be listening very carefully to the ministers statement. I ask the minister to continue.

**Ms NEVILLE** — We are getting on with standing up for farmers, working with regional communities, protecting their agriculture future and protecting their water supplies. What I want to know is: is the door open or not? Is the door open? Is the National Party opening the door to fracking?

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms NEVILLE** — That is what the Liberal Party are saying. I thought you were in coalition together — —

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is now clearly defying the requirements of sessional order 5. Asking rhetorical questions cannot be advising the house of matters. I ask you to bring her back to compliance with the sessional orders.

**Ms Allan** — On the point of order, Speaker, if you look at sessional order 5, there is no way that the minister's contribution can be interpreted as defying sessional order 5, because it allows ministers to make statements about matters relating to their portfolio. In regard to the Minister for Water's portfolio, this is a policy position that the government has taken that requires legislative change, and it is entirely appropriate for her to reflect on what support that legislative change might receive from within the community and in this place.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order at this point. The minister is entitled to refer to other policies and ideas, but I do ask the minister to pay a lot of close attention to her statement.

**Ms NEVILLE** — We are standing up for regional Victoria. We are giving certainty to regional Victoria. What I have indicated today is that those opposite are not giving them certainty. They are putting at risk their agriculture future, putting at risk the Victorian economy and putting at risk our precious water supply and water security. I ask the National Party: are you closing the door or not?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Before calling on the Leader of the Opposition, the Chair wishes to apologise to the house. The member for Warrandyte had made a point of order but the Chair had not actually ruled on the point of order in relation to whether the Minister for Police was actually reading from a document.

**Ms Neville** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Warrandyte had asked if the Minister for Police was willing to provide that document to the house.

**Ms Neville** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Minister for Police was referring to notes. The point of order is not upheld.

### Country Fire Authority former chair

**Mr GUY** (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Deputy Premier. On 3 August, to the Standing Committee on the Environment and Planning, John Peberdy gave sworn evidence saying:

... in relation to the phone call from Mr Merlino. I think coercion at best. That was to me a totally unrealistic approach for a new minister to come and say, 'Well, unless you do this on this particular day, you will be sacked'.

The chair later said:

It was like a gun to your head.

Mr Peberdy said:

Well, it was a gun to our head.

Deputy Premier, why did you bully John Peberdy? Why did you directly threaten — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing! The Leader of the Opposition is entitled to silence when asking a question. The Premier will come to order.

**Mr GUY** — Deputy Premier, why did you bully John Peberdy? Why did you directly threaten him and his board?

**Mr MERLINO** (Minister for Emergency Services) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. The former Country Fire Authority (CFA) chair also said this to the parliamentary inquiry into bushfire season preparedness, he said of the dispute:

This is a tremendous distraction from what the CFA should be doing.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Deputy Premier, in response to the Leader of the Opposition, will be heard in silence by all members.

**Mr MERLINO** — And the only people that want to continue this dispute are those opposite. And they do it — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions and statements interrupted.**

## SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS

### Members for Kew and Frankston

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Kew will withdraw himself from the house for the period of 1 hour, and so will the member for Frankston withdraw himself from the house for the period of 1 hour.

**Honourable members for Kew and Frankston withdrew from chamber.**

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

### Country Fire Authority former chair

**Questions and statements resumed.**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Deputy Premier will continue, in silence.

**Mr MERLINO** (Minister for Emergency Services) — And they do it.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr MERLINO** — Well, plenty of volunteers and plenty of brigades are telling me that they expect that Andrew Ford will be a candidate for the Liberal Party at the next election.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr MERLINO** — You would have to ask him of course, Speaker. They continue this dispute through lies and misinformation. Whether it is in relation to seven on the ground, whether it is in relation to consultation, it is lies and misinformation.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Rowville is warned.

**Mr MERLINO** — And not just the Liberal Party here in Victoria —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Morwell is warned.

**Mr MERLINO** — but the federal Liberal government. The federal employment minister admitted to lying — an article in the *Herald Sun* that she admitted later that day was a lie.

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is not only misleading the house and breaching standing order 118 but he is also debating the issue, and I ask you to bring him back to answering the question.

**Ms Allan** — On the point of order, Speaker, the minister was being entirely relevant and consistent in answering this question within the confines of the standing orders. He was asked about matters relating to the finalisation of the CFA enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA). He was outlining that very clearly to the house, and I think he should be allowed to continue to answer the question.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order at this point. The Deputy Premier will continue in line with responding to that question.

**Mr MERLINO** — In relation to the substantive question from the Leader of the Opposition, I have spoken about this on many occasions publicly. The cabinet resolved to accept the recommendations of the independent umpire, the Fair Work Commission. The cabinet resolved to accept the recommendations, with the protections for volunteers that this agreement will not impact on them. I had a conversation with the acting chair of the CFA, and I said to the acting chair of the CFA if he could come back to me and indicate whether he was willing to end the dispute. The acting chair of the CFA came back to me and said — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Hawthorn is warned.

**Mr MERLINO** — He came back to me and indicated that they were unwilling to end the dispute. I made a decision in accordance with my responsibilities and the authority within the act to remove the board. They were incapable and unwilling to resolve this dispute.

*Supplementary question*

**Mr GUY** (Leader of the Opposition) — After such disgraceful comments, I wonder: will the Deputy Premier — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair must be able to hear the question as put by the Leader of the Opposition. The Chair is unable to adjudicate unless the Chair can hear the question properly. All members will cooperate and allow the Leader of the Opposition to put his question in silence.

**Mr GUY** — I wonder if the Deputy Premier will apologise now for not only bullying and threatening Mr Peberdy but making such disrespectful comments to the 60 000 volunteers that Mr Peberdy and his board were put there to protect.

**Mr MERLINO** (Minister for Emergency Services) — I make absolutely no apology for seeking to end this dispute. I make no apology for destroying the lies and the myths that everyone opposite me has been peddling in communities across Victoria. The chief officer has said that the proposed agreement will not impact on his abilities to make directions to keep Victoria safe in emergencies. The emergency management commissioner has said that this agreement in regard to seven on the ground will not impact on volunteers.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions and statements interrupted.**

**SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS**

**Members for Ripon and South-West Coast**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Ripon and the member for South-West Coast will withdraw themselves from the house for the period of half an hour. The Chair is unable to hear the Deputy Premier and would therefore be unable to adjudicate should there be points of order. The Deputy Premier to continue, in silence.

**Honourable members for Ripon and South-West Coast withdrew from chamber.**

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and  
MINISTERS STATEMENTS**

**Country Fire Authority former chair**

*Supplementary question*

**Questions and statements resumed.**

**Mr MERLINO** (Minister for Emergency Services) — In that infamous Sky News interview even the federal employment minister said, ‘Yeah, absolutely. The agreement only applies to the 31 or 34 integrated stations’ — lies and misinformation from those opposite.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The minister’s time has expired.

**Ministers statements: economy**

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) — I rise to inform the house of the acquittal of our commitment to create 100 000 full-time jobs and the resurgent Victorian economy that has produced this result. The Andrews Labor government has delivered the highest annual full-time jobs growth, the fastest growth in the nation and the highest consumer sentiment in the nation. We are in a state of momentum, but we must acknowledge that there are factors beyond the control of government that are contributing to our success, three most notably: the adjustment of the Australian dollar, the end of the mining boom and, more importantly of course, nobody has to listen to the member for Malvern anymore. The member for Malvern has now been the shadow Treasurer for five more days than he was Treasurer. It is timely to reflect on how the economy has performed in his absence.

The Victorian economy has performed in a miraculous way. Full-time jobs growth is up 800 per cent, economic growth is two and a half times higher and side letter signing and craven betrayals of the Victorian people are down 100 per cent. It is clear that the less we have to hear about the economy from those opposite the better it does. But we are not resting on our laurels. We are making record investments in infrastructure, family violence prevention, education and health. The *Herald Sun* is doing its part by kindly pretending that the member for Malvern and the member for Rowville never existed. In fact they had to go back almost 20 years to find a conservative Treasurer they liked.

**Pakenham police resources**

**Mr PAYNTER** (Bass) — My question is to the Minister for Police. Minister, on 12 March this year the

Pakenham police station was firebombed. At that time your government said security at the station would be upgraded. It was firebombed again just days ago. Minister, despite a police security audit being completed months ago and commitments from your government to upgrade security, why have all the recommendations to keep local police safe not been actioned?

**Ms NEVILLE** (Minister for Police) — It is a really concerning incident that happened at Pakenham station two days ago, and I am very pleased that there were no injuries to any police officers. We know our police officers face threats from terrorists, from gangs and from outlaw motorcyclists every day; they put their lives at risk. The security program that is rolling out is rolling out very quickly, and there is a very significant investment that Victoria Police and government are making. At the moment we have got 79 per cent of the program complete, so 256 stations, including the Pakenham station, have been completed.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The minister will continue, through the Chair.

**Ms NEVILLE** — Fifteen per cent of work orders have also been issued, so that is 49 stations across the eastern and the western regions, and for the remaining 6 per cent, which are 18 stations to do, there is a process of tendering going on. There are physical security improvements being made, there are improvements being made to police officer safety as well, and the Pakenham station has — —

**Mr Paynter** — On a point of order, Speaker, to clarify. The minister has just said that the works at the Pakenham police station have been completed. Can I please confirm that she actually said that?

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Bass is entitled to make a point of order. The Chair does not uphold the point of order.

**Mr Battin** — On a further point of order, Speaker, in relation to answers to this house being factual, the inspector, Shane Smith, has come out saying works are not completed at Pakenham police station. He is the inspector at the station, works there daily, and not one of the recommendations have been completed that you said would be completed.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Gembrook will resume his seat. The Chair does not uphold the point of order.

**Ms NEVILLE** — I have been in conversation with the Chief Commissioner of Police about this, and that is what the chief commissioner's office has provided me with, that advice.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The minister will continue through the Chair.

**Ms NEVILLE** — I am not sure if the Leader of the Opposition, in those comments, is suggesting —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The minister will continue through the Chair.

**Ms NEVILLE** — that the chief commissioner is misleading the community. This is information directly from the chief commissioner, that we are 79 per cent complete — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will come to order. The minister will resume her seat. The minister was asked a serious question by the member for Bass. The minister is responding to that serious question as put by the member for Bass. The minister is entitled to silence when advancing her response to the house.

**Ms NEVILLE** — The chief commissioner has provided information to me about this incident.

**Mr Battin** — On a point of order, Speaker, answers must be factual to this house. The local inspector has said the works are not complete. If the chief commissioner has said differently, can you please make that information available to the house and table the document you are referring to — that the chief commissioner is saying that Shane Smith, the local inspector, is wrong in what he is saying about that local area?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! There is no point of order. The minister will continue.

**Ms NEVILLE** — I find it absolutely extraordinary the disrespect you have for the chief commissioner. Let us be clear: 79 per cent of this program is complete. I am absolutely willing to offer the member for Bass a briefing about — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I now warn the member for Bayswater and the member for Hastings. The Chair is unable to hear the Minister for Police. The Minister for Police will continue in silence.

**Ms NEVILLE** — As I indicated, I am very happy for the member for Bass to be briefed about all the stations in his electorate. On the security screen program rollout, 79 per cent complete, 15 per cent work orders, 6 per cent where they are out for tender. These included perimeter fencing upgrades, CCTV and security system installation and upgrades. Again, our police officers deserve our respect.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Minister for Police has provided that document to the Clerk.

*Supplementary question*

**Mr PAYNTER** (Bass) — Minister, crime in Pakenham is up by 40 per cent. Residents are contemplating establishing a local vigilante group.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Bass is entitled to put a supplementary question to the Minister for Police in silence.

**Mr PAYNTER** — Crime in Pakenham is up by 40 per cent. Residents are contemplating establishing a local vigilante group. The police station has now been firebombed twice. The Police Association Victoria is screaming for more resources. Minister, how can local police be expected to keep the community safe when you will not even keep them safe?

**Ms NEVILLE** (Minister for Police) — Again, can I be very clear: there are more police now than when we came to government. More police are being funded, which was acknowledged by the police association today — that we are getting on, we are talking to the members, we are giving the police the powers and the resources that they need, and the secretary of the police association acknowledged that today in his comments. We believe we need more frontline police. That is why the only frontline police in this state that have been funded in the last 30-odd years are from this side, Labor governments — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr Walsh** — On a point of order, Speaker, on the issue of relevance, the member for Bass's supplementary question was very specific about how

can the police in Pakenham keep the community safe when the minister is not even keeping them safe. I ask you to bring her back to answering that question from the member for Bass.

**Ms Allan** — On the point of order, Speaker, I ask you to rule the point of order out of order. The minister was being entirely relevant. The question was about safety and police keeping communities safe. To do that you need to refer to police resources and the extra police resources that this government is putting on. It is entirely relevant to the question that was asked.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order.

**Ms NEVILLE** — Crime rates are going up. For the last six years the trend has been an increasing crime rate. We are seriously concerned about that. That is why we are funding more frontline police, that is why we are giving additional powers to the chief commissioner and that is why we are working hand in hand to deliver better community safety, including in Pakenham, including in those growth corridors, where the chief commissioner has said we need to ensure additional resources.

### Ministers statements: level crossings

**Mr NOONAN** (Minister for Industry and Employment) — We are getting on with the job of removing level crossings and, importantly, creating jobs for Victorians. Our program to remove nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong will create over 2000 jobs over the life of the project. These will be highly valuable jobs for our south-east and provide a lot of benefits for businesses from our Local Jobs First policy. I know the hardworking member for Clarinda appreciates having these jobs located in his community.

I am also pleased to inform the house that our major projects skills guarantee will apply to this fantastic \$1.2 billion transformational project. Delivering on our election commitment, the skills guarantee will see 10 per cent of labour hours on this project filled by apprentices, trainees and engineering cadets. Removing these nine level crossings will create 233 employment opportunities for apprentices, trainees and cadets. Our major projects skills guarantee is helping young people to get a job, something those opposite never cared about. In fact last year we saw an increase of nearly 600 people commencing construction apprenticeships compared with 2014. This reverses the decline in apprenticeship commencements we saw during their four years of slashing TAFE funding.

I am sure that everyone in the house can see the value in providing jobs and opportunities for young people who want a trade. Well, it seems that is not so. It is disappointing to see this critical project being undermined, which threatens these jobs. The *Caulfield Glen Eira Leader* reported ‘MP battles sky rail plan’. The same member called the project ‘a dud’ on Facebook. I am disappointed to be referring to the member for Caulfield, who is jeopardising these jobs.

**United Firefighters Union Victorian secretary**

**Mr BATTIN** (Gembrook) — My question is to the Premier. The United Firefighters Union (UFU) state secretary is now saying that 60 000 volunteers are not up to the job. Premier, you refuse to call this man out for bullying. Will you now call him out for disrespecting and denigrating the hard work of 60 000 volunteers who proudly protect Victoria?

**Mr ANDREWS** (Premier) — I thank the member for Gembrook for his question. I am not aware that any Victorian anywhere in our state would be saying that the Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers are not up to the job; no-one that I am aware of is saying that.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr ANDREWS** — Again we have got a kind of hope over experience. Do they not wish that these things were true! The truth about it is this: 350 additional firefighters sure beats cutting the budget by \$66 million. Call me simplistic, but I reckon more money is better than cutting the budget.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier is now debating the issue. It was a very specific question about evidence given by Mr Marshall to a parliamentary inquiry, and I ask you to bring the Premier back to answering that question.

**Ms Allan** — On the point of order, Speaker, I am urging you to rule out the point of order. The question referred to supporting CFA volunteers, and that clearly again goes to the issue of resources and support that this government is providing to the CFA. I would suggest that is entirely relevant to the question that was asked.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Premier will continue. The Chair does not uphold the point of order.

**Mr ANDREWS** — Thank you very much, Speaker. What I was simply doing was indicating issues of longstanding, issues that were raised as far back as the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission — the

need for additional firefighters, career firefighters, to work closely together in integrated stations with their volunteer counterparts, their partners in keeping us all safe. Three hundred and fifty additional firefighters. They hate it being mentioned but it is the truth. It is what we said we would do.

And where will it occur? In great communities like Ballarat, Bendigo, Shepparton, Morwell, Frankston, Cranbourne. And you know what? I wonder whether anyone opposite has ever bothered to go to those communities and apologise for the cutbacks that they delivered — never once. The CFA, with its volunteer firefighters, its career firefighters, is one of the great institutions in this nation. I for one believe that it can of course be even better with strong support from a government that invests — —

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Premier will resume his seat.

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier is trying to talk about any subject other than the statements made by the secretary of the UFU, but that is what the question was about, and I ask you to bring the Premier back to answering that question.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Premier will now come back to answering the question.

**Mr ANDREWS** — On CFA capability and who is for them and who is against them, this government will continue to provide things like 70 additional trucks for CFA volunteer brigades — —

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier is flagrantly defying your ruling. I ask you to instruct him again to come back and answer the question.

**Mr ANDREWS** — On the point of order, Speaker, I was asked about alleged comments. I have indicated that I have absolutely no knowledge of any Victorian who would be opposed to CFA volunteers. I do know a few Victorians who are prepared to go to any lengths through lies and just political games, and they are of course sitting over there.

**Mr Walsh** — Further on the point of order, Speaker, the Premier says they are alleged comments. The question was about comments made by the secretary of the UFU under oath, so they are not alleged comments. These are comments denigrating the CFA volunteers, made under oath, by the UFU secretary.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order. The Premier had been

responsive to the question. However, the Chair does call on the Premier to come back to continuing on the same line as the question that was put.

**Mr ANDREWS** — I am very pleased to have dealt with the notion — not a quote from those opposite, but their version of what might or might not have been said. On behalf of the government, let me be very clear: we will continue to support our CFA volunteers and our CFA career firefighters, and the games of those opposite will not deter us. We will continue to do just that because it is the right thing to do. It is the Labor thing to do. It is what we have always done whenever given the great gift of governing this great state.

*Supplementary question*

**Mr BATTIN** (Gembrook) — The opposition has asked more than 70 questions on matters relating to the CFA and specifically the UFU and its state secretary. It is clear to everyone in this Parliament, to the media, to the gallery and indeed to all Victorians that despite —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I warn the Deputy Premier. The member for Gembrook is on his feet and is entitled to silence when asking a question.

**Mr BATTIN** — It is clear to everyone in this Parliament, to the media, to the gallery and indeed to all Victorians that, despite all these claims and the evidence and all the questions asked to you about him, *Hansard* shows you are unwilling to even say this man's name. Premier, you are so willing to do the state secretary's political bidding; why is it you cannot bring yourself to mention this man's name?

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions and statements interrupted.**

## SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

### Member for Macedon

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Macedon will withdraw herself from the house. Other members have been warned. The member for Macedon will leave the house for 1 hour.

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

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

### United Firefighters Union Victorian secretary

*Supplementary question*

**Questions and statements resumed.**

**Mr ANDREWS** (Premier) — I am certain that when the member for Gembrook was practising that in front of the mirror it was a much bigger finish to the week than that. Let us get the wet lettuce out, shall we? Honestly, what a pathetic question.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Premier is entitled to silence. The member for Malvern is warned. A supplementary question was put; it is a serious question. The Premier is responding to that question. He will be allowed to continue in silence.

**Mr ANDREWS** — Thank you very much, Speaker. With the greatest of respect to you, I am not sure that it is a very serious question actually, because I tell you what, I will give those opposite a bit of advice: do not hold your breath waiting for us to take lectures on bullying, for instance, from people who are opposed to the Safe Schools program.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Questions and statements interrupted.**

## SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

### Member for Morwell

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Morwell will withdraw himself from the house for a period of half an hour.

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

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

### United Firefighters Union Victorian secretary

*Supplementary question*

**Questions and statements resumed.**

**Mr Walsh** — On a point of order, Speaker, on the issue of relevance, if the Premier does not know the secretary of the UFU's name, I am sure we would allow

him to phone a friend, if he can find one, to actually get the answer.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I call the Premier, in silence, on the point of order. The member for Broadmeadows will allow the Premier to speak, and so will the member for Hastings.

**Mr ANDREWS** — On the point of order, Speaker, here was me thinking this was a serious question. It is a nonsense question from people who would rather raise money misusing the name of the CFA than actually stand up for the CFA. It is a nonsense question from those who rightfully sit over there.

**Mr Guy** — On the point of order, Speaker, I move for a 1-minute extension in time for the Premier's answer so he can say the name of Peter Marshall.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order. The Premier, to continue.

**Mr ANDREWS** — I have finished my answer.

#### **Ministers statements: school breakfast clubs**

**Mr MERLINO** (Minister for Education) — I rise to update the house on the rollout of the school breakfast club program to 500 government primary schools across the state. Last week I joined a member for Northern Victoria Region in the Legislative Council, Jaclyn Symes, and the member for Shepparton at Pactum Dairy in Shepparton to announce that from 2017 the Pactum Dairy Group will exclusively supply milk to the Andrews Labor government's school breakfast club program. That is 400 000 litres of Victorian milk from Victorian farms that will now be delivered to 25 000 students each year. This deal will see 130 dairy farmers across the Murray-Goulburn supply milk to our local students.

It was also my pleasure to announce that from 2017 SPC Ardmona in Shepparton will supply 80 000 tonnes of Australian-grown baked beans to schools under the program. Labor supported SPC in opposition, and we will continue to support it in government.

With this breakfast club program we are supporting Victorian dairy farmers, 500 workers at SPC, along with 2700 growers and suppliers, and 25 000 kids across Victoria. I have had the pleasure of visiting many schools that are rolling out the breakfast clubs. Sharon Thompson, the assistant principal at Wilmot Road Primary School in Shepparton says:

It's certainly a brilliant program for us and enables kids to start the day in the right way.

It will be so good now to also be able to support our local dairy farmers and SPC.

We know that those opposite will scrap the school breakfast club program. We know that is what they will do, just like they did to the education maintenance allowance, just like they did to Free Fruit Friday — —

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Deputy Premier may have only 5 seconds remaining, but nonetheless he is debating the issue rather than advising the house. I ask you to bring him back to complying with sessional order 5.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Chair upholds the point of order. The Minister for Education will use the last 5 seconds of his ministers statement appropriately.

**Mr MERLINO** — Speaker, the school breakfast club program supports kids in need, supports local industry and will only be delivered under Labor.

## **CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS**

### **Brighton electorate**

**Ms ASHER** (Brighton) — (10 389) My question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. When will the government fund the installation of pedestrian traffic lights in Hampton Street, Brighton, in a shopping strip which is known as Dendy Village? People who frequent the area have been calling for pedestrian traffic lights for some time. The area is congested and dangerous, and unfortunately there has already been one tragic death in the area. The reason I am asking this question again is that Bayside City Council has recently funded an upgrade of the area, and in a press release dated 22 June 2016 the council has made clear this upgrade funded by council has, if you like, taken into consideration the potential for pedestrian lights to go in. I am wondering when the government might fund those particular pedestrian lights.

### **Broadmeadows electorate**

**Mr McGUIRE** (Broadmeadows) — (10 390) My constituency question is to the Minister for Training and Skills. The information I seek concerns how the Andrews government's Skills First policy can benefit Melbourne's north, particularly its capital, Broadmeadows. The policy is vital for this economic engine room as it undergoes the transition from deindustrialisation to new businesses and jobs. The specific information I seek is whether early access can be provided to the targeted funding streams announced.

I also want to thank the minister for his dedication, from his commitment as a teacher at the Glenroy Technical School to the systemic reform he has instigated to overhaul Victoria's training and TAFE system, guaranteeing funding to secure the future of TAFE quality training and coordinating skills and jobs for the future, which is vital for my constituency. I also want to ensure that the house remembers that under the former coalition government \$25 million was cut from the funding to Kangan TAFE, and then it was merged with Bendigo TAFE at the most vulnerable time when Ford was cutting its jobs.

### **Gippsland East electorate**

**Mr T. BULL** (Gippsland East) — (10 391) My constituency question is to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and the information that I seek on behalf of my constituents is what plans and time frames have been put in place for roadworks on the Princes Highway just east of Lakes Entrance. I have been contacted over recent weeks by a number of business operators in Lakes Entrance who are concerned that there will be a longstanding detour on the Princes Highway over the upcoming school holiday period when large numbers of people holiday in the town. Indeed the Princes Highway east has large volumes of traffic heading to popular tourist destinations like Marlo, Mallacoota and Bemm River in my electorate. To have a longstanding detour around the Princes Highway with these high traffic volumes is certainly not ideal, and I seek that information from the minister to clarify what plans and time frames are in place.

### **Eltham electorate**

**Ms WARD** (Eltham) — (10 392) My question is to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and concerns the government's Switch On website. Last week I held a forum in my electorate to help community members understand the Andrews government's Victorian Energy Compare and Switch On website, which offers independent advice regarding gas and electricity bills. Local interest was so high that not only was my office filled to capacity but I am holding a second forum to meet demand. I thank everyone for their interest and participation. The overwhelming response was that this website is a useful tool for understanding energy bills and receiving genuinely independent advice on what was the best and cheapest option for customers. One comment by many of my constituents in attendance was that they wanted to know which energy company was Australian owned. For them this was very important information that they wanted access to to help with their energy choices. What will the minister do to improve information to my

community regarding this issue in Victoria's energy market?

### **South Barwon electorate**

**Mr KATOS** (South Barwon) — (10 393) My constituency question is to the Minister for Police. When will the minister finally provide the Geelong police service area with the additional police officers they so desperately need so that they can protect the community properly? Last Sunday, 28 August, the police, ambulance and clinical early response (PACER) unit from the Geelong station was cancelled due to a lack of police resources. PACER is a valuable collaboration between Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria, where a police officer and a mental health clinician attend calls where there is a person with mental health issues or where there is potential that it might be someone with mental health issues. On that same day at Geelong station there were only two officers in the watch house when there should have been three. This is an absolute health and safety issue for not only the police but also for the community that they are not servicing properly. So I ask again: when will the minister finally provide the police resources to the Geelong police service area that they so desperately need?

### **Essendon electorate**

**Mr PEARSON** (Essendon) — (10 394) My question is directed to Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing. My question is: what is the latest information on the government's plan to improve and increase housing in my electorate? The Essendon electorate covers the Flemington housing estate, which the minister and I have visited several times. Most recently the minister attended a forum on the estate at the local community centre which discussed a range of issues, including the need for more social housing and the condition of units on the estate, many of which are ageing. Increasing the quality and quantity of public housing on this estate would make a significant improvement to the lives of the residents.

### **Eildon electorate**

**Ms McLEISH** (Eildon) — (10 395) I address the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change. What will the minister do to ensure that residents and businesses in the Warburton and Millgrove areas are not subjected to continual unplanned power outages during the powerline bushfire safety program? As you will know, power outages in the Upper Yarra are expected as the government pursues moves to decrease the risk of fire from powerlines. Those living and

working in the Upper Yarra know and understand and certainly acknowledge the importance of that program. My office was contacted by many people at the end of last week as the 10th unplanned outage in 14 days occurred. This was the straw that broke the camel's back. They told me that the consistent message from AusNet Services is that they have to do it this way as they are under pressure from the state government. Their customers as a result are treated very shabbily. People can deal with planned outages. They can make plans. It is near impossible to keep the doors of a cafe open when you cannot have power to cook and to serve customers and at the same time you are expected to pay wages and overheads. It is extremely difficult for everyone concerned.

### **Pascoe Vale electorate**

**Ms BLANDTHORN** (Pascoe Vale) — (10 396) My constituency question is for the Minister for Youth Affairs. What state government programs are available to support scouting groups such as the Oak Park scout club? On Wednesday, 24 August, I visited the Oak Park scouts for their annual reports and presentation meeting. It was fabulous to hear the reports of each of the scouting groups at Oak Park. From the Joeys to the Adventurers, the breadth of activities undertaken throughout the year was incredible. The Adventurers were just back from their hike from Torquay to Aireys Inlet. This was an amazing achievement that no doubt required a great deal of preparation in anticipation, and resilience along the way, but they made it to the end with smiling faces, as evidenced by the photographs. The committee also reported, and it was obvious that they are a dedicated group who are tirelessly working to ensure the smooth operation of the Oak Park scouts. I offer my congratulations to president Adrian and his team, all of whom were re-elected for another term. Scout groups endeavour to educate young people in a range of areas — physical, social and intellectual — so that they can develop into responsible and fulfilled adults and make a positive contribution to our community.

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

### **Polwarth electorate**

**Mr RIORDAN** (Polwarth) — (10 397) My question is to the Minister for Agriculture in the other place. Can the minister tell me when her department will announce the continuation of funding for the important cattle underpass construction program? Farmers across Victoria are currently queuing in wait for the announcement of the next round of funding for this

very important initiative. Colac Cement Products, one of the state's most reputable underpass installers, told me that no underpasses have been commenced in Victoria since January this year. They have a growing list of partners who are waiting to invest in this program. Farm communities are keen to learn if the program's continuation will be real and if the subsidies will be as they were before. Cattle underpasses can cost between \$100 000 and \$200 000. They are a significant capital cost that not only improves on-farm productivity but adds greatly to the safety on our roads and railways. Country communities were promised an answer on this program once the government had organised the sale of the Melbourne port. That has now been given the go-ahead, so the minister has no good reason not to give confidence back to farmers so that these important improvements can go ahead.

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

### **Niddrie electorate**

**Mr CARROLL** (Niddrie) — (10 398) My constituency question is for the Minister for Health, and I ask: what has the Andrews government done to protect the ratio of nurses and midwives to patients, and what effect will this have on my constituents in the electorate of Niddrie, many of whom value the work of Cyril Jewell House in Keilor East? This service has 45 beds, including 15 designated for young residents with high-care multiple sclerosis and neurological disorders. These public facilities have nurse-to-patient ratios to ensure quality care — ratios which do not necessarily exist in the private sector. My community values nurses and midwives because they play an absolutely critical role in our community. I look forward to hearing from the minister on how she is also committed to improving care and services in our health system. By enshrining nurse-to-patient ratios in law, the health and safety of patients will no longer be exploited in enterprise bargaining agreement negotiations. My residents and I also work and live near Western Health. This is a massive investment in our local community for a service which I and my many constituents use.

## **MELBOURNE AND OLYMPIC PARKS AMENDMENT BILL 2016**

*Second reading*

**Debate resumed.**

**Mr BROOKS** (Bundoora) — It is a great pleasure to be able to join the debate on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016, and I welcome

the support that has come from the other side of the house for this important piece of legislation. This piece of legislation deals with one bridge that is to be constructed over Batman Avenue linking the Birrarung Marr area with Melbourne Park and the tennis centre, and this is an important link. So it is a small project in the scheme of the upgrade project that is going to take a decade or more, but this is an important bridge because it is another important piece in the picture, if you like, of one of the world's best sporting precincts. Importantly it provides yet another connection to make it even easier to move between the CBD, Melbourne's cultural precinct, and Melbourne's sporting precinct.

It is very pleasing to note that the bridge is to be named Tanderrum Bridge. Tanderrum is a traditional welcoming ceremony of the people of the Kulin nation featuring song, dance, cultural exchange and importantly, in a symbolic way for this particular bridge, to provide safe passage for visitors on country. So one cannot think of a more appropriate name for this bridge, because it will provide, as I said earlier, that welcoming connection between Birrarung Marr and the tennis precinct. I want to just acknowledge the traditional owners who are participating in this process, in particular Aunty Carolyn Briggs and Aunty Diane Kerr, who assisted with the consultation around the naming of the bridge. Of course I understand that consultation also took place with the Wurundjeri land council and key Indigenous elders about the proposed name and the management arrangements. So it is an important part of the story of that part of Melbourne on the edge of the Yarra with its rich Indigenous history, and I think it is appropriate that this bridge is named to reflect that strong Indigenous heritage.

It is also worth noting that the bridge will be adjacent to, and in some respects slightly over, Speakers Corner, sometimes known as Yarra Bank, which since the late 1880s has been a place where people could gather to listen to speakers. It was a place of political discourse, well before the time of television, talkback radio or social media, where great debates and orations took place around issues like conscription, women's suffrage and very important issues of the time, and we should not forget the heritage of that place. So it is pleasing to see that there will be a small platform as part of the bridge that will provide people with the opportunity to look out over Yarra Bank and Speakers Corner and also an interpretive sign that will provide information about the rich heritage of that particular site.

This bridge, which is to cost around \$25 million, is part of the 10 to 15-year redevelopment of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks precinct. It is going to cost nearly \$1 billion, and this is an important investment because

it will drive further improvements and keep Melbourne's sporting precincts in a leadership position in relation to attracting major sporting events to Melbourne and assisting in the growth of our visitor economy. This is an area that the Andrews government has worked very strongly on in ensuring that we have a comprehensive plan for growing the visitor economy. We have released the *Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy*. We know that the visitor economy is worth a significant amount to not just the economy of Melbourne; the strategy talks about growing those opportunities into regional Victoria as well, so that is the key part of this particular plan.

When I think about the advantages that Melbourne has and the importance of linking the CBD to the Melbourne Park precinct and the sporting precincts, the first thing I remember — and this is quite a visual interpretation of this — was last year when Melbourne hosted the State of Origin match. I think it was match 2 of the rugby league series between New South Wales and Queensland — two states in fierce competition. When Victoria played host to that competition between two other states, what struck me was the number of supporters of both of those teams, easily identified by their blue and maroon jerseys, scarves, caps and so on, who were in Melbourne around that time right throughout the CBD. They were obviously staying in Melbourne, availing themselves of the accommodation in our wonderful city, spending money at hotels where they were staying, in restaurants and on entertainment and then being able to literally walk or take a very short tram trip down to the MCG to see that wonderful game, which I should add attracted a crowd of over 91 000 people, which is still the largest crowd ever for a State of Origin match.

Considering this was a match played outside of the two states that were competing, it is a magnificent indication of just how strongly our sporting precinct performs and the importance of having that precinct right on the doorstep of the CBD. Connections that make it even easier for people to move between our sporting precinct and the city are therefore so important.

I also want to mention that that sporting precinct is one that the Labor Party has proudly been involved in — and some would say driven — over the decades. If you look at the MCG today, you see that both sections, the Great Southern Stand and the more recent other half of the MCG structure were effectively built by Labor governments. The original one was built by the Cain government, and the newer section of the MCG was built by the Bracks government in the run-up to the 2006 Commonwealth Games. We on this side of the house are very proud to have been the drivers of the

development and the continuing improvement of the MCG.

AAMI Park, which is such an important part of our soccer and rugby codes, was of course again built by the Bracks and Brumby governments. Yet again, in relation of course to the tennis centre, which is the subject of this bill we are debating today, it was the Cain government that made the decision to move from Kooyong to what was then known as Flinders Park and to develop the Australian tennis centre. So this is a journey the Labor Party in government has driven quite strongly, and this redevelopment has been one that was started by the previous Labor government and was supported by the Baillieu and Napthine governments and now continues to be supported strongly by the Andrews Labor government. We understand the importance of continuing to develop those particular sporting facilities and the connections and the amenities that are so important.

The current stage of that program, stage 2 of that decade-long program, is worth some \$338 million. This is therefore a very significant investment, but it supports our reputation as the sporting capital of the nation and one of the great sporting cities of the world. When you travel overseas and talk about Melbourne, people instantly can recall and talk about the Australian Open Tennis Championships, the Melbourne Cup, the AFL Grand Final, the Australian Formula One Grand Prix and a whole host of other cultural and artistic events that this city and this state have become well known for hosting over many years.

We should not rest on our laurels. We understand that there is increased competition from other cities around the world for these sorts of sporting events. Sydney is currently embarking on a massive investment in its stadiums — a some \$1.5 billion or \$1.6 billion investment in its stadiums. I still think that that city suffers from the fact that its largest stadium, the ANZ Stadium, is situated well away from the CBD, and the city has had some difficulties, it is fair to say, in trying to resolve those difficulties. I think they will find the investment they are going to make still does not provide the fantastic advantage we have here in Melbourne, which is, as I say, world-class stadiums that are connected to and very close to the CBD of one of the most livable cities. I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms VICTORIA** (Bayswater) — I rise to speak on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. I want to acknowledge the opening speech our shadow Minister for Sport made on the bill in the debate in Parliament today, but I also want to say that I am here to do a bit of a rah-rah for the other side of

things. I am going to put on my shadow Minister for Tourism and Major Events hat here, because of course this precinct is not just sports, and all I am hearing is sports. There is a significant crossover between this bill and what is happening in this precinct, and I want to be the one to champion that. Certainly this side of the house remembers that that precinct, that area, is totally about everything that is Melbourne, not just sport.

The bill makes amendments to the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Acts 1985, and its stated purpose is to amend the act to provide for the reservation of land and strata of land as National Tennis Centre land for the purpose of a bridge across Batman Avenue. It has been stated that we will not be opposing this bill, and I certainly agree with that stance. We have always said we will be a constructive opposition if we can be, and of course on something like this, there is no reason why we cannot have a bridge, and calling it Tanderrum is also a very nice touch. We will always be, and I will certainly be when the minister for soccer — sorry, the Minister for Sport and Minister for Tourism and Major Events — actually does something for the good of Victoria, and we are not going to stand in his way.

Before I look more closely at the specifics of the bill, I want to talk a little bit more about the tourism sector here in Victoria, which is extremely relevant to this particular bill and this particular precinct. After two years in government this is the sum of what the minister has produced, as far as tourism goes in this state. It is a four-page, 719-word administrative bill that really amounts to little more than a local council planning approval document. I find that disturbing, to say the least. I could certainly read the whole thing out and still have plenty of time to speak on the bill, but I will not, because it is in *Hansard*. But in two years that is about the sum of it. So far we have seen no plan for the tourism sector at all on the part of this government. We have seen reviews — in fact people I know have submitted to the government as part of reviews and not even had an acknowledgement of receipt of their submissions to these reviews, and some of those were even 18 months out. Key tourism boards have been left without members for 18 months or so. This all comes back to what is happening in the precinct. It is all about sport; it is not about tourism and attracting people.

We have seen the government's own tourism figures in the budget projecting reduced growth in regional areas, which I find disturbing. In major events — and of course a lot of those happen here in that 'sporting', which I will put in inverted commas, precinct — we keep seeing event after event stolen by other states. In fact there were no key performance indicators (KPIs) given at the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

hearing when I had a question asked of the minister about KPIs for how money was being allocated and what it was being measured against, about how we were attracting new things to this state as far as major events went. There was nothing in place. There was nothing in place as far as KPIs went for the unaccountable major events slush fund.

As I say, although this particular bill is obviously necessary to facilitate the development of the bridge, it is actually not helping tourism in any way. There has been a real lack of attention to tourism and major events by this government, and I am going to talk about that a bit more in a moment.

If I go to the clauses, clause 4 of the bill inserts new part 5B headed 'Batman Avenue bridge' into the principal act and makes several revocations of land usage and reservations to allow the bridge to proceed, including through new section 34FA(4)(c) which revokes any reservations under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 as applicable. When you look up the Batman Avenue bridge project on the Major Projects Victoria website, it describes the project in this manner:

The bridge will provide the public with direct access from Lower Terrace, Birrarung Marr over Batman Avenue and into Melbourne Park.

Once completed, the bridge will significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to walk from Flinders Street station and Federation Square into Melbourne Park, and will provide a more enjoyable entry experience for people attending the Australian Open.

Again, it is about sport. I raise this because when you think of this government's policies and the Australian Open Tennis Championships, the first thing you think about is the dud logo that was not able to be used at the Australian Open. When I asked the minister what it would cost to make reparations for that, he said there was no cost involved because there was no issue. Well, the logo was not used because there was an issue: the players could not play around it. Anyway, apparently there are no additional costs but there has also been no sanction for any individual over the use of the dud logo because the application of the brand, as the minister said, was in accordance with the tournament's regulations. I just raised my eyebrows at that. In other words, the only bill we got pertaining to this is about a shiny new bridge. It is a bit disappointing, is it not?

Let us have a look at clause 3 of the bill, which deals with definitions. Clause 3(2) outlines the definition of 'National Tennis Centre land', with the flow-on changes to paragraph (f) under this definition in section 4 of the original act. The minister, in his speech

and statements, has defined this bill and project around sport, and I keep coming back to this. Indeed it is in his role as Minister for Sport that he introduced this bill rather than in his role as Minister for Tourism and Major Events. This, I believe, is entirely a reflection of the attitude of this government and this minister towards major events and tourism. Basically, if it does not involve a ball, preferably a round one, the minister is not interested.

I want to say that my beautiful fiancé, Angelo, and I have quite often been to that precinct for soccer — we love soccer, we love footy across at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, but we also love concerts. We love going to all sorts of different things. In fact I went to a dinner at Margaret Court Arena, which was stunning, and there is so much more to this precinct that people will be able to access via this bridge across to Birrarung Marr from Federation Square and all that sort of thing than just sport. We have to get over just sport being staged in this area.

I want to give members an example. Rod Laver Arena is about far more than just sport. I cannot even tell you how many things I have seen there. In 2009 it was the third highest grossing venue in the world, grossing \$60.5 million. Its highest attended year was under the coalition government, with 942 510 attendances across 94 events. But it was also under the coalition government, in 2013, that the venue saw the most events in one month — that is, 26 in October of that year. Pink's Truth About Love tour, which I went to and it was stunning — she is amazing — sold the most tickets for any event, a remarkable 238 000 tickets just for Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne alone. So to not think of this as an entertainment precinct is negligent. This demonstrates how multidimensional these venues are and it again highlights the complete lack of focus that this minister has on the portfolios outside his own personal areas of interest.

If we have a look at the Major Projects Victoria website, there is a lot of information about the naming of the bridge. As I said, naming it 'Tanderrum' is a great idea. It is a very positive gesture, but again it is one of those nice PR-spin types of things when in fact in Aboriginal affairs, which I also wear the hat for on the coalition side, there has been an incredible amount of programs that have not been funded or have been funded just for a single year under this government. A little bit less spin and a little bit more substance would be very, very welcome.

Victoria's major events contribute \$1.8 billion to the economy every year. Combined with our tourism industry they employ over 200 000 people. There is no

doubt that our wonderful 'sporting precinct' is a major part of that, but obviously the arts, culture and entertainment are major parts of that as well. We support the linking of all of these parks and areas to Federation Square, but it is a great shame that this bill is the sum total of the work provided by this minister in two years at a time when the Chinese and Indian markets are expanding and competing Australian states are leaving Victoria behind in the quest to benefit from those markets. I would say to this government, 'Wake up and smell the roses. It's more than just about sport when we walk into that precinct', and it should be absolutely noted as such.

**Ms WILLIAMS (Dandenong)** — It is my pleasure to rise in support of Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. Before I get into the substance of this bill, I want to counter a few of the remarks made by the member for Bayswater in her targeting of the Minister for Sport and Minister for Tourism and Major Events on this matter. I think the criticisms she levelled at him were quite unfair. I will let the facts speak for themselves as to whether his commitment to tourism and major events is as weak as she has attempted to portray it, because on the facts it certainly is not. On his watch we have had the establishment of Visit Victoria, the announcement of a new visitor economy strategy, a Regional Events Fund worth \$20 million, our Business Events Fund worth \$9 million, \$38 million for marketing and an additional \$80 million for the Major Events Fund in 2015–16 for all types of events. Then I was thinking about some of the things that have come to Victoria in the last couple of years under the minister's guidance.

We had the Ai Weiwei and Andy Warhol exhibition, *Kinky Boots*, Marilyn Monroe at Bendigo, David Bowie — an exhibition I went to — these were all incredible events that were not sports related and delivered a hell of a lot to this state. To ignore those and insert into your contribution a bit of cheap politicking is really just that. It is cheap, and it does not reflect well on the member for Bayswater. She should reflect on that.

Back to the bill at hand. This bill will give the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust legal ownership of the new bridge for pedestrians and cyclists over Batman Avenue, linking Birrarung Marr and Melbourne Park as we have heard. The bridge is part of a \$338.1 million stage 2 of the redevelopment of Melbourne Park, which is an important part of ensuring that Melbourne remains the sporting capital of this nation and the event capital of this nation and also contributes to our reputation as the most livable city.

Following a 'Name the bridge' competition, which I understand received thousands of entries, it was recently announced that the new bridge will be named the Tanderrum Bridge. 'Tanderrum', for those who may not be aware, is a welcoming ceremony by the people of the Kulin nations and it features song, dance and cultural exchange and provides a safe passage for visitors on country. The bridge will allow direct access to the precinct from Flinders Street station and Federation Square. This is obviously a huge benefit to those who attend any of the 200 events per year, sporting and entertainment, that are held at Melbourne Park, including the Australian Open Tennis Championships and any number of concerts. I was recently at Rod Laver Arena to see The Cure, one of my favourite acts. I have got to say it is one of the best acts I have seen. It was incredible.

**Mr Wakeling** interjected.

**Ms WILLIAMS** — The member for Ferntree Gully said he missed that concert. I would like to tell him that he did not miss much, but he certainly did miss a lot. It was an amazing show.

I drive past the site for the Tanderrum Bridge most days on my commute into and out of the city and I really look forward to its completion, because I think it will add something really special to that precinct and be a really special connection point. The design for the bridge was unveiled prior to the 2015 Australian Open and it is due to be completed later this year.

The reason we need to amend this legislation is because, as it stands, it does not give the trust the authority to manage the bridge, and this needs to be rectified to enable efficient and effective maintenance of this important piece of community infrastructure in the time ahead. We are keen to see this change made at this time so that management of the bridge is in place by its completion. This way we can ensure it is properly managed from the outset and does not slip through the cracks. If it were not introduced now, then no organisation would have responsibility for managing the bridge and the trust would not have authority to look after it. So this is quite a practical change and one that I think we can all get on board with to ensure that we are essentially putting the right protections and maintenance measures in place for an important piece of community infrastructure.

Obviously having this bridge in a situation where it was not subject to maintenance during this period would be extremely undesirable in the lead-up to the 2017 Australian Open, when it is hoped this bridge can be in use for patrons travelling to and from the tennis. As we

know, they come in large numbers to the Australian Open, and I was pretty gobsmacked to read the figures of attendance from this year. It attracts 720 000 visits to the Australian Open during that couple of weeks, which makes it the largest annual event in Australia. That is an incredible number of people coming through for an event that Melbourne has become very well known for.

We are fortunate to have events of this calibre in Melbourne. We have the previous Labor government to thank for the Australian Open in particular, because in 2010 it secured the Australian Open for a further 20 years beyond the expiry of its existing agreement. I was particularly proud of that achievement. Not passing these amendments now could also result in the bridge not being able to be insured, which is another reason why this bill must pass this place. It might be overstating to say it is a matter of urgency, but it certainly would be good to get it done soon.

In terms of the provisions of the bill, it will insert a new part 5B into the act, and it also includes a new section 30FA that will revoke existing reservations to the extent that they apply to land and airspace occupied by the bridge. A number of different parcels of land are affected through this. Proposed new section 30FB will then reserve the land and strata of land where the bridge is located under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978, and the reservation will be for public purposes, in particular the purposes of the National Tennis Centre. Reserving the bridge as part of the tennis centre land is an efficient and transparent way to give the trust responsibility for it. Section 6 of the act clearly states that it is the function of the trust to be responsible for the care, improvement and use of the National Tennis Centre, and the bridge will be closely integrated with the National Tennis Centre. It essentially makes sense for it to be managed as part of that whole centre.

I also want to talk a little bit about stage 1 and stage 2 of the redevelopment of Melbourne Park by way of a bit of a background on how this project has come about. Stage 1 works commenced in 2010 under the previous Labor government and comprised three components. There were the early works, the eastern plaza and the western precinct. The early works basically comprised a landscaping and water harvesting scheme, which included a 4.5-megalitre water tank under the oval and better connections and infrastructure to reduce the reliance on temporary infrastructure for events — events like the Australian Open, for example. The eastern plaza was essentially a new plaza to the east of Hisense Arena, including new indoor and outdoor tennis facilities, an operational car park and enhanced connections to AAMI Park and Richmond station. The western precinct was a significant redevelopment of the

Margaret Court Arena, including an increase in seating capacity and the construction of an operable roof. This work was completed before the 2015 Australian Open.

On 12 January 2014 the former Premier unveiled a revised master plan and announced a \$338 million commitment to stage 2 of the redevelopment. The main elements of stage 2 include significant refurbishment of the Rod Laver Arena and the construction of the Batman Avenue bridge, which we are now calling Tanderrum Bridge, as well as a new administration and media building.

These are all very important developments for our city. It is not just all about sport, as the member for Bayswater said; it is also about culture and about building things in this state that attract people. We have got a lot of competition in Melbourne not just with our interstate colleagues but also internationally. We put a lot of work and effort into making sure we are the no. 1 destination here in Australia to come to for major events and sporting events, and I think we are quite competitive by nature and do not want to see the sorts of cultural activities that we get to enjoy here being lost to other locations. Therefore having the best facilities in place and the best connection points is really important for making us a prime location for these events and also for attracting locals as well to attend these events by making it as easy as possible for them to get there.

I am also aware that there have been a series of stakeholder engagement sessions about the Melbourne Park redevelopment since 2009. I know that the Wurundjeri land council was invited to all of these sessions and there has been some extensive consultation with traditional owners regarding Tanderrum Bridge, including its naming and the proposed management arrangements for the bridge. Earlier this year — I believe it was in March — the minister appointed a panel of eminent Victorians to provide advice on the naming of the bridge. This included Aunty Carolyn Briggs and Aunty Di Kerr. I know Aunty Di Kerr well because she is from my part of the world in Dandenong. I always enjoy hearing her give a welcome to country, because every time it is different and every time it is passionate. She is an amazing advocate for our Aboriginal community but also an amazing member of the broader community in terms of her large range of interests and the time and passion that she puts into those interests. We are very grateful to have her advice not just on this matter but on a whole range of matters. On that note, this is a sensible bill and is one that should be passed, and I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr HIBBINS** (Prahran) — I rise to speak on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016,

which changes the reservation status of Crown land in relation to the Tanderrum Bridge to the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust. This is a pedestrian and cycling bridge that is connecting Birrarung Marr to the Melbourne Park precinct, which has been discussed by previous speakers, and is undergoing a significant and substantial redevelopment.

The bridge's name is Tanderrum, which is of course an Indigenous welcoming festival. Certainly that is a name that the Greens support, and I think we should be doing much more to incorporate Indigenous language into our city. We have got Birrarung Marr, which has been named in the last decade or so. We have got the William Barak Bridge, which was completed for the Commonwealth Games. The name Prahran itself is a historical name meaning 'land surrounded by water'. The Greens certainly encourage the continued incorporation of Indigenous language in the naming of our city.

It is ironic because the main concern that the Greens have with this bill, although we will be supporting the bill, is the failure or the lack of consultation with traditional owners regarding this particular piece of legislation. I appreciate there has been consultation regarding the naming of the bridge, but this particular piece of legislation should have triggered consultation. Also there has been a failure to even consider traditional owners within the minister's statement of compatibility.

To further explain, the Wurundjeri people have lodged a threshold statement under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 with the native title unit of the Department of Justice and Regulation, which means the Wurundjeri have lodged a claim for recognition and settlement with the Victorian government. Birrarung Marr is of course an important place. It is registered as a place of Aboriginal heritage cultural sensitivity, as described in the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007.

We note that the minister's statement of compatibility with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities does not address Aboriginal cultural rights and says there are no people with property rights affected by this bill. However, section 20 property rights do include traditional rights as well as statutory rights. Certainly we will be seeking a fresh statement of compatibility before this bill reaches the Legislative Council to fully meet the needs of consulting with the traditional owners.

We have consulted with Native Title Services Victoria as a stakeholder in the bill, which has in turn consulted with the traditional owners of the land, and we have

been informed that the Wurundjeri have not received notice of this bill from the government, let alone been consulted. The Wurundjeri claim is for all of the land that is the subject of the bill. The outcome of the claim could be a land use activity agreement that is negotiated with the state government, which would afford the Wurundjeri procedural rights, such as the right to be notified and consulted where a change in the status of land in the agreement area is proposed.

In these circumstances, even though there is no land use activity agreement in place, given that a claim has been made there would be a reasonable expectation that the Wurundjeri would be afforded the same rights that they would enjoy if a land use activity agreement had been put in place. Certainly that is what has occurred when other traditional owners have lodged a threshold statement but have not finalised a land use activity agreement. We also asked Native Title Services Victoria whether this bill could affect the Wurundjeri claim, and we have been advised that the land status changes could potentially affect the claim.

I appreciate that there has been consultation regarding the naming of the bridge and in regard to the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, but it is not the same as consultation that is triggered by the existing Wurundjeri threshold statement, the outcome of which could be that land use activity agreement which would have actually mandated consultation on this bill.

We can talk about our Indigenous heritage, land rights and treaties; we can use these names. I note that the government issued a media release today, 'Traditional owner rights strengthened in Victoria', which actually refers to the Traditional Owner Settlement Act and says the government is introducing a bill to strengthen that act, and I note that there was a significant Indigenous involvement in the launch of the northern bike trail strategy, but this needs to be backed up by action in adherence to the laws that we have. I would certainly be asking that these issues be addressed before the bill reaches the Legislative Council.

I would like to move on to discuss another wider issue that has come up post the Rio Olympics. I think the mayor of Melbourne, Robert Doyle, has raised the prospect of investigating whether Melbourne should host the Olympics. This probably comes up every year or so. We had the Committee for Melbourne also coming out and saying that they think it would be a great idea. Certainly this bridge and Melbourne Park would make up the central part of hosting any Olympic Games or any part of a bid that Melbourne made. But before we launch what is ultimately a very expensive,

involved and costly exercise I think it is worth exploring that a bit further.

There is no doubt that Melbourne would be well placed in terms of its sporting facilities to host the Olympic Games, but it comes at an extraordinary cost, and on an initial viewing you would find it very hard to justify the billions of dollars that would have to be spent for Melbourne to host the Olympic Games considering the transport crisis that we are in and the demand for infrastructure that we have. Justifying the expenditure of that amount of money would be difficult.

Look, I love the Olympic Games; I think they are fantastic. Even though they have probably been taken over a bit by corporate sponsorship — I think McDonald's and Coca-Cola are two of its biggest corporate sponsors — and certainly there are a number of issues with the Olympic movement, the games are athletics at their best. Before we place a bid for the Olympic Games, as has been suggested by the Lord Mayor, we have to ask five questions.

The first question is: what purpose would hosting the Olympic Games serve? What justification can we have for spending significant amounts of money on it. Rio and Beijing, which have hosted the games, are in developing countries. They were probably looking for a chance to put themselves on show to the rest of the world. I thought the London games were good for bringing what is a fragmented country together. We would really have to look very hard to find a legitimate purpose for why we would go through the exercise of bidding for and potentially hosting the Olympic Games.

The second thing we would need to look at is getting the Olympic Games to turn a profit. A number of cities have suffered severe financial losses because of the Olympic Games, some into the long term. I think only the Los Angeles games in 1984 actually managed to turn a profit. You have to look beyond the sorts of cost-benefit analyses that we use to justify the grand prix, such as for every dollar spent we make X amount of dollars. I think if any city is going to host the Olympic Games, it needs to turn a profit or at least break even. I am talking about the money spent on infrastructure, sporting venues, hosting the games and security compared with the money that actually comes in from revenue, sponsorship, ticket sales and TV rights. It needs to be able to turn a profit or at least break even.

Thirdly, you would need to look at integrity and you would need to be satisfied of the integrity in the governance of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and sporting bodies, the drug testing regime, our

own sporting bodies and the bidding process — I think we got burnt when we bid for the FIFA World Cup. There have been some investigations into the Tokyo 2020 bidding process. The IOC as an organisation is opaque and badly in need of reform. We have seen after the games the Australian Olympic Committee and the Australian Sports Commission at loggerheads, and given the amount of funding we are putting into elite sport, that is completely unacceptable. You would need to be satisfied that the integrity of the governance of the entire Olympic Games process is up to scratch.

Fourthly, you would need to find a way to ensure that, if you are hosting the Olympic Games, there is an expectation, as there was with Sydney, that we would invest substantially in elite sports to get that medal tally up. I know there is a wider debate on whether we should be doing that, but certainly if you were to host the Olympic Games, you would expect the dollars to flow. You would need to make sure that there is at least some link between money that flows into elite sports and winning medals, and that that is reflected in somehow increasing community participation in sport. There is a wider debate between elite sports and community sports, but we would need to draw that link if we were to justify the substantial investments that would be required to lift the home nation and lift our athletes to be appropriately placed to compete successfully at our own games.

Finally, you would need to ask: what legacy would the games leave? — and not just with shiny new sports stadiums and upgraded facilities. Obviously you would need significant investment in transport infrastructure. Richmond station was built for the 1956 games. You would need to look at what transport infrastructure legacy would be left but also what other social legacy the games would leave. Rio pushed a very strong message of peace and climate change. When Melbourne hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2006 I think, perhaps rather cynically, temporary accommodation was provided to homeless people to, in effect, get them off the streets. About 100-odd units from the Commonwealth Games athletes village were provided for social housing. I think we would need to go a lot further than that. Perhaps if we were to justify bidding for the hosting of the Olympic Games we could use those games as a catalyst for social change and for solving the homelessness problem in Victoria. They would be the five tests I would put before we embark on what is an extremely involved and costly exercise in bidding for the hosting of the Olympic Games.

The Greens will be supporting this bill. The bridge I think is a welcome addition to the sporting precinct and to Birrarung Marr and will provide a connection, as

other speakers have said, between the sporting precinct and the CBD, although we are very disappointed with the lack of consultation and the disregarding of the views of the traditional owners that should have been warranted, given that they have put in that threshold statement. We really do hope that, having raised these issues, those matters can be rectified before this bill gets debated in the upper house.

**Ms GREEN (Yan Yean)** — It is with great pleasure that I join the debate on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. I felt like I was in not one but two parallel universes, coming after the contribution of the Greens member for Prahran and, in the last half hour, the contribution of the member for Bayswater. They made presentations, but they bore no connection to the facts of the situation.

Before I go into the detail of the bill I might respond to some of the remarks that were made by the member for Prahran, the Greens member, about the so-called lack of consultation with the ‘Wooroonjeri’ people, and the ‘Wooroonjeri’ land council. I would ask the member for Prahran to actually double-check how Wurundjeri is pronounced, because it seems he is so well connected to the ‘Wooroonjeri’ that he cannot pronounce the name of them.

I would like to read a supporting stakeholder comment from Aunty Diane Kerr:

I haven't had the opportunity to thank you for involving traditional owners in the committee for the naming.

There were many awesome suggestions and I was really proud that the committee members decided on Tanderrum. As an elder I was pleased that people wanted an Aboriginal name without us having to put it up first.

It was a great consensus at the meeting and was a true show of reconciliation.

Thank you again for your respect.

**Mr Hibbins** — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, the member seems to be misrepresenting my position, when I clearly talked about the consultation regarding the legislation and actually acknowledged the consultation regarding the naming. So if she has a debating point to make about the legislation rather than the naming, I suggest she make it; but otherwise she is misrepresenting my position.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pearson)** — Order! The member for Prahran made a wideranging contribution and did raise his concerns about the consultation process which the government entered into. The member for Yan Yean is entitled to rebut some of the positions that he took in his speech, and she

is entitled to make a wideranging contribution, as he was afforded.

**Ms GREEN** — Thank you, Acting Speaker. As I had begun saying, there has been a series of stakeholder engagement sessions — at least one per year — about the Melbourne Park redevelopment since 2009. The Wurundjeri land council has been invited to all sessions, and more recently there has been extensive consultation with the traditional owners regarding Tanderrum Bridge, including its naming and the proposed management arrangements for the bridge.

In March 2016 the minister appointed a panel of eminent Victorians to provide advice on the naming of the bridge, and this included Aunty Carolyn Briggs and Aunty Diane Kerr. Consultation also took place with the Wurundjeri land council and key Aboriginal elders about the proposed name and management arrangements. The chosen name, Tanderrum, refers to a welcoming festival of song, dance, trading and cultural exchange; brings together concepts of pride, culture, spirit; and symbolises the coming together of the Kulin nation — an alliance of five Indigenous Australian tribes in this area.

Before I was interrupted I was quoting Aunty Di — that is, Diane Kerr, a respected Wurundjeri elder. The government, of course, is aware that the Wurundjeri/Woiwurrung have applied to negotiate a settlement under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 and they have put themselves forward as the traditional owners of much of metropolitan Melbourne. This matter is being assessed by the Department of Justice and Regulation to confirm key thresholds are met prior to the commencement of negotiations.

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

**Ms GREEN** — Before the lunchbreak I was responding to a number of curious takes on this bill and what has led up to it and also the government's record in tourism. I was able to respond to the member for Prahran, who said that the Wurundjeri people had not been consulted about the Tanderrum Bridge, and then I was able to read into *Hansard* a quote from Aunty Di Kerr thanking the minister for using that great Wurundjeri word ‘tanderrum’ as the name for the bridge, which puts the lie to what the member for Prahran was saying.

Before that the member for Bayswater spoke from the other side of the chamber, and whilst I was not sure whether I was looking at a Monty Python episode about ‘I want an argument’ or an episode of the *Real Housewives of Melbourne* or *The Stepford Wives*, she

seemed to think that there has been nothing happening in tourism. When you have a visitor economy strategy, it is about tourism, so I think the member for Bayswater might want to take a bit of an economics lesson.

Creative industries, for example, is much broader than the arts. You just do not look at it; there are actually jobs in creative industries. We take a much broader view about the tourism sector, which is the visitor economy, and also broader than the 'yarts' that we have so often heard the member for Bayswater talk about. It is creative industries.

If I am going to take any advice, I am going to take it from the eminent economist Saul Eslake, who is respected by both sides of politics. He has been appointed to many advisory positions by both sides of politics at all levels of government, including the Rudd government's Long-Term Tourism Strategy Steering Committee. I spoke at the Victorian Caravan Parks Association annual conference after Saul Eslake. He presented a very impressive set of numbers and said that Victoria was definitely punching above its weight in tourism and that we were likely to have growth in tourism in Victoria for the next 10 years. He said that this was occurring despite the underinvestment and the lack of attention being paid out by the federal government from its tourism dollars, because it was not interested in promoting the great tourism offerings that we have here in Victoria.

We have set a goal of increasing visitor spending to \$36.5 billion by 2025, and our visitor economy strategy identifies priorities across nine policy areas, of which I would ask the member for Bayswater to avail herself. They are already delivering. We have got a ministerial advisory committee chaired by the former minister, John Pandazopolous, with great representation across the visitor economy sector, including several members from regional Victoria. We have also established Visit Victoria, and if the member for Bayswater is watching any television, going to a movie or is on social media at all, she might have seen the Wander Victoria campaign, which is the biggest campaign in decades promoting what we offer here.

I thought it was a very churlish contribution on her behalf, denigrating the Minister for Sport, who is also the Minister for Tourism and Major Events. She implied that a working-class chap such as himself would only have interest in sport. Well, if she got to know the Minister for Sport, she would know that he is a very broad individual and a very wideranging minister who can walk and chew gum. He loves his sport — everyone knows that — but he has taken great steps in attracting major events to this state. In the arts we will have *Kinky Boots*, and we have had the Ai

Weiwei, Andy Warhol and David Bowie exhibitions, and many more. We have got a Business Events Fund, we have set up a regional tourism fund and we have got a Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund. It could not be further from the truth to say that this minister and this government do not have tourism front and centre.

The tourism sector was crying out for leadership under those opposite. I would suggest to the member for Bayswater that if she does have the hat, as she said, for tourism, she needs to get out a bit more, because the tourism sector has no idea who she is. I would say to her that public policy and the economy are much broader than the arts that she is always talking about. Even when she is talking about our Indigenous people she only seems to be able to talk about the arts. If you are going to dish it out, sister, you make sure you are actually broader and deeper than those you are denigrating.

**Mr THOMPSON** (Sandringham) — I am pleased to contribute to the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. I note that the details of the bill involve the revocation of the existing reservations of a number of parcels of land where they intersect with a new proposed bridge, which involves the redevelopment of Melbourne Park and a new bridge for pedestrians and cyclists over Batman Avenue linking Melbourne Park and Birrarung Marr. The new bridge will be named Tanderrum Bridge and is intended as a new front door to Melbourne Park. I also note that the bill will give the trust the legal ownership of the bridge to ensure that it can fulfil its responsibilities in maintaining the bridge as effectively and as efficiently as possible.

I further note in speaking to this bill that it is my intention to speak on behalf of the mums and dads and armies of volunteers who pay for and cut up the oranges in junior sport, who put on the umpire, team manager and coaches' bibs, who sweep out the mud and grass cuttings or the sports tape off the pavilion floors, who wash the team jumpers and get them dry for competition again in the middle of July and who turn up in all weather to support the junior and development leagues for boys and girls as they progress from junior level through to teenage level and later adult participatory areas.

It was the former Labor government that gave away the legendary Olympic Park, the setting of 13 athletic world records by the likes of Ron Clarke and John Landy, to the Collingwood Football Club. I still maintain that a royal commission is required into this particular act, which gave near exclusive use to one club. I also note the taking up of that space — Athletics

Victoria was relegated to Albert Park, and the sporting fields, once amateur ovals where some of the infrastructure in the precinct now is, are no longer available for amateur teams to play cricket or football. The old St Stephens Harriers track is no longer in the area. The Beaumaris Football Club in my electorate is reputed to be the largest junior football club in Australia, but it does not have enough grounds for its teams to play on. There has been a long-running campaign in the south-east of Melbourne, the Grass Ceiling campaign, in relation to improving the infrastructure for female sports participation.

Visionaries of the past have given us Royal Park, Fawkner Park, Studley Park, Albert Park and Dendy Park. Melbourne has held the mantle of being the sporting capital of the world. It hosted the Olympic Games in 1956 and the Commonwealth Games in 2006. It has been the training ground for Olympic medallists. The foundation for sporting achievements at elite level are the junior clubs across the state. At this point I pay tribute to the modern day Melbourne visionary, the great George Voyage, who has dedicated a greater part of his life to the development and administration of junior and amateur sport, also as a participant himself. As Melbourne's population is doubling, George is one of the few voices championing the doubling of recreational lands in middle Melbourne. How do we train future men and women Olympians without the grounds for junior development?

I have some keen-minded Beaumaris constituents who have seen the development of Australian sport in the postwar period. They — their husbands or themselves — were directly involved in the Second World War. There is 97-year-old Jean Parry, who served as a nurse in the Middle East, and 91-year-old Maureen Coad, whose husband served in the Australian navy. They have interests in recreation ranging from tap dancing through to golf and tennis, but throughout their long lives they have seen many sporting events in the Australian nation. They have seen the contribution of people such as Russell Mockridge, Herb Elliott, Ron Clarke, Ralph Doubell, Raelene Boyle, Debbie Flintoff-King, Kathy Watt and the men's rowing teams including Mike McKay, Nick Green, James Tomkins and Drew Ginn. They saw the Sydney Olympic Games, where Cathy Freeman won the 400 metres gold medal, noting also that Cathy trained along the Sandringham foreshore and on the Sandringham athletics track. They would have known of Alisa Camplin, Leisel Jones and Lydia Lassila.

The foundation for their sporting achievements at elite level came through their engagement in junior clubs, and the state and nation need to do more to promote the

development of our basketball clubs, netball clubs, athletics clubs, cricket clubs, gymnastic clubs, rowing clubs, cycling clubs and triathlon clubs. While we have built infrastructure in the Melbourne Park precinct that serves our ability to host international events, it is important that it not be at the expense of the playing fields of Melbourne and areas where there can be recreational participation at junior level. It is interesting that the Olympic Park athletics facilities were relocated from the Olympic Park precinct to the top of Albert Park Lake, because it was the place where world records have been set. I give the example of the Victorian distance runner, Ron Clarke, who, as reported in the *Canberra Times* of Thursday, 19 December 1963, set a world record time for the 6 miles and the 10 000 metres at Olympic Park:

Clarke set the times in the annual Emil Zatopek trophy race.

He completed the 6 miles in 27 minutes 17.6 seconds, which was 26.2 seconds faster than the previous world record set by Sandor Iharos in 1956.

He bettered the time for the 10 000 metres record by 3.2 seconds ...

The old mark of 28 minutes 18.8 seconds was set in 1960 —

by a Soviet Union runner, Bolotnikov. He might be known to the member for Melton. Clarke's time for the 10 000 metres could have been better except for a misunderstanding in relation to the lap calls. A track on which there were multiple world records set within this precinct has been given to the Collingwood Football Club, and the amateur athletes of Victoria have been sent down to the top of Albert Park Lake.

I think it is a shame. That heritage put Australia on the world stage and gave young Victorian athletes inspiration and an understanding of what they could be as well. It was just a matter of years later that the great Ralph Doubell picked up his medal in Mexico in 1968. I also pay tribute to Lindsay Fox for his good work at Melbourne High School, where he has commissioned the installation of statues featuring former students of Melbourne High, their contribution to sport and their achievement at the elite level. So in speaking about the good work that has been undertaken across the metropolitan landscape in the development of sporting facilities, we need to understand that the development of infrastructure should not be at the expense or the net loss of playing spaces and the aggregate participation in sport at junior level.

The Olympic Park athletics track was well served by Richmond station and also Flinders Street station, and there was a tram network that served it well. At the top of Albert Park Lake transport is not quite as useful in

providing access to that particular precinct. We in this Victorian Parliament have an obligation to preserve our history and our heritage. The steamrolling has not made the front pages of the newspapers and it has not registered in the minds of many people across the chamber, but it is uppermost in the minds of athletics administrators in Victoria. It is uppermost in the minds of those people who have had the privilege of running at Olympic Park in yesteryear that there was a sellout of that sporting precinct when the athletics site was relocated to Albert Park and given to the Collingwood Football Club.

Herb Elliott ran at Rome in 1960 and won the gold medal in the 1500 metres in the time of 3:35.6. One of his training venues and precincts was around the Olympic Park area and up the Anderson Street hill alongside the botanical gardens. It is important that we do not relegate to the past that knowledge and that understanding of Australia's sporting heritage — its sporting prowess — as we build more infrastructure. That building should not be at the expense of junior participation in sport and access to sporting facilities in metropolitan Melbourne.

**Mr J. BULL** (Sunbury) — I am very pleased to be able to contribute to the debate on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. This is an important bill that surrounds the delivery of a piece of infrastructure that will ensure that our most famous sporting precinct only gets better. I was listening intently to the previous speech, and I can recall that last year the member for Melton, the member for Essendon and I and a few other members on this side of the house attended the Victorian Institute of Sport, and what a fantastic amount of work the Victorian Institute of Sport does in supporting those athletes who are up and coming and working hard each and every day to be the very best they can in their respective sports.

It is no secret that Melbourne is the sporting capital of the nation. We are the envy of all other states, and why should we not be? It might be the Australian Open Tennis Championships that you love; perhaps it is the AFL Grand Final, the Melbourne Cup, the Melbourne Marathon or hundreds more fabulous sporting events that make this city what it is, making it tick.

**Mr Battin** interjected.

**Mr J. BULL** — I thank the honourable member for his support. Sport, as we know, is an extremely important part of our fabric as Victorians. Sport has a wonderful ability to be able to bring us together and share a common bond. Within my community, the electorate of Sunbury, I know that there are so many

who love their sport, whether it is tennis, golf, Australian Rules, soccer, netball, volleyball, cricket — the list goes on. Certainly Sunbury, Gladstone Park, Diggers Rest, Bulla and Gowanbrae are places with wonderful individuals, sporting teams and communities who go out each and every week and each and every weekend and do the very best they can.

I know that as a local member often it is hard to acknowledge the milestones that are celebrated in local sport each week, and at the risk of singling one out I want to take this brief opportunity to mention Shaun Sims from the Diggers Rest Football Club, who recently played his 300th game for the Diggers Rest Burras — a mighty and outstanding achievement.

You only need to look at the recent Olympic Games in Rio to see just how hard our wonderful sportsmen and women work. I want to congratulate all of those who went to Rio and contributed to such a wonderful performance — 29 medals, including 8 gold — especially our Olympic heroes such as Mack Horton, Catherine Skinner and Kim Brennan, who are all Victorians, and the many more who did us so proud on that sporting stage. I also wish the very best to those who are competing in the upcoming Paralympics, and I think that all members will wish those competitors the very best.

The Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016 relates to the precinct which includes the tennis centre, and this is one of the many reasons why we are known as the sporting capital of the nation. We have heard this afternoon that the precinct has a long history dating back to the 1800s, and it is certainly worth looking at how we got here today. If we fast-forward to 2016, we know that the Australian Open has grown to be Australia's largest annual event, reaching over 720 000 visits this year alone. This precinct is an absolutely fantastic space, made better by the previous Labor government that in 2010 secured the Australian Open for 20 years beyond the expiry of the existing arrangement. At the same time, there is a significant commitment of \$363 million towards the first stage of a 10 to 15-year \$972 million redevelopment of Melbourne Park to ensure this precinct continues to grow and serve the athletes, the competitors and the thousands of Victorians, Australians and people from all over the world who come and visit our wonderful city.

As we have heard this afternoon, this bill relates to the Tanderrum Bridge, which as we have heard, means a welcoming ceremony by the people of the Kulin nations featuring song, dance and a cultural exchange to provide a safe passage for those visiting our great

country. I think this is a wonderful name, and certainly through the process of the naming competition it has been a very important gesture. I am certainly of the view that it is a perfect fit for a bridge connecting to a world-renowned sports and entertainment precinct. It is hard to believe that the precinct hosts more than 200 events per year. The requirement for this legislation surrounds the need for certain existing reservations under section 30F of the act to be revoked and to make way for the bridge. New section 30FB inserted by clause 4 of the bill provides for the land and strata of land occupied by the bridge and service boxes to be temporarily reserved under section 4 of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 for public purposes, in particular for the purposes of the National Tennis Centre.

The footbridge is the centrepiece of the \$338 million stage 2 upgrade of Melbourne Park, and it will shave pedestrian travel time between Flinders Street station and Birrarung Marr to under 10 minutes. In terms of the dynamics and the movement around the entire precinct it is certainly going to open up and improve accessibility to the tennis centre and the surrounding areas. At Birrarung Marr and along the river there are a number of fringe events that happen in relation to significant events such as the Australian Open, and we know they bring more and more people to Melbourne Park. We are incredibly privileged to have such a wonderful calendar of sporting events, making us the sporting capital of the nation. We know that these bring thousands of visitors each and every year. It is something that this government and all members on this side of the house are very, very proud of.

I just wanted to take a moment to address some of the comments from the other side, in particular from the shadow tourism minister in relation to claims regarding the Minister for Tourism and Major Events essentially saying that the minister cares very little for tourism in this state. I just wanted to point to things like Visit Victoria, the new Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy, the Regional Events Fund of \$20 million, the Business Events Fund of \$9 million, \$38 million for marketing over two years, Wander Victoria, the additional \$80 million being added to the Major Events Fund and the many cultural events we have, such as White Night and the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival.

All of these fantastic events bring people to Victoria each and every year, and see them spending their money, booking accommodation and going to restaurants. These are really important things to have, and I certainly want to take the opportunity to commend the minister on his hard work and his dedication to tourism in this state and to sports of all

kinds in this state. I think if you check in on the minister's social media accounts — Twitter or Facebook — you will see there are very few times when he is not at an event, and he works extremely hard — —

**Mr Dimopoulos** — Hardworking minister!

**Mr J. BULL** — Absolutely, he is hardworking, member for Oakleigh. The minister gets on with it, and that is what those on this side of the house are all about. We are a government committed to putting people first, to getting things done and to getting on with it for each and every Victorian. What we want to be and what I believe we are is a jobs-generating government that has hit the ground running from day one. Things like Melbourne Metro; the five new stations; two 9-kilometre tunnels; a direct connection, which is very important for my community, from the Sunbury line to the Pakenham-Cranbourne line; and the removal of the 50 most dangerous and congested level crossings are projects that create jobs, that put money into people's pockets and that ensure that we continue to be the world's best state and certainly the world's most livable city.

These are things that this government is particularly passionate about. We are passionate to make sure that we continue to grow, evolve, develop and stay ahead of other states and other territories and ensure that people want to come to Victoria. This is a great place to do business, it is a great place to work and it is a fantastic place to come and watch sport — things like the Melbourne Cup, the AFL Grand Final and the Australian Open. These are all fantastic events that I know members in this house and people in the gallery this afternoon are excited about. I for one am excited about them. This is an important piece of infrastructure and a great bridge, and I look forward to its opening.

**Mr T. BULL** (Gippsland East) — It is a pleasure to rise and make a contribution on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. As has been touched on by previous speakers, the purpose of this bill is to amend the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Act 1985 to provide for the reservation of land and strata of land as National Tennis Centre land for the purposes of a bridge across Batman Avenue.

Currently a pedestrian bridge is being built over Batman Avenue, which has been named the Tanderrum Bridge. The footbridge will allow easy access for pedestrian flow from Flinders Street station through to the National Tennis Centre. The legislation amends the definition of the National Tennis Centre to extend it to include this additional land and strata title.

I am aware, and previous speakers have also noted, that the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust is very supportive of the legislative changes, which will avoid any confusion over the ownership and subsequent maintenance of the footbridge. This has been highlighted through the fact that we currently have two other footbridges that carry pedestrians back and forth from the MCG to the National Tennis Centre that are not owned or managed by either the MCG or the National Tennis Centre. So this has caused a bit of a problem when maintenance has been required or other issues have popped up that require works, whether that be due to damage by weather or damage by graffiti or other means. There has not been a clear understanding of who is responsible for the maintenance. So whilst that remains unresolved this is an opportunity to put in place some ownership guidelines for the new bridge so we do not have a replica of the confusion that exists with the other two.

It is appropriate when we are talking about a bill titled Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016 that we touch on the importance of sport in our great state but also within our local communities. It is a fact that the young people who are involved in team sports in clubs are far less likely to appear in our justice system. There are some obvious reasons around that. That is because often kids who, through no fault of their own, may not have great role models in their lives — they may not through their family situation be exposed to the greatest of environments when they are being brought up — in team sport are often, as younger people, placed around good role models. You are placed around people who can mentor you in what are appropriate behaviours relating not only to good sportsmanship but also to life skills in general. They become role models for those kids to aspire to be like. When we have kids that are involved in sporting clubs we are clearly seeing the benefits of that, as shown by those statistics, which clearly show that they are less likely to enter into the justice system.

This footbridge that will connect the tennis centre and the MCG is one that I dare say I will use quite frequently, being a Richmond Football Club member. Unfortunately with finals time approaching I have not had cause — I have paid my membership — in recent years to be attending the MCG in September. I do go to a few games, but unfortunately it is not to watch my beloved Tigers. So hopefully in some way this piece of infrastructure can inspire and improve their performance.

**Mr Donnellan** interjected.

**Mr T. BULL** — I will take up that interjection. My maternal grandfather was the president of Fitzroy Football Club.

**Mr Donnellan** — An honourable man.

**Mr T. BULL** — An honourable man. Back to the bill. It has been touched on by previous speakers that Melbourne has the title of being the most livable city. It is infrastructure like this that goes a long way to preserving and maintaining that reputation. We do have a great reputation for being a great tourist area, and we do have a great reputation of being the sporting capital of not only Australia but also the world. Easy access to and from venues is critically important in relation to maintaining that great reputation that we do have worldwide.

I noticed that recently — whether it comes to fruition or not — our Lord Mayor was discussing once again the possibility of Melbourne making a bid for one of the future Olympic Games, and of course infrastructure like this would be pertinent to any bid, because once again access to and from our magnificent sporting venues in the inner city is absolutely critical for those who are visiting our area.

I just want to talk for a couple of brief moments about the importance of sport in my own electorate of Gippsland East. I live in an electorate that has communities that are very, very sparsely interspersed. Our main population centre is Bairnsdale, which has a population of just over 13 000 people, but in a whole lot of smaller rural communities in my electorate like Heyfield, Swifts Creek, Omeo, Swan Reach, Marlo, Cann River, Mallacoota — all these are little communities with populations that range between probably about 50 to 2000 people — there are some things that are the backbone of those communities, and they are the sporting clubs. So whether they be football, cricket, hockey, tennis, netball or whatever, they play such an important role in being the backbone of our communities.

Victoria is very much a sporting state. To be able to experience, within a few hours drive of my electorate, world-class sports being played at venues like the MCG and the tennis centre inspires participation in those sports. We only have to see the interest in leg spin bowling that came from Shane Warne and the interest in tennis that came from Pat Rafter. These sportspeople do become role models that our younger people aspire to be like, so let us never underestimate the value and importance of sport in our communities, because involvement in sport does go a very, very long way to solving a lot of the problems that we encounter in wider

society — those problems being disconnection with community and lack of self-esteem and self-confidence that can go on and lead to other issues. Sports, involvement in team sports, sporting clubs and sports associations indeed have an absolutely enormous role to play.

I also want to touch briefly on the volunteers who contribute to our sporting clubs in rural and regional areas, whether they be people who are serving on committees, whether they be people involved in ground preparation, whether they be people involved in umpiring or refereeing. I think we lose sight of just how much voluntary time and effort is required, for instance, to field a football team on a Saturday afternoon. It is absolutely extraordinary how many volunteer hours are required.

It is very, very fitting when we are talking about the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill that we acknowledge those volunteers who work tirelessly within our community. Unfortunately in some cases that has been an area where we have had dwindling support. As people have become busier in their lives and have had more demands on their lives, the level of volunteering in some areas has dwindled somewhat. I would like to think that we will certainly see a rebirth in that area.

In winding up my contribution I reinforce our non-opposition to this bill. We look forward to seeing this work come to conclusion and fruition. That will greatly enhance access to what are, I would have to say, two of the premier sporting venues not only in Victoria but in Australia.

**Ms KILKENNY** (Carrum) — I am delighted to be able to contribute to the debate on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016 for many reasons, and not just because I love sport, although that is certainly one of the reasons. As we have heard, the bill before us today concerns a bridge which is currently under construction, and that bridge, when finished, will complete the link between Flinders Street, Federation Square, Birrarung Marr, the tennis centre and Melbourne Park precinct and neighbouring Olympic Park. It will be a state-of-the-art footbridge for pedestrians as well as cyclists, giving them a direct link and direct access from the city to Melbourne Park. It is also the centrepiece of our \$338 million stage 2 upgrade of Melbourne Park.

We have heard how it was the previous Labor government which commenced a three-stage redevelopment of Melbourne Park in 2009. This was partly to make sure that Melbourne retained the

Australian Open Tennis Championships, which as an avid tennis fan I am absolutely delighted to say we have done, until 2036. This massive staged redevelopment was also undertaken so that we could continue to compete for and attract to Melbourne the best major events and thereby drive our major events industry and visitor economy. We are doing this. As the Treasurer said earlier today, we are in a state of momentum in Victoria. I am very proud to be on this side of the house and delivering on that.

We have heard how in April this year Melbourne was confirmed as the sporting capital of the world. This is certainly an auspicious accolade and one we should all be rightly proud of. The major events and visitor economy has significant growth potential and endless possibilities not just for Melbourne but for all of Victoria, including our regions. There is huge potential for future growth and the potential for us to deliver on our priorities of employment, jobs, and skills and training opportunities. With this in mind, it is the Andrews Labor government which is making significant investments across Melbourne and Victoria to activate that critical pipeline of infrastructure for tourism, sporting and cultural events.

We know that the visitor economy is a key pillar of Victoria's prosperity. While the member for Bayswater might put on her rah-rah hat for the arts and culture — and well may we ask, 'Where's Heidi?' — it is this Andrews Labor government which has established the *Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy* and Visit Victoria because we understand the need for growth in this sector and we understand the opportunities that the significant growth in this sector will bring for all of Victoria. Our aim is to bring in \$36.5 billion in visitor expenditure in 2024–25 and 320 000 jobs in Victoria. This bill is just part of that wonderful picture.

As we have heard, this bill will amend the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Act 1985 to incorporate and reserve certain land upon which the new bridge will be built as National Tennis Centre land. That land will be managed quite appropriately by the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust. The bridge is going to be constructed as a welcoming bridge to welcome visitors to the tennis centre and to the Melbourne Park precinct. As a welcoming bridge it is very appropriate and fitting that the name of the new bridge will be the Tanderrum Bridge. Tanderrum, being an Indigenous word, means a welcoming festival of song, dance, trading and cultural exchange, symbolising the land owners' hospitality in which strangers are given temporary access and safe passage. I would like to thank our Indigenous community for their very important contribution to the process. There have been consultations taking place

since 2009 with stakeholders including the Wurundjeri land council and key Aboriginal elders.

I do want to touch briefly on some matters that the member for Prahran raised earlier today in his contribution. The Wurundjeri, as we know, have applied to negotiate a settlement under the Traditional Owners Settlement Act 2010. That application is currently being assessed. But it is obviously important to keep in mind that this piece of legislation is simply looking at transferring responsibility for this land from one public authority to the next, so it is probably somewhat premature for the member for Prahran to be speaking on this application by the traditional owner group when the bill before us is an entirely separate process to that application.

Interestingly the architects of the bridge have also put forward their ideas for this bridge:

... an important connection between the historic landscape of Speakers Corner and the outside tennis courts of Melbourne Park ...

And I like the comment from the architects that:

Both of these existing spaces are steeped in egalitarian and democratic values — one with a history of regular citizens speaking freely on any subject; the other where a player of any ranking can pick up a tennis racquet in one of the sport's great precincts.

So the Tanderrum Bridge will provide safe passage to visitors who are visiting the Melbourne Park precinct, and the bridge's name, an Indigenous word, will act to remind visitors of our Indigenous past and of the need to tread lightly on this place and to respect the hospitality and generosity of the traditional owners.

Of course, by incorporating the Indigenous word as the name of this bridge, it is also a timely reminder of this government's equality agenda in respect of our Indigenous communities. That is an agenda to close the gap and obviously lift the standards of Indigenous Australians. It is about respect and about respect for equality. On this issue it is this Andrews Labor government that stands head and shoulders above those opposite. We have done more for equality than those opposite — seeking equality, seeking justice for Indigenous Australians and seeking justice for women. It is not about games or name-calling; it is about action. As far as I am concerned and members on this side of house are concerned, it is about being judged by what you do and not by what you say you will do.

Frankly, I must say, I am sick and tired of those opposite trying to take the higher moral ground on the issue of equality. There is nothing that those opposite

can point to to suggest that they are genuine in their pursuit of equality, and we can take the Country Fire Authority dispute as an example. We have seen those opposite pit volunteer firefighters against career firefighters, which is something those on this side of the house would never do. All firefighters deserve our respect and should be commended for the selfless work that they do in keeping our communities safe. And what about our LGBTI communities? Those opposite have opposed the Safe Schools program in our schools, and I can see no good reason for doing this. If those opposite are sincere about stopping bullying, then they would be supporting Safe Schools in all of our schools.

Obviously naming a bridge Tanderrum is not the answer to all of our problems, but it is certainly a strong symbol and it reflects the Andrews Labor government's commitment to equality. No amount of heckling or name-calling from those opposite is ever going to alter the fact that when it comes to doing, when it comes to achieving results on equality, when it comes to justice for Indigenous communities, equality with women, equality for our LGBTI communities — —

**Mr Battin** — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, in relation to the actual bill, we have strayed a long way from the bill. It is a very important topic, but the bill in hand at the moment is around sports, particularly around the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill, and not in relation to equality.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Ward)** — Order! I thank the member for his contribution. It has been a wideranging debate, including around issues of young people in sport and a whole variety of areas, including accessibility and access. I ask the member to continue.

**Ms KILKENNY** — As I was saying, I was referring to the name of the bridge — the Tanderrum Bridge — as a timely reminder of our Indigenous past and of our need to recognise our Indigenous communities in the same way that we need to recognise all diverse communities in Melbourne and across Victoria. I am very proud of the government's record on what it is doing in the equality space. The Andrews Labor government is a government of action in equality, and I commend the bill to the house.

**Ms SHEED** (Shepparton) — Thank you, Acting Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on this bill. The Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016 sets out the purpose of the bill, which is to amend the act to provide for the reservation of a strata of land as National Tennis Centre land for the purposes of a bridge across Batman Avenue. The Melbourne and Olympic Parks precinct is an amazing place. It has

absolutely amazing things happening there, and I just printed out some of the events that occur there over a period of time: concerts, sporting events, The Wiggles shows for children, shows for families and other wonderful events. It has an extensive range of other things that take place there: the Australian Open Tennis Championships grand slam, international and national rugby, football, rugby league, netball and basketball, as well as many high-profile concerts and shows.

It has some incredible facilities too. Melbourne Park alone has Rod Laver Arena, Hisense Arena, National Tennis Centre, Melbourne Park Function Centre, Margaret Court Arena and two show courts. It has cafes, 19 outdoor tennis courts, 6 indoor tennis courts, a major oval, the Tennis Australia administration and Tennis World. Olympic Park has AAMI Park, Westpac Centre, Olympic Park Oval and Gosch's Paddock training fields. There is excellent public transport that adjoins Melbourne and Olympic parks.

Regional people also like to access these amazing facilities and events. Many are in a position to access them, and they do enjoy it, but they do not have the opportunity of doing so by using public transport if they live in my electorate. For too long the Shepparton railway line has suffered from underinvestment, while we have watched Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong and Traralgon enjoy the benefits of more than 20 services a day. Our wider catchment is equal to that of Bendigo, so we wonder why we cannot have the sort of investment in rail they have enjoyed. We cannot even claim to have the services other regional cities enjoy. This seriously impacts on people in my electorate in terms of people being able to come to Melbourne and enjoy the entertainment they might choose to have access to — and it is world-class entertainment that happens in Melbourne. It is a fantastic place with fantastic facilities, and regional people want to enjoy those as well.

We want the government to invest in the necessary work at Murchison so that trains can pass each other, we want them to invest in stabling at Shepparton so that two trains can stay there overnight and we need a protective services officer on the railway station at Seymour, and all of this work is actually achievable. I am pleased to say that as a result of our All Aboard campaign, which has been under way for some time, we have been getting some traction on this and some movement. In the last budget the government has agreed to add one more train service to and from Shepparton each day, but that only takes us to five trains to Melbourne and four home. That makes us a pretty poor relation relative to those other major regional towns I have mentioned.

We are consulting at the moment with the community about the sorts of train services we would like to have and the timetabling, and I am quite confident that the people of my electorate will be very keen to have a late-night train coming home on Saturday night. So many people love going to the football. There are a couple of trains that go down during the course of the day, but the only train home is at 6.32 on Saturday evening; that is pretty early. There are so many things on on Saturday nights that people cannot access — for example, enjoying the night out. They may even like to have a few drinks and come home by train. It is something that is not there and not available at the moment.

I remember during the Commonwealth Games back in 2007 I had the benefit of being able to go to that event, and it was terrific. During the course of the games I took the train to Melbourne on a couple of occasions, and our train to Shepparton had standing room only — can you believe it? People want to go to these fabulous events and cannot access them locally. Families were standing in corridors, in doorways, because they were so passionate about getting there and being able to take their families to see those fantastic events.

I am therefore confident that when the government invests in these changes our Shepparton community will use the train much more. I believe that in Bendigo, when it had the poor services we currently have, not many people used to train. They used alternative ways of getting there, or they simply did not go. But once the excellent train services were delivered to that community, the patronage increased amazingly, and that is what we expect will happen.

Like Bendigo, Shepparton has the opportunity to expand in so many ways. We have the University of Melbourne's rural medical school located there, in the Goulburn Valley, next to Goulburn Valley Health. La Trobe University is offering an expanded range of courses next year, and we have the GOTAFE college there. With good rail services we would expect people to travel into Shepparton. We know that in Bendigo, 10 per cent more people are now travelling into it than leave it each day. So it is not just to get to Melbourne; good rail services actually bring activity and business into your own town.

When the new Shepparton Art Museum receives the remaining \$10 million of funding it has been promised by the federal government we expect to see the commencement of the building of an iconic building on the lake in Shepparton which will be a multipurpose art museum, art gallery and function centre, with cafes, which will be truly beautiful. People will want to come

to Shepparton to see those things; we will actually have something — along with other things we currently have — to offer people. The availability of public transport in a two-way motion will bring great benefits to our town.

It may seem that my argument here is that we need better public transport just to access Melbourne, and that is a very strong part of it because there are events that happen in Melbourne that will never happen in the country, as they are world-class events that can only happen in a big city. Nevertheless, regional Victoria is a truly beautiful place. There are many reasons why you would travel to regional Victoria, and there are many reasons why you would seek to travel to my electorate. So while I commend this bill and the fact that there is going to be a fabulous new bridge across the Yarra, I would like to draw to the government's attention that it is about access for all to these fabulous places, and by having better public transport and better train services the people of my electorate will be able to have that.

**Mr DIMOPOULOS** (Oakleigh) — I just want to say that I enjoyed the contribution of the member for Shepparton. She is always very measured, well informed and articulate. And I love Shepparton — we have had that discussion before. I travelled to Shepparton almost 10 years in a row to stay with good friends annually for a week's break, and while I do not have executive office-holder responsibilities, I think the government has definitely listened and will continue to listen to the member for Shepparton's concerns.

It gives me great pleasure to speak on this bill, the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. It is a quite simple bill but a very important one. As other speakers have said, the bill gives the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust legal ownership of the new bridge for pedestrians and cyclists over Batman Avenue, which links Birrarung Marr and Melbourne Park. This will enable the trust to maintain the bridge in an effective, efficient and integrated way. In a sense, while it is significant, it is essentially a bit of tidying up.

The bill does invite a bit of a walk down memory lane, as other members have found. It is a reminder of the significant achievement of how that precinct has grown over time. Obviously since its inception in the 1980s, under the then Premier John Cain and the Cain government, it has grown to become a significant centre of entertainment and sport which attracts 720 000 visits a year, or indeed it did in 2016. But again it is just another reminder of what good governments can do over time through positioning integral pieces of land together in a way that has a common purpose. In this context that common purpose is the development of a

sports and entertainment precinct. There is probably not one Victorian who has not at some point visited one of the facilities in this precinct.

In 2009, as the minister said in his second-reading speech, the then government commenced a three-stage redevelopment of Melbourne Park to retain the Australian Open Tennis Championships in Melbourne until 2036. They were successful in signing an extension of 20 years to the existing contract for the Australian Open. Stage 1 of that redevelopment was completed in 2014. Stage 2 is currently in progress and includes the construction of a new administration and media building; a bridge for pedestrians and cyclists over Batman Avenue, which is the bridge that we are moving this legislation in relation to; and a significant refurbishment of Rod Laver Arena. While this bill technically relates to authority over that one bridge and brings a bit of cohesion to the land under one authority, it is a reminder of how huge and significant this precinct is not only to the tourism economy but also to the livability of Melbourne and Victoria with the ability of each of us to access these facilities.

Two hundred events a year are held in the precinct. As the minister said in his speech, the bridge will effectively be a front door for this complex and provide easy access from Flinders Street station and Federation Square. I heard, and I am sure someone will correct me if I am wrong, that Flinders Street station is closer to this precinct than Richmond station is, which is counterintuitive. I think with this bridge it creates a seamless thoroughfare or access point.

I would like to touch on a couple of the contributions made by those on the other side, in particular the contribution of the opposition spokesperson on tourism. True to form, the member for Bayswater picked up a very unusual lens through which to assess the achievements of the Andrews Labor government. That lens is probably called envy, small-mindedness or something like that. But I have to join my colleagues in correcting the perception that this government is not doing enough — or anything in fact — on tourism. As a quick stocktake, we established Visit Victoria — a seamless, coordinated authority to manage tourism in this state under one brand and one strategy, we announced a new visitor economy strategy; we announced a Regional Events Fund of \$20 million, a Business Events Fund of \$9 million and a marketing fund of \$38 million over two years, we announced the Wander Victoria campaign and we announced an additional \$80 million for the Major Events Fund in 2015–16 for all types of events.

There have been many cultural events staged in the state, including the Ai Weiwei and Andy Warhol exhibition, *Kinky Boots*, the David Bowie exhibition at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, which I had the pleasure of attending, and the Marilyn Monroe exhibition in Bendigo. I think it is important to have more events held outside Melbourne.

**Ms Sheed** interjected.

**Mr DIMOPOULOS** — ‘Hear, hear’, said the member for Shepparton. We are listening, absolutely listening. There is also the White Night Melbourne event, which because of the Andrews government is going regional; the Virgin Australia Melbourne Fashion Festival; the Clunes Booktown Festival; and food and wine festivals. I am getting a bit tired from reading this list out, but I will continue because I think it is important for the opposition to hear it. Other events are the Melbourne International Film Festival and the New York Museum of Modern Art exhibition in 2018, not to mention our enormous suite of business events secured while this government has been in office.

Tourism is an absolutely important component of our economy. It is front and centre of our priorities as a government. I am conscious of what the member for Shepparton said, but what I am going to say is a bit Melbourne-centric, although there is absolutely a strong regional element to it. You cannot have this enormous calendar of events and not enable people to genuinely access it through affordable, connected public transport. One element — only one, but it is an important element — is 24-hour public transport. I know that we are still in the trial phase, but I am really proud of the fact that we committed to that while in opposition and are in the process of delivering it in government.

In conclusion I just want to say a couple of things. I want to pick up on the point on consultation raised by the Greens. We take that enormously seriously and absolutely agree with the very eloquent comments of the member for Carrum in relation to our commitment to equality and Indigenous communities. As other speakers have said, there have been a series of stakeholder engagement sessions in relation to the Melbourne Park redevelopment since 2009, on average one a year. The Wurundjeri land council was invited to attend all sessions as partners in the project, and more recently there has been an extensive consultation with traditional owners regarding the Tanderrum Bridge, including on its naming and the proposed management arrangements for the bridge. Minister Eren has appointed a panel of eminent Victorians to provide advice on the naming of the bridge, which include

Aunty Carolyn Briggs and Aunty Dianne Kerr from those communities.

This is not an ill-considered proposal. It is a proposal that firmly stacks up in terms of the investments made in this precinct over the last 40 years. It is also a proposal that keeps the faith of the Labor movement in terms of the value set we hold with the traditional owners of the land. And for me, while we are talking specifically about a bridge, it is a demonstrable record of achievement in infrastructure by this government and includes my favourite topic, the 50 level crossings, 4 of which are in my community, that we are removing; the Melbourne Metro project, which is fully funded — I would believe the Treasurer before the former Treasurer, the member for Malvern; high-capacity trains; the 50 per cent content rules to ensure production occurs in Victoria; the western distributor; the Monash Freeway widening; Mernda rail extension; Southland station; over \$1 billion of capital works in schools; and a whole range of other investments. The bill is very consistent with the value set of this government. I commend the minister’s work on this, and I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr CRISP (Mildura)** — I rise to make a contribution on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. The purpose of the bill is to amend the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Act 1985 to provide for a reservation of land and the strata title of the land to the National Tennis Centre for the purposes of a bridge across Batman Avenue. There is currently a pedestrian bridge being built over Batman Avenue which has been named Tanderrum Bridge, and this footbridge will allow easy access for pedestrians to flow from Flinders Street station to the National Tennis Centre. The land is currently held under section 20B(2)(b) of the Melbourne City Link Act 1995 and will be now added to the National Tennis Centre.

The two other footbridges that move pedestrians between the MCG and the National Tennis Centre are not owned by either the MCG or the National Tennis Centre. When these walkways are damaged or are graffitied there is no clear understanding of what this means in terms of maintenance of the bridges. I think this is a very important issue that does need to be addressed because bridges do need maintenance, and those two remaining bridges need somebody to take on responsibility for them. As we are aware, neither the MCG trust, the Melbourne City Council nor the National Tennis Centre will take responsibility for their maintenance. Particularly as we have such a wonderful city, even beyond the safety issues, there are issues of graffiti that are of concern.

This is a bill to overcome those issues so there is a responsibility for this bridge's maintenance and its access to one of the grand precincts in the sporting world. It is the home of champions and is visited by country people. Getting around, when country people come to this precinct, is very important. Connectivity is important as well. Most country people are here on the weekend. They do not know Melbourne all that well, so being able to move from Flinders Street station into the precinct is an excellent initiative.

I would also like to pay tribute to those people who work at weekends, not in our elite sporting precincts but at those clubs that are made up of the volunteers and the mums and dads who assist the participants in weekend sport. That ensures that the benefits of participation are delivered to the wider community. These people get up on the weekend and give up a great amount of time in order to aid that participation. Without a local start we would not have champions. Those champions would not be found without that community sport that occurs locally and all the people who foster those champions, who go on to entertain us greatly. I know other members have paid tribute to the people who do that. It does not matter what job you do; whether you are marking the lines, giving encouraging words to young participants, umpiring, working in the canteen or cutting up the oranges, this all builds a structure that leads to that great sporting precinct that we have in Melbourne.

This is a sensible bill, particularly to sort out the long-term maintenance of these particular bridges, because the two that are already there will become a problem for somebody soon. These things do not look after themselves; they do require work from time to time. I urge that, with this new bridge underway and with a taste of this legislation, work is done to secure the future of those walkways. It is no good building one bridge if you have to retire another. With those words said, I commend the bill to the house and look forward to walking over the bridge.

**Ms SULEYMAN** (St Albans) — I rise to speak on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. I commend the previous speakers on this side the house. There have been some great contributions towards this particular bill. As many speakers have said, Melbourne is the most livable city. Exactly! Nothing could more perfectly describe Melbourne. We have a legacy of hosting some of the world's most significant sporting events, from the Commonwealth Games, the AFL Grand Final, the ICC Cricket World Cup all the way through to the grand prix and many other sporting events, including the Australian Open

Tennis Championships. Melbourne is the sporting capital of the world for this decade and those to come.

Not only is this legacy a credit to our rich culture of sport and competition but when we look at Melbourne Park it is a key entertainment precinct right in the centre of our city. It hosts over 200 events each year with a history dating back to the 1800s. It acts as a time line of Melbourne's historic sporting culture. Just 28 years ago close to 266 000 fans packed Melbourne Park to witness the first Australian Open there. Stepping forward to 2016, the competition now reaches over 720 000 fans. It is an international sport where we have a worldwide audience.

This is not only about the Andrews Labor government's commitment to sport and investment. We have seen that previous Labor governments understand the importance of maintaining and investing in our sporting facilities, and, most importantly, attracting events to Victoria. In 2010 Labor committed the stage 1 funding to the Melbourne Park precinct and secured the Australian Open for a further 20 years. And the previous Labor government commenced the 2010 developments comprising three components — the early works, the eastern plaza and the western precinct. On this side of the house, Labor governments have really got a priority when it comes to funding sporting events and making sure that we have infrastructure that accommodates these events. Our first-rate entertainment facilities represent our commitment to local sports, entertainment and tourism.

I note the Minister for Sport, who is also the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, is in the house today. What an outstanding sports minister we have in Victoria. He is passionate not only about sport but also about attracting events, and not only in the centre of Melbourne but also in places like St Albans. In my electorate we have so many sporting clubs that rely on government to invest in and support their programs and volunteering, clubs such as the St Albans Saints Soccer Club. Volunteers — mums and dads — contribute each day to these clubs to make sure that their kids are able to not only be healthy and active but also play and be part of a competitive field across Melbourne. The clubs rely on the grants and support that this government provides. I want to thank the Minister for Sport, who has really led and provided opportunity in relation to investment in our sporting clubs across Victoria.

Today we are here to talk about the footbridge that will provide a new pedestrian entrance to the Melbourne Park precinct from the city. The bridge will connect with Birrarung Marr to provide direct access from Flinders Street station to Federation Square and will

serve as the centrepiece of the \$338 million stage 2 upgrade to Melbourne Park, a significant investment by this government. It will also allow pedestrians to walk between sporting facilities and Flinders Street station in less than 10 minutes, making it much more accessible. This will provide Victorians with a quicker, safer journey to experience their world-class sports and entertainment facility.

The master plan for the stage 2 redevelopment also includes refurbishments to Rod Laver Arena, providing a new eastern facing primary entrance, improving public amenities, expanding the public concourse space and of course providing accessible entrances to the seating bowl. Of course the development also includes an administration and media building, which is critical to making sure that we have the appropriate administration facilities at Melbourne and Olympic parks.

I am also delighted that the bridge is being named Tanderrum Bridge. Of course there has been extensive consultation in relation to the naming of the bridge. We have heard that 'tanderrum' means 'welcome ceremony' to the people of the Kulin nation. Earlier this year the minister appointed a panel of eminent Victorians to provide advice on the naming of the bridge, including people like Auntie Carolyn Briggs and Auntie Diane Kerr. Consultation also took place with the Wurundjeri land council and key Aboriginal elders about the proposed name and management arrangements.

The chosen name, 'Tanderrum', refers to the welcoming festival of song, dance, trading and cultural exchange. It brings together concepts of pride, culture and spirit, and symbolises the coming together of the Kulin nation, an alliance of five Indigenous Australian tribes in south-central Victoria. It is great to see that the Indigenous heritage of the area has been honoured and respected, and most importantly that extensive consultation has been undertaken with the Indigenous community, as part of naming this bridge.

I have spoken about the investment in relation to sport in the St Albans electorate. As I have previously said, I have got many sporting clubs in the electorate of St Albans. We take pride in all of our sporting clubs, whether they are soccer or footy. On increasing the participation of women and girls, I know a lot of soccer and footy clubs in St Albans are encouraging and facilitating that. Let me say that just yesterday I was honoured to be visited in Parliament by a Green Gully Soccer Club player, George Lambadaridis, who many in the west would know. What an honour. The Green Gully Soccer Club is a western suburbs soccer club,

and their victory over the Central Coast Mariners at home was the first time that a local club in Victoria defeated an A-League club. Now they are off and making real headway in the Football Federation Australia Cup. This event was also broadcast by Fox Sports across the nation. We are very proud to have a western suburbs club that is making national news.

I had the opportunity to greet George yesterday. I have also met with representatives of many of my other sporting clubs. I have mentioned the St Albans Saints Soccer Club. Ivan Maric is an example of someone who is putting back into the community. He is a professional-level AFL player and also the president of St Albans Saints Soccer Club. He volunteers, puts back and makes sure that the St Albans team is a top competitor in the national league.

I could continue and talk about the level of investment by the Andrews Labor government not only in sports or tourism but also in terms of the level crossing removals at Main Road and Furlong Road in St Albans. We are seeing them being removed. We will see a new station in the next few months, and that is fantastic for the people of St Albans. Next month we will see the commencement of the \$200 million Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital, a first again for the west. We will see a women and children's hospital delivered by the Andrews Labor government in 2016. I am very, very proud of those commitments.

We never got anything from the Liberals and The Nationals, quite frankly, in the west. We were like the poor cousins. We never received any form of funding when it came to the necessities of a community. It is only the Andrews Labor government that has been delivering in relation to public transport. Just today there was an announcement about the Doctors in Secondary Schools program. How proud am I that Keilor Downs College, St Albans Secondary College and Victoria University Secondary College were part of this announcement. I commend this bill. I commend the minister for his leadership in this area. It is a fantastic contribution to sports and events in this state.

**Mr WATT** (Burwood) — I rise to speak on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. The bill is essentially about a bridge and about who has control of and maintenance responsibility for that bridge, but it is about more than just that, because the Melbourne and Olympic parks are about sport in Victoria and Melbourne being the sporting capital of Australia, and I would probably say the sporting capital of the world. Part of that is about what happens in this precinct. It is not just about a bridge; it is about people being able to get from Flinders Street station across to

the tennis centre to the greatest tennis event in the world and to watch some of the best tennis in the world at Rod Laver Arena and the tennis centre. It is also about being able to get across to the MCG, one of the greatest sporting icons and greatest sporting sites in the world — and I suppose from there you would be able to get across to the parks precinct. I am proud of it as a Victorian, even though this precinct has been damaged over the years by decisions of previous governments.

If you think about the other facilities that are in this particular precinct, you look at AAMI Park. Now, I am a Melbourne Victory member, and have been since the day they actually started in this competition, and I used to go to Olympic Park to watch Melbourne Victory play. AAMI Park is a great facility, but they built a facility with foundations for 50 000 — this is the previous Labor government — when it only has a 30 000 capacity and when Melbourne Victory at the time had about 30 000 people going to games. So it was not really enough room for growth for Melbourne Victory to be able to participate in sport at that stadium.

But you do not have to be concerned about Melbourne Victory worrying about growth at that particular stadium, because when we got into government, what we actually discovered was that the previous Labor government had not provided funding for enough seats. You do not have to worry about participants or people going to watch the sport, because there was not enough funding in that particular proposal to actually put seats into the ground. But you do not have to worry about seats, because there actually was not enough money in the budget to put grass onto the ground — so you would not have been able to play sport there in the first place. This is the shambles that the Brumby government left the Baillieu government when we got into office, and we had to fix that particular proposal.

I also want to go back to and look at Olympic Park. One of the greatest disgraces that I see is that athletics was moved from Olympic Park because of Collingwood — Collingwood of all teams, Acting Speaker McGuire — and the fact that the Premier of the day happened to be a Collingwood supporter. It is an absolute disgrace that he handed over Olympic Park — Olympic Park, the home of athletics in Victoria. This is the place where people warmed up for the Olympics. Athletics has been in that spot for decades, and to be told by the Brumby government: 'I'm sorry, the president of the Collingwood Football Club, who is also a member of the Athletics Australia board, by the way, wants you to move away from this particular precinct and get out of the way so that Collingwood can have a training ground' is an absolute disgrace!

I went down to the 2012 World Masters Games at Bob Jane Stadium. I actually opened that particular event. I had a conversation with a lot of the athletes down there. What they said to me was, 'You can take the athlete out of Olympic Park, but you can't take Olympic Park out of the athlete'. I competed at Olympic Park numerous times. I competed at Olympic Park with great pride for the Box Hill Athletic Club, I have got to tell you. It was a disgrace, and I was quite saddened and I know a lot of athletes were very saddened about the fact that they had been booted out of Olympic Park so that the Collingwood Football Club could have a training ground. That was an absolute disgrace. I know it is something that those who participated in athletics will never forget, and they will never forgive the Labor Party for what they did to athletics in this state and the fact that they would actually boot athletics from the place where we competed for decades.

Not me particularly, but athletes for decades competed at Olympic Park. Schools would go down there and kids would compete at Olympic Park for their schools. People competed at Olympic Park for their state, and for them to be told, 'You are not worth being in this particular precinct because of the Collingwood Football Club' — because the Premier of the day decided he wanted his football club to be walking distance to the MCG — was an absolute disgrace. In fact some of those members who agreed to that decision are still in this house. They should hang their heads in shame.

This particular precinct is a great precinct. It is much poorer for the fact that athletics is not there, but it is a great precinct with good tennis, with football — —

**Mr Eren** — Concerts.

**Mr WATT** — With concerts — it is not just a sporting precinct, as the member for Lara points out. He is the Minister for Sport and has just discovered he is the Minister for Tourism and Major Events as well.

On the fact that we are building a bridge, it is people like me, who competed at Olympic Park, who look at this particular bridge with a heavy heart and think, 'How good would it have been for me to be able to walk across this bridge to go to see some of the greatest athletes in the world come to Victoria to compete at Olympic Park?'. But unfortunately I have got to walk past a disgraceful training ground for the Collingwood Football Club and think, every time I go to the Melbourne Victory games that I go to, about how disgraceful it was that the president of the Collingwood Football Club, along with the Premier of the day, did over athletics in this state. It is disgraceful, and members should hang their heads in shame.

I have got to say, getting back to AAMI Park, that AAMI Park is a pretty good stadium. I go there regularly. Unfortunately when Melbourne Victory plays someone like Adelaide or Sydney, we cannot play there because we have got too many people who want to go and watch. We have to run off to Etihad. I go to Etihad Stadium to watch games, when I should be at a premier stadium that has a capacity of more than 30 500.

**Ms Asher** interjected.

**Mr WATT** — The fallacy is that we would build a foundation for 50 000 and spend millions of dollars on a new stadium and then say, ‘That’s okay, because we’ve got a foundation that can cover 50 000’. Is the proposal to knock down a 30 000-seat stadium, leave the foundations there, and build a 50 000-seat stadium? This sounds like desalinomics to me. It is the type of thing that a government would do if they have no idea what is going on.

**Mr Eren** interjected.

**Mr WATT** — I will say that, as the minister points out, not only is the stadium used by the Victory but it is also used by Melbourne City, Melbourne Storm and the Rebels — some great teams. But I tell you what: they would appreciate it if they had a decent stadium with decent capacity so they could get more people in to watch.

I was at a match, I think it was last year, and I saw some of the juniors from one of my local sporting teams, the Ashburton United Soccer Club, on the ground participating in some of the pre-game events. That was fantastic, and I pay tribute to the Ashburton United Soccer Club for the great work that they do with all of their soccer players. But they are not the only soccer club in the electorate of Burwood; obviously the Eastern Lions Soccer Club and Riversdale Soccer Club are great clubs as well. If you look at the Box Hill United Soccer Club, that is also another great soccer club in the electorate of Burwood. While we are talking about great clubs, I do want to pay tribute to the Ashburton United Junior Football Club, which won four premierships on the weekend, two of those being women’s teams. They only have three women’s teams, but the other women’s team that competed, the youth team, came runners-up. They were in the grand final. That was a great effort by all of those people who do play sport, particularly for the Ashburton United Junior Football Club, the Ashy Redbacks, and all their successes on the weekend.

I also want to pay tribute to the Surrey Park Junior Football Club that had a team get up in a premiership this weekend just gone by. I note the member for Box Hill is the member in that particular area. Nonetheless, it is close to my electorate, and I congratulate everybody who participated in junior sporting events on the weekend.

**Mr EDBROOKE** (Frankston) — It is indeed a pleasure to rise to speak on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. From a local point of view, a Frankston point of view, local sport is indeed the glue that binds our community together in a lot of ways. In a lot of ways it is also what keeps our kids on the straight and narrow. It is with great revelation that I can say that together with the local council and other community leaders, I know that and support different sporting communities in Frankston. Our kids become the champions that play at places like Rod Laver Arena, and we really have to support that.

I would just like to give a quick shout out to the Frankston District Netball Association, whose courts I am at every Saturday eating an egg and bacon roll and watching the girls play netball. Also we have just committed funding to building netball courts at the Eric Bell Reserve in Frankston North, which is another much-needed facility, so a big shout out to all the mums and dads, who, like the member for Mildura said, help out. Whether it is marking the lines, coaching or supporting, they keep our kids in sport and keep them on the straight and narrow.

Sport, as well as being very important to my local community, is so important for Melbourne and so important for Victoria. Victoria is, of course, a sporting state and the sporting state of our nation. Last year I saw that firsthand at the Rugby Sevens game in Victoria, where I met the New South Wales Premier, Mike Baird. Mike had to come all the way down to Victoria to see the biggest game of rugby he has ever seen with the biggest crowd. We gave him a bit of a ribbing about that, and he received that in good humour, so it was all good.

Since its inception in the 1980s the National Tennis Centre has been an outstanding asset for Melbourne and Victoria, and it hosted its first Australian Open Tennis Championships in 1988. I have been to Rod Laver Arena quite a few times, not always for sporting events, although I have been there for tennis a ton of times. I did see The Cure there a couple of years ago, if anyone remembers The Cure with Robbie Smith, and the first concert I ever went to was the Oils supported by Things of Stone and Wood. Later on I went to my children’s

first concert, which was The Wiggles, and that was pretty good fun too. It is a very, very important — —

**Mr Nardella** — Can you tell me your favourite?

**Mr EDBROOKE** — My favourite was easily The Wiggles. It was great. I love a bit of a dance.

It is a very important precinct for Melbourne. The Australian Open has, of course, grown to be one of Australia's largest annual events. Attendance continues to grow every year, reaching a record of over 720 000 visits in 2016 alone.

Along with Melbourne Park and the neighbouring Olympic Park, we also host a large number of other sporting events, concerts and family shows. As I said, to keep up the momentum of Victoria, and as we know Victoria has got a whole lot of momentum at the moment, we need to do it in every — —

**Ms Graley** — State of momentum.

**Mr EDBROOKE** — A state of momentum, indeed. We need to actually keep that up in every sector, and the sporting sector is one of them. So in 2009 the former Labor government commenced a three-stage redevelopment of Melbourne Park to retain the Australian Open in Melbourne until 2036 and continue to help drive Victoria's major events industry and visitor economy, and thank goodness they had the vision and foresight to do that. Stage 1 of the redevelopment was completed in 2014 and stage 2 is currently in progress, and that is why we are here today speaking on this bill. It includes the construction of a new administration and media building and a bridge for pedestrians and cyclists over Batman Avenue, which we can see every time we drive from the southern suburbs into Parliament House. This bridge links Melbourne Park and Birrarung Marr, making it safer for pedestrians and also quicker to get from Flinders Street station to the sporting precinct. The redevelopment also includes a significant refurbishment of the fantastic Rod Laver Arena as well.

This bill relates to the bridge over Batman Avenue, which is due for completion later this year. I note that the bridge was recently named the Tanderrum Bridge. Tanderrum is a welcoming ceremony by the people of the Kulin nations, featuring song, dance, cultural exchange and providing safe passage for visitors to country. It is a mark of respect to the first owners of this land as well. Tanderrum is a perfect name for this bridge, connecting two world-renowned sports and entertainment precincts that host over 200 events each year.

The nuts and bolts of the bill basically enable the bridge to be managed and maintained by the trust in an efficient and effective way, and it splits up some of the land parcels so they can be managed as well. I do know there was a notion expressed by the member for Prahran about the naming of the bridge, and I would like to talk about that just for one second. Sometimes we find ourselves politicising things unnecessarily, and I think that was probably an example of that.

In Victoria we have been able to do a lot for tourism in the last 18 months. We have had the Andrews Labor government and the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, who I note is at the table at the moment, establish Visit Victoria, announce a new visitor economy strategy, and establish a \$20 million Regional Events Fund and a \$9 million Business Events Fund. There is \$38 million for marketing over two years, including the Wander Victoria campaign. The government has provided an additional \$80 million to the Major Events Fund in 2015–16 for all types of events in Victoria.

It sponsors major cultural events, including the Andy Warhol and Ai Weiwei exhibition, the *Kinky Boots* musical, the Marilyn Monroe exhibition in Bendigo and the David Bowie exhibition, which were all very successful. I attended the David Bowie exhibition with quite a few other members from both sides of the house. It was actually quite a learning curve because he was a little bit before my time in a lot of ways and he straddled a lot of generations, so it was quite interesting. Also White Night is going to regional Victoria, and there is the Virgin Australia Melbourne Fashion Festival, the Clunes Booktown Festival and the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival as well. Of course there is the Melbourne International Film Festival, and a New York Museum of Modern Art event is coming up in 2018, which I know a lot of members here will be looking forward to, not to mention the suite of business events secured under this government.

The tourism industry, I think it is fair to say, was crying out for some leadership, some direction, some inspiration and an injection of funds from government, and it has got it with this Labor government. Of course on top of that we have the injection into grassroots sports, which I connect back to what I was talking about only a couple of minutes ago with how important sport is for our local communities, especially in Frankston. We have got the \$100 million Community Sports Infrastructure Fund, the \$8 million Country Football and Netball Program, and \$22 million for the Better Indoor Stadiums Fund. This is a much more significant investment than the Liberal-Nationals government ever made. We are also encouraging more

females in sports, building female changing rooms and toilets, and installing defibrillators. There is a lot going on.

Just with regard to what the member for Prahran raised, he did have a concern regarding consultation with the traditional owners of the land. I would like to address that; fair is fair. There have been a series of stakeholder engagement sessions, at least one per year, with regard to the Melbourne Park redevelopment since 2009. The Wurundjeri land council has been invited to all sessions — every single session — and more recently there has been extensive consultation with the traditional owners with regard to the name of the bridge itself, including proposed management arrangements for the bridge as well. In March 2016 the minister appointed a panel of eminent Victorians to provide advice on naming the bridge. These included Aunty Carolyn Briggs and Aunty Diane Kerr, all well-respected Indigenous elders. Consultation also took place with the Wurundjeri land council and key Aboriginal elders about the proposed name and management arrangements. The chosen name refers to, like I said before, a welcoming festival of song and dance and symbolises the coming together of the Kulin nations, an alliance of five Indigenous Australian tribes in south-central Victoria. I think that that proves very well that there was plenty of consultation with the traditional owners of the land, and I think they are quite happy with the name.

I think it does justice to have that great pedestrian bridge saving people time, making it more convenient to get to this sporting precinct and keeping Melbourne as the sporting capital of Australia and beyond. I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms ASHER** (Brighton) — I wish to make a couple of observations on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016 — not very lengthy ones, I would have thought, because my voice will not last. The bill of course enables the reservation of land to enable a bridge across Batman Avenue to link various parts of Melbourne. It is a worthwhile piece of infrastructure, and obviously the opposition does not oppose the bill — in fact successive governments have built on the National Tennis Centre and a whole range of infrastructure around that area.

There is a reason I was moved to leave my office. As many people would know, I am a very old-fashioned member of Parliament, and I have the speaker on in my office the whole time, basically. When people call quorums, I do not have to come running. I am very well aware of who has spoken on what bills, and in fact I probably reckon I could give the Premier some advice

as to who I think should be promoted into the next cabinet, because I reckon I have heard almost every speech that government members have made and indeed opposition members have made. I was sitting in my office today, and I heard a whole lot of nonsense, and I thought, ‘No, no. This is time for me to leave the office and come and set the record straight’.

Broadly what I heard in my office were a series of claims made by Labor Party members that they were responsible for the major events strategy, and of course they linked this back to the bill and talked about the sporting precinct and what had been done and so on and so forth. In fact I heard a number of specific events mentioned as being secured by the Labor government. One mention was made of the David Bowie exhibition; clearly I must have been hallucinating when I announced we secured that event. Clearly I have imagined, I have dreamt, that I went to the cabinet subcommittee and argued for that event and secured the funding and announced it. I have clearly lost my mind. I have concocted this in my mind, and I really should be giving credit. I am told by a number of speakers — not all — on the other side that that event had been secured by the gentleman sitting across the table, the Minister for Tourism and Major Events.

I just want to set the record straight: not all events have been secured by Labor ministers. More importantly I just want to give a bit of background. Of course John Cain started the construction of the tennis centre — that is absolutely right — but in terms of the major events strategy, just let me assist some of the newer members of the Labor Party as to how this actually evolved. The first person who actually started talking about this, to be fair — —

**Mr Eren** — Joan Kirner.

**Ms ASHER** — It was Joan Kirner. There is no need to jump in; I am actually someone who is prepared to give credit. She started off in a very, very basic way. She asked this guy called Ron Walker to look at perhaps whether we could get another bid up for the Olympics and get a couple of events. It was a very, very minor way to try and deal with the recession and the fact that we had hardly any tourists coming to Melbourne in those days. Then the Kennett government was elected. Interestingly enough, while there were a series of cutbacks when that government was elected, because there were dire economic circumstances, one of the areas where there were absolutely no cutbacks at all was tourism, because former Premier Kennett recognised the economic contribution of tourism to the state. One of the things that he did — and I will give him credit for driving this — was a whole revamped

major events strategy, and he put a lot of money into it and ramped up the securing of a whole range of events.

It does irritate me somewhat to listen to new members of the ALP opposite claiming that the major events strategy is all their current government and that Labor governments have done this. It is a nonsense to claim that; it is an absolute nonsense. If you want to actually give some political credit, you can give a little bit of political credit to Joan Kirner and you can give a lot of political credit to Jeff Kennett, who absolutely drove this strategy and funded it. I even heard one member — and I will not name her — speaking favourably about the grand prix. I would remind the house that Labor originally opposed the grand prix when Jeff Kennett secured it. There were rallies against it; they opposed it at Albert Park and the then member for Albert Park opposed it and helped form the Save Albert Park group. I am very happy for the member who made that claim to recognise that the grand prix is a good event for Melbourne, but she does need to understand that initially her party opposed it and that her party then came around to supporting it.

I also note with some interest that in the second-reading speech there is something that is slightly misleading. First of all, the tennis had been secured until 2036 for a very long time before the redevelopment of Melbourne Park. I know this because I signed the contract, and I know what date I signed the contract because I know when I was the minister. There were repeat contracts signed but I can assure the house that it was not the construction of the three-stage redevelopment of Melbourne Park that secured the tennis until 2036. It was secured well before then, which is why I laugh when Mike Baird keeps on saying, ‘We are going to secure the tennis’. As the minister at the table, the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, would know, because I assume he has had a look at the contract, the tennis has been secured until 2036. However, whilst I am — —

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms ASHER** — Well, for reiteration of it. Whilst I have pointed out that a number of Labor members have incorrectly attributed a number of things and rewritten history, I note that the member for Frankston referred to the second-reading speech. He referred to the fact that in 2009 the government commenced a redevelopment of Melbourne Park and spoke about the vision and foresight of the government that did that. Of course the date was 2009, so I congratulate the member for Frankston on his even-handedness, unintentional as it may have been, in acknowledging that that part of the

redevelopment was commenced under the previous government.

As I said, one of the really important infrastructure components of the major events strategy is the whole sporting precinct around the tennis centre. I acknowledge that it was started by John Cain, but I think it is very important to look at the role of successive governments in all of this and not simply claim that one side did it all. We should also acknowledge that so much of the sporting precinct we have around Melbourne adds to the quality of life for Melburnians but a lot of the events that are secured to play in these facilities are secured with tourism dollars, again as the minister at the table knows. They are commenced with tourism dollars because visitors come and stay and boost the economy of the city, so I am delighted to say a couple of words in support of the bill.

As the opposition has indicated, we do not oppose the bill. I think anything that adds to the infrastructure of the sporting precinct is particularly good, but I counsel the many ALP members who simply look at their briefing notes and parrot the briefing notes that are in front of them to exercise a little bit of caution. When you are a minister and people give you briefing notes it is often a good idea to start asking a lot of questions about the briefing notes, with all due respect to the public sector.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms ASHER** — You do have to read them first — that is a very fine point — but it is a good idea to ask questions. I would urge members of the ALP on the other side of the house not just to regurgitate their briefing notes, because sometimes if they regurgitate their briefing notes, they perpetuate errors, and there are still some of us in this house who can remember the 1980s. Indeed, my friend the Deputy Speaker, who I think is going to speak as well, is someone else who has been around for a long time. But I would advise the Labor members of Parliament to ask some questions — do not just parrot and rabbit away about the briefing note — and understand that the person who is responsible for the major events strategy in the state of Victoria is former Premier Jeff Kennett and that the seed of the idea was in fact planted by Joan Kirner, not the current Labor government.

**Mr NARDELLA** (Melton) — I rise to support the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016, and I will get to the honourable member for Brighton in a second. I have been around for a little while — —

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr NARDELLA** — Some would say too long, wouldn't they, Hodgey? But anyway, I have been around a little while. I have heard some bizarre speeches in my time. I have got to say that my honourable friend from Sandringham is somebody I actually look up to. I actually do see him as a good man, a good person, but the speech he gave on this particular bill was absolutely bizarre, let me tell you. To call for a royal commission into the athletics tracks and Olympic Park transferring over to Albert Park where the Victorian Institute of Sport is when his party will not even support a royal commission into the banks is just going on bizarro.

I have got to say that the member for Sandringham and I have spent the same amount of time in the Parliament — different houses but in the Parliament — and I was going to jump up when he talked about the Beaumaris athletics track et cetera. They are all very important things for those Brighton aspirants, as we have discussed previously, to have but they really are nowhere in the bill. Be that as it may, I really do enjoy his contributions to the house.

In terms of the honourable member for Prahran, we are going from bizarre to bizarro. We set up in 2009 a consultative process with the Wurundjeri people — and that is how you actually pronounce it — to look at all aspects of Olympic Park but specifically to have a look at the naming of the bridge and get their concurrence on that. Then he comes into this house — like he always does — and gets the Liberal and National parties' disease of making things up. I think that is really sad.

Like the honourable member for Brighton, I was in my office and I heard the member for Prahran when he said that there was no consultation with the Indigenous peoples. That is just wrong. It is not for me to counsel any other members within this house because, be it as it may, most people would want to counsel me because of the things that I say and do in this place, but I think there is a responsibility on members to be accurate in terms of the things that they put to the house, and that is certainly not the case with the honourable member for Prahran.

Let us get to the honourable member for Brighton. The honourable member for Brighton talked about the major events strategy. Admittedly the things that she said were correct in terms of the major events strategy, and I know her passion for tourism. I know that she established the Jigsaw program for tourism here in Victoria, which I think has served this state extremely well. I know her passion for tourism and development within Victoria, and that legacy is there. The problem was that honourable members on this side of the house

were not talking about the major events strategy; maybe some were, but certainly not to my understanding of and listening to what they were saying. We were actually talking about the Victoria economic strategy. The Victoria economic strategy has components that go to the support and the funding of programs — for sporting programs, for infrastructure — throughout Victoria. That is what honourable members on this side of the house were talking about.

That is not to take away from the major events strategy. There was some discussion about Albert Park and the grand prix, and I did oppose the grand prix, as my honourable friend from Essendon said. The grand prix is at Albert Park; it is not the place for it. It was certainly the place for it back in 1955, but it is not the place for it in this day and age. I remember being at the South Melbourne town hall, where I had organised a meeting to support, at the time, my friend and colleague the Honourable John Thwaites in his opposition to the grand prix at Albert Park. That decision was made whilst he was overseas, but that is all part of history now. I do concur with the honourable member for Brighton that that particular strategy for that race is extremely important for Victoria and the economic benefits to Victoria are great.

If people know me, they know that I do not give praise lightly, and I have certainly been critical of this particular person, but the work that Ron Walker and his team did towards a major events strategy are part of his legacy and of the government's legacy at the time, the Kennett government. They gave it to the people of Victoria. The jobs that it has created, the networks and the partnerships are all great, so I do praise the Right Honourable Ron Walker — 'Right Honourable' because he was the Lord Mayor of Melbourne — for that particular strategy.

My major interface with the tennis centre and Olympic Park really is through rock concerts. I have been to a few rock concerts there, and you get there via bridges. We have all been talking about a range of things, but this particular bill is about a bridge. The honourable member for Wendouree and I and the member for Essendon are going to walk over the bridge. I am a cheapskate and I am going to wait for the cheap tickets right at the back somewhere, but we are going to go and see Guns N' Roses, with Axl Rose. Let me tell you that I went to see Guns N' Roses when they were popular — —

**Ms Knight** — They still are.

**Mr NARDELLA** — They still are — yes, of course they are still popular. Axl at the moment is touring with

another band. What is the other band that he is touring with?

**Ms Knight** — AC/DC.

**Mr NARDELLA** — AC/DC, that is right. They have never been the same since Bon Scott unfortunately departed us all that time ago.

There is another story there. Let me tell you this: in 1975 my mate Murray Baker and I went to a school social at Sunshine Technical School and we were knocked out by this band. You had the singer who was going from one speaker stack to another. You had this guitarist who was amazing. Murray and I could not believe what we saw. We just stayed at the back of the Sunshine tech hall and we just were in awe. The next day I found out we did not pay them. That was the best school social ever. We had our mullets and we had our high-heeled shoes and we tried to pick up the sheilas. I was not successful. People said, 'No, we didn't pay them'. I said, 'What do you mean you didn't pay them? They were just amazing'. They said, 'There were supposed to be five of them there. One of them was too whacked out with alcohol from the day before and there was only four so we didn't pay them'. And it was AC/DC with the late and great Bon Scott.

I support the bill before the house. It is a terrific piece of legislation, and it is very nice to reminisce every now and then.

**Mr HODGETT** (Croydon) — It is always a pleasure to follow the member for Melton, who is showing his experience in the house, because I have not heard of half of those bands, but I am sure they play a good concert.

As the former Minister for Major Projects, I had a lot to do with the Melbourne and Olympic parks, and I am very proud of successive governments' investment in this area. We have heard previous speakers talk about the importance of this entertainment and sporting precinct, so it is a pleasure to be able to make a contribution on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. As we said on this side of the house, we do not oppose this bill.

Members have gone through the purpose of the bill, which is to amend the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Act 1985 to provide for the reservation of land and strata of land as National Tennis Centre land for the purposes of a bridge across Batman Avenue and for other purposes. I will not go into the clauses or anything else in the bill, but what I want to talk about in my contribution is this great, marvellous asset in Melbourne. Successive governments have put

significant funds into this to keep Melbourne as the sporting capital of the world and certainly the major events capital of Australia.

Stage 1, which commenced some time ago, invested I think — I checked with the minister opposite before — \$366 million in this area. Stage 1 predominantly involved the National Tennis Centre development and of course the oval redevelopment. Then another \$338 million was announced around my time as minister there, which was for the bridge, for the administration and media building — which is the important eight-storey building there on site which I understand is going to be completed in October or November this year and which is a great project and a great addition — and of course for upgrades to Rod Laver Arena. I will come back and speak about that because I do not know if people realise the important and significant contribution that Rod Laver Arena makes to the Victorian economy. Certainly stage 2 provided for an upgrade to the Rod Laver Arena in one of four years, and I will come back and speak a little bit about that.

As a previous Minister for Tourism and Major Events, the member for Brighton summarised in her contribution quite well the investment that has been made here into this area, and it is a fantastic area of Melbourne. I do not know of anywhere in the world where you have such a sporting precinct on your doorstep. When you talk to overseas visitors and ask, 'Do you want to come to the football, soccer, netball or any events — the tennis?', they wonder, 'How far do we have to travel? Do we have to go around town?', as they experience in some of their cities around the world. They are amazed and delighted when they find they can actually walk down from Flinders Street station or from Richmond station to this sporting precinct, to the MCG, to AAMI Park, to Rod Laver Arena, to Hisense Arena or to Margaret Court Arena.

They are some fantastic venues that host, as we have heard, the mighty Melbourne Victory Football Club — I declare my interest there, as I am a member of Melbourne Victory — and host Melbourne City as well, which had a major signing, as we acknowledge. We can be proud of the cricket and the footy played at the MCG. As a proud, paid-up Richmond supporter I often attend there, with mixed results this year, I might say. I will declare my interest also in the Melbourne Vixens, as I am a member there. If you see them playing at Hisense Arena or at Margaret Court Arena, you will see they are fantastic venues to stage netball and to see our Melbourne Vixens play there. Of course we will be back at AAMI Park this Saturday night to see the mighty Melbourne Storm defeat the Sharks and

win the minor premiership. All these sports are played in that area.

As the member for Brighton was saying before, Melbourne has been the most livable city now for five years running. As I said, we are the major events capital of Australia and the sporting capital of the world. Part of Melbourne being the most livable city is because of what we have on offer there. We have a number of events here in Melbourne, whether it be the grand final, the Melbourne Cup, the grand prix, Melbourne Fashion Week or the tennis. But if you speak to the former Minister for Tourism and Major Events and even the current minister, they will tell you nothing brings a greater spend to Melbourne than the two weeks of the Australian Open Tennis Championships. Every other one of those events is an event over a day or a two-day, three-day or four-day weekend. The figures of the spend in Melbourne, Victoria, around the Australian Open are absolutely phenomenal. People choose to stay here, and our hotels are full and our restaurants are full. They visit our arts and cultural precincts, so they are very important for Melbourne.

As the previous speaker said, that investment under the previous government has secured the Australian Open here until 2036. That is very important for Melbourne and very important for the Victorian economy. With the development of Margaret Court Arena, which I oversaw as major projects minister, a third retractable roof means that we have in fact now weatherproofed the Australian Open. When we went down there for a significant launch and event at Margaret Court Arena, I think it was Todd Woodbridge at the time who had just returned from commentating at Wimbledon in the UK — it was a few years ago now — where play had been rain-interrupted. He made the point to me, ‘You have effectively weatherproofed the Australian Open’. He said, ‘You don’t realise the significance and importance of that’, because he had just come from Wimbledon, which was rain disrupted, and of course TV is all about constantly broadcasting and not going to breaks. He said, ‘You don’t understand the importance of that, that you will be able to close the roof on Hisense, close the roof on Rod Laver or close the roof on Margaret Court Arena’, which is a brief interruption — in fact the Margaret Court Arena roof closes very quickly — and the tennis can continue and the commentating can continue. So it is significant.

In the time remaining I want to talk about the Rod Laver Arena. I want to mention Brian Morris, who is the CEO of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust. Brian does a fantastic job there. He proudly talks about that whole precinct. But not many people would know that Rod Laver Arena was actually built in 1988. If you

go there to a concert or sporting event, it looks like a fairly modern arena, so people think, ‘Why are we investing in its upgrade as part of that stage 2, \$338 million precinct upgrade?’. But the arena was built in 1988, and the upgrade will first of all improve the public access areas and amenity of the area, but it will also bring that stadium up and build the capacity up to be able to stage modern concerts in this day and era.

A few years ago, as I said, when we were in government and I was the minister, I think at that time — I think it has declined slightly since then — Rod Laver Arena was sitting at no. 3 in the world in attendance at concerts and in tickets or value of ticket sales. It was second only to the O2 Arena in the UK, and I think the other one was Madison Square Garden in New York in the US, so Rod Laver Arena bats amongst the best. There is great management down there with Brian Morris, and of course this upgrade will continue the investment and make it a modern stadium.

I could go on in the time remaining to talk about how sport plays an important part in our lives. Certainly there are many people from our local sporting clubs out in my electorate of Croydon that would come and watch soccer, rugby, netball, cricket and football. I was at Eastfield Cricket Club recently, which is working towards a redevelopment of the clubrooms. South Croydon Football Club is looking at an upgrade of its light facilities. The Croydon Rangers Gridiron Club is looking for upgrades to its facilities. All these are local sporting clubs in my electorate that would benefit from upgrades to their sporting precincts, where young kids come and watch their heroes and of course join and play a team sport.

The one thing that disappoints me a bit is that it is a pity that, with the development of Melbourne Metro, the government is not going to put an interchange at South Yarra, the sixth busiest railway station in Melbourne, so people travelling in from lines such as the Cranbourne-Pakenham line will not be able to get a direct train to the sporting and entertainment precinct. They will have to get off and change trains as far back as Caulfield, so I think that is very short-sighted of the government.

I would also like to see the government have a look at our plans that we were looking at for the development of Richmond station. Again there is a need for an urgent upgrade to facilities there. Both the Flinders Street and Richmond stations are the gateways to the sports and entertainment precinct, so it would be good to see the government turn its mind to those two issues at times. We are not opposing the bill. I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr PEARSON** (Essendon) — I am delighted to make a contribution in relation to the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. It is interesting when you consider a bill like this to note that ministers fund this expense through the budget, and it is appropriated by the Parliament. Legislators pass laws like this one to make it happen. Invariably the public service will manage this project while it is underway. Taxpayers, of course, pay for it, but it is important to note that it is working people who build these sorts of projects.

Both my wife and I are very fortunate. Both of us come from very modest backgrounds. My father was a butcher who left school at 15. When you are working in a trade where you are producing something that is quickly turned over, you obviously have a certain level of pride in the work that you do and you have pride in the business you build up, but it is different — it is very different. My father-in-law was a bricklayer, and he left school at 15. He loved being a bricklayer, and one of the proudest achievements of his working life was being afforded the opportunity to work on Melbourne Park when it was first built in 1988. In fact I remember that when I first met him in the early 1990s, it was the one project that he talked about with great pride.

My father-in-law, throughout his career, was a proud member of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU). He was proud to work on the tools, he was proud to build things that were enduring, he was proud to be a member of the CFMEU and he took great pride in his work. For working people like my father-in-law who are afforded the opportunity, through their own labours and endeavours, through their muscle, through their physical strength, through their sweat and through hours and hours of repetition, to do something that ultimately results in a lasting monument that will last beyond all of those efforts it is a thing of immense pride.

My father-in-law grew up in Coldstream, and a good friend of his was also a brickie. His name was John Mitchell. Mitch was a terrific bloke. Sadly he died a few years ago from cancer, and so we went to his funeral, which was up at Coldstream. I remember in the eulogy people talked about his work at the Coldstream IGA. I remember at the time thinking it was quite a curious thing that in his eulogy people would mention the fact that as a worker his legacy, in part, was the local supermarket. But it was a measure of pride. It was a recognition that through your labours and through the longevity of your labours there is a sense of immortality that is borne out by just sheer, brute force.

You are talking about working people who, in the case of my father-in-law, left school at 15 and for decades worked on the tools all around the city. He built his own house with his own hands. He worked on countless extensions, countless construction projects and countless buildings, and he worked on the CityLink tunnels under the Yarra, the Burnley Tunnel and the Domain Tunnel. But one thing stood out for him. The thing of enormous pride and satisfaction was being able to work on Melbourne Park. These jobs are physically hard. They take a toll. When you leave school at 15, it is inconceivable to think that you could spend 50 years on the tools in a job like this and retire on the tools at 65. My father-in-law is no longer a bricklayer. He works as a courier. He will retire next year, and it will be a well-earned retirement for him. He has absolutely worked tirelessly at the work he has done and he takes pride in his family.

Governments will claim the legacy for these sorts of projects. We are in this game; we know that is how it works. Sporting greats down at Melbourne Park will claim the name; they will claim it. But it is working people like my father-in-law, Jeff Marshall, who can always claim that these monuments are their own, because they were the ones that built it. They were the ones that got up at the crack of dawn while most of us were asleep to get in the ute and drive across town in the cold, in the wet and in the dark to work on and build these sorts of projects.

I am very proud of Melbourne Park. I think it is a wonderful institution. It has been a wonderful cultural base for our lives as citizens of this great city. Other speakers have spoken about the importance it has played in terms of sport, tourism and music. I am very fortunate. I have seen Midnight Oil play there. I have seen Cold Chisel. I have seen the Rolling Stones play there. It is — —

**Ms Thomas** — What about the Angels?

**Mr PEARSON** — Sadly I did not see the Angels there. I came so close to seeing the Angels play at the Manhattan Hotel, but sadly I was under age and I missed out. But Melbourne Park is a wonderful cultural institution that we have had.

This bill is fairly dry, and it is technical. It is very specific, and it is very focused. It is extremely pleasing to see that finally now we are recognising Indigenous Australians in these great cultural precincts and in the fact that the bridge is going to be named the Tanderrum Bridge. As other speakers have indicated, tanderrum is a welcoming ceremony by the people of the Kulin nation. It is wonderful that, as a community, now we

are in a position where we can recognise and acknowledge the great role that Indigenous Australia has played in terms of shaping our own identity, and it is broadening out our understanding.

It is also important to recognise that these sorts of projects do so much to diversify our economy. The minister is overseeing a revamp of this sector to expand it beyond major projects to look more at the creation of a visitor economy, which is a profound change in the sector. It is recognising that we are seeking to try and make those changes and to look at making sure that, from the point of view of an economic driver, there are multiple levers in place — in situ — in order for this economic growth to occur and in order for an institution like Melbourne Park to be contemporary and relevant in the 21st century.

But, as I said, it is important always when you think about these sorts of institutions to think about the physicality — their physical presence — and the fact that they have been created by working people who strive every day to build this city and who have sought comfort and protection by belonging to a trade union which will advance their interests, will make sure that they go to work and come home safely and will make sure that they are fairly paid, recognising that if you work on the tools, you cannot be expected to serve out 50 years on the job. The reality is that your body breaks down through the sheer physical exertion. These sorts of buildings, these sorts of institutions, are a testimony to hardworking Victorians who work tirelessly to build a better life for themselves and their family. I am so enormously proud of the work my father-in-law did on this great project. He is a great man, he is a hardworking man and he has been a wonderful father to my wife, and I am so proud to call him my father-in-law. I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr CLARK** (Box Hill) — I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

In so moving I draw the house's attention to the fact that we are now at 20 minutes past 4 on a Thursday afternoon and the debate on this bill has been continuing for some time. There is a very pressing item of business on the notice paper that this house should be attending to — namely, the proposal from the Legislative Council for a joint sitting. This house should be proceeding to deal with that matter rather than continuing to debate the bill that is currently before the house. There has been an extensive number of speakers on the bill. There have been some interesting contributions — in many senses of the word 'interesting' — but it is quite clear that the government

is simply intending to pad out the debate on this bill through to 5 o'clock when the guillotine will be applied and it will adjourn the house off without having dealt with this very important matter of the joint sitting.

It should not need me to reiterate to the house the importance of dealing with this matter before we adjourn. There is a vacancy in the Legislative Council. It is a fundamental requirement — a mandatory requirement — of the constitution that that vacancy be filled, and this house, this Parliament and everybody involved in avoiding complying with that obligation of the constitution is in breach of their duty to do so. We should not be allowing this situation to continue. This house should not be tolerating the government continuing to openly defy the law. We need to deal with this matter. We need to comply with the constitution. We need to uphold the principles of democracy and ensure that where there is a vacancy and a mechanism for filling that vacancy that that vacancy is filled, and we should be doing so forthwith.

So we should not be continuing to debate the bill currently before us; instead we should be adjourning that debate. We should have the Leader of the House move — or if she is not to move, I or other members would certainly be prepared to move — that other orders on the notice paper be deferred until later this day so that we can deal with item 11 in relation to the joint sitting proposal from the Legislative Council. It is a disgrace and a contempt for democracy for this house and this Parliament not to be filling that vacancy and for the government to be instigating that defiance. In fact it is compounding the situation when members of the government, in defending that position, get up and do so on the basis that they are not prepared to agree to fill that vacancy until some grievance that they have asserted is remedied. As I have said previously, that might be the attitude of the union standover merchant, the union thug and bully, but it should not be the behaviour of an elected government. An elected government calls on others to uphold and respect the law and it should be upholding and respecting the law itself.

If members on the other side wanted to do the right thing not only in the current instance but for the future, they should be supporting the adjournment of this current debate so that we can get onto that matter and deal with it expeditiously. In urging members on the other side to do so I need hardly remind them that in the long term they are far more likely to be the beneficiaries of both the legal requirement and the democratic spirit being upheld. It is members of the Labor Party who are far more likely to want a transition of a member of the upper house during the course of a

Parliament — to have one person step down and somebody else, who has been worked out behind closed doors through their factional system, to take their place — so it is setting an awful precedent for members opposite in particular as well as for democracy and the rights of citizens more generally to have their full representation in this Parliament. It is setting an awful precedent, particularly for those opposite, and they ought to reflect on the precedent they are setting for the future as well as the damage they are doing to the fabric of democracy at present.

The community is entitled to expect all members of the house to do the right thing — to listen to the advice and words of the then Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, John Lenders, who said that any government that refused to honour the constitutional provisions concerned deserved to be held in contempt by the community. The more those opposite delay this the more they are risking that contempt of the community. I urge the house to agree to the adjournment of this debate.

**Ms D'AMBROSIO** (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change) — I oppose this motion. The sheer hypocrisy of those opposite knows no bounds whatsoever. The fact is that we have a robust legislative program that this government is committed to, and this bill forms an integral part of that program. We have a long list of members of Parliament who are waiting to speak on this bill. They have a very strong contribution to make on behalf of their communities and on behalf of their electorate, and they ought to have the opportunity to do just that.

This is not the first time that we have had a stunt pulled by those opposite. When it comes to supposed constitutional matters — really, precedents? Have a look at your own actions. Have a look at the actions that you yourselves as members of the opposition are imposing on those in the upper house. A duly elected member of the upper house has been benched for six months for what? For doing his job: representing his community and representing his government. To talk about precedents is rich. It is hypocritical and it is absolutely wrong.

Our government is committed to a very important piece of legislation because it knows what the priorities are. We know how to grow the economy of the state and how to grow the important jobs that are the hallmark of a good Labor government. In relation to tourism and major events we have seen a wealth of economic development through our very strong tourism programs and through our very important and very strong major events programs, tourism that brings much-needed

money to this state, growing the fantastic jobs that so many Victorians are starting to enjoy, thanks to a Labor government. For those opposite to interrupt the flow of that important work, the important legislative program of this government, just exposes the small-mindedness and narrow-mindedness that drives the activities of those opposite right here in this house every single day. No wonder they are in opposition and no wonder they were a one-term government.

Our government has a very strong agenda and a very busy program to get through. We ought to be able to give all the good members on this side, who were duly elected by their communities, the opportunity to speak up and contribute to what is a very important bill that will help to continue to drive the economic development and the tourism dollars that Victoria is now becoming more accustomed to, thanks to this government. We ought to move on from this debate on this stunt that is again being presented to us. Let us get on with the business of doing what governments ought to do and what the Parliament ought to do — that is, to get on with growing jobs and growing the economy for the betterment of all Victorians.

**Mr McCURDY** (Ovens Valley) — I rise to contribute to this debate because it is an absolute disgrace that we find ourselves here again this week with the opportunity to, in good faith, have a joint sitting. Still we are refused that opportunity. The National Party have a long standing history in terms of how we go about preselecting our members of Parliament. We give them due time to go and meet with the membership so that we get a clear picture of who would be the most suitable candidate.

Earlier today I was disgusted to hear the member for Bendigo East talk about Damian Drum walking away from northern Victoria, because that is simply not true. Damian Drum has moved on to the federal Parliament, as many of us in this place know. Due consideration should have been given to the National Party taking their time to preselect their candidate and now allow that member, Luke O'Sullivan, into the chamber. The argument has been given that we took too long to do that. I am sure that had we done it in a period of weeks, just like a factional deal gets done on the other side, we would still have been denied that same access now.

I think those opposite are very confused about the fact that we need representation. As the member for Bendigo East should understand, northern Victoria is short on resources because this government is leaving us high and dry in northern Victoria and in the regions. I do not understand why the member for Bendigo East will not allow us to have this joint sitting and refuses to

even accept that there is an issue. The democratic process that we went through was clear and concise. As I said, Damian Drum did not walk away from northern Victoria. He is now the local federal member up there and is supporting communities very, very well in that regard. It is a disgrace that we are not being allowed due service here and we are not getting the joint sitting that we deserve. We will not go away. This will not die down until those opposite actually consider that this member should be in his rightful place in the upper house.

**Ms GREEN** (Yan Yean) — Never let it be said that members of the National Party put the jobs of Victorians and country Victorians ahead of a job for one of their own. Rather than continue to debate this important bill, which will drive jobs for Victorians and on which there are members who want to speak — and I have had the benefit of speaking on this bill — we are told that instead that we have to fix up the mess that Damian Drum, a former member for Northern Victoria Region in the other place, left. Rather than resigning and allowing the preselection process to go ahead, he waited. He did not resign in a timely fashion; he wanted to keep getting the dollars that the National Party always puts first. They always put the white car of government before their community, yet they represent areas that have some of the poorest educational and health outcomes in this state. So Damian Drum did not resign in a timely manner. He kept earning his money whilst campaigning. He left it for the longest possible time rather than resign in a timely manner so that the democratic process within the National Party could take effect.

Those on the other side seem to think that we do not have a democratic process in the Labor Party. We do. When this matter was debated earlier today I listened intently to the member for Macedon, whose electorate, along with the electorate of Yan Yean, is also within the Northern Victoria Region. Let me ask you, like the member for Macedon did, was Damian Drum, a former member for Northern Victoria Region, ever seen? The only time he was seen was when the boundary of the Yan Yean electorate was changed during the redistribution, and it became a seat that for the first time since I was elected to Parliament the coalition thought, ‘Oh, God. We’d better get in there. We’d better find someone. We’d better meet someone. We could win this. We don’t know anyone, but we’d better get in there’. But did we see anyone after the election? No, we did not. They did not run a candidate there, so they have never struck a blow for anything in my area.

I have many friends and family members in the adjacent electorate of Eildon, in the nearby electorate of

Euroa and also in the electorate of Ovens Valley. They very rarely saw Damian Drum, a former member for Northern Victoria Region. I am sure Luke O’Sullivan is a fine fellow, but I know — just like I know the National Party — they are always first in line for a free lunch and to get into that white car. All they will be worrying about are those dollars, that away-from-home allowance flying out the window. When they open up their wallets, the moths are flying out. They are not getting that allowance and this would be absolutely killing them.

We are quite within our rights to not hold a joint sitting and to want to debate a bill that is about providing jobs for Victorians. Gavin Jennings, a member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region, is being prevented from doing his job by an action taken by those opposite when there is no precedent anywhere in any Westminster system. Even George Galloway, a member of the House of Commons who was found guilty of doing oil deals with Iraq, was suspended for only 18 days. Yet what happens with a member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region? He is suspended for six months. We do not see crocodile tears from the other side for the lack of representation that the community of the south-eastern suburbs is suffering. We only hear about it in the north.

Damian Drum has gone off to another sinecure, and the National Party love doing this — swapping from one Parliament to another, from job to job, from a little overseas trip or junket here or there. Well, you are just going to have to wait because we are more concerned about the jobs of all Victorians, the circumstances of all Victorians — their health, their education — as we have always been concerned about, rather than the trappings of office, which is all that lot on the other side are interested in. The debate on the bill before the house should continue.

**Mr T. BULL** (Gippsland East) — I rise to make a contribution on the motion to adjourn the debate, and I also support the need for the joint sitting to proceed. What a lot of bluster and puff we have just heard from the member for Yan Yean. In all of her ranting she made the comment that we on this side of the house are only interested in the white cars of government. I can only put that down to two reasons. Either she cannot remember the election in 2014, which they actually won, or it is her disappointment about missing out on a white car for herself that she is having a little bit of trouble coming to grips with. But there was no need for the tanty. I will try to provide some reasonably balanced comments.

We have heard from the other side a whole lot of reasons Mr O'Sullivan cannot take up his position in the upper house. We have heard commentary around Mr Jennings and his suspension from the upper house. We have just heard a discussion about jobs. We have heard about a whole lot of things that simply are not related to a member of Parliament being able to take up his position in the upper house. Northern Victoria Region is an extraordinarily large upper house electorate that is represented by five members of Parliament. Given the enormous expanse of northern Victoria, it should have those five members of Parliament representing it in the state Parliament.

We had some comments about Mr Drum turning his back on northern Victoria. Mr Drum has done the opposite. Mr Drum has moved into the federal Parliament to represent a very, very large slice of northern Victoria, and Mr Drum stayed to go through the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's process here in Victoria as a shadow minister, which I think was probably an honourable thing for him to do.

We talk about all of these matters that simply are not related to a person being able to take up their democratic rights and democratic position and represent the constituents of northern Victoria in the upper house. There is nothing else to be entered into; that is the sole reason that we should be having this joint sitting to get Mr O'Sullivan into the upper house of the Victorian Parliament.

**Mr PEARSON** (Essendon) — I rise to oppose the motion put forward by the manager of opposition business. The reality is that this is just another attempt by those opposite to derail the business of this government. The reality is that we have got a Parliament that has got two chambers, the Assembly and the Council. Members in the Council have decided that they want to have a joint sitting, but we in the Assembly have decided we do not want to have a joint sitting and we will not have a joint sitting until the Special Minister of State, a member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region in the Council, the Honourable Gavin Jennings, is returned to the Legislative Council so he can continue to represent his electorate. It is a very simple proposition.

I note that Mr O'Sullivan is in the gallery, and I note that Mr O'Sullivan is a friend of mine. He is a good person, and I am sure he will make an outstanding representative of the people of Northern Victoria Region in the Council. But the reality is you cannot have a situation where we in the Assembly are left to clean up the mess caused by those in the other chamber who, in the most capricious and outrageous stunt,

kicked out the Leader of the Government for a period of six months.

**Mr D. O'Brien** interjected.

**Mr PEARSON** — The member for Gippsland South asks what has that got to do with leave. What it has got to do with is that the Leader of the Government in the Council moves the motion for the joint sitting. He cannot move the motion if he cannot take his seat in the Council chamber. That is why. It is simple as that.

We hear about the fact that the people of northern Victoria are missing out on representation. Well, what is interesting is that Mr Drum is reported to have considered resigning his upper house seat for preselection for the federal seat of Murray on 30 March 2016, and I would have thought that would have probably resulted in Mr Drum thinking about saying, 'Well, I am leaving my old job; I am moving to a new job'. That is fine. I get that. I am not quite sure how active he would have been in servicing the constituents of northern Victoria at that particular point in time, but leave that to one side.

Mr Drum was not preselected for Murray until 11 April. What I find fascinating is that we all know the federal election was held on 2 July this year. Nominations for the seat in Northern Victoria Region did not open until 4 July 2016, so clearly the National Party were not interested in filling this vacancy until they were absolutely, 100 per cent sure that Mr Drum was off to Canberra, because they know damn well if he had failed in that attempt, they would have shoehorned him back into the Council so they could continue to support his salary and his political career could continue. That was their motivation. They were very happy for northern Victoria to not have any form of representation from the National Party from at least 11 April until 4 July, and now they come in with crocodile tears trying to derail the business of this government by trying to force this joint sitting.

Again I reiterate, as I have said on numerous occasions, give me back my leader — the Leader of the Government in the Council — and we will have the joint sitting. Give him back. We want him back. He is an important member of our team, and we will not be hijacked by those opposite.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr PEARSON** — I understand that those opposite are sometimes afflicted with the born-to-rule mentality. That is part of their problem. What those people do not realise is that people like me and people like the hardworking member for Niddrie and the hardworking

member for Bundoora have come here for one reason — to rule them. We are here to rule you. That is what we are here for. We will not be derailed from the business of government. This is just a stunt from those opposite. It is an outrageous stunt. We have got speakers on the speaking list who want to speak on this bill. This is just another stunt. We are here to get on with it, we are here to stay on this side the house, and we will not be derailed by those opposite.

### House divided on Mr Clark's motion:

#### Ayes, 38

Angus, Mr	Morris, Mr
Asher, Ms	Northe, Mr
Battin, Mr	O'Brien, Mr D.
Blackwood, Mr	O'Brien, Mr M.
Britnell, Ms	Paynter, Mr
Bull, Mr T.	Pesutto, Mr
Burgess, Mr	Riordan, Mr
Clark, Mr	Ryan, Ms
Crisp, Mr	Sandell, Ms
Dixon, Mr	Sheed, Ms
Fyffe, Mrs	Smith, Mr R.
Gidley, Mr	Smith, Mr T.
Guy, Mr	Southwick, Mr
Hibbins, Mr	Thompson, Mr
Hodgett, Mr	Tilley, Mr
Katos, Mr	Victoria, Ms
Kealy, Ms	Walsh, Mr
McCurdy, Mr	Watt, Mr
McLeish, Ms	Wells, Mr

#### Noes, 43

Allan, Ms	Kilkenny, Ms
Andrews, Mr	Knight, Ms
Blandthorn, Ms	Lim, Mr
Brooks, Mr	McGuire, Mr
Bull, Mr J.	Merlino, Mr
Carbines, Mr	Nardella, Mr
Carroll, Mr	Neville, Ms
Couzens, Ms	Noonan, Mr
D'Ambrosio, Ms	Pakula, Mr
Dimopoulos, Mr	Pallas, Mr
Donnellan, Mr	Pearson, Mr
Edbrooke, Mr	Richardson, Mr
Edwards, Ms	Scott, Mr
Eren, Mr	Spence, Ms
Foley, Mr	Staikos, Mr
Garrett, Ms	Suleyman, Ms
Graley, Ms	Thomas, Ms
Green, Ms	Thomson, Ms
Halfpenny, Ms	Ward, Ms
Hennessy, Ms	Williams, Ms
Howard, Mr	Wynne, Mr
Kairouz, Ms	

### Motion defeated.

**Ms THOMAS** (Macedon) — It is my pleasure to rise to speak on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016. This is a really important bill, and I thank the minister for bringing it to the house. Melbourne has been named once again the world's — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Members will leave the house respectfully.

**Ms THOMAS** — I am delighted that as well as being crowned the world's most livable city, Melbourne has now been given the title of the sporting capital of the world. This bill is an important part of us having achieved that title.

Before I go on to talk a little bit more generally, let me put on the record the objectives of this bill. The bill will give the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust legal ownership of the new bridge for pedestrians and cyclists over Batman Avenue, linking Birrarung Marr and Melbourne Park. This will enable the trust to maintain the bridge in an effective, efficient and integrated way. The bridge will be named Tanderrum Bridge. Tanderrum is a welcoming ceremony by the peoples of the Kulin nation featuring song, dance and cultural exchange and providing safe passage for visitors on country. The bridge will be a new front door for Melbourne Park from the city, providing direct access to the precinct from Flinders Street station and Federation Square. It is really important that this bill be passed today and sent to the other place. I am pleased that the opposition are not opposing the bill.

But if we are talking about Melbourne Park, it would be remiss not to talk about the legacy of that fantastic former Labor Premier John Cain. The tennis centre, in no small part, owes its establishment to John Cain. He is a man who was very devoted to this state and to this city. He wanted to ensure that we had a fantastic cultural precinct down around the arts centre, but his passion was to deliver the Melbourne Park and the Olympic Park area, that fantastic sporting precinct.

Reflecting also on John Cain's time as Premier, let us not forget that this was the Premier who was a champion of equal opportunity laws — —

**Mr McGuire** — And FOI.

**Ms THOMAS** — And FOI, which we talked about earlier. But on equal opportunity, it was John Cain who said, 'I am not going to go to the grand final as a guest of the Melbourne Cricket Club if my wife is not able to accompany me'. He is a man who said, 'I am not going to go to the Melbourne Club as a guest of the Victoria Racing Club while the white line remains that divides men from women'. So John Cain was a man of enormous principle and he stood his ground, and both those clubs, as we know, were dragged — we would have to say — kicking and screaming to allow women as full members of their clubs.

It was my good fortune — as a consequence of my uncle having a lady's ticket at that time, which enabled me to attend many grand finals accompanying him — that my uncle took up the opportunity that the Melbourne Cricket Club had at that time to convert ladies' tickets to full memberships. I always think about the debt that I owe to John Cain for my full membership of the Melbourne Cricket Club. Of course when my own daughter was born, now some 22 years ago, I made sure that she was nominated also. While she has now just got through as a provisional member and she is very disappointed that she is not able to attend grand finals, she will one day have the opportunity to become a full member of the Melbourne Cricket Club. As I said, it would have been absolutely remiss to talk on this bill without mentioning the fantastic legacy of John Cain — that great Labor Premier of this state.

I also want to take the opportunity to share with you some of the other fantastic events that have occurred in that precinct. While it is almost the end of the day — it has been a long week here in Parliament — it is nice to reflect on some of those fantastic experiences I have had in that precinct.

I have been able to attend a couple of Australian Open Tennis Championships matches. What a fantastic venue that is down there, and what a great opportunity to see the world's best in Melbourne. And does Melbourne not just light up in January when the Australian Open is on? It is fantastic to walk around the streets of Melbourne and see people from all over the world coming here. The atmosphere is always wonderful at the tennis.

It has also been fantastic to see a number of pretty fabulous live performances down there at Melbourne Park. I would like to reflect for a moment on seeing Prince perform live down there at Rod Laver Arena. What an incredible performance that was.

**Ms Halfpenny** interjected.

**Ms THOMAS** — I will take up the interjection from the member for Thomastown, who had the good fortune to see the Rolling Stones there. Can I tell you, Deputy Speaker, that I bought tickets to see the Rolling Stones at Hanging Rock in my electorate, and you know what happened there? The first gig was cancelled, and then when they rescheduled, do you know what then, Deputy Speaker? Mick Jagger had a sore throat. So I am afraid that I have now had to reconcile that I will never see the Rolling Stones live in my lifetime or theirs —

**Mr McCurdy** — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, this bill is about a footbridge here at Birrarung Marr and Melbourne Park, and I do not see how talking about the Rolling Stones and Hanging Rock has absolutely anything to do with this bill at all. I know it has been a wideranging debate, but I would ask you to bring the member back to remotely talking about a footbridge and some title exchange, which is what this bill is about.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! I do not uphold the point of order. It has been a very, very wideranging debate. I remember one honourable member talking about AC/DC.

**Ms THOMAS** — As I said, I have not been able to see the Rolling Stones, and that will forever be a great disappointment to me. I did, however, see Neil Young and Crazy Horse perform at Melbourne Park, and that was quite spectacular. A number of people I know were quite disappointed, but if you are not, as I am, an aficionado of Neil Young, then you would not know that there is Neil Young acoustic but that is only one side of Neil Young; Neil Young and Crazy Horse is another side. Neil Young had put out an album called *Psychedelic Pill*. I see the Treasurer is in the house. I think he would probably enjoy it. I know for certain the member for Essendon would really love that album. But seeing Neil and Crazy Horse perform — and I note that the Deputy Speaker was there as well — we rocked out that night. That was pretty fabulous.

There was Bruce Springsteen of course — a fantastic rock-and-roll singer. I have to put this on the record too. Can the Republicans — the conservative side of politics — stop using Bruce Springsteen's songs, because they have nothing to do with you? Bruce Springsteen is on our side of politics. He is our man, right?

**Ms Graley** — He is a working-class man.

**Ms THOMAS** — He is a working-class man. *Born in the USA* is an anti-war anthem, if people would take the time to listen to the lyrics. Will they stop appropriating the music of the left?

**Mr Pearson** — That's right.

**Ms THOMAS** — It happens all the time. And while I am at it: Leonard Cohen. How spectacular was Leonard Cohen's performance, also at Melbourne Park? It was amazing to see that a man in his 70s has such extraordinary stage presence, and he sang so beautifully. At Melbourne Park it felt like I was in a cabaret venue, such was the intimacy of the evening and the atmosphere that Leonard Cohen created. It will

be wonderful to see much greater and easier access to all of these venues, and I commend this bill to the house.

**Ms GRALEY** (Narre Warren South) — In the short time I have available to me I would just like to say to the member for Macedon that I have seen the Rolling Stones three times, and she has missed something. It is a pleasure at this very late time to speak on the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016.

I would just like to put on the record that I have actually run at Olympic Park — and won, as well — as a student athlete at Sunshine West High School. We had a fantastic former Olympian coach in Bill Earle. We actually ran the race, and won, and it was just a fantastic experience to stand on that dais at Olympic Park and get that blue ribbon which said ‘first’. I think I have still got it amongst my memorabilia.

This is a very important bill, because it is again about making sure that Melbourne, the world’s most livable city, remains the sporting capital of the world. I think both sides of politics believe it is very, very important that we, as the sporting capital of the world, invest in our sporting infrastructure. Yes, this is about a bridge, but if you have been down to that area, as I have many times — I have watched, many times, finals; not a grand final with the Western Bulldogs in it, I am still waiting for that experience — you will know that this is about a very important bridge that will make the area much more conducive to pedestrian traffic. It is a busy place, so it deserves this sort of infrastructure, and I am very pleased to see that it has been named with an Aboriginal term, the Tanderrum Bridge. I commend the bill to the house.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The time set down for consideration of items on the government business program has expired and I am required to interrupt business. The house is considering the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Amendment Bill 2016.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Read second time.**

*Third reading*

**Motion agreed to.**

**Read third time.**

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
AMENDMENT (OFFICE OF THE  
VICTORIAN INFORMATION  
COMMISSIONER) BILL 2016**

*Second reading*

**Debate resumed from 30 August; motion of  
Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The question is:

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

**House divided on question:**

*Ayes, 46*

Allan, Ms	Kilkenny, Ms
Andrews, Mr	Knight, Ms
Blandthorn, Ms	Lim, Mr
Brooks, Mr	McGuire, Mr
Bull, Mr J.	Merlino, Mr
Carbines, Mr	Nardella, Mr
Carroll, Mr	Neville, Ms
Couzens, Ms	Noonan, Mr
D’Ambrosio, Ms	Pakula, Mr
Dimopoulos, Mr	Pallas, Mr
Donnellan, Mr	Pearson, Mr
Edbrooke, Mr	Richardson, Ms
Edwards, Ms	Sandell, Ms
Eren, Mr	Scott, Mr
Foley, Mr	Sheed, Ms
Garrett, Ms	Spence, Ms
Graley, Ms	Staikos, Mr
Green, Ms	Suleyman, Ms
Halfpenny, Ms	Thomas, Ms
Hennessy, Ms	Thomson, Ms
Hibbins, Mr	Ward, Ms
Howard, Mr	Williams, Ms
Kairouz, Ms	Wynne, Mr

*Noes, 35*

Angus, Mr	Northe, Mr
Asher, Ms	O’Brien, Mr D.
Battin, Mr	O’Brien, Mr M.
Blackwood, Mr	Paynter, Mr
Britnell, Ms	Pesutto, Mr
Bull, Mr T.	Riordan, Mr
Burgess, Mr	Ryan, Ms
Clark, Mr	Smith, Mr R.
Crisp, Mr	Southwick, Mr
Dixon, Mr	Staley, Ms
Fyffe, Mrs	Thompson, Mr
Gidley, Mr	Tilley, Mr
Guy, Mr	Victoria, Ms
Hodgett, Mr	Wakeling, Mr
Katos, Mr	Walsh, Mr
Kealy, Ms	Watt, Mr
McCurdy, Mr	Wells, Mr
Morris, Mr	

**Question agreed to.**

**Read second time.**

*Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.**

**POLICE AND JUSTICE LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL  
2016**

*Second reading***Debate resumed from 31 August; motion of  
Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police).****Motion agreed to.****Read second time.***Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.**

**NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
ORDER SCHEME BILL 2016**

*Second reading***Debate resumed from 30 August; motion of  
Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).****Motion agreed to.****Read second time.***Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.**

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT  
(PUBLIC SECTOR COMMUNICATION  
STANDARDS) BILL 2016**

*Second reading***Debate resumed from 31 August; motion of  
Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport).****Motion agreed to.****Read second time.***Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.****Business interrupted under sessional orders.****ADJOURNMENT****The SPEAKER** — Order! The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

**Bayside retirement village rates**

**Ms ASHER** (Brighton) — (10 399) The issue I have is for the Minister for Local Government, and the action I am seeking of her is to seriously consider the submission put to her by the Brighton on Bay retirement village. A submission has been sent to the minister through me in May, and the residents are concerned about rate increase notices that have been sent to them by Bayside City Council. The residents are concerned that they are paying twice for the services provided by the retirement village and that Bayside council is also raising rates for services that the retirement village actually provides. It is expressed succinctly in an email to me dated 23 April, and I quote:

Residents at the Brighton on Bay have been issued recently with Bayside council rate notices showing dramatic increases in their rates and are understandably upset and stressed because they already pay service fees for property services within and around this multistoreyed building at 1 Asling Street. Bayside council does not provide any property services nor waste disposal. In essence, residents here are now paying double taxes for their property services.

I am aware that there is an inquiry into the retirement housing sector by the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues, but that committee is not due to report until 1 March 2017, as I understand it. I am aware that there is a specific term of reference in relation to this issue before the committee, but I would like the minister to consider this matter herself. The problem for these residents is that the financial aspect of this is being encountered now. I completely understand the issue they are putting to me and indeed to other members of Parliament — I am sure the same issue has arisen in other members' electorates — and I would request that the minister consider that issue now and provide due response, hopefully a favourable response, for my constituents.

**Station Street, Carrum**

**Ms KILKENNY** (Carrum) — (10 400) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Public Transport. The action I seek is for the minister to join me on a visit to the Patterson River in Carrum. Since becoming the member for Carrum I have received a lot of community feedback and input from constituents

about extending Station Street across the Patterson River, linking Carrum and Bonbeach. About a month ago I sent out a community survey to all households in Carrum, Patterson Lakes and Bonbeach asking residents to indicate their support for extending Station Street across the river. In response I have received hundreds and hundreds of completed surveys as well as emails from local residents, and I am very keen to show the minister Station Street at the Patterson River and formally hand over these surveys.

With the level crossing removal work that will take place in Carrum, including the removal of the level crossings at Station Street and Eel Race Road, this is an opportune time to consider and investigate the possibility of connecting both sides of Station Street over the Patterson River. Extending Station Street across the river would avoid the need for people to dogleg across the rail line to get between Bonbeach, Carrum and Patterson Lakes, and it could also mean the closure of the level crossing near Mascot Avenue in Bonbeach. I know constituents would be delighted to see the minister at the Patterson River and for the minister to take delivery of the community surveys about connecting both sides of Station Street at the Patterson River. I look forward to welcoming the minister to Carrum.

### **State Emergency Service Wangaratta unit**

**Mr McCURDY** (Ovens Valley) — (10 401) I raise a matter for the Minister for Emergency Services. The action I seek is that the minister provide funding for a new building for the Wangaratta State Emergency Service (SES). The Wangaratta SES unit headquarters are currently located in Millard Street, Wangaratta, and over the past few decades the responsibilities, equipment and membership of the unit have expanded enormously. The site has become compromised for several reasons. This site is now restricted for room for SES vehicles, equipment and personnel and has inadequate IT resources, a single toilet, very limited parking and single vehicle-width access onto a very, very busy road on a blind corner. All those factors combined really make it a tough job, and it is a very difficult job for this unit to operate.

Frequent flooding events in the region over the past few years are particularly common, and the incident control centres have been established to manage these events. When there is an overflow of operational command into the current unit headquarters it causes a lot of additional stress. When providing road crash rescue on the Hume Highway, the Northeast Health hospital is the only main hospital between Melbourne and the border, so the SES at Wangaratta are regularly called out to

service accidents on the Hume Highway. A significant increase in membership and fleet over the next 10 years will necessitate a relocation.

Over the past few years the Wangaratta SES unit has had extensive discussions with the Rural City of Wangaratta regarding the options that are available for their relocation. The Rural City of Wangaratta has reserved 4500 square metres on a site on Handley Street. That land will coexist with the already established fire station next door and the police complex across the road. In many respects all the ducks are lined up, and we now just need the funding, which is in the vicinity of around about \$1.4 million to \$1.5 million for a building that will service the needs of the Wangaratta SES.

I certainly want to pay tribute to the work that they do. Catherine Russell is the unit controller, and Carina Heppell along with Michael Quinane and Paul Zuch are instrumental in making sure that the SES in Wangaratta continue to be on call at all hours of the day, 24/7, to support our community. It is time that we reciprocated by providing decent facilities for the Wangaratta SES.

### **Northern suburbs netball facilities**

**Ms BLANDTHORN** (Pascoe Vale) — (10 402) I appreciate the opportunity to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Sport. The action I seek is for the minister to provide an update on the rollout of the Labor government's commitment to build and upgrade netball courts in Melbourne's inner north in general and the Pascoe Vale district in particular.

The Labor government committed \$9.6 million to build new courts in Melbourne's inner suburbs, where a shortfall in playing space has led to a decline in participation. The 2015–16 Victorian state budget provided \$252 000 to allow planning works to begin immediately, ensuring the 64 competition-ready courts promised by the Labor government are delivered in locations throughout inner Melbourne, including Moreland.

Last week I went to Martin Reserve to announce funding from this program for new drainage and resurfacing of the courts within that precinct. It was the first training session of the spring season for the Hadfield Netball Club and it was lovely to give the good news to the club. Labor has listened to local netball clubs like Hadfield Netball Club who say they can offer more opportunities to players if they have better and more courts.

The Labor government will continue to work with Netball Victoria, local government and community clubs to help more netballers take to the court in inner Melbourne, but I ask the minister for an update on the rollout of this program.

### **Esplanade, Mount Martha**

**Mr MORRIS** (Mornington) — (10 403) I raise a matter this evening for the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change. I ask the minister to urge her department to liaise with the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council to ensure that the situation that currently exists at The Pillars at Mount Martha is resolved before the coming summer season.

To provide background for that request, I have previously raised this matter with the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. It is related to an area of Mount Martha known locally as The Pillars, which is south of the main shopping area on the Esplanade. It is a very winding piece of road and is not an area that is capable of taking more than one car in each direction. It is a sensitive coastline, and it is becoming a very popular spot, unfortunately, for kids to jump off the cliff into Port Phillip Bay. Kids have been doing this for generations, but it has generally been those who have grown up in Mount Martha and Mornington. They have known about it and done it, but the rest of the world has stayed away.

However, through social media we now have a significant number of people coming down from Melbourne — of course Peninsula Link has made the peninsula much more accessible — and we now have incredible numbers. You only have to look on YouTube to see the popularity of the site. Of course with that increase in usage come some significant issues. There are jurisdictional difficulties because of course the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is involved, which is why I am directing this request to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, but of course VicRoads is also involved. I have previously raised the matter with the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and there has been some movement in that regard.

The police are involved because with the sheer volume of numbers there has been some antisocial behaviour as well, and of course you have people parking — even though there is no parking permitted — on both sides of the road and creating a risk for both pedestrians and motorists.

This is a complicated issue. A very large public meeting in July of this year worked through the issues,

and essentially it came down to DELWP being the lead agency, so I ask the minister to confer with her department to ensure that not only are they addressing the issue but they are addressing the issue in a timely manner. There are all sorts of environmental sensitivities, apart from the clear difficulties for residents and the risk of a traffic accident as well. It is a matter that the minister needs to get onto and hopefully get resolved before the summer.

### **Narre Warren police**

**Ms GRALEY** (Narre Warren South) — (10 404) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Police, and the action I seek is that the minister joins with me in visiting the Narre Warren police station to meet with our hardworking police officers — officers who always go above and beyond the call of duty, I must say. They service our diverse and ever-growing local community with concern and do a really great job.

Our community has a lot of challenges that our police must confront and overcome. For example, between April 2015 and March of this year there were 1406 reported incidents of family violence in the City of Casey. That is an increase of 9.2 per cent on the previous year. It is an epidemic and one that our local police have to deal with multiple times each and every day. They see the harsh reality of the physical and verbal abuse, the intimidation and the threats that rip families apart and harm innocent people, even their pets. It is their suffering that our police confront and work tirelessly to bring to an end.

I know that the local community appreciates all that our brave police officers do for us each and every day, and I look forward to joining with the minister to personally thank our extraordinary local police.

### **Wesburn Primary School**

**Ms McLEISH** (Eildon) — (10 405) The action I seek tonight is from the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. I would like the minister to arrange for the installation of electronic 40-kilometre school speed signs at Wesburn Primary School on the Warburton Highway. Wesburn is not a tiny school in comparison to other schools in my electorate. It has got 148 children, and I think their safety is of extreme importance.

The school is located on a corner with a gentle bend, but Wylie Street is quite sharp, so it is not a very easy spot for parents to be slowing down and dropping off. The current signage there is proving to be quite ineffective — the traffic is not slowing — and school

community members have for some time been concerned that vehicles are speeding in excess of 40 kilometres per hour on a regular basis. The signage in that area chops and changes very frequently and is a little bit confusing, and I certainly acknowledge that it is confusing for motorists. However, vehicles still travel too quickly, and somebody could get killed.

Warburton Highway is a major arterial road which services the entire Upper Yarra, and there is a lot of traffic. There is pretty well no other way in or out of that area. The school have raised this matter in the past with very little success, and they are particularly frustrated. This frustration is exacerbated when they see other schools in the Yarra Ranges in Labor-held electorates having these signs installed, and they are sure that the risk to the students, the staff and the traffic supervisor is lower, as are the traffic volumes. In fact there were 16 new signs at three schools: The Patch Primary School, Mount Dandenong Primary School and Selby Primary School.

The principal of Wesburn Primary School, Anne Stenhouse, has spoken to me about this on numerous occasions, and she is very concerned about the safety issue. I know that VicRoads like to do traffic counts, and I am not sure when they last undertook traffic counts near the school and during school hours, but if they need to do that again that is good, but they also need to check the speed of the traffic at that time.

Another factor here it is that Wesburn Primary is near the foot of Mount Donna Buang, and the weather conditions there can be fairly ordinary at times. I certainly do not think it is fair that the supervisors are placed at unnecessary risk to do their job. They certainly have a right to a safe workplace. Flashing lights in this area will help motorists see the school speed sign, it will slow the traffic down a little bit earlier and it will improve safety for students, for parents with them and for the crossing supervisor. It would certainly create a better, safer traffic warning system outside the school. They should not have to wait till a tragedy occurs. Pam Woodhead is a very long-time crossing supervisor, and her work is very valued by the school.

### **Ascot Vale Primary School**

**Mr PEARSON** (Essendon) — (10 406) I direct my adjournment matter to the Minister for Education, and the action I seek is for a meeting to be arranged between Ascot Vale Primary School, the Department of Education and Training and me to discuss maintenance requirements at this great school. Ascot Vale Primary School is a great school. It is a very old school. William

Scurry, who invented the Scurry rifle which was used for the evacuation of Gallipoli, was a past student, and the school is very well led by Sue Osborne, who is the principal, and Michael Downing, who is the assistant principal. Being an old school there are some maintenance issues that have arisen, particularly in relation to rising damp and some water-related issues, so it would be greatly appreciated if a meeting could be convened between the department, the school and me to address these issues.

### **Sandringham electorate lifesaving clubs**

**Mr THOMPSON** (Sandringham) — (10 407) The matter that I wish to raise is for the attention of the Minister for Emergency Services, and the action I seek is for the minister to visit the lifesaving clubs within the Sandringham electorate and serving members of the Sandringham electorate to review the maintenance requirements, with a view to facilitating funding for Sandringham electorate lifesaving clubs. Lifesaving clubs which serve the Sandringham electorate include the Mentone Lifesaving Club, the Beaumaris Life Saving Club, the Black Rock Life Saving Club, the Half Moon Bay Surf Life Saving Club and the Sandringham Life Saving Club, and just adjacent to the Sandringham Life Saving Club, which was once within the Sandringham electorate, is the Hampton Life Saving Club. It is now located in the state electoral district of Brighton, but the club serves the interests of numbers of Sandringham electorate members.

There have been recurrent programs to improve safety on the bay and also improve infrastructure on the bay. In the late 1990s the then Kennett government, in order to reduce the number of drownings in Victorian coastal waters and inland waterways, embarked upon an important program under two schemes: one entitled Play It Safe by the Water, and the other entitled Lifesaving into the 21st Century. In relation to Play It Safe by the Water, there was a very strong public education campaign that targeted groups at risk and culturally and linguistically diverse communities to promote increased safety awareness of the risks of swimming in unpatrolled ocean beaches and waterways. Also, in relation to Lifesaving into the 21st Century, there was a recurrent funding program which provided funding for lifesaving clubs on a recurrent basis.

Life Saving Victoria now is the body that represents the melded organisations of the surf lifesaving clubs in Victoria and the Royal Life Saving Society Australia Victoria Branch. There were two organisations, and one patrolled ocean beaches and the other patrolled more bay beaches and inland waterways. There is now one

organisation that helps triage funding provision. In recent years lifesaving came under the umbrella of emergency services, and there is an importance in the training of people to better improve safety outcomes, and lifesaving clubs in the Sandringham electorate need good facilities. At Black Rock and Mentone there are important needs that need to be addressed to provide for future safety of swimmers in Victoria.

### **Country Fire Authority Plenty station**

**Ms GREEN** (Yan Yean) — (10 408) I rise in support of a much-needed rebuild of the Plenty fire station on Yan Yean Road, which is currently at the corner of Memorial Road in Plenty. The action I seek is that the Minister for Emergency Services and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) urgently work with the Minister for Roads and Road Safety and VicRoads to secure a better site for the Plenty fire station. As the Minister for Emergency Services knows, the Plenty fire station rebuild was an election commitment, and this election commitment was funded at the first opportunity in Labor's first budget last year.

The leadership of the fire brigade had actually proposed to me — Adrian Marshman and Jason Skiba and others — an idea they had come up with. Given the Yan Yean Road duplication project is proceeding, they identified a parcel of land, slightly down from where the station is now and on the other side of Yan Yean Road and where the duplication would be, which would be a much safer location. This section of Yan Yean Road carries 23 000 vehicles a day from some of the fastest growing population hotspots in Victoria. Sadly this section of Yan Yean Road has seen 45 people hospitalised due to road crashes and, sadly, a fatality. That is just between 2010 and 2015.

Plenty CFA has been at the front line of each and every one of these incidents as it is an accredited road accident rescue brigade. The road is heavily congested during peak travel times and non-peak times. My family, staff, friends, constituents and I use this road every day. My office is located on this road, so I see it each and every day. We need to make this road safer to reduce injury and loss of life, but we also need to ensure that our firefighters are safe.

On the parcel of land that the fire brigade had identified and on which there had been a meeting between both ministers' offices, it is now seen that that land has too many trees on it and also the block slopes away. Given that the road is under construction now or is due to be under construction, community consultations are occurring. It is urgent that the minister intervene with the roads minister and VicRoads in order to secure a

better site, preferably closer to Diamond Creek Road, which is where more of the incidents that this brigade turns out to occur, but also importantly it is where the majority of the volunteers live. This is an opportunity to fix both of these problems for this community and to support our great volunteers in the Plenty fire brigade.

### **Responses**

**Ms ALLAN** (Minister for Public Transport) — I am very pleased to respond to the adjournment action raised by the member for Carrum. Her request was for me to come, if I recall correctly, to the Carrum station area near the Patterson River to receive the surveys and to hear from her and be briefed on the results of the survey work she has been doing in her electorate about a river crossing. I would be absolutely delighted to accept that invitation as I enjoy the member for Carrum's company enormously. She is a terrific, hardworking local member. But also, beyond those personal reasons, I think there are some really exciting opportunities to discuss how our level crossing removal program is going to really improve the local area.

I thank the member for Carrum for the hard work she has done in already getting out and about in her community on these issues. There is obviously quite a bit more work to be done, and I look forward to doing that with her in the weeks and months ahead. In the meantime I look forward to making a time to come to Carrum to receive the surveys and hear more about the feedback that the member has received from the local community.

Deputy Speaker, you asked me to refer the remaining nine matters raised by members to various ministers, and I am very pleased to do just that.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The house is now adjourned.

**House adjourned 5.32 p.m. until Tuesday, 13 September.**

